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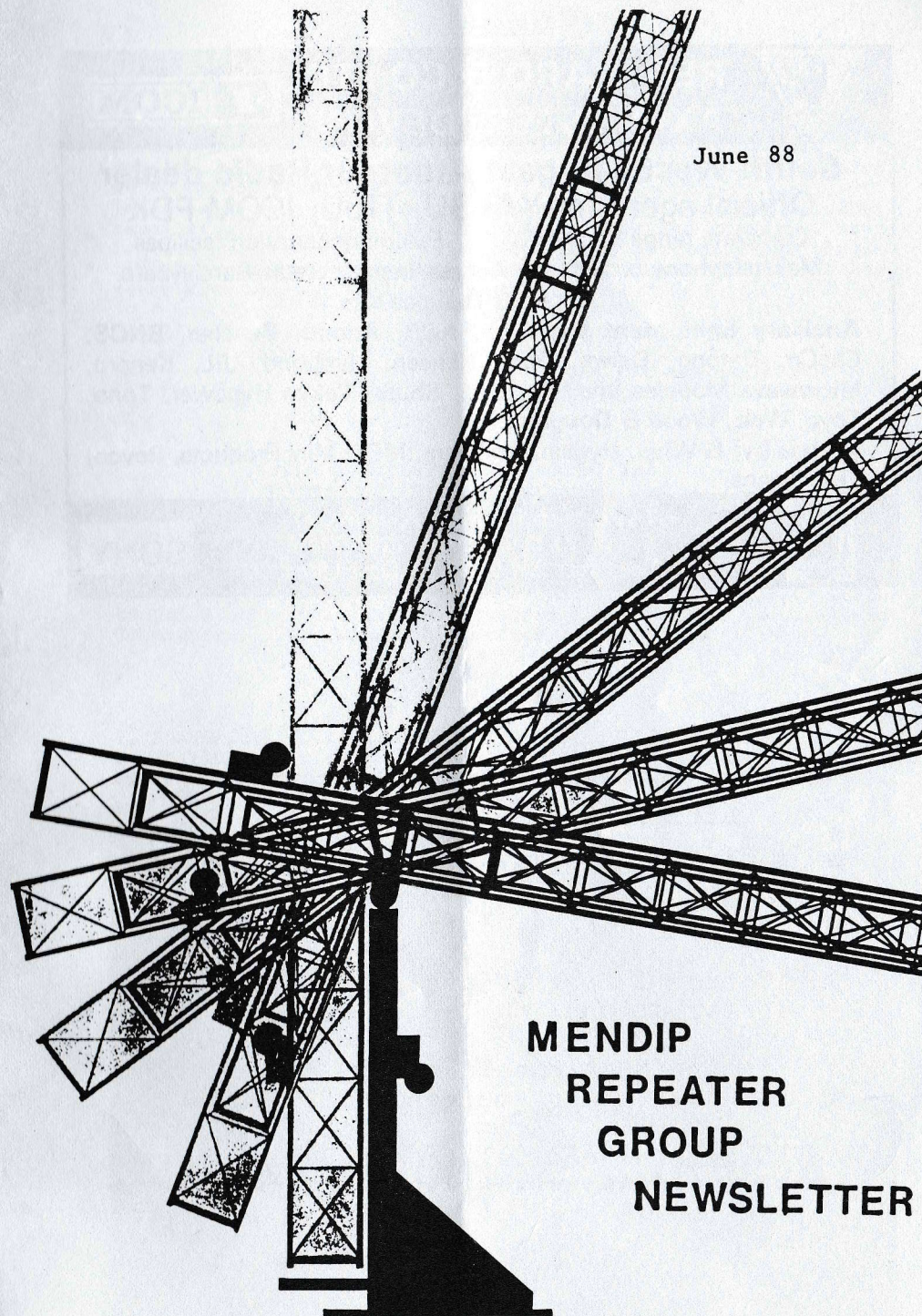
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NEWSLETTER PRINTED BY G4 TJB QSL CARDS.

June 88



**MENDIP
REPEATER
GROUP
NEWSLETTER**

GB3WR

GB3UB

GB3VS

GB3UT

Dear Member,

Welcome to the June 88 edition of the Mendip Repeater Groups Newsletter. Thankyou for your support over the past twelve months and we feel sure that continued support will remain, keeping our group of repeaters at the high standard we've become accustomed. Technically our repeaters are superb and are the envy of other repeater groups especially for reliability and coverage. What is said on the repeater is another thing of course but please remember repeater operation gives you a large audience and you never know who may be listening.

