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dash fixing Negative earth 5 waths ourput

${ }^{\ddagger} 18^{95}$

## （approx．） <br> f34 PER PAIR

+p 于f f .50
Duo III， 20 watts rms，
40 watts peak
$27^{\pi} \times 13^{*} \times 11 \frac{11^{\prime \prime}}{}$（approx．）
f52 PER PAR

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| :--- |
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## BACK NUMBERS

We are very glad to announce the re-establishment of a PW Back Numbers Service for our readers. In future back numbers dated from June 1977 only will be available from our Post Sales Department for 65p, which includes postage and packing. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to IPC Magazines Ltd.
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IF YOU'RE an electronics enthusiast, then whether you are lucky enough to have a room set aside for your hobby, or you just commandeer the kitchen table from time to time, you will need some sort of tool kit and at least one or two bits of test gear.

In this issue we have two items of particular interest, the first being a special offer of a soldering iron kit at some twenty per cent below the normal retail price. With four different-sized bits, this iron should be able to cope with all your PCB joints and plenty more besides. This offer is exclusive to $P W$ readers.

Our cover subject this month is one of those pieces of equipment that, once you've got it, you wonder how you ever managed without. When working on experimental circuits, or just doing some servicing, a good stabilised power supply unit is so much easier to use than a lash-up of batteries and potential dividers. This particular design offers two independent outputs, one for driving TTL and the other for CMOS, operational amplifiers or discretes.
As many of you will know, almost all the constructional projects published in PW are written by outside contributors, and we are always on the look-out for interesting articles from our readers. Don't be put off by the fact that a few authors' names seem to crop up fairly regularly-it's an open stage. The only qualifications are that your project is likely to be of interest to a reasonable number of other readers, and that the components required must be currently available through retail sources. Articles should preferably be typewritten, double-spaced on one side of the paper only, with all drawings on separate sheets. Try to follow as far as possible the style used in the magazine. Next month, we hope to publish a more comprehensive guide for budding authors.
If you're not sure whether it's worth going to the extent of writing a complete article about your project, just drop us a line giving the basic details of what it does and how it does it. We'll tell you if it looks promising. Remember, you don't have to be an accomplished technical author. If your idea is worth publishing, PW staff can do whatever is required to put it into shape. We look forward to hearing from you!

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## PLEASE NOTE

We do not operate a Technical Query Service except on matters concerning constructional articles published in PW. We do not supply service sheets or information on commercial radios, TV's or electronic equipment.
All queries must be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope otherwise a reply cannot be guaranteed.


## Component catalogue

In these penny-pinching days the electronic enthusiast needs every help if he is to continue building projects and eat as well! Sifting through PW will usually account for most of your much needed components but they're so spread out that postage robs you of any financial advantage you may have gained. The answer is to purchase most, if not all from a single supplier-and to do it from a comprehensive catalogue. Greenweld who regularly advertise in PW have just

launched their latest catalogue which contains over 4000 items, hundreds of which are illustrated, and range from multimeters to IC's to semiconductors and switches.

Included in the catalogue are five $10 p$ vouchers which can be used against any component purchased. The price for the catalogue is 30 p plus 15 p postage and can be obtained from Greenweld, 443 Millbrook Road, Southampton. Tel: 0703772501.

## All change

Readers who were unfortunate enough to have had to take their Philips or Pye radio in for servicing will no doubt be familiar with the initials CES-for the
uninitiated (Combined Electronic Services). Well now that you are all familiar with this name you can now forget it, because as from September 1st, Philips have been running these service departments up and down the country under the new name "Philips Service".

Philips Service will comprise 25 Service Centres for spares and repairs with the main centre still sited at Woddon, Croydon. In fact, Philips claim that this new system will enable them to introduce a new pricing policy, which could lead to price reductions on certain spare parts. For those customers unable to get to one of the Centres, the now all-too-familiar computer situated at Woddon should speed up and give a better service to those orders sent by post.

Philips Electrical, Century House, Shaftesbury Ave., London. Tel: 01-437 7777.

## Exit the inch

Like it or not the days of Imperial measure are numbered (no pun intented) and that total metrication is creeping ever closer and closer with the almost inevitable conclusion that accompanied decimalisation of our money-someone somewhere will make a pretty 'fast buck'.
The reason that metrication has fuelled the inflation fires can almost be put down to one thing, and that is ignorance. If a manufacturer 'rounds' his product up to the nearest whole penny or to the nearest kilo, and in the latter case charges more than he should for the extra weight, the public should make it known to the authorities, and refuse to buy the commodity. But how can honest 'Joe Soap' do this if he doesn't know what a kilo is, what 500 ml means, and how-on-earth, can he ask for a shirt with a size 39 collar?!
The people who teach the public, such as school teachers and examiners, and for people in trade, industry, publishing, journalism and printing the Metrication Board has produced a style guide for teaching and using SI Units. The Booklet, titled 'How To Write Metric' is roughly divided into two sections-'The Teaching of SI Usage' and 'Rules and Guidelines'. The guide ends with a wide selection of SI Units and symbols, derived
units, preflxes, base units and supplementary units. Priced at 50p each or $£ 20$ for 50 copies they can be obtained from HMSO 49 High Holborn, London WC1V 6HB. The reference number is ISBN 0117008672.

## TRE examples

A couple of months ago we published a list of Colleges who are running the Radio Amateurs Examination Course. A useful addition to any course is a book containing past question and answers, properly set out, with diagrams in a form that the examiners like to see. The RSGB now publishes a book titled 'Radio Amateurs Examination Questions and Answers', which has been compiled with the assistance of the City and Guilds of London Institute.
The book is arranged in the same format as the UK examination, with chapter titles as follows: Licensing conditions, Transmitter interference, Elementary electricity and magnetism, Elementary alternating current theory, Thermionic valves and semiconductors, Radio receivers, Low power transmitters, Propagation, Aerials, and Measurement.

Containing 118 pages and costing £1•70, copies can be obtained from RSGB, 35 Doughty Street, London, WC1. TeI: 01-37 8688.

## BSI to the rescue?

You remember that little story we published some months ago on this page, about the new International 16A plug that was being considered by the UK?-Well, they have considered it, that is the British Electrotechnical Committee have, and they've approved it. We must add though that this approval is for the first draft only, and does not commit this country to accept any further proposals or to final adoption of the system.
If The British Standards Institute were to publish a document on this system they would require that all socket-outlets should have shutters, and would require a minimum recess depth of 9 mm in order to provide assurance that live parts cannot be touched. Also the Institute would require socket-outlets and adaptors to be fused. As yet, these features are not included in the IEC draft.

# PORTABLE D.A. AMPIIFIER 




A small amplifier which will operate from a 12 V Battery is often useful. This particular example was intended for loud-hailing from a small motor boat, so the amplifier was designed with mobile PA applications, in mind. The prototype was used to drive an ordinary boxed speaker, but a small horn type would be far more suitable, and less bulky. Another likely application is for audio systems for cars and boats, fed by a cassette player and tuner or small radio. With alterations to the preamplifier circuitry, many variations on the basic circuit given are possible. Only two active devices are used-a quad operational amplifier and an IC power amplifier. This will drive any speaker from 4 ohms upwards, and has an output power of $2 \cdot 5 \mathrm{~W}$ into 4 ohms. To increase the amplifier's versatility a music input and comprehensive tone controls are included. The music input accepts signals from any cassette recorder or tuner having an output of 50 mV or more.

## Preamplifier

The circuit of the preamplifier is shown in Fig. 1. It uses the quad Norton amplifier which is an unconventional operational amplifier in that it amplifies the difference between two currents rather than two voltages.

The IC will work using any voltage between 4 V and 18 V . However a stable supply is needed, so the Zener stabilised circuit of Fig. $\boldsymbol{Z}$ is used to give a stable 10 V . The small capacitor C13 across the electrolytic is essential to decouple the supply at high frequencies in order to prevent instability.

## Microphone Mixer Stages

The microphone preamplifier (IC1a) is designed for a low-impedance microphone, and therefore has to give a considerable amount of voltage gain. With VR1 at maximum, the gain is about 115. The gain is reduced by decreasing VR1, increasing the amount of negative feedback. C2 prevents changes in VR1 from affecting the biasing of the amplifier by blocking d.c. The input circuitry is a little more complex than appears necessary. To obtain a 600 ohm input impedance, it would be usual to make R2 $600 \Omega$ and omit Rl. However to avoid loss of bass, Cl would then need to be about $250 \mu \mathrm{~F}$, which is bulky. Use of a higher value than this for R 2 reduces C 2 to a sensible size. The input impedance is then reduced to about 600 ohms by R1 (for use with a 2 k microphone omit R1).

