

Caption Competition

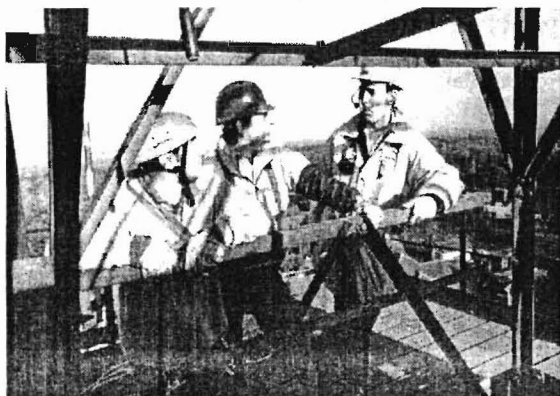
This trio are some 100 feet above ground, the weather was quite cold, with the wind blowing reasonably hard.

Just what did Nigel say?

I'm sure we can find a suitable prize for the most amusing caption!

Send your captions to:

Jim G6FCL,
89 Tyefields,
Pitsea, Basildon,
Essex, SS13 1JA



Just what was Nigel saying to the other two?

ERG ON THE WEB !

The Committee has always saved postage costs by using e-mail whenever this is possible. As part of our ongoing improvements, the ERG can now be found on the Internet. If you have Internet facilities, simply point your browser at:

<http://www.swsystem.demon.co.uk/erg>

There you will find latest news from ERG, equipment details, committee membership, constitution, useful links etc. The initial page set has been generated by Murray G6JYB. The group is grateful to committee member Simon Wilton, G7HCD for providing this web space free.

*** LATEST NEWS * LATEST NEWS * LATEST NEWS * LATEST NEWS ***

Continued from Front Page

Just prior to Christmas, Dick G4GUJ received verbal agreement from the site donors for us to operate the repeaters from their site with a promise of written confirmation in the New Year. In fact written confirmation arrived a few days later, so we now have the official go-ahead!

A lot of hard work has been put in by a good number of people both on and off the committee, which has facilitated a successful conclusion to our search for a good site. The committee would like to thank everyone involved especially Nick and all those who helped with the tests whether they were out on the road or on site.

Now we have the go-ahead, all site application papers have been submitted to the appropriate authorities. We will now monitor progress and will be chasing where we can. It's almost impossible to calculate when we will be up and working again, but it is unlikely that we will see GB3DA on the air before the middle of 1997 and unfortunately GB3ER could be quite a while longer.

The reasons for these delays are simply due to the lengthy procedures that the RA have to follow when issuing NOV's for repeaters, more so when they are on a shared frequency such as 70cm where of course we have only secondary status.

In any event all progress will be reported back to the membership as and when things happen.

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Essex Repeater Group Newsletter - Winter Edition

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NEWS UPDATE



Danbury Tower

I'm sure everyone is fully aware of the consequences at the loss of Danbury Tower, the site had been home to both GB3DA and GB3ER for many years. As a result of course both ERG repeaters are temporally silent!

Much work has been done by the committee having been tasked with rapidly finding a new home for the repeaters at short notice. Remember that it's not just a case of putting up aerials and running a few cables! The committee had to take into account many things users may not be aware of, not least are coverage, cost, security and coexistence with other frequencies in use at any prospective new site.

We have held back publication of this newsletter so that we could give you some good news and that news is very good!

145.725

Use it for Simplex until the repeater is back on!

*** LATEST NEWS * LATEST NEWS * LATEST NEWS * LATEST NEWS ***

Following extensive searches for sites two were finally short-listed which are as follows:

1. Jacksons Coaches located at Bickenacre, which could have been made available for occupation as soon as the required paperwork has passed through the system. The cost of rent and electricity were a major hurdle, in addition to this was the expense of constructing a building to house the repeater!
2. Electricity Board / Water Board site at the top of Danbury Ridge, behind St Johns Church. This late contender was a vastly superior site. It was decided to postpone a decision on the Jacksons Coaches site and to actively pursue this site, even though this may delay our license application a little. Cost was just that of electricity.

After a series of meetings with the site representatives, a tentative agreement was given for our occupation of the site.. On Sunday 15 December saw Committee members and other users, testing both of the repeater frequencies from the new site, using a portable cabin on wheels with an integral wind-up mast built and loaned to us by Nick G7HCO. Various tests by both parties resulted in a positive outcome.

