

NARS NEWS



| An occasional Newport Amateur Radio Society newsletter |

Editors message

Quite a large newsletter this time as we have been quite busy at the club. Some great events coming up so don't miss those. Read about Doug and his outbound voyage in this news letter, the return leg to follow in the next edition.

Lighthouses 'not' on the air

Unfortunately we had to cancel the lighthouses on the air event at the East Usk Lighthouse this year. Strong winds and rain resulted in this event being called off. We look forward to next year.

Upcoming Events

24th-25th Sept - Railways on the Air - Tintern - GB4OST

30th Sept - Quiz night with the Cwmbran Club, MC0YAD at St Julians Learning Centre

14th Oct - Coal Power Stations - Ross - GW3NWS

28h Oct - AGM

18th Nov - 3d Printing demo evening - Richie & Dale



To the Azores and Back

As you all know our own Doug - MW0OPY - single-handedly sailed to the Azores and back. His story is too long to tell here in this news letter, however you can read all about it at the following website. Part 1 in this news letter :

<http://goo.gl/N9onRJ>

A couple of quotes, to 'wet' the appetite :

" So, I was hooked. My name duly appeared on the initial contenders list and I started preparing. Not all my Imray charts were in date but a few new ones made a lot of difference. My off-shore charts were all 2nd hand, mostly in date but not up-to-date BA. "

" The run across from there to the Azores was generally OK. Few ships were sighted but the weather wasn't going to let me pass unhindered and there was another gale to endure while transiting the archipelago. Whatever happened to the 'Azores High?' "

" Then, as the gale slowly abated came another heavy blow - my 150% genoa, furling to the shrouds, tore on the spreader tip after throwing off one of the wheels. "



Steve - GW4BLE

As many of you know Steve - GW4BLE - has undergone some quite extensive surgery. He has been re-admitted recently with a few complications but progress is being made. We all wish him a speedy recovery. Get well soon Steve !



Working KG1E

MW0LGE/P working KG1E on 15 watts SSB on 20m and a painters pole for a mast. Operating from the Magor wetlands on his KX3 and a newly constructed 1:1 dipole centre and balun (see article below).

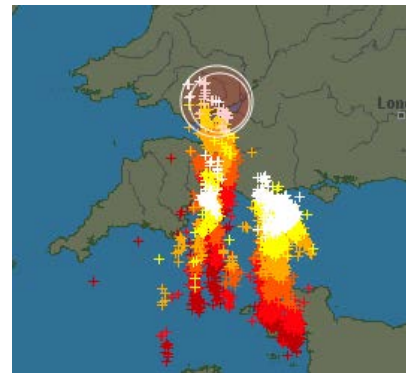
" If I had gone overboard then even if I had taken the dinghy with me it would have been a 450 mile paddle to the Iberian Coast. Thanks, Guardian Angel. "



Well done Doug, an amazing achievement !!

Lightning Protection

Lightning protection is quite a complicated topic. Perhaps the easiest method to try and avoid a 'hit' is to unplug your antennas and let them 'float'. Ensure the ends of the cables are kept well away from things that lightning/static could potentially arc to. Also remember to ground them out before reconnecting to the radios. We had some recent storms locally, but there are other times when static in the air is 'high', hail and such like.



SUBS reminder

Just a reminder that club subs were due on the 1st September. The membership fee for one year is £35. Please make cheques payable to NARS and see Steve GW4OGO.



Happy 80th birthday to John - GW8ICQ

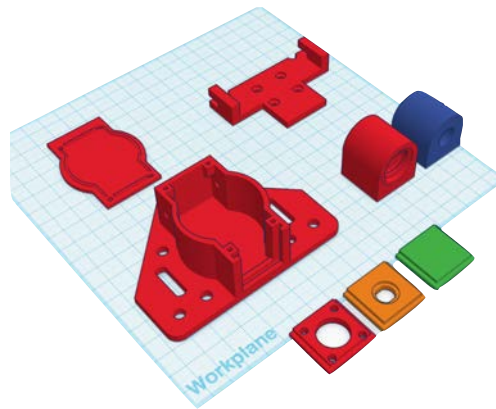
John celebrated his 80th birthday with friends at the clubhouse on the 2nd of September. We also had a nostalgia night where we heard stories of past radio experiences and many special QSL cards were on show. Dale organised a special 'link up' with Steve BLE in hospital, with everyone gathered around the camera.



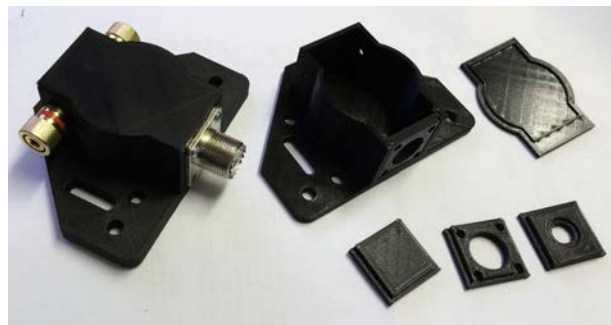
3D Printing !

