

For the next event Chris tells me he may take the valve gear over to his /A QTH where the ambient noise level is much lower.

The final submission comes from **Derek G3NKS** who reported the weekend was not very successful for him but enjoyable nevertheless. Limited time & a high local noise level especially on 80m didn't help.

He made 11 QSOs split between 80m and 40m, 8 of which were valve-tx to valve-tx, whilst some receiver problems kept him off 60m. He told me many of his CQ calls on the Sunday morning went unanswered but by the afternoon 7030 was crowded and he had to wait for a space.

His set up is a 5W CO/PA using two 6V6 valves with a Drake R4C receiver feeding about 60ft feet of wire in inverted vee configuration, apex at about 15ft. He closes by saying thanks to those who were patient while he endeavoured to copy them through the local QRM.

So that wraps up a busy Valve Weekend – and my first Valve Report.

But remember, there's no need to reserve the valve gear for just two weekends a year – there's the Winter Sports running from Boxing Day until New Years Day, plus the weekly Sunday & Wednesday activity sessions. And half the fun is in building your own, or tinkering with vintage commercially made gear. So, please share hints, tips and even whole projects, so we can spread the vacuum enthusiasm around like an infectious disease!

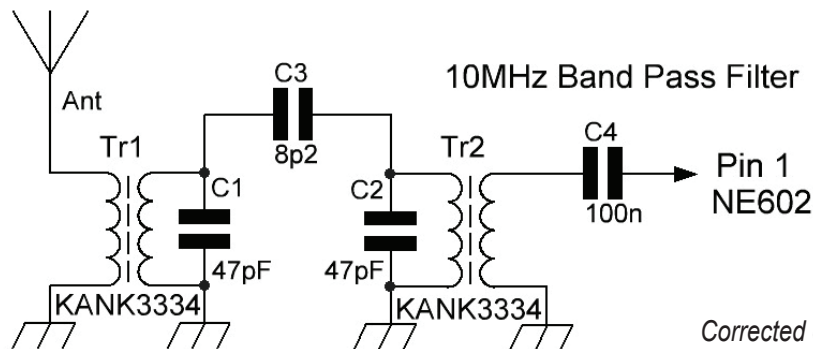
72 and keep those filaments glowing.

Paddy – G4MAD G-QRP #16290

Mea Culpa Steve G0FUW

Folks, thanks to **Tim, G3PCJ**, for drawing my attention to the fact that I included a 40m Band Pass Filter in the Little Mate article in Sprat 197. The capacitors in the Band Pass Filter should be 47pF, not 100pF. I'm off to thrash myself with a copy of *Scroggies*.....I hope that hasn't spoil your enjoyment of Sprat 197's edition.

73, Steve, G0FUW



Corrected drawing with
47pF capacitors

Valve QRP report Paddy G4MAD email: g4mad@gmx.com

Welcome to the winter 2023 Valve QRP report – the first one with me at the keyboard.

I'd like to start by thanking **Colin G3VTT** for his service as Valve Correspondent; he thankfully gave me some pointers before unleashing me on the membership – and in particular I note that I will merely be 'curating' this section of SPRAT. And I turn to you, the hollow-state loving members, to feed me your stories, successes and challenges.

Colin was also the driving force behind the Valve Weekends which are now in their 15th year, and continue to be a popular activity.

The most recent, in the first weekend of November was no exception – and was the 3rd one I'd joined in. At this stage I need to make a confession. There's ageing but fully functional Trio 9R-59DS warming my shack on these weekends, but the transmitter is borrowed. It's a 3 valver based on the design in Practical Wireless, February 1994. And it belongs to Rich G0GGA.

However, Rich's enthusiasm has rubbed off enough for me to complete the construction of a HT/fils supply – labeled the Widow Maker - and I'm now at the metal bashing stage of my own 3-valve transmitter. More of which in future columns as progress is made.

November Activity

So onto the November activity. And it's only right that I start with **G3VTT Colin** who was QRV on Saturday mainly and worked all the regulars including G4ALG, G4ZXN, DK4AN, G4PRL, G3XIZ and others. Most memorable contacts were with G14CZW using a MK128 spy set and a long QSO with Fred G4HWK who is over 100 years old running QRP during which there was information passed about Fred's WW2 activities in the Royal Navy near Harwich. Colin was using his co/pa using a 12BY7 and a LS50 valve from 1942.