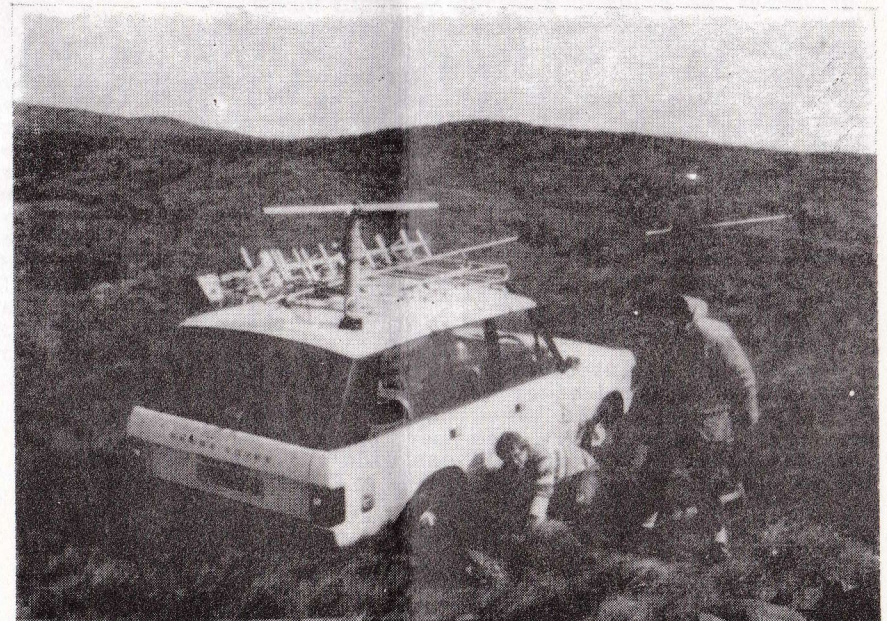
73 see you at Longleat !

MENDIP REPEATER GROUP COMMITTEE

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Vice Chairman.....	P. Beecham.....	G6PZ
Secretary.....	S. Gardner.....	G4PSP
Tech Manager.....	I. Parker.....	G8XZD
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CHAIRMAN'S NOTICE

Here is our 'new look' Newsletter and I hope the members will let the committee have comments. Hopefully we will not have to seek a hefty bank loan to cover the increased production costs. The AGM has produced some new committee members and the first committee meeting showed the advantage of 'fresh blood' with new ideas. Welcome to them and fresh ideas.

Our new technical manager Ian G8XZD has the urgent tasks in hand - stand by power for WR and with Adrians (G4UVZ) assistance GB3VS is now providing good service on 70cms to the SW of MRG catchment area.

Membership is healthy and you are asked to encourage the regular non-member users of our repeaters to join and contribute to the running costs. There are still several regular users of 'WR' in particular who believe it is a 'free service' funded by the RSGB/DTI/or someone. A little gentle persuasion please!

Longleat is on the horizon, see you there,

IVAN G3GKC

TECHNICAL MANAGERS REPORT

Since my last newsletter, I'm pleased to report that my technical sub-committee have been working hard maintaining our repeaters and commissioning GB7UX the groups packet radio repeater project.

Apologies in advance if I've missed out any names. Next time you use one of our repeaters spare a thought for all your repeater group back-up team that give so freely of their time.

GB3WR RO LOCATED Nr WELLS SOMERSET

GB3WR continues to give good service and is well used. Lets hope that when our site lease expires that we continue to get favourable terms from our Landlords (The BBC). G3VPF recently reported that the Stockland Hill repeater group which runs GB3SH (RBII) and GB3DB (144.65) have had their rent increased from 'nominal' to £100 per installation p.a. by the IBA as a result of a recent 'review of policy'.

We occasionally get on site interference which is unfortunately unavoidable. With the amount of RF generated on site the equipment seems to survive well despite the occasional hiccup. Maybe we should have a competition - guess the total ERP of the Mendip mast or the number of aerials in use! (A prize of a bent slim jim on a seized rotator for the nearest correct entry!)

The other type of interference is still with us. Yes I know its been said a thousand times but IGNORE IT! 9 times out of ten it will go away. What ever you do -don't acknowledge their presence, however angry you may be. If they hear you say something like "oh! sorry old man didn't get any of that-some !*#!** jammed you out", they'll have a field day and continue.

