

Sierra Signals

Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club

Auburn, CA

An ARRL Special Services Club

<http://sf-arc.org>

July 2005

P.O. Box 1005, Newcastle, CA 95658

You've Got To Be Kidding!!

(Reported by Greg, KO6TH)

What has two arms, two legs, and flies at 18,000 miles per hour? SuitSat!

You think I'm kidding. At first, I thought it was a joke too. SuitSat. Yeah, right. But, no, there actually really is a project to launch a space suit into space, all by itself. And there really is a purpose, in addition to creating some really good fodder for the next April issue of QST.

The original idea for SuitSat came during discussions at the joint AMSAT Symposium/ARISS International Partner meeting last October. ARISS is the group that runs the Amateur Radio operations on the International Space Station. The project has two objectives: Provide a platform for awareness and education with students and hams around the world. The project has generated interest within a number of schools, who will be submitting artwork and audio recordings to be included on a CD ROM to be flown inside the suit.

At the Key of S.F.A.R.C.

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RESOURCES

REPEATERS

145.430 (-0.6 MHz/PL 162.2)
440.575 (+5.0 MHz/PL 94.8)
223.860 (-1.6 MHz/PL 100.0)

CLUB NET

Thursdays, 7:30PM, K6ARR/R
145.430

CLUB MEETINGS

Second Friday of the month,
7:30PM at the Library, 350
Nevada St, Auburn CA

CLUB BREAKFAST

Last Sat of the month at Susie's
Café, Cirby at Riverside, Roseville
- 8:00 AM

NET CONTROL OPS

Dave Jenkins, WB6RBE
Gary Cunningham, KQ6RT
Joe Sylvia, KF6OQY
Casey McPartland, W7IB

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Also within the suit will be an electronics and communications package being designed by ARISS teams in the US and Russia. The satellite will operate in a transmit-only mode, beaming back both telemetry and slow-scan TV pictures as the suit orbits for a few weeks. With very little mass, no attitude control, and a lot of surface area, SuitSat is only expected to orbit for a short time before re-entering the atmosphere and burning up. (continued on page 2)

2005 Calendar of Events

(Operating Events in Italics)

[Dates are local unless otherwise indicated]

Jul 8	Regular Meeting
Jul 9	<i>IARU Championships</i>
Jul 16	<i>No. Am. QSO Party (RTTY)</i>
Jul 31	<i>"Flight of the Bumblebees" QRP</i>
Jul 30	Club Breakfast
Aug 6	<i>No. Am. QSO Party (CW)</i>
Aug 12	Regular Meeting
Aug 20	<i>No. Am. QSO Party (SSB)</i>
Aug 27	Club Breakfast

We encourage members to receive Sierra Signals via email to save the Club the cost of reproduction and mailing

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Forty Years Ago At The SFARC

(Reported by Gary, KQ6RT)

July 21, 1965

No regular meeting was held as not enough members were in attendance. Those present were Carl Rolufs, Otto Ruud, Frank Carman, Joe Merryman and Dick Lund with latecomers Bob Coiling and Jack Shrewder. About the only official business that was attended to was two bills that the secretary presented to the treasurer, one from Zackit for the HW-12 A.C. power supply—which had already been paid—and one for the rent of the post office box. After an eye-ball QSO, and some money-tree seed gifts from the custodian, the group dispersed.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard H. Lund, WA6YO

73,

Gary, KQ6RT

(Ed. Note: It's always been interesting to me that the meeting minutes from that era don't include call signs)

Suit Sat

(Continued from Page 1)

The electronics package also serves the second objective, that of being a test bed for sensors that might be used on future AMSAT satellites, including project Eagle, the next high-orbit satellite that is currently on the drawing boards. For proper attitude control, satellites need to know where they are, or more specifically, which way they are oriented relative to the Earth and Sun. They carry sensors to detect the warm Earth and light from the Sun as they spin. These sensors cost several thousand dollars each, and there is a risk of the cost rising or the parts becoming unobtainable. The team came up with the unique idea of using common Infra Red motion detectors instead, but need to prove that their crazy theory will work before committing the success of a very expensive (for Hams) satellite on them. So, they need a test bed. In walks (so to speak) SuitSat.

