



SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

86th Anniversary Year - Founded 1935

JULY 2021 – No 947

SRCC supports the RSGB Child Protection Policy

General Club Business:	secretary@srcc.uk	Honorary Secretary & Editor
Membership/Treasurer:	membership@srcc.uk	Quin Collier G3WRR
Newsletter articles/distribution:	newsletter@srcc.uk	19 Grangecliffe Gardens, LONDON, SE25 6SY
Club Equipment Loan:	equipment@srcc.uk	Tel: 020 8653 6948
Club Website:	https://www.srcc.uk	

As we (hopefully) approach the end of lockdown, we now have a tentative timescale for returning to face-to-face meetings at Trinity School. This is reflected in the Future Meetings section (below). However as we all know, things in the COVID world can change – so for the most up to date information, please keep an eye on the SRCC website at <https://www.srcc.uk>

SRCC COMMITTEE 2021/22

Chairman	Vacant
Acting Chairman for July	G4FFY Ray Howells 01732 357474
Vice Chairman & BE Coordinator	G3ZPB Peter Burton 01737 551413
Hon. Secretary & Newsletter Editor	G3WRR Quin Collier 020 8653 6948
Treasurer & Membership Records	G4FFY Ray Howells 01732 357474
Resources & Liaison	G4DDY Maurice Fagg 020 8669 1480
Events	G6JXA Kim Brown 07812 735507
Fund Raising & Resources	G4LZE Colin Lugard 07533 174388
Publicity	G3MCX John Kennedy 020 8688 3322
Committee Member	G7VAK Paul Beaumont 07818 660493
Webmaster (Co-opted)	G4FYF Steve Jones 01424 584143

EDITOR'S OPENER

Dear Members & Friends,

Welcome to the July 2021 SRCC Newsletter.

Our hopes that the July A meeting would mark a return of face-to-face meetings at Trinity School have been frustrated by the Government's unwelcome but necessary decision to defer the cessation of lockdown till 19th July – and even that is not yet certain due to the continuing increase in the COVID delta variant. As a result, the 5th July A meeting will now be a video evening via Zoom. More details are given in the Future Meetings section.

I think many of us who have held our licences for a fair while have noticed that for the general public, amateur radio no longer holds the magic that it used to do when we first “got out ticket”. In those days of limited international telephone traffic, the ability to talk to people outside (or even in) the UK was quite impressive. But with the advent of mobile phones and the internet it has rather lost its charm, and for the uninitiated the unpredictability is a source of disappointment (e.g. “Can we talk to someone in Switzerland (or Heckmondwike or Guatemala, etc.) please?” – “No, it doesn't work like that”) rather than one of the appeals of the hobby. Well, I recently bumped into a friend I hadn't seen for a long while and found an alternative angle on things. She, while not being a hippy, is on the “New Wave” end of things and is a member of a Twitter group which, as younger folks often are (and should be), is worried about the way the world is developing. The topic of concern seemed to be what would happen if the internet (and communications networks generally) stopped working. Knowing of my interest, and appreciating that it works without any underlying (comms) infrastructure, she said “what about ham radio?” (let's not get into the debate here about calling it “ham radio” rather than “amateur radio”...). This stirred up some interest within the group and I have been volunteered to speak to them and tell them a bit more about our hobby! Obviously amateur radio is just one of many infrastructure-less radio systems which should also be discussed, and the terms under which it operates is not really compatible with an emergency communications system (apart from organisations such as RAYNET). But under a state of major organisational collapse such niceties as licence conditions might become less important than expedience – and for sure the experience that amateurs have could be useful in getting communications working again. It will be interesting to see how this plays out and I will report back what, if anything, comes of it.

A slightly shorter Newsletter than usual this month as it has been a busy month and with VHF NFD coming up on the first weekend in July (at our usual site on the B269 just outside Warlingham) there is still a lot of preparation to be done – so without further ado, into the Newsletter....