GB3UT 24cm TV REPEATER-BATH UNIVERSITY

Sterling work has been carried out on the 24cm television repeater by Mike G8CPF, Richard G1WRR and Henry G8OTA. The aerial is now some 3m higher which should improve coverage. Whilst the number of users is not high, the dedicated core maintain the spirit of true amateur radio with home construction and experimentation with equipment and aerials.

GB7UX-2 PROPOSED PACKET RADIO REPEATER

When I wrote to the RSGB on the 1st of August 1987, I was unofficially told that our licence application would be forwarded to the DTI as part of phase 2 of the packet radio experiment and that licencing would be a mere formality. Since the application went in, (1/8/87) I have only received one communication from the RSGB which was a standard letter acknowledging the groups application. It is worth noting that our application was in with G8IMB (the packet co-ordinator) a good 2-3 weeks before phase 2 closed.

Nearly a year has passed now and we are still none the wiser. All enquiries either to the co-ordinator or the repeater management group seem to meet with non-committal answers. It seems strange that a hobby which is primarily concerned with communication that this situation should arise. The latest 'excuse' is that we are waiting for the new licence conditions to be drawn up. Having had my moan I'll get off the soap box and tell you a little more about the repeater.

A few weeks after the application went in a F494 base station was donated to the group by Philips Radio Communications Systems Ltd (ex Pye Telecom) of Cambridge. Thanks are due to Jon Bigwood, G8KNN, for this procurement. High spec crystals for the base station were donated by QSL Crystals Ltd. Our thanks to them.

For those unfamiliar with the F494 this is a 25w base station which can be configured as a repeater (full duplex) or in our case, simplex operation. The F494 is current kit, and several examples of it are in use in the GB3WR repeater site by commercial users. Thanks are also due to Henry G8OTA for constructing a pin diode aerial changeover for this unit. Site tests were conducted from the repeater site on Feb 14th with many good links being established. Space doesn't permit the results to be published but I can assure you its a good site and should become an excellent repeater in keeping with the Mendip Repeater Group tradition.

It is hoped that the TNC will run level 3/4 Networking software and we are awaiting with interest the arrival of the 'ROSE' code from the states. Lets hope the licence arrives soon, in the mean time watch out for flying pigs!

GB3VS RB3 Nr. TAUNTON

Now settled down from its recent refurbishment by Adrian 'G4UVZ' and his team. We are starting to see the benefit of the new site as the usage increases almost daily. Recent improvements include increasing the spacing between tx and rx aerial thus improving the isolation, as a result the receive cavity has been taken out of circuit as desense is minimal. GB3VS is running the maximum output power of 25 watts erp providing reciprocity with the higher powered mobile operators.

GB3UB RB4 BATH UNIVERSITY

Since US has been upgraded, the old US transmitter will be fitted into UB allowing the existing transmitter to be serviced without taking it off the air. A new aerial, based on his 1.2 wave length full wave dipole (as used on WR) has been designed by Dave G3UUR. He reports initial tests to be favourable with a useful increase in gain over the G3VEH full wave dipole currently used. As soon as a second of these aerials can be manufactured, they will be installed on the mast at UB. This should help to improve the service area and iron out the odd scratchy spots. Dave who originally built UB some 10 years ago has recently moved back into the area. We look forward to hearing him more often on the repeater.

SOME NOTES ON UHF OPERATION

In general remember;

- 1) That seasonal changes in foliage can affect received and transmitted signals by up to 10db.
- 2) That where the received signal is not line of sight the signal arriving at your aerial can come from several reflections. These reflections can cause partial (or total) cancellation of the received signal even though you might be Q5 through the box. If you experience this phenomena, then moving a few metres either way may cure it.
- 3) Mobile aerials not mounted in the centre of the car roof have lop sided polar diagrams. This can give the impression that the repeater is apparently stronger or weaker when travelling up and down the same stretch of road.
- 4) Joints in feeders are bad news. If avoidable, use the best possible connectors, N type or BNC. Avoid the PL259 series like the plague! Use good quality cable for patch leads CB cable is definately out!
- 5) That the rig is only as good as the aerial its connected to. Its ridiculous to connect a bent coat hanger to an expensive rig and expect it to perform well.
- 6) Aerials work far better when mounted outside. Expect a 10db increase in gain by taking the aerial out of the Loft and up onto the roof. At these frequencies its a lot cheaper to use decent aerials outside than to spend money on linears and pre amps!

INTERLINKING REPEATERS

=====

There is some discussion locally and nationally concerning the linking up of amateur radio repeaters so that stations may communicate with each other using more than one repeater.

