

## UK FM GROUP (WESTERN)

### Western FM Repeater Group

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### NEWS SHEET No.7 - MAY 1976

EUREKA!!!!!! The most important news since our last News Sheet is of course that we have received our licence (or rather a copy of it) from the Home Office via the RSGB allowing us to put our 2 metre repeater GB3MP on the air from Moel-y-Parc. Verbal permission did in fact reach us at the end of January and the licence subsequently appeared during February authorizing us to operate on channel R6 with a maximum e.r.p. (as requested) of 15 watts using F2 and F3 modulation.

Our Group, initially known as the Western FM Repeater Group, was formed on Wednesday 19th March 1975 at an open meeting called at the headquarters of the Mid-Cheshire A.R.S. in Winsford, Cheshire. A Committee was elected and the repeater group formed with the primary object of setting up one or more repeaters to serve radio amateurs in the North West of England and North Wales. The objectives of the Group were defined more specifically, and a Constitution was drawn up and adopted, at a meeting of the Group which took place in The White Lion Inn at Pen-y-mynydd, Clwyd on Monday 15th September 1975.

Our proposal for a 2 metre repeater (GB3MP) to be sited at Moel-y-Parc was submitted in its original form to the RSGB on 24th April 1975 and on 29th May 1975 we submitted additional information as requested by the RSGB. During the Summer there were some un-avoidable delays due to holidays being taken by both RSGB staff and the official involved at the Home Office. After some "false alarms" we learned that our application had finally been submitted by the RSGB to the Home Office on 12th August 1975. The licence was subsequently issued on 30th January 1976, and we had GB3MP on the air for the first time transmitting in beacon mode from the Moel-y-Parc site on Sunday 14th March 1976 for two hours from 11.30am until 1.30pm.

Members will therefore note that we have achieved what had hitherto been thought impossible - we got our repeater on the air in just under a year from the date of formation of our Group. Purists might say that we have still to put it into full operation - but we expect that this will be achieved any day now (first week in May????) In fact the only item still needing to be done is for our receive aerial to be connected to its co-axial feeder - once the riggers have done this we can air test the machine in repeater mode: provided of course that we have no receiver de-sensitization problems.

The idea of forming the Group was discussed originally by Gordon Adams G3LEQ and Brian Levett G3TXH at an informal meeting which took place between them over a cup of coffee (or was it tea?) in a Little Chef restaurant near Ellesmere Port. Both Brian and Gordon had been thinking of putting forward a repeater proposal if sufficient support could be found in the Liverpool/Cheshire area, but Brian had not had much success with "soundings" taken in Liverpool. However they jointly decided that an open meeting should be called of all interested amateurs and that a proposal should be put forward for a 2 metre repeater at Moel-y-Parc - as an initial project.

Well, that puts the Group's short history on record; and we hope that our members will soon be able to feel that all the effort expended during the last year will have been worthwhile. So "pin back your ears" for MP!!!!

P.S. Monday night is our Net Night on 145.600MHz at 9.30pm clock time - hear you on then? (Except on monthly meeting nights).

AIMS OF THE GROUP It might be appropriate at this time to re-state the aims of our Group as defined in the Constitution - for the benefit of the large number of new members who have joined us in the last few months. They are as follows:-

- (1) In general - to further the well-being of amateur radio and electronics;
- (2) In particular - to enable radio amateurs in North Wales and the North West of England to gain direct personal experience from which to assess the utility of radio repeater operation;
- (3) In particular - to establish a talk-through radio repeater station at Moel-y-Parc, Clwyd, North Wales initially in the 145 MHz amateur band and later to establish repeaters in the 433 MHz amateur band to serve areas within the Group's established catchment area.

Your Committee feel that the Group is now well on the way to achieving these aims - we only hope that you will agree. If you want still more action - then step right up - we can use your services!

