



## North Bristol Amateur Radio Club

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

July 2020

Covid-19 Edition

### **Is this the end of Lockdown**

Hopefully this will be the last Q5 of our special Covid-19 edition, reverting to quarterly editions. With Pubs, Clubs and Restaurants beginning to open from the 4<sup>th</sup> July, we should be back at the Club soon, we are just waiting for our Chairman and She7 to give the nod. Take a look in the Notes From The Chair on the last page of this edition.

### **Trouble at the club**

During the big storms of a few weeks Ago we had GB3AC go off air. This was not a problem with the repeater but flooding in the shack tripped the RCD. See the Chair's report.

### **Didn't Auto Receive Q5?**

If you have had to download your copy from the web site and don't get it emailed to you. Then register on line. There are at least three of you saying "Pete has emailed it to a little used Mail box" Well, Pete had to have been Given the wrong address somehow. If you change email address, let Pete know. He can't guess your new address.

### **Is The IC 7300 Killing Ham Radio**

I am quoting this from a you tube video and is going to upset a lot of owners. I am not saying this because I haven't got the money for one, I have. (Don't tell the XYL) It is nice to own and looks rely good. I am not just picking on the 7300 it is all SDR setups with a waterfall screen.

In last months Q5 I said "call CQ, you may be surprised". The problem I see is with the waterfall it's self. In this video, on the 6m band the waterfall is totally void of all signals, blank, nil, nada. Question, is there anyone there. No, switch off and do some house work. If the radio had just a dial and digi display we may have stuck around to see if someone should appear., spinning up and down the band and calling CQ. The video continued with a CQ call, the band then came alive. To me the evidence is strong. Everyone is sat in front of the screen waiting for the first station to make a move. "The Bands Are Dead" or are they?

## Amateur Radio – Chronicles of a newcomer

### Getting on the Air -how hard can it be?

In the 1960s as a teenager I became hooked on receiving long distance radio and TV and listening to radio amateurs on 160 metres. I took the Radio Amateur's Exam in 1965 with a view to getting a Full Amateur Licence a couple of years later. No problem. 52 years later and I still hadn't become Licenced! I decided to 'do something about it' in 2017 and joined the Radio Club, voiced my ambitions and concerns to a few of the Members who were very kind and encouraging. I was loaned a small VHF/UHF transceiver by one of the Members to 'play with' but this certainly did not come anywhere near to meeting my ambitions. One of the plus things that occurred during the onset of Covid 19 Lockdown was that the 2m & 70cm bands suddenly came alive! Lockdown stopped all that so I had to make do with what I had at home or could get via the internet. Almost miraculously with the onset of Lockdown we experienced remarkably nice weather to go outdoors with daylight lasting well into the evening. Perfect for doing things outdoors. I had no shack or equipment to speak of. So it was portable in the garden or another massive delay. **I made a decision!** Now or never, so I made my faltering maiden transmission on one of the Club Nets, from home –in the garden, with a beer, 2 watts with the Baofeng unmodified!!. Boy was I nervous but comfortable and the World beckons ..... folks could only just hear me, so a bit of a failure. Time to experiment on aerials plugged directly into the portable. Now the fun began. I bought a simple "white Stick" and fixed it to the portable using a socket converter via some coax recovered from another antenna I had bought second hand, plus cannibalised connectors from scrap equipment. I took a very long decorator's roller brush handle (2 metres long), mounted the white stick and supported the whole thing on the garden umbrella stand. I was able to try out various locations in my back garden, ending up right at the end furthest from the house (in quite an elevated location). Still the signal reports were underwhelming – but at least I had made a start and could access some of the local 2m and 70 cm repeaters. Time for drastic action if this was going to progress. **I made another decision.** Obviously height was King and so I set to work stringing together 3 by 2.5m lengths of old 50mm diameter steel tubing that I had stored behind the garden shed (recovered from the swing frame our children had used 20 years ago and kept ("just in case it came in handy"). In total I would have a mast 10 metres high! One problem: how did I keep it all standing up – (no guy ropes or string). I fixed it to the branch of a tree conveniently located and my first 'decent' antenna was born and it was well camouflaged from the neighbours & XYL (very important). The 2 watts was just about heard in Chipping Sodbury (simplex). Progress though! I had also been loaned a mains powered transceiver to try out before lockdown through the generosity of one of the Club Members. I was also given a nice length of coax cable so I was therefore able to extend the antenna cable to my garage 25 metres away and rig it up to the mains powered transceiver plus having the benefit of staying dry as the weather started to deteriorate! On that fateful day early May 2020, I switched it all on, set the output to 10 watts and the (local) World was my oyster! I am at last able to be heard in simplex as well as accessing pretty well all the local repeaters both on 2 M and 70 cm as far away as Axebridge and darkest Caerdydd and beyond. On one day I was heard simplex in Taunton at r=3 and s=5. Success!

