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**CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Iain Wingate (G4HAQ) has been appointed to the committee, replacing Ron (G8CXR) who has now left the area, but is still a member. Iain has in various ways been involved with the group since it was founded. He was actively involved with the installation of the mast and antenna first used for the GB3GH voice repeater and was the groups first Technical Manager.

I am pleased to announce that we have been granted £250 from the Severn Sound Money Mountain. This will be used in part to fund the work required at GB7GH.

Through the medium of this publication I would like to thank all of those involved in the work to relocate GB7GH and GB3GH. More help will be needed soon with other projects and I would ask members to contact either Stewart G0LGS or myself if they can help in any way.

**Nick Negus  
G6AWT**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting will take place at the Civil Service Club, Tewkesbury Road, Cheltenham at 20.00 on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2002. The Bar will be available prior to and after the meeting.

**GB3GH 70CM 'S VOICE REPEATER**

Thanks to the efforts of Nick (G6AWT), Steve (G4FPV), Ken (G3LVP) and Stewart (G0LGS) the 70cm voice repeater GB3GH was moved from the Ullenwood site to its new site at Churchdown (Chosen Hill) on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2001.

Work on the day included a complete re-fit of both GB3CG and GB3GH into a larger rack. This means both systems were out of action for several hours during the move.

Despite the improved coverage of the repeater in Gloucester and Cheltenham and the increased number of people with 70cm capable radio's (those sold by the group in recent months) usage of GB3GH is still quite low.

**GB3CG 2M VOICE REPEATER**

As mentioned above GB3CG was re-fitted into a new (larger) rack in late December.

**GB7GH NODE**

As reported in previous newsletter, work to prepare for the move of GB7GH has been ongoing for much of the last year.

All operational equipment was moved to the new site during a weekend in mid January. However due to problems with all of the new specially made commercial grade 70cm antenna's, which were purchased & installed prior to the move of the radio equipment, the system was not returned to full operational status until 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

Some final adjustments to the alignment of the antennas on the new site, in order to get the best possible performance on some of the links, may still be required.

During the move of GB7GH the link to G8PZT was upgraded to full duplex operation, early indications are that this link is working better than it has done for sometime.

Since the move of the GB7GH system we have seen an increase in the number of problems on the link to GB7FD. These have mainly been due to problems with the Transmitter / Receiver units currently in use at GB7GH. Steve (G4FPV) has some alternative 23cm radio's (different models) which it is hoped will (after modification) be used to replace the existing units.

The 19K2 link via GB7RR (to MLVN) is currently out of order, due to problems with the receiver.

GRG's lattice mast from the old GB7GH site was dismantled, and most of the remaining antennas and feeders removed from the site owner's tower on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb & 2<sup>nd</sup> March. Whilst some of the recovered antennas are still in reasonable / good condition and will be retained for possible future re-use, the eldest of them (particularly 23cm ones) are not suitable for re-use and so will be scrapped.

The 4 x stacked Dipole Antenna system, which was used by GB3GH voice repeater has been left on the site and made available for use by Gloucestershire County RAYNET. (They previously used an antenna of their own that was installed on the now removed GRG mast).

GRG has been granted permission to continue to use the previous equipment room as a storage area, but we have been advised that we may be asked to vacate at short notice (1 month). Alternative premises for storage of the equipment are being sought.

## **GB7FD NODE**

We are still awaiting definitive information from the site owners regarding timing of the replacement of the aerial mast and site buildings.

We have been advised that we may be required to turn off the GB7FD node for the duration of the planned work, after which all equipment will be relocated to the new site buildings and new antenna's installed on the new site mast.

The group hope to have the alternative links from GB7GH and G4FPV (both via GB7RR) to GB7RC and on to G6TJZ (GB7TJZ) in Bristol fully operational before GB7FD is turned off.

We have received reports that both the 2m and 70cm user ports are currently not working as well as they have done in the past, however due to the volume of work that has been taking place at GB7GH and the pending replacement of the antenna mast and buildings at GB7FD, the committee have decided that only essential work will be done at the site.

## **GB7RT & GB7SR NODES**

Problems with the cable connection between GB7RT and GB7SR in recent weeks have made this link almost unusable. Engineers (from the owners of the cable circuit) are currently investigating.

## **GB7GC NODE**

The only link to the rest of the network from the GB7GC user access node was off from mid January until late February due to antenna problems at the new GB7GH site.

## **GB7RC NODE**

Due to the work at GB7GH and restrictions on accessing the GB7RC site in bad weather, GB7RC is still no yet fully operational, it is hoped that this can be rectified in the next few weeks, prior to the expected temporary loss of the GB7FD site. An annual inspection of the antenna system is due shortly and will be carried out at the same time.

## **GB7RR**

Some work to improve the stability of the radio will be required in the near future, this should reduce the higher than expected retry rates that we have seen on the link to date. This work may be carried out before the system is used as part of the alternative southbound link (whilst GB7FD is out of action).

GB7RR is expected to be off air for a short time during the forthcoming installation of MB7UC, whilst a new DC power supply system and the necessary RF filters are installed.