The music preamplifier (IClb) is very similar in operation to the microphone stage. However to obtain a high input impedance R6 must be large, unless more complex circuitry is used. This restricts the stage gain to one-third, but this is offset by the small amount of gain in the mixer stage, giving an overall sensitivity of about 50 mV music for full output.

## Tone Control Circuit

This is the standard Baxandall circuit, and has unity gain. The amplifier is biased by R15 and R16. The non-inverting input is grounded, effectively disconnecting the current mirror. The voltage at the inverting input is a fairly constant 0.5 V whatever the input current, and use is made of this to set the output voltage to the correct value. The quiescent voltage


Fig. 1: The main (quad Norton) preamplifier circuit diagram.
Note : R12 (27kת) has by an oversight been omitted. The junction of C6 and C7 should be broken, and R12 interposed.
at the output will be that which gives 0.5 V at the inverting input-about 5 V here.

The other amplifiers are biased by the more usual method. A $1 \mathrm{M} \Omega$ resistor from the supply rail (R4, R8, R10) to the non-inverting input gives about $10 \mu \mathrm{~A}$ through the current mirror. This is balanced by an equal current through a 470 k resistor connected between the inverting input and output, setting the quiescent output voltage to half supply voltage -5 V here. It is worth remembering that in the first case the output voltage is a fixed multiple of the voltage at the inverting input terminal, and therefore is substantially independent of the supply voltage. In the second case, however, the output voltage is a fixed fraction of the supply voltage. Thus the second method of biasing should be used where large variations in supply voltage are envisaged, to give the maximum possible undistorted output voltage swing.


Fig. 2: Zener-stabilised supply and power amplifier circuitry, C19 is 100MFD and not 1000MFD as shown.

## components

| Resistors |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| R1 | $680 \Omega$ |
| R2 | $3 \cdot 3 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R3 | $470 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R4 | $1 \mathrm{M} \Omega$ |
| R5 | $100 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R6 | $1 \mathrm{M} \Omega$ |
| R7 | $47 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R 2 | $1 \mathrm{M} \Omega$ |
| R9 | $220 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R10 | $1 \mathrm{M} \Omega$ |
| R11 | $470 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R12 | $27 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R13 | $27 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R14 | $15 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R15 | $470 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R16 | $47 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R17 | $4.7 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R18 | $4.7 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ |
| R19 | $100 \Omega$ |
| R20 | $2 \cdot 7 \Omega$ (see text) |

VR1 $2 \mathrm{M} \Omega \log$
VR2 $1 \mathrm{M} \Omega \log$
VR3 100k $\Omega$ 1in. preset
VR4 100k $\Omega$ 1in. preset

## Semiconductors

IC1 MC3401; IC2 LM380; D1 1N4001; ZD1 10V, 400 mW Zener

## Miscellaneous

S1 SPST Toggle; FS1 1A Fuse; Case 203mm $\times 95 \mathrm{~mm}$ $\times 50 \mathrm{~mm}$; Veroboard (2 pieces); Line Fuseholder; 4 Knobs; 2 Jack Sockets; DIN Speaker socket; 14-pin IC Socket; 2 large crocodile clips; Power supply cable; Loudspeaker 4-15 $\Omega$.

$W 542$
Fig. 5 (below):-a general view of the inside of the unit.


## Power Amplifier

The circuit is shown in Fig. 2, and uses an LM380 amplifier. Briefly, it is an audio amplifier with its gain internally fixed at 50 , giving a sensitivity of about 50 mV for full output. It will drive a 4 ohm load with a supply of up to 14 V , producing an output of 2.5 W .


Fig. 4: The wiring of the output stage board.

## Construction

The power and pre-amplifiers are built on separate pieces of 0.1 matrix Veroboard. Layouts for these are given in Figs. 3 and 4. The completed unit may be housed in a proprietary aluminium box, with a slightly sloping front. The internal layout can be seen from Fig. 5, and is not critical. An IC socket is recommended for IC1, but not for IC2, since this will reduce the heatsinking by the circuit board.

Some attention must be paid to the heatsinking of IC2. No heatsink is required with load impedances greater than 8 ohms, provided the case is well ventilated. With impedances down to 4 ohms a heatsink area of at least 4 square inches is required.


This month we offer to PW readers the chance to buy a miniature soldering iron kit at a substantial saving on normal prices. Why not treat yourself-or, with the festive season fast approaching, perhaps you could persuade your nearest and dearest to get one for your Christmas stocking.

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The packs available to readers are as follows:-
PACK A: The iron and four bits as described above. The recommended retail price of such a pack would be $£ 4.73$ including VAT; the special "all-inclusive" price to readers is $£ 3 \cdot 75$.

PACK B: The iron and four bits as PACK A, PLUS 6 m of Multicore Savbit solder 22 SWG and one 1 amp fuse. The recommended retail price of this pack would be $£ 5 \cdot 29$; the special "all-inclusive" price to readers is $£ 4.15$.

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Offer closes on 30th December, 1977.

# Sopewnamtomaster <br> R.A.E.[Radio Amateurs' 'xamination] <br> John Thornton Lawrence GW3JGA \& Ken Mc Coy GW8CMY 

The passing of the Radio Amateurs' Examination, set by the City and Guilds, requires a certain level of theoretical technical knowledge. Whether one considers that this level is too high or too low is beside the point. The course that follows is intended, with the help of certain external aids, to prepare the reader to pass the examination. It will not teach him all about electronies!

## Alternating current

In the previous sections we have dealt with direct current and we know that D.C. maintains a steady value, either positive or negative in polarity, as shown graphically below. Alternating Current (A.C.) on


W546
the other hand, varies in a special way and to understand this, we return to the magnetics section. You will remember that when a conductor is moving in a magnetic field, the direction of the induced voltage (and the resultant induced current) depends on the direction of movement and the direction of the magnetic field.

Let us imagine two bar magnets, a loop of wire and a current meter, arranged:


The loop is rotated and, using Flemings Left Hand Rule, we look in detail at the induced currents in the loop, as shown in Fig. 14. In (a) no current flows because the direction of movement of the conductors forming the loop is parallel to the direction of the magnetic field. In (b) current begins to flow in the direction shown, as the conductor cuts across the field. In (c) maximum current flows as the conductors now cut the field at right angles. In (d) the current is decreasing and at (e) again no current flows. Here the position is similar to (a) except that conductors A and B are transposed. This means that when moving
to (f) and beyond, conductors A and B are then cutting the field in the opposite direction. This results in the flow of current being reversed every half revolution. This is shown graphically in Fig. 15 and it can be seen that in one revolution, the current starts at zero, rises to a positive maximum and falls to zero again, then rises to a negative maximum and again falls to zero, thereafter the pattern is repeated for every revolution of the loop. If the rotation is continuous and at a constant speed then the peak amplitude of the voltage (and resultant current) waveform and the period are also constant.

## The Sine Wave

The shape of the alternating waveform we have observed is called sinusoidal or a sine wave because the amplitude of the voltage or current at any point during the cycle is related to the trigonometrical function called the 'sine' of the angle of rotation. Fig. 16 will help you to remember some of the terms used when referring to sine waves. The amplitude at the peak of a sine wave is known as the peak value. Because the instantaneous value is continuously varying between the peak value and zero, the value which is equivalent in heating effect to D.C. lies between these values. It is known as the root mean square or rms value and it is this rms value which we use when stating the mains supply voltage, transformer ratings, etc. The rms value is 0.707 of the peak value and conversely, the peak value is 1.414 the rms value. For example, the peak value of the 240 volt mains supply is $240 \times 1 \cdot 414=339$ volts. The peak value is of particular interest when specifying the maximum voltage rating of components in an A.C. circuit.

In Fig. 16, a 2 Hz sine wave is shown, each period or cycle occupying 0.5 second.

As a further example, suppose that the time of one period was 1 ms ( $1 / 1,000$ second) then there would be 1,000 cycles or periods in 1 second and the frequency would be written as $1,000 \mathrm{~Hz}$ or 1 kHz .

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \mathrm{f}(\text { frequency })=\frac{1}{\mathrm{t}(\text { time of one period })} \\
& \text { and } \quad \mathrm{t}
\end{aligned}=\frac{1}{\mathrm{f}} .
$$

## Now test yourself:

Q. If the time of one period of an alternating current supply is 0.02 second (or 0.0166666 second if you live in the U.S.A.) what is the frequency?
A. The answer to this one is engraved on the front of your electricity supply meter.
The alternating current supply to your home is generated at the power station in a similar manner to the mechanically rotating coil we have just described. The alternating current passing from an Amateur VHF transmitter to the aerial is generated

(a)

(d)

(b)

(e)

Fig. 14 : (above) and Fig. 15 (below).

by a valve or transistor oscillator and amplifier. The frequency may be 145 MHz ( $145,000,000$ cycles-persecond) but the alternating current is still a sine wave and it has the same properties as its lower frequency compatriot.