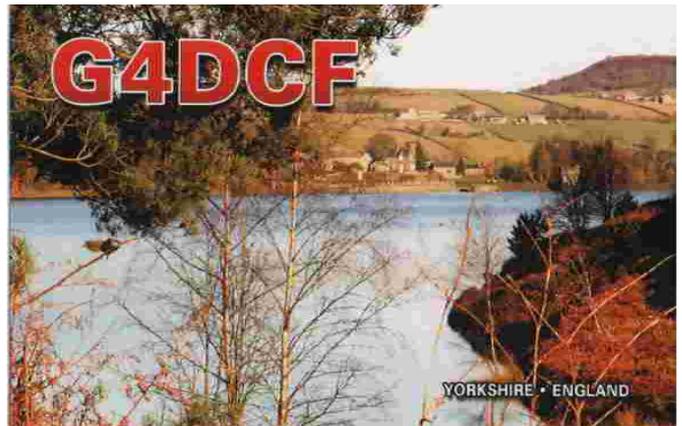
Now on to the next challenge – SDRs and loop antennae. That will be for next time

Rave Roake (M0RKE).

## QSL Cards Continued

Last month I placed In Q5 more of our QSL Cards. Well, no sooner than Q5 was published I received in the post two more actual cards from the RSGB Bureau. This is envelope No. 1 in the Mills On The Air series. I had noticed that they were only sent to GB0ASH to reply to the ones we had sent.

You will notice that the QSL card has two sides whilst the EQSL Card that you saw last month was only single sided. In the next issue I will show you how to send off for cards of your own. It can be quite addictive to Collect and display in the shack.



**SCOTLAND**

LOCATION: ISLASH  
 QRA: IO1AS/HP  
 WAB: DR34 IOTA 008

To Radio: GB0ASH  
 Via:

| Date |   |    | Time  |  | Frequency | 2-Way QSO | Signal Report |
|------|---|----|-------|--|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| D    | M | Y  | UTC   |  | MHz       | Mode      | RST           |
| 11   | 5 | 19 | 10.06 |  | 7         | SSB       | 53            |
|      |   |    |       |  |           |           |               |
|      |   |    |       |  |           |           |               |

| TRX   | Watts | ANT                 |
|-------|-------|---------------------|
| FT450 | 100   | W3 DZZ wire antenna |

GM6MML A/P  GM6HFF A/P

Val & Glenn Bates  
 9 Parkdene Close, Hamwood  
 Bolton, Lancashire, BL2 3LH

**G4DCF**

**GB0ASH** CQ Zone: 14  
 ITU Zone: 27  
 Loc: IO93FM  
 WAB: SE20

Mike Booth  
 15 Nether Royd View, Silkstone Common  
 Bartsley S75 4QQ, England UK.

Visit me at QRZ.com  
 XCVR - Icom IC-7300  
 AMP - Ameritron AL-811 (300 watts)  
 ANT - 6 Band Hexbeam   
 - KV2 Vertical (40 & 80m)

Confirming QSO With

|        | Date |       |      | UTC  | MHz | RST | 2-WAY |
|--------|------|-------|------|------|-----|-----|-------|
|        | Day  | Month | Year |      |     |     |       |
| GB0ASH | 12   | 05    | 19   | 1346 | 20m | 59  | SSB   |

PSE / TNX QSL VIA BUREAU OR DIRECT

*Try to be 73 from Mike*

It must be remembered that when having a QSO with a station and you quote QSL you are in fact asking for confirmation of the contact (QSL Card) and not that you understand. I often hear contacts on repeaters with QSL quoted after virtually every sentence.

The Q code says QSL- Can you acknowledge receipt / I am acknowledging receipt not that you understand what is said. Sorry, this is one of my pet hates on the air operating.