## **A.P.R.S. DIGIPEATER**

The group was asked by one of its members to look at putting on a 2m APRS (Automatic Position Reporting System) UI-Digipeater in the Cheltenham area.

Following consultation with local APRS users, Dave Morris (G4GVZ), who has been operating a APRS UI-Digipeater from his home for sometime, was co-opted by the committee at their meeting in late January to manage this project.

An application for installing an APRS UI-Digipeater on the Cleeve Common site was submitted in early February, and a Notice of variation to operate using the callsign MB7UC was received by Dave on 26<sup>th</sup> February.

The system will comprise a KAM 9612+ TNC (on loan from G0LGS), which supports APRS DIGI functions without the use of a computer, a Yaesu (FT203R) hand-held radio (on loan from G6AWT), with suitable RF filters provided by G4FPV. It will use the same tri-band vertical that is currently used for GB7RR (on 70cm). It is hoped that system will be installed and operational by the end of March. (Testing of the hardware was underway at G4GVZ's station as this newsletter was being written).

This new facility should provide improved APRS 'connectivity' to/from the Midlands, Oxfordshire, Wiltshire and beyond.

Further information on APRS can be found at <http://www.aprs.org/>.

Software for APRS includes the popular UI-View program (for Windows) that can be found at <http://www.ui-view.com/>, whilst Linux users are catered for using the program Xastir from <http://sourceforge.net/projects/xastir/> or aprsd from <http://sourceforge.net/projects/aprsd/>.

## **GB3CCX**

Ken (G3LVP) reported that he had seen DX reports for GB3CCX in recent amateur radio press, but could not recall any details. The best DX report we are aware of to date is PA0WMM in JO22FE, RST 549, at a distance of 444 km. If anyone else has seen any better reports please inform Nick (G6AWT).

GB3CCX is expected to be off air for a short time during the forthcoming installation of MB7UC, whilst a new DC power supply system is installed on the site.

## **GB7GLO AND MLVN NODE**

It is planned to update the FBB software in use at GB7GLO sometime in the coming months, this should take a few hours to complete during which time GB7GLO will be unavailable.

## **GB7LGS**

Stewart (G0LGS) hopes to be able to upgrade much of the Computer Hardware, Operating System and other software used at GB7LGS in the next few months. The current 486DX-100 based system has run the present system for over 4 years, but is showing its age.

## **LOCAL EVENTS**

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Nick (G6AWT) is trying to re-arrange the Microwave Round Table event following the postponement of the event that had been planned for October 2001. Access will be by ticket only (in advance). Contact Nick (G6AWT) for further details and an application form.

A Festival of Science is to be held at Cheltenham Town Hall from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> May. It will feature a section entitled 'Adventures in Communications' from which a special event station will be operating HF (Voice & CW) and VHF (PACKET). Entrance to the event is free.

## **TREASURERS REPORT**

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Despite what seemed like low number of people attending the Worcester rally on the 8<sup>th</sup> December the group raised just over £470, mainly from the sale of Philips PRP73 (70cm) handheld radio's and surplus microwave components.

We understand that the groups involved in the organisation of the Worcester (Three Counties) Rally have decided not to hold any rally during 2002. We extend our thanks to them for their support during the last few years.

Gloucestershire Repeater Group will therefore try to attend at least one other 'local' rally this year.

- Anyone got any suggestion as to which rally may be worth attending?
- Have we any volunteers to help on the day?

**Stewart Wilkinson.**  
**G0LGS**

## **FOR SALE**

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Free to a good home: Mains operated commercial 2m valve transceiver, the unit is single channel with 25W RF O/P, it is designed for continuous operation. Approx. size 3ft x 2ft x 1ft (HWD), can be delivered. Contact Nick (G6AWT).

The group has a 7ft 19Inch equipment Rack, with side and rear doors, mains socket strip and earth bar, delivery negotiable. Contact Nick (G6AWT).

## **WANTED**

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The GB7DXC DXCLUSTER support group requires the following items for a high-speed linking project:

- 23cm's (1240-1300 MHz) Transmitters & Receivers, capable of data transfer at rates up to 64kbps. Ideally they should be ready to install & use (i.e. 'plug & play').
- 23cm's (1240-1300 MHz) Duplexers.
- 23cm's (1240-1300 MHz) Antennas.

Contact Martin (G0HDB) on 01684-772178, via GB7DXC or email to g0hdb@amdavies.demon.co.uk

## **FOURPACK NEWS**

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A meeting at the end of January discussed ways of improving the network connectivity in the Bromsgrove area. Part of the discussion included the allocation of GB7 callsigns for some existing systems in the area.

The installation of GB7BM has been delayed whilst further negotiations take place with the site owners regarding details of antenna placement on the site tower.

GB7WE has a fault within its power supply system, which means it is not fully operational. The system currently only provides a backup path to G8PZT node as the northbound link is awaiting completion of work at GB7CH (Chester).

FOURPACK Meetings: 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month, with the AGM on 25<sup>th</sup> April at 'The Anchor', Upton-Upon-Severn. (Non-members welcome).