



SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

87th Anniversary Year - Founded 1935

MAY 2022 – No 957

SRCC supports the RSGB Child Protection Policy

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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 Trinity School, Shirley Park, Croydon CR9 7AT

1st MEETING Monday 9 May: 6m and sporadic E by Chris G4IFX
2nd MEETING Monday 23 May: Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat with John G8MNY

SRCC COMMITTEE 2022/23

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 Records	G4FFY Ray Howells	01732 357474
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Events	G6JXA Kim Brown	07812 735507
Webmaster	G4FYF Steve Jones	01424 584143
Committee Member	G7VAK Paul Beaumont	07818 660493
Committee Member (Co-opted)	G3ZPB Peter Burton	01737 551413
Committee Member (Co-opted)	G7RUX Jason Gardner	07515 357630

EDITOR'S OPENER

Dear Members & Friends,

Welcome to the May SRCC Newsletter. I guess the major news is that following the AGM on April 4th, we now have a full time Chairman again rather than a rotating Chairmanship, with John Kennedy G3MCX accepting the post for the period of one year. And we are very pleased to welcome some new blood in the form of Jason Gardner G7RUX who was co-opted onto the Committee at our monthly meeting in April.

I'm pleased to say that I am now clear of COVID, which (thanks probably to three holes in the arm courtesy of Astra Zeneca) felt no worse than a really bad cold but has left me rather listless and

lacking in energy (well, that's my excuse...). I understand that many people of my age group who have had COVID have had the same experience, but am assured that that will pass!

On the health front, I have been exchanging e-mails with one of our "country members" Ted G3EUE near Shoreham. He recently spent three weeks in Worthing General Hospital for treatment of a chest complaint. He says he was well treated but was bored stiff. However, making a virtue of necessity he took the opportunity to re-read Bill Bryson's "A Short History Of Nearly Everything" – well worth a read if you haven't done so! Despite a further visit to A&E (where he comments that "the chairs became very uncomfortable overnight") he says that "things should be straightforward from now on". I'm sure we all wish him our best wishes for a continuing recovery and future good health. Fortunately he has a son in the area who can keep an eye on him and Mrs Ted.

Anyhow, time to move on to the rest of the Newsletter....

73, Quin G3WRR

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The April A meeting (on the 4th) was the Annual General Meeting. While this can seem a rather "dry" topic it is important to the future of SRCC and is the key opportunity for the membership to have a proper say. So it was good to see that 20 members (over a third of the membership) took part – evenly balanced between face-to-face attendees and those participating via Zoom. Details will not be provided here as these will be provided in the minutes in due course and will be circulated to members and published on the website. But, as stated above, probably the key thing is that we now have a full Committee and full time Chairman: details of individual responsibilities are shown on the first page.

The B meeting on the 18th was slightly less well attended than normal but provided as good opportunity for a chat, and as usual John G8MNY was there with all his test gear and spent much of the evening helping Steve M0PEL with refurbishment of a rather elderly but basically sound FT101ZD.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The May A meeting (on the 9th rather than the 2nd which is a Bank Holiday) will be a repeat visit from Chris Deacon G4IFX from the UK Six Metre Group, who has previously presented his video on 6m via Zoom, and kindly joined us to answer questions. This time it will be a face-to-face presentation: it will revisit some of the material covered previously, but will focus on sporadic E (Es), and particularly on Chris's research on this fascinating mode. The timing is quite opportune as it coincides with the start of the summer sporadic E season.

The 6th June A meeting will be a Video Evening – topic still to be decided.

Looking further ahead (date still to be finalised), Steve Shorey G3ZPS will be giving us a lecture on older equipment, broadly from the 1960s and 70s. He is particularly interested in rigs from the old KW marque and it is hoped that he will bring some working rigs along.

Another summer event will be the annual barbecue (or alternatively "Pastyrama Croydon II")

following the success of last year's event). It will probably be held on a weekend afternoon, which seems to be suit the membership well.

MY VENERABLE B40 RECEIVER by Steve G4FYF

This beast is sentimental to me.



It was used by an operator near to me who used it in conjunction with a Codar AT5 160/80 meter, 10W, AM/CW, transmitter. During my SWL/pre-full license days (circa 1975) I spent many occasions with him in his shack experiencing and learning the art of ham radio operating etiquette, and on his death it was gifted to me.

