



SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

OCTOBER 2024 – No. 986

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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 United Reformed Church, Croham Park Avenue, Croydon CR2 7HF

1st MEETING Monday 7th October: Surplus Equipment Sale
2nd MEETING Monday 21st October: Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat with John G8MNY

SRCC COMMITTEE 2024/25

Chairman & Publicity	G4LZE Colin Lugard	07533 174388
Vice Chairman	G7RUX Jason Gardner	07515 357630
Hon. Secretary & Newsletter Editor	G3WRR Quin Collier	020 8653 6948
Treasurer, Membership & Liaison	G4FFY Ray Howells	07921 567651
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EDITOR'S OPENER

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

September has been a slightly more relaxed month here at Mission Control Norwood, with a week away in Lincolnshire with my daughter and 3½ year old granddaughter. However, I had agreed that the day after my return I would visit the Crawley Radio Club venue to give a presentation on “Adjudication of RSGB Contests” at the Microwave Round Table. I thought all the pre-work had been done and dusted before setting off for Mablethorpe on the frigid East Coast: however, preparation, as always, took longer than expected and with the usual brinkmanship I had to get up at 0530 on the day of the presentation to add the final touches. Adrenaline is a wonderful mind focuser (I would volunteer to give the presentation to SRCC but as contesting is very much a niche interest here it probably wouldn't go down too well!).....

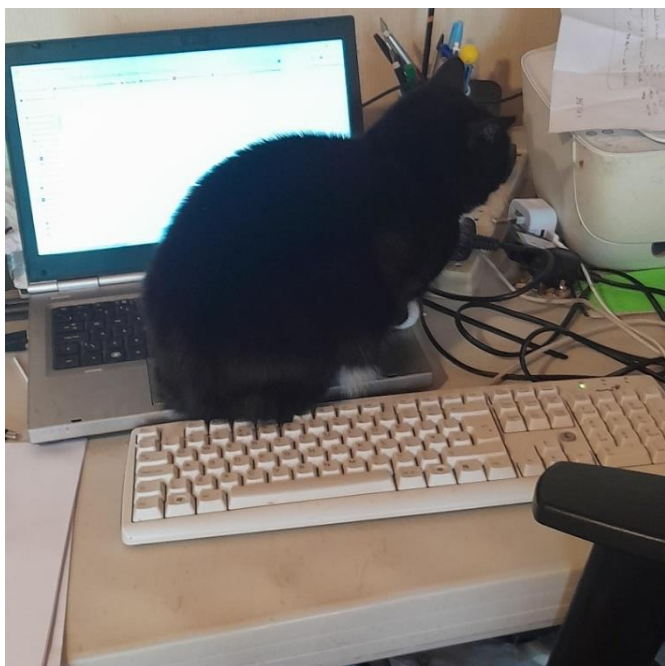
An incident (in hindsight quite amusing but not at the time) which happened to me recently is perhaps worth retelling. I was on my way to Worcester Park for an appointment and chose to go by public transport rather than driving. Among other reasons, I was not keen to donate £12.50 to

Mr Sadiq Khan, and anyway my Freedom Pass (inevitably referred to by my son as my “sad old git card”) let me travel free. It was absolutely pouring with rain that day and by the time I got to Thornton Heath station I was saturated – despite valiant efforts with a brolly given as a free gift at the 2010 RSGB Convention. All went well until the second leg of the journey from Clapham Junction ground to a halt. After about 10 minutes the guard (a pleasant young lady who admitted to being quite new to the job) announced that we were delayed due to a broken down train at Wimbledon. We all sat and waited. After a further 15 minutes or so, said guard came on and explained that the problem was actually a loss of traction voltage on the line and that the emergency lights would have to be turned off, which they were. Another probably 10 minutes passed at which point the lady came back on and said (apparently this was supposed to be “good news”) that they were calling out a Senior Person to sort out the problem. This Senior Person would probably be arriving in 20 – 30 minutes. Without getting too biological here, she advised us that there were no toilets on the train (you don’t need them on short routes, right?) and proposed an expedient solution which I will not expand upon. Fortunately, in my case will power and muscular control saved the day.

Eventually the power came back on, and we were assured that we would be moving once they could find a driver to move the train ahead of us.... this took another 15 minutes. The explanation as given was that a bird had got stuck between the shoe (i.e. the pickup from the 750V third rail) and the third rail itself and this had somehow shorted out the line. After discarding ideas involving the Iron Chicken in the Clangers (this allusion should be understandable to readers with young children or grandchildren) I think I understood what had happened – but if anybody who properly understands third rail systems can make sense of this please do let me know. Anyhow after just over 1½ hours we were on the move again! Unfortunately, I had missed my appointment, so turned round at Wimbledon for the long haul back to SE25 – to be advised that there were delays due to a power failure on the line to Surbiton. I finally got home at 2pm, after having been in sodden socks and shoes for 4½ hours.