73, Quin G3WRR
SRCC Secretary / Newsletter Editor

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The June A meeting on the 7th had been billed as a presentation on the nanoVNA vector network analyser by myself. In the event, things turned out rather differently – and certainly for the better! The need to prepare the presentation in the same timeframe as getting ready for CW Field Day (the weekend of 5th / 6th) meant that time for the former had been distinctly limited. However, while at Field Day, Geoff G3TQF (a Rugby ATS member) asked if I had seen the RSGB video on the subject by W2AEW, of which I had been unaware. He kindly sent me the URL, and it proved to be a revelation – far better than I could ever have done. So instead of my efforts the members saw a thoroughly professional and well-presented video. It really is worth a look if you are at all interested in the nano VNA and it is available at this URL:

<https://rsgb.org/main/blog/tonight-at-eight-archive/2021/03/08/12-april-introduction-to-vnas-and-the-nanovna-by-alan-wolke-w2aew/>

A presentation, however good its quality, is one thing but there is nothing like a bit of hands on to let people really get the feel of the actual product. So, it is proposed that at a future B meeting (date yet to be agreed) one or more nanoVNA users will bring them down and demonstrate them “in the flesh” to those present.

The virtual B meeting on 21st June was the familiar Zoom based Round Robin and was attended by eleven members. A number of topics were discussed, including how the delayed lifting of all lockdown restrictions would affect how we conduct the NE Surrey Contest Group VHF NFD entry on 3rd/4th July.

FUTURE MEETINGS

As explained earlier, the proposed 5th July Construction Contest cannot now take place. Instead, a Video Evening will be held. This will be TFXFactor 025, covering the following topics:

- WQRadar
- RFinder
- Elecraft K4
- Wolfwave (probably nothing to do with wolf whistle...)
- RF repeater linking.

However, it is intended that the Construction Contest will be rescheduled later in the year.

The virtual B meeting (on 19th) will again be a Zoom based Round Robin.

The August A meeting will be a variation on the traditional summer Barbecue. Although it will be held at Peter ZPB's QTH in Old Coulsdon it will instead be a Cornish Pastie session and will be held on the afternoon of Sunday August 1st. Owing to the ongoing risk of COVID and possible limits on the number of people who are allowed to congregate in one place, we are avoiding an “open invite”. To be on the safe side, attendance will be limited to SRCC members, their families and close friends. In order that an appropriate number of pasties can be ordered, members are asked to complete the form at the rear of this issue of the Newsletter and return to Peter G3ZPB with the anticipated number of attendees in their party (or alternatively provide the information by e-mail).

With the recent introduction of new licence conditions putting an emphasis of compliance with EMF, it is currently planned that the September A meeting (6th September) will cover this topic and is expected to include a tutorial on the use of the Ofcom spreadsheet-based field strength calculator.

73, Quin G3WRR

VHF NFD 2021

SRCC will be taking part in VHF NFD over the weekend of 3rd/4th July as usual as part of North East Surrey Contest Group. SRCC will be providing the 70cm station using the call G3SRC/P. 6m & 4m will be provided by Addiscombe ARC using G4ALE/P and 2m by “SRCC & hangers on”, to use Alun G4WGE's words, using the call G0SAC/P. Some assistance from CATS is also anticipated.

Visitors will be welcome but the continuation of lockdown until July 19th means that the RSGB VHF Contest Committee has found it necessary to provide certain restrictions.

The key one is that tents, caravans etc are regarded as “indoor locations” and so the number of people per station is restricted to six. This may mean that you are welcome to look into the tent but may be not allowed to enter it. Regrettable, but necessary in the interests of being “good citizens”.

We will be using the usual site near Warlingham – for those who do not know it, the NGR is TQ386565. Coming out of Warlingham in a South Easterly direction along the B269, the site is on the right about 1.5 – 2 km after the outskirts of Warlingham. The antennas should definitely be visible! Access is via the farm track – the gate should not be locked, but if it is call me on my mobile on 07951 514074 to gain access. And if you don't feel like coming out, why not come on and give us a contact?

73, Quin G3WRR

NATIONAL FIELD DAY 2021 by Quin G3WRR

No, this is not a time traveller's report of next weekend's VHF Field Day! It is a report on HF (CW) Field Day on the first weekend in June.

It is quite a few years now since SRCC took part in this event, led by the now deceased Ron G6LX and John G3BFP from a number of different sites in the Croydon area and always achieving appearing near the top of the listings. Nevertheless two SRCC members plus a former Purley resident are carrying on the tradition, badging ourselves as Flying Ducks Contest Group. We used to enter as Devon Badgers Contest Group but the name was changed as (a) we ceased going to Devon for Field Day, and (b) we wanted to avoid getting culled. The two SRCC members are myself and Alun G4WGE (aka. DR101) and the third is John G4CZB who now lives in Northampton. We now operate from just outside the village of Ravensthorpe (near Northampton) from a site to which Northampton Radio Club have access.

