

NARS - June 2020 Roundup !

Hi all, just a quick recap of June. Another quiet month here at this qth at least.

Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken successfully launched into space on top of a Falcon 9 rocket inside the new Crew Dragon and docked with the space station. A truly amazing achievement from a private company, SpaceX. Who knows what the future might hold in this regard. Their space suits certainly look ... different !



On the garden front; my beans are up to chest height, the tomato plants are coming on well, and have already had about 15 cherry sized tomatoes from them so far. The potatoes are about to flower, in a week or so.

My brother and I picked about 2.5kg of gooseberries and I turned them into jam, very nice it is too. There is probably another 5kg of crop up the garden but the birds can enjoy those. The blackcurrants and raspberries are not ready yet, but the rhubarb is taking over ! Perhaps a tart is in order.



I trust those members that are pottering in the garden are enjoying the fruits of their labour.

GW4JBQ : News from Julian. He has been very busy building a workbench for his brother who has recently installed a new shed. A fab job there Julian.

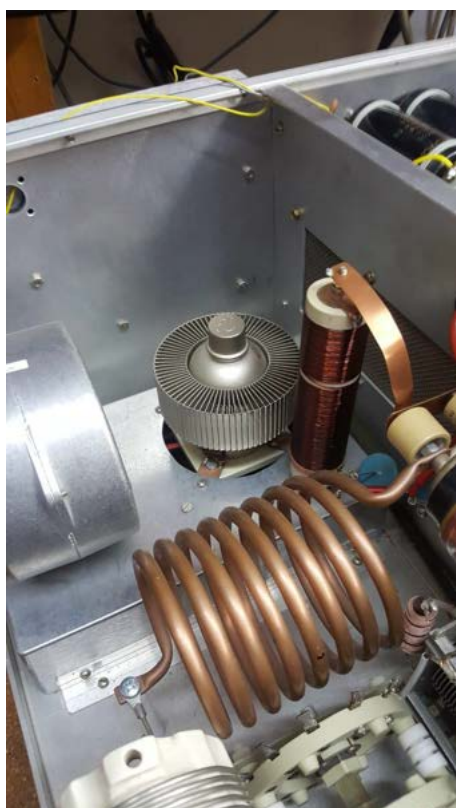
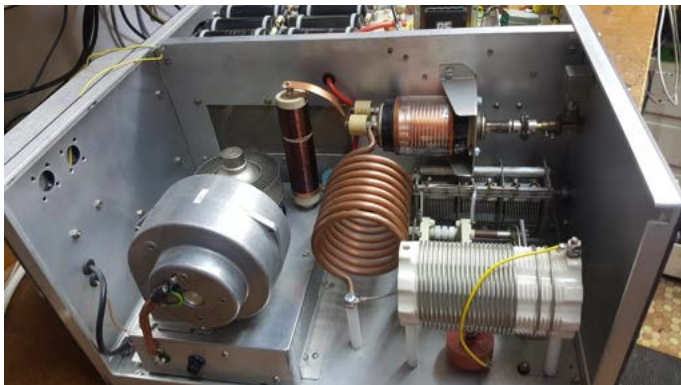
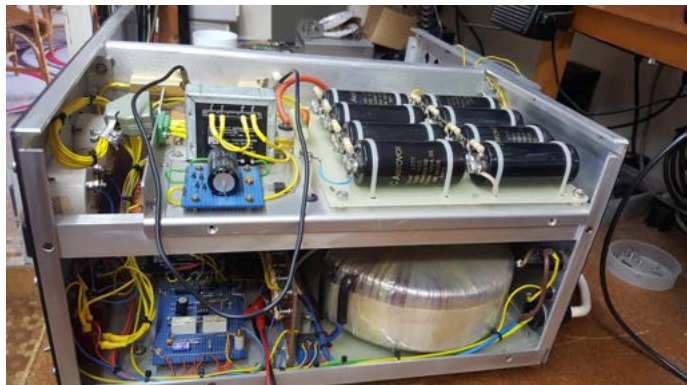
He has been too busy to do much on the radio but he did have a go in a recent RSGB Club Championship contest, and reports :

'I finally managed to have a go in the RSGB CC Data Section, I only made a few contacts in the may section but a few more in the June section with a creditable score and managed to place myself in 102 place out of 163 which is not bad



considering this is a cumulative contest. The one thing it does do is help to raise the profile of NARS, the final segment is at the end of July so will have a crack at that one if I am allowed.'