But looking at the escapade as a whole:

- the train was sufficiently empty that soccer crowd mentality had not set in, and instead a kind of Blitz Spirit prevailed
- keeping the victims informed of what is happening really helps keep things cool
- having used BR (mostly Southern Region) for 60+ years, this was probably the worst single glitch I have experienced – which isn’t too bad really!



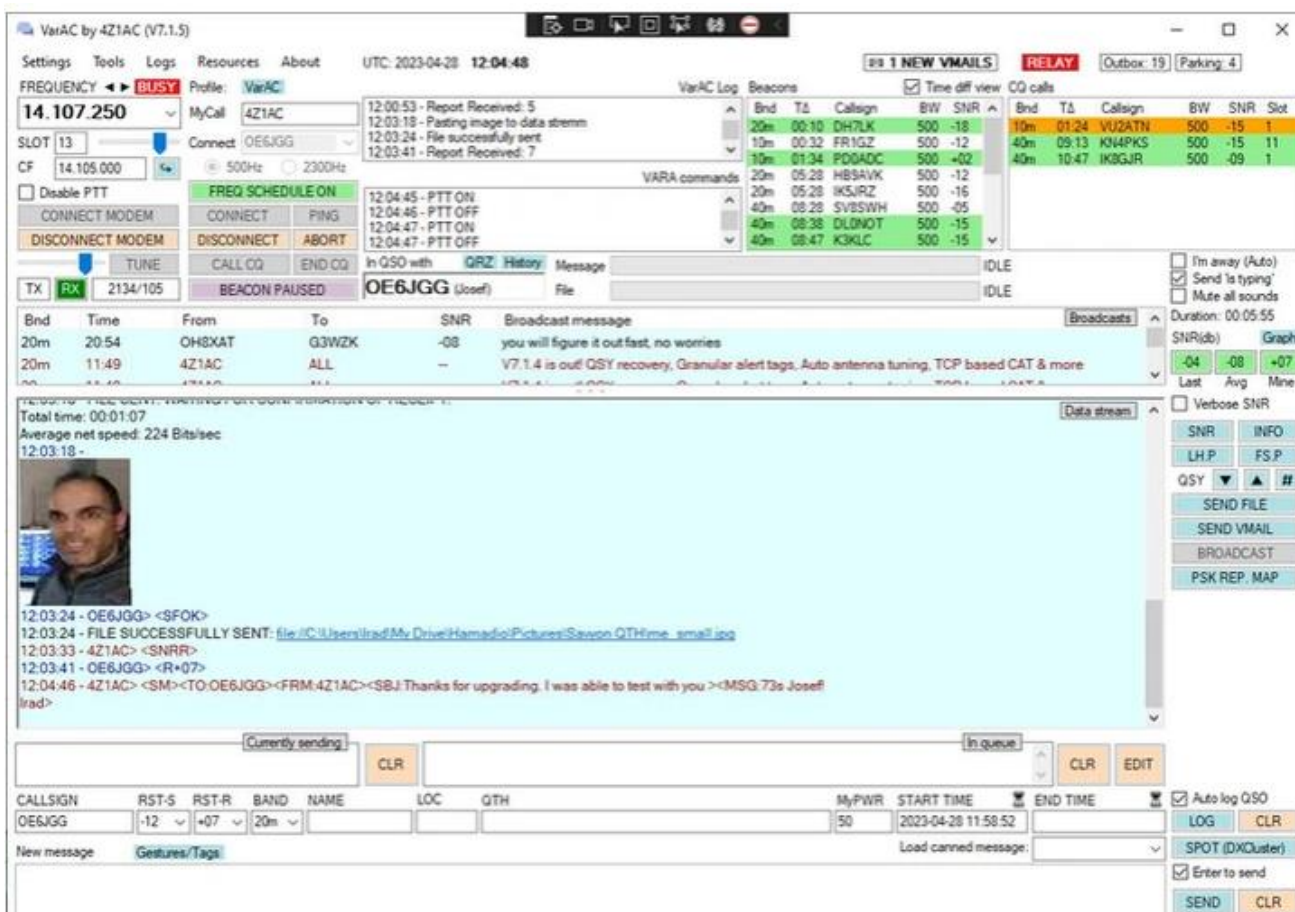
This picture shows the Editor’s Assistant (Pepsi) providing her usual helpful support! As I write this, she is sitting on my preparatory notes.

