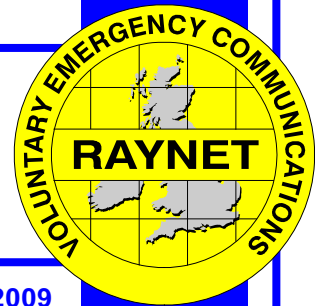


RAY~Link



Issue 66, January 2009



Courtesy of M0SPD

The Merseyside Group Control Vehicle at the 2008 AGM which they hosted

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The regular newsletter of the Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network

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Membership Subscription Rate. The annual subscription is inclusive of Personal Accident Insurance cover whilst on RAYNET duties, and is £7.20 per annum (60p per month). Members are also covered by Public Liability Insurance for RAYNET duties.

RAYNET all purpose number:

0303 040 1080 (Press * for emergency)

The Geographical Number continues to be valid:

0141 621 2121

The RAYNET Shield

National Chairman, Cathy Clark G1GQJ presents the RAYNET Shield for 2008 to Kent for its outstanding response to a callout by the South Coast Ambulance Service on 2nd October, and for the excellent planning and execution of that plan in covering the Tour de France.



The shield was accepted by Richard Mason 2EORAM, Group Controller of Medway Group on behalf of the County Controller, Dennis Spalding G1JQH, who was 'imprisoned' at home recovering from a hip operation.

The SECamb callout was reported in Issue 65 of RAY-Link and arose from a total failure of mains and standby power at the SECamb Maidstone HQ, resulting in a loss of telephone, radio and IT services.

Kent were assisted by South Sussex Group. When, at 21:00 it appeared that the operation may extend well into the next day all adjacent Groups (in three Zones) were put on standby ready to provide relief operators.

The callout occurred at 15:45 and lasted until 09:30 the following morning. Despite the alert occurring in normal working time, within 1½ hours Kent RAYNET had all the required ambulance stations and hospitals manned and four linked talk-through units to provide radio communications between SECamb HQ in Maidstone and the hospitals in South and East Kent and the Isle of Thanet! The strategically positioned TTUs facilitated direct message passing anywhere across the network

The logistics involved:

- Operators at 7 Ambulance Stations
- Operators at 3 A&E Hospitals
- Four linked repeaters setup on hilltops for the operation enabling messages to be passed in a single hop
- More than 30 operators were involved, allowing for shift changes
- The network was in place for 16 hours running on independent power.

The RAYNET network kept the SECamb radio network (provided by hand-held Airwave radios brought in as part of the SECamb Emergency Plan] free for priority traffic.

The 2008 Conference & AGM

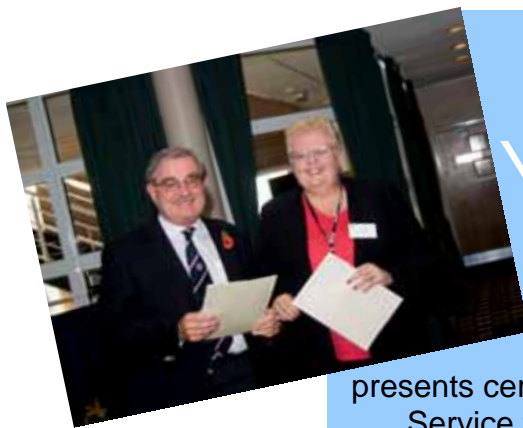
The 2008 Conference and Annual General Meeting was a roaring success with over 100 members attending—equal best with 2005 in the current decade. It was held at Aintree race course, with the Premier Inn Hotel, Rocking Horse Restaurant and the conference centre all in one place. It was all organised by the NE RAYNET Groups, who even arranged the dry sunny weather (they claim)!



Stephen Maddox OBE, Chief Executive of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council kicks the event off with the opening address. The event was sponsored by the Merseyside local authorities.



Dave Hicks G8IFA Zonal Coordinator for Zone 10 at the podium. Sadly, we learned later in the day that Dave is resigning after 14 years in post, due to ill health.



