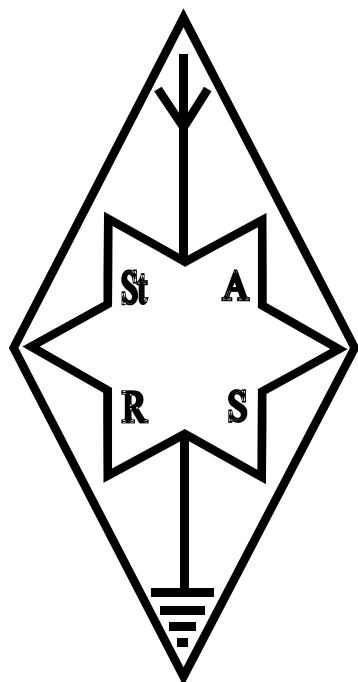


STARLITE

G6OI
1938

The Newsletter for Members and Friends of
Stourbridge and District
Amateur Radio Society
incorporating
Old Swinford Hospital School Radio Club

G6SRS
1938



G4CVK

1969

ISSUE
07/2011



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Visitors always welcome

MEETINGS

The Society holds its full meetings on the
1st and 3rd Monday of each Month at

Old Swinford Hospital School

Heath Lane

Stourbridge

(8.00pm – 10.00pm)

Additionally the shack is open during the same times on the
intermediate Monday's

*All correspondence/enquiries should be addressed to the
Hon. Secretary:*

John Clarke M1EJG
(01562) 700513

honsec@g6oi.org.uk

STARS Web Site

WAP enabled ??

STARS

C/O The Mill House

21 Mill Lane

Blakedown

Kidderminster

DY10 3ND

www.g6oi.org.uk

www.g6oi.org.uk/wap/index.wml

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

The talk given by Karl Truby on Soldering In the Aircraft Industry was well received by an appreciative and interested audience and this was evident by the numerous questions put to Karl as the talk progressed, which Karl was easily able to answer. I suppose as amateurs we are more focused on getting our construction efforts to work and reliability is not “centre stage” for us, however Karl gave a fascinating insight into the reliability of electronic circuit boards and by extension safety in the aircraft industry where reducing avoidable component failure is paramount.

The annual club barbecue at the Sheepwalks was well attended and ex-club members John Tracey and his wife Eileen also joined us. Despite the weather being against us the turn-out was high and would have been even higher if Adrian Simms and Richard, having set out on bicycles had not had to turn back because of the downpour. Thanks also go to James and Wayne for laying on and cooking an excellent range of burgers and spicy sausages for us all and also to Nick for the loan of his table.

I have the considerable luxury of not having to scratch my head this month wondering what topic may be of interest and would like to thank James for this month's well illustrated article on the rather innovative home entertainment system he has integrated and built.

As always I would be interested to receive contributions and feedback on any of the articles. I aim to make Starlite available for the first day of each month, so please can you submit any articles in time for this deadline. My wife has returned from her wanderings and is back in her unofficial job of Starlite head proof reader once more.

Regards

Adrian Bryan (G0NLA)



Photograph courtesy of Wayne Mocroft



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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

22 August

SSB Field Day Preparation

Please note that there will be no meeting on 29 August as it is a Bank Holiday. To help to make the SSB Field run smoothly we need to assemble, prepare, check and gather the equipment needed for the SSB Field Day on the 3rd and 4th September. If you have not yet added your name to the list in the shack to indicate your availability for the SSB Field Day, please can you make an effort to do so.

3rd and 4th September

SSB Field Day

The SSB Field Day will be held at High Acres Farm which is near to Stourbridge Tennis Club. As noted above please can you add your name to indicate your availability on the list on the notice board in the shack. Alternatively could you e-mail or phone any of the committee if you would like your name on the list, but will not be attending any club meetings between now and the SSB Field Day.



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AN INTEGRATED HOME ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM (on the cheap!)

It all started with buying a Sony Blu Ray player, I didn't really buy this for a Blu Ray, I still don't own a Blu Ray disc! I mainly bought this as it will play a multitude of video formats (avi, mpeg, divx etc) and also with a network connection to play back BBC iPlayer over the internet plus an HDMI connection to my TV.

I then noticed that it had a USB socket on it, I dug out my USB hard drive caddy that also had a network connection. I plugged this into the Blu Ray and it would play back various movies and music that was on the hard drive. As this was also networked I could copy files onto the hard drive from my PC. This seemed to work really well. Also I have a video sender, which I was already using plugged into my freeview hard drive recorder so I could watch recordings in the bedroom. This video sender (£29 from Aldi) has 2 inputs, so I used the 2nd input for the Blu Ray, this meant I could watch anything the Blu Ray would play back, i.e. iPlayer, recordings on the USB hard drive and also DVDs etc.



