



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 28th March 1930hrs

**Phil Whitchurch G3SWH "Effective QSLing" or**

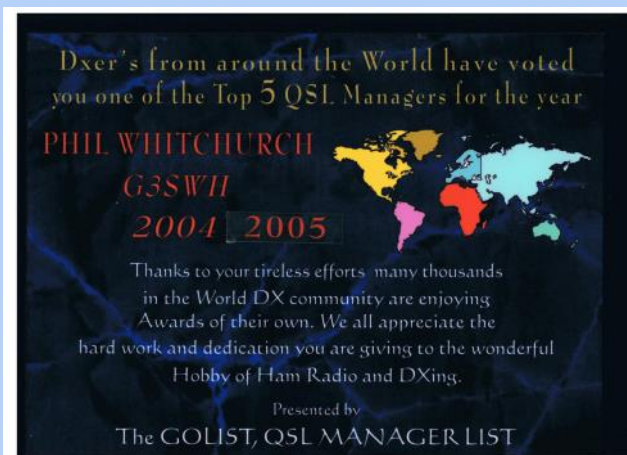
All you ever wanted to know about QSLing but were afraid to ask.

Phil says "As the QSL Manager for a number of DX stations and DX-peditions, I firmly believe that, even in the 21st century, QSL cards continue to be an important part of our hobby of amateur radio. The main purpose of my talk is to enable operators to make their QSLing both effective and efficient and to make getting that all-important QSO verification as simple as possible."

Come along and find out everything you need to know about QSLs .

*"I Don't QSL!" Come along and find out - you may be inspired to start a collection !*

*"I already have too many "*  
*You could get into e-QSLs !*



## Cyril Chapman G2HDR passed away on 21st Feb

*(I asked Philip ,his son, if he could let me have a few words about his father )*

Father got a temporary (Artificial Aerial) licence just before the start of the second world war and was granted a full licence after the war finished. He was always interested in radio but as there was little equipment around post-war it was largely down to home build, often put together with help from those involved with the Post Office. In the 1950s the MOD started selling off their equipment which was then utilised by the local amateurs. I can well remember father had in his shack a large iron framework with rows of pull-out racks bolted on the frame.



Cyril obtained his full licence after taking the RAE and Morse test in 1955; he made his first contact on October 1st (on 160m) of that year.

He served on the Bristol RSGB committee and became Chairman in the mid-60s .

His love was always Morse and he attended many NFDs. These were really great weekends. I well remember one of the radio club members had a large dog, a St. Bernard or similar, and he used to take that up to Dundry; apparently the dog was very useful in the middle of the night as a foot warmer.

Father's other interest was photography and seldom was he seen without his camera.

Workwise he worked in Southmead Hospital from early 1940s and was involved with the inception of the Pathology Department just before the launch of the NHS in 1948. He worked all his life in Toxicology, the science of drug determination from various samples; he used to enjoy this investigation work. He was well respected for his great attention to detail in his work, which covered the whole of the South West region.

He took early retirement in 1987 as my mother's health was in decline, and she passed away in 1988.

Up until his last week, he was fully in control of his life and keen to get back on the air from his care home in Filton.

It was a surprise that his decline was so quick, as in conversation with him you would have thought there was little wrong.

He was buried in Seaton in East Devon, a location he chose nearly twenty years ago, in a Woodland Burial on the banks of the River Axe overlooking the wetlands and wild life sanctuary - still keen on photography you see - mind you I think I will have a slight problem getting an aerial installed here, although I am sure he would appreciate it if I could !

He would have been 93 this month.

Philip Chapman

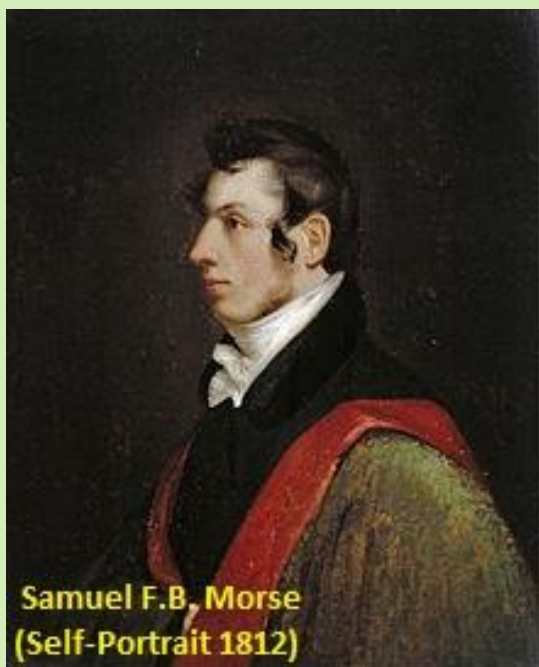
*Thank you Philip for those memories; your father was a real gentleman . G2HDR RIP*

## Men of Vision

Since the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the 1440s, the world has changed faster than at any time in the many centuries before this event and could be thought of as the main catalyst which heralded the new age of mass communication (Gutenberg's press pre-dated Caxton's, though the Chinese have a good claim to this invention many centuries before). In the early years of the printing press, mass communication brought success to the spread of Luther's European Religious Reformation, where previous attempts had failed.