As with so many facets of life, COVID has taken its toll – NFD did not take place at all last year (as far as I am aware the only other times it has been stood down since the end of WW2 being in 2001 due to the Foot and Mouth epidemic and the Suez Crisis in 1956). And although we in the UK decided to proceed in 2021 some other participating European countries decided against doing so. Notable amongst these was Germany (largely because of its federal structure making it difficult for DARC to come up with a realistic set of rules). This was a major blow as the DLs are very keen of CW FD (last year 42% of our contacts were with German stations) – but as part of the big picture the needs of radio amateurs quite rightly rank pretty low!

We had had a bit of a windfall regarding antenna hardware. My chum Dave G3TBK who lives near Grantham had concluded that age had taken its toll and their FD group were no longer able to participate, so he very generously donated us all their mastage - enough to let us get up two 45-foot masts. This proved to be much easier to erect than the scaffolding mast and Clarke pump-up mast we have used in the past. There is an interesting story about the new hardware which apparently had originally belonged to GEC and had been to Australia in its travels – but I know no more than that!

Alun and I loaded up and set off for Northampton on Friday morning and arrived chez G4CZB early in the afternoon – giving us time to set up the masts (taking care to obey the “24-hour rule”) before retiring to the pub for an evening meal. This gave us plenty of time on Saturday to get the tent up, the gear (Elecraft K3 transceiver and laptop based N1MM+ software for logging) installed and the ATUs tuned up.



**Station of G3WRR/P in
HF NFD 2021 near
Northampton (with
thanks to G4WGE for
picture)**

This last is most definitely non trivial.....in our chosen section (formerly the Restricted section but now rebadged “Low Power Unassisted Portable”) entrants are allowed only a single antenna (although a set of pullable links is permitted to allow you to shrink a big antenna - typically a 160m doublet – to a smaller one – typically a 40m doublet – once 160m & 80m are finished with by about 0400 UTC). This means the antenna has to be tuned up on all six participating bands (160m / 80m / 40m / 20m / 15m / 10m). The wildly different impedances at the centre of the doublet on the different bands, compounded by the impedance transformation resulting from a length of open wire feeder of different electrical length on each band, means that getting a decent SWR on all bands can be a bit of a struggle. But this was achieved without too much trouble this year. Our antenna was a sort of hybrid doublet / inverted V, with a 40m doublet strung between the two 45 foot masts, with pullable extenders allowing sloping extenders to be added for 160m & 80m (see picture above). This had the great advantage that this year we did not have to erect a mast in the middle of a patch of nettles.

This year we were ready to go at start time (4pm clock time) and got off to a reasonable start with Alun G4WGE as usual kicking off – but about one hour in, the power meter / SWR bridge started playing up – showing a much higher power output than we were actually getting. This necessitated John going home (half hour+ round trip) to get a replacement and the loss of half an hour operating time. A further two hours later smoke was noted coming from the 10m ATU – accompanied, when we looked, by a remarkably healthy spark for 100W output! This damaged the switchbox (that selects the required ATU per band) so another round trip to CZB Towers was needed to get a replacement switch with more lost time. After that everything went reasonably OK. The shortage of DL portables was a problem as expected but a gratifying number came on fixed instead – as did a lot of European Russian stations including a fair number of portables (double points...). Contact numbers were way down on 160m (46 rather than 100 – 110) but in compensation 10m & 15m were better than expected. In all we made 663 contacts over the 24 hours (about 80% of what we would usually expect to work). After good weather for most of the weekend, the inevitable happened and it rained about an hour before the end, leaving us to make an uneventful if somewhat moist journey back to London.

So, onto the aftermath.... in addition to necessitating the hanging up of tents in the garden to dry, when the power meter / SWR bridge was checked, it worked perfectly and was within 10% of my Bird Thruline – odd – perhaps it just cooked up because it was very hot afternoon. As for results, we were 9th out of 15 UK entrants in our section – a bit disappointing – I'm convinced we could do better if we went to the site near Brighstone on the Isle of Wight but the logistics of getting people and gear there seem to preclude that. But never mind, we all enjoyed it and expect to be back in 2022!

