



SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB

APRIL 2025 – No. 992

General Club Business: secretary@srcc.uk
Membership/Treasurer: membership@srcc.uk
Newsletter articles/distribution: newsletter@srcc.uk
Club Equipment Loan: equipment@srcc.uk
Club Website: <https://www.srcc.uk>

Honorary Secretary & Editor:
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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**

A MEETING Monday 7th April: SRCC Annual General Meeting
B MEETING Monday 21st April: 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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Trophy Manager	G7RUX Jason Gardner	07515 357630

EDITOR'S OPENER

Dear Members & Friends, welcome to the April 2025 SRCC Newsletter.

Many thanks to Colin G3YCR for the following information regarding Bill 2E0WBO received this afternoon (27th March):

"I heard from Jean who lives in Bridge Place where Bill lived. She had received a phone call from another neighbour who said Croydon Social Services people had been in Bill's flat. They told her that Bill had passed away in January. There was no more information, and it was as much of a shock to Jean as it was when she told me. Thus, at the moment we don't know of any funeral arrangements or what happened to Bill's possessions including his radio equipment. I believe Bill had a sister who was younger but again I know nothing more. The entry for his parents in the 1939 Register (it wasn't a census as such) shows two blanked out entries below them which normally indicates those still alive when the information was published; that would fit with Bill and a sibling being at their residence at the time. A sad end to one of the more colourful characters I have

known. I'll share more information if any comes my way".

This was followed later this afternoon by further information from Colin as follows: "I have now learnt that Bill's funeral is to be at 0945 on 1st April (Tuesday) at Croydon Crematorium. The hospital chaplain will be taking the service. I shall try to be there". I'm sure anyone who knew Bill will be welcome to attend. Many thanks to Colin and Pat G4FDN for their efforts on this. The world is a sadder and duller place without the likes of Bill.

Nothing else of great import from here to report, so now onto the main contents....

73, Quin G3WRR

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

March 2025 A meeting (3rd) 2025/6 Programme Planning meeting. This meeting had been scheduled to consider SRCC's future meeting programme, with output to be fed forward into the AGM in April. It proved to be a very useful session with a wide range of inputs from the attendees. G3WRR opened by presenting statistics on attendance at meetings since 2015 and average attendance for various types of A meetings. Major points were:

- significant drop (around 30%) in average attendance after COVID
- highest attendances were for AGM, video evenings and Surplus Equipment Sales.

Some of the key points arising from the subsequent discussion were as follows:

- longer term planning of meeting programme needed (some clubs publish programmes for at least six months ahead)
- need for stronger Committee focus on programme planning. G4FDN suggested a Committee member with particular responsibility for this should be nominated. He said he would be happy to feed some of his experience in this area to the nominated person
- the above should include "reaching out" to external speakers. It has been suggested that some of the income from the G4CCY/DDY estate could be used to fund where necessary - such lectures could possibly be labelled "G4CCY/DDY Memorial Lecture" or similar
- basic talks for members with limited technical background (e.g. how to use test equipment such as AVOs)
- introductory / refresher courses on more complex equipment (e.g. nanoVNAs). A specific example of this might be use of the Minos or N1MM+ logging programs – which could be of particular use in preparing less experienced operators for VHF NFD and hence easing resourcing issues
- issue a questionnaire (totally voluntary completion of course) to members to (amongst other things) identify (a) topics of potential interest and (b) individual skill areas that could be tapped for future lectures
- "non-radio" talks have been popular in the past – consider at least one per year
- consider club outings (e.g. to Bletchley Park)
- in view of the later G3ENG's interest in construction, use some of the income from his estate to provide larger prizes in the Construction Contest
- re-introduce the Construction Project – need to select interesting / useful products (e.g. using Raspberry Pi) and preferably demonstrate an example in advance to foster interest.

March 2025 B meeting (17th) This was the usual B meeting Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat session.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Important - Please note that the dates for SRCC meetings in late April and May are all over the place due to the proliferation of Bank Holidays.... correct dates are:

April A meeting	first Monday	7/4/25 (as usual)
April B meeting	fourth Monday	28/4/25
May A meeting	second Monday	12/5/25
May B meeting	third Monday	19/4/25

Normal scheduling will be resumed in June!

April 2025 A meeting (7th) Annual General Meeting (AGM) Please come along and attend this meeting as it is the main opportunity for members to influence who runs the club and the nature of its programme. The Calling Notice, agenda and nomination forms were circulated on 19th March.

April 2025 B meeting (28th) This will be the usual B meeting Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat session.