30 YEARS

Cathy Clark G1GQJ National Chairman presents certificates for 30 years of RAYNET Service to Trevor Groves G4KUJ (Left) & Phil Williams G6AQP (Right)



Tom Henratty G0JRT stands down as Zone 1 (North East England) Co-ordinator after 11 years in the office. Cathy, G1GQJ National Chairman presents a momentum to Tom in recognition of his contribution to the organisation.

A special thanks to:

Chris Hampson G8RXB for leading the organisation of the AGM.



Steven Davies M0SPD, Wirral Group for all the photographs.



One of a number of User Service vehicles on display at the convention. This is the Red Cross Unimog (yes, they do only have the one) not long back from China. It does about 9 miles to the gallon which was a bit of a problem as diesel is apparently not readily available in China.





The 2008 Network Convention and AGM took place in the Becher's conference suite in the Queen

Mother's stand at Aintree Racecourse, Liverpool on Saturday 4th November.

The event, sponsored by the five Merseyside local authorities, was attended by over 130 delegates and guest speakers. The welcoming address was given by Stephen Maddox OBE, Chief Executive of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council and was followed by a presentation on Merseyside Police Communications.

Following the theme of "Tunnel Communications", there were presentations by Richard Davies of Network Rail, the Standedge tunnel tests and the Mersey Tunnel communications system. There were also presentations on insurance by David Heap, the Network's insurance broker, and feedback on the Network's strategic planning discussions, given by Phil Williams G6AQP, Deputy Chairman. Chris Moulding demonstrated APRS throughout the day. RAYNET Supplies were also in attendance.

An emergency vehicles display was provided by Merseyside Police, Network Rail, Mersey Tunnels, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, British Red Cross, Salvation Army and Sefton Council.



Following lunch, kindly provided by the sponsors, the Network Chairman Cathy Clark G1GQJ, presented her report to the membership.

She outlined changes to the

Committee of Management during the past twelve months and presented a gift to Tom Hanratty



GOJRT, who will be retiring as Zone 1 co-ordinator on 31st December 2008. She looked forward to welcoming Geoff Darby G7GJU as ZC1 and Andy Evans G6RIB as ZC2 in January 2009.

The 2008 RAYNET Shield is presented to Kent RAYNET in recognition of their work during the Tour de France 2007 and most recently in response to the SECAMB communications failure.

Cathy spoke briefly on the current situation regarding the RSGB and also on the matter of talk-through permits.

She announced a number of projects to be undertaken by the Network during the forthcoming twelve months

including the purchase of a dedicated RAYNET server. This facility would allow the Network to improve IT services, both internally and also to the membership in the years to come. Training packages were currently being developed, and it was envisaged that electronic packages could be developed using the facilities on the dedicated server.

A new non-emergency telephone number went live at the end of August and would be officially launched to our User Services at the Emergency Services Show in Stoneleigh near Coventry to be held in mid November. □



RAYNET at the Emergency Services Show, Stoneleigh - November 2008



The RAYNET stand in the calm of the evening before the show opened. The stand to the left is that of the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Cabinet Office).

So far as we are aware this was our first appearance at a National Emergency Services Show, and there was no charge. It was a big two-day affair, occupying two large exhibition halls (up from one last year). We were nicely situated amongst our User Services, next door to the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) who we kept well fed with jelly beans! Bruce Mann, Head of CCS stopped by briefly and took our gate-fold leaflet and a jelly bean or two. Whilst we are known at the CCS it was nice to learn that the boss personally is aware of who we are, he said *I see you guys virtually every week!* It would appear he is a keen cyclist.

We were visited by a large number of our Cat 1 & 2 User Services, as well as those who already know us



Publicity Material

Our national publicity material was updated with new fliers, fact sheets and activity reports on display and available for our User Services to take away.

well, such as St John Ambulance and Red Cross. Several times we were told *You are in are emergency plans but we did not know what you could actually do!*

Two of us were quizzed by a Lieutenant Colonel for a good twenty minutes about our capability and asked why we did not present at the Emergency Planning College at Easingwold. We said we would be very happy to do so if invited! The Lt Col said he would be at Easingwold the following week and intended to ask about us.

Although the event is not open to the public there were a fair number of radio amateurs there, quite a number of RAYNET members and many others. We must have been visited by at least 40. Next year we are considering having a visitors' book.