Fig. 16: 2 Hz sine wave, showing peaks.

## Self Inductance

When a conductor is carrying A.C., the magnetic field produced by the current varies in both amplitude and direction. This variation of the magnetic field around the conductor induces, by self inductance, a voltage (back e.m.f.) in the conductor and this produces a current which opposes the 'main' current producing it (Lenz's Law).

In a straight conductor, the self induced current is smaller than if the conductor is wound into a coil or solenoid. Here the magnetic field lines surrounding each conductor also pass through adjacent conductors and induce currents in these which also oppose the 'main' current. The effect is shown diagramatically in Fig. 17. The self inductance of a coil depends on a number of factors including the number of turns, the diameter of the conductor, the permeability of

(c)

W548

(f)

(g)
the material in the core, and the volume and general configuration of the coil. The unit of self inductance or inductance is the Henry ( H ) and practical coils or inductances may have values from a few microhenrys $(\mu \mathrm{H})$ to several millihenrys ( mH ) for radio frequency use and up to many tens of Henrys for low frequency purposes.


Fig. 17

## Mutual Inductance

Mutual inductance is easier to visualise than self inductance and is shown in diagram form in Fig. 18:


Suppose we pass a current through coil A in the direction shown. The resultant magnetic field lines link it with $B$ and induce a voltage and resultant current in that coil. (Note that the current flowing in coil B is opposite to that in A. See Memory Aid Fig. 7.)
If an alternating current is made to flow in A, then for each change in current direction there will be a change in magnetic field direction and a resultant change in the induced voltage and current in B. In other words, an alternating current in A produces an alternating current in B. The circuits are electrically isolated but magnetically linked or coupled by the 'magnetic circuit'. You will no doubt recognise this as the action of a transformer.
all of the primary field lines pass through the secondary winding. The losses in the windings themselves result from power being dissipated as heat due to the ohmic resistance of the copper wire used. With careful design, transformers can be made where these losses are very small indeed, in fact a modern power transformer can have an efficiency as high as $98 \%$.

## Transformer types

Transformers come in many shapes and sizes. The construction may vary between two "hairpins" of heavy gauge wire making a transformer that will couple power out of a VHF or UHF transmitter, to


1: Heavy duty L.F, choke. 2: Ferrite pot-core inductance. 3: Transmitting H.F. choke. 4: H.F, choke. 5: VHF choke, 6; VHF transmitter tank coil. 7: Ferrite toroid inductance. 8: VHF tuning inductance.

## The Transformer

A Transformer consists of two (or more) coils or 'windings' magnetically coupled, so that an alternating current in one coil, the primary, produces an alternating current in the other, the secondary. The method of magnetically coupling the coils depends largely on the frequency of the alternating current with which it will be used.
Providing that the primary and secondary windings have the same number of turns then the secondary current will be almost equal to the primary current and the secondary voltage almost equal to the primary voltage. It will not be exactly equal because of losses in the magnetic circuit and in the resistance of the windings. The losses in the magnetic circuit are mainly due to a loss of induced current because not
the heavy, laminated iron cored, version found in the mains transformer. The primary and secondary windings need not be physically placed side by side. Often they are wound one on top of the other, or adjacent, end to end. The windings may also share a common core material, such as in the mains transformer. This serves to concentrate the linking magnetic field, improving the efficiency of the magnetic circuit. The windings may also form part of a tuned circuit, as in the case of the I.F. transformer, which we will be dealing with later.

## Basic rules

There are some basic rules that apply to transformers, particularly low frequency and power types, which define the relationships between primary and secondary current, primary and secondary voltage and the numbers of turns in the primary and secondary windings. These are best summarised in some
simple equations, but let us first define the quantities involved.

$$
\text { Primary current }=I p
$$

Secondary current $=$ Is
Primary voltage $=\mathrm{Vp}$
Secondary voltage $=V \mathrm{~V}$
No. of primary turns $=\mathrm{Np}$
No. of secondary turns $=\mathrm{Ns}$
In these equations we will ignore the losses which occur since they are relatively small, so that:

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \frac{\mathrm{V} \text { secondary }}{\text { V primary }}=\frac{\text { No. of secondary turns }}{\text { No. of primary turns }} \\
& \text { or } \frac{\mathrm{Vs}}{\mathrm{Vp}}=\frac{\mathrm{Ns}}{\mathrm{~Np}}
\end{aligned}
$$

also:

$$
\frac{I p}{I s}=\frac{V s}{V p}
$$

We may combine these two equations, as follcws:

$$
\frac{I p}{I s}=\frac{N s}{N p}=\frac{V s}{V p}
$$

Using these equations it is possible, if we know some of the quantities involved i.e. current, voltage, no. of turns, to calculate the others without too much trouble.

## Example 1

A mains transformer has a 250 volt primary winding and a secondary winding that provides 15 volts for use in a low voltage supply unit. How much current can be drawn from the secondary if the primary current is 0.5 amps ?

The part of the equation we require is:

$$
\frac{\mathrm{Ip}}{\mathrm{Is}}=\frac{\mathrm{Vs}}{\mathrm{Vp}}
$$

putting in the values that we know:

$$
\frac{0 \cdot 5}{\text { Is }}=\frac{15}{250}
$$

Rearranging we get:

$$
\text { Is }=\frac{0.5}{0.06}=8.33 \mathrm{amips}(\text { say } 8 \mathrm{amps})
$$

So we have found that we may draw 8 amps from the secondary winding, at 15 volts.

## Example 2

A mains transformer has the following windings:
Primary 240 volts
Secondary (a) 1000 volts
Secondary (b) 12 volts
The primary winding consists of 1,440 turns of wire. Assuming there are no losses, calculate the turns required for the secondary windings (a) and (b).

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \frac{N s}{N p}=\frac{V s}{V p} \text { therefore } \mathrm{Ns}=\mathrm{Np} \times \frac{\mathrm{Vs}}{\mathrm{Vp}} \\
& \mathrm{Ns}(\mathrm{a})=1440 \times \frac{1000}{240}=6000 \mathrm{turns} \\
& \mathrm{Ns}(\mathrm{~b})=1440 \times \frac{12}{240}=72 \text { turns }
\end{aligned}
$$

## CONSTRUCTION

## Inductances and Chokes

In a practical circuit the actual value of the Inductance and its construction is governed largely by the frequency and the characteristics of the circuit in which it is to be used. A selection of inductors and chokes is shown in the photograph.

Low frequency laminated iron-cored chokes are used for filtering purposes in D.C. power supplies. The winding is carried on a bobbin, through which the core is asembled. In audio frequency circuits, chokes may also be wound and enclosed in a ferrous material 'pot-core'.

Intermediate and low radio frequency coils are usually layer wound on a former or tube, sometimes in several sections to reduce self capacitance. Tuning coils are wound on a former inside which is a threaded core of iron dust material which can be


Fig. 20 : Mains transformer-physical construction.
screwed in and out to adjust the inductance to the exact value required. Coils for HF and VHF are usually made of thicker wire wound on low-loss formers or self supporting with an air 'core'. At UHF inductors may be in the form of strips or lines of flat strip or rod and bear little physical resemblance to a conventional coil.


## Transformers

The mains transformer has windings designed to suit the expected operating conditions. If the transformer has to provide a high value of current (as in our Example No. 1) then the windings are of heavy gauge (diameter) wire, appropriate to the current, so that the overall resistance of the winding is small and the power lost, also small. The mains transformer often has an electrostatic screen between the primary and secondary windings. This is connected to 'earth' and prevents any capacitive leakage or other effects from affecting the secondary windings. The windings themselves consist of enamel covered copper wire wound on a bobbin with layers of insulating material between each winding. The core is made up of thin laminations of special iron to reduce 'eddy current' losses. Eddy currents are produced in the core by induction (remember that iron is also a conductor) and the laminations provide many breaks in the electrical continuity of the core material thus preventing the flow of eddy currents while leaving its magnetic properties largely unaffected.

Transformers for audio frequencies are similar in construction to power transformers but the core material is specially made to operate over a wide frequency range and to cause negligible distortion.
I.F. (Intermediate Frequency) transformers usually consist of two windings which are each tuned to the operating frequency by associated capacitors and adjustable tuning iron dust cores. The magnetic coupling between the windings is critical and is set in manufacture to provide the desired selectivity characteristic.
R.F. (Radio Frequency) transformers vary widely in design and construction and may be wound on a former with or without an adjustable core. R.F. transformers for use over a wide range of frequencies are sometimes wound on a ferrite ring. The secondary winding may be separate from or interwound with the primary.