## Chair Chatter

Its been a while I know since we had to close the Club due to the Corona Virus. So, what's been happening with myself and more to the point the club.

Well first, some of you may not have realised that I have continued to work in London providing 100% Underground Transport for the Key workers and essential services during the epidemic. Its been very challenging for myself with my staff working from home remotely along with staff that I had to furlough. Therefore, I am enduring many long days and hours and ever changing government policies and risks hence my absence from radio. I will be enduring this until October 2020 when we might see a return to office work and ease of restrictions.

Regarding the club, I have no date to give you regarding the club opening it may be October 2020. This is down to Government Policy and the Trustees of SHE7 who have an obligation like us to ensure all members are safe.

During the lockdown the Trustees of SHE7 have been repairing the roof and making improvements to the building by replacing the Kitchen and providing a Disable Toilet which was both overdue. In order to facilitate the Disable Toilet, the Trustees have moved our top shack into the old SHE 7 office. The old office is being refurbished and will give us a clean damp free room to operate in. I know you will ask many questions regarding the move but it was out of my hands. However, I have discussed this week how it will look and so far, I have no concerns to worry about going forward at the time of writing.

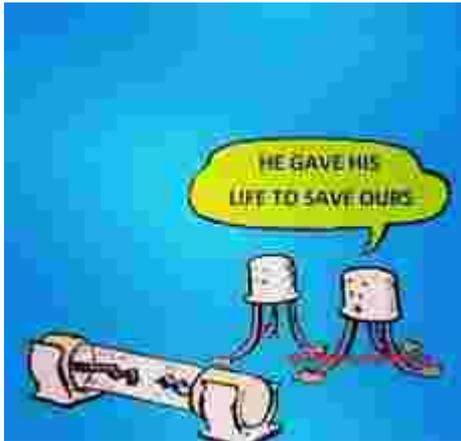
This week GB3AC went off the air. Myself and Tony (G4CJZ) went to site and found that the RCD had tripped. This was due to the shack being flooded of storm water (up to 2cm). The exceptional heavy rain we experience the week before blocked the drain and water simply rushed into the basement. I spent the next 3.5 hours lifting heavy water logged carpet tiles and rescuing equipment on the floor. Not a pleasant job I was expecting a must admit.

I returned again this Sunday(the 28th) with my Son Peter and spent another 3 hours tidying and cleaning the remaining mess along with washing the steps and surrounding area of silt to ensure no further blockages of the drain would occur for the forceable future. So, it was a good job GB3AC went off the air as we may not have gone to the club for many weeks as restrictions apply to visiting SHE7. Going forward I can report we had no real damage to any of the equipment and that most of the floor it is now drying out. We have lots of spare carpet tiles so we are ok.

Well that's it for now. It's a mixed bag of information and updates but I hope we will all be back enjoying the club soon when restrictions are lifted and we have a safe system and in place.

73Paul  
G8YMM

## Fuses What are the types



What are the different fuses, they are just a glass tube with a bit of fuse wire in it right, Wrong. There are too many types to go into here. A 2amp fuse can be time delayed to add delay to the blowing, can be a Lag or a quick blow. There is also anti surge. So that is four different types just for 2amp . What I will say is, if a fuse blew, it blew for a reason very rarely was it a weak fuse. A faulty component will have made it blow so please don't replace it with a larger rated fuse.

### Mains Fuses

I can remember when I was a lad my dad had a habit of replacing a fuse in a plug top with silver paper foil from a cigarette packet. Luckily, we didn't have a house fire. DON'T Do it. Always replace a fuse of the correct rating. Remember from your training the fuse is there to protect the cable not the appliance it is connected to. A bedside light 3A electric fire 13A. Don't put a 13A fuse in all your plug tops.

## Portable working

Next issue will have the report and possible Photographs of Rocky and my adventure working portable. We will be still be following the guidance of our leaders although Durham is a bit too far to travel.

I have ordered a new Leisure battery for the season and I have the club's inverted V that I had made at the end of last year but not used yet.

The weather has yet to improve then we will be going to Togg Hill for a bit of a play and a picnic. Another reason for the Club Net is, Call in to find out the date we are contemplating going.

|            |       |                |
|------------|-------|----------------|
| 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 |

### Notes

The Saturday net is DMR Time slot 2

It is not known to this date if the 80m net is still in operation. Please let me know ether way.

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