Anyhow, “outraged of SE25” stuff over, so here we go...

73, Quin G3WRR

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

September A meeting (2nd) “This was “An introduction to VarAC” by Ray G4FFY. VarAC is a free, modern HF P2P real-time chatting application for the amateur radio operator based on the VARA protocol. His presentation was based on the May 2023 RadCom article, and as often happens, a presentation makes what was incomprehensible on paper much clearer! In addition to explaining installation, configuration and operation Ray gave a live demonstration using an on-site antenna erected by John G8MNY and assistants. Although no full contacts were made, several of Ray’s calls were displayed on the beacon system (analogous to RBN (Reverse Beacon Network)) included in the software package. The screenshot below shows one the the main user interface screens. It comes from <https://www.varac-hamradio.com/> which is acknowledged as its source. This website contains a host of further information about VaRAC, and the application can be downloaded from it.



September B meeting (16th) It had been hoped that in addition to the traditional Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat format, Ray G4FFY would be able to give a demonstration of the FT4 data mode in one of the RSGB FT4 contest sessions taking place on the same evening. However, he had taken the opportunity to go into hospital for surgery on what is euphemistically referred to as “the water works” and thought it wiser to stay at home to recover! It is hoped that he will demonstrate FT4 at a future date.

FUTURE MEETINGS

October A meeting (7th) Surplus Equipment Sale. This is your twice-yearly opportunity to acquire items of previously used, possibly previously loved and hopefully still working equipment – and

conversely the opportunity to pass on to others, items that you acquired at the March sale! Gareth G4XAT has again kindly agreed to do his “Mr. Sothebys” act.

October B meeting (21st) This will be the usual Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat format session.

November A meeting (4th) “Show and Tell” evening. Readers may recall that we tried this idea, borrowed (or perhaps downright stolen) from the West Kent Club via Ray G4FFY, at the January 2024 A meeting. This seemed to work well and encourage member participation, so we are going to hold another one. As a reminder, these are informal sessions without the need for pre-arrangement at which members can come along and display and/or describe anything they have been doing recently that might interest other members. These are intended to be quite informal, with no need for pre-booking or detailed preparation and a duration of perhaps ten minutes per item but flexible. So please come along and show us your latest!

November B meeting (18th) This will be the usual Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat format session.

SRCC's 90th ANNIVERSARY APPROACHING!

Most members will be probably aware that SRCC was formed in 1935, meaning that next year the club reaches its 90th anniversary. The Committee are starting to think about how we should celebrate this significant occasion and would like to take this opportunity to sound out members on how they feel it should be conducted. At the time of the 80th anniversary I was a relatively new member but remember that we held a barbecue in the garden of John G3MCX and his wife Sandra, with a marquee and a contractor provided hog (or similar animal) roast.

That would certainly be an option, but things have changed in the intervening decade: for example, the traditional annual barbecue seems to have become a lot less well attended since then. The options appear to include:

- no particular celebration (although it would be extremely sad to see that option)
- formal meal in a restaurant – but not “dinner jacket formal”...
- as above but more informal (but please don't ask for a distinction between those two at this stage...)
- barbecue in member's property (self-catered)
- barbecue in member's property (bought in caterer)
- probably NOT a disco... 😊.

There are no doubt other options but as a person who is not a great one for attending “social events” your scribe's “event horizon” is somewhat limited! So, if you could let me have some idea of (a) whether you would be likely to attend a 90th anniversary celebration, and (b) what sort of event would take your fancy (although these two aspects clearly interact) in the next month or so that would allow us to progress arrangements.

73, Quin G3WRR

HERE AND THERE

A few items this month:

Following last month's report on the entry in the July IOTA contest by G4WGE and G3WRR, the results have now been published, with a remarkable overall total of 2087 logs received. The entry by G4WGE/P took 16th place out of 54 entries in the Multi Operator Single Transmitter Section from 776 validated contacts, winning the RSGB IOTA UK&CD Multi-Op LP DXpedition Trophy, which will be presented at the RSGB Convention on 13th October.