MEMBERSHIP At the date of writing we have around 183 members, and by the time the Manchester Belle Vue Convention is over - we should have exceeded the 200 mark. The present membership list is as follows, and we would like to say now "THANKS CHAPS" for putting your money down when we needed it most - before the repeater was on the air. Latecomers have the following to thank for what has been achieved so far:-

|         |        |        |        |        |        |         |                |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|----------------|
| G2ALN   | GW3LNZ | G3VIN  | *G4CKF | G8ARQ  | G8EHG  | G8HVV   | *G8KOB         |
| *G2AMV  | G3NPJ  | G3VOM  | G4CLA  | GW8ASD | G8EHT  | *G8HYI  | G8KSC          |
| G2FOS   | GB3NRS | *G3VUM | G4DBE  | G8ASG  | G8ENC  | G8IAN   | GW8KSE         |
| G3AOS   | G3OQT  | G3WFW  | G4DDZ  | G8AVJ  | GW8ESE | G8IKW   | GW8KSF         |
| G3ATZ   | G3PNQ  | G3WIC  | G4DHO  | G8AWN  | G8EWD  | *GW8IMB | G8KTE          |
| *G3BRS  | G3PTU  | G3XGH  | G4DOJ  | G8AWS  | G8FBI  | G8ITC   | G8KTW          |
| G3DCA   | G3RTU  | G3XII  | G4DPW  | G8AXE  | G8FDL  | G8IVW   | G8KUP          |
| *GW3DZJ | G3SMM  | GW3XST | GW4DTQ | G8AYG  | G8FJA  | G8IYA   | G8KUZ          |
| *GW3ELM | G3SMT  | GW3YQP | G4DVS  | G8AYW  | GW8FQF | G8IYC   | G8KVM          |
| *GW3GRY | G3SMU  | G3ZOD  | G4ECI  | G8BCG  | *G8FUM | G8JAI   | G8LEQ          |
| GW3GWA  | GW3TCE | G3ZZP  | G4EFP  | *G8BEQ | G8FVV  | G8JBZ   | plus:-         |
| *G3HXX  | G3TFN  | G4API  | G4EGA  | G8BRP  | G8FWD  | G8JBJ   | *Lowe Electr.  |
| G3IAK   | G3TJI  | G4AHF  | GW4EGX | G8BNU  | GW8FZA | G8JER   | *Thanet Elect. |
| GW3IEQ  | GW3TMH | G4AOS  | G4EJA  | G8CET  | GW8FZC | G8JHL   | R Hallett      |
| *G3IJE  | GW3TMP | G4AQP  | G4EJM  | G8CJQ  | G8GAJ  | G8JNJ   | J McArdle      |
| G3IWE   | G3TSZ  | G4AUR  | G4ELA  | G8CZW  | G8GFP  | G8JNM   | R Stubbs       |
| G3IWJ   | G3TXH  | G4BBU  | G4EST  | G8DNY  | G8GTP  | G8JXC   | H Keate        |
| G3JMQ   | G3UCA  | G4BKF  | G4EQT  | G8DTF  | G8GKZ  | G8KHT   | J Nutt         |
| G3JWK   | G3UDZ  | GW4BQM | G4EQZ  | G8DVR  | G8HAV  | *G8KIX  | T W Bates      |
| G3KAF   | G3UKM  | G4BTW  | GW8ACG | G8DYI  | G8HED  | GW8KJN  | T O'Brien      |
| *G3KLL  | G3VDS  | G4BVE  | G8AFC  | G8DZJ  | GW8HNV | G8KJZ   | G M Williams   |
| *G3KVT  | G3VFP  | G4BYP  | G8ALA  | G8EAV  | G8HQW  | G8KMN   | R Stark        |
| G3LEQ   | G3VIJ  | G4CJD  | G8ARI  | G8EHF  | G8HRT  | G8KNP   | D Smith        |
|         |        |        |        |        |        |         | I Smith        |

N.B. \*Represents a Sustaining Member.