The tests were remarkably successful providing extremely good signal reports from all parts of the original GB3DA coverage area, even some of those notorious black holes were indicating improved signal reports. No EMC problems were encountered however the GB3ER signal reports were a little disappointing. This has prompted a thorough check of the radio equipment used for the 70cm repeater.

Continued on Back Page

All Photographs Courtesy of G0PAE

ERG CONSTITUTION CHANGE

As indicated at the marathon 1995 AGM, the changes made to ERG constitution have been reviewed. The result was just one change which was presented to the 1996 AGM. On behalf of the Committee, Murray G6JYB presented an amendment designed to tidy up an ambiguity on voting rights at either an AGM or EGM. The new sentence reads:-

'Members must be fully paid up or be honorary (as per 3c) to be eligible for a voting card.'

Originally this was tabled to be added to the end of paragraph 5e(i) (Voting). On the night, by popular request from the floor, it was added to the end of paragraph 5d (Validation). Its effect actually confirms current practice, and as such makes the position clearer to all. In the interests of saving costs, members are requested to amend their own copy. Alternatively a full copy of the current constitution can be obtained from the Honorary Secretary. The new ERG web site will also carry it in MS-Word6 format soon.

Murray G6JYB

Election of the Committee

Officers:

Mike Wheaton	G4ZPE	was re-elected as Chairman
Chrissy Merrell	G8OIV	was re-elected as Treasurer
Dick Merrell	G4GUJ	was re-elected as Secretary

Ordinary Members:

Murray Niman	G6JYB	was re-elected to the Committee
Steve Emmett	G7RGG	was re-elected to the Committee
Simon Wilton	G7HCD	was re-elected to the Committee
Clive Ward	G1EUC	was re-elected to the Committee
Jan Swanwick	G7UVP	was elected to the Committee
Jim Mahoney	G6FCL	was elected to the Committee
Brian Lewis-Hill	G1EOV	was elected to the Committee

Canvey Rally

If you're after bargain in test equipment and other such goodies, then don't miss us at the Canvey Rally this February!

Better send the wife to her mothers for the day, so you can smuggle the stuff back home!

This is an event not to be missed! Remember, 2nd February 1997.

The Paddocks, Long Road, Canvey Island, Essex.



Jan, G7UVP 100ft up and bungee jumping may be?



Look! Wake up down below will you?



What's all this? Sitting down on the job!

SPARE POWER SUPPLY

We have a spare power supply that is not working 100% correctly. Its specification is 13.8 volts at some 15 amps. Anything outside of this will blow a trip on the front panel.

An attempted rework of the PSU has shown that much of the original wiring linking the PCB's together is not going to last much longer, the wires have gone brittle and there are also a few dry joints.

The mains input is fused with a neon on indicator, twin toroids approximately 120mm diameter by 60mm high (i.e. very heavy), coupled to the bridge rectifier is an enormous capacitor! This all feeds the regulator circuitry which is using a 723 and four 2N3055s to pass current. Strangely, it does not use the conventional 723 circuit that is in common use today! In light of this I will be rebuilding the PSU from the ground up and will fully document it for future reference. I'm tempted to stay with the 723 as the voltage regulator, but we are also looking at other regulators because the 723 can be prone to RF feedback problems. Any comments on regulation IC's is most welcome!

The new power supply will also feature some new gadgets!

- IC based battery backup switching.
- Output to the radio logic board so we get a "B" tone instead of the usual "K" tone!
- Drop in replacement PCB's for voltage regulating, battery backup etc.
- Sturdy Output connectors, 4mm post terminals with screw down sleeves.
- Filtered mains input at the entry point of the PSU case.
- Soft start.

We would be most pleased to hear from anyone with any comments or suggestions etc. Of course offers of components would be most welcome!

Simon G7HCD

GB3CMS

The 10GHz Beacon GB3CMS was taken down from Danbury Tower along with the voice repeaters on 2nd November.

Towards the end of the summer its power output suddenly dropped to negligible levels. The chief suspect was quickly found as rainwater poured out of the slotted waveguide antenna (which had lost its protective coating) as it was lowered from the tower!

It is now convalescing at the research centre of a well known local electronics company. Examination of the masthead unit internals showed it had stayed dry - a vindication of the modifications made a few years ago.

On power up its frequency and power were found to be very close to their nominal values.

An application has already been submitted for a new site via the RSGB Microwave Committee, although it may be quite a while before approval is obtained. In the meantime improvements to its weather resistance and the keyer unit will be incorporated.

Murray G6JYB