Fig. 21: Mains transformer (18V rectifier trans.). 2: Transistor driver transformer. 3 : I.F. transformer. 4 : Miniature I.F. transformer. 5: R.F. transformer coil. 6: Broadband R.F. transformer.

## HIDIL IOIE

## IC of the month-Nov 1977

We apologise to our readers, and to - Ferranti Ltd., for misquoting the type number of the timer IC on the cover and contents page of the magazine The number should be ZN1034E, as given in the article.

## Low Distortion Sine/Square Wave

 Generator, October 1977In Fig. 1 the connection from the switch S2a 'Sine' position should go only to VR5; and not to S3 or VR2. The PCB is correct. If the circuit is constructed on other than our PCB, using Fig. 1, the effect of the error will be that the output attenuator will be inoperative on 'Sine'
Resistors R4 ( $3.3 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ ) and R5 ( 6800 O ) are shown transposed on the PCB. The circuit diagram is correct.

## Solo Supermind, October 1977

The case details should be "P.S.Comps. code 509-276, with a front panel size of $250 \mathrm{~mm} \times 130 \mathrm{~mm}$. If inaccuracies are noted in meter deflection, resistors R1 to R8 (all $2.2 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ ) should be changed to $2 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ high stability (metal oxide)

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DC Current ( 6 ranges)
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#  

Most modern FM tuners either employ, or make provision for, a centre zero meter to indicate when accurate tuning has been achieved. However, a suitable meter can be expensive and requires hole-cutting and drilling of chassis to fit. These thoughts prompted the author to design and build a completely solid state equivalent which will cost the constructor less than $£ 1$, assuming that all the components are bought new.


Fig. 1 : Circuit of the tuning indicator.

## Circuit Outline

By using a 741 op amp in the differential mode and driving a pair of LED from the output a very simple circuit can be realised employing only 6 basic components. The circuit diagram is shown in Fig. 1. Here the dc voltage across the meter output terminals is applied to the inverting and non-inverting inputs of the op-amp, pins 2 and 3 respectively.

Since very few components are employed the circuit can be constructed on a small piece of Veroboard and supported by the LED mounting clips. A suitable layout is shown in Fig. 2. The prototypes which have so far been constructed have been tried on a number of tuners which already possessed a tuning meter and the circuit described has been found to be virtually as accurate.
With the circuit wired into the tuner a check is made that both LED are illuminated. A point off-station is tuned so that only inter-station noise is being received, and VR1 adjusted until both LED are equally illuminated.

## components

## Resistors

R1 1 MO R2: 22 kR ; both $\frac{1}{}$ watt $5 \%$ carbon, YRt 1 KQ horizontalpreset.
Semiconductors.
IC1 741 LED 1 and 2,02 dian, 50 mA nax, colour to. cholce.

Miscellaneous
Veroboard e $5^{\prime \prime}$ natrix $47 \mathrm{~mm} \times 38 \mathrm{~mm}$ LED Clips.


Fig. 2 : Physical layout.


A station is tuned in, and as tuning proceeds the LED will vary in brightness, the correct tuning position being the point where they are both equally illuminated.

## SPECIAL

## PRODUCT

REPORT



CHROMATROAIES


The Chroma-Chime is an electronic door chime which provides a selection of 24 different tunes. Readers may already have seen advertisements for the complete unit, which has also been featured on TV.

The heart of the design is a microprocessor chip, produced for Chromatronics by Texas Instruments, and containing all the necessary software (programs) to generate the various tunes. Now, the electronics enthusiast can buy a kit from which he can make up his own chime unit, and probably his first microprocessor-based project, to boot.

Besides the microprocessor itself, the circuit uses five transistors, four diodes and handful of resistors and capacitors, all mounted on a single printed circuit board. The loudspeaker and batteries (two PP3 etc.) are the only off-board components.

Provision is made for the connection of two circuits to external bell-pushes (Front and Back doors?). Closing one of the pushes will cause the unit to play whatever tune has been selected on the two internal switches. Closing the other push will play one tune which is pre-selected by the manufacturer.

Apart from the Tune Selector switches, the other controls are three preset potentiometers which are used to set the Volume, Speed (Tempo) and Tone (Sustain) of the tune.

## Assembly

The kit is supplied complete down to the last screweven a coil of p.c. solder is included. In the sample kit supplied for review, the loudspeaker had been slightly damaged in transit, but we are assured by Chromatronics
that this item is normally packed in a protective bag, so the problem should not arise again.
Building up the kit is very straightforward, following the instructions given in the comprehensive assembly manual. The time required is quoted as about three hours, but the experienced constructor should be able to manage it in not much over half that time.
The microprocessor is an MOS device which is, of course, susceptible to damage from static electricity. For added safety in assembly, Soldercon sockets are provided for mounting this component. A variety of different transistor types may be included, according to availability. Included in the assembly manual is a table covering every possible type and its leadout configuration. Except, that is, the ones supplied with the review kit! The transistor manufacturer had supplied devices marked with a standard type number but having a non-standard pattern of leadouts. You will not be surprised to learn that the unit did not work when first switched on. Again, Chromatronics assure us they now have this problem under control.

## Results

After sorting out the transistor problems, the unit worked well, providing its allotted selection of tunes. The volume is possibly a bit low for some houses, particularly when TV viewing or Hi Fi listening is in progress. However, terminals are provided for connecting an extension loudspeaker, and a purpose-designed unit will be available shortly.
The kit costs $£ 18$ including VAT and postage and packing. It is available from Chromatronics, River Way, Harlow, Essex.

With the new Antex soldering stand you have the assurance that with the iron tucked neatly into the strong angled spring coil you have maximum safety when preparing or waiting for the iron to heat. Moulded into this stand is provision for six alternative bits; and two small sponges for cleaning bits.

This sturdy plastic stand is a useful addition to any household or workshop. The SK3 and SK4 kits comprise of a full instruction card mounted with either the CX miniature soldering iron or the larger X25 general purpose iron. Included in both of these kits is the safety stand.

All the range of Antex soldering irons are made on the principle of putting the heating element inside a shaft, then the desired bit is eased over the shaft, giving maximum heat transference, this is why so often a small Antex iron can do the job of a larger conventional iron. The precision made slide on bits are slit to make them easily interchangeable.

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## DETECKNOWLEDGEY

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| 27×107 | 50v/.3w 0.14 | $\begin{array}{ll}\text { LLC4828 } \\ \text { CFS } 10.7 \mathrm{~mm} & \text { ceramic } \\ & 0.50\end{array}$ | min. foil trimmers (see pi) |
| ZTX108 | 30v/.3w 0.14 | BLR3107N mpx 1.90 | 22t 100k pots for tuning_45 |
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This part describes the assembly of the cabinet and off board interconnections for the calculator keyboard version of the instrument. The slight variations required for the conventional keyboard version will follow next month.

## Back panel wiring

In the prototype, the front and back panels were cut and folded out of 14 swg aluminium sheet. The rear panel is shown in Fig. 1. The large bracket at one end carries the mains transformer while the narrower flange running the full length takes self tapping screws to fasten the chassis into its cabinet. Four small brackets fix the printed circuit board into place on the back panel. Their height is critical to the final assembly of the chassis into its cabinet; read on before starting any mechanical work! These brackets should be fixed to the back panel so as to register exactly with the centres of the fixing holes on the PCB. Drill these for self tapping screws. At the same time mark and drill clearance holes at the front of the transformer platform for the mains transformer mounting bolts, which also secure the PCB at the front of the cut out.

When fitting the voltage regulators, make allowance for any variation from the specified devices. The prototype used a TO-3 encapsulation for IC21. No insulating kit is needed for this as its can should be in electrical contact with the panel. Bolt a solder tag under one of its fixing screws.
When using a plastic version, the same comments apply. The same cannot be said for IC22 (the -12 V regulator). It is most important that a mica washer and insulating bush are used when fixing this.
The mains input cable should be clamped to the back panel and the earth wire connected to a solder tag mounted under the clamp. The neutral connection should go straight to the transformer and the live should, at this stage, be left long enough to reach the front left hand corner of the PCB-where the mains switch will be mounted. Connect the side terminal of the fuse holder to the other input of the mains transformer and then link the two secondary pairs to their respective pins of the PCB. Refer to Fig. 1.
Solder up all the chassis tag connections. All must go to the same solder tag under IC21. This cannot be stressed too highly otherwise nasty earth loop problems and instability are likely! Connections to this solder tag come from the PCB pins located as follows:


Fig. 1 : Back panel assembly. The dimensions are for guidance only.



