

### **John D Heys G3BDQ SK (Silent key)**

I last met John in the late 1990's in the White Hart Inn not far from his QTH. The last QSO I had with him (It took some looking up!) was in 1996. John was using the G6HH HERC call sign. CW of course! When I look further back to December 1995 I can see that the QSO with John was on a regular net. At that time there were regular CW and FM nets. From my log book I can see I was not a regular attendee of either the CW or FM net. Sadly all except myself are now SK! (Silent keys). G3BDQ John Heys (G6HH). G3YYF Reg Kemp. G3MRS Rex PontetPomini. G4ERA Doug Mephram. On this particular occasion GX0IPX Geo had a QSO with me 20 minutes later. Geo was the founder of Fists CW Club and was using the Fists Club call sign.

When I came back to amateur radio in 2013 I don't think John was coming to club meetings any more. To me John is best remembered for his book "Practical Wire Antennas". This is the first antenna book that I purchased. It was published in 1989 and I don't expect it was long after that I bought my copy. It would not be a lie to say it has been by my bedside ever since! It was out of print for quite some time which I

felt was a shame because it was a slim volume packed with all the information you could possibly want when erecting a wire antenna for the HF bands. Only recently did I see that John's book is back in print and edited by Ian Poole. It is available from RSGB and other book sellers. If it is anything like John's original book it should be a good read.

John's style of writing made you feel he was talking to you personally speaking from a personal point of view often relating the actual locations where the antenna was erected. Besides explaining how to make and erect our favourite antennas such as the G5RV or Long Wire etc. John adds his "take" on existing designs. In some cases he leads you through the design process and the pitfalls he found with the antenna and modifications he made. One antenna that comes to mind is the Steeple Antenna. In the book he even discusses underground antennas!

As a dedication to John I have picked one of the many antennas from his original book. Only in the last few weeks have I erected a 20m Extended Double Zepp Antenna, this is not the first 3 time I have used this particular antenna. It is a good design.

So in my own words here is the Twenty Metre Extended Double Zepp Antenna. It is capable of being tuned on most bands but it's design frequency as described in the book is for the 20 Metre band giving up to 3dB (Decibel) gain over a single half-wave dipole antenna, but only on the design frequency! There is nothing to stop you making the antenna for a different band, the formulas will hold good just change the centre frequency, in a nut shell, most dipole antennas are a half wavelength long but the Extended Double Zepp is a wavelength plus a bit! To be exact 1.28 wavelengths total length. The feeder is in the middle as per a dipole. This particular antenna is for the 20 metre band and the total length will vary according to where you set the centre frequency SSB part of the band or CW.

John's QSL cards

I set my centre frequency at 14.058 MHz (CW Fists calling frequency). I set the velocity factor of my wire antenna at approx 285,000 Km/sec (ie. just under the speed of light (299792 Km/sec)). The formula I use is as follows.  $285/14.058 \times 1.28 = 25.95$  Mtrs. (In feet lets call it 84Ft it is not critical because you will be using an ATU for fine tuning). The feed point is in the middle. (42Ft). John takes this antenna one step further by giving you the choice to up the gain of the antenna to 6dB by adding reflectors. Using an ATU this antenna will tune most of the HF band without any problem. If you are short of space, drooping the last say six feet or so of each end vertically the antenna will still radiate well. The only band that probably will not tune is Top Band which technically is not an HF band but even then if you are using twin feeder, strapping the feeders at the ATU and balancing against earth or a counterpoise will make top band possible.

John's description of the Extended Double Zepp runs to about three hundred words so you can see my description is only a potted version. So the answer is to read "Practical Wire Antennas"!

For me it has been my go to antenna book. I shall always be grateful to John for his antenna book and the proof of the pudding so to speak is that it has been updated and reprinted.

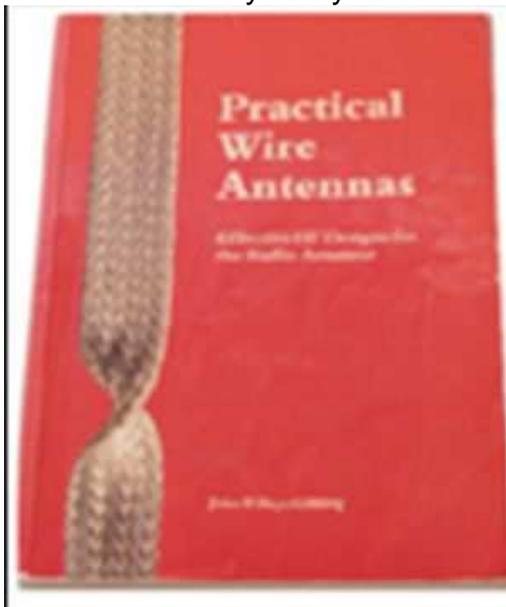
Thank you John.

(Apologies for the delay in this article reaching publication but due to the time lag between an article being written and published it could not be helped. Richard G0ILN. )

I try and find a snippet to end with and this time it is from YouTube “W3ATB CW and Morse Code Journey”. I found it entertaining and especially useful and uplifting for anybody contemplating taking up Morse Code for the first time or coming back after a break.

As always Feedback is always appreciated positive or negative. My email address is kairos1@talktalk.net

Don't forget we are on the air every Monday evening at 8pm on 3.563 MHz CW and also listening on 145.275 FM in case anyone wants to call in. We may take a minute or two to answer you if you call on FM. Please mention HERC in the subject box.



Richard G0ILN.

### **Eulogy of silent key John Heys G3BDQ**

I would like to read you a letter that John had published in the Guardian in 1989

John writes: “When I was a lad in Macclesfield 60 years ago my mother often said to me “Shape yourself, don't stand there like Piffey.” Piffey? Who was Piffey? I am appealing to the Guardian's more erudite readers to help me solve this mystery”.

Piffey it turned out was a notoriously idle dock worker in Cardiff in the late nineteenth century. The one thing John did not do with his life was to stand around like Piffey.

John was born in Macclesfield in 1923. His father disappeared in 1925 leaving him to be brought up by his mother and grandmother, something John himself said gave him his strong wish to succeed.

In 1935, aged 12, John started his hobby of short wave wireless transmission; making receivers and teaching himself Morse code.

In 1939 John started work in the Macclesfield education offices and served in the home Guard until aged 18 he volunteered for the RAF serving as ground crew working on airborne radar equipment, mostly with no 77 squadron which flew Halifaxes and then Dakotas. In 1945 John flew by stages to India based in the north west and using leave to have a holiday in Kashmir; before returning to the UK on the Georgic for demobilisation.

On return to the UK John settled in Hastings, initially with his mother May, training as a teacher and starting work at Mount Pleasant Primary School. It was also in 1946 that John obtained his radio transmitting licence and the call sign G3 BDQ.

In 1952 John married Betty. Living in St Leonards and then from 1969 in Whitefriars in Guestling.

John had many and varied interests including radio, publishing two books on aerial systems, as well as numerous letters and articles especially, but not only, on postcards and stamps. John and Betty were both long standing members of the Labour party, on one occasion meeting and chatting with Harold Wilson and serving as president of the National Union of Teachers in Hastings. John was a keen philatelist and a keen collector of postcards, winning numerous 1sts and best in shows in competitions at a national level.

From 1976 John served as a JP in Hastings.

In a very full, interested and interesting life one of John's very few regrets that he was unable to keep up his position as a fellow of the royal Geographical Society to which he was proud to be elected in 1950 but which as a young teacher the annual fees were too much of a burden.

Keith Brown