GW3NWS : News from Ross. Ross has resurrected a nine year old project. It has sat under the bench for over six of those years, but is back on top now. A homebrew amplifier that will run '2.5kW all day long!'.

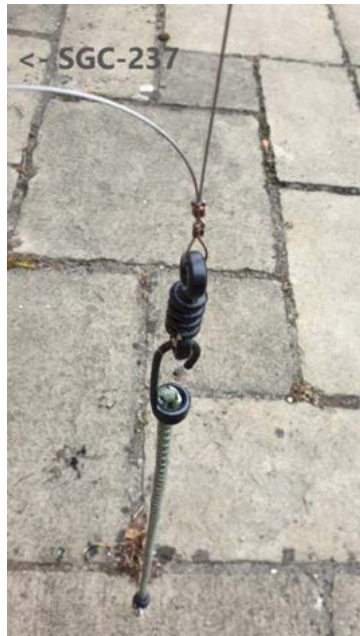


2W1ADO : News from Ken. Ken reports that he has been working on his sheds and has joined two together, making a single 10ft x 5ft shed. He has also been working on a store area some 4ft wide. This has been an ongoing project since mid February, but in his words 'you don't rush things when in lock down'. He has sent in some pictures of his shack which looks very tidy and organised indeed.



MWOLGE : News from Richie. Yet again, a week or so of 'playing' radio at the start of the month, but it has settled back onto the back burner again.

I have a random sized loop here for HF, max circumference around 195ft and is tuned with a remote SGC-237. It forms a rectangle, fed in the bottom corner, up the tower, over to another support, down that and then back to the feed at the base of the tower. The main issue I had is when I needed to lower the tower for windy conditions. I would end up with loads of spare wire from the loop dangling everywhere. Using the idea from the AdjustiWave antenna system I decided to use uninsulated 1mm stainless rope/wire for the loop, and run it up the tower, to the other support and back to a fly fishing reel/spool that has spare stainless on it. I can then wind up this slack, or give some wire to the loop as needed. It seems to work very well and is now very easy to lower/raise the tower.

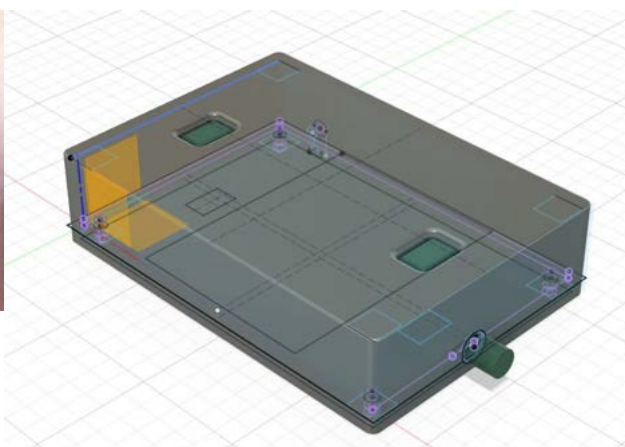


I worked some FT4, FT8, JT9 and even some JT65 on various bands. Stations in Japan, South Korea, China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan were the rare ones for me in my log. 6m kicked into life a couple of times, and even the US being copied at this station on data modes.

