

STARLITE

THE JOURNAL FOR THE STOURBRIDGE AND DISTRICT A.R.S.



**G6OI
G6SRS**



ISSUE: SEPTEMBER 2020



G4CVH

**STOURBRIDGE & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY
INCORPORATING
OLD SWINFORD HOSPITAL SCHOOL RADIO CLUB**

MEETINGS HELD AT

**OLDSWINFORD HOSPITAL SCHOOL
HEATH LANE
STOURBRIDGE
[8:00 TO 10:00 PM]**

VISITORS ALWAYS WELCOME

**THE SOCIETY NORMALLY HOLDS ITS MEETINGS
EVERY MONDAY (EXCLUDING BANK HOLIDAYS)**

RSGB AFFILIATED SOCIETY

STARLITE

Telephone Enquiries to:-

Hon. Secretary
John Clarke M1EJG
[01562] 700513

Or by Email to:-
honsec@g6oi.org.uk

StARS Website URLs:-
www.g6oi.org.uk
<http://g6oi.ross-lewis.co.uk>

StARS Facebook Page:-
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/stourbridge.ars/>

All correspondence/enquiries should
be addressed to the Hon Secretary at:-

StARS
c/o The Mill House
21 Mill Lane
Blakedown
Kidderminster
DY10 3ND

Forthcoming Meetings

September 5/6 th	*** SSB Field Day – Cancelled??? ***
September 7 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
September 14 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
September 21 st	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
September 28 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
October 5 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
October 12 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
October 19 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
October 26 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
November 2 nd	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
November 9 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
November 16 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
November 23 rd	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.
November 30 th	Club Net: 145.325MHz FM & Zoom Video. 8pm.

Editor's Comment

It was recently announced that since this Covid thing began and the introduction of online licence exams, there have been around 1,000 new hams being licensed. Furthermore, there were around 400 more due to take the exam in August. This is surely a good thing for the future of the hobby, but how many of these new licensees will actually get on the air? I suspect very few! I would be very surprised if this figure was exceeded, but I'd love to be proved wrong! Have you any view or opinions on this subject?

During the first week of August, it was reported that a contact was made between California and Hawaii. "Nothing unusual about that", I hear you say, but this was on 144MHz CW, most likely via tropo ducting and was at a distance of about 2,600 miles. I don't know what power and aerials were being used, but as these were Americans, I leave the possibilities to your imagination.

Did any of you take part in the "RadioActive" 2m FM QSO Party on the 22/23rd August? Organised by Mike M0XXM to attract activity on the 2m band, it appears there was a lot of stations on the air.

How about the "145 Alive" event on 29th August? Organised (I think) by Tim G5TM, to attract more activity on 2m FM?

Both events were designed to give newly licensed M7s a chance to get their feet wet on 2m, without the pressure of trying to get a contact on the HF bands. I intended to have a go, but forgot to charge my leisure batteries – Typical!!

FOR SALE

Yaesu FT-857D. 160M – 70cms. With matching power supply unit. Price is around £450. This is a silent key sale. If you are interested in this (or know someone who may be), please contact John G8UAE (g8uae@f2s.com) who will furnish the contact details.

The photograph is for illustration purposes only.



Further Musings From Andrew Jellyman G8MKK

I can fill in a possible gap in the information re. Brian G3ZUL. He was previously G6AGT/T (in 1973 at least) when living in Pilgrim Road, Droitwich. I'm not sure if you are aware, but all those years ago, if you wanted to operate ATV, you needed a separate licence (G6***/T). You also needed a separate licence for mobile operation, though that was just your normal call-sign with /M on the end, but ATV was different. This persisted until at least 1975/6, when I was first licensed, as I spent the princely sum of £2.40 on top of the basic licence fee of £4.80 for a mobile call, but to my eternal regret I didn't apply for an ATV licence. In those days, before I had a job, £2.40 was a lot of money!

Thanks so much for mentioning G3CAQ's fascinating history. It's a shame StARS archivist never had a chance to proof read the STARS stuff. This has happened to me a few times in my professional life and it is damned annoying. One piece of work came back to bite me on the nose about 25 years after it was written when a consultant I was dealing with said 'but you said'.... I couldn't remember what he was referring to until he showed it me and then it all clicked. I did some work for a guy from Manchester Uni and took my technician with me to assist. It all clicked when I read the document which only mentioned me in passing with my technician's name ahead of mine, inferring that he was my boss. Had it come to light at the time I, and also my actual boss, would have gone ballistic! The technician had left by then so no come back: C'est la Vie I guess. The National Physical Laboratory also published something I wrote for them as an informal note but that has long since disappeared off their web site, mistakes and all.