Over the two days seven of our senior members (Gregg GODUB is missing from our picture) covered the event led by Phil Williams G6AQP, Deputy Chairman. Two or three covered the stand whilst the others variously took breaks to eat and look around, but most importantly to 'network'.

We had all brand new publicity material and business cards for the event, thanks to Phil G6AQP and Brett G4FLO, burning the mid-night oil to produce the designs and source the suppliers. The collapsible display screens clearly shown in the picture (top left) made their first appearance at the national AGM at the beginning of November. We are grateful to Ian Jackson G9RWH our Company Secretary for sourcing these and getting them delivered in time.

We were all of the opinion that the show significantly raised our profile, and an appreciation of our capability with our user services and we found some useful products and were able to negotiate 'quantity discounts' for one-off orders—details elsewhere in this news letter. □



More of our new publicity material



Six of the seven members who helped man our stand; left to right are: Chris Sheridan M0AZQ, Zone 6 2 Sigs BDE Liaison & HF Team; Phil Williams G6AQP, Deputy Chairman & ZC5; Dave Green M0HPV, ZC9; Chris Hampson G8RXA, ZC7; Don Kirkwood G3YQO, ZC6; David Smith G8IDL, News Reading & HF Teams. Missing from picture: Greg Mossop G0DUB, Technical Team Leader & HF Team.



Greg Messop G0DUP, our National Technical Team Leader Elected as Region 1 EmCom Coordinator for the next three years.

At the November IARU Region 1 Triennial Meeting in Cavtat, Croatia Greg Mossop G0DUP was elected to serve as IARU Region 1 EmCom Coordinator for the next 3 years, superseding Seppo Sisatto, OH1VR, who has done such a good job establishing GAREC over this recent period. Having just been elected when he turned up to help at the Emergency Services Show he made no mention this. Fortunately we have members who are happy to snitch. Thanks to Paul Gaskell G4MW0 who was duty snitcher on this occasion. We need more of this!

Gregg always hides his light under a bushel. Despite denying that the RAYNET HF Net (raynet-hf.net) is organised no doubt his work in this area has been a major contributory factor in being recognised for this appointment.

As well as being an active group, county and Zone 10 member, Greg is also part of the Emergency Planning and Technical voluntary teams and a hard-working member of the RSGB's 5MHz Working Group. He was instrumental in the setting up of the RAY-WARP, and has assisted in the preparation of documentation for international conferences, such as the IARU Region 1 meeting in Davos in 2005, and GAREC in 2005 and 2006. He was awarded the RAYNET Shield in 2006 in recognition of his untiring work, commitment and co-operation at all levels of RAYNET.

We hope you will all join us in congratulating Greg on a well-earned appointment and we are sure that he will see through and motivate even more development of Amateur Radio Emergency Communications in the HF arena during the next few years.

The current major source of info on Cavtat is the DARC (German National Amateur Radio Society) website at <http://www.darc.de/ausland/new/iaru/CV2008/> - (in German, of course].

Three New Zonal Co-ordinators



Andy Evans G6RIB

Andy has been elected Co-ordinator for Zone 2 (Yorkshire and Humberside) from 1st January 2009, filling a long standing vacancy. Andy has been a member since 2004.

Geoff Darby G7GJU

Geoff has been elected Co-ordinator for Zone 1 (North East England) from 1st January 2009, replacing Tom Henratty G0JRT who stands down after 11 years. Geoff has been a member since 1989.



Jon Mossman G7JKK

Jon has been elected as Co-ordinator for Zone 10 (North West England) from 1st January 2009, replacing Dave Hicks G8IFA who stands down after 14 years in the post. Jon has been a member since 1992.

Three Long-Serving Outgoing Zone Co-ordinators



Dave Duff GM4UGF

Dave stood down as Zone 22 [North of Scotland] Co-ordinator after 4 Years in post on 31st December, 2008. Dave's zone covers the largest region in terms of area and he had the furthest to travel for CoM meetings. He was also been acting as caretaker Co-ordinator for South of Scotland. Dave has been a member since 1983 and ZC since 2002.

Dave Hicks G8IFA

Dave also stood down as at 31st December, 2008 as Zone 10 (North West England) Co-ordinator. Dave, who has been a member since 1982 had held the office since 1994. Dave is a former board member of the RSGB.