The system requirements are:-

- * The opening of a repeater interlink should be under the deliberate control of a user, requiring a particular access or "thru-tone" to facilitate it.
- * Such "thru-tones" should have a sufficient range of permutations to allow for every amateur phone interlink to have its own unique network identity ("NI"). The tone system should be compliant with one of the international standards such as CTCSS, CITT or DTMF.
- * Compatibility. A station calling via two repeaters at the same time, MUST be able to hear any respondents on either repeater, whether or not they are equipped with the (new) tone signalling accessories.
- * Interlinking should "time-out" in the absence of re-enforcement.

The current solutions entail the use of duplex microwave links or expensive "trunking" using the public switched telephone network (PSTN). All of these require modifications to the existing repeater equipment and the introduction of additional equipment of complexity equal to or exceeding that already in use.

INTERMEDIATE REPEATERS

=====

This proposal concerns the concept of "Intermediate Repeaters" which are systems designed to relay traffic BETWEEN existing repeaters.

It is felt that the main applications for this innovation would be in the linkage of little used "70 cms" repeaters which serve much smaller populations than their "2 metre" cousins.

The advantages of such systems are:-

- * No changes need to be made to existing repeater equipment.
- * The interlinked repeaters do not need to be directly connectable either through land-line or optical microwave links. A very long span is possible linking say, a West Country repeater with a Midlands repeater.
- * Any convenient intermediate site will do.
- * No additional frequency spectrum is required

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Equipment requirements:

At first sight, it would appear that two full-duplex units are required, each receiving the output from one repeater and re-transmitting it on the input frequency of the other.

It is however possible to make a system work by using a single full-duplex transceiver and intelligently switching two (or more) sets of channels.

The system is depicted in Fig.1 interlinking two local 70 cms repeaters which are separated by the Mendips. It is assumed that the Intermediate Repeater is sited somewhere where both repeaters can be adequately worked using low power and simple antennas.

Full Duplex Transceiver:

The radio equipment will need to be of a similar quality as used in existing full duplex 70 cms systems. Being crystal controlled, such "talk-thru" base stations are available on the secondhand market for under £100.

Channel Switch:

This circuitry has to switch the two pairs of crystals alternately. The transmitter must be electrically keyed down during each changeover.

Antennas:

For successful full-duplex operation it is best to use inherently simple matched antennas such as half-wave dipoles and quarter-wave ground-plane types.

However given a good set of filters and a low spurious commercial transceiver, high gain arrays, might be locked-off towards each of the two targets using a double antenna switching system.

"Thru-tone" detector:

The Intermediate Repeater's receiver will need to be able to detect its own unique "thru-tone". This can be a burst of CTCSS (sub-audible tone-squelch) or a pair of DTMF digits - these like the 1750 Hz tones currently in use will wake up the controller and initiate the interlink control system. CTCSS has the advantage of being passible throughout an initiating station's over. DTMF has the advantage of more permutations, simple encoders and convenience in "dialling" multiple hops.

"K" detector:

A few hundred milliseconds after a signal disappears from the input of a repeater the control logic generates a "pip" or (formerly) a morse code letter "K". This will have fixed characteristics of deviation, frequency and duration.

The Intermediate Repeater must have a decoder tailored to recognise each of these two end of carrier signals ("EOCS"). The operation of the detector will need to be suspended for some seconds after changeover to pass the "EOCS" that precedes the start of any given "over".

THE FOLLOWING ARE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP (15th April 1988)