The B40 is an Admiralty HF receiver used in many ships, submarines and coastal stations and entered service around 1948.

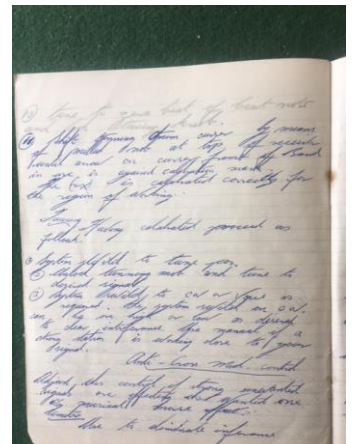
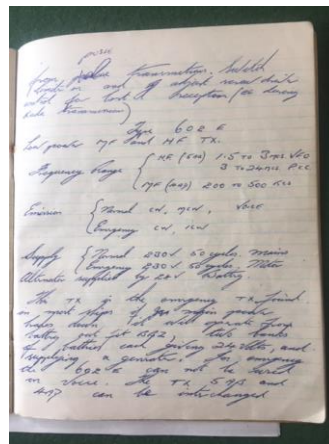
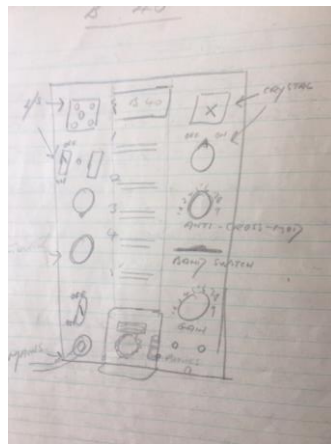
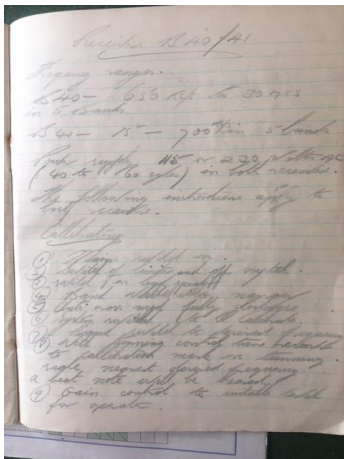
It was designed for the Royal Navy by Murphy, and as such, had to be strong and reliable, sensitive and easy to use. It was literally built like (for) a battleship, and had to stay on frequency, when the ship fired its guns! Consequently weight was not a factor in its design. It was used by many navies in the world, including the Royal Australian Navy.

This B40 had a separate unit on top with no specific detail as to its function. Following a bit of interweb interrogation I gleaned this, it being a 'Receiver Adaptor Outfit FAZ'.

Up until the mid-1950's, the RN/RNZN were using a hotpotch mix of communications equipment that was mainly for CW and AM and completely wasteful in terms of frequency spectrum management. The Murphy B40D/B41 HF/LF/MF receivers were used mainly for Radioteleype (RATT) [RTTY?] reception in conjunction with an SSB Adapter known as the Receiver Adaptor Outfit FAZ. It could also be used for SSB voice, but as there were no SSB transmitters available at the time, RATT reception was the order of the day. The RN had decided on rationalizing communications throughout the fleet and as the RNZN was made up of predominantly British built ships and equipment, it made sense to follow their RN counterparts.

Surprisingly, I have discovered that two other HERC club members proudly possess a B40! More surprisingly, a while ago I discovered that a Bexhill acquaintance was a naval radio operator who used a B40 during service onboard the Cruiser HMS Superb. He kindly shared his operating notes made early 1953, with me (see below...).

I must admit that I have not done too much examination to my B40. Weighing in at a mighty 52kg, it's not easy to manipulate and takes up a lot of bench space!