We take this opportunity of saying a special THANK YOU to our Sustaining Members - although there are only nineteen of them - at the last count they had contributed more to our funds than the total ordinary membership and we much appreciate their generosity. Since our last News Sheet our new Sustaining Members include:- G2AMV - Basil O'Brien, G8KHT - Bill Clarkson, G8EAV - Frank Johnson, Thanet Electronics, G3UKM - Bill Leighton, University of Manchester A.R.S. (G3VUM/G8FUM) and G3KVT - Tony Smith (for the second time around!) We also welcome two honorary members: Bob Stark and G8DTF - Bob Price; both of whom have had their first year's membership given to them by the Group in appreciation of the hard work they have put in on the logie. Many others have given their time and goods to the Group - and to them also we say a heartfelt thank you. Valuable items of hardware donated recently include a complete and brand new TRIO solid state receiver from Lowe Elect-



MEMBERSHIP CTD. Lowe Electronics, electronic sub-assemblies from Microwave Modules (making them new additions to the membership list), a Hexalator - otherwise known as a ferrite circulator from Steve G3TPW, a large quantity of valves for GB3MR from Martin G8JNJ and a 19" cabinet for the same project from Tony GW8ASD.

NEWS OF OTHER REPEATERS GB3HH Harpurhill, Buxton came on beacon mode during the middle of April for the first time and seemed to take most people by surprise. However the man from Sheffield University - Tony G3RKL reports that he has still to complete construction of the receiver and the logic and he does not expect to put it into repeater mode before June. In the meantime it seems to be putting a good signal into North Manchester and parts to the East of Manchester where the GB3MP signal is noisy. HH is however weak across the Cheshire plain due to the Cat & Fiddle and Axe Edge getting in the way. When GB3RF gets on the air during the Summer we should have pretty good coverage around the North West! GB3BM came on the air during March from Turner's Hill, near Dudley, Birmingham and puts out a good signal along the M6 link motorway towards the M1 and also up the M6 towards Keele. GB3CI the Corby UHF repeater is due on at the end of April together with our three UHF repeaters GB3MR, GB3LL and GB3ST. Corby will use channel RB2 in common with Stoke-on-Trent. Manchester and Llandulas will be on channel RB4. Our own Chester members are working on a UHF FM repeater for their City namely GB3CR which it is hoped will be licensed next Spring, and we are also in the process of submitting a special application for a linear repeater licence GB3LR operating 70cms input and 2 metre output to serve the North West - initially on an experimental basis.

GB3MP MOEL-Y-PARC OPERATING HOURS By the time you read this News Sheet MP will have commenced regular beacon test transmissions between 9.00am and midnight BST daily. Once this test has been satisfactorily completed it is expected that MP will go straight into repeater mode operation - and if no snags crop up the regular operating hours will be from 7.45am to a quarter past midnight BST daily. Until we have the 24 hour emergency switch-off arrangements completed (hopefully in a few months time) you will not be able to use GB3MP in the wee small hours. Operation will be on channel R6 with 1750Hz access tone of at least 250msecs duration and a talk time of one minute.

THE UHF REPEATERS Our first three UHF repeaters GB3MR Park Moor, Manchester (RB4), GB3LL Llanddulas, Colwyn Bay (RB4) and GB3ST Ash Bank, Stoke-on-Trent (RB2) will hopefully all come on the air for the first time during the first week of May. Access tones will be as for GB3MP but the talk time will be two minutes. GB3MR will also include special facilities for RTTY users who employ AFSK on the new standard tones and 170Hz shift. The future Liverpool repeater may possibly be located at Aintree and has been allocated channel RB6. The Chester machine GB3CR has not yet been allocated a channel but it is hoped that it may be able to use one of the existing three UHF channels rather than introduce the need for a fourth pair of crystals in the North West. We suggest that 70cms FM operators in the North West should equip themselves with the following channels:- RB2, RB4, RB6, SB8, SU20 and SU18 and/or SU16 initially. Those wishing to join the North West UHF Net will also require 433.350 MHz SIMPLEX. It is not expected that any repeaters will use this frequency up here. If you need a good mobile 2 x  $\frac{1}{2}$  wave co-linear antenna (type U5) contact the Group Secretary Gordon Adams, G3LEQ. QRX £12.30 + VAT. We also have concessions available on ICOM, Microwave Modules and QM70 gear at the moment. The UHF repeaters (as with the VHF ones) will be vertically polarized.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS You have not heard much about Committee meetings during the past year because all our meetings have been public and monthly. However now that the repeaters are coming "on stream" we expect that there will no longer be a need for open monthly meetings and after our May meeting there will be no more formal meetings until September (see Diary Notes). At our Monday 16th February 1976 meeting in the Wirral Mercury Motor Inn - which was attended by nearly 100 people we completed our Committee (except for a Chairman!) and this now comprises as follows:-  
President: Basil O'Brien G2AMV. Chairman: Office vacant.  
Secretary: Gordon Adams G3LEQ. Treasurer: Peter Fox G8HAV.  
Chairman Technical Sub-Committee: Arthur Russell G8AWS.  
Members: Terry Gunby G8KIX. Keith Faulkner G4EQZ.  
Geoff Booth G8DZJ. Alan Warne G8AYW.  
Club Reps: Frank Wiseman GW3GRY (Rhyl).  
Roy Stubbs (GB3LL).