- C30AKA G0APK G0AWX G0AZE G0BKU G0BQD G0CAM G0CCA G0CCB
G0CCO G0CFM G0CNA G0COM G0CPG G0CYD G0DBK G0DUU G0DZA
G0EGC G0ENF G0EZU G0FAA G0FFY G0FGF G0FGN G0FGR G0FHD
G0FZT G0GJB G0GWF G0GZW G0HAD G0HBE G0HEX G0HKB G0HPS
G0HVA G0IFI G1AAH G1ABT G1AJC G1ARZ G1AVB G1BKL G1BVG
G1BYE G1DBF G1DCG G1DCZ G1DFK G1DNG G1DYG G1FGK G1FON
G1HFJ G1HFY G1HSF G1IHL G1IHT G1IIM G1IVM G1JKO G1JMK
G1JOR G1JPK G1JRM G1KEU G1KFC G1KTJ G1KVD G1MDC G1MIV
G1MMS G1MSI G1MWM G1NGQ G1NKB G1NMW G1NTK G1NUA G1NZJ
G1OKC G1OKD G1OKU G1OOB G1OPW G1ORL G1ORN G1PBX G1PVJ
G1PLM G1PNF G1PVB G1PWU G1RLC G1RSF G1RWT G1SGK G1SMD
G1TAL G1UAA G1UEL G1UKB G1ULZ G1UQE G1UQH G1USW G1VJK
G1VQA G1VQG G1VSX G1VSZ G1VZO G1WCH G1WPX G1WQR G1WVQ
G1WRR G1WVI G1XGZ G1XOZ G1XWZ G1XXC G1XXE G1XYX G1YKC
G1YLT G1YNZ G1YZV G1ZBM G2BAR G2BQY G2BRR G3AGT G3BPM
G3CQE G3ESO G3EWF G3GKA G3GKC G3IBK G3IJU G3IUV G3JAR
G3JEP G3JYS G3KSK G3LJD G3LNW G3MIZ G3MVA G3NET G3NOF
G3NXU G3OSH G3PYF G3RHU G3RRK G3RYC G3SJI G3SPU G3SXY
G3TFM G3TKF G3UGR G3UPV G3UTO G3UUR G3VEH G3VJJ G3WBA
G3XBW G3XGY G3XIT G3XWK G3YBY G3YDC G3YHV G3YNI G3YPL
G3ZKI G3ZNV G3ZUQ G3ZWL G4ATP G4AUN G4AVJ G4AYB G4AYD
G4BSF G4BYJ G4CBS G4CJZ G4DGU G4DIE G4DKS G4ETN G4EVI
G4EXQ G4FSL G4GBN G4GBX G4GGA G4GTD G4GUG G4GVM G4HHL
G4HWD G4JBG G4JWB G4JQD G4JQP G4JSN G4KNE G4KPT G4LAF
G4LAW G4LJZ G4LYG G4LYP G4MYR G4NBD G4NFO G4NQQ G4NXG
G4NYN G4OFH G4OJA G4OJH G4OTJ G4OWH G4OXR G4OXY G4OYY
G4OZH G4PDG G4PLY G4PSP G4RLK G4RSH G4RZY G4SCD G4SFS
G4SJJ G4SUH G4SZB G4SZS G4TAH G4TBO G4TIX G4TJB G4TLL
G4TLP G4TRN G4TXW G4UEO G4UGO G4UGT G4UHN G4UIU G4UKF
G4ULV G4UNU G4UOA G4UPS G4USO G4UVZ G4VBO G4VEH G4VGV
G4VVS G4WJY G4WKM G4WLB G4WMV G4WPY G4WPZ G4WRW G4WTA
G4WXD G4XKK G4XLY G4XUR G4XWE G4XWY G4XYZ G4YJH G4YOC
G4YQG G4YQR G4YTH G4YTP G4YZR G4ZBQ G4ZDR G4ZEU G4ZLF
G4ZNK G4ZOG G4ZQF G4ZXE G5RQ G6ACO G6AEC G6AFL G6ANI
G6ASI G6ASO G6ASP G6AWT G6BMF G6EIV G6EMB G6ENM G6ETL
G6FBR G6FXH G6GBH G6GNG G6GVH G6HIQ G6HKD G6HMV G6HOR
G6HTZ G6HUO G6HYU G6IAV G6IUQ G6IVU G6IZE G6JGR G6JNB
G6JTT G6KPD G6KTW G6LRQ G6MBJ G6MJG G6MRJ G6MXL G6OWL
G6PEN G6PJT G6PPU G6PZ G6RAZ G6RKO G6RQB G6RUP G6SJM
G6TAH G6TAL G6TKR G6UAC G6VSE G6WIM G6WLG G6WLX G6WOV
G6WZA G6WZS G6XFC G6YCG G6ZIM G6ZOD G6ZPG G6ZPY G7AHE
G7AYL G8ARH G8BIR G8BMR G8CPF G8DBP G8DJW G8DKC G8DRK
G8FAS G8FC G8FKC G8GFZ G8HNM G8HVY G8IKR G8IOJ G8IUV
G8IZZ G8KBQ G8KKA G8KNN G8LGC G8LRB G8MPH G8MYN G8NMU
G8NNU G8NQO G8OEU G8OQG G8OTA G8OTH G8OUG G8PVI G8SPC
G8SRH G8SUW G8TOF G8UVM G8VDF G8VGI G8VOE G8VPG G8WKK
G8WKL G8WLV G8WRC G8XYS G8XZD G8YML G8YMM G8YPV G8YWQ
G8ZOE G8ZSP G8ZVK G8ZYD GU1WDT GU3EJL GW0HKL GW1EPR GW1LOR
GW1LWC GW1NYO GW1OPT GW1RGO GW1VGS GW2FWD GW3LAD GW4HA GW4ISF
GW4KYM GW4NLE GW4POA GW4TUL GW4UXK GW4WQC GW4XKE GW6ADM GW6CUR
GW6JBP GW6MOB GW6MWN GW6NQU GW6UXK GW6VLA GW6YNV GW6ZHM GW8DGM
GW8ERA GW8PTS GW8REV