73 Steve

HERE AND THERE

One comment to add to Steve's item on the B40 above. Having seen one of them "in the flesh" some years ago at (from memory) HMS Belfast, I seemed to recall that one of the front panel controls was marked "CROSS-MOD" or similar. This surprised me initially, but I concluded that if you are in an environment such as a large warship where there are several transmitters in the 100+ watt range on different frequencies with very closely spaced antennas, strong signal handling could be an issue! Wanting to make sure that I wasn't suffering from a "fake memory", our Fount Of All Knowledge (the internet) was inspected and of course almost immediately provided the answer. There is indeed an ANTI-CROSS MODULATION control which works by varying the control grid bias on the first RF stage. Thanks for this information to <http://www.portabletubes.co.uk/boats/murphy3.htm> which is well worth a read if you are interested in older technology.

73, Quin G3WRR

DESTINATION: ISLE OF WIGHT by Quin G3WRR

Those who read this Newsletter regularly may be aware that the RSGB Commonwealth Contest - still known by its historical name BERU (for British Empire Radio Union Contest) by many entrants - is my favourite contest. They may also know that barring COVID, attacks by giant voles or other inconvenient Acts of God I like to go over to the Isle of Wight where access to a cliff top site that goes very well on the HF bands is available. The site is a very old Hi-de-Hi style holiday camp going back to the early thirties on the South-West facing side of the island between The Needles and Niton. Although many of the chalets are not in particularly good condition, the folks who run it are very friendly and cooperative and don't mind antennas put up on their site!

The antenna chosen - a Titan DX vertical - is quite a complex one with stubs and tuning rods all over the place to get it to resonate on all bands from 80 - 10m and has spacers to keep the rods in the right places (see the pictures below). Previous experience has taught that assembly on site

in the pouring rain – particularly getting the spacers mounted and aligned correctly - is neither pleasant nor easy. So I decided to pre-assemble it as far as possible at home. This proved to be not too difficult – I was able to join the four main sections and lay it out between the front door, through the hall and kitchen, leaving the top sticking out of the cat flap. (Perhaps it is just as well that Mrs. WRR “took up an alternative opportunity” some years ago...). With that done, alignment of the spacers was reasonably straightforward. Unfortunately having the spacers sticking out meant that transporting the antenna inside the car (preferable to on the roof rack) – always a challenge with one of the sections being over 8ft in length - was not as easy as when it is in slimline mode. This is compounded by the fact that the main sections cannot be completely separated owing to a length of coax which runs all the way from the bottom to the top, meaning that it behaves like a kind of aluminium concertina (one of the pictures below will show what I mean...). A trial of this Brave New World (with the car unloaded) took about ten minutes to get the antenna in – but oddly, getting it out was not so easy and took nearly 25 minutes, necessitating jiggling it all around with both the front passenger door and the tailgate open. (The neighbours sometimes find my antics a trifle odd...). But like most things once you have sussed it out, it is not too difficult.

So on the due weekend (12/13 April), having loaded up the car the previous night off I set on Friday morning, taking the ferry from Portsmouth to Fishbourne (reputedly the most expensive per mile cost for a ferry anywhere although I take that on trust) as usual. On arrival on site, the road track down to the chalet was closed off due to cliff falls (always a problem at the mudstone cliffs there). And Dave the groundsman advised me against driving round to the back of the chalet as he had got the site mowing machine bogged down the previous week. So it was case of manhandling all the gear about 120ft in the pouring rain. But they do say that if you can't take a joke you shouldn't have joined.... Anyway, after tea and a change of clothes (by which time the rain had stopped), it was antenna erection time. In fact erection of this antenna (with a total height of 36ft) by one person is not quite as hard as it sounds because the Titan is relatively light. Oddly, the trickiest bit is getting it property vertical single handed. (Any significant deviation from vertical is asking for trouble on a windy site like that one). You really need three people – one to sight for vertical and one each on the side guys – to do it efficiently, but it is possible - if slow - by yourself. It was finally erected and upright just before the daylight was lost. This meant having to drop it again the following morning to put on the counterpoise (and connect the feeder which I had forgotten to do...) but that was relatively easy with all the guys already set up correctly.

After a visit to the Three Bishops in Brighstone for a meal followed by a night's sleep it was easy to finish the aerial off. (The gear had been set up the previous afternoon while it was still raining). Everything worked fine (a tried and tested setup long since debugged consisting of an Elecraft K3 running 100W with P3 panadaptor, with logging provided by N1MM+ running on a laptop) and there was time for breakfast before the 1000 UTC start.