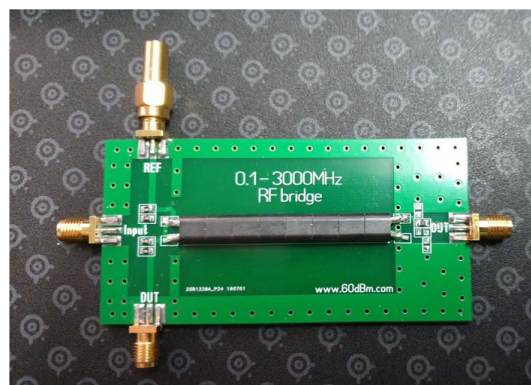
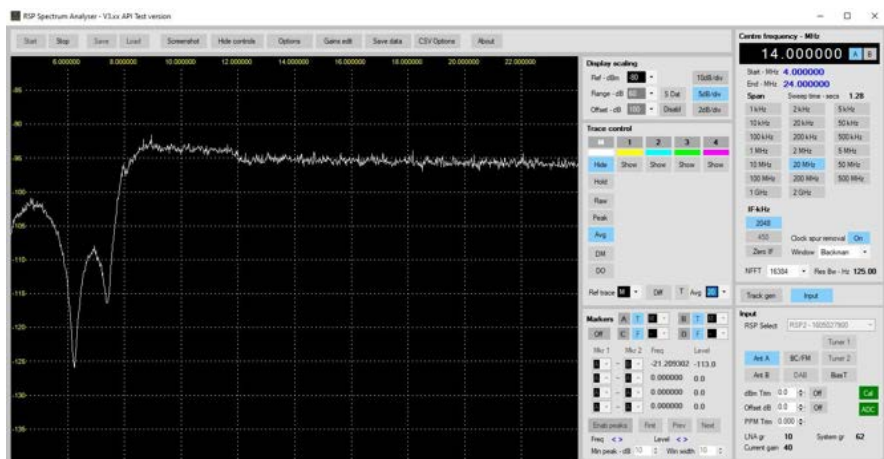
It was nice to get out for a couple of evenings to a local spot (<5miles) for some of the 2m net nights. A great location @ 200+m asl on the top of Caerlicken Lane, just to the SW of Wentwood.



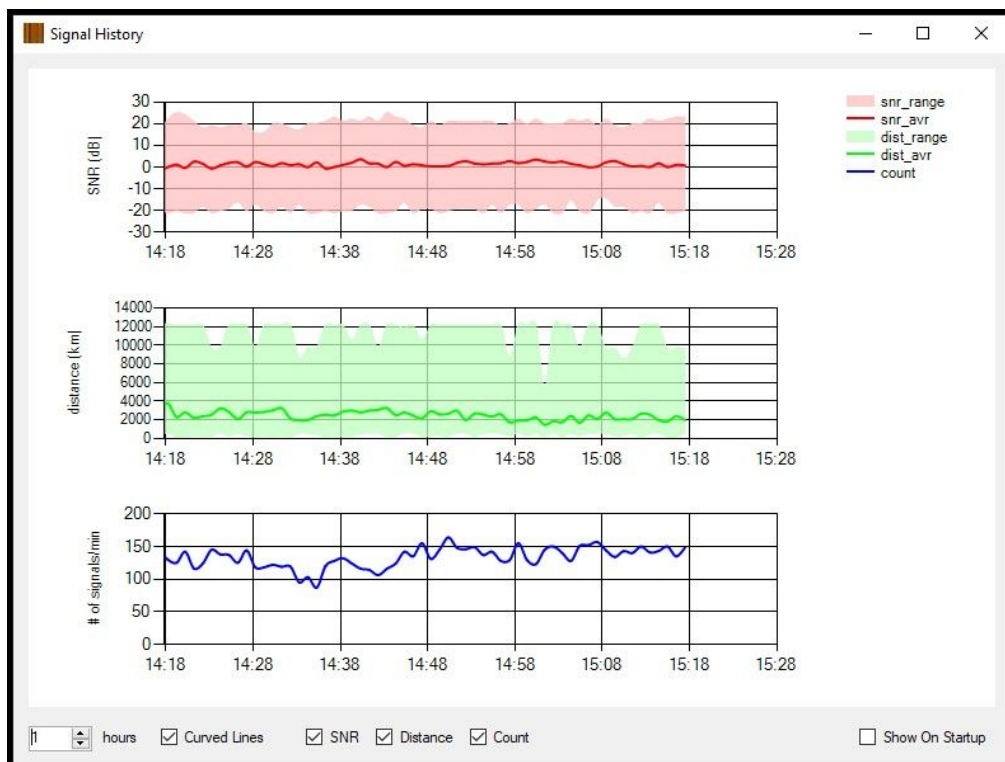
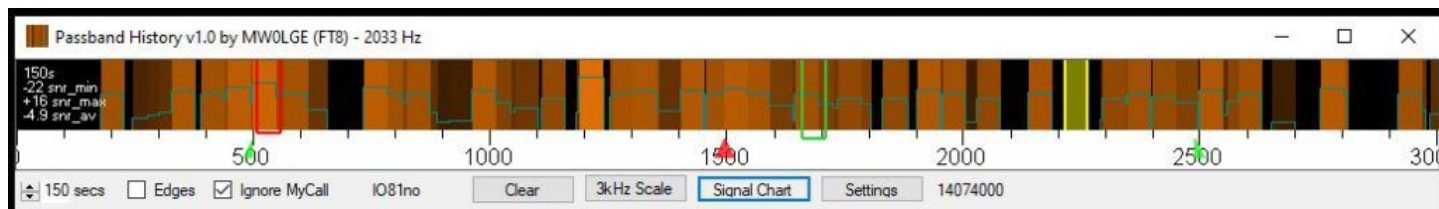
I also got to grips with Fusion 360 which is an amazing cad package, and built some enclosures for my completed WSPRlite low pass filters which I 3D printed using PLA.