I have recently received the following from Steve G4FYF: *"I occasionally meet up with an old timer in the local who was a radio comms chap in the Royal and Merchant Navies and still loves his cw. I've taken my pc to the pub and looked for cw on Hack Green and he still seems proficient to receive at 20/25+ wpm. I have a keyer that I've taken at times but he just can't cope with a paddle key! So, thought would be nice for him to practice his art again with what he was used to".* Does anyone have a straight key that they might be able to donate for what seems a worthy cause? (I had a look but was surprised to find that I no longer have a straight key!) If you can help, please contact Steve at steveg4fyf@hotmail.co.uk.

Those who are interested in historic aviation may wish to note that the Wings Museum near Balcombe in Sussex is holding a "run day" for a static Rolls Royce Merlin engine on Saturday/Sunday 26th/27th October. That is interesting enough in itself but there are two factors that make it particularly so. Firstly, the engine was from a bomber that crashed in a German bog in WW2 but was in sufficiently good shape that one of the engines could be brought back to life: and secondly the bomber in question was a Halifax – a plane which normally used Bristol Hercules radial engines, the Halifax / Merlin combination being quite unusual and adopted only at times of shortage of Hercules engines. The full story is told on the museum's website at <https://www.wingsmuseum.co.uk/event/rolls-royce-merlin-engine-run-3/>

I certainly intend to go on one of those two days (the museum also has a gallery of radio equipment) so may see some of you there.

73, Quin G3WRR

SRCC LEAGUE TABLE – AUGUST 2024

Four entries were received for the August League Table, the same number, and same entrants, as in July – but only because of a null entry from one of them! G4FFY and G4FYF retain their first and second places, with M0LEP and G3WRR swapping places to take 3rd and 4th.

ENTRANT	WORKED DXCC / SQUARE	WORKED SRCC MEMBER	WORKED IN CONTEST	POINTS THIS MONTH
G4FFY	47	6	10	116
G4FYF	32	2		68
M0LEP	12	7		38
G3WRR				0

The following notes are provided by the entrants...

G4FFY: *August was a low activity month with the 2m UKAC as my only contest entry. Attended a couple of week-long Dog Agility shows with no radio activity, plus also a hospital visit for a urological procedure. However, did work several SRCC members courtesy of the "Pat Net" when Pat G4FDN was on holiday in Ireland using EI2JW on 40m. DXCC's worked has not been increased and is still at 162.*

G4FYF: Usual European stuff on 40 and 20 apart from Brazil on 10. Occasionally this game throws up a land I've not heard of and requires research! This month was Aland Island. This is a small island at the entrance to the Baltic sea at the tip of the Finnish peninsula.



M0LEP: Most of the DXCCs came from occasional SOTA chasing as usual, but Pat's EI Holiday Nets added a good number of extra SRCC members to the list.

G3WRR: [Null entry]

The cumulative annual results are shown below:

ENTRANT	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
G4FFY	114	223	89	123	157	265	91	116					1178
G4FYF	28	40	68	38	30	70	52	68					394
G3WRR	63	18	42		45		30						207
M0LEP	14	22	20	46	22	14	22	38					198
M0CGF			100	86									186
G3ZPB	69	83											152

Ray's impressive lead continues to grow but apart from that there has been change in overall positions this month, which is to be expected at this time of the year. However, M0LEP and M0CGF have changed positions, with M0LEP moving up one place to fourth.

73, 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.....

Thanks as always for the inputs. Some of the available material has again been stood over till next month, but more is always welcome! See you next month.

73, Quin G3WRR
SRCC Secretary and Newsletter Editor

SURPLUS EQUIPMENT SALE RULES

Most of you will be familiar with the format – but for any newcomers the “rules of engagement” are as follows:

1. It is very helpful for sellers to be in the meeting room by 7:30pm and to bring good quality saleable stuff – no “rubbish” please – although, like beauty, what constitutes rubbish and what constitutes high quality gear is in the eye of the beholder!
2. All members and visitors whom they have brought along must sign the attendance book and all must be conversant with the rules.
3. It should be noted that the club accepts no responsibility for goods sold at this private sale, and the purchasers buy on the understanding that they are capable of determining the usability, fitness for purpose and SAFETY of goods obtained
4. The following also apply:
 - only SRCC members are permitted to sell
 - all items not donated for the benefit of the Club must be marked with the name or callsign of the vendor, a brief description and details of any reserve price
 - bids shall start at 50p and increment in steps of 50p up to £10 and £1 steps thereafter – unless determined otherwise by the auctioneer
 - the auctioneer, in his sole discretion, will determine what constitutes an acceptable bid
 - sellers will not be paid until all buyers have settled up
 - the club levies 15% commission on all commission sales
 - please do not obstruct the doorway, facilitating escape in case of fire
 - the venue is a NO SMOKING area.