May 2025 A meeting (12th) Surplus Equipment Sale – bring along all that equipment that you no longer use and get paid for it (as well as making a small contribution to SRCC funds) - and also perhaps to acquire a new set of used stuff to take its place.....

May 2025 B meeting (19th) This will be the usual B meeting Fix-it, Move-it-on and Social Chat session.

73, Quin G3WRR

FOR SALE BY PAT G4FDN

Yaesu FT-817ND MF/HF/VHF/UHF Transceiver £200.

In good clean condition. No scratches on screen/front panel and no signs of wear on knobs, buttons and markings. It comes complete with original box, manual, 12V PSU/Charger, Microphone, 6m/2m/70cm Antenna/Shoulder Strap/Internal Rechargeable Battery/AA Alkaline Battery Pack/





Available separately, if required, is a FRIWO 12V 2.5A PSU at £10. NB: The supplied Yaesu NC-72U PSU can charge the radio and operate it on receive, but not on transmit. A supply of 2A or greater is required for transmission on an external source.

Also available, if required, is a brand-new NiMH 1500MA battery pack (FNB-85 replacement) at £20 to replace the existing Yaesu FNB-72 that the FT-817 is offered with.

Wellbrook ALA1530 Active Loop Antenna £85 - less than half the price ML&S and RadioWorld sell second hand units for.

In very good clean uncorroded condition. It covers from LF up to 30MHz. It comes with a pole mounting adapter, 12V PSU, remote power feeding unit/amp, and 5m length of RG58 connecting cable. In my experience it is very good on LW/MW/Top Band/80M/40m pulling signals out of the noise signals that I can't hear on a vertical or doublet antenna. Considered by many amateurs to be the 'gold standard' of receiving loops it has a very high overall 4.7 (out of 5) rating on eHam.net. <https://www.eham.net/reviews/view-product/2780>



Pat can be contacted at patrick@mc-guinness.eu

TWO ITEMS FROM PAUL G7VAK

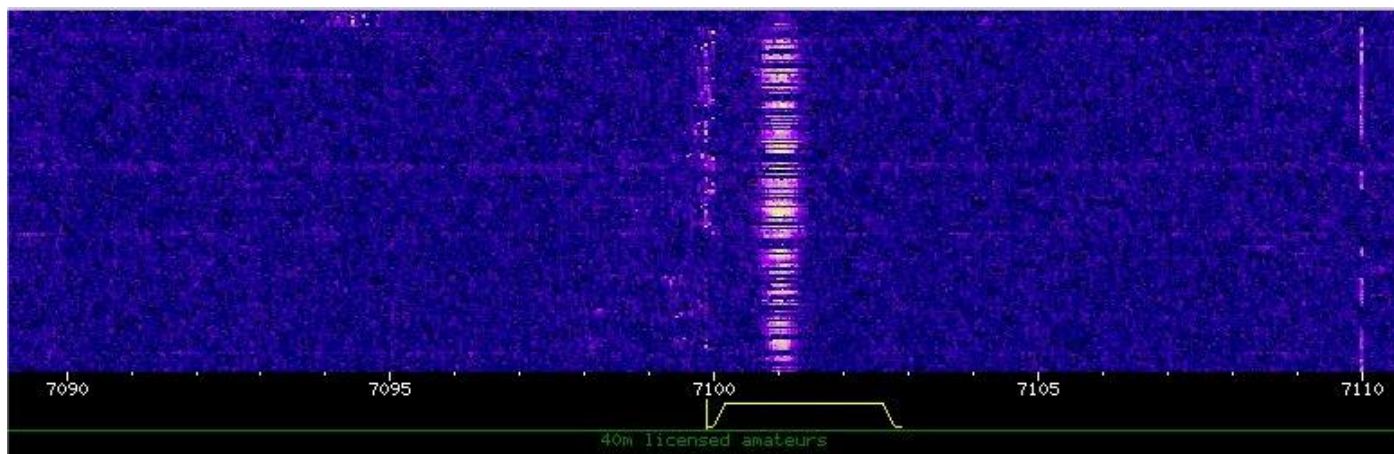
Many thanks to Paul G7VAK for the following two items, with apologies to him for the delay in getting them into the Newsletter. These represent a type of HF spectrum activity that is rather different from what we perhaps consider SRCC's mainstream – but a bit of diversity is always instructive and worthwhile. I'm sure if you have any queries, Paul will be happy to answer them!

XC CRACKLE (A CLASSIFIED NUMBER STATION)

Not reported in excess of twenty years it was heard by an ENIGMA2000 Monitor [<http://www.enigma2000.org>] on 2nd February, 2025: 7101kHz 2104z at reasonable strength, increasing. That monitor QTH is in Crawley, Sussex.