The history document could not have surfaced at a better time as I recently took an old friend, who's late husband was G8GUN, to visit the daughter of G5KS, who was (I now know from G3CAQ's most impressive work) the first chairman of the Dudley club, so I was able to give his daughter a copy of that section, which she was delighted to receive. I also found a section on George Flanner who's brother Frank, G3AVE, I knew reasonably well. George was a genius and is credited with the design of very early transistorised TV cameras and who was well known in this area for his ATV interests. There is also a history of MARS, of which Howard, G8GUN was a long standing member and who's name (albeit misspelt once) appears several times. It even includes mention of a meeting where G5PP, a keen mobile operator, gave a talk on mobile aerials (I think) that Howard often mentioned. This was mainly because G5PP was drawing large sparks from his aerial to any convenient metal object. A passing Bobby was somewhat concerned and stopped to investigate whereupon G5PP drew a spark to the pip on top of the Bobby's helmet. The Bobby was so fascinated that he insisted someone else wear it so he could witness the sparks for himself! Shades of Tesla I think.

IARU to review band plans to accommodate growth in digital modes.

The following appeared on [Southgate ARC News](#) recently:

IARU: HF Digital Mode Band Plan review

For the first time in their history all three IARU Regions have joined together to directly co-ordinate band planning efforts to accommodate the the explosive growth in HF digital modes

The announcement from the IARU Secretary Dave Sumner K1ZZ reads:

“Because frequency allocations and amateur radio operating interests vary in different parts of the world, the development of band plans – voluntary guidelines on the use of the spectrum that is available to radio amateurs – is a responsibility of the three IARU regional organizations. Each of the three Regions has a band planning committee to focus on this work. In recent years there have been increased efforts to bring the regional band plans into alignment wherever possible. Final approval of band plan revisions is generally given by the regional conferences of IARU member-societies that are held every three years on a rotating basis.

“This approach to band planning generally has kept pace with the evolution of amateur radio operating. However, the explosive growth in HF (below 30 MHz) digital modes, particularly FT8, has led to perceived overcrowding of HF digital mode band segments. Accordingly, a working group has been formed consisting of representatives of the three regional band planning committees. This is the first time the three Regions have joined together to directly coordinate band planning efforts.

“The working group has already had fruitful discussions with the WSJT Development Group led by Joe Taylor, K1JT. Additional discussions, including with other HF stakeholders, will be held as part of a fundamental review of the different HF digital modes, and how they can be best categorized and arranged to share the limited spectrum available.

“The main aim is to develop solutions that reduce congestion within very popular mode segments while preventing mutual interference between incompatible modes to the greatest extent possible. While the proposed band plan revisions will have to be approved by member-societies in each Region, recent administrative changes mean that the changes can be implemented without having to wait for the regional conferences.

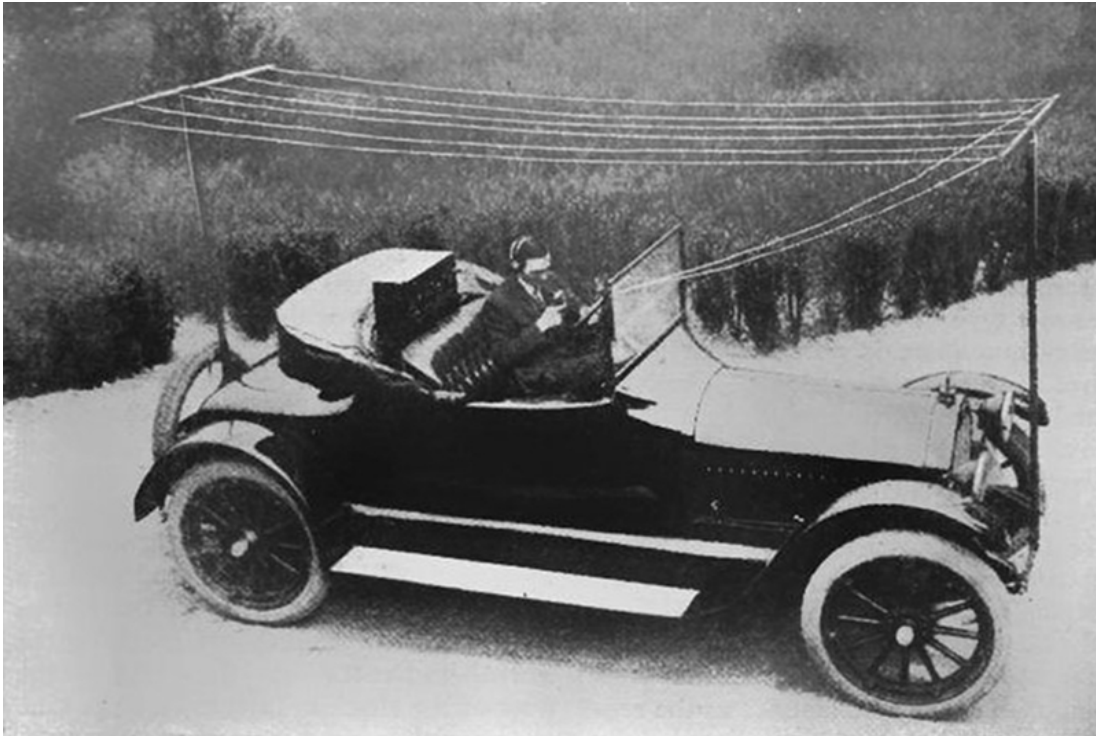
“Amateurs are encouraged to follow progress through their IARU member-society and the respective IARU websites, all of which can be reached via www.iaru.org

