

GM4RIV

GM3W



Club Magazine



WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

Winter 2003/2004
Issue 15

Editorial

I hope that you had a lovely Christmas and are looking forward to a happy and prosperous New Year.

Robin GM3ZYE, was in hospital having a hip replaced but made it home for Christmas as was **Bob GM0RTS**, who had a heart attack but also made it home for Christmas.

The Silent Key sale of **Neil GM4LQS**'s radio equipment was well attended and a tidy sum was raised. His **XYL**, **Effie**, would like to thank everyone for their support. The larger items are still not away yet, but this was to be expected due to their greater value.

Our leader, **Bill MM0ABQ**, gave a very interesting talk on bee keeping. The things that those little honey makers get up to was intriguing. I haven't seen any questions about bees on *Who Wants To Be a Millionaire*, but I'm ready for them.

Unused as I am to speaking in public yours truly introduced a video on the exploits of the Voodoo Contest group in Africa.

Apart from the introduction everyone seemed to enjoy the video. It also gave us a chance to try out the new projector, amplifier and speakers. All was well.

Our Christmas meal was in Creetown. So far to the east that **Jim GM4LPT** and his missus took **B&B**. A very good turn out with members from north, south, east and west all enjoying themselves. I had a great night as I managed to get **VNW** put at another table. Sorry **Ellis**. (The story and pictures are on the club website).

Our traditional Pie & Pea night was almost cancelled, but the **Girvan** crew came to the rescue. As long as food is involved we are there. **Ian GM0NBG**, cooked the mushy peas, all three gallons of them. **FSZ** got the pies and the Christmas pies from a local bakers. A good turnout, (but could have been better), of members and friends were soon tucking in. The raffle, twenty four prizes, was well supported and the money raised covered the evenings expenses with a little to the club funds.

Thanks to everyone who gave articles for the magazine. I've even got some for the next one. But keep them coming.

73 & 88 ERIC

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Antennas in a Limited Space

by
MM0LEO - “MacLeo of Portpatrick”

Two-hundred-foot towers, mono-band Yagis, stacked Yagis, full-wave delta loops, balloon-supported full-wave vertical wire for 160 meters..... Yep, you would all like to have such super antennas but you are faced with the reality of the space you have available at your individual QTHs. You generally have a small garden or there are local restrictions on what you can erect for antenna supports. What do you do? You make do. You fit in what antennas you can and use them as best you can. You don't need to try to copy the big guns by having an antenna 200 feet up a tree. You can lose power through such a long coax run plus the tree will whip around so much during storms [this is Scotland, remember], that you may well spend more time fixing your antenna than spend time on the air operating. Will you beat the big-gun, multi-multi stations in a contest or pile up? No. But you can have a lot of fun and, if so interested, work a lot of DX with simple antenna systems.

The MM0LEO Antenna System

My first operation from Portpatrick was from Moir Cottage in the Fall of 1999 with the call sign of MM/W3LEO. My antenna was a vertical with tuned radials that I borrowed from Graham, GM4BES. Now, Moir Cottage has a very small patio area behind it, surrounded by stone walls or the stone sides of adjacent buildings. Much like trying to operate from the bottom of a quarry. But I still managed to make 150 contacts in about two weeks of operating time.

By the Spring of 2000, I had my trusty ol' Cushcraft R-5 vertical, a 40-meter dipole, and a collapsible DK9SQ fibreglass mast. Now, I was off and running. But still using MM/W3LEO. This caused no end of problems with some not realizing the 'MM' = "GM". Some thought I was maritime mobile, others wanted to know what the number was after the 'MM'. I finally had my MM0LEO by the Fall of 2000.

The R-5. This is a great limited-space antenna that covers 10, 12, 15, 17, and 20 meters. Another great advantage for me was how easy it was to

put it together, put it up, and take it down each trip. No permanent antennas at the rental cottage. Once Graham and I had worked out how to best set it up, we could then put it up on its 6-foot mast bungee corded to a vent pipe at the back of the patio in about 20 minutes. The base of the R-5 was just about 8 or 9 feet above the ground. No 200-foot towers here!!!