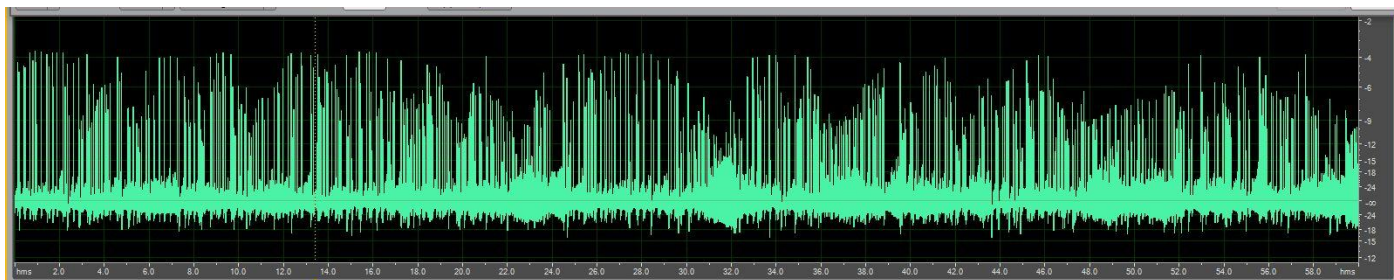
This signal hails from the days of Soviet Russia. It's origins are unknown and it is classified in the NEW ENIGMA2000 Active Station List V1.3 on page 43 under the NOISE Stations or UNIDENTIFIED MODES section as XC; its description brief as: 'XC Crackle, closely spaced carriers, total b/w =< 380Hz'

The Monitor sent in this screen from the Twente University SDR

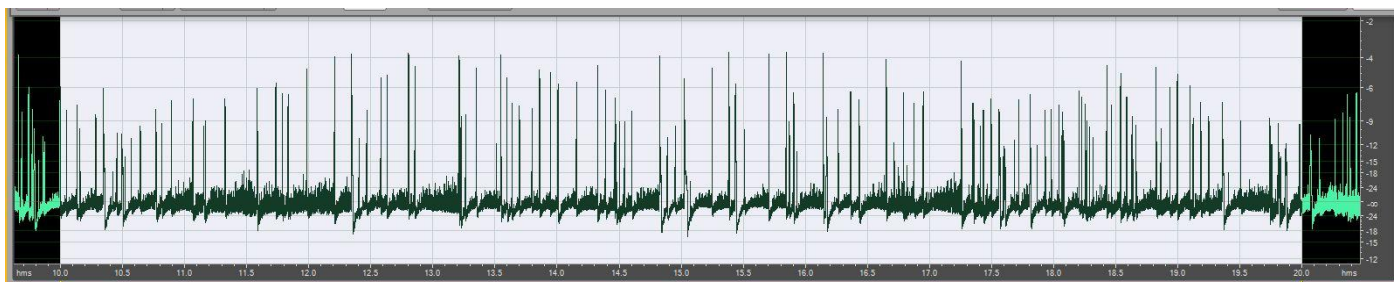


Waterfall screen from Crawley Monitor [Twente University SDR]

The image on my own G31DDC SDR [aka. Excalibur] looked much the same, and surprisingly noiseless too. I commenced my intercept at 2114z ending at 2137z and was particular in recording the signal using AM mode. My low and high filter stops being 10 and 1000Hz, the bandwidth 1200Hz.



Processing the signal gives this representation in a 60s scan:



Sampling from the above sonogram between 10 and 20s we see an expanded view

G7VAK checked for the signal at 0530z 03/02/25 and the Crawley Monitor checked later and offered, "All silent at 0845z I did some quick checks on the SDRs [at the time] and found strong signals across Europe, Hungary, Sweden, Poland. Very weak from Switzerland – Nothing from USA, Japan, Australia or S. America."

So, there we have it, for now. An interesting incursion into the 40m band of a signal followed for years but of which we know so little. [Any suggestions welcome]

E11 13908KHZ 0745Z - 4TH FEBRUARY, 2025

Sending to schedule the Polish Number Station E11 transmitted a null message. Such a message repeats a 3 figure number and zero zero, separated by a forward slash. Spoken in English there is also a Slavic version, S11a. Both are listed under the catalogued Family Three also known as 'The Strich Family.'