It was unanimously agreed that Basil O'Brien should be invited to become our first President, and that the terms of reference should be drawn up at a later date and hopefully incorporated into our Constitution during our September Annual General Meeting. Basil very kindly accepted the office and we shall of course look to him for advice particularly on RSGB matters.

DIARY DATES Please make a note of the following events now:-  
Saturday/Sunday 8th/9th May 1976 International VHF Convention organized by the RSGB at Brunel University, Uxbridge. Full details in March "Radio Communication".

Saturday 15th May 1976 Region 11 O.R.M. and Mobile Rally. We have been invited by Roy Stubbs and Phil Hudson GW3IEQ to attend this event at the Royal Lido, Bastion Road, Prestatyn, Clwyd. We shall be setting up a small stand there in the morning with our leaflets and shall be in attendance all day. Volunteers for stand duty are requested.

Monday 17th May 1976 at 7.30 for 8.00pm in the Wirral Mercury Motor Inn. We have once again hired the Conference Room and private bar(!) and hope to have the long awaited talks on our logic systems etc. This is a superb venue and is located at Backford Cross just outside Chester on the Helsby to Queensferry Road A5117 at the junction with the A41 less than 5 miles from the end of the M56. In fact the access from Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and North Wales is ideal.

Sunday 30th May 1976 A Fox Hunt in Cheshire on 2 metres. Bring the family and tune in on channel S22 145.550 MHz between 2.15 and 2.30pm and listen for G8LEQ (or G3LEQ). You may find it an advantage to start from high ground as the "fox" will only be using a  $\frac{1}{2}$  wave whip antenna. Come equipped with a picnic tea (if you never find the "fox's lair" you can at least keep the family going on emergency rations!) Why not build an HB9CV DF ant? Transmissions from G8LEQ will continue at intervals during the afternoon either in the form of CQ calls or QSOs. All you have to do is find him. There will be a good prize for the winner.

Saturday/Sunday 22nd/23rd May 1976 144 MHz portable contest (brought forward from 29th/30th May) 16.00 to 16.00 hrs GMT. Rules in April "Radio Communication".

Sunday 20th June 1976 RSGB Region 1 VHF Contest from 09.00 to 17.00 hrs GMT on 4m, 2m and 70cms plus special 23cms. Multi and single operator stations. Rules available from G2CUZ or G3LEQ see.

Saturday 26th June 1976 Our own mobile get together at Willaston-in-the-Wirral village fete starts 11.30am on the recreation ground. Bring a picnic lunch. Children's races, plenty of interest for the family. Talk-in on S20 and S22. Details from G8KMN George.

Saturday/Sunday 3rd/4th July 1976 VHF NFD 16.00 to 16.00 hrs GMT. See March 1976 "Radio Communication" for details and rules.

Monday 13th September 1976 at 7.30 for 8.00pm our Annual General Meeting in the Wirral Mercury Motor Inn, Backford Cross, Chester. - and don't forget the RSGB National Exhibition at Alexandra Palace, London, 30th/31st July and 1st August 1976. BCNU, Gordon.