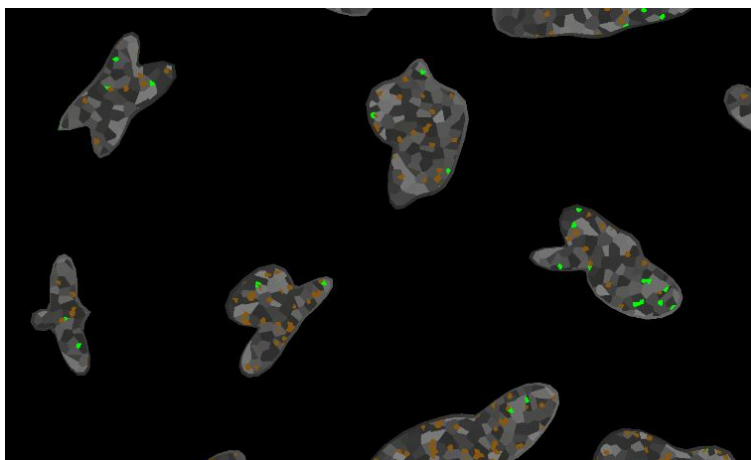
I started looking at the return loss of the filters using an RSP sdrplay, a wide band noise generator, through an RF bridge.



I spent some time developing a WSJT-X/JTDX helper application that keeps track of bandpass activity, and will build a history of up to 5 minutes of activity. It also tracks SNR averages/min/max, station distance using locator data and total station decodes all which can be plotted on a chart. You can get more info here : <https://ramdor.co.uk/passband-history/>



Finally, after that, I decided to put a halt on all the radio related stuff, and spend some time re-learning the Unity Game Engine, and have a 'play' around with procedurally generating 2d asteroids. A suitable dose of perlin noise to the rescue. All coding is in C#, and may or may not find itself into some sort of 2D multiplayer space game.



Other Info

Paul has had some more information from the RSGB regarding remote invigilation of intermediate and full exams. It seems like this will be only made available initially to those who have already booked an exam prior to lock down. I have not heard if Declan is going forward with this as yet.

Nets and Keeping In Contact

As you know, we have three nets running at the moment for you to keep in contact and hear what we have all been doing during all this indoor time.

- Tuesday VHF net, 8pm local. 144.700MHz
- Thursday Club Night net, 7pm local. 144.700MHz
- Sunday HF net, 10am local. 3.705MHz +- qrm

Other Nets

- Cwmbran DARS - GB3RT net, Monday 7.30pm
- Cwmbran DARS DSTAR net - DCS 005P, Tuesday 7:30pm
- Cwmbran DARS HF net, 3.722, Thursday 7:30pm
- Carmarthen ARS - 80m ssb, Sunday, 2.30pm, contact GW0JLX on 0776 828 2880
- Bristol ARC - Nets on GB3AC Sun 8pm, Wed 8pm. Fri 7pm

Lockdown is ever so slowly being relaxed, and I see there may be outdoor pub time shortly. Not much changed in this household as mum being in the shielded category has been instructed not to enter another building other than her main residence until mid August time. I am not sure how things are going to change really until a vaccination is produced.

If you need an invite to the whatsapp group, drop me an email with your phone number and I can add you.

Also, drop me an email/sms/message with anything you get up to during July that you feel may be of interest and can be included in the next roundup.

Stay safe, take care.

73 for now, Richie. MW0LGE