SURREY RADIO CONTACT CLUB
SEPTEMBER 2026 – No. 1009

General Club Business:	secretary@srcc.uk	Honorary Secretary:
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Club Equipment Loan:	equipment@srcc.uk	Carshalton Beeches
Club Website:	https://www.srcc.uk	SM5 3NG
		020 8643 0491

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

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1st MEETING Monday 7th September 2026: "PCB design using Sprint" by Bob G3OOU

2nd MEETING Monday 21st September 2026: Fix-it evening led by John G8MNY

Acting Chairman	G4FDN Pat McGuinness 020 8643 0491
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Committee member	M0RSK Krishnan Rangaswamy cqm0rsk@gmail.com
Committee member	M6SLQ Dale McMurray 07812 131643
Committee member (co-opted)	M7JQL Chris Mullings 07508 337720
Webmaster (non-Committee member)	G4FYF Steve Jones 01424 259377
Treasurer (non-Committee member)	G4FFY Ray Howells 01732 357474
Newsletter Editor (non-Committee member)	G3WRR Quin Collier 020 8653 6948

EDITOR'S TWOPENNY WORTH

Apologies for the slightly later than normal arrival of the September 2026 Newsletter (my target date being the end of the preceding month). My excuse is that I was on holiday near Scarborough with my daughter and 5 year old granddaughter until 31st August! One of the novelties of our break was experiencing heavy rainfall and lightning which we had not experienced for a month or two here in the Deep South. This was the first time I had been to Yorkshire since regular visits to Sheffield in the very late 1980s as project / technical manager for introduction of the first exchange equipment by Northern Telecom (a Canadian firm) into the BT inland network. Pat G4FDN was also away during the month taking his regular holiday in the Republic of Ireland, and some pictures are shown later.

Another August activity has been cataloguing all the SRCC equipment available for loan to members, as well as the substantial amount of equipment donated to the club over the last few years by members and others (sadly, in many cases the family or friends of recently deceased amateurs – although one of the major contributors has been SRCC member Dave G3NGK whom it's good to report is alive and flourishing). Krishnan M0RSK and I have been working on a list of the items held at Mission Control Norwood - and there are probably others elsewhere. The current

list contains 115 different items (some of which are multiple instances of the same general items such as components, power and RF leads, semiconductors etc). It is estimated that about one third to one half of the total has been catalogued so far, and once that is completed it will be necessary to decide their futures. Some alas are almost certain to be junked, but others will vary from items of significant value best sold individually to boxes of capacitors disposed of *en masse*.

Watch this space!

7**3, Quin G3WRR**

RECENT EVENTS

3rd August *'Calibration'* by John G8MNY. John's talk covered a number of topics including:

- basic accuracy
- temperature drift
- stability
- repeatability
- component ageing
- servicing / homebrew

Further information on these (and other) topics is available at https://www.theskywaves.net/

17th August *Fixit evening* led by John G8MNY. It was good to have a visit at this meeting from a 15 year old boy with the surname Cress (whose first name I am embarrassed to say I have forgotten) and his mother. He seemed very interested and we hope to see him at future meetings and that he will consider becoming an SRCC member in due course.

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FUTURE EVENTS

7th September *'PCB Design using Sprint with examples from HF Transceiver Design' by Bob Burns G3OOU.* Bob says" This illustrated talk will review two methods of PCB design commencing with a very old manual graph paper method which I have used both privately and commercially for many years followed by a modern CAD software package called Sprint Layout V6 which can emulate the graph paper method. Included will be some live on-screen demonstrations to show how Sprint works and what is required to enable manufacture by an external supplier. The talk will finish with the display of some example PC boards designed with Sprint, manufactured by JLCPCB in Hongkong and populated by the speaker"

21st September *Fixit evening* led by John G8MNY

5th October *Surplus Equipment Sale*

19th October *Fixit evening* led by John G8MNY

2nd November To be confirmed

16th November *Fixit evening* led by John G8MNY

7th December *Construction Evening*.
The activity will be to make up a Bluetooth Speaker kit, which also includes an FM Radio with remote control. The cost will be around £10 to £12 and the kit can be assembled in just over an hour or so. More details will be made available to members in the next few weeks
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21st December *Christmas Social*

VHF NFD RESULTS

The results of VHF NFD 2026 have now been published and the SRCC positions (overall and per band) are as follows:.