Tom Henratty GOJRT

Tom is the third ZC to stand down. Tom was Zone 1 Co-ordinator (NE England) until 31st December, 2008. Tom, who has been a member since 1986 had held the office since 1st January 1997

I am sure all members will join the Committee of Management in thanking them for their dedication. *Chairman*

We Get Mentioned in the Most Unexpected Places!

Following the callout of Kent RAYNET in October last year I was contacted by Bill Ray, a journalist, presumably just by virtue of being the ZC for the area. Bill said he had never heard of us and asked what we did. I briefly explained what we do and who we do it for.

He came back to me again in November for some more information which I duly gave him. A couple of days later Richard Mason 2E0RAM, Kent RAYNET drew my attention to an article by Bill on the web site of *The Register*, (http://www.theregister.co.uk/2008/11/28/wireless_survivors/) about resilience, in which we get a mention on both pages. I was impressed by the way Bill found a 'shell' around which to introduce the subject in such a way that it was not just a statement of fact which nobody would have bothered to read—indeed, which would probably never have been printed.

It was clear from the article that Bill had properly researched his material. As a professional journalist he no doubt takes this aspect for granted and I am sure it is expected from those for whom he writes. Nevertheless, as I said to him in an email afterwards, that is not universal practice and I am sure that some professionals are actually paid to write garbage. I am sure most of us will have heard the saying *Never let the facts get in the way of a good story!*

Don Kirkwood G3YQO

Grab Bags and Inflatable Tents at Discounted Prices

A spinoff from our attendance at the Emergency services show is that it gave us a chance to look at a vast range of products available to emergency, rescue and other similar services. See **page 6** for three items of particular use to RAYNET.

We were able to negotiate corporate/quantity discounts for one-off orders. In the unlikely event you have problems getting the discount email raylink@raynet.net.

Seen at the Emergency Services Show



Inflatable Tent from Emergency Solutions Ltd

Our presence at the Emergency services show was not all one sided. There were some useful products from a RAYNET point of view and we were able to negotiate bulk discounts even though orders are likely to be placed as 'one offs'.

Inflatable Tent

The first things that took our interest were the inflatable tents. That was quickly quelled when we discovered the prices—£3,000 & £4,000 plus VAT. That changed again when we visited the outside area and saw one that was less substantial than these but generally adequate for our purposes. This is the one illustrated. Known as the *emer@tent*, it measures 3.9x2.4m with full headroom—so it could hold a small car—and certainly a field Control. It weighs just under 16kg and occupies less than 0.1m³ and comes with a foot pump, guy cords and stakes. Greater stability can be achieved by



Also at the show were some excellent industrial quality Kit Bags. Two caught our attention. The first was a clothing

could be as simple as driving your vehicles over them. A continuous air supply is not required. If it is deployed for some time a top up of air every day or two will keep it rigid.

This comes from Emergency Solutions Ltd, Stansted House, Third Avenue, London Stansted Airport, CM24 1AE. Tel: 01279 681386; Fax: 01279 661430, Email: sales@emer.uk.com.

Now for the price. Emergency Solutions have said that they will supply at the corporate rate of £492.78 incl VAT. They will include *free* of charge the heavy duty ground sheet. If you place an order say that you are RAYNET and this was agreed at the Emergency Services Show.

It comes in different colours and for an extra cost the RAYNET logo could be displayed on the walls.

bag with two totally waterproof compartments; meaning that wet clothing could be placed in one without contaminating the 'dry side'. It is illustrated here:



Kit Bag 2KT34, £13 +VAT

The second model is an ideal equipment bag with rigid sides and base, several Velcro® fastened pockets on the outside and zipped mesh pockets on the inside—this is it:



Tactical Kit Bag TKB, £34 +VAT

The figures quoted are actually the 100-off prices but RAYNET members can buy one-offs for this price. Just say you are RAYNET, we were at the Emergency Services Show and Susan authorised it (she's the boss).