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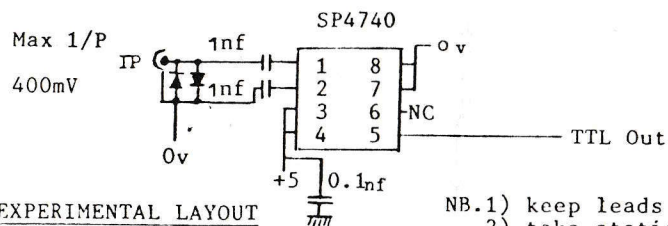
CHEAP PRESCALER FOR 23CM

I was looking to extend the range of my frequency counter up to 23cm but couldn't justify spending in excess of £40 for a 1.39Hz divided by 100 prescaler. Looking through some data books I came across a Plessey divided by 256 chip, these are intended for synthesized tv tuners. Sensitivity was quoted as 5mV between 50MHz and 1.39Hz, it also produced a TTL output. Of course putting a divide 256 on the input to your counter is going to mean the displayed frequency will be divided by 256. At first I thought you could further divide the output - this would make the display correct but impair the resolution (the counter would be counting far less pulses per unit time so full 8 digit accuracy wouldn't be achieved). Further inspection of the above meant that the second divider would have to divide by 1000 over 256 which isn't an integer so would not be possible anyway! Anyway, not to be put off I considered the other option - divide the clock frequency to the counter chip by 256 (or 25.6 or 2.56). This would make the reading correct and also increase the gate time by 256 (25.6 x or 2.56 x) so the resolution would be maintained. To stop the display from overflowing I decided on dividing 2.56 Problem non integer division - however it suddenly twigged that I could cheat and alter the crystal frequency and solve the problems. So I threw away the 10MHz crystal and got a new one made. Since I was dividing the input by 256 I divided 10 MHz by 2.56 giving a new crystal frequency of 3.90625MHz. This was ordered and duly installed. Now the reading was correct but reading 10x higher ie. 433.1MHz read 4331.0MHz. Anyway just shift the decimal point one place to the left. The gate times are now 0.256 sec 2.56s or 25.6s. I find the 2.56s gate gives the best compromise between accuracy and count update time. Do remember the accuracy of the counter is only as good as the crystal reference so make sure its a high stability one.

RESULTS - The counter triggered happily off a 70cm 1W handheld at 1M-ditto for 2M handheld(1W). I was most surprised that it triggered off a cordless telephone at 10cm! (thats 1mW output!).

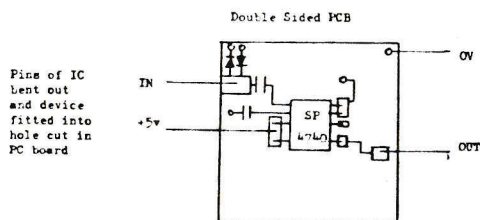
Although its lower quoted frequency is 50MHz it seemed to work ok at 5MHz, I've only had it operating for a week but it appears to work well - the only problem seems to be it oscillates in the absence of a signal but I'm sure I can get around this o.k, and the cost £1.95! Not bad.

Circuit (CRIBBED FROM DATA SHEET)



EXPERIMENTAL LAYOUT

NB.1) keep leads as short as possible.
2) take static precautions.



Modulation detector:

The Intermediate Repeater requires a means of detecting plain modulation through a repeater - a simple VOX circuit will be suitable.

Carrier detection:

The Intermediate Repeater requires a means of detecting whether or not a particular repeater is transmitting or not. This can be derived from the receiver's squelch circuit. Pye 461s for example have a squelch relay circuit already fitted.

Access tone generator:

This is the standard 1750 Hz tone generator for accessing a repeater from "cold".

"Busy" tone generator:

This can be a brief (4 cycle) burst of the familiar telephone "engaged" signal.

OPERATION
=====

Fig.2 is a simple flowchart indicating the type of control requirements for an Intermediate Repeater ("IR")

Initiation:

The "IR" receiver scans between the two monitored repeater's outputs. The "IR" transmitter ALWAYS transmits on the input of the repeater it is NOT listening to.

