



Radio Society of Great Britain



City of Bristol RSGB Group - G6YB

[At the Bristol Lawn Tennis & Squash Club, Redland Green, Redland, Bristol BS6 7HF](#)

Monday April 30th 1930hrs

TONY GRIGGS G4KMB:

His journey in the South Atlantic aboard the Royal Mail Ship “ St Helena”



This is the story of Tony's journey last year, aboard one of the last remaining mail ships to Tristan da Cunha and St Helena.

Tony made a short video which he will show as part of his talk entitled 'No More Morse' which highlights how shipboard radio communication has changed since his days as a Merchant Navy R/O in the 60s. The film also shows something of life on the islands and includes an interview with the chief operator at Tristan Radio.

You will find this a fascinating evening - do try to get along !

Coming soon : Dates for your diary

May 28th : Phil Whitchurch G3SWH 3DA0PW Swaziland 2012

June 25th : Christmas meal ! More details soon

July 30th : Potted Talks & Natter Night

I asked a few months ago for contributions for the newsletter including the subject “How I started in Amateur Radio”. This is from Martyn G3RFX

Part two

“What sort of a hobby is this anyway?” my mother would say. “On that bloomin’ radio all day and talking absolute drivel to like-minded layabouts across the length and breadth of South West Essex? Not to mention increasing our dear neighbours’ blood pressure to danger level in the middle of the night with your stupid Morse code broadcasts. Quite apart from which, you ought to be concentrating on your O Levels!”

Admittedly she had a point here - as my less confrontational father tended to agree.

“Martyn,” he would say, “if you don’t stop transmitting like this, 24 hours a day, I’ll switch off the electricity to your bedroom. That’ll teach you!”

But it never did. Each time I simply pulled up the appropriate floorboard in my bedroom, otherwise known as the Pig Sty, and re-connected my home-brew hotchpotch of a station directly to the bare mains wiring underneath. This way I was back on the air within seconds.

A highly controversial solution, this, and one which came firmly into the ‘Don’t try this at home’ category. But then at home was the very place I needed to try it most. After all, how could things possibly be right with the world if G3RFX wasn’t on the air talking absolute drivel on 160m?

I often wondered whether my friend John, G3PQA, down the road in his Elizabethan cottage on Theydon Bois Green, had similar problems with parental power cuts, veteran birdwatchers and allegations of talking absolute drivel. If so, he never mentioned it. Also, he had the considerable advantage that he almost exclusively used CW, where any long-winded controversial content would be less obvious to the casual listener.

For a time I liked to think that John and I were arch-rivals on the 160m scene. If I was honest, though, the main difference between our two stations was that his was excellent and mine was crap. After all, he was always working stations I could barely distinguish from the noise level, let alone work myself. Although I do seem to remember a few very encouraging 559 reports from Czechoslovakia, which were OK in my book. ‘OK’, of course, in more ways than one.

Yes, it was at around this time that I discovered that there were clearly limits to what you could work in the way of DX on Top Band with only a 132 ft long wire at the dizzy height of 25 ft down the back garden.

Yet what this set-up lacked above ground, it more than made up for below it: a highly intricate earthing system consisting of all manner of copper rods and assorted metalica hammered into a corner of the parental flower bed.

I’m amazed my mother allowed it all in the first place – perilously close, as it was, to her prize-winning collection of roses, ranunculus and runner beans. Indeed to her additional dismay I could often be heard hammering yet more metal into this subterranean ‘Woodpecker’ array, firmly convinced that it would add at least one S-point to my signal on 160m into down-town Prague.

But then maybe one day there would be a newly licensed Czech operator just as keen as myself - sitting in his bedroom late at night and with the window wide open, listening on 160m to the legendary CW Bird booming in at 599 all the way from Theydon Bois, Essex.

Thanks for that Martyn Another history next month

News you may have missed

Congratulations to Steve Hartley G0FUW from Bath who has recently been appointed as Chairman of the Training and Education Committee. The new committee will take over much of the work previously done by the Amateur Radio Development Committee. Steve will bring a vast background of experience and knowledge in the training and education field to this new role and I'm sure he will do a really great job.

Amateur radio insurance update Following the previous announcements about the withdrawal of Bluefin from amateur radio insurance on the 31 March 2012, the RSGB is pleased to announce that two brokers are now offering insurance cover for radio amateurs. Whilst they do not recommend or endorse insurance companies they can confirm the details as follows:

South West Broking Ltd

This company is offering insurance that has been negotiated specifically for amateur radio enthusiasts. They have gained the commitment of an insurer within Lloyd's of London who offers cover for both radio equipment and third party liability insurance. Cover is available to both individual members and clubs.

Contact: Julian Dent of South West Broking Ltd. On 01454 806503 or by e-mail at: Julian@southwestbroking.co.uk and they will be pleased to provide further information

Quotedesk

A specialist insurance cover is also available from a company called Quotedesk. They are offering an all risk cover for Amateur radio equipment along with public liability cover.

Contact: Phone +44 (0) 845 073 7137 or visit www.quotedesk.co.uk

(any feedback from the above please let me know - Robin)

Titanic Anniversary "Radio Ham" Artie Moore (A press quote, so that could mean anything!), who picked up the distress message from the Titanic in his shed in Gelligroes Mill, near Pontllanfraith, 100years ago this month, will be honoured by an exhibition in Caerphilly. <http://www.thevalleys.co.uk/whats-on/the-titanic-the-mill-and-the-signal-artie-moore-and-titanic-s-sos-p211831>

Sorry for the lack of pictures this month !

If you have anything that might be of interest (radio related) to our reader, please send them along to me at robin@g3tkf.co.uk

Local Clubs Why not support them and try to make a meeting or two ?

Blackmore Vale <http://www.radioclubs.net/bvars/events.php>

Chepstow and District ARC <http://www.gw4lwz.org.uk/>

Chippenham & DARC <http://www.g3vre.org.uk/archive.asp>

MidSARC <http://www.midsarc.org.uk/>

North Bristol ARC <http://www.nbarc.org.uk/>

Shirehampton <http://www.shirehampton-arc.org.uk>

South Bristol ARC <http://www.sbarc.co.uk/>

Thornbury and South Gloucs ARC <http://www.tsgarc.ham-radio-op.net>

Trowbridge and District ARC <http://www.radioclubs.net/trowbridgedarc/events.php>

Please try to get along to a few talks given at the many clubs in our area .

If you find them interesting please consider getting some details to pass on to me so that OUR group can have a supply of interesting talks !

Have you got anything you would like more information on, or would YOU be prepared to give US a talk ?

Don't forget - if you see anything of interest to the group, or have anything for sale or wanted, drop me an email for inclusion in the next newsletter.

73

[Robin G3TKF](#)

RSGB Bristol Group Hon.Sec.

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