For more information see www.ruthlee.co.uk; Ruth Lee Ltd is located in London Road, Corwen, LL21 0RZ; Tel: 01490 414282; Fax: 01490 413091; Email: mail@ruthlee.co.uk. □

The Year in Review—2008



Geoff Griffiths G3STG
14 Mansion House Gardens
Melton Mowbray
LE13 1LE

2008 proved to be another year of progress for RAYNET throughout the UK.

Groups were been busy with no less than 509 events having been reported, giving support to our User Services, and responding to various emergencies around the UK

January saw the Eastbourne and Wealden Group, supported by South Sussex, placed on standby for a potential Flooding emergency in Uckfield. A temporary Talk-through unit was activated to enable good coverage of the area. The Surrey Group undertook some training at SECAMB HQ in Banstead, and this contact with the User Service proved useful later in the Year.

Altogether 26 events in the month kept groups across the UK busy, and included testing of communications links, and support for a number of outdoor events.

Robin Bellerby took up his post this month, holding the Public Services Post amidst high hopes for improving relationships between the Network and the Society.

Twenty-seven events were reported to the web-site in February, with the involvement of all sorts of transport from trains, horses, motorcycles and marathon runners. Scouts across the Cotswolds were taking part in their Marathon, Groups in Oxfordshire got involved in a Winter Challenge, and exercises involving simulated rail crashes and opening rest centres kept some Groups busy this month.

Members who visited the Blackpool Rally this month had an opportunity to meet CoM members face-to-face, and replenish their Supplies chest.

March proved to be even busier, with meetings, exercises, training and user service events keeping everyone busy. This month saw an increase in Local Resilience Forum meetings for many areas too, refining relationships between Groups and their Blue Light services.

The next month calmed down a little, with 28 events recorded, ranging from major events such as the Three Peaks Fell Race and the Birmingham McMillan Cancer Run needing the cooperation of more than one group to service, to Zonal Meetings and a meeting of the Cave Radio Group.

But then into May, traditionally the busiest month of the year for many Groups - this year no exception to the tradition with 73 events reported.

Gwent Group were busy with tests for the Dark Dragon event whilst Kent Groups were preparing for the Castles Ride. On the Isle of Man, the Manx National Rally received support from RAYNET members from Zone 10, and Fund raising events got Communications support in Suffolk, Yorkshire, Norfolk, Warwickshire, Surrey, Hampshire, Sussex, Merseyside, Herefordshire, Nottinghamshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Wiltshire,

Dorset, Leicestershire, Fife, Hertfordshire, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Cheshire, Tayside, Derbyshire, Surrey, Humberside and Greater Manchester. There was of course a host of other work on too, so truly a national month of activity.

Internationally, many Radio Amateurs assisted with communications during and following the earthquakes in China, and international co-operation continued with the latest in the series of International "GlobalSet" tests.

In June, the Pitt Review was published, giving in its 92 recommendations much thought to User Services and RAYNET Groups alike, following on from the Floods of the previous year.

RADCOM published an account of the Mull Rally work done by volunteers from all over the UK, and detailed some of the ground

breaking development of the use of APRS and Packet communications in support of this major motor sport event.

For the rest of RAYNET members, the month proved to be just as busy as was

May, with 73 more duties reported. The Tunnel 10k gave Merseyside an opportunity to explore tunnel communications which was reported on at the National AGM later. Ironman in Dorset kept everyone on their toes, and support for events, day and night, continued around the UK.

RAYNET Groups across the UK were active in July in a number of high profile duties with three Lon-

➡ *2008 followed the trend of 2006 and 2007 in seeing us involved in more than 500 events during the year.*



➡ *Internationally, many Radio Amateurs assisted with communications during and following the earthquakes in China, and international co-operation continued with the latest in the series of International "GlobalSet" tests.*



don Groups working for the first time in support of the National Kidney Research Fund on the London Bridges Walk. The Gloucestershire County Team providing communications cover at the Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford, and two Welsh groups working on Exercise Dark Dragon to mention but three. Altogether, there were 54 events of various sizes around the UK covering Bike Rides, Walks and public events.

International

News included the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding at Friedrichshaven between the IARU and Red Cross and Red Crescent which was reported this month, thus strengthening the links between these organisations and the Radio Amateur Community.