We start the description with a user appearing at his/her local repeater's input and sending a brief "Thru-tone".

Decoders usually generate an initial "flag" when an incoming tone is first detected. This stops the scanning while the more specific decoding takes place. Should the decoded signal be accepted the system briefly changes channel and checks the distant repeater for "carrier present".

If busy, the repeater changes channel and waits for the calling station to drop carrier after which it sends the busy signal (indicating nothing has been retransmitted) and switches through to the normal talk-thru mode. In this case starting with the distant traffic being re-transmitted through the caller's local repeater.

Talk-thru:

Should the distant repeater be "down", within a few milliseconds of this being established, the "IR" changes channel to receive the local repeater and keys its transmitter and standard 1750 Hz tone burst to bring up and relay through the distant machine.

In the talk-thru mode, the direction of transmission is maintained until detection of a "EOCS pip tone", one or two seconds of silence or a "thru-tone terminating" is detected at which the Intermediate Repeater changes direction. This latter facility (of detecting a termination) enables a calling station to restore an interrupted distant QSO by "blipping the distant repeater in". As for example when a weak mobile signal is dropping in and out producing a succession of spurious "pips".

The Intermediate Repeater interlinking "times out" after say either 8 seconds of silence on both machines or say 6 minutes without a "thru-tone" having been detected at either end.

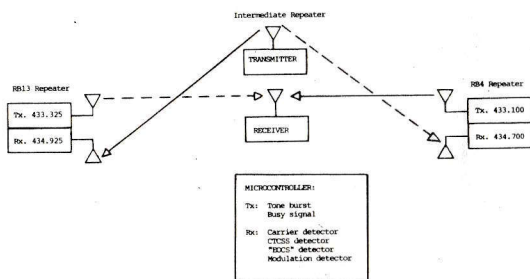
ROUTINE PROCEDURES
=====

The audio quality is likely to be much degraded, passing through THREE repeaters rather than one. A crisp "communications quality" speech will no doubt fare the best.

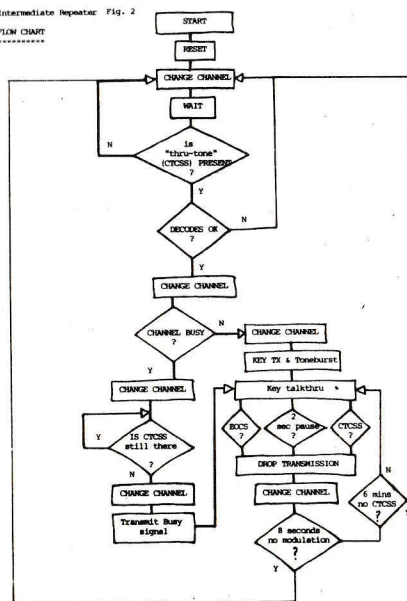
In "talkthru" it will be normal to hear TWO pips between overs. The first as YOU drop carrier will come from your local repeater and the second will be the relayed "EOCS pip tone" of your transmission tail via the distant repeater. Likewise the distant operators will generate a local "EOCS" and you will both hear a second one as the "IR" drops out of your local unit.

To reply to someone via your own repeater, and be heard via the distant repeater will entail either "jumping in before the pip" or waiting for three!

Intermediate Repeater System Fig. 1



Intermediate Repeater Fig. 2
FLOW CHART



MATERIAL COSTS
=====

The repeater should be obtainable for under £100 (the author has two serviceable 70cms repeaters purchased for around £60 each).	£100
The repeater will require two pairs of crystals	30
Antennas	30
Filters	20
CTCSS detector	30
VOX unit	20
Microsystem	100
Miscellaneous components	80
	=====
	£410

LABOUR ESTIMATES
=====

	hours
Commissioning repeater on 70cms: making good & alignment	80
Design and build crystal scanning circuits	40
Antenna construction	20
Filters	40
CTCSS detector	20
Vox unit	20
1750 Hz tone burst unit	10
Busy tone burst unit	40
Microsystem (adaption of existing board)	40
Program development	100
System integration	60
	=====
	470

Members Adds

REMEMBER ALL ADDS ARE FREE !