Moving on a few centuries, we can see how the world continued to advance through the use of mass communication by means of the overland and undersea telegraph and then by wireless. Recently I wrote about the epic attempts by Cyrus West Field to lay the first Trans-Atlantic cable. He was aided by the man we associate with the telegraph code. This man was Samuel Finley Breese Morse. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries formed a period when people of wealth were eager to invest in an age of unstoppable progress. Mass communication changed the world from a multitude of unconnected global villages into one big global city. Former errand boy, Cyrus Field, had built his career as a businessman in the Paper Mill industry and used his wealth and connections to fund his cable project.

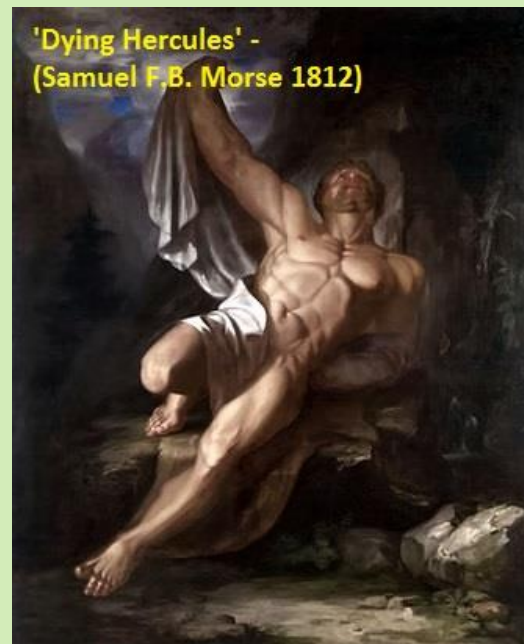
Samuel Morse was better known as one of the greatest American portrait painters.



**Samuel F.B. Morse  
(Self-Portrait 1812)**

Morse studied art in England and trained in the English 'Historical' style of painting. But perhaps as America did not have much history to paint about, Morse turned to portrait painting. In 1832, he became interested in the possibilities of inventing a telegraph system. In fact, Morse did not singularly invent the Morse code. Rather it was a co-development with his friend, Alfred Vail, and was a numeric format which would require a code book to translate the numbers into words. It was Vail, though, who developed this into a code which incorporated letters and other characters and this became American Morse Code used on the railroad telegraph systems.

Little did I realise whilst being trained as a professional Morse operator, some 45 years ago, that the Morse Code we are familiar with today has little similarity with the code of Morse and Vail. The code we closely use today was developed in Europe, by Friedrich Clemens Gerke, in 1848 and adopted as Standard International Code by the International Telegraphy Congress in 1865. Like Field and Morse, Gerke came from an entirely different background. He was a writer and musician who also became interested in developing telegraphy by changing and expanding the Vail-Morse code into its more familiar form.



The fact I find fascinating about people such as Field, Morse, and Gerke as with so many others who came up with great ideas during the late golden age of the Industrial Revolution, is that none were men of particular science or engineering. They were, though, men of vision who realised their ideas by being able to tap into (excuse the pun) financial resources and the minds of some of the greatest engineers and men of science of the age in order to achieve their dreams. As for the Morse code, should we call it Gerke code? Though, at least Morse and Vail started with dots and dashes.

**Bob G4BWB**

**John F.R.Weston G3LYW**

**The funeral will take place at Haycombe Cemetary BA2 2RQ in Bath on  
Tuesday April 5th at 1130hrs**

### **Coming soon to the Bristol Group**

April : Roger Dixon G4BVY “Matching - Amateurs do it in different ways”

May: John Thomas G4DVV “Rockets and X rays”

June : Chris Rennie M0OLO “Optical Communications”

July : “Christmas” Party

**Any more ideas for speakers later this year please ?**

### **At the local clubs :**

Bath and District ARC <http://badarc.webs.com/>

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

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

MidSARC [www.midsarc.org.uk/](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/calendar/>

Thornbury and South Gloucs ARC <http://tsgarc.uk/>

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

Weston Super Mare RS [www.radioclubs.net/wsmrs/](http://www.radioclubs.net/wsmrs/)

If you want to buy or sell something, let me know - Or tell us on the [Bristol RSGB Yahoo Group](#) !

I need articles for “How I started in radio” or “Things you may not know about members of the group” - If it’s publishable it can appear here!

**[Robin G3TKF](#)**

RSGB Bristol Group Sec.

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**<http://www.g6yb.org>** Don’t forget the history of the group here: **[History](#)**