At home, the long-awaited meeting with the RSGB took place, which was followed shortly thereafter with the disappointing news that The Society had decided to withdraw from its *Memorandum of Understanding* with the Network.

August, normally a "quieter" month for RAYNET Groups around the UK brought reports of the frequencies used by Hurricane Watch, and information on the work of IRESC in preparation for the "season". News also came from 38 events around the UK including RAYNET support for music festivals, horse events, triathlons and walks, the Action Research 100 mile Bike Ride and sailing club events as well as sundry training events and exercises. The Isle of Wight Group were kept busy at the Cowes Regatta firework display, and offered free ferry tickets and a packed lunch to entice support

from the mainland!

September saw the usual burst of activity with a total of 66 events being reported. Many Groups were pleased to learn of the revised conditions governing the manning and close-down of RAYNET talk-through units. The Network decided to continue the issuing of talk-through permits to provide information to OFCOM regarding the successful operation of the facility. Members in Essex supported the testing of

International News included the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding at Friedrichshaven between the IARU and Red Cross and Red Crescent which was reported this month.

the Flood Warning Sirens in the County, whilst the Ironman event in Dorset drew support from members from Somerset, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Devon

and Yorkshire. Fife members helped out at the Leuchars Air Show, whilst the Lion's Tail was once again tweaked by the Melton Group, and Equinox kept members in Wiltshire busy.

Members from three Kent Groups provided communications for the South East Coast Ambulance Service during a communications failure at their Kent HQ in October. Excellent wide area coverage was provided for non-

emergency traffic over the entire area. The callout came at 15:45 and continued through to 09:30 the next day. (*See inside front cover*).

Other service for a total of 36 events reported this month included the Leicester Show at Donington, a major exercise in East Anglia, and runs, Marathons and exercises throughout the UK. In November, RAYNET presented a stand at the Emergency Services Show at Stoneleigh

Park Showground on the outskirts of Coventry and prompted much interest from Conference attendees. The stand was also visited by RAYNET members showing their support.

November also saw a very successful Annual Convention at Aintree Racecourse which was excellently organised by the Groups in the Merseyside area. This saw the launching of a new non-emergency telephone no, and a series of interesting presentations on Merseyside Police Communications, Tunnel Communications, and useful information on Network Insurance arrangements and a display of emergency vehicles from local 'Blue Light' and voluntary services.

The latest GLOBALSET test was held this month, and at the subsequent IARU Region 1 meeting in Croatia, Greg Mossop G0DUB was appointed the new Emergency Communications Co-ordinator for three year term beginning in January 2009. Greg is heavily involved in the Globalset test and in the RAYNET HF Team work

In December, the retirement of David Hicks G6IFA as ZC10 was announced, and his successor,

Jon Mossman G7JJK of Trafford and Rochdale RAYNET groups, took up this post in January 2009. RAYNET supplies closed for a well earned

rest over the Christmas and New Year period after another successful year's service to RAYNET volunteers. Members also had their final chance to offer comments on the New Draft RAYNET Manual Part 1 which had been launched earlier in the year.

And so with a further 18 duties notched up and with the publication of a new Ofcom Frequency Table, 2008 drew to a close, and we all look forward to another successful year for all RAYNET Volunteers.

Before we close however, we

should remember the service of those members we have lost during this year, these include:

Ray Webb G3EKL the Network's first Z2 Co-ordinator and Network Treasurer, Mrs **Lilian Austin G0WYX** of North West Durham RAYNET Group, **Eileen Daly**

G0TXF, of Wirral RAYNET group, **Joe Binnings G3AJS** formerly County Controller Essex, **George Kallis 2W1JLK** of Gwent Group, and **Charles Bottoms G4PIP**, Controller W Midlands, all old friends who will be sadly missed.

□

The Charles Bottoms G4PIP Legacy

In January 2008 we sadly lost Charles Bottoms G4PIP, the former County Controller for Warwickshire and an active radio amateur for many years. (See his obituary in RAY~Link 63, p3).

A few months later we received a letter from the executors of his estate informing us that we were mentioned in his will and that, along with a number of other charities, would be sharing in the residuary of his estate. This came as a complete surprise as we had known nothing about his intentions to remember the Network. It takes some time to obtain probate and to wind-up an estate but in October we received a cheque from his executors for £30,000. We

were deeply touched that he held the Network and its members in such high regard.

