



# RAY ~ Link

Issue Forty Four  
October 2002

The Regular Newsletter of The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network

RAY-Link is published for the benefit of all Network members and the preferred method of distribution is by e-mail. Those who receive their copy by e-mail will receive their AGM calling notice by snail mail this year. A change which will allow e-mail distribution of the AGM calling notice will be proposed at the AGM and will hopefully come into effect next year.

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## National AGM November 2nd 2002

This year's National AGM will be held on November 2nd, and Leicestershire RAYNET are pleased to be able to welcome the Network to Leicester for this important meeting.

Geoff, G3STG has been able to secure the National Space Centre as the venue for our meeting, and we are sure that members will find this a venue for an "event that's out of this world".

This "state-of-the-art" visitor and exhibition centre was opened just over a year ago, and has already broken its target visitor numbers. It provides an exhibition which demonstrates many aspects of space, space exploration and astronomy. In addition, the "space theatre" offers a fully equipped planetarium and audio visual show offering an introduction to space science.

The Centre, located in the northern outskirts of Leicester, is also the home of the new "Near Earth Object" monitoring centre, and its clean control room will form an important part of the Mars "Lander" project.

Members attending the AGM will have full access to the Centre, and there will be ample time in the day's programme for to visit the exhibits and demonstrations. In addition, if you want to sit in on a space theatre presentation during your visit, then this can be booked on the day at a special rate of £3.00.

Members arriving for the AGM will be provided with tea, coffee or cold drinks, and there are refreshment facilities in the centre for those not wishing to bring their own.

There is ample free car-parking, and the centre is well signposted from the M1 and M69 motorway systems. And of course, talk-in will be available.

The National Space Centre Amateur Radio Society regularly operate and demonstrate a fully equipped amateur radio station in the Amateur Satellite Service for the public which is sponsored by the major equipment manufacturers and by AMSAT, and we expect to have this operational on the day of our meeting. This station forms an important part of the "Space Now" area, and offers an ideal opportunity to introduce modern Amateur Radio to members of the public. We recently entertained young enthusiasts who helped polish mirrors for the "Starshine 4" satellite to be launched soon.

If you have not yet sampled amateur satellite communication in action, this is your chance.

If you want more information why not visit the websites on [www.spacecentre.co.uk](http://www.spacecentre.co.uk) and [www.nsc-ars.org](http://www.nsc-ars.org)

**Membership Fee 45p. per month.  
PAI £1.05 per year or part year  
(1st May - 30 April).**

*All correspondence and membership registrations should be sent to:-*  
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## **A BUSY FEW DAYS WITH RAYNET.**

**David Hicks, G6IFA**

**A**s a Group Member, ZC10 & Publicity Director, I often get involved in several aspects of RAYNET over a few days. A weekend in July was typical of this situation and covered 4 days.

09.00 hours Sunday July 7th. I was on site at the Countess of Chester Hospital, Checkpoint 26 the halfway point of the Liverpool - Chester - Liverpool Bike Ride, assisting Merseyside RAYNET. The event is an annual fund-raiser for charity and the RAYNET operation is in support of St. John Ambulance who have 4 ambulances deployed that follow the bulk of the riders on the course. Mike G8RXB the Merseyside RAYNET Controller organises the manning of the event by RAYNET and uses about 24 operators in total via RAYNET Control and 2 talk-through boxes.

My checkpoint was manned by Graham G7NEH, a push-bike mobile Peter GW4IGF, and me. This event was also an opportunity to deploy the "rapid erect dipole". This is a 9 metre fibreglass fishing pole, with a dipole made from ladder feeder cut to operate on 2 metres and 70 centimetres. The mast and aerial is erected in 2 minutes (no kidding) and lashed to the car door handle for support. The aerial operated very well with up to 50 watts available on 2 metres and 40 watts on 70 cms. We were stood down at 13.30 hours.