(a) Immediately to the left of B1, (b) Immediately in front of C44, (c) From pin 3 of IC22, (d) Immediately behind the positive end of C44, (e) Immediately behind IC19, (f) The earth connection of the DIN (Phono) output socket.

Having done this, connect leads between the output sockets and their respective board pins as shown on Fig. 1. Finally connect the input and output pins of the voltage regulators to their respective PCB pins-note that there are two output wires coming from each to feed different parts of the board, one pair goes to the pins above C49 and C50 while the other pair goes to the right of IC2.

## Front panel

A degree of skill is needed to make the front panel as it has a 'dog's leg' in it to help differentiate between the accompaniment and melody keys. The critical dimensions are the overall height of the front panel to allow the chassis to slip into the cabinet and the depth of the step in the 'dog's leg' which is the equivalent of one row of calculator keys ( 0.6 in ). The latter is important for cosmetic reasons and to ensure that the flange running along its underside tallies with the positions of fixing holes in the PCB.



#### Abstract

The photograph shows the plywood sleeve cabinet as used for the prototype calculator keyboard version. Note that the front of the cabinet has a pair of runners to give extra support to the keyboard section of the printed circuit board.


Start by cutting out the two end plates-these set the overall height and the depth of the step together with the angle of the bends. See Fig, 2 for details.
The main panel is cut and folded out of one piece. Use a fine saw and cut a slot to allow for the different positions of the bend at the 'dog's leg'. Using the smaller end plate as a template, fold the front panel for the accompaniment end of the keyboard. Start with the bottom flange then draw the material from the vice or clamp to put in the small angle bends at the top of the vertical and sloping sections. If you need to extend the slot this can be done quite easily. When folded, the end plate should fit under the top flange of the panel and the bottom flange of the end plate should be flush with that of the main panel.
Move to the other end of the work piece and put in the bends for the melody section of the keyboard; this time use the larger end plate as a template. Try to ensure that the sloping panel is parallel over both sections and then use a liberal quantity of Araldite to glue the end plates into position. Run a fillet of the glue under the inside edges where the sloping and vertical parts of the panel butt on to the end plates. Cut a filling piece and glue into the gap left between the two parts of the front panel. Use plenty of glue to fill any gaps or irregularities in the fit.
When the glue is rock hard-leave for at least 24 hours--mark and drill the front panel for the potentiometers and switches. Marry the panel to the PCB so that the vertical edges are just clear of the push button keys and mark positions for fixing holes along the underside flange by spotting through the PCB in the six marked locations. Self tapping screws should be used; drill the holes undersize.

At the left hand end of the panel (accompaniment end) drill a hole for a nut and bolt through the PCB and into the flange under the end piece. This hole should go through the copper area which is at earth (chassis) potential. A solder tag should eventually be fixed on this screw and a bonding connection made to the front panel with a wire soldered to the body of one of the potentiometers. Note-it is no good relying on connection through the end piece because the Araldite will have acted as an insulator! Drill a similar hole through the PCB and end piece at the melody end but keep the position clear of any of the PCB wiring. Fix the completed front panel to the PCB
-forming threads for the self tapping screws, etcbefore progressing further. Make sure that all the push buttons will operate without fouling anything.

## Front panel wiring

Remove the front panel and finish it off with a rub down and give it several coats of hard polyurethane based silver lacquer. Fix all the controls in place and connect them with flying leads to their respective board pins (see Fig. 3 for details). This operation is best done with the front panel tilted forward over the push buttons. Use screened leads for connections to VR7 (Melody Volume), VR13 (Accompaniment Volume), VR17 (Drums Volume) S3, 4 and 5 (Melody Voicing) and S 6 and 7 (Accompaniment Voicing). Lightweight stereo screened pairs help cut down the number of separate leads required. Always use the earthing pin on the PCB associated with the respective 'live' terminals for each potentiometer or group of switches. Do not link all the earth connections on the front panel controls together or you will get major earth loop problems!

Note that the switches should be orientated as follows: S1, 2, $3,4,5,6$ and 7 should normally be closed in the ' $U p$ ' condition; S8 to S13 inclusive should normally be open in the 'Up' condition. When S14 a and b is ' Up '-in the Vamp OFF condition-the poles should be connected to +12 V at the positive end of C17.

Screw the front panel into place--not forgetting the solder tag and bonding link going from the left hand end plate to the body of one of the potentiometers. Finally, mount the mains slide switch in front of the accompaniment keys. A small LED may be fitted next to the switch connected via a 470 ohm resistor across the -12 V supply and ground. The cathode should go to the more negative voltage. Connect the live mains input lead to the main switch and run another wire from the latter to the central terminal of the fuse holder. The organ is now complete.

Next month-the variations required for conventional keyboard instruments, setting up the preset controls and fault tracing.

## TRAFFIC LIGHT CONTROLLER P.

## Outline

This design uses TTL ICs to simulate the appearance of traffic lights. The "lights" consist of three LEDs which go on and off in the sequence followed by actual traffic lights. Applications of this circuit might be found in model town and railway layouts, or (with a little modification) as a yes/no decision maker. The sequence displayed must be: red, red/yellow, green, yellow, and back to red again. In addition the red or green periods (which are equal) must be longer than the yellow or red/yellow periods (which are also equal). The circuit follows this succession in a continuous cycle.

## Circuit Description

The circuit consists of four distinct sections; these are the oscillator, the counter, the decoder and the display.

The oscillator is a SN7413, dual four input nand Schmitt which, together with R1 and Cl, generates a series of pulses. The frequency is set by Cl $(1000 \mu \mathrm{~F})$ which gives reasonable timing for a model layout. These pulses are fed to a SN7490 decade counter, which advances by one whenever an input pulse is detected. When it reaches nine, it resets to

Fig. 1: The main circuit diagram.

zero; in this way the continuous cycle is produced. The count appears in binary at pins $12,9,8,11$ ( 1,2 , 4,8 respectively). This count is taken to IC3, which is a SN7441A binary to decimal decoder. It has ten output pins which are normally high, but which go low in conjunction with the binary input. For example, when binary 0101 appears at the input pins, output pin 14 (associated with decimal 5) goes low. Since the decoder input cycles from zero to nine, the decoder outputs will do the same. These outputs are in four groups, each controlling a particular display function.

## The display

This consists of three LEDs, arranged one above the other as in conventional traffic lights. The red LED is driven from counts zero, one, two and three; the

green LED from counts five, six, seven and eight; and the yellow LED from count nine. Count four drives both the red and yellow LEDs, via diodes D1 and D2. These prevent the yellow LED lighting during counts zero, one, two and three, and the red LED lighting during count nine.

## components



## Construction

The unit is constructed on a piece of $0 \cdot 1$ in Veroboard which measures $50 \times 45 \mathrm{~mm}$. Layout details, including modifications for the decision maker, are shown in Fig. 3


Fig. 2 : Modifications around ICI for use in "random" mode.

## Modifications for Decision Maker

These modifications, detailed in Fig. 2, allow the circuit to be turned into a form of "coin tosser". When switched in C2 determines the oscillator frequency, and sets it much faster than Cl. The input to the 7490 is also disconnected from the oscillator, but is reconnected when the relay (a 14 -pin DIL reed type) is energised. The relay is operated by TR1, which has a delay circuit C3/R7. When S2 is pushed, C3 charges to the supply potential and holds TR1 on. As C3 slowly discharges through R7 and TR1 base, it provides a delay of a few seconds, holding the relay on after S2 has been released. When RLA1 de-energises, the counter is again disconnected from the oscillator, and the display freezes in one state. When the switching speed of the display and the time delay on RLAl are combined, it becomes impossible to predict just how the display will stop-in other words, the outcome is random. Should the display halt at a state which includes a yellow light, S2 may be pushed again.


## A REVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In general, the author does not have any more information on products than appears in the article.

## Loud mouthed chips

If noise annoys your neighbours, they will not be very pleased to hear about one of the latest IC chips to arrive on the US market. It is a 28 -pin device which has the sole purpose in life of generating noises! But it isn't quite so strange as might first appear. The manufacturers are aiming the new chip mainly at the toy and games market and they've taken the job very seriously.