The DK9SQ Fibreglass Mast. This is a collapsible mast that is just one meter in length collapsed but will extend to 10 meters fully extended. The highest section is very thin and can only support a wire and not the connector/feed point of a 40-meter dipole. So, I would just extend it to 9 meters. [I once tried attaching one end of the dipole at the 10-meter point and running the other end around the ground. What did I work? Well, it was WAPAS — Worked All Portpatrick Alarm Systems; the minute I tried to tune up, I heard the ‘beep, beep, beep’ of several nearby alarm systems. So much for that experiment].

The 40-Meter Dipole and the Genesis of the Infamous ‘Drunken Delta’. There I was with a nice, standard 40-meter dipole and the mast in the small patio. I first used a very heavy metal barbecue pit as support for the mast. [After the cottage owners got rid of the old BBQ pit, I used a step ladder from the cottage. I just tied the step ladder down with a four-point mooring]. I taped the dipole feed point to the mast and proceeded to extend the mast, taping the coax to the mast as I went along. When fully extended to 9 meters, the dipole in an inverted V configuration still had a fair bit of dipole on the ground — not enough mast height and/or not enough patio space. So, I attached the wire to the walls of the patio and brought the dipole ends back toward the mast. The ends didn’t extend all the way to the fibreglass mast so I ended up with an open semi-delta. At first, the attachment points on the wall were not very strong and I could therefore not draw the dipole arms taut. This meant there were a few curves or ‘waves’ in the wire. Jim, GM3VNW, saw it and christened it ‘The Drunken Delta’. Wouldn’t work???. Jim was very surprised [astounded, flabbergasted...] that I got signal reports back from stations in England giving me reports from 57 to 59+20!!!! On a later trip, I got some wall spikes from the local Home & Garden shop in Stranraer and could then pull the wire taut but it was still ‘The Drunken Delta.’ Now, I was off and running on 40 meters.

The Results To Date.

In the last four years, I've had nearly 4200 QSOs with 154 DXCC countries. I have worked [and confirmed via QSL cards] 49 of the 50 U.S. states — still need that elusive KH6-Hawaii — a hard propagation path from here at 55 degrees North. My country totals per band are: 10 meters - 110, 12 meters - 65, 15 meters - 94, 17 meters - 47, 20 meters - 103, and 40 meters - 41. Not too shabby getting 41 countries on 40 meters SSB on a 'Drunken Delta' HI, HI. Note that I am not a CW man and all these QSOs are SSB. Also all are 100 watts from an Icom 706 MarkII. Typically on a five-week trip, I get four weeks of operating time. In total, I've had about 30 weeks to be on the air from Portpatrick. Then you have to take out time for visiting friends, WARC meetings, touring a bit, trips to my local pubs for a pint or two or three..... Propagation conditions have been going down and there was a major solar flare the end of October 2003. All in all, not too bad results for a couple of space-limited antennas.

Recent Changes.

For my October-November 2003 trip, I was in a flat at 12A Hill Street in Portpatrick. This flat had a small terrace, only 10ft by 16ft, even smaller than the Moir Cottage patio. The R-5 went up with no problems, being attached to the wrought iron railing with my good ol' bungee cords. But the 'Drunken Delta' had to end up with the arms only 90 degrees apart rather than the normal 180 degrees. But, I still managed QSOs including 13 different countries on 40 in the CQWW contest [25-25 October]. This included a contact on 40 with D44TD in Cape Verde, a distance of 2900 miles. In 9 hours operating time spread over the two days of the CQWW contest, I had 234 contacts with a total of 65 different countries. And I've been on 40 several mornings on the 'Irish Net' with friends in Ivy Bridge [near Portsmouth], Derry, Waterford, Skibereen, Donaghadee, Glasgow and other QTHs. And still getting 57 to 59+20 reports from stations in England and Ireland. [Ask Graham - he listened in when I first used the new configuration].