At 14.00 hours I was mobile from Chester on route to Bournemouth some 240 miles distant in order to attend the Emergency Planning Conference & Exhibition. I arrived at the QTH of Chris G8RXA (twin brother of G8RXB) ZC7 at 18.00 hours, spent a pleasant evening with him and his family, early to bed and next morning at 08.00 arrived at the Bournemouth International Centre (BIC). The Dorset RAYNET Forward Control Vehicle was already installed in the Exhibition and the "National RAYNET" Display Stand was set up ready for the arrival of the delegates. With me on the stand were Chris G8RXA, Keith G7HQR Dorset DCC, and John G0SKR S.E. Dorset GC. On demonstration in the FCV were APRS, Slow Scan TV, together with Data transmission and the various voice frequencies. Delegates from the UK, Bermuda, USA, Canada and Europe visited the stand and were of good

Quality over the 2 days of the Conference. We were able to attend the talks and lectures, the most notable of which was given by Joe Callan the Chief Fire Officer of the New York Fire Department. His description of his involvement in the September 11th. atrocity, together with video and photographs, was both moving and emotional. He spoke of the great loss of life by the responders and public but also of the masses saved, whilst being critical of their own actions and the lessons learned. This is one talk I will never forget.

Whilst at the event I was also able to do some publicity work for RAYNET, by talking to the editors of the SIESO & EPS magazines, together with talking to those delegates who were unaware of what RAYNET was or what RAYNET did. We broke the stand down late on Tuesday afternoon, and I returned to Chester.

On Wednesday morning I attended a Demonstration of the River Dee Emergency Equipment. RAYNET was in attendance with RNLI/Coastguard, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service, Police, Ambulance, and the Local Authority Civil Protection departments. Other RAYNET attendees were Greg G0DUB W Cheshire GC, Alan G8OJQ W Cheshire DCC. The EPO Major Incident Unit was on site which RAYNET manned with 2 metre & 70 cms equipment and we also demonstrated Slow Scan TV, and the various masts and aerials we had available including the "rapid erect dipole".

The Fire Brigade demonstrated a pneumatic walkway which can be used to rescue people from ice, swamps and water. It was also demonstrated as a "jetty" and the RNLI lifeboat made use of this. Unfortunately the Air/sea Rescue helicopter was unable to attend due to being committed elsewhere. This was an excellent opportunity for all the participants to network with other responders, and RAYNET was able to demonstrate its potential in assisting at emergencies.

The forgoing is probably typical of the involvement of RAYNET members from time to time, it does seem to take over your life on occasions, but we are putting something back into the community, which is the best justification for doing it.

## **Ray Withers**

**I**t is with sadness that we have to report the passing of Ray Withers, MD of RAYCOM, formerly G4KZH. Ray died in hospital on Sunday, 31st June and his funeral was at Stourbridge Crematorium on Friday 12th. July.

Ray's business was originally run from his home in Stourbridge after which he opened a shop at Quinton in Birmingham. He then moved to a much bigger premises next to Junction 2 of the M5 motorway. He gave up the amateur radio business some years ago and concentrated on the broadcast communications side, dealing with such entities as Mick Jagger, Jean Michel Jarre, etc.

He was a regular at many of the rallies up and down the country and will be remembered for his wit and humour even though he had been ill for many years. Many of the RNARS members will have seen him, met him or worked him on the air.

## **Elections for Zonal Co-ordinators**

**T**he Zonal Co-ordinators in Zones 1 & 12 are due to retire at the end of this year and the post in Zone 2 is currently vacant.

The Zonal Co-ordinator is an important post in RAYNET as the holder is a director of the company and a trustee of the charity. As such he, or she, is the Zone's elected representative who ensures that RAYNET is run properly and that members' interests are taken into account at the Committee of Management meetings.

A more complete list of the duties and responsibilities of a ZC can be found on pages 2 and 5 of Ray-Link 37, July 2000. If you do not have a copy you can download one from the members section of [www.raynet-uk.net](http://www.raynet-uk.net). The existing ZCs in Zones 1 & 12 are willing to stand for re-election. Nominations for Zones 1, 2 and 12 should be supported by at least 5 Controllers and members in the Zone. The nominee must also sign a declaration that he/she is willing to stand and not disqualified from being a company director or charity trustee. All nominations should be sent to the Hunters Moon address before the 21st October. An election will take place if more than one nomination is received before the closing date. Further advice can be obtained from The Secretary at [HuntersMoon@raynet-uk.net](mailto:HuntersMoon@raynet-uk.net)

## ***Incident at Dash Falls***

## **Cheshire RAYNET**

- (Back O' Skidda, Cumbria).