BAND	POSITION	CERTIFICATE	BEST DX	KM
overall	3rd out of 4		N/A	N/A
2m	3rd out of 4		PA1T	524
70cm	2nd out of 2	Runner up, multi - single sect.	HB9WW	698
23cm	2nd out of 2	Runner up, multi - single sect.	G8HIE	51

As this was the first stand-alone SRCC VHF NFD entry for a long time (entries for the past decade plus have been as part of North East Surrey Contest Group), this is a creditable result, particularly as (a) this was SRCC's first time in the Multi-single section and (b) there were only two operators (John G8MNY and Chris M7JQL)! Looking forward to 2027…..

WHERE HAVE ALL THE RADIO AMATEURS GONE?

Many of us have commented on the apparent decline of amateur radio. Thanks to Steve G4FYF for sending the following:

*"I found this interesting. It was titled "**The Ham Radio: Where Did 750,000 Operators Go?"***
https://youtube.com/watch?v=f8rcxPu5oOU&si=BEwjc0Wn_L2p42LS
It describes the birth and development of amateur radio from spark gap onwards and regimentation of specific bands for amateur use. Much of this was due to ex-military radio operators and radio engineers. Then moves through the license system and, supported by data, the decline in licences in relation to demographics over the years, and other technology that may have played a part.73 Steve"

Although written from a US perspective it may strike a chord over here – Steve's suggestion for a video evening is certainly worth considering, particularly if followed up by a group discussion.

JAMBOREE ON THE AIR (JOTA) ON SATURDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2026 - by KRISHNAN M0RSK

The 7th/12th Croydon sent us an email on 8th August 2026 asking if the SRCC could set up a station for JOTA at their Scouts headquarters at Birdhurst Rise in Croydon. The location is a 5 min walk from the St. Paul's United Reformed Church where our club meets (local map below).
In addition to facilitating JOTA, this would be an opportunity for our club to get the message out to youngsters about amateur radio and hopefully attract new participants to the hobby.
John G8MNY and Krishnan M0RSK visited the Scouts location for a feasibility check and an initial discussion with the Scouts contact, Chris Dean on 20th August 2026. Following are the salient considerations for our club and committee. All views and assistance are welcome.

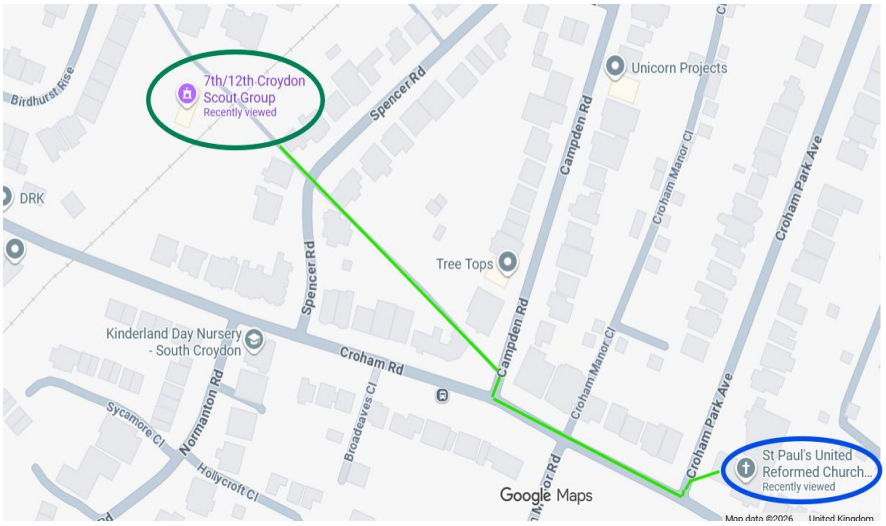
Proposal is for SRCC to set up a station on Saturday 17 October 2026 between 10 am and 4 pm at the Scouts location for them to be able to contact other JOTA stations 'further afield' (the Scouts contact enquired contacts would be possible with JOTA in Europe and the USA).
Hence, our station would need to operate on 40m and 20m at a minimum. The Scouts location has enough space to put up wire antennas between the trees. However, as John G8MNY mentioned, it is a bad VHF location at a much lower elevation. The Scouts Hall is spacious, and the temporary shack can be set up in the adjoining echo-free office. Sufficient power outlets are also available, as are toilet and kitchen facilities.

Vehicular access to the Scouts location is constrained and cars would need to be parked on the main road as the path to the Scouts location is more for pedestrian and not meant for regular vehicular access.

John G8MNY has generously volunteered with his very reliable and robust portable station for the event (we measured the path to the Scouts location as being wide enough to squeeze through John's van to ferry the stations for the event). Dale M6SLQ has also offered his services in organizing, especially a digital station as a back-up to make contacts in case the HF propagation forces aren't there with us on the day (weather would also be a factor). Dale has also offered to explore if we could set up an SDR station with colorful waterfall displays to attract the youngsters who visit the event.

Please do let the committee know if you are able to volunteer to be an operator or a speaker (the Scouts contact did indicate that we could potentially give a talk on Friday evening on 16th October 2026 to the Scouts).

More to come!



A PROBLEM AROSE….BY GARETH G4XAT

Whenever I go radio-portable I always take my FT857 ‘shack in a box’ not least because it runs 100W on HF and 50/30 on 2m/70cms. Its been totally reliable from day one…until the last time I took it out.

It’s usually powered from a 12V source, previously lead-acid but now by an excellent Fogstar 105A/Hr LiFePO4 battery, good for over 6000 charge discharge cycles and with a 10 year warranty. However, on its last outing for a 145-Alive event, I found it was intermittent on power-up. Checking the fuses in the somewhat crude in-line dual fuse holder and no signs of vaporised metal. Checked the XC60 Plug I had soldered onto the lead – also looked OK. By careful positioning I was able to get the radio powered up and it worked all afternoon.

Back home I finally remembered to investigate the problem, still nothing obvious, so a much closer inspection of the fuse holders was done as this seemed to be where the problem was. With the radio on, wiggling of the cables revealed the fault. The flexing of the cables where they entered the fuse holder was also flexing the tab that formed one half of the blade fuse itself, leading to a fatigue fracture where the fuse element met the tab inside the plastic moulding. That was it, nothing wrong with the connectors, the cables or my soldering. Just a fatigue fracture on something that was never designed to allow for any flexing. Automotive fuse holders are not renowned for moving like this. Thinking about it, I’m sure older leads used to use glass cartridge fuses, so maybe another case of letting the accountants spec a system. Owners of similar power leads might like to check their own, and carry spares in the ‘portable radio’ box.

For a similar reason, owners of any Ford with an Eco-boost engine might like to check their service record for history of regular oil changes. ‘Wet-belts’ are used in the engines and regularly fail from 60,000 miles onwards. They are not the only manufactures to try this penny-pinching, and they all largely fail well before what might be considered reasonable.

HAM RADIO IRELAND by STEVE EI5DD/G4GFC

Thanks to Steve EI5DD / G4GFC (an SRCC member whom I first knew in the early 1970s as an Addiscombe ARC member living in Addington!) for sending the following:

"*Here is the link to the latest (June 2026) issue of Ham Radio Ireland Magazine, a free publication downloadable from the following link in PDF Format PDF Version*
https://www.docdroid.com/GMccbUt/hrivol03082026-pdf
Flip Book Version

Here is the link to the FlipBook https://heyzine.com/flip-book/3dda0460a9.html. Once the link opens there is a box at the top right-hand corner which will enable enlargement and clicking on the Cloud Icon will allow the PDF to be downloaded. There is even a share facility.

Current and Back Issued of Ham Radio Ireland may be downloaded from here https://galwayvhfgroup.blogspot.com/2022/06/connacht-regional-radio-newsletter.html Once the link opens there is a box at the top right-hand corner which will enable enlargement and clicking on the Cloud Icon will allow the PDF to be downloaded. There is even a share facility.

From the Editorial team and EI3CC Collective Communications Radio Group we take this opportunity to thank our memberse for their support and wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. If you are a Secretary of a club do feel free to send us information about your planned activities and we will include them in our news section. It is free publicity.

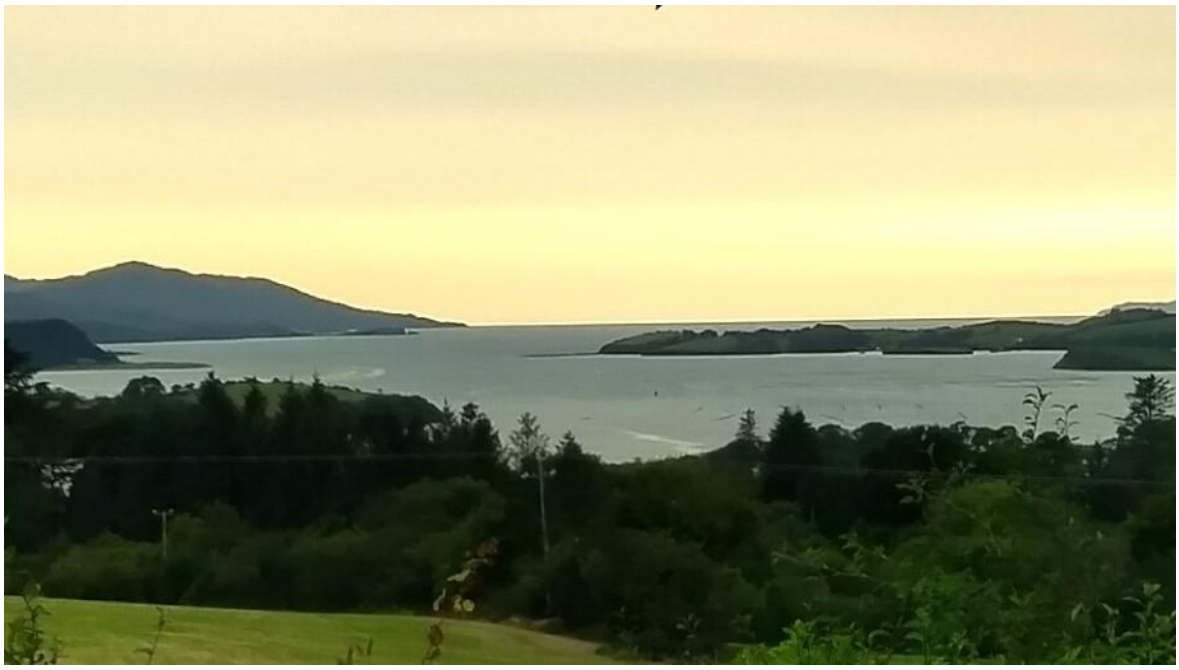
Steve EI5DD Editor
John EI3HQB Sub Editor"

PAT'S HOLIDAY PICTURES

Thanks to Pat G4FDN for the following pictures from his recent holiday in the Irish Republic.



QTH AT CARRIGBOY, BANTRY, CO CORK OVERLOOKING BANTRY BAY



OVERVIEW OF BANTRY BAY



SECOND QTH IN CARROWNISKEY BALLYCASTLE, CO MAYO



40M GROUND PLANE ANTENNA WITH AUTO ATU AT CARROWNISKEY SITE

SRCC members worked on 40m SSB were John G8MNY, Martin G4FKK, Jim G4WYJ, David G0PAR, Rick M0LEP, Steve G4FYF, Oliver M9OPS, and Krishnan M0RSK.

73, Pat G4FDN

A NOVEL SOLUTION TO CROSS POLARISATION! by RICK M0LEP

Back in the tail end of last year the Summits on the Air (SOTA) management team announced that there'd be a Challenge activity for the whole of 2026. Previous Challenges have involved combinations of 12, 6 and 10 metres, and one or two other complications. This year's Challenge involves 2 metres and 70 cms, but to make it a Challenge, only CW and SSB contacts count, and scoring involves distances, so activators and chasers have to exchange locations.

I had, at home, an FM rig and a white stick. Clearly that wasn't going to cut it. I got my hands on a small 2 metres transverter which works very nicely with my KX3. I tried it with the white stick with no success at all. I swapped the white stick for a 5-element 2 metres Yagi I had in storage. That worked a bit better, but it quickly became clear that antenna polarisation was an issue. Some activators were using portable Yagis which they usually deployed with horizontal polarisation, but others were using slim-jims or flowerpots which generally work well only when close to vertical. I could, of course, change the polarisation of my yagi, but the process involved ladders, spanners, and a certain amount of brute force. It was not something that could be done between QSOs. I investigated commercially available ways of changing polarisation. One solution involved X-beam antennas and multiple co-ax relays. Another just two separate antennas. The least complex option involved simply twisting the antenna from one polarisation to the other, but no obvious commercial kit was available.

When I mentioned the problem during an SRCC Monday morning 80 metre Net, John G8MNY mentioned that Gareth G4XAT had done something along those lines recently, so I dropped Gareth an e-mail, and he came back with photos of his solution and a whole slew of ideas. His solution involved a bit of 3-D printing. I took some of his ideas, most especially his suggestion that a good strong door hinge would be a good place to start, and put my lathe and mill to use. Parts of the project were delayed because a nesting box on the end of the house near the antennas was occupied for a while, but I finally have a Yagi that I can twist through ninety degrees from the comfort of my shack, and I'm looking forward to having the chance to do a little better in the present SOTA Challenge than I've managed so far.



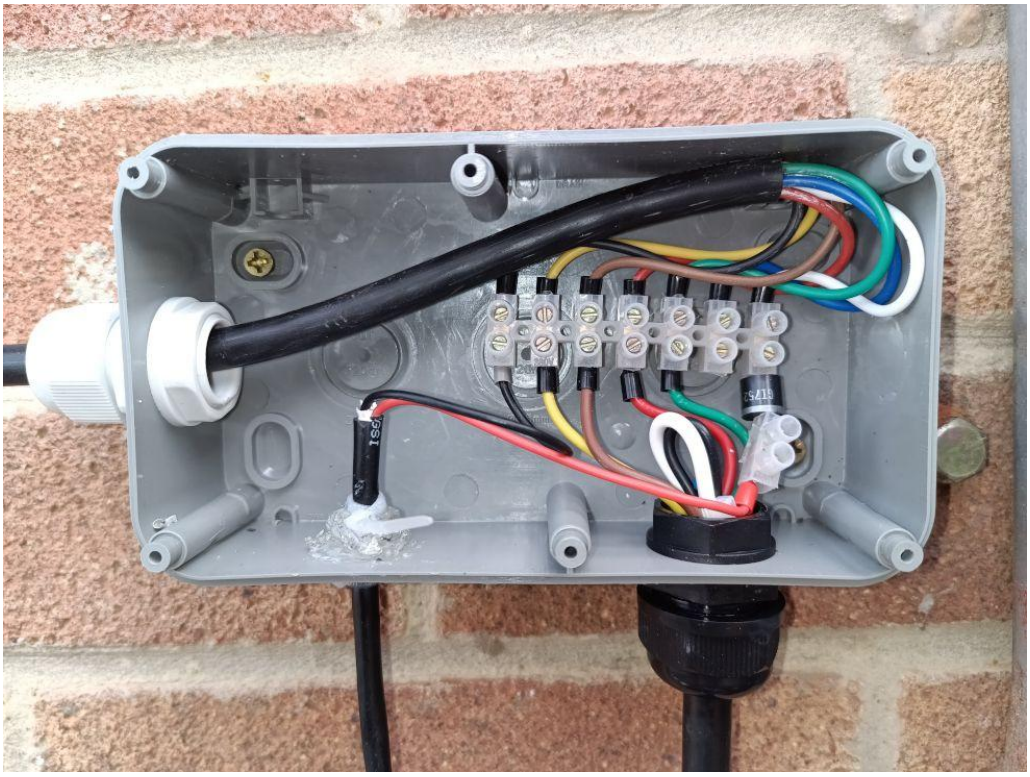
THE INSIDE OF THE ACTUATOR BOX

It needs just 12V DC down the wire. Everything else is handled by the Pi Pico W over WiFi



EARLY TEST OF MECHANISM

An early test of the mechanism at ground level. You can see the the heavy duty door hinge at the core of the mechanism



BORROWING UNUSED ROTATOR WIRES

The rotator has a seven core cable, but only needs four of the wires, so power goes to the microcontroller via a couple of the spares.



PUTTING THE WHOLE LOT TOGETHER

A photo of the chaos on the garage roof while I was putting everything together. Yes, rain did interrupt the process, more than once....



ANTENNA UP AND HORIZONTAL

The antenna finally raised. Its at-rest position is horizontal



ANTENNA VERTICAL

P.S. Preparing the antenna's EMF assessment was interesting

73, Rick M0LEP

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 g3wrr99@gmail.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 to all the contributors for a healthy crop of inputs! But more is always welcome 😊

73, Quin G3WRR
SRCC Newsletter Editor