



North Bristol Amateur Radio Club

S.H.E.7, Braemar Crescent, Northville, Bristol BS7 0TD
G4GCT, M0NBC, G6PNB

1st April 2020

Covid-19 Edition

Lock down. We thought that in this edition we would introduce the new committee and their responsibilities but alas the AGM has had to be postponed. I suppose some good has come of the situation in that some of us can play more radio.

Bletchley Park Trip Shame this had to be postponed. I had kept in touch with Bletchley Park and it was decided to cancel the coach a week before the closing of the park. Incidentally, Bletchley Park is now closed. It was a good thing too as we didn't want to lose our coach deposit. Rebecca from Peter Carol coaches is very understanding and has gone out of her way to help in these difficult times.

More Cancelled events Mills On The Air is the first on our calendar to take a hit and the Lighthouses On The Air later in the year may also not go ahead. It depends on how things pan out as this virus continues. We will however keep you all informed.

Keeping The Club Together. There will be continued nets on Sunday and Wednesdays as usual and an additional net on a Friday using GB3AC and GB3BS. The reason why we are using both repeaters is quite simply not all members can access BS or AC so it gives all members a chance at making a contact. The net is earlier in the evening than the Sunday / Wednesday nets. Here are the details of the new net.

Friday GB3AC 19:00 to 19:30
GB3BS 19:30 to 20:00

The now established nets are:-

Wednesdays GB3BS 20:00 to 21:00
Fridays GB3AC 19:00 to 19:30
Fridays GB3BS 19:30 to 20:00
Saturdays GB7BS 19:00 to 20:00
Sundays GB3AC 20:00 to 21:00

Note

The Saturday net is on DMR Tslot 2

The club thanks both repeater keepers for the use of the repeaters.

Odds and Ends

Dummy load simplified I was clearing out the Garage the other day and I noticed old tea urn. I thought that with the heating elements still in working condition I could put it to some good use. I measured the DC resistance and found it to be near to 47Ω that, I thought, to be close enough to make a good dummy load.

I made off the power lead to a PL259 the brown wire to the centre pin, blue to the shield and earth wire to RF earth. I connected this onto the antenna socket my SWR meter. The patch lead from my trusty Yaesu FT840 was connected and power was switched on. The rig was tuned to the 20m band and at first things looked bad. An S9 of noise. I then noticed that the lid was left off so that the element was left exposed to RF noise. Clipping the lid on all the noise completely disappeared.

I now Gingerly pressed the PTT while on low power. Keeping an eye on the SWR meter. 1.5:1 great. Now on full power. The reading was about 1.6:1 but was rising. I turned it off when it reached 3:1. Investigating the problem found to be as the element was heating up, the DC resistance was changing. (Of course DC resistance is different to Impedance).

The cure was to keep the element cool. I poured in about 2L of cold water. Success! It now stays a steady 1.5:1 and the by-product is steaming hot water. This I put to good use by making a cup of Earl Grey Tea Just adding milk and a little pinch of salt.

Repeater Abuse. Recently there has been an increase in abuse on the repeater network. Ofcom's advice is---

Do not respond to it. Experience teaches us that those responsible want an audience, so ignore them.

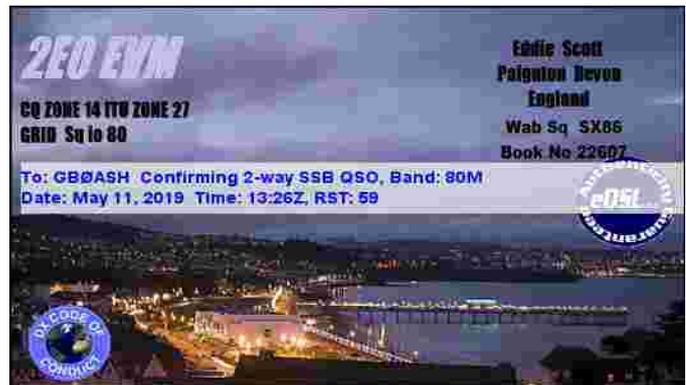
Do Not correspond with those responsible. Note If you reply to an unlicensed station, no matter how annoying they are, you yourself are committing an offence and your licence can be revoked. The repeater keeper will be aware and will be logging Dates, Times and other relevant details, so let the repeater keeper deal with the problem.

There is more on using your repeaters by Mat G7FBD later in this edition.