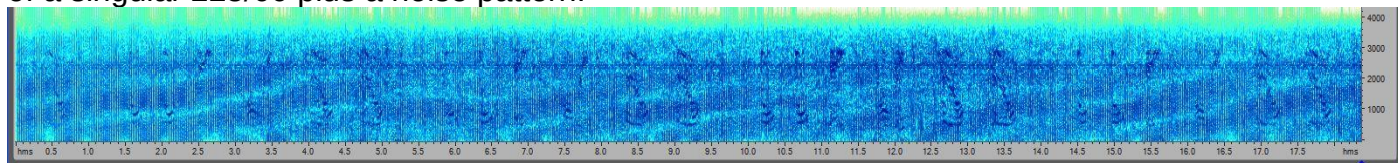
On 4th February, 2025 I intercepted the regular transmission on 13908kHz at 0745z. A null message was sent 228/00 and repeated for just over three minutes when it ended with a succinct 'OUT!'

[The Slavic station, S11a would have sent 'dvoyka dvoynka vosyem [228] cherta [/] nul nul [00] and also repeated for around three minutes]

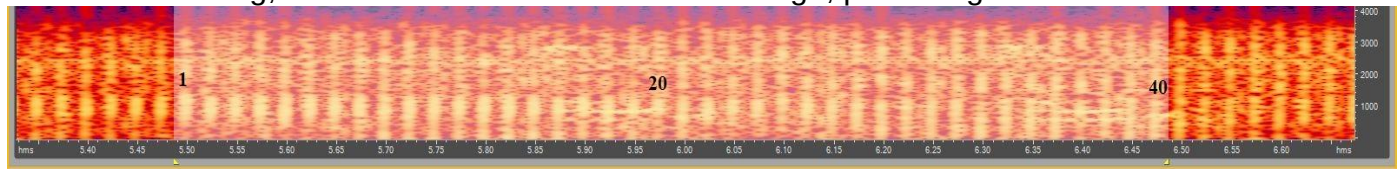
My contemporaneous notes state:

13908 0745 04/02/25 288/00 OUT 0748z Fair, with PulseQRM3.

I decided to look into the troublesome QRM. Looking at the first image we see the representation of a singular 228/00 plus a noise pattern.

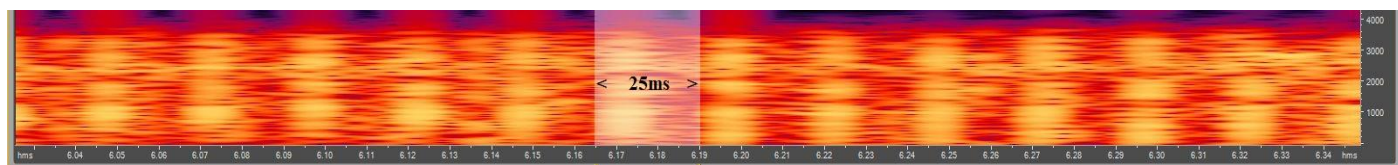


What I heard were very rapid but regular pulses which can just be made out [The scale here represents ~18.5s of sending]. Looking into the pulse rate I make a measurement across one second of sending, from 5.5 to 6.5s from the above image, producing:



This measurement illustrated 40 pulses per second, or $1 \div 40 = 0.025$ s or a pulse of 25ms duration.

The result here demanded a further measurement, randomly taken, of one pulse between scale points 6.165 and 6.19s, practically proving the simple mathematical derivation :



Consulting the 'Technical Handbook for Radio Monitoring HF' [2011 Edition, Roland Proesch] page 382, leads me to a series of diagrams of Over The Horizon Radar (OTHR) and the varying parameters from the different types.

Picture 367 shows two pulses against a grid with the legend: 'French OTHR with 25ms pulses or 40 pulses per second [pps]. Leading me to the conclusion this QRM is caused by a French OTHR.

THE GB7OK REPEATER

Many thanks to Pat G4FDN for forwarding me some information on the GB7OK repeater supplied to him by Tony Ravelini G1HIG, the GB7OK repeater keeper. The original item contained a couple of pictures but for some reason I have been unable to transfer these across, so for now it's just a "word picture"!

"GB7OK has recently returned to the air on 2m channel RV57 145.7125MHz Tx and 145.1125 Rx. It is a dual mode analogue FM/digital voice Yaesu System Fusion repeater using Yaesu DR-1 hardware with a WACOM WP-269 Duplexer feeding the antenna on the Alarmwise office building rooftop at 100 High Street, Beckenham. For FM access a 82.5Hz CTCSS tone must be used. When in System Fusion mode, GB7OK is automatic linked to the Wires-X system Southern ENGLAND 88688 'room' and returns there after non-activity after 15 minutes, such as a previous user change to a different WIRES-X 'room' or unlinking when a QSO just via the local repeater is required. The Southern ENGLAND 88688 WIRES-X 'room' also can be accessed via the reflectors FCS 28792 and YSF 88688 - useful for hotspot users without RF or direct WIRES-X access.