“You can join the IARU News mailing list at:

<https://reflector.arrl.org/mailman/listinfo/iaru-news>.”



HAM RADIO MOBILE OPERATIONS CIRCA 1919



You used to be able to tell a die-hard ham radio operator on the road by the number and length of antennas protruding porcupine-like from their vehicle. There are still some mobile high frequency operators that have respectable car-mounted antenna farms, but they have nothing on Alfred H. Grebe. In 1919, he fitted a medium wave transmitter in his car that operated around 2 MHz. Since it needed a very large antenna, Grebe rigged a wire antenna that looked like a clothesline between the two bumpers. Obviously, you had to stop, set up your antenna, and then operate — you couldn't talk and drive. But this may have been the world's first automotive radio setup for voice communication.

The car had a separate battery for the radio and a dynamotor to generate high voltage for the tubes. Although many radio enthusiasts found ways to add receivers to their cars in the 1920s, it would be 1930 before Motorola made radios especially for cars in production quantities.

That wasn't what Grebe was most famous for, though. He worked as a ship's operator. After making a few receivers for friends, he decided to open up a business. Grebe radio, though, is hardly a household name today. But he was best known for setting up radio stations, including founding the station that would eventually become WCBS, often called the father of news radio.

We always enjoy learning about radio pioneers, including Edwin Armstrong and Reginald Fessenden. This is certainly a far cry even from the old mobile telephones.

DA0FF VHF/UHF Contest Group

Finally back!

It has been one year since our last contest activity, but now we will be back for the IARU R1 September contest from our QTH Wasserkuppe in JO40XL.

The setup will be exactly the same like last year, except a few little changes.

This means that we will be using 4 towers with 4 x 9 Element yagis, 1 tower with 12 x 5 Element yagis and 1 tower with some experimental antennas.

You will find us around 144.245 Mhz +/-.

Please give us a call. We look forward to working you!

73 de DA0FF

I've included this for interest only and to show what a (presumably) rich club can achieve. Editor.



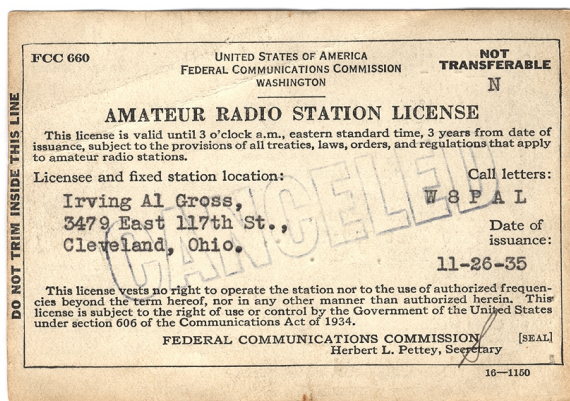
Alfred J. Gross W8PAL (1918-2000)

Gross was born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada in 1918, the son of Romanian immigrants, he grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, in the United States.

His lifelong enthusiasm for radio was sparked at age nine, when travelling on Lake Erie by a steamboat. While sneaking around the boat he ended up in the radio transmissions room. The ship's operator let him listen in on transmissions. Later, Gross turned the basement of his house into a radio station, built from scavenged junk-yard parts.



At sixteen he earned his amateur radio license, and he used his call sign (W8PAL) his whole life.