The chip is a mixture of bipolar logic circuitry and injection logic ( $1^{2} \mathrm{~L}$ ). Crammed into its tiny area, the device has noise oscillator, noise generator, noise filter, SLF (super low frequency) oscillator, VCO (voltage controlled oscillator), mixer, system-enable logic section, one-shot circuitry, envelope and generair modulator, attack/delay logic, and an amplifier. In very large quantities the device will sell for just one dollar.
The beauty of the device is that it only requires external resistors and capacitors to programme virtually any desired sound. For example it would be possible to have a sound like a submarine engine, then the throbbing of a heavy bomber aircraft, the screech of bombs falling followed by the sound of an explosion. The latter sound is aided by the one-shot oscillator in the device. This caters for sounds which last for less than two seconds, whereas other sections of the chip concentrate on allowing continuous sounds like sirens etc. The user may provide switching logic to switch in different sets of components. However, the chip manufacturers are rumoured to be currently working on a complementary chip which is designed to programme this device giving a series of several "standard" sounds.

The chip is not available in the UK, but readers might care to toy with some ideas for sounds they'd like to produce as and when it does become available. Do I detect someone saying "Hear hear"?

## Where there's smoke

Some time back a sensor was launched onto the market which detected smoke and chemical fumes. Various electronics journals subse-
quently published circuitry using these sensors. For those interested in this area of electronics-great news brothers.

A British company has manufactured a chip for use with ionization smoke alarms. The device replaces some 30 discrete components. The magic number you're looking for is MEM4962; a single chip LSI (large scale integration) package which harbours an FET input, detector, voltage comparator, oscillator, trigger, horn driver, and CMOS output stage; in fact, just about all the circuitry you need to make a sensitive electronic nose to detect combustion-just add the sensor and alarm device. Please note; manufacturers very seldom if ever supply direct to the public.

## Under water warmith

Microwave ovens are gaining popularity. Their ability to cook food in very short times and using minimal power are plus factors. The latest application of microwave heating is that of "cooking" divers while they plod happily round the sea bed. This work is currently going on at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The Newcastle "chefs" viewed current methods of keeping divers warm at great depths with no real enthusiasm. One method relies on heating gas near the diver's suit. Another approach uses energy transmission which involves very heavy electrical currents and much copper connecting material.

Workers at Newcastle use a horn antenna fed at 8 GHz with some 3 kW of power. This power is transmitted down the diver's air hose which has a high dielectric material lining. The air is heated safely and transferred to the diver.

Ingenious though this may be, I don't think there's any real substitute for a good coal fire!

## PW on a disc

When the laser was first publicised it was hailed as a solution in search of a problem. But with the passing of time, this has changed. A new video disc storage system has appeared
which employs a laser beam. A disc of thin, transparent plastic, about the size of an LP record, has one side coated with a very fine layer of metal.

The recording tracks are made by burning minute holes in this metallized surface with a laser beam. The holes are typically a bare one micrometre in diameter.

In this way, the manufacturers are able to store some 18,000 separate pictures. Any individual picture may be called up in just one second. The system has various applications varying from storage of video signals, to the compact storing and playback of things like photographs for police work.

Just think, you might one day buy a whole year's Practical Wireless on a single LP.

## Out for the count

Frequency counters have come a long way over the years. Many Hams will smile wistfully at the mention of a BC 221 with its little dial and a set of interpolation figures to enable the user to work out what the frequency was.

A newcomer to the frequericy measurement range is the FC600A. This beautiful little beasty can be held on the palm of your hand. It gives an eight digit digital readout of frequency from 6 Hz to 600 MHz . The weight is only $1 \frac{1}{2} \mathrm{lbs}$.

The counter oscillator has an ageing rate of just 3 ppm (three parts per million) per year and is guaranteed accurate to within 5 ppm over its operating temperature range of $0^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ to $+55^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$. And it's economical to run, drawing only 300 mA from a 12 V supply.

Just in case you want one the cost is around 595 dollars (about £350) and the size is $5 \frac{1}{2} \times 3 \frac{3}{4} \times 1 \frac{3}{4} \mathrm{in}$.; about the size of a well stocked wallet.

# $O_{N}$ <br> <br> NEXT MONTH IN... <br> <br> NEXT MONTH IN... practical practical WIRELESS WIRELESS <br> proporitional power Conipoilir 

Earlier methods of room temperature control fade into technical obscurity as our Proportional Power Controller leaps into the future! Using zero voltage switching technique, the unit provides interference-free temperature control of resistive loads (such as bar type electric fires) in the convenient range $40^{\circ} \mathrm{F}$ to $80^{\circ} \mathrm{F}$.


## plus <br> Merial Performante <br> <br> pest 5et

 <br> <br> pest 5et}Constructing aerials from a book and taking their radiation Testing model granted is one thing.ized ones, and aerials, or even fullsizeristics is someplotting their characteristicX inventor thing else. Fred Judd ' 71 Special' aerial, of the very popular ' $Z L$ speck the problem shows how

## HF Direct

This ultra simple direct convormance comwave receiver offers a performersion superparable to a $£ 200$ double CW, the selectivity het. Intended for SSB and the AF passband- it is controlled entiant and operation noise perthis makes alignter for optimum for good AM uses a dual gate FEl fanced mixer for good $A M$ formance and a rejection. and spike noise rejection.


## J. THORNTON-LAWRENCE GW3JGA

connected to the meter by S3. The rather unusual resistor arrangement for monitoring current avoids the difficulty of making up a low resistance shunt for the meter. The recommended resistors for R19-21 are $2 \%$ thick film types and for R22, $2 \%$ metal oxide, giving a worst case error of about $7 \%$.


## Circuit

The full circuit diagram is shown in Fig. 2. The 5 V supply is shown in the lower part of Fig. 2 and comprises a mains transformer T2, full-wave bridge rectifier BR2, smoothing capacitor C5 and integrated circuit regulator IC3. Current and voltage metering is provided by R19-22 and R23 respectively. These are
power supplies: $+5 \mathrm{~V} 0-400 \mathrm{~mA}$ for TTL, 0 to +15 V $0-100 \mathrm{~mA}, 0$ to -15 V 0.100 mA for op . amps and general transistor circuitry.


Fig. 1 : Block diagram.
The +5 V is fully floating while the bipolar supply has a common zero volt connection as shown in Fig. 1. This arrangement provides a fixed supply for TTL and a fully variable supply which may provide up to 30 V at 100 mA , with the supplies in series, or 0 to +15 V and 0 to -15 V with a common 0 V connection.

In conventional usage, the 0 V output of the 5 V TTL supply and the centre $0 V$ of the dual supply would be joined together. To do this, a link switch is provided to join or 'common' the OV connections. This switch may be set to the un-linked position when full isolation of the supplies is required.


For voltage monitoring, the meter is switched in series with R23, giving 20 V full scale deflection.
In the variable supplies, the mains transformer T1, bridge rectifier BR1, and smoothing capacitors Cl and C2 generate a dual 20 V supply line. From these rails, regulated lines of $+10 \mathrm{~V},+5 \mathrm{~V},-5 \mathrm{~V}$ and -10 V are provided by corresponding Zener diodes D1, D2, D3 and D4. These voltages are fed to various parts of the circuit.

## Variable regulator circuit

The basic regulator circuit is shown in Fig. 3. It consists of a 741 operational amplifier used as a summing amplifier and a power transistor, Trl, connected as an emitter follower. The output from the emitter follower is fed back to the inverting input of the 741 and so provides negative feedback. This causes the output of the emitter follower to maintain the voltage at the inverting input equal to the non-inverting input, i.e. at zero volts.


Fig. 3: The basic schematic of the variable voltage section. Fig. 2, the complete circuit diagram, is shown on page 589.
A negative current of 1.5 mA is set up through R15 by connecting the bottom end to -5 V . An equal but opposite polarity current comes from TR1 emitter (the output terminal) through VRI to cancel out this


Fig. 4: The current limiting circuitry.
negative current thus maintaining the 'summing junction' at 0 V . With VR1 set at zero resistance, +1.5 mA will be provided with the output terminal virtually at 0 V ; with VR1 set to maximum ( $10 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ ), Trl emitter and the output will now move to +15 V to maintain +1.5 mA through VRI. Therefore, at any setting of VR1 the output voltage will be equal to the voltage drop across VR1 produced by 1.5 mA through it.