The start was, as always, slow with only three stations in the log in the first hour: two UK HQ stations and one 5B4 (Cyprus). But as the sun moved over towards the west a few of the stronger Canadians appeared on 20m & 15m with a few African stations. These were joined at by about 1330 (UTC) by occasional Australian and New Zealand stations. The trick is to watch the panadaptor closely for signals and to change band frequently to take advantage of changing conditions and (hopefully) catch new stations as they appear. And so it continued until just before 2300 by which time things had slowed down (or maybe I had...) and being pretty tired by then it was time for bed. Back up again for a first contact at around 0530 (perhaps a bit of a late start again – must start earlier next year) for a further 26 contacts before the 1000 close. After that it was a kind of reversal of setup (only more tired) and I caught the 4pm ferry back to Blighty and got home around 8pm. I did not empty the car that night....

Apart from my meal on Friday night, catering was rudimentary – a Pot Noodle or two, plus Marmite and jam sandwiches (not combined...) plus tea in copious quantities - 19 dead teabags were in the bin at the end.

So how did it all go? I almost certainly lost a few contacts: I noticed that on 15m & 10m the K3 sounded suspiciously quiet, only to find, about 8 hours in, that it had been switched to the RX ANT socket (which allows you to have a separate antenna for receive (eg. a loop or Beverage). Things perked up when I reconnected the receiver to the main antenna...Hum ho, that's one more mistake not to make next year....

In the end there were 114 contacts "in the book". A brief summary of countries worked is: 5B (Cyprus) 3, 5X (Uganda) 1, 5Z (Kenya) 3, 6Y (Jamaica) 3, 8P (Barbados) 2, 9H (Malta) 6, 9J (Zambia) 2, 9Y (Trinidad & Tobago) 2, C5 (Gambia) 3, V2 (Antigua & Barbuda) 1, VE (Canada) 49, VK (Australia) 12, ZD7 (St. Helena) 2, ZF (Cayman Islands) 5, ZL (New Zealand) 7, ZS (South Africa) 1, UK HQ stations 12.

This put me as second placed UK entrant (out of 32) in the Restricted Single Operator Unassisted category (don't ask....). This was quite pleasing, but I was again pipped to the post (and the John Dunnington Trophy) by John G4CZB – an old friend who used to live in Purley but is now resident in Northampton. As for other friends, our fellow SRCC member Alun G4WGE was on from a family site by the River Severn and made 106 contacts. And Mike G3VYI (whom many of you will know from the Addiscombe ARC contingent in VHF NFD) operated from Gozo (off Malta) as 9H6YI and won the Restricted Single Operator Unassisted category with 561 contacts. Mike and his wife Hilary are clearly gluttons for punishment as their route to Gozo in their camper van was:

- Channel Tunnel to Europe
- drive to Geneva to visit a friend
- drive from Geneva to Genoa
- ferry from Genoa to Sicily (visiting Mount Etna)
- ferry from Sicily to Malta
- ferry Malta to Gozo.

Full marks for effort and endurance but I think I'll stick with Portsmouth to Fishbourne (although I might be adventurous and try Southampton to East Cowes next year...).

A few pictures from their stations and mine are attached below.



Ready for the off at WRR Towers



Made it! Titan DX with sea in background



Antenna looking upwards

View of antenna and chalets – it's the antenna that is vertical and the ground that's sloping...



Station with luxury sofa in background providing enhanced feng shui....



**G4WGE/P site –
the tall pylons in
background span
the River Severn**



**9H6YI site after
disappointing
incident with
storm**

I hope to be on next year as usual – so steel yourself for another tedious tale in next May's Newsletter.

73, Quin G3WRR

SRCC LEAGUE TABLE – MARCH 2022

The number of entries received for the March 2022 League Table was slightly lower than usual at six – the usual suspects but with no submissions this time from Peter G3ZPB or club call G3SRC. The monthly results are tabulated below. For the third month running, Ray G4FFY takes top place. The remaining five entrants maintain the same relative positions as last month but each was one place higher owing to the absence of an entry from Peter G3ZPB.