Sony Blu Ray player, connections from left to right:-

Grey - network cable, red & white – audio to sender, yellow – video to sender, black – HDMI to TV, black – fibre optic to amplifier.



Video sender.

I then looked into proper network storage array (NAS) rather than the very basic one I had. I bought a netgear Stora, which also has the capacity for 2 hard drives that can be set up in a mirror array. This means all the data is written (mirrored) to both hard drives. If one hard drive fails you have not lost your data. However I found this very restrictive about how the file structure could be set up and what permissions could be given to various users. I then sold this on ebay for what I paid for it. In fact I came out the deal better off as the Stora came separately with a free 500Gb Hard drive.

I then looked into what else was available. I found free software called freenas, this is linux based and can be installed on virtually any PC. It only takes an hour or so to set up and is basically a step by



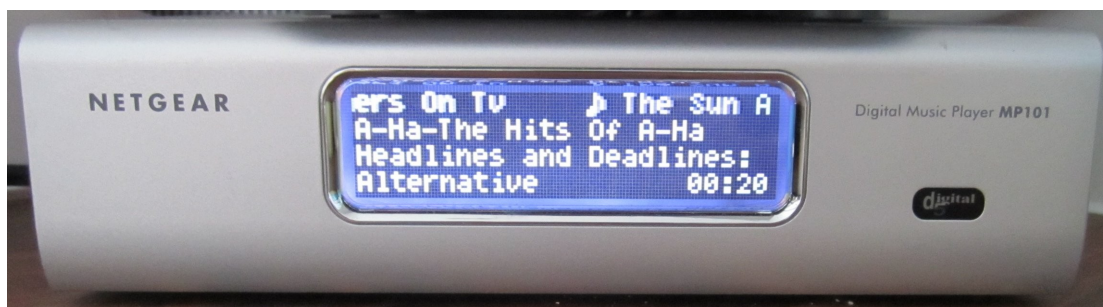
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step process, even if you have never used Linux before (like me) it's easy to understand. This also has inbuilt software raid.

The Blu Ray player will stream media from a DLNA server, freenas has a DLNA server built in. However I could not get this to work, research on the net revealed that it's a known issue between various DLNA servers and Blu Ray players. Next I looked at what could be done with an XP machine. I installed XP on the same machine and enabled DLNA within windows media player (inbuilt into version 11 and higher) The Blu Ray saw this no problem and played back everything. I looked at how I could set up some sort of RAID. I found on ebay a brand new PCI card with 2 x SATA ports. This could be set up for hardware RAID and the card was only £7. Again this was simple to set up, install the card, plug the 2 drives in, run the software. Select which one has the existing data on and which is the new drive to be added. This did take several hours to copy data across and set up the RAID – (re silvering the mirror according to Adrian!) So I now have a 750GB RAID storage, Windows XP system is on a separate 40GB IDE hard drive.

I also found some free windows backup software called fbackup. This is excellent for free, you can select exactly which folders you want to backup, set a schedule, set if you want to do a straight copy or compress the files. I now have my 2 machines set up with a backup schedule to the NAS. I have also copied the various movies and MP3's onto the NAS. I can play these back via the Blu Ray player which is plugged into my hi-fi.

We also have a small hi-fi in the kitchen, I wanted to be able to play back MP3 from the NAS. I looked into what was around for cheap. I found another Netgear product, MP101, its almost 10 years old now, but has a large florescent display for selecting tracks etc. I bid on a few from ebay and about the 4th one I got for £17 delivered. My budget was £20. Again research on the net was contradictory about if it would play back from a DLNA server, When I got the device, it immediately saw the NAS server and did start to play music, amazing I thought, but after a bit it would lock up, or hang between tracks. I then installed the propriety Netgear media stream software on the XP NAS. I then found an upgrade of the software and this did a firmware update on the netgear box. This then played back all the audio media, you can select via artist, genera, album etc, and also now has the feature of internet radio. I can now play two separate media streams from the same NAS server.



Netgear MP101 – almost 10 years old!

I did think I would put the PC base unit in the garage and look at automatically powering it up in the morning and shutting down at night. In the end I decided to keep it in the office. I turn it on when required and found some more free software to automatically shut down the PC at a pre-set time. I also installed VNC (again free!) to remotely control onto the NAS PC if I need to check on the state of the PC or change / install anything etc.



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So I now have a fully integrated media solution for the whole house, playing media back from one central server, that has hardware RAID on the hard drive.

I can also recommend a harmony universal programmable remote control. I have bought universal remotes in the past, but they haven't really done all the functions required and take an age to set up. This one is different. I bought a 4 device unit (Logitech Harmony on special offer from play.com for £10) You plug it into your PC via USB, tell the software the model number of your devices and it then downloads the controls to the remote. The common functions are copied across by default, and then you can drag and drop the other buttons across as required to the keys you desire. There is also options to select other custom buttons, such as favourite channels, punch-through, i.e on the Freeview controls when you press the volume is controls the TV volume.