This is the first legacy or bequest that the Network has ever received and being a registered charity it means that the money is exempt from Inheritance Tax. No restrictions on the use of the legacy were placed in his will and we feel quite humbled that Charles not only remembered us, but is trusting us to spend the money wisely. A legacy in some ways is an ultimate gift as the individual cannot be present to see that it is being put to good use.

The Committee of Management met in January 2009 and took the following decisions.

That:

1. the sum will be regarded as capital
2. Charles should be remembered in the name given to this capital
3. professional advice would be taken in how best to invest this capital
4. interest on this invested capital would be used first to provide RAYNET grants.

Obviously there is more to be done and details will be published in future editions of RAY~Link as they become available. However if you have any ideas or comments, please Brett Rider at finance@raynet-uk.net or via Hunters Moon).

Talk-through Permits Now Issued for a 12 Month Period

With effect from 1st January this year, Ian Jackson G8RWH, the Network's Talk-Through Co-ordinator is issuing 12 month Talk-through permits. Work is in progress to allow Controllers to apply on-line for their permits but in the meantime SAE's are still required.

Controllers are reminded that talk-through usage reports can now be made on line. The Network has to provide an annual report regarding our operations involving talk-through use (including frequencies and any interference). The use of this facility will greatly assist the Network in providing Ofcom with more up-to-date data.

Do you have an Icom 706?

If you do, you may like to visit <http://www.eham.net/articles/12358> which alludes to a major design flaw. Thanks to Nigel G1XBV, for forwarding the this link.

SEEHEAR

ONCE AGAIN, GEOFF TRAWLS RECENT RADIO PUBLICATIONS FOR ARTICLES OF RAYNET INTEREST



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Once again, can I welcome you to my stroll through some of the articles in various Amateur Radio Mags which may be of interest to RAYNET Members. And this time, something a little different with some personal comments about a problem we all have to think about!

RadCom

THE RADIO SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN MEMBERS MAGAZINE. WWW.RSGB.ORG

December's RADCOM contained a review of a clever dongle which allows you to sample the D-Star network without spending out a lot of cash on one of the latest radios with D-Star capability.

Simple idea really, fit the dongle into a USB port on your PC, load up the supplied software, and away you go. The real power of the system is that the internet can be used to connect to a worldwide system of gateways and repeaters. So to sample the power of the system, this might be a way of deciding whether the mode is for you or not. The only problem is that the dongle is priced at the best part of £150, so it's still not a fantastically cheap route into exploring the mode. If you are interested, then visit pages 44 & 45!



The 2008 Global Amateur Radio Emergency Conference was held in Friedrichshafen, and report of some of the interesting outcomes appeared on Page 51 of the October issue of RADCOM, written by Robin Bellerby. The conference decided to adopt the theme of "Amateur Radio - your resource in emergency and disaster communication" for this year's World Amateur Radio Day on April 18th. The conference also saw the signing of a "Memorandum of Understanding" between the ITU, the IARU and the International Red Cross, similar to the one recently agreed between Red Cross and ARRL.(RADCOM October 2008, P51)

The DATA Column in the same issue reported on freely available Software now readily available for data modes, including a new approach to narrow band TV. Also were reported three soundcard



A Screen Short from Win DRM

based digital voice modes, which the article reports provide surprisingly good audio quality with virtually no QRM when used with an SSB transceiver. Of the three, FDMDV seems to give better results with weaker signals than WinDRM. (RADCOM October 2008 P56, 57)

As usual the American CQ Magazine carries a useful content of Contest and operating news, but also includes a monthly "Public Service" column (alas poor RADCOM) and in January 2009 interesting reports of the support for the Philadelphia Phillies Parade, changes to the North American message system and a Pandemic Flu "Drill" which involved mass immunization of 4,500 citizens, and used Amateur Radio to maintain contact with other centres involved.