A team from Cheshire Raynet was in the Lake District on Sunday May 12th 2002, doing Communications checks in preparation for the LDWA Lakeland 100. Bruce, G1ORS, was located at the proposed Talk-through site at Castlerigg Circle near Keswick while Pat, G7EYR, Phil G4HUF, Rob, G8XMZ & Julian, G0LBO were attempting to access Skiddaw House Youth Hostel in two Land Rovers. Phil & Pat aborted the trip at a point before Dash Falls due to the state of the track while Rob, a more experienced Off-Roader and Julian continued on towards Skiddaw House.

At approximately 1330 Pat saw frantic activity at the top of the slope with several people shouting to try and stop some mountain-bikers who were heading down the track towards Phil's Land Rover. Pat stopped them and they abandoned their bikes to run back up the track where there had obviously been an accident. At this time, Rob had good comms with both Bruce & Phil although mobile telephone communications were unreliable in the area. Pat proceeded up the hill on foot with a handheld to establish what had happened while Phil & Rob remained in their positions to ensure good comms with Pat once she arrived on scene. She was met by one of the bikers who advised her that Mountain Rescue were required to attend to a young lady who had fallen 40ft head first into Dash Falls and was suffering from head and neck injuries. This information was relayed to Bruce who contacted Cumbria Police at 13:45 by mobile telephone who in turn alerted Mountain Rescue.

While waiting for the Keswick MRT to attend, the RAYNET operators were able to assist the casualty and other members of her party by supplying blankets, coats etc to keep them comfortable and reduce the risk of hypothermia. Julian returned to the incident scene from Rob's Land Rover with equipment and to support Pat. Phil also ensured that the gate at the bottom of the track was unlocked to ease the MRT's passage to the scene once good comms were established between Pat & Rob.

Keswick MRT were on scene at 14:33, and within minutes a RAF Air-Sea Rescue helicopter had arrived. The casualty was airlifted to hospital in Carlisle with suspected serious head, neck & arm injuries along with another member of the party, still wearing Julian's coat! The RAF crewman refused to return it to Julian! After the initial call to the police had been made, Bruce had two calls from Keswick MRT. The first, at 14.03, was to advise that Mountain Rescue were on their way, to confirm the details and to enquire how he knew about the incident. The second, at 14:15, was to double-check the NGR of the accident, as their local knowledge indicated that radio comms from his location to the scene was not possible! An explanation of the position of the relay vehicle reassured them that the details were correct as given. Cheshire RAYNET have since been in touch with the Mountain Bikers and have been advised that the casualty was not as seriously injured as had been thought. She has a lot of bruising, damaged neck muscles, a broken collarbone and a badly damaged cycle helmet.

Afterwards, the team considered their actions and were reasonably satisfied with their response to the incident - it is always possible to learn from experience! - but mainly they were pleased that they were in the right place(s) at the right time to be of assistance.

## ***RAYNET Supplies***

RAYNET Supplies continues to serve RAYNET members by supplying goods which are of use to those participating in our hobby. While extending the range of clothing, the opportunity has been taken to improve quality and to provide a professional corporate image. Members may choose garments with the text "RAYNET" or with the round Network logo. Embroidery of RAYNET Group names, call signs, etc. can be arranged on an individual basis.

Unfortunately, as often happens, the recent change provided a few hiccups, with delays, caused by the change of suppliers, occurring at the most inopportune moments. The stock held has had to be increased to cover the wider range of garments, and members are asked to allow up to three weeks for delivery, although in practice seven days is a more realistic time.

RAYNET Supplies is run by volunteers, not full-time staff, and correspondence by email (supplies@raynet-uk.net) is preferred telephone enquiries whenever possible.