## * components

|  | Resistors <br> R1 $6809 \mathrm{~W}, \quad$, R13 $33002 \%$ <br>  <br> R4 $680 \mathrm{C}, \square$ R16 $3 \times 3$ (ha <br>  <br> R7. $33002 \%$ R19 $3902 \%$ W thick fim <br> R8 $3902 \%$ wher fime <br> R2O $3.9 \mathrm{Q} 2 \%$ IW thek fim <br> R9. 1 K 0 <br> R10. 3 3k <br> R21 $3.902 \%$ W thick film <br> R22 1.2 k 2 $2 \%$ <br> R11 3.3k2 <br> R12 1 k 2 <br> R2a $20 \mathrm{kaC} 2 \%$ <br> AII W $5 \%$ carbon tim, except where stateo. <br> VII 10 k 2 W Wire wound, VR2 1010 IW whe wound <br> Capacitors <br> C1 220014F25V <br> $\mathrm{C2} 2200 \mathrm{zt} 525 \mathrm{~V}$ <br> C3 10HF-25V <br> C4 $10 \mu \mathrm{~F} .26 \mathrm{~V}$. <br> C5 2200 $\mathrm{\mu F} 25 \mathrm{~V}$ <br> C5 220 PF <br> Cl 470 nE <br> Semicontuctors <br> Switches <br> S1. DPDT <br> S2 SPST <br> S3 2 pole 6 way <br> Transformers <br> T1 Primary 240 V secondary two windincs each of 15 V 0.2 A <br> T2 Primary 240 V secondary two windings each of 4.5 V 0.6 A <br> Miscellaneous <br> PC (Tom Readers PCB service at requifed), Meter 01 mA , temmals, knobs, mains lead, hardware, cabinet $(2) \times \mathrm{B} \times 14 \mathrm{~cm}) \times$ |
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Rotation of VR1 produces a linearly variable output voltage of $0-15 \mathrm{~V}$.

When a current is drawn from the output terminal, this tends to reduce the output voltage slightly and this negative change is at once apparent at the 'summing junction' and so produces a positive change at the output and restores the output voltage to the correct value again, or almost so. This amplified correction gives the characteristically low output impedance that can be obtained from electronic voltage regulator circuits.

## Regulator with current limiting

The circuit with the additional components is shown in Fig. 4. A current sampling resistor, R8, monitors the load current. This resistor is between the emitter and base of $\operatorname{Tr} 2$ and when the load current produces a sufficient voltage drop across R 8 , $\operatorname{Tr} 2$ turns on causing positive current to flow from the collector of Tr 2 to the 'summing junction'. This results in a negative polarity change in the output, ensuring that the output current does not rise to a dangerously high value. Tr2 will turn on when the emitter-base voltage (V) reaches about $0 \cdot 55 \mathrm{~V}$ :

$$
I_{\max }=\frac{0 \cdot 55 \mathrm{~V}}{3 \cdot 9 \Omega}=140 \mathrm{~mA} \text { approx }
$$

The resistor R8 performs a dual purpose in that with R7 (see Fig. 2) it provides a meter shunt for monitoring output current, giving a full scale deflec-
tion of the panel meter for 100 mA . The shunting arrangement is similar to the +5 V supply circuit previously described.

R9 is included in the base circuit of $\operatorname{Tr} 2$ to limit the base current to a safe value and R5 is included in the non-inverting input of the 741 to balance the small voltage off-sets produced by the input currents of the device. C3 is fitted across the output terminals to provide a low output impedance at medium and high frequencies. The negative supply is a mirror image of the positive supply.

The panel meter has a basic sensitivity of 1 mA full scale deflection and is switched to various parts of the circuit for output voltage and current measurements.

## Construction

The prototype was housed in a Verobox. The printed circuit board carrying all the components was fixed to tapped pillars provided in the base of the Verobox. The front and rear panels fit into slots in the base and cover.

The printed circuit board layout is given in Fig. 5. The overlay, Fig. 6, shows numbered interconnection points where the wiring from the front and rear panels is connected. These points are also identified on the circuit diagram shown in Fig. 2. The only connections not identified in this way, are those to the mains transformer primaries, as they do not connect with the PCB. The primaries of the transformers are fed from S1, the double-pole on/off switch.


Fig. 5: The PCB shown copper side. The scale factor is one; ready made boards may be obtained from the PW Readers' PCB service. Details page 593.
Fig. 6: Component overlay. This drawing is shown on page 591 (overleaf). The reference letters refer to the circuit diagram.



## ELECTRONICS FAULT DIAGNOSIS

## by lan R. Sinclair

Published by Fountain Press, Argus Books Ltd., 14 St. James Road, Watford, Herts.
108 pages $£ 2$ - 75
This book is unusual in several respects: it maintains a $100 \%$ educational aspect in the classic questions and answers textbook style while being informative at the same time. The author has managed to define closely the ability and technical understanding of his readership thus obviating the boring preliminaries of very basic theory; this book is not for beginners.
The content comprises about 50 or 60 circuits, each complete and functional, with accompanying descriptions of normal circuit operation. For each, the author provides tables of voltage readings, as well as 'scope diagrams where necessary, taken from critical points in the circuit. While one set of readings will correspond to normal circuit operation, others have been taken with various hypothetical fault conditions. The reader is left to work out which is the correct set of figures, given several fixed points to work from, and which sets correspond to various component failures. The format is certainly educational and occasionally mind bending-even for the more gifted amongst us. Answers of course are at the back.
What the book amounts to is a collection of technical puzzles capable of stretching professionals and amateurs alike. More surprising, it works at several levels of understanding; this mostly results from the author's policy of including the easy circuit examples first with more difficult ones further on. Interest is maintained by the nature of the circuits given. He has carefully avoided the textbook trap of including oft-quoted, boring circuits such as astables and the like. They are there but in heavily disguised form within larger circuit building blocks. One gets the feeling that the author is as happy with a soldering iron as he is with a typewriter. Indeed, most seem very efficient and would find ready application in many areas of amateur electronicswhich is far more than can be said about most circuits published in text books.

Frank Ogden

## A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL ICs By D.W. Easterling

Published by Bernards Ltd., The Grampians, Shepherds Bush Road, London, W6 7NF.
76 pages 95 p
The title 'A Practical Introduction to Digital ICs' overdescribes the content of this 76 page volume. More precisely, the latter deals with practical applications (sic) of six members of the 74 series. These applications are mostly adjuncts to a digital timer described in the penultimate @hapter. It has to be said that the overall impression is one of confusion, inaccuracy and lack of aspect.
Throughout the book, the author seems unable to decide continued on page 606

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# AMERE 20 YEARS 

## R.HAM BRS15744

Within the past 20 years, man has achieved his dream of centuries and become clever enough to leave his own world and visit another. In fact, it was barely 12 years from October 1957, when the Russians launched the first artificial earth satellite, to July 1969 when the Americans placed two men on the moon.

It all began on October 4, 1957, when a 23 in polished sphere, called Sputnik-1, and weighing 1841b, began orbiting the earth every 96.2 minutes, sending the first radio signals back to earth from a man-made space-craft. Very soon, radio enthusiasts throughout the world were working out orbit times and tuning their communications receivers around 20 MHz to hear the bleeping signals as Sputnik-1 passed over. A month later, Soviet scientists put the dog Laika into earth orbit aboard their 11201b Sputnik-2 and in February 1958 the Americans launched their first satellite, Explorer 1.
As the years passed by, hundreds of satellites were successfully launched by both the Americans and Russians and through their combined efforts a great deal of scientific knowledge has been gained.

## Marconi's Day

Just four years and two months after the conquest of space began, the first amateur radio satellite, Oscar1 (Orbiting Satellite Carrying Amateur Radio) was sending signals back to earth on $145 \cdot 008 \mathrm{MHz}$. Thanks to the United States Government Oscar-1 was placed in orbit, as a "piggy-back" passenger, by a USAF Thor-Agena rocket while on another mission from the Vandenberg base in California. At that time, amateur radio had much worth-while publicity because Oscar-1 was launched on December 12, 1961,


The equipment installed at the clubroom of the Mid-Sussex Amateur Radio Society for co-ordinating the launch of Oscar 7.
the 60th anniversary of the day that Marconi and his colleague Kemp, situated on Signal Hill, Newfoundland, heard for the first time in our history, a wireless signal which had originated from the other side of the Atlantic.

Technically minded people throughout the world praised the Project Oscar Association (formed by a group of American radio amateurs) for making it reality, that a 1011b capsule, carrying a tiny VHF transmitter was orbiting the earth and sending the letters 'hi'-'hi'-'hi' in morse code from space. Further satellites in this series were launched by American rockets in 1962, 65, 70, 72 and 74 of which the last two, Oscars 6/7, are both communications satellites and still operational. (Details in Practical Wireless, December 1976.)


The QSL card received by the author confirming his reception of signals from Australis Oscar 5.
In January 1970 Australis-Oscar 5, constructed by amateurs in Melbourne, Australia, was launched and its signals, a series of variable tones, gave information about the satellite's attitude, battery condition and temperature. This data was received on $144 \cdot 05 \mathrm{MHz}$ and, by ground command, on $29 \cdot 45 \mathrm{MHz}$ was recorded by a team of regular observers on special $\log$ sheets distributed by Bill Browning, G2AOX, for the occasion.

## Communications Satellites

Satellites provided the answer for faster communications around the world and, although the first "active" communications satellite Courier-1b, only operated for 17 days, by July 1962 the first television pictures had bridged the Atlantic via Telstar-1, followed in December 62 by Relay-1.

