

quencies of course! How is it these guys are always road sweepers, and not working for Marconi?

Contest barmy

Hams are contest barmy! Every weekend there's a contest on at least one band. Not twenty four hours content to have just, Oh no, forty eight hours is a man sized contest. Everyone winds up the RF to legal limit, plus 400%. What does it all prove in the end? Nothing, it's always the same idiots that win! A good long rag chew is more beneficial to all.

QSL cards

The result of a contest is usually a deluge of useless QSL cards. The only people getting any real satisfaction from them is the printer and the post office. Mine go under the leg of a table to stop it rocking. If you're an artistic freak, you'll probably paste them on the wall to cover the cracks. Anyway, you can never believe what's written on them. The sender doesn't want you to think his station is inferior to yours, so he frigs the signal reports.

A bit silly

Hundreds of new licences are issued annually to candidates who only just scrape through the RAE with a large slice of luck. With the ink still wet on a grubby little bit of paper, they spend an arm and a leg on an all singing all dancing black box. Selecting the local repeater channel they hog it for hours, calling CQ-DX this is G6... continually 'til eventually one of their club mates two roads away replies. After giving their name which they spell phonetically three times and the same with the QTH they continue "Oh yes, well you know that don't you John, and I guess the weather's been the same with you etc, etc, etc."

RAYNET

During the East coast floods in the mid fifties, a number of Hams did trojan work in helping the emergency services and ships at sea. This became the germ of an idea to form an amateur emergency communications network, from volunteer Hams. "RAYNET" as it's now called was the result. It's a well known fact that when an Englishman is up against the wall, he's at his best and this is how it's been on numerous occasions when RAYNET has gone into action. But at the debriefing afterwards the

controllers gently pat themselves on the back for a job well done; except their report shows things might have been better if only... the mobile had gone to the right grid reference. Why give him a bunch of numbers, when he could have been told to stay outside Jones the Butcher's Shop in the High Street; and if only the portable station had stayed in contact! No credence is given to the fact the poor sod had fallen in the swollen river losing his 'hand held' and almost his life. The report recommends more map reading and operating exercises. It's suggested the controllers go out into the field for a change. It's time the top brass remember we're a bunch of volunteers, not a battalion of soldiers. The organisers who would have these volunteers trained to military standard should join the professionals and stop "playing" soldiers.

Don't knock CW People who knock CW tend to be silly people who mostly can't be bothered with the effort of learning it themselves. All that rubbish about it being an anachronism is just patently wrong. There is nothing like it for pulling a QSO out of the noise or QRM. It can be sent at any speed with the minimum of equipment and it is certainly much more effective than the other so called 'narrow band' media such as RTTY, Amtor, etc.

In any case, you should hear the drivel which pours forth out of the mouths of babes, so to speak, most of whom are newly licenced G6's. You hear them baying for a novice licence which, in reality, is just a request for a substitute for a bit of study, application and hard work. To scrap morse would be to cause yet further degeneration in the standards of our hobby. You've only got to listen to them. Most of the newcomers are simply full to bursting with boring inanities. Witness what's happened to the repeaters.

Condescending

People who build their own equipment are in the main a bunch of self opinionated, egotistical folk who look down on those of us who get our enjoyment with shop built blackboxes. They should remember that amateur radio can mean all things to all people.

As for patronising us 'mere mortals' you always know a home brew merchant by the dreadful

quality of the audio. At least we don't inflict the unpleasant results of our labours on other unfortunate stations.

RAYNET vigilantes

The idea behind Raynet and the motives of the majority of its members are good to the point of being laudable. Having said this, a small number of them see themselves as vigilantes of the radio spectrum. I have lost count of the number of times that I have heard the extremists come up and say something to the effect of "Do you know that this is a Raynet frequency? Do you mind moving off to another channel?". You go back to them and point out that there is no current occupation of the frequency and therefore you cannot see what harm is being done. They typically reply that these frequencies are set aside for Raynet use whether they are presently in use or not. In any case the call for Raynet to use them could come at any time and therefore you should never use them except on Raynet business. You then reply that your licence entitles you to transmit anywhere within the prescribed bands, etc. The debate degenerates from there.

The whole 2m spectrum seems full of Raynet frequency proscriptions. Any reasonable person naturally keeps clear of traffic which has serious intent whether it emanates from Raynet or not. However it seems that the attitude of some Raynet members borders on the unreasonable and is definitely OTT.

Think then speak

People who say "This is G6ZZZ calling CQ and looking for any possible calls" get right up my nose or, at any rate, fill me with despair about the state of my hobby. All calls are possible, especially if someone goes back to them. I appreciate that this is a character tick but I do wish people would think a bit before they open their mouths.

Protiteering

"So you're setting up a new magazine are you? You should do an article on the amateur radio dealers and their profit margins... Listen mate, I know. I've been to the States and I've compared the prices that you can buy the same equipment over there. They must be making an absolute bomb out of us!" ●