The new traffic jackets, which are smarter and more comfortable, now come with transparent pockets which allow RAYNET badges to be inserted for events, and removed if the jacket is to be used for other purposes. In addition a transparent pocket with a Velcro fastening is provided to take, and securely hold, a RAYNET membership card. The high visibility waistcoats have RAYNET badges sewn on front and back, and now also have the membership card pocket as standard.

As it is impossible to take every stock item in every size to rallies and shows, members are requested to order in advance so that your order can be completed in advance and delivered at the show. Members requiring items at the AGM should contact RAYNET Supplies by 21st. October.

The full list of RAYNET supplies can be obtained in the members' area of [www.raynet-uk.net](http://www.raynet-uk.net) and a pdf file is also available for download. A restricted non-members list is also on the site in the "general" section. Make sure you use the Members' area so that you get the full choice of goods!

## ***"Classic 999 Show"***

Earlier this year, Bill Mahoney was asked to co-ordinate a demonstration station at the "Classic 999 Show" using West Midlands RAYNET members. A press release was prepared and sent out, and Bill was also asked to do a piece for Police World as we had graciously been allowed to use the Club Call of the IPA, GX4IPA. Our photograph shows Bill, far right, with Madeley Smith (left) and Dave Green (centre) with a "thank you" award alongside the appliance which features in London's Burning (hence "Blackwall").



## The Name RAYNET

There has been considerable discussion recently concerning the RSGB's proposal to move away from the term "RAYNET" and instead to use the phrase "The Radio Communications Voluntary Service." This matter was discussed in great detail at our September Committee of Management meeting, and the committee unanimously decided that The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network would not change its title, nor use the phrase "The Radio Communications Voluntary Service", because it was felt that there was no need for a change, and that our User Services and the Public had been used to "RAYNET" since 1954. We were particularly disappointed that no consultation had taken place despite The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network being affiliated to the RSGB.

It was agreed that we should issue the following statement which reflects the decision taken at the meeting.

"There have been a number of enquiries following an item which appeared in the September edition of RadCom, which referred to the RSGB's move away from the term "Raynet", substituting the phrase "The Radio Communications Voluntary Service." Despite being affiliated to the RSGB, The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network was not consulted about the RSGB's proposal to change the terminology. At its meeting on 14th. September 2002, the Committee of Management unanimously agreed that we would continue to be called The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network, known as RAYNET, or "The Network". As the term "RAYNET" has been used in the public domain since 1954, and as the Network has actively promoted the name "RAYNET" to our User Services and the Media since The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network was formed in 1992, we will continue this policy, and our groups will continue to be referred to as RAYNET."

It was further agreed that the Secretary would write to Paul Gaskell, the RSGB's newly appointed Radio Communications Voluntary Services National Co-ordinator, reminding him that his appointment was made only by the RSGB and that he must not at any time speak on behalf of The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network.

At rallies and radio shows, some RAYNET members come to our stand believing that they are members of the Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network, not realising that they are members of independent groups, or groups which are affiliated to the RSGB. While we encourage all our members to work with any RAYNET members, irrespective of whether they are, or are not, Network members, we must point out that the benefits of membership are extended only to our own members.

We did not ask to separate from the RSGB, but formed "The Company" and later "The Charity" at the request of the RSGB when it was having difficulty funding RAYNET. Several meetings were held, and it was agreed that we should separate, but maintain affiliation. At the last minute, the RSGB decided to support some groups which did not want to join the new organisation. The matter was further complicated by UKRS which was set up as an alternative radio club to the RSGB, and which also supported RAYNET groups. We are pleased to note that RAYNET members are realising the benefits of being part of The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network, and that our membership figure is rising again. The Committee of Management will do everything it can to support "The Network's" members and is always looking for opportunities to further the service which we provide to both our User Services and the Community. Members should be assured that our title, registered for both Company and Charity purposes is "The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network", known as "RAYNET" and that we have agreed to use "The Network" as an everyday abbreviation.