FOR SALE

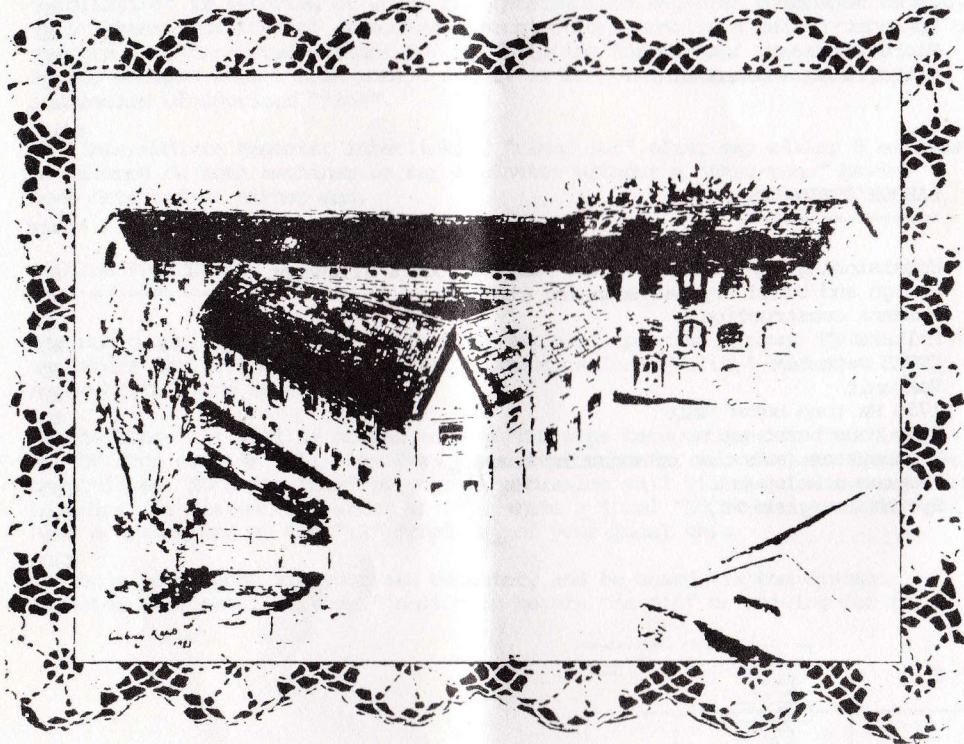
FT101 ZD Mk 3 FM WARC Bands, good condition = £375.00

FL2100 Z WARC Bands, Linear Amplifier, good cond. = £475.00

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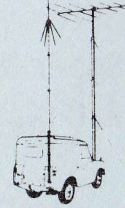
The range now available has increased greatly to cover, in addition to precision crystals, a wide range of antennae, oscillators, filters, resistors, thermistors, coils and coil parts.

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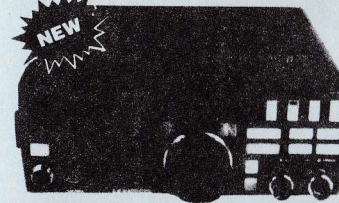
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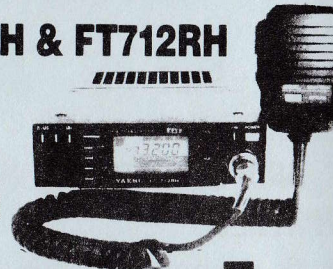
The FT747GX is a compact SSB/CW/AM and (optional) FM transceiver providing 100 watts of PEP output on all hf amateur bands, and general coverage reception continuously from 100 kHz to 30 MHz. A front panel mounted loudspeaker and clear, unobstructed display and control layout makes this set a real joy to use. Convenient features include operator selectable coarse and fine tuning stems optimized for each mode. Dual (A/B) vfos, along with twenty memory channels which store mode and skip-scan status for auto resume scanning of selectable memories. Eighteen of the memories can also store independent transmit and receive frequencies for easy recall of split-frequency operation. Wideband (6kHz) AM and narrowband (500 Hz) CW IF filters are included as standard, along with a clarifier, switchable 20 dB receiver attenuator and noise blanker. User programming for more advanced control by an external computer is possible through the CAT (Computer Aided Transceiver) System. The transmitter power amplifier is enclosed in its own diecast aluminium heat-sink chamber inside the transceiver, with forced-air cooling by an internal fan allowing full power FM and packet, RTTY, SSTV and AMTOR operation when used with a heavy duty power supply.

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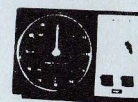
Smaller than their predecessors these models utilise a new cpu with greatly expanded features, most notable of which are 19 memories and support for the DVS-1 Digital Voice System, which can digitally record and playback from the microphone or the receiver.

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FT712RH **£375.00**
DVS 1, voice memory unit..... **£79.00**
FTS12, CTCSS unit..... **£60.38**

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