



RAG CHEW

MAY 2016

Many thanks for the encouraging feedback from you all to my first "Rag Chew". Please help me to keep this going by submitting articles on any topic you feel will be of interest to club members.

USE IT – OR LOSE IT!

Over the past few years there has been a dramatic decline in day-to-day 2m SSB activity and to try and stimulate some activity on the band, Lyn GW8JLY has proposed activity sessions on Monday and Friday evenings between 2000 and 2200 and Wednesday mornings 1000 – 1200. As we meet on Monday evenings at Churchdown School it will be an ideal opportunity to use the club station.

Contest Gossip

Yours truly got a mention in the Adjudicators Comments for the 2016 1st Top Band Contest:-

"A special mention for Brian, G4CIB entering his first 160m contest having been licensed for 47 years."

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Several members have been supporting the Tuesday evening VHF UK Activity Contests – for latest positions do log into the VHF pages of the RSGB web site <http://www.rsgbcc.org/vhf/>.

As of the 26th April we are 51st in the overall UKAC table out of a total of 94 entrants with logs submitted for 6m (G4CIB), 4m (G4CIB), 2m (G4BCA, G4CIB) and 70cm (M0XAC).

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On the HF contest front, various members have been supporting the 80m Club Championship and as of 26th April we are lying 16th in the table out of 34 entries with Data entries from Bob M0NQN, CW entries also from Bob M0NQN, and SSB entries from Gary M0XAC and contest newcomer Matt M6XMM along with myself G4CIB. Keep up the good work everyone!

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The following article has been submitted by Graeme G0EEA – many thanks! If you wish to find out more about the radios that Graeme reviewed, have a word with him at any club meeting.

MY DAB DOMESTIC RADIO EXPERIENCE

If you already played with Digital Audio Broadcast, domestic radio receivers, I hope this is a light-hearted entertainment echoing some of your feelings. If not, read on, similarly. For the time being, my experience of DAB radio is admittedly limited to only two receivers. There are indeed plenty other DAB radios that you could buy. I won't identify either one of my two, to ensure fairness all around, and no litigation!

In both sets, very many stations are receivable, each station often having its own genre, for example Jazz, Rock, 80's Pop, 90's Pop, Christian, BFBS, and their own brands such as Breeze, Heart, Sunshine, to name just a few, and this in addition to the BBC's familiar 1, 2, 3, 4 plus the Beeb's digital-only stations.

Another advantage was that I found the telescopic aerial, whilst necessarily fully extended for best functionality, nevertheless gave almost perfect reception most of the time despite me **not** fully extending the aerial, and (unlike FM sets similarly deprived of a good aerial) **not** affected by the nearness of your hand to the set.

I am not going to give all of my gripes, but I can't help noticing what might be a sort of design quirkiness commonality, in as much that minor weaknesses are there which would cost design time to resolve but have no production cost; I get the feeling of a rush to market.

On one of the sets, there is, to me, an unfathomable feature- as soon as the mains is switched on at the wall, it goes into a silent Standby mode. How did the designer know that I would turn the radio on simply because I didn't want to hear it? Ask a silly question....

On the other set, which is approximately of shape and size of a paperback novel, or it's flat screened electronic equivalent – like I said, no brands are mentioned here- all the controls are push buttons on the 'front cover', except that the on-off switch is a slider on the rear. "So what?", I hear you thinking, but this means you will like to place the set on your desk/table standing on the unstable 'book spine' instead of flat on its back for good stability. Just as well, then, that you didn't want to use headphones, they plug in at the back too...not far from the external dc power socket. The display is bright blue, very pretty and I really do like it but you can't turn it off to save battery current. I nearly forgot to say, this set is commendably very lightweight, I regret to say it will fall over if you stand it on the 'book spine' and push one of those control push buttons. Despite all this, and the minor gripes I said I wouldn't give you, I feel that this particular set was really good value for money and gives me plenty of fun.

Graeme G0EEA

QRP OPERATING
by Brian G4CIB
Part 2

I concluded Part 1 with my first QSOs using the HW8 QRP rig which I had built during the Spring and early Summer of 1981. By this time, my experience using the HW7 and HW8 had really infected me with the QRP bug. I joined the G-QRP club in early 1979 – I am still a member (508) and their quarterly journal SPRAT still inspires me in all things QRP.