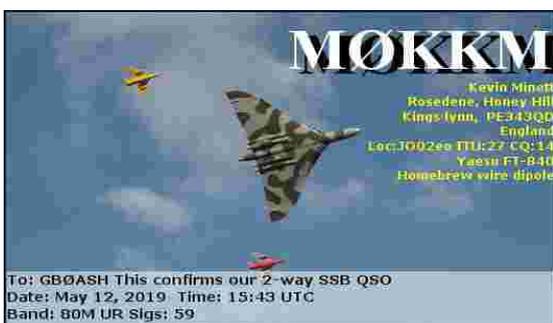
Licence Renewal Another reminder, you must validate your licence every 5 years. Just log into your account at "Ofcom."

Training Mat is looking into training by media like Skype or Whatsapp. While he tries to sort this out it is advised that students carry on the best they can using the RSGB training manuals. Could students wishing to take part in this type of training please contact the training manager Mat G7FBD on his email address g7fbd@gb7bs.com

QSL cards Just an update, there are no QSL cards from the bureaux even though envelopes have been sent for the special event stations of GB0ASH and GB0AVR. I must admit I forgot to send envelopes for the LHOTA (Lighthouses) GB0ALH. As I remember, I was a bit disabled and had a zimmer frame when Steve G8JUT kindly picked me up for the drive to Avonmouth. There, that's my excuse .



In the picture cards you see here they were uploaded to eQSL Land they would cost about \$12 a year. £9.96 as of 26th Mar The one below is Free. A standard sample card cost you nothing to set up. This is easy to do and you can register on line to open an account.



This is an eQSL card to our mill last year. We had three altogether and it may be the best alternative to the RSGB's bureaux. It takes about two years to get the cards via the post so I propose in future we design cards to send via eQSL The cards are instant and cheaper.

These cards may not show a very long distance contact but it shows the all points of the compass we were able to reach.

The log showed greater distances than the cards but these were a receipt or confirmation. I hope to bring you more cards in the next edition of Q5. To show contacts to Lighthouses On The Air.



I think eQSL is the future and I will be using this bureaux for the future and I think the club should be going that way too.

Whoever takes on the roll of events manager/coordinator for the next term I will try to sell the idea to them.

If you have any Ideas for eQSL cards please let me know. Cartoons or photographs let me have your samples and we can see what we can do.

Operating GB3BS.

Like * ALL * UK repeaters, information on frequency, Tones and Colour codes can be found at <https://ukrepeater.net>. GB3BS complies with Ofcom regulations with beacons every 15 minutes. These beacons will transmit regardless if there is a QSO or not. If there is a QSO, the Deviation is reduced so it doesn't interfere. If a station Hands Back the QSO and the Beacon starts before the pips, please wait for completion, then the pips will be sent, otherwise there is a risk of time out.

Talking of Timeout - GB3BS and in fact GB7BS both have a 4 minute time out. So if you "Waffle" for over 4 minutes in a single "sitting" you will find after 4 minutes the receiving station will be listening to Dead Air as the repeater will have gone off air! Blue Peter Badges are awarded for Staying with the Timeout. Following a few simple rules will save the shame of a timeout. The repeater generates 2 pips (unlike GB3AC which only has the 1). These PIPS actually mean something. I wonder how many of you knew that. If you are a member of the Bristol 70cms Repeater Group and receive our newsletters, you already knew. The first PIP is a courtesy PIP. It occurs 1 second after you stop transmitting. It is a marker to let stations wanting to Join the QSO to announce themselves with JUST their call sign given. After the FIRST PIP there is a 2 second pause (The courtesy period) then a SECOND PIP. This has two purposes. The first is to indicate the end of the courtesy period.

The second and MOST important purpose is to indicate the 4 minute timeout timer has now been reset to Zero. The QSO can now continue. The repeater does make other sounds, and the pips can change to a lower tone if the repeater is running on the standby generator. You can however still continue enjoy the repeater.

One final thing of importance with GB3BS is that thanks to repeater abuse that affects all repeaters world wide, we operate a thing called a Kurchunk timer (No, we did not call it that I promise).

This timer occurs (currently) when the repeater is off air and in standby. When it senses a station wanting to use the repeater, there is a timer that starts the Kerchunk timer that almost says "Go on, prove you are a not messing around and just "Blipping Me". A few seconds of continuous signal the repeater will fully wake up and start relaying your audio so others can hear you. To get around the Kerchunk timer is easy - Key your transmitter and then take a Deep breath, give your Call sign at least twice and your on air! IF you just key up and start giving your call sign - As the Kerchunk timer is stopping the repeater coming on air instantly – the first part of your call sign will not be heard. for example "BD" Even Though I said "G7FBD". Hopefully the above will help you get on to and use GB3BS and indeed other repeaters too.