The project has recently been approved, and already the teams have developed much of the electronics. School submissions for the CD were due in mid-June, and if all goes well, the Suit will be on board a Progress resupply ship to the Space Station in August or September. From there, the Suit will be "launched" out of the Station's hatch during a future space walk.

More on this unique project as it evolves.

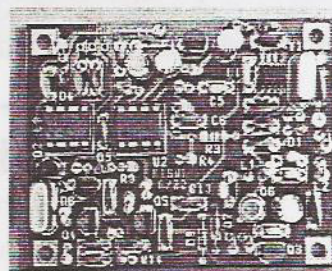
73,

Greg KO6TH

QRP - The Addictive Mode

The RockMite

This little radio is a gem, although it is a bit off the beaten path, so to speak. It is a crystal-controlled transceiver (7040 or 17060 KHz, pick one), and while it does not come with an enclosure, it is "Altoids Compatible."



Now, before you ask, "What? No tuning knob?" the answer is "Yes, but ..." Unlike many folks who call CQ, and listen on their transmit frequency with a 200 Hz filter, those addicted to QRP will tune around. They will also listen for weak signals. And, since on

CW, we set our BFO to receive a suitable sidetone, the RockMite actually allows you to have two rockbound frequencies, separated by twice the sidetone frequency (often around 600 Hz) from one rock.

The RockMite will produce 0.5W with a 12V supply, but will operate on any supply voltage from 8-15V. It also includes a built-in Iambic keyer! The kit was developed in Germany, and the website www.qrpproject.de/UK/rockmite.htm says that it sells for 45 Euro, which is pretty close to \$50.00 or so.

Tuna Tin II

The Tuna Tin II is a child of the Tuna Tin I, as you might suspect, and is a cool little 250 mW transmitter (only). You can find some great pictures at clocksusa.com/tuna/tt2page1.html or better yet, contact Bob, KD6WTY, who has built one of these little wonders. You will need a receiver, but the price for the parts will be much less than \$45 Euro!

Operating QRP

Operating QRP is a little different than operating with a 100W or KW rig. First off, you aren't running much power, so you want to do the best you can with an antenna. Secondly, the less power you are running, the less likely you will want to be calling CQ. The best idea, at least at first, is to go to the "QRP Watering Holes" (7040, 14040, 17060 ... and when the solar flux is up and the K-index is down, 21040 and 28040), and call any station calling CQ. Or, if you hear a station working someone, and the signal report is "569" and they sign with "72" instead of 73, tail end him.

The good news is that QRP folks tend to listen for the weak ones, and that would be you! The standard signal report in non-QRP situations is "5NN." QRP'ers will give "569" and often something much more realistic of your real report.

Code speeds tend to be quite a bit slower than in the rest of the band, and I, like everyone else, will match the speed of the station I'm talking to.

"72:" Many QRP stations will sign off with you using "72" instead of "73." I'm not sure where this comes from (I'm

assured that it does not mean "A little less than Best Regards" however), but you'll hear it a lot. Also, keep a log. You will very likely get a QSL card for most QRP contacts. Although not at all required, you can sign <yourcall>/QRP when calling a station.

Talking to people on a radio that you can put into your pocket and is powered by batteries is a rather neat experience. There is a growing cadre of /PM's ... Pedestrian Mobiles ... possibly fostered by the Elecraft KX1. Commonly, a /PM will mount a shortened whip (like the MP1) to a backpack or harness, and drag a trailing counterpoise wire. I've worked five of them so far ... not terribly strong, but certainly readable. I haven't found the courage to walk around my neighborhood with a whip antenna on my back and dragging a wire yet, but I might try it down at the railroad tracks some day.