Conclusions.

You can indeed have a lot of fun with limited space antennas: work DX, get in contests, ragchew, whatever..... Remember that a lot of other hams out there also have limited antennas and are not using high power amplifiers. Also remember that the folk with the big beams can often hear your 'little' signal when someone with a dipole might not hear you. Put up the best antenna you can in your space but don't think it has to be 200 feet high to work.

A final note. One of your best pieces of equipment you already have and, indeed, had even before you became a ham - your ears. Nothing beats being able to listen well. So, listen, listen, and listen some more. You'll be surprised at what you hear.

73, GUD DX, & CU on the bands.



The drunken delta in
it's small terrace.
Just 16 feet x 10 feet

The R5 5 band vertical



EuroEnglish

The European Union commissioners have announced that an agreement has been reached to adopt English as the preferred language for European communications, rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, the British government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a five-year phased plan for what will be known as EuroEnglish (Euro for short).

In the first year, "s" will be used instead of the soft "c". Certainly, sivil servants will resieve this news with joy. Also, the hard "c" will be replased with "k". Not only will this klear up konfursion, but typewriters kan have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm (wanna bet?) in the sekond year, when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced by "f". This will make words like "fotograf" 20 per sent shorter.

In the third year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be ekspekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkorage the removal of double letters, which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horrible mes of silent "e"s in the languag is disgrasful, and they would go.

By the fourth year, peopl wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" by "z" and "w" by "v". During ze fifz year, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou", and similar changes vud of kors be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters.

Und efter ze fifz yer, ve vil al be speking German like zey vunted in ze forst place

.

Bright Sparks Quiz

A trip to Perth for some water supply equipment coincided with the annual “Bright Sparks” Quiz night at the Kilmarnock ARC. Sheila and I were passing the door, as it were, at the time of the start so dropped in to see what it was all about. We were made very welcome, sat down to watch teams arriving and bought tickets for the raffle with excellent prizes, almost exclusively good quality bottles. Most folk we didn’t know but there were some familiar faces we recognised as pickup passengers on our club’s coach trips to the rally at Coatbridge.

The host club, having eventually got the PA system working, got clubs to set up as teams of four and state their name. A couple from the Hurlford club invited us to join them and make up a team. There were about ten sets of ten questions. Questions were mostly general knowledge, which was handy for Sheila because she was able to join in.

The winning club called themselves the Central Belters – they did have six members!! Our scratch team got 4th place. After the trophy presentation we helped ourselves to sandwiches and sausage rolls. Finally the raffle was drawn and the winners duly collected their bottles of wine and whisky.

All together we thought it was a good evening and a pity there was no one else from our club there to form another team.

Well Frank, here’s proof that we have put a team in before. I expect that the hair of Andy and Ellis might give away the fact that it wasn’t last year.



YOUR SHACK

Get your digital camera out. In each magazine I'll put in pictures of YOUR shack. So get snapping and let everyone see where you are 'coming' from.



First photo after my plaintive appeal was that of George, MM0CBL.

George's main interest is in data modes and he will be instructing club members on his pet subject later this month, January.

MacLeo's Scottish shack in Portpatrick. Minimalist but very effective.



Icom 706 Mark II, matching Icom ATU, Watson 30 amp PSU, Toshiba laptop running Logger logging software.

Now have over 4200 contacts, 155 countries, 49 states [just can't get Hawaii] from here or from Moir Cottage.

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Planning permission for an aerial.

Simple?

When Jim GM0KWW, who lives in a shoreside cottage just north of Girvan, was granted permission to erect an R7000 vertical by South Ayrshire Council, it carried a five year renewal clause. This meant re-applying in 2003. So Jim sent off for the renewal expecting it to be just a formality. Oh dear!

New laws had been passed after the scares about mobile 'phone masts supposedly causing health problems and, yes you've guessed it, amateur radio aerials are included in these regulations. The wording is not specific but covers ALL radio aerials, creating a grey area which local councils in their lack of knowledge about such things tend to lump together just to be on the safe side.