So, after seeing some of the creations from a few friends and their 3d printers, my brother and I decided to go 50/50 on a printer. I really needed a small dipole centre and balun combo for my portable operations, capable of 100w tops, so I decided to go about making one.

Some designs in TinkerCad, a few tweaks here, a few there, and the case was complete, together with a number of different plates enabling custom, SO239 and bnc connections. The case would eventually house a 1:1 guanella current balun, using a fair-rite type 31 core.



The case went through a number of iterations, and prints. The above design is the latest version but seems to always be in a state of flux. The T clip you see in the design enables the dipole centre to be attached to a painters pole or slid down a fibre mast.



We did some tests last Friday at the club running 100 watts constant through the balun. I also used the balun with an inverted-v cut for the 20m band last weekend, and managed to work KG1E on 15watts. so all seems to be working well.

73 - MWoLGE



Calibration Evening

Ross brought in an array of test equipment and members checked everything was in order with their gear.



Fish and Chips !

What a great evening our annual fish and chip supper at the Wheatsheaf Inn in Magor tuned out to be. Mike - GW8MER - and his band 'Mixed Feelings' provided the evenings entertainment. Great food, great company and great music, doesn't get much better than that (oh don't forget the drinks too).

Beam me up Scotty

It all seemed like such a simple idea.....

What I needed was some sort of portable/temporary/directional aerial ready for when the Dxpeditions started. So, when Steve BLE mentioned that he was going to try to get Ant MWoJZE to give NARS a demo on the Hex beam, thoughts of a single band rotating dipole evaporated! By the time Ant duly arrived with his demo aerial set-up, I had managed to talk myself into having one of his portable Hex beams which he brought along to the event for me.

He also demonstrated a heavy duty push-up mast which was supplied via Gary MMoCUG. That's what I needed, I thought. So, over to Gary's website, where that idea got superseded by the idea of a more permanent mast affixed to the back wall of the house (after all, I'm not getting any younger and raising and lowering, not to mention turning a push up mast every time a bit of DX arrived might wear a bit thin after a while!) Well, this is what I told myself as I ordered the mast from Gary.



Six weeks later, Gary arrived (eventually) along with the mast and bracket, only for us to find said bracket did not fit! So back to Aberdeen with it for some fettling. After another couple of weeks the modified bracket received by post - yes, and it only cost £120 to send - although I had to be home as they couldn't fit it through the letterbox!

With the help of Ross NWS, the bracket and mast were duly fitted to the wall and much to his consternation, I vowed to "leave the install of the Hex beam for a month or so to allow the neighbours time to get used to it". Two days later, I decided to see what it looked like (breaking strain of a Kit Kat) only to discover that all the wire elements were too short except for 20m! One or two phone calls to Ant established it was not me that had got it wrong and they were posted back for another spot of fettling (still not found out why they were short).

Meantime as the 20m fitted, may as well try it out, I thought. The results of initial test were better than expected - 3 or 4 s-points over the doublet and that's at it's lowest height. Have since had the other re-worked elements back and installed and am more than pleased.

Oh, and then there was the install of the coax, rotator cable and of course the rotator.....

Not to mention the negotiations with the station manager - that new kitchen looks great! - 73 Steve - GW4OGO





BBC B Micro

MW0LGE's ancient BBC B Micro lives again. Article to follow in an upcoming news letter.



Articles

Please forward any ideas for articles, write ups and pictures for the next news letter to Steve GW4BLE. He can be seen here sporting his DX hat here at the recent UKSMG and National CW Field Day weekend.

Message from John - GW8ICQ

I would like to thank all the members of NARS for the lovely surprise on my 80th. birthday recently. It really made the day for me, a chorus of "Happy Birthday" when I arrived - Thanks Paul - cards, banners and, thanks to Margaret and Carol, a magnificent chocolate cake, complete with icing and candles. A display of QSL cards and memorabilia from the early days really brought back so many great memories. Logbooks from the past made very interesting reading and many of the entries made me very envious!

For me, it was a very memorable evening and I thank you all, especially Steve, who couldn't be with us, and Ross. Get well soon Steve, we are all thinking of you.

See you soon, 73 everyone - John

and finally....

The club will be on air this coming weekend 24th - 25th September for the yearly Railways On The Air weekend event. GB4OST will be the station callsign operating from the Old Station Tintern. The station served the village of Tintern on the Wye Valley Railway. It was opened on the 1st of November 1876, one of four stations on the line, and closed for passengers in 1959, and to freight in 1964. It was the second largest station on the line. It is now owned by Monmouthshire County Council and operates as a tourist attraction with an exhibition centre, cafe and shop.

Also, many thanks to everyone who has contributed to the this newsletter at short notice. Not all news letters will be quite this long, but there has been lots happening at NARS recently. Steve BLE asked me to sort this one out as he is rather busy getting better. Get well soon Steve from all of us.

73 - MW0LGE