## Welcome to Leicester For the 2002 RAYNET AGM

**We hope that the following notes will answer most of your questions about the location for this year's AGM!**

**Location** The National Space Centre is located just off the A6, 2 miles north of Leicester City Centre, midway between Leicester's central and outer ring roads. Brown signs will direct you from the M1 (Junction 21, 21a and 22), and from all arterial routes around Leicester. The Centre is located in Exploration Drive, off Corporation Road. Midland Mainline and Central Trains serve Leicester station, and bus route 54 serves the station, St Margarets' Bus station, and runs to Abbey Lane, 5 minutes walk from the Space Centre. For further information please phone Leicester Tourist Information on 0116 299 8888. If you would like more information about the Space Centre, try logging on to [www.spacecentre.co.uk](http://www.spacecentre.co.uk) or to [www.nsc-ars.org](http://www.nsc-ars.org)

**Best Routes** From the North Exit M1 junction 22 and go 4m southbound on the A50, signed Leicester. At the outer ring road, turn left, signed A46 Newark, then in 4m turn right onto the A6. Straight on at the first traffic lights and again at the 1st roundabout. Then at the second traffic lights, turn left into Corporation Road, and right into Exploration Drive. From the South and Midlands Exit M1 Junction 21a Note (no access this junction from the north!). Follow the Outer Ring for approx. 6 miles then turn right onto the A6. Straight on at the first traffic lights and again at the 1st roundabout. Then at the second traffic lights, turn left into Corporation Road, and right into Exploration Drive. From the East From the A47, take the A563, the Outer Ring Road, for approx 4m, then take the A6 towards the city. Then at the second traffic lights, turn left into Corporation Road, and right into Exploration Drive.

**Talk-in & Car Parking** RAYNET members will be providing a talk-in service on 144.625MHz between 10:00 and the beginning of the AGM, using the national RAYNET callsign G4NRC.

The centre has plenty of car parking, and it's free!

**Meeting and Greeting** You will meet at the door of the centre by members of the RAYNET Team, and you will be given your free ticket to the space centre when you sign in at our special reception point inside the main doors. Please don't go to the main ticketing desk, and remember to have your valid membership card with you. No card, no free ticket!

**A Welcome Drink** The meetings will be taking place in the "Shuttle Suite", and all members will be provided with a cup of tea or coffee with our compliments.

**My family are coming with me!** Your family are welcome to visit the Centre with you, but unfortunately will have to pay for entrance at the main ticket desk.

**How do I get my ticket for the Theatre Show?** The Theatre, which is reported to contain the newest and best planetarium in Europe, will be showing a presentation on the "Search for Extra Terrestrial Life" which is suitable for all family members over five. Members can buy their ticket for one of the 20 minute shows at a specially negotiated price of £3.00 when they arrive at the Centre.

**Is GB2NSC going to be demonstrated on the air?** We hope to be able to demonstrate GB2NRC satellites working live on the day for members, subject to appropriate satellite passes. We may even hear the ISS depending on the space-crew's working schedule. More details when you check in.

**What are the feeding arrangements?** There is a dedicated area adjacent to the Shuttle Suite where you can eat your own refreshments, or there are two snack bars in the Centre. Alternatively there is a McDonalds 1/2 mile away, or many eating places and pubs in the City Centre just a few minutes drive away.

**Is there a dinner on Saturday evening?** There will be a dinner at the "Gynsills Lodge", part of the Premier Lodge chain, 3 miles from the Space Centre. The cost is being held to a reasonable level, and if you would like to take part, please email [agm@raynet-uk.net](mailto:agm@raynet-uk.net) before Friday 25th October.

**I want to stay overnight.** A block of rooms has been reserved at the same "Gynsills Lodge" for Friday and Saturday evening at a special rate of £46.95 per room per night, and cost of one full breakfast per night is included in this rate. Reservations must be confirmed to [agm@raynet-uk.net](mailto:agm@raynet-uk.net) by Friday 25th October.

**Any questions?** Please email us at [agm@raynet-uk.net](mailto:agm@raynet-uk.net) and we will do our best to help.

Hope to CU in Leicester next month!