

# CROSSTALK



## Chairman's Chat

Hi All,

Welcome to this issue of Cross talk. As we approach the Annual General Meeting in December I would like to thank every one for their support throughout the past year. Also my thanks go to all the speakers who have given their time to entertain us at the club meetings

Looking back through the year we have had some interesting talks at our meetings, though it is becoming ever more challenging to find new subjects to cover. So if anyone has a certain subject or topic that they feel would be of interest please put the idea forward so that the committee can try to arrange a speaker or indeed an event.

The last event that the club organised was to participate in Lighthouse weekend, which I was pleased went very well. Similar to last year, we only operated on the Sunday, though I feel we are becoming more familiar with the venue and set-up is quite quick. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Harwich society for use of the Lighthouse.

As mentioned earlier please don't forget the AGM and Christmas social on the 13th December. As usual please bring along a plate of something for the buffet table and your raffle tickets collected throughout the year from Bob.

73 - Kevin M0JVC

## HARIG Meetings

**8th Nov:** Canada - Kevan 2E0WMG

**13th Dec:** AGM and Christmas party

**10th Jan:** "My other Hobby/Interest" - all.

**14th Feb:** HF Propagation - Steve Nichols G0KYA (Video & Skype)

**8th Mar:** Talk by Kevin M0JVC (TBC)

**12th Apr:** My Time at the BBC - Tony 2E0FTQ

**10th May:** Quiz with Colchester CRA

## Visit by the RSGB Regional Manager

We are happy to welcome the RSGB Region 12 manager, Keith Haynes G3WRO, who will be visiting us at the November meeting. He will say a few words prior to Kevin's talk about Canada.



His deputy, Peter Onion G0DZB may also attend.

## Visit by Bob WA1Z to Jonathan's QTH

Bob WA1Z was invited by Jonathan to make use of his QTH and equipment to prepare himself for the World Radio Team Championship next year. Bob explains his motivation here:

*I took a long weekend off from work to visit Grazyna, M0GIM, and Jonathan, G0DVJ, at their QTH in Ipswich to operate the WAE CW contest. The primary purpose of the trip was to learn more about summertime HF propagation from Europe during a DX contest in preparation for being Katsuhiko's JH5JHM teammate in next year's World Radio Team Championship (WRTC) in Germany during the IARU July contest. Unfortunately, I was unable to travel the weekend of IARU, but WAE presented a very suitable "Plan B" that allowed me to still experience summertime HF propagation in an European-centric DX contest.*

Below we give Bob's a detailed account of his visit.

### Notice of AGM

Members are advised that the HARIG Annual General Meeting will be on 13th December 2017 at 8pm in the Pavillion, Dovercourt, Harwich.

Following the completion of the AGM business there will be the usual Christmas party. Please bring some food as a contribution to the evening.

### Events

Mills on the Air weekend at The Observatory, Wakes Colne.

Event at the Harwich High Lighthouse (earlier in the year than ILLW)

## Bob's Weekend at Jonathan's QTH

It was a quick turnaround, flying out of Boston Thursday evening and returning Monday. None of this would have been possible without significant help from many people along the way:

John, G4BAV, Chairman of the Ipswich Radio Club, took time out of his day Friday to come by Jonathan's QTH to raise the telescopic tower that supports the SteppIR DB11 while Jonathan drove down to Heathrow to collect me. The members of the Ipswich Radio Club also offered their Elecraft K-Line for me to use in the contest.

Kevin, M0JVC, Chairman, and members of the Harwich Amateur Radio Interest Group invited me into their fold as a member, which allowed me to be able to sign M4U during the contest.

Among all of that, Grazyna and Jonathan opened her home to me and were wonderful hosts – all while balancing having additional guests on Saturday. They took even more time out of their weekend on Sunday to play tour guide for a few hours taking me to Lavenham for cream tea and sightseeing.

Thank you, John, Kevin, Grazyna and Jonathan, Ipswich Radio Club, and Harwich Amateur Radio Interest Group for your generosity and time. I am deeply grateful for all of your help.

Contest Summary Report: <http://www.wa1z.net/2017WAECW>

### Station Details:

Elecraft K3, P3, KPA-500

SkookumLogger Logging Program

80 and 40 M Horizontal Loop

20 – 10 M SteppIR DB11 Yagi

I have never operated a ham radio station in Europe before. In the weeks leading up to the WAE contest, I spent some time looking at propagation probabilities using the VOACAP Online utility (<http://www.voacap.com/p2p/index.html>) and reviewing 2017 IARU logs that some of the WRTC 2018 competitors graciously published on the WRTC 2018 website (<http://wrtc2018.de/index.php/en/competition/2017-iaru-en>). I used this information to get an idea of what I might expect in WAE. I brought a cheat sheet I developed based on this little research, but also promised myself to not use it as a plan. Rather, I tried to use it as a guide, referring to it on occasion to see if things were panning out as I checked various bands each hour. For the most part, it did.

To get a sense of propagation over a 24 hour period, I tried to make sure I operated each clock-hour at least once over the two day period. I came close, missing the 0500, 1600 and 2100z hours. In all, conditions did not seem to be all that good, but I still worked some interesting DX. I spent a fair amount of time tuning around the bands, just listening, in order to see if there were interesting openings that I might otherwise miss. Nothing exotic turned up, but I also suspect activity was lower this year compared to past WAEs.

My favorite contact of the weekend was to ZM4T on 40 M at 0430z Saturday. I'm not sure exactly what path this was, either SW or some sort of skew path, but he was a fairly easy contact.

15 M was marginal all weekend, although I may have missed a small NA opening on Sunday afternoon, which was not a focus for me since I have a good understanding of NA->EU propagation during the summer. My first contact on 15 Saturday morning was to VK6LW, so I got excited that 15 might be in good shape, but my hopes were dashed as I couldn't get any runs going on the band either day.

10 M opened to the south both days, but only marginally. There was not much activity at all from Africa (not a single ZS was heard). We had activity from EA8/9 and CN on other bands, but perhaps northern AF is too close for 10. I did hear FH/DJ9RR several times on 10 over the weekend. However, I could not break his pileup.

It was fun to hear just how *loud* Asia is from Europe compared to operating from the east coast of North America. It's a polar path to most of central and east Asia from W1 and can be a difficult area to work from modest stations back home.

I was particularly impressed with Jonathan's 80 and 40 Meter horizontal loop. In addition to working ZL on 40 right after sunrise, it was also a real treat working a loud E21YDP (worked barefoot) and 9M2/JE1SCJ in the evenings. On 80, QRN was particularly loud Saturday morning, but the Skimmer spots appeared to show pretty good signals into USA and Canada. I did get a lot of serial number repeat requests, though, thanks to the typical summertime noise on the band. Jonathan has a quiet location!

This was also my first opportunity to receive QTCs. What a fun challenge! It was a bit stressful, initially, but once I got a couple under my belt, I recalled some advice Jonathan gave me on the trip back to the house on Friday: stay relaxed and loose. It worked!

It was a fun weekend all around. The bottom line is, one weekend of contesting somewhere new will not make you a propagation expert, but I feel more confident that I now have a basic understanding of EU summertime HF propagation.

Thanks again to everyone who made this trip so educational and enjoyable!

73,

Bob

PS: In fact Bob did wonderfully well in the contest, given the conditions. It is most likely, when the full results are published in December, that HARIG will have earned 1 Participation point and 2 Attainment points towards the qualification needed in 2019 to keep M4U for another three years. Thank you Bob for your efforts.