My last comment for all out there, we have a good 70cms Repeater Network around Bristol - GB3AC located at SHE 7. GB3ZB on the Dundry Hill's and GB3BS on top of the Lansdown Hill's. GB3AC has good coverage in and around most parts of Bristol. GB3ZB has the Bristol area parts of S. Wales and Gloucestershire as well as toward Jn16 Swindon and offers internet linking. GB3BS has a coverage area of around 60 miles circumference of Lansdown. giving good range into Gloucester, Swindon and Reading, then south towards Yeovil and west into Cardiff and Junction 32 so there is something for everyone on UHF for some, trust me, your nose will NOT bleed coming this far up the spectrum! Full coverage maps can be found on the ukrepeater.net website - and for GB3BS, on our website- gb3bs.com.73

Mat G7FBD

CQ Contest

I am currently looking into holding a friendly contest lasting about 6 weeks we can all do from home, not based on DX but on the number of simplex contacts, extra points if you hold a foundation licence. Wait a moment, this is what Mat G7FBD was proposing for an inter-club contest. If you would like to register, email me your interest. I will then email the start date with a simple set of rules and a log sheet to fill in. All done by email so no face to face contacts here.

Tracking The ISS

This was a conversation on one of our nets a while ago. It is not as difficult as you may think.

First of all there are lots of myths about passes of the ISS. It is often said that it passes every 96 minutes or so. Well, yes and no. If you imagine the ISS in space going around the earth across the poles. (Yes I know it is not it's orbit) The earth is spinning underneath it. On one side of the earth it is travelling from north to south and on the other side it is travelling from south to north. If say the first pass is over Bristol, in the 96 minutes it took the ISS to come around. The earth would have spun underneath so the next pass will be over West Wales. The pass after that will be over the Irish sea. So you see in this example you can see that the ISS or indeed any satellite is not there by just time alone. There are other calculations that are involved, so use an on line pass calculator for the ISS. There are also apps for your phone as well.

This example is only a very simplified explanation. The calculations are beyond me and the man involved with the predictions of orbits was a German, Mr. Johannes Kepler (1571 – 1630) born well before artificial satellites but his calculations and name is still used today. I hope it has given food for thought for your own on line research.

Dave G7BYN

Now a Cry From The Heart.

It is increasingly difficult to write items for Q5 on a more frequent basis during the Lock down period. I therefore, plead for items that can be published.

My thanks go out to Dave M0RKE for his column in the last edition and Mat G7FBD for this edition of Q5. Items don't have to be as long as Dave's, it is always good to have the basic idea that I can elaborate on.

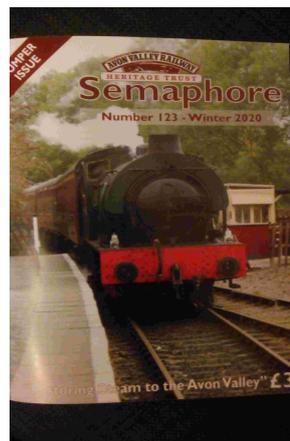
Things For Sale.

We know it is difficult to sale your items during these times. You shouldn't travel to the Post office to post items. There may be no post person to get it to your door. (did you see what I did then to be PC). I suggest that you advertise here for Free. By the time the next edition is published and your ad appears the lock down may be lifted. If it isn't, at least your item is noted my our membership and a purchase could go ahead albeit the delivery is delayed to when the club reopens.

Talking of the club reopening, we obviously don't know how soon this will be. Of course we are all listening to the news and could be over twelve weeks. That will take us up to June.

At this moment the only outgoing expense is the room hire that we all help cover with the door entry fee. Your committee is currently looking into this with SHE7. We hope a financial report will be available for the next Q5.

Avon Valley Railway It may be old news but, we have appeared again. This time in the AVR's publication Semaphore. This magazine is a six monthly publication and is available from Bitton station. During lock down they may send it by post but I haven't checked this yet. If you are one of their members, it is free. Why not join them?



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Date of the next copy about 3 to 4 weeks time or as and when the Lock down conditions change.

Date of this copy 1st April