Logitech Harmony 300 universal remote.

I could also show you a picture of the XP NAS machine, but it looks just like any other PC!

James (G7HEZ)

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FROM OUR ROVING REPORTER

June/July 2011 Starlite June/July 2011

We had a most interesting talk on soldering by Karl Truby of Goodrich Aerospace at our June meeting on the specifications that have to be met in the aerospace industry. I can appreciate this as my own job for a number of years both at Contactor Switchgear & Field & Grants was a Quality Control Inspector working in those days to BS 5750 spec. This was later changed to another specification especially on flame proof motors which I worked with BSFA and their inspectors who would visit the factory unannounced to ensure that quality was conformed with. So the talk by Karl brought back a number of memories and the measuring instruments that I used which also had to be calibrated and checked twice a year to maintain the high standards to meet with the specifications.

On the Friday night before the meeting, I went to The Bonded Warehouse and listened to Jazz provided by The Simon Deely Trio with guests. The double bass player in the trio is Jim Sutton G7FMQ who lives in Stourbridge. Jim is a computer programmer and has been to STARS in the past but due to other commitments can not attend. I try to persuade Jim to visit us every time I see him. Simon Deely has brought Live music to Stourbridge for 10 yrs now. It was nearly 20 yrs ago this year when I first started the Stourbridge Branch of The George Formby Society.



The chap in yellow had to stand-in as we were missing a microphone stand



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Moving on, as a condition of winning Wordsley Got Talent I, along with the second, third and first from the Junior and Senior sections had to play at The Wordsley Festival. Despite a few rain showers I thought our performances went off very well and I certainly enjoyed it as I do when I am playing to an audience. I even asked my percussion instrumentalists along - see photo above. Bernard worked at Contactor Switchgear from 1941-1946 before I started there in 1951.

Well what can one say about our annual barbecue which this year was held earlier than usual. I thought bringing forward the barbecue was all the better for the lighter night, or was it the rain was the governing factor. However members of STARS are intrepid and rain does not stop us at all. I went past the turning for Compton and ended up on the Bridgnorth Road. I had to go past The Cat Inn. The STARS held a Dinner there once. How many recall ? Before I could turn round to get back on the right road which, because of the bends, I find tricky. It was a great evening with good food, but it's been a busy week and week end with all my other interests. What with Football Coupon collecting and shopping on Wednesday it takes up a whole day and I am whacked at the end. Then Thursday morning and into the afternoon Glenys and I had to go into Wolverhampton at night for the Organ Concert at Kingswinford British Legion. Friday it's work on The Severn Valley Railway and I am always late getting back from there. We often have a meal at Wetherspoons in Bewdley. It is a welcome break from cooking when Glenys and I get back home. Glenys looks after the Great Western Shop.

At the time of drafting out the final stages of this report I am on the 09:32 train from Bewdley to Bridgnorth and it is Sunday 26 June and the second day of the 1940s weekend. After two days of travelling and entertaining I am again whacked so today Monday I have been getting my batteries recharged ready for a repeat next week end and work on Friday, before then and I will feature it in the next report. I have been asked to entertain the school children on SVR who always visit each year everyday during 1940s event. I have invited fellow SVR volunteer Bernard G0BJS as my percussionist.

Best 73s Malcolm G8BOP



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YOUR COMMITTEE

Hon. President	JAMES	G7HEZ	
Vice President	ADRIAN SIMMS	M3HBA	
Hon. Secretary	JOHN	M1EJG	(01562) 700513
Hon. Treasurer	JOHN	G8UAE	
Committee Members	NICK	G6DQN	
	MALCOLM	G8BOP	
	ANDREW	M6APJ	
	RICHARD	M1DBC	
	ADRIAN BRYAN	G0NLA	

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

It should be noted that the Shack will be open every Monday evening unless shown otherwise in the Calendar

August	Mon 1st	Informal - On air or natter
	Mon 8th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
	Mon 15th	Informal - On air or natter (no main meeting)
	Mon 22th	Meeting to Plan SSB Field Day
	Mon 29th	No Meeting due to Bank Holiday
September	Sat 3rd	SSB Field Day
	Sun 4th	SSB Field Day
	Mon 5th	Informal - On air or natter
	Mon 19th	Echolink and Internet Gateways (Richard Newton)
	Mon 26th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
October	Mon 1st	Informal - On air or natter
	Mon 8th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
	Mon 15th	Talk on the Sinking of the Titanic (to be confirmed)
	Mon 22nd	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
	Mon 29th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
November	Mon 5th	Informal - On air or natter
	Mon 12th	Open Shack Night - On air or natter
	Mon 19th	Club Surplus Sale
	Mon 21st	Open Shack Night - On air or natter