For users new to System Fusion, the Bromley Repeater Group website has a very useful webpage including a video on Wires-X networking access and the on-air etiquette that should be followed: <https://bromleyrepeatergroup.weebly.com/wires-x.html>

GB7OK is ideally located for handheld and mobile operation in the Croydon and surrounding areas and indeed handheld access inside the SRCC meeting room at St Paul's URC was tested and proved at the last club meeting.

Switching between FM and System Fusion is automatic on the repeater, but users who can only listen to FM should be careful that they don't inadvertently interrupt or obliterate digital QSOs that they can't decode.

The Bromley Repeater Group Website homepage is at <https://bromleyrepeatergroup.weebly.com/> and the group also have a presence on Facebook.

If any SRCC member wants help setting up their radio for GB7OK, or who wants to test access to the repeater in either FM or digital System Fusion they can contact Pat G4FDN.

HERE AND THERE

Some of you may have received the code 161 at the end of a QSO when we would perhaps have expected 73 and wondered, as I did, what it means. It occurred to me that since $73 + 88 = 161$, it might be a kind of gender-neutral end of QSO signoff. This is part of the story: in fact it is a term used by FOC (First Class Operators' Club). A full explanation is given at the following URL: <https://www.g4foc.org/why-161>

A quote from my granddaughter Summer, now approaching four years of age. She was being interviewed – something to do with selection for Junior School I think. The lady asked her "what sort of things make you happy?" and she replied "going out in the snow": and when asked "what sort of things make you sad?" she replied "having to eat carrots and peas". Elanor and I thought that hilariously funny but that is probably just the Collier family humour: however, it's a really good example of how the way we look at things changes with age...**73, Quin G3WRR**

SRCC LEAGUE TABLE – FEBRUARY 2025 RESULTS

There were four entries for February 2025, all from the “usual suspects” but one down on January. The February monthly listing is as follows:

ENTRANT	WORKED DXCC / SQUARE	WORKED SRCC MEMBER	WORKED IN CONTEST	POINTS THIS MONTH
M0CGF	92	2	35	223
G4FFY	64		37	165
M0LEP	14	1		30
G4FYF	10	1		22

The following notes are provided by the entrants...

M0CGF: *Managed to swap my lash up 6pm pole with a fold over ground spike from Barenco and now have the Yaesu rotator working up about 6m. So let's see what this season brings. VHF looks slightly different from this location looking at my adsb aircraft tracking. South is dead, east looks a lot better and north west still looks good. February - usual stuff plus a go in the EU DX contest. Best QSO probably the VK on SSB who answered my CQ up at Woldingham, about 70w and a 5m telescopic whip on the mag mount.*

G4FFY: *More activity in February 2025!! On VHF operated in the 2m and 70cm UKACs, 70cm AFS, 2m and 70cm FT8 contests. On HF operated in the 80m Club Calls SSB Contest, the 1st 160m SSB Contest, and the Feb FT4 HF Contest, plus general HF FT8 operation. DXCC's worked has increased to 165 during February, working Saint Barthelemy FJ/DK6AS during the HF FT4 contest on both 15m and 20m; and Nigeria 5N9DTG on both 10m and 12m using FT8.*

G4FYF: *All on 40, 20 and 10. Only stand out one for me was Kuwait on 10 meters.*

M0LEP: *I managed to spend a little time SOTA chasing, so most of the DXCCs came from that. Mostly CW this month, too.*

The cumulative annual results are as follows:

ENTRANT	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
M0CGF	146	223											369
G4FFY	138	165											303
G4FYF	40	22											62
M0LEP	6	30											36
G3WRR	30												30

Looking at the Solar Flux Index (SFI) on the excellent Solar Ham website by VE3EN, it seems clear that we are significantly past the peak of cycle 25 which would have occurred in June 2024 or thereabouts. The HF bands are still holding up quite well but there are reports of 10m closing earlier in the evenings. So perhaps it's time to “gather ye rosebuds while ye may” to quote from

the poet Robert Herrick in 1648 (although he probably wasn't thinking about propagation when he wrote it since it comes from a poem entitled "*To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time*"...)

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 g.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 for the inputs from our membership in this issue – these are always welcome! See you next time.

73, Quin G3WRR
SRCC Secretary and Newsletter Editor