To make matters more difficult there are different laws for England and Scotland.

When Jim asked the local planning office for guidance they hadn't a clue, only that they needed an ICNIRP certificate before they could consider his application.

So Jim got in touch with the RSGB planning committee who didn't seem to know of this certificate but passed it on to their local planning expert, Leonard Paget GM0ONX, who lives in Kilmarnock and works for East Ayrshire Council. His enquiries the East Ayrshire planning department revealed that they knew nothing about such a certificate.

Len has now taken on the role of agent for Jim and has written to South Ayrshire Planning department asking them to get in touch with the Scottish Executive Development Department to clarify the situation.

If you think that it only means ticking a box on a form read this:-

The ICNIRP certificate is required in order to comply with current Government legislation regarding planning applications involving antennae where NPPG19, para. 54 states *"to demonstrate to planning authorities that the known health effects have been properly addressed, applications for planning permission involving antennas must be accompanied by a declaration that the equipment and installation is designed to be in full compliance with the appropriate ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure to radio frequency radiation"*.



Simple?

To be continued.

www.gm0hpl.co.uk

It's colourful, cheerful and topical. But above all, it's updated regularly.

 GM0HPL,s Homepage 

 TOMMY McCUTCHEON 

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All The Best For 2004

1	GM0FSZ	ERIC	GIRVAN	21	MM0AIW	BERT	STRANRAER
2	GM0NBG	IAN	GIRVAN	22	MM0CNF	JIM	DRONGAN AYR
3	GM0HPK	ELLIS	LOCHANS	23	MM0DFS	ANDY	NEWTON STEWART
4	GM0HPL	TOMMY	STRANRAER	24	MM0KBT	DAVY	KIRKCUDBRIGHT
5	GM0JMO	JOHN	GIRVAN	25	MM0LEO	LEO	PORTPATRICK
6	GM0UDY	ANDY	GIRVAN	26	MM1BHO	RICHARD	KIRKPATRICK DURHAM
7	GM0URZ	FRAZER	NEWTON STEWART	27	MM0GOF	JOHN	GATEHOUSE OF FLEET
8	GM0SWX	JOHN	STRANRAER	28	MM1DWU	GEORGE	GIRVAN
9	MM0NGR	ROD	STRANRAER	29	MM1ECE	STEWART	GIRVAN
10	GM3JKS	FRANK	BARRHILL	30	MM3BOJ	DAVID	MAYBOLE
11	GM3VNW	JIM	GIRVAN	31	MM3FQI	GILLIAN	DRONGAN AYR
12	GM3ZYE	ROBIN	NEWTON STEWART	32	MM3GIR	KEVIN	GIRVAN
13	GM4BAE	GERRY	STRANRAER	33	MM3KMR	KIM	DALBEATTIE
14	GM4BES	GRAHAM	PORTPATRICK	34	MM3NCM	NEIL	GIRVAN
15	GM4FGD	ARCHIE	LOANHEAD EDINBURGH	35	2M1SCO	ROBIN	CROCKET- FORD
16	GM4GDF	JOHN	WIGTOWN	36	MM3SLD	JOHN	KIRKCUDBRIGHT
17	GM4LPT	JIM	STRANRAER	37	MM3UDY	DAVY	GIRVAN
18	GM4YYF	STUART	PORTPATRICK	38	MM5WIG	IAN	WIGTOWN
19	GM4ZTO	JOHN	BALLANTRAE	39	SWL	COLIN	STRANRAER
20	MM0ABQ	BILL	WIGTOWN	40	SWL	RICHARD	NEWTON STEWART

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DON'T FORGET?

29th January

George MM0CBL demonstrating data modes

19th February

Tom Wyllie GM4FDM

Talk and video

Dxpedition to Faroe Islands

18th March

Helen Macdonald (XYL MM5WIG)

Talk on astronomy

22nd April

Frazer GM0URZ

“How radio affected my life”

Edited by
GM0FSZ