An exercise was held in St Bardino County as part of the USA's largest ever earthquake drill - designed to be "as close to a real activation as we could manage". The feedback from the exercise indicated that the phone system and Internet contacts would be down after 10 minutes. Ham Radio Operators would still be required for up to 72 hours after the event, although Internet contact would probably come up quick quickly after the restoration of power supplies. (CQ Amateur Radio JANUARY 2009 pp50-53)

The November issue carried

interesting early reports of Hurricane Ike which hit the Texas Coast in Mid-September, and showed the importance of support from the IRESC, using English and Spanish speaking operators, and the use of VoIP via the Internet for passing weather information. (CQ Nov08 pp60-64)

The same issue contained an interesting article reminding us that Telephones can provide a useful source of good quality microphones! (pp 44-49)

QST, the ARRL USA equivalent of RADCOM carried an editorial from their Chief Exec, K1ZZ, reporting the contribution made by Amateur Radio during the 2008 Hurricane season, concluding with "Does this mean that Amateur Radio no longer has a role to play? ABSOLUTELY NOT!" I hope this was read in Bedford hi hi. (QST November 2008 p9)

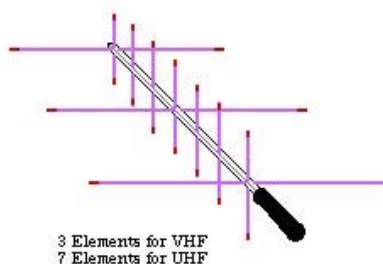
The same issue carried a neat idea for feeding antenna cables into the shack. It certainly would suit if you have a sash window next to your operating position. I don't have, so I shall continue to rely on my plastic sink drain pipes through the wall for six colour coded feeders - but don't forget to make the pipes drain towards the outside! (pp 40-42)



If you have not come across the Arrow Antenna yet, then the article in QST for December 2008 (p80) may be of interest. This

American antenna manufacturer produces some nice so-

lutions to having a two-band yagi antenna with built-in diplexer which comes "flat-packed" into a cardboard tube - handy for those remote locations, and greatly sought after for portable sat-comm demos! (QST December 2008 p60 or web-search for Arrow Antennas)



AO27	Up-link 145.850	Down-link 436.800
UO14	Up-link 145.975	Down-link 435.070

Arrow Antenna



safe and legal system of operating voice mobile is one that we all need to give some thought to, and there have been a number of commercial solutions in the amateur press recently. I have been operating a Watson Mobile Microphone kit driving a Yeasu 8800 in the boot of my Corsa, but am not really too happy with it. The Corsa is fairly typical of your EuroJelly Mould with all the usual problems of no storage space on the dash for the rig for other bits and pieces. I thought I had this cracked when I persuaded my friendly Vauxhall dealer to run an un-switched 12 volt supply into the boot, with a tap off at the gear lever well.

The remote unit consists of a control box with PTT up-down switches etc. The mounting of this unit is provided for by a

curved profile design to fit around the gear lever stalk, but unfortunately this will not cope with a gaiter around the gear lever as is provided on many small cars, and the supplied rubber band designed to hold the box in place just doesn't work for me. In addition,

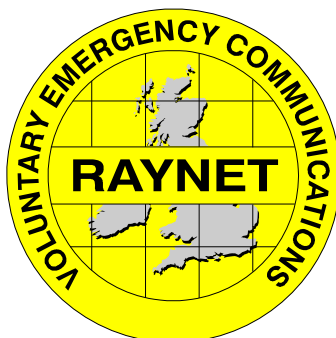
I can find room for the supplied swan-neck mike behind the sun-visor, but this only really gives adequate audio out when it is positioned very close to me which hardly makes it inconspicuous! Let alone safe.

There have been a number of adverts recently for remote kits using a blue-tooth mike and ear-piece, and I am tempted to try one of these out. You can read these reports at QST November 2008 pp73-75 for a simple circuit (non-blue tooth), or CQ Amateur Radio December 2008 (RPF Comms TalkSafe) which also been reported in Radcom ... so watch this space.

In the meantime, if you have any problems accessing any of the references quoted, please drop me a line and I will see if I can help.

Watch This Space

In a non-scientific survey which has not been carried out, it was determined that 25% of all our readers could have said something interesting, useful, funny or controversial to fit in this space. . . too late now! You will have to wait for the April edition for which the deadline is 19th April.



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