HERE AND THERE

Thanks to Mike M1CCF for a number of interesting items this month:

Have you ever considered using a drone to support an antenna? Take a look at this picture before proceeding...



Commemoration of D-day in 1944 continues to be well supported in the UK by activities in a number of different spheres. VMARS (the Vintage and Military Amateur Radio Society) did their part this year by running a special net on 3.615MHz AM. If you are interested in use of vintage equipment, it's well worth looking at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jw2eXBe6Zgk> which shows operation of the special event station GB0DD in Chichester using a Beverage antenna firing North. Participants included:

- 2 x portable (One on Hayling Island on the beach and one up North using an aerial held up by a drone!)
- A Marconi CNY2 (Landing Craft)
- An HT12 (landing Craft assault vessel)
- Numerous 19 sets
- Numerous aircraft sets including T1154/55 & ART13
- Even the infantry showed a presence with wireless set 38!
- The Para's were there too with a wireless set 76 and R109 combo
- Plus a few base stations with wireless set 12, BC610 and T1509 for the RAF

Were you thinking of attending the National Hamfest at Newark over the weekend of 24th / 25th September this year? It has unfortunately been cancelled but it intended that it will be held in September 2022.

73, Quin G3WRR

SRCC LEAGUE TABLE – MAY 2021

There were eight entries, all from the “usual suspects”, for the May 2021 League Table. May saw a significant change in their positions on the monthly table. The “big three” (Ian M0CGF, Ray G4FFY and Colin G4LZE) continue to occupy the top three positions as they have done for the whole year so far, but Ian has moved back up to first place with Colin up to second and Ray down to third. After that, with just over a quarter of the leading scores, Quin G3WRR moves up two positions to fourth narrowly displacing Ted G3EUE and Peter G3ZPB by one position each, with Steve G4FYF and Rick M0LEP retaining their existing positions. May’s listing is shown below:

ENTRANT	WORKED DXCC / SQUARE	WORKED SRCC MEMBER	WORKED IN CONTEST	POINTS THIS MONTH
M0CGF	301	1	10	616
G4LZE	216	1	158	592
G4FFY	247	5	32	535
G3WRR	49	4	50	156
G3EUE	49		42	140
G3ZPB	16	2	15	51
G4FYF	19	1		40
M0LEP	7	5		24

Unfortunately, publication deadlines means that it has not been possible to provide details of individual entrants’ activity this month. However, it is very clear that May was an exceptional month, with the average score of the three leaders being just under three times that of their April entries! Although HF activity was reported as being somewhat improved with several entrants reporting new DXCCs worked, the star of the month was undoubtedly six metres, with the usual early summer enhancement period offering extended openings not only to the usual South Easterly regions such as the Balkans, but also to North America, with users of FT8 being able to take advantage of the protocol’s ability to catch brief openings. There will be more to report for June – but that is getting ahead of ourselves! The cumulative scores for the year so far are shown below:

ENTRANT	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOT
M0CGF	310	281	313	220	616								1740
G4FFY	211	215	252	224	535								1437
G4LZE	179	177	239	180	592								1367
G3EUE	15	60	80	97	140								392
G3ZPB	20	136	77	74	51								358
G3WRR	21	66	62	33	156								338
G4FYF	40	36	36	28	40								180
G3SRC	48	21											69
M0LEP	22	14	12	18	24								90

There are still no indications of a consistent upturn in cycle 25 – so let's take advantage of the sporadic E season while it lasts!

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 / 3710kHz / LSB	Monday	9.00 am
10m / 28.078 MHz / JS8	Wednesday	10.00 am
4m / 70.30 MHz / FM	Thursday	8.00 pm
6m / 51.55 MHz / FM	Tuesday	8.00 pm
2m / 144.6125 MHz / D-Star	Friday	7.30 pm
2m / 145.35 MHz / FM	Friday	8.00 pm

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.....

Not much to add, other than to hope that you remain well and COVID free – but I continue to look forward to seeing you again face to face (or in at least one case, for the first time)...whenever that finally happens!

73, Quin G3WRR
SRCC Newsletter Editor

SRCC PASTIE SESSION SUNDAY 1st AUGUST 2021

I will be attending the above and will be part of a group of attendees.

Name:

Date: