



RAY~Link

Issue Thirty one
October 1998

The Regular Newsletter of The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network

RAY~Link is published for the benefit of all members of the Network. It is posted to all controllers who are requested to assist in ensuring a wide membership circulation.

(This edition has been sent to all Members)

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1998 AGM

The Network's 1998 Annual General Meeting will be held in the Cheshire Constabulary Training and Conference Centre, Nantwich Road, Crewe, Cheshire, on Saturday 7th. November at 14:00 hrs. As usual there will be a morning pre-meeting, starting at 11:00 hrs. and it is hoped that the choice of this central location will encourage a large turn out of members.

Items for RAY~Link.

Items for RAY~Link are always welcome, and should be sent to Ron Cowan, GM4SRL who is QTHR. The preferred format is by e-mail to roncowan@zetnet.co.uk, but copy on an IBM formatted disk in ASCII format is also easily handled. Items for the Christmas edition (yes, it's nearly that time already!) should arrive by 1st. December 1998.

Zone 9 AGM

The AGM for Zone 9 will be held at 10:30 hrs. on Saturday 14th November 1998 in the Tanhouse Centre, Hampstead Road, Great Barr, Birmingham. Talk-in will be provided by the Sandwell RAYNET Group on 144.675.

All correspondence and membership registrations should be sent to:-
"Hunters Moon", Newton-le-Willows,
BEDALE, North Yorks, DL8 1SX
Emergency 24 hour contact line:-
(0141) 621 2121

CHAIRMAN: Ron Cowan, GM4SRL
(0141) 620 1000

ZONES:

- Z1:** Tom Hanratty, G0JRT
(01207) 505315
Z2: Contact Meantime Brian
Tindill, (01677) 450387
Z3: Dave Hocking, G4FSS
(0116) 239 3803
Z4: Martin Green, G4PMG
(01422) 828678
Z5: David Whiteman, G1ADW
(0956) 299784
Z6: and Deputy Chairman
Cathy Clark, G1GQJ
(01844) 351461
Z7: Chris Hampson, G8RXA
(01425) 672002
Z8: Contact meantime via ZC 10
(01244) 336639
Z9: Madeley Smith, G8KVU
(01203) 597411
Z10: David Hicks, G6IFA
(01244) 336639
Z11: Contact Meantime via ZC 12
(01290) 421298
Z12: Tom Stewart, GM0BKX
(01290) 421298
Z18: Contact meantime via ZC 10
(01244) 336639
Z22: Iain Strachan, GM4FLP
(01382) 580356

SPECIALIST TEAMS

Emergency Planning:

Cathy Clark, G1GQJ

Finance:

Martin Green, G4PMG

Publicity:

David Hicks, G6IFA

Registrations:

David Whiteman, G1ADW

Technical:

Chris Hampson, G8RXA

Training:

Tom Hanratty, G0JRT

Talkthrough applications:

Ian Jackson, G8RWH,
5 Vivien Cl, Chessington,
Surrey, KT9 2DE

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Emergency Network.

May I first explain that Action Research is a charity who raise money to fund research into diseases and disabilities which are usually grossly underfunded. Vaccines for polio and German measles, the use of ultrasound in medicine and artificial hip replacements are all major research projects that Action Research has been involved with. Currently 175 projects are supported nation-wide, a commitment approaching almost L13,000,000 to improving our health.

"The Action 100 Bike Ride" Sunday 30th August 1998 was the second successful operation of this event by RAYNET. Previous to last year (97) the rides communications were handled by a territorial army signals group for some 17 years. However, last year they announced that they couldn't take part due to cut backs, so the organisers were advised to seek RAYNET assistance. Apparently their counterparts who organised other events for the same charity couldn't understand why they were not already using RAYNET!

The user service for the event is St John Ambulance. The Bath division fields 4 ambulances and a control car. The event started simultaneously at Bristol and Bath (manned at 06:00hrs local, riders set off from 0630 - 08:00hrs) The course follows the A4 through Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, North Wiltshire, West Berkshire, East Berkshire and the A308 to finish at Kempton Park racecourse in Surrey.

The event is closed down at 20:00hrs local time. It is quite an achievement for 6 RAYNET groups in 4 counties to support an organisers control vehicle plus 4 other marshal vehicles, 4 Ambulances, 1 ambulance control vehicle, up to 2 cycle repair vehicles plus two start points and the feeding stations and other logistics as well as manning high risk traffic danger spots on a course of 115 miles and of some 14 hours duration! The organisers control vehicle (Marshal 1 / G8XAA) was manned this year by two RAYNET op's. Lance, G0CCU and Alan, G3ZKI. I learned from last year that it is a long time for one person to do the lot so I invited Alan, G3ZKI to assist. (The smartest move this year!) The organisers have been very quick to point out that we have handled the message traffic better than the T.A.. as we are not adamant that we have to pass the info in the army manner and make it awkward for the organisers to get the information they need in their preferred format. For instance they had refused to refer to the ambulances by their PMR call signs and insisted on using the full registration number. In Avon we have always used the Golf Alpha +3 figure callsigns which are conveniently written on the sides of the vehicles because it is easier!

We in the control vehicle had an especially long day, I personally got up at 0400 and returned home at 2315, Alan was picked up before me and dropped off shortly afterwards as he doesn't live very far away. We look forward to hearing the final outcome next year but riders numbers were down from just under 500 to under 300 this year, mainly due to the organisers altering the entrance form conditions. Last year's event raised £37,000 and we are very pleased to be able to help such a good cause.

The experience has proved just what can be done of a fairly long distance by letting the local groups "do their own thing". Local knowledge and regular training are very valuable! This year the Avon Area control station was manned by members of the newly formed (1998) Bath and North Somerset group (BaNES) supported by some Bristol Group members from the Lansdown site. Lansdown is an old Royal Observer Corps hill top comms bunker in the grounds of Avon Fire Brigade's Headquarters.

The Lansdown site proved to be very effective in it's coverage of the course and the signals were favourably commented upon by stations as far away as Berkshire. Not bad for a 10 Watt TCVR! The aerial was mounted on a 40 foot crank up tower and the site is 237 Metres above sea level. Unfortunately the Bath Start point wasn't readable from Lansdown as the bunker is on a plateau but set back from the edge and therefore cannot "see" down into some of the city. The operator in Bath was only using a hand held as he was having to pop in and out of the building. Luckily BaNES group have a member just up the road from the Guildhall who ran talk through at home and saved the day. Last year we operated a mobile at the south of the city who relayed to Roy - G0NZU, the control station in Filton, North Bristol. This arrangement was an improvement with one less operator going /M. This year to prevent the few complaints that were received last year of low power signals from the control vehicle, (1997 was 5W from IC32E to a mag mounted 1/2 wave) we used my FT290R MKII with attached 25W PA running from a 75AH leisure battery (provided by Alan - G3ZKI). We were also equipped with an IC32E each and plenty of charged nicads and a couple of 12V 6.5AH gel cells I bought at the Longleat Rally this year. (Be prepared!!)

My thanks go to the members of the following groups for their support and I believe at least one operator who assisted from outside these groups areas. Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, North Wiltshire, West Berkshire, East Berkshire, Surrey. We just couldn't have done it without them! Thanks again everyone, see you next year!

National Training Team

Geoff Derby, G7GJU

If you have recently accessed the RAYNET Web page and looked through the list of contents you will have noticed that there has been a significant change to the Training Team over the last few months.

This is the first of what I hope will be a regular insert into RAY~Link, so I will introduce myself and the rest of the team. My name is Geoff Derby, G7GJU. I live near to Chester-le-Street, not far from the Beamish open air museum. As part of the training team it is my task to advertise what we have to offer, and this will possibly be in the next edition of RAY~Link.

The other team members are as follows:-Tom Hanratty, G0JRT, ZC1, who put together this training team and liaises with the Committee of Management. June Wallis, G0OGB who volunteered to be our secretary. David Austin, G0WYW who will look after our accounts. Eric Curd, G7DPZ whose expertise is in the setting up of exercises George Boundey, G0VII who will look after the technical side of things along with Tony Forster, G6VHG. Paul Farrah, who is the only member brought in from the old training team, and who will be trying to keep continuity between the old and the new teams. As he lives in the South of England, he can only attend meetings as work allows, but we keep in touch on e-mail.

All except Paul live in the North East of England and are within easy reach of each other so we can meet at regular intervals in order to satisfy your needs in training. If you think that you could put something positive into the training scheme, no matter where you live, please get in touch with Tom Hanratty c/o Hunters Moon.

If you think that you could write an exercise or if you have a particular expertise we would be grateful if you contacted us. If you know about Datacomms, you would be particularly welcome!!

So that is a brief resume of who we are and now we are in the process of putting together training packages which can be sent to groups, or, if necessary we can come to you and put together a training weekend.

You can get in touch with us in the following ways:-
By phone to Tom on 01207 505 315
By e-mail to tomhanratty@compuserve.com
By post to Tom Hanratty, G0JRT, c/o Hunters Moon, Newton-le-Willows, BEDALE, North Yorks, DL8 1SX.

Raynet Workload

Geoff Griffiths, G3STG

How busy have we been? The National Diary which is stored on the Telephone BBS, and appears for the current months on the RAYNET Web pages, is always a fruitful hunting ground for those interested in the changes which take place for our Network.

So far this year, Network groups have reported working, or planning to work, on no less than 364 events or exercises, and this compares well with previous years. 1994 saw a total of 352, but 1995 had no less than 440 calls upon our time. This seems to have been the peak for local marathons and fun runs, with later years seeing a swing to equestrian events.

Once again, the busiest months in 1998 have been May (78) and June (63), with no events so far reported for December. Let's hope we all have a peaceful holiday break this year. The South-east seems to have been busiest this year with 76 events reported, closely followed by the north-west with 74. Quietest Zones this year seem to have been the north of England, and northern Scotland (8 events each), with the East Midlands, Central London and the West Midlands (19 events each)

The Diaries continue to provide an invaluable source of information for Groups looking at activity levels and planning frequency usage, but the system does depend upon YOUR Group reporting your events, both planned and unplanned. Wherever Groups of other affiliation report their plans, these too appear in the Diaries but have not been included in the figures reported here.

If you are interested in delving into the archives for your self, then they can be found on the telephone BBS on 01296 39 37 37.

Current Diaries can be found through the web pages on www.sgi.leeds.ac.uk/raynet/ or can be requested through GB7NRC

RAYNET 80m Net

The duty rota for the Sunday morning net and news is as follows:-

11th Oct - Duty G4KUJ, Standby G0MRH

18th Oct - Duty G0BDA, Standby G4KUJ

25th Oct - Duty G0EWO, Standby G0NZU

This 80m net meets on 3.663 MHz. on Sunday mornings at 08:30 hrs. clock time. All RAYNET members are welcome to call in at any time.

Items of news should be sent by 19:00 hrs. on Wednesday evenings to Ron Cowan, GM4SRL on e-mail (roncowan@zetnet.co.uk), or by fax.(0141-621 1000) and items for the diary dates should be sent to Geoff Griffiths, G3STG on e-mail (g_griffiths@Compuserve.com) or to G3STG at GB7NRC.

As News and Diary Dates are compiled separately, it is important that submissions are sent to the correct collator. The Net organiser is Eric, G4FSN, who has an interest in Near Vertical Incidence Skywave Communication. In his latest note to newsreaders, Eric wrote, "For those wishing to know more about NVIS, I strongly recommend the book "Near Vertical Incidence Skywave Communication" by D.M.Fiedler and E.J.Farmer, published at 14 US dollars by Worldradio Books, PO Box 189490, Sacramento, CA 95818, USA. The book consists largely of reprints of articles first published in the US "Army Communicator" magazine, and, although the basic intention is to inform their military colleagues, the authors also put a strong slant towards the work of the Amateur Radio emergency services. Besides the text, there are graphs, diagrams, and logs of actual exercises using NVIS.

Both of the authors are US Army Signals Officers, but additionally, Ed. J. Farmer is licensed as AA6ZM. His e-mail address (I am advised by G4MWO) is 76121.3726@compuserve.com. There is a great deal of theoretical and practical information relevant to RAYNET HF operations in this well-written and highly-readable 144-page A4 paperback."

For Sale

Madeley Smith, G8KVU, ZC9 has some Racal equipment, and a Murphy MF/LFRX for sale. Please send an sae for full list.

New County Controller.

Martin Wells, G7TNZ became the County Controller for Nottinghamshire on 1st. August. His telephone number is 01909 482 772.

RAYNET SUPPLIES

You will see that the Financial Report sent with the AGM notice states that a partial repayment was made in January 1997. This has been presented this way to reflect the loan made to RAYNET Supplies (Lakenheath) following transfer of the business from RAYNET Supplies (Northern) which was not repaid (less the £50.00 shortfall reported at the 1987 AGM) until January 1997 and which could not therefore be included in the 1996 accounts, and has been therefore been included in the 1997 accounts.

The Committee thanks Barbara and Ray for their work to put RAYNET Supplies back on a sound footing, allowing it to be passed on to Brian Shearer in Dunoon, who has undertaken to carry on the task of running this important function. Brian has already attended several rallies, and will be at the AGM in Crewe.

Please contact him 01369 708 760, (Phone) or 01369 708 769 (Fax) or e-mail to:-
raynet.supplies@latheron.demon.uk
if you want to order items ready for collection.

If you want to have items posted to you, please use a copy of the order form which appeared in the last edition of RAY~Link.

Disasters WEB Site

Martin, G3USF - Staffs County Controller

On behalf of Staffordshire RAYNET, Martin, G3USF, Staffs County Controller has established a Disasters and Emergency Management web page.

While this includes links to RAYNET groups it is first and foremost an information resource on disasters and emergencies worldwide and organizations - governmental or voluntary involved in emergency operations. It currently contains over 300 such links and is added to regularly. No presentational frills - just lots and lots of information!

The URL is <http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/por/disaster.htm>
Martin would very much welcome suggestions for additions at m.harrison@pol.keele.ac.uk