This is where my log book helps me to recall the challenge and satisfaction using QRP has given me over many years – I hope, by the way, that the newer, younger club members keep a log book – it is invaluable for future reference when Anno-Domini plays havoc with the memory!!

Since submitting Part 1, I have been trawling through my QSL cards and I came across the first one I received when I started using my HW7 in 1973 – a QSO with HA8KWO – and here it is!

I'm intrigued to know what "Game of Rummy in the Ether" was all about – I note that this card

HUNGARY 8 ♣

HA 8 KWO

TO RADIO	DATE	GMT	Mc/s	2-way	RST
G4CIB	04.08.1973	2013	14	CW	589

PSE/RS QSL VIA BUREAU
BUDAPEST 5, P. O. BOX 214

BEST 73 7007 op.

was the 8 of Clubs!! Many QSL cards followed from QSOs with the HW7. Just before Leta and I got married, I sold the HW7 to Tony G4CMY and I believe he too had a lot of fun using it. Do you still have it, Tony?

Between 1978 and 1983 when Leta and I lived in our first house at Longhope, the garden was such that an end fed wire was the only option for HF working. With this arrangement using my HW8 I managed to work all over Europe plus the odd bit of DX with 3 watts, mainly on 40m and 20m and occasionally on 80m and 15m.

My log book shows some interesting entries for 18th October. It would appear to be an East German contest (before re-unification) – throughout the day I worked on 15m clocking up 30 qsos including K2PZ in Virginia and 9H1EL in Malta, the remaining qsos with mainly East German stations (call signs began with Y followed by 2 digits and 2 letters), also stations in Italy, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Hungary, Russia, Finland and Poland.

In the middle of May 1983 we moved to our present QTH at Corse Lawn, my last QSO at Longhope was fittingly with Leta, G4RHK/M travelling between Gloucester and Longhope on 2 metres on 19th May 1983. Not QRP I hasten to add – in fact QRO - I was using the QQV06-40 valve amplifier which I still use now – 120 watts DC input. Looking at the time of the QSO I guess Leta was coming home from work in the early evening.

I note from my log book that my first HF QSOs from Corse Lawn were on Sunday 29th May 1983 on Top Band of all things – I had acquired a KW160 transmitter second-hand. This was a compact 10 watt Top Band AM/CW transmitter which I used in conjunction with an HRO receiver so still QRP. And who were the call signs worked? All then GARES members or friends of members as this was in the era of the Sunday morning Top Band Net – G4HFT Steve, G3YEU Barry (For some reason in my log book it says "last Top Band QSO" - I think Barry was in the Royal Signals attached to GCHQ and had probably been posted elsewhere and was saying his farewells), G4HBV/A Tony (operating from his parents QTH in Hucclecote), G2DAD Charles (located in Upton St Leonards – he always was accompanied in his shack by a gentleman called Stanley – or so my log book says!!), G4CLR Ian and G4KFG Derek (in Prestbury). What I didn't make a note of was antenna – I must have used a hastily erected end fed wire.

Within a few months of moving in, I arranged for a local builder to attach two wall brackets on the roof apex so that I could have an inverted V doublet over the top of the house. One half goes to a tree in the front garden, the other half to the boundary fence in the back garden. The antenna is non-resonant and uses the maximum length possible in the available space – mine has about 50 feet in each arm. The antenna is centre fed with open wire feeder. At last after many years of using end fed wires, I was able to use a balanced antenna.

QRP QRP

MOBILE

PHIL ASTLE

JCC-4709 ZONE-25

Okinawa Islands

JS6GIM

IOTA AS-17

Dear Brian, TNX FB QSO. VY 73 es FB DX from Toshio

TO RADIO	CONFIRMING OUR QSO						
	DAY	MONTH	YEAR	UTC/JST	MHz	RST	2-WAY
G4CIB/QRP	16	03	1991	2257 UTC	14	559	CW SSB

I'm very happy to contact with QRP station!!

OP: Toshio Kuwayama "KUMA" If I could, I will try QRP!!

QTH: 18-2 Ahacha, Urasoe city, OKINAWA 901-21, JAPAN [LOC: PL36UF] cu-AGN!!

PSE QSL

THS Graphic Arts

Do
send
me

your articles to g4cib@outlook.com.

Coming next month: The Club Construction Competition – results and report.
Photos from the club archives.
Operating from Lundy

73 and good DX de Brian G4CIB