ENTRANT	WORKED DXCC / SQUARE	WORKED SRCC MEMBER	WORKED IN CONTEST	POINTS THIS MONTH
G4FFY	89	4	20	207
M0CGF	50		8	108
G4LZE	21			42
G3WRR	20		20	60
G4FYF	33	1		68
M0LEP	6	4		20

87% of Ray's scoring contacts were on HF, with 10% on VHF and 4% with SRCC members. All his HF contacts were made using FT4 or FT8, and included all continents except Antarctica. 60% were with European stations, followed by Asia (12%), North America (11%), South America (7%), Africa (5%) and Oceania (4%). All HF bands were used except for 17m, with over 75% split between 40m 20m & 15m. He worked AH77 (Hawaii) on 40m as a new country. He was also active on VHF, picking up eight big squares (all intra UK) on 6m, 2m & 70cm using a mixture of SSB (in the RSGB 6m & 70cm UKACs) and FT8.

90% of Ian's scoring contacts were made on SSB with the rest on FT8 and included all bands between 80m and 6m with the exception of 30m. The greatest number (44%) were on 20m followed by 40m (16%), 80m & 17m (both 10%) with the rest fairly evenly distributed between 10m, 6m, 15m & 12m. They included all continents except Antarctica with Europe providing nearly two thirds of the scoring contacts. As usual they included some (in your scribe's highly subjective view) interesting ones, including 9Y (Trinidad), ZP (Paraguay), V3 (Belize), KL7 (Alaska – which can be tricky because of the polar path): a particularly interesting one was VK80LAN in Western Australia, a special event station celebrating 80 years of the Lancaster bomber.

Almost all Colin's scoring contacts were made using FT4 with a sprinkling of FT8. All but one (on 17m) were on 40m. 75% were with European stations with two in Oceania (YB (Indonesia) and VK5 (South Australia)) and three in Asia (4X (Israel), JA (Japan) and TA (Turkey)).

All Quin's scoring contacts were made using CW, and included all five of the pre-WARC bands between 80m & 10m. They were all made in the RSGB Commonwealth Contest, in which, with the exception of nominated HQ stations, only contacts between different Commonwealth call areas count for points. This rather reduces the pool of available countries but on the other hand a number of uncommonly encountered prefixes regularly appear. As a result, the distribution of scoring contacts between continents was rather untypical, with only 24% in Europe, 29% each in Africa and North America, 10% in Oceania and 5% each in Asia and South America. Numerically, the most common prefixes worked were VE (Canada), VK (Australia) and ZL (New Zealand). More uncommon ones included 5X (Uganda), 5Z (Kenya), 6Y (Jamaica), 9J (Zambia), 9Z (Trinidad and Tobago) and ZD7 (St. Helena).

Steve's scoring contacts were mostly made in the CQ WW WPX SSB contest – another good one for picking up countries – and he seems to have found the higher HF bands productive, including W (USA) and VE (Canada) plus two new countries in the form of D4 (Cape Verde Islands) on 15m and FY (French Guiana) on 10m.

Rick's radio time was limited by the need to take advantage of the improved weather to do outside work. His scoring contacts were his usual mix of contacts on SRCC nets (40%), post GB2CW call-backs and SOTA contacts. He notes that the improving condition mean that a number of North American SOTA stations are "reaching almost (but not quite) workable levels" as he puts it!

ENTRANT	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOT
G4FFY	166	153	207										526
M0CGF	102	87	108										297
G3ZPB	90	123	0										213
G4FYF	36	42	68										146
G3WRR	0	66	60										126
G4LZE	0	73	42										115
G3SRC	66	15	0										81
M0LEP	18	26	20										64

The situation in the cumulative listing is rather more complex, with Ray G4FFY, Colin G4LZE and Rick M0LEP retaining first, sixth and eighth positions. Ian M0CGF and Peter G3ZPB exchange second and third positions, with Steve G4FYF moving up one position to fourth and Quin G3WRR up two to fifth. G3SRC moves down three places as a result of not submitting an entry (due to not appearing on the air) this time.

I hope my doom and gloom over the past year or so is well past now that the solar flux is still holding up (although slightly down to 124 at the time of writing)let's hope for at least a couple of years of good HF conditions!

Quin G3WRR SRCC Leaguemeister

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 q.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.....

Nothing more to say this month – see you next time!

**73, Quin G3WRR
SRCC Chairman / Newsletter Editor**