Peter GM0EUL reports he managed to get on from time to time over the weekend, but didn't work any other valve stations. He managed 5 CW QSOs – 4 on 40m, one on 80m. He was using his Heathkit HW100 that he's owned since he passed his Morse test in 1986, which was "trickling along" at 5W for VQRP day. The Heathkit is accompanied by homebrew ATU& QRP wattmeter and a HiMound HK707



Peter's station featuring his HW-100.

straight key. His antenna is an end-fed-half-wave for 80m (full wave on 40m).

Peter says he loves “the smell of hot dust and the thrill of dangerously high voltages!” Although his HW-100 gets very little use these days he finds it’s always fun when it does. The radio is working well, it has relatively new finals, a replacement choke and a few new capacitors after one blew up a couple of years ago - and all new capacitors in the power supply to stop it buzzing through the headphones.

Tim G4ARI had a busy weekend with an an 80m ARDF on the Saturday in south Leicestershire, and was QRV on Saturday evening and Sunday morning on 80m CW with his Codar



AT5, with 8 QSOs logged, with Xavier ON6XB providing a QSO beyond our shores. The AT 5 seems to be a popular rig, since he wasn't the only one!

Tim uses a homebrew keyer with a high voltage solid-state relay to switch the Codar AT5's cathode voltage. He also dug out the Acos crystal microphone for the AT5 following a suggestion from Rog GW3UEP. To his amazement it still worked but sadly he didn't make any QSOs on AM. On Sunday night Tim tried calling CQ on 160 metres but without any replies.

The station of Tim G4ARI with his

Steve G0FMY admits he “can't be trusted with those HT voltages on transmit, although there's an 1T4 battery regen under construction” he was however QRV over the weekend with 1W from his solid state Super VXO Voxner and worked Ian, G4GIR in Bedford - despite some challenges from contest QRM.

Ian G4GIR was on the other side of that QSO was using a newly acquired Swan 350 (pictured) he found at the St Neots rally. He has given it some renovation and also modified it so it can be QRO or QRP. He also had his Codar AT5 on the air.



The station at G4GIR

Ian managed 14 QSOs over the weekend from 160m to 10m, with three Valve to Valve contacts, three SOTAs and one at 1 Watt (with Steve G0FMY). Ian say's good time was had and he's looking forward to the next one.

Peter G3XJS was only able to spend a short time during Sunday on the air and managed one QSO with Tim G4ARI on 80m. Like Tim, Peter was also using an AT5 Tx with 3W output, with a Drake 2B Rx.

Rich G0GGA also joined the Leicestershire ARDF on Saturday. Back in the shack, and with his 3-valve transmitter with me, he turned to his single valve ECL82 MOPA. This runs 5W on 80m, into a small balanced Delta Loop, via an ATU. Rich tells me this transmitter uses negative grid block keying, which means no characterful chirp!!

His receiver is a vintage 1953 Admiralty CAT RX, which he purchased at the Telford rally last year (I know – I saw him and G3XPU struggling across the outdoor sales area as they man-handled it back to the car park).

Rich says a combination of other commitments and high levels of local QRM meant he only worked two other valve stations, G4ARI and G4ALG, both on Sunday. “Quite a few of the regulars were heard, but would have been very hard to work through the noise”.

John G3TYB had a very fruitful weekend, working 160m (1 QSO), 80m (5 QSOs), 60m (3 QSOs & 40m (3 QSO). He worked twelve stations in all, of which nine were QRP valve to valve.

John's radios were all valve Tx and Rx and varied from a Eddystone 830 rx, homebrew vfo 80/40 transmitter, homebrew tx/rx (regen) for 80/60/40 and a ex-army Mk119 spy transmitter for top band. His antenna is a 120 ft inverted L.

Apart from top band, where he only heard and worked one station, John found there seemed to be quite a lot of activity, which was pleasing.

Chris G3XIZ joined in using his home brew 8 valve transceiver, which has had some 'improvements' which he has completed since the last event. The rig covers 160, 80, 60 and 40m with a VFO and full QSK. It gives 4W of RF from an EL84 into his 40m end fed inverted 'L' at a height of 9m. Despite local QRM he managed 13 QSOs with 12 individual stations - 7 were valve to valve and with 6 unique valved stations.



Pictured is Rich's ECL82 MOPA