Canada Day Contest

Looking for a fun activity on the air this weekend? Those on the email list for Sierra Signals can join in helping our neighbors to the north celebrate "Canada Day" celebrating the confederation of Canada. This is always a fun, low-key operating event, and because you can work a station on all bands (excluding 30, 17, and 12 meters), and on both CW and SSB, it seems there is always someone to work.

1 Jul 0000Z (30 Jun 1700 PDT) to 1 Jul 2359Z (1 Jul 1659 PDT). Contacts with Canadians are worth 10 points each, and contacts with stations outside Canada are worth 2 points. We all send RS(T) and a serial number to them, VE's will send you RS(T) and province or territory.

Official RAC stations (Canadian prefixes with "RAC" for the suffix) are worth 20 points each. The 10 provinces and three territories total 13 multipliers. Visit www.rac.ca for more information.

HRes 230

A "Sense of the House" resolution has been introduced by Rep Mike Ross, WD5DVR that requests the FCC to delay implementation of it's recently enacted changes to Part 15 regarding BPL, and to commission the in-depth and impartial technical studies to clearly determine the interference potential of BPL.

Regarding HRes 230 specifically, Jim Haynie, ARRL President, said this week that the task at hand is to encourage other House members to sign on as cosponsors of the resolution as the first step toward House adoption. And that's where League members come in, he said.

"I really encourage you to contact your congressional representative," Haynie said. "It's listed in the front of almost every phone book who your congressman is. If not, you can go to the United States House of Representatives Web site and find out by typing in your ZIP code. I really encourage you to do this because it's important to the future of Amateur Radio."

A sample letter is available on the ARRL Web site, but Haynie called on members to express their support for the resolution in their own words.

To expedite delivery, you can send all correspondence bound for Members of Congress--preferably as an attachment--to hres230@arrl.org or fax it to 703-684-7594. The ARRL will bundle correspondence addressed to each Member of Congress for hand delivery.

Sierra Signals Gets a New Editor

Fred, K6DGW

This will be my last issue as Editor of Sierra Signals, and it is a step I take with more than a little regret and sadness. The newsletter has been my connection with the SFARC since I usually cannot make the Friday night meetings.

As many of you know, I carry some injuries from my USAF service in SE Asia 40 years ago, and they are beginning to restrict my mobility a bit more rapidly than I thought would happen. Andrea and I have had some travel destinations in our plans (the Canal was one of them) for years now, and I want to enjoy them while I can still get around. So, I have reluctantly decided that I need to simplify my life and off-load some on-going responsibilities.

I'm also a firm believer that an infusion of new blood, new ideas, and new concepts from time to time is always a good idea for any organization. I've been doing this since 2000, and in fact did a tour as the Editor back in the 80's too.

Debbie, KF6LXN, has offered to take over the job of Editor, and I want to thank her for that. I also want to thank the many contributors that help me put the issue together each month. Gary, KQ6RT, who has faithfully provided us with the history of our over 40 year-old club; Greg, KO6TH, has supplied me with regular satellite columns for 5 years now; Casey, W7IB (and Oscar, W7IB/K9), regularly penned musings and ideas. Thanks to all of the Secretary's over these past 5 years for all of the Meeting Minutes. And a special thanks to Richard, WA6RWS, who prints and reproduces each issue, and mails it.

I will still be around and a member, I'll still help contribute occasional stuff to Debbie, and you'll still hear me on the repeater. SFARC is a thriving club. Thanks for a great ride.



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Phone Number: _____ Application: (Circle One) New Renewal

Member Dues: Circle Amounts That Apply.

Applications received in the middle of the year will be pro rated. Contact the President or Treasurer for exact rate.

Membership:	\$22.00	Name Badge:	\$7.00
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Auto Patch Donation:	\$ _____	Newsletter Booster:	\$ _____
Miscellaneous Donation:	\$ _____	Christmas Donation:	\$ _____
Worldradio Renewal:	\$ _____	TOTAL:	\$ _____

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