

Kings Lynn Amateur Radio Club, Lighthouse On The Air 21st & 22nd August 2021 GB2HLH

It was a bit touch and go due to the pandemic but all involved were keen to get on the air this weekend after a year away.



As usual, Mike M0XXM obtained our call sign of GB2HLH. Sorted out all the permissions and informed the members that 'volunteers' were to attend. After so long away from playing with wireless there were no shortage of people promising to come.

Adverts went out, some members used the evil eye known as Facebook to inform the public know we were going to be on the cliffs. Along with a few email dumps and phone calls there was lots of excitement before the weekend. As things were opening up and restrictions were lifting some of the members who usually attend had gone on family holidays.



The event was approaching and the trailers and Land Rovers were packed ready for a Friday night set up, the clouds gathered, tents were put up and kettles, cookers and lamps lit. Mike, Charles and Kevin put the small camp together, erected aerials, cables, tables, chairs and victuals and added fences to ensure the public did not get too near to any EMF and with Marshal, camped that Friday night to be ready for the rest of us to come early Saturday morning.



This year Mike and the others had worked incredibly hard, we had available a desktop HF set working full range, 2 military radios PRC320 and PRC 352 so another full HF, 4m and 6m FM and 2m FM and SSB as well as 70cm. Marshal had his van and radio so he set up a CW station and Kevin ran FT8. We also had a go at getting into the VMARS net on AM.





This year we separated the operating tent and the sitting and chatting tent so there was plenty of space to ensure separation and air gaps. Tea was non stop as was chocolate bars and on Saturday Mike cooked everyone bacon rolls. Sunday was a bit of a celebration as it was Kevin's birthday, no need to say how old just that we no longer have to put road tax on him any more! So we had cakes and more tea.

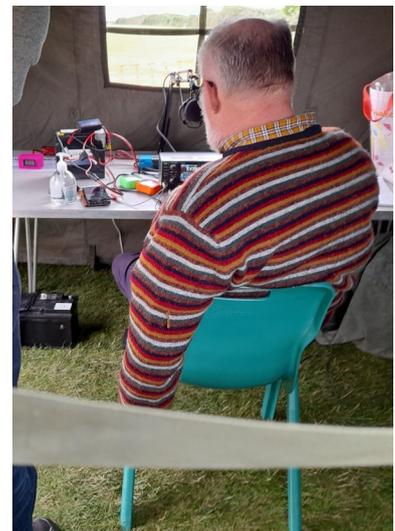
We all started bright and early on an overcast and surprisingly fresh Saturday. As many of us pulled up we noticed people in running gear setting up check points in front of our camp, it was the Hunstanton Promenade Park Run so we all took the opportunity to cheer them on. Good to see the area so well used. We had quite a few people operating on the Saturday, Kevin on 2m and the HF, Dave having a go at 4m and 6m and the 320 as well as learning how to use the new Icom with a waterfall display. Charles, Bob and Marshal as well as others all pitched in and it was a great day. The weather held off pretty well and there was lots of radio.

At one point we had another chap cross over the 2m station on the calling frequency, we had a go at talking back to him to ask him to move but no reply. After some work Kevin and Dave found he was on another frequency anyway and it was our radio that was wide open. Kevin tried to talk to him as he and a friend were trying to set up some SSTV but could not get through. Luckily we had enough radios to change over and carry on.

We had quite a few visitors and lots of people stopped for a chat and to ask about what we were doing. It was great to get the chance to talk to amateurs from other clubs who were here on holiday and we are always so happy when KLARC members drop in as it's not always possible to get out at 7pm on a Thursday night.



Figure 1: The Lighthouse on a previous, sunny, day!!

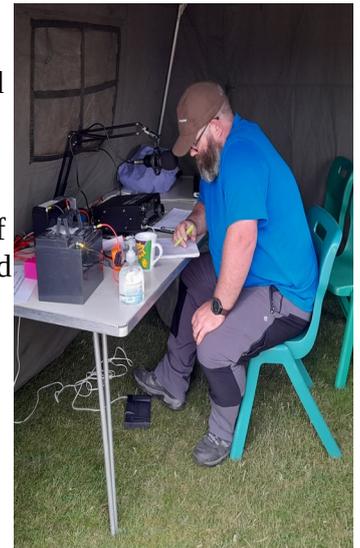




Sunday was a day to remember and we thank everyone who came that day. Again, we came early, others had camped over night and we all set too on the various radios. Numbers calling in were increasing and at some point a French station put us on the cluster. Luckily Charles was able to dig in and take the pile up with Kevin logging. The temperature was dropping and the wind blew, after so many weeks of dry and heat, it broke! The rain was epic to say the least but we kept operating and the contacts were still coming in thick and fast.

Not many visitors on Sunday, I think the rain and the visibility being 100 foot may have had something to do with it. We shut the windows, separated into the different tents to keep safe and carried on. Even with the weather, tea flowed, snacks were eaten and contacts made. At the end Mike was guessing that it was one of the best weekends for radio we had ever had. From a membership position we met up with members who had been out of touch for some time, we took on new members and had many interested and taking leaflets promising to come to the Thursday Club night (and indeed, many have since come and joined).

Kevin took all the hand written logs to sort out the QSL cards (I can only apologise for my writing) and in the end, across all bands, modes and even FT8 we made 139 QSOs.



This was a fantastic weekend, so many contacts both on radio and in person and without doubt the most exciting thing to come of this after getting out of isolation is to welcome the new and returning members, to have an event that increases our numbers with every license class in evidence shows the work was well worth it.

All of this can only happen with volunteers and the efforts of Mike who holds the N.O.V. for GB2HLH and we must never forget the other events that we hope will be on air again in the new year; Castles on the Air – Eric, Airfields on the Air – Kevin, Lighthouses – Mike and hopefully many more. It will be fantastic to see more members coming to the events and getting on the air. If you enjoy the events then do not forget we always need volunteers. There will be support, thanks and a warm welcome for anyone who wants to take part at any level and any licence class. We hope to see you next time.