The walkie-talkie

His interest and knowledge in radio technology had grown considerably by the time he in 1936 entered the [BSEE](#) program at Cleveland's Case of Applied Sciences (now a part of [Case Western Reserve University](#)). He was determined to investigate the unexplored frequency region above 100 MHz. Between 1938 and 1941, soon after the invention of the walkie talkie in 1937 by Donald Hings, he created and patented his own version of the "walkie-talkie".

World War II

During World War II, Gross had some limited involvement in building a two-way air-to-ground communications system for the U.S. OSS (a forerunner to the CIA) for use in military operations, known as the [Joan-Eleanor system](#). It comprised a hand-held SSTC-502 transceiver ("Joan") and a much larger aircraft-based SSTR-6 transceiver ("Eleanor"). Gross' actual contribution to the project is unclear (he was not an OSS member), but the main developers on the project were Dewitt R. Goddard and Lt. Cmdr. Stephen H. Simpson (Goddard's wife's name was Eleanor, and reportedly Joan was an acquaintance of Simpson). The system operated at frequencies above 250 MHz, which was at a much higher frequency than the enemy had thought conceivable. This allowed operatives using "Joan" to communicate with high altitude bombers carrying "Eleanor" for times of 10 to 15 minutes without the use of code words, eliminating the need for decryption. It was developed beginning in late 1942, was highly successful and very difficult to detect behind enemy lines at the time. It was marked Top Secret by the U.S. military until it was declassified and made public in 1976.

Citizens' Band (CB)

After the war the FCC allocated the first frequencies for personal radio services; the Citizens' Radio Service Frequency Band (1946). Gross formed Gross Electronics Co to produce two-way communications system to utilize these frequencies, and his company was the first to receive FCC approval in 1948. He sold more than 100 thousand units of his system, mostly to farmers and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Two-way radios

Cartoonist Chester Gould asked if he could use Gross' concept of a miniaturized two-way radio in his Dick Tracy comic strip. The result was the Dick Tracy two-way wrist radio.

Telephone pager

Another breakthrough came in 1949 when he adapted his two-way radios to one-way for cordless remote telephonic signalling. He had effectively invented the first telephone pager system. His intention for this system was to be used by medical doctors, but was met with scepticism by doctors who were afraid the system would upset patients. This same technology is used in one-way radio signalling devices, such as garage door openers.

Later years

In 1950 he tried in vain to interest telephone companies in mobile telephony. Bell Telephone was uninterested, and other companies were afraid of Bell's monopoly on transmission lines.

Gross continued inventing, and began working as a specialist in microwave and other communications systems for companies such as Sperry Corporation and General Electric. He continued working until his death at age 82.

Some More You Tube Channels To View

Simply To Fill A Page!

2E0EZT amateur radio: I enjoy operating amateur radio from portable off grid locations such as during wild camps usually carrying everything in a backpack, I like to experiment with antennas for this purpose. I also have a collection of military radios which I operate from outdoor locations. I hope you will like my videos and subscribe as it helps me to provide better quality videos.

<https://www.youtube.com/c/2E0EZTamateurradio/videos>

lanxfs: Radio stuff...an amateur/ham returning back to the hobby. I learned a lot of good (& bad!) advice from the Internet when returning back to the hobby late 2018 after a 30 year break. Once I was back on the air in December, I decided to "do my bit" and put something back into the online community which hopefully may help others finding their way into the hobby, or if you're like me, just some decent content to watch. All my videos are a reflection of what I've been up to in terms of building, testing and operating and generally exploring the hobby.

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ianxfs/videos>

Tim G5TM: Experiencing HAM Radio - based in the UK. Portable and Mobile HF & VHF. Including antenna building.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZSapoUEIPcGdSkqCbGtG7Q/videos>

Radio Prepper: This channel is dedicated to emergency radio communications in times of wide-area disasters and unrest. It emphasises low power portable operations without grid power. Videos will include tutorials, product reviews and field operations. Please see <http://radiopreppers.com> to join a group of dedicated and knowledgeable radio operators.

<https://www.youtube.com/c/RadioPrepper/videos>

Mike M0MSN: Ham Radio - based in the UK building antenna and radio repairs, you know Amateur stuff and little CB too. (hollyend01 now Mike-M0MSN)

<https://www.youtube.com/c/hollyend01/videos>

K8MRD RADIO STUFF: <https://www.youtube.com/c/K8MRDRADIOSTUFF/videos>

watersstanton: This is the Channel presented by Waters & Stanton Ltd. We are a major UK distributor of Radio Communications equipment and our Company was established in 1973. We hope that you enjoy the content and also enjoy reading the comments of our viewers.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/watersstanton/videos>

Signal Search: W5KV's Signal Search. All about Amateur Radio.

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SignalSearchW5KV/videos>

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