In July 1963 Syncom-2 was placed in synchronous orbit some 22,000 miles over the Indian Ocean, followed in 1964 by Syncom-3, in 1965 by Early Bird-1, In January 1967 Intelsat-2b was stationed, also in synchronous orbit, above the Pacific Ocean and was used to link Apollo programme stations together in addition to its commercial duties. The first "passive"

## S-DeGnology



Throughout this series, electronics has been employed to amuse, assist or entertain. The circuit shown in Fig. 1 must surely come under the heading of 'useful'.

The basic idea is that a momentary contact is made which causes a light to switch itself on. After a predetermined period, the light automatically switches itself off. It remains off until there is another contact (this need only be for a fraction of a second) when it will again illuminate and, after a set period, switch off again automatically.

It is envisaged that numerous uses could be found for an automatic courtesy light. For example, the bell push on a front door could form the contacts. When pushed, the light would come on just long enough for the keyhole to be found.

## Circuitry

At first sight, the circuit of Fig. 1 may look unfamiliar and yet careful examination will show that

it is merely a multivibrator connected for monostable operation. Transistors $\operatorname{Tr} 2$ and $\operatorname{Tr} 3$ form the mono-stable. Note the absence of a capacitor which (in an astable) would be inserted in place of R6.

The result is that the mono-stable normally remains in one state: with one transistor on and the other off. By making a momentary contact across S-DeC holes 65 and 70, it causes $\operatorname{Tr} 2$ to switch on and $\operatorname{Tr} 3$ to switch off. The result is that Trl now conducts and lights the lamp LP1 in its collector lead.

This new stable state is not permanent however. It only lasts for a finite time which is dependent upon the value of the resistor pushed into S-DeC holes 4 and 14; and on the value of the capacitor C1. After a time (which depends on these C1/R5 values) the circuit will automatically revert to its original state. It will remain in this state until the contacts are again shorted. See Fig. 2 for component layout.

## Components

Variation of R5/Cl gives a measure of control over the timing period during which lamp LP1 is on. Using the values shown, the lamp remains on for a period of 15 seconds. Changing the value of Cl to $330 \mu \mathrm{~F}$ increased the 'on' period of LP1 to approximately one minute. Varition of R5 might be useful in some applications but it suggested that the minimum value of resistance should be $47 \mathrm{k} \Omega$. It is possible to use a potentiometer for $R 5$ but in this event a $47 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ resis-

## you will need . . .

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Fig. 2. The S-DeC layout for this month's project shown actual size. Atternative Iransistor types may be used to those shown th the circut? However, make sure that their feadout configurations are in accordance with the tayout Also note that Int is a PNP type while the others are NPN

## FK240

tor should be wired in series with the pot, thus ensuring a minimum value at all times.

Lamp LP1 should not be rated at greater than 100 mA , and 6 V should be considered the ideal voltage for general use with the circuit. If the light is to be on for only short cycle times, say not longer than 15 seconds, then up to 12 V may be used. With 6 V applied and a $330 \mu \mathrm{~F}$ capacitor for Cl , the quiescent current drawn by the total circuit was barely 1.25 mA . Using a 4.5 V battery, this dropped to approximately 0.9 mA .

## Contacts

The contacts which short together momentarily can be the bared ends of the wires from S-DeC holes 70 and 65. These might be fixed to a door (or whatever) in such a way that when the door opened the two bared ends brushed against each other. For other applications any type of switch or bell-push would be suitable, and a reed switch with magnet should be an elegant and reliable method.

communications satellite, Echo-1, launched August 1960, was a 100 ft diameter balloon with a metallised surface for reflecting radio signals. Later, in January 1964, came the 135ft diameter Echo-2 which was used in a co-operative programme with the USSR. Many radio amateurs took part in the Echo experiments.

## The Permit

Around April '62 the question arose as to whether amateurs would be contravening the terms of their licence if they listened to satellite signals outside the recognised amateur bands. However, as a result of discussions between the Radio Services Department and the RSGB the Post Office decided that if an amateur wishes to receive signals emitted by: artificial earth satellites engaged in scientific space research, for the purpose of making observations on the technical characteristics of such signals, or otherwise carrying on technical investigations in radio technique, they will authorise him to do so.

## Conquest of the Moon

It was only 11 years and 7 months from the flight of Sput-nik-1 to the day when Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin landed on the moon, after a journey which had been pioneered by a series of earth satellites. Between July 1964 and March 1965 Rangers 7, 8 and 9 sent back a total of $17,000 \mathrm{TV}$ pictures from their three journeys to the moon. In May 1966 Surveyor-1 made a successful soft landing and in 13 days it sent more than 11,000 pictures of the lunar terrain back to earth. In August 1966 Luna -Orbiter-1 photographed some two million square miles of the moon's surface while on earth, men were being trained in the Gemini, Mercury and Apollo capsules ready for that great moment in July 1969 when a radio signal from the moon, 240,000 miles away, carried the message: "this is Tranquility Base, the Eagle has landed."

When Neil Armstrong left the Eagle and set foot on the moon he said "one small step for Man . . . one giant leap for Mankind" and I think that sums up the whole of the space programme over the past 20 years.

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## Tuning Adjustments

L1, L2 and L3 and the trimmers can be set before adding the BFO and $5 \cdot 5 \mathrm{MHz}$ FET stage. L3 and the trimmers determine the bands covered, so they must be adjusted correctly. Either of the following methods can be used:

1. If the associated receiver covers at least some of the correct oscillator frequencies, and if its calibration is reasonably accurate, the oscillator frequency can be checked by placing its aerial lead (preferably screened except near the end) near L3. It will then be possible to pick up the oscillator carrier. As the converter output is to be $5 \cdot 5 \mathrm{MHz}$, there will be $5 \cdot 5 \mathrm{MHz}$ difference between the required band frequencies and the oscillator. For example, for 1.8 to $2 \cdot 0 \mathrm{MHz}$ the oscillator will tune to $7 \cdot 3$ to $7 \cdot 5 \mathrm{MHz}$. TC1 and L3 are adjusted until this is achieved. All the required oscillator frequencies were listed earlier. If a required band cannot be reached with some of the trimmers, the core of L3 is slightly moved to correct this, until adjustment of the five trimmers alone allows all five bands to be covered.
2. An alternative method is to use a signal generator, or to find amateur band signals, working the converter into the receiver in the usual way. The core of L3 is sealed after adjustment.

Subsequently adjust the core of Ll so that 7 MHz signals are peaked with VCl fully closed, and 21 MHz is reached with VC1 nearly completely open. L2 has more than adequate coverage for 160 and 80 m and the core is set so that VCl gives resonance with both bands. VC1 will allow tuning of signals 11 MHz away from the required bands, in the way explained, so the five resonant points for the wanted bands should be marked on the dial of this control. The core of L4 is simply adjusted for best volume or sensitivity.

## IF Unit

The IF stage is assembled on a metal chassis about $75 \times 50 \times 40 \mathrm{~mm}$ ( $3 \times 2 \times 1^{11}$ in) high, as in Fig. 7, made from scrap metal. Coil L5 is wound on a 7 mm diameter former. Begin at point 1 and wind on thirtythree turns to 32SWG enamelled wire, finishing at point 2. C18 is across this winding, its leads projecting under the chassis. Winding $3-4$ is ten turns, close to the main winding.


Fig. 7: Layout and wiring for the optional IF amplifier stage.
The small board in Fig. 7 is mounted by a bracket, which is the chassis and negative return. Output from 4 goes to a co-axial socket on the unit. The coil core is set to peak signals, as for L4.

## BFO Unit

Fig. 3 is the circuit, and Fig. 8 the layout of this stage. L6 is wound on a 7 mm diameter former, with core, and has thirty turns of 32SWG wire, close wound, centre-tapped for the chassis connection. R14 and R15 allow the shorting of VC3, to put the stage out of use, thus avoiding a separate switch. The extreme corner of one moving plate is bent outwards, so that it firmly contacts a fixed plate when the capacitor is closed.

A satisfactory level of BFO coupling was obtained by running an insulated lead from VC3 (marked IF) and looping this round the centre pin of the output socket in Fig. 7. When this stage is fitted, set VC3
half open, tune in an AM or CW signal and adjust the core of L6 for the usual zero beat position. Rotating VC3 either way should then cause a heterodyne, rising in pitch.


The converter is ideal for use with the general coverage type of communications receiver, but can of course be used with other receivers. A screened aerial lead from receiver to converter is necessary, and should not be longer than necessary. This can provide an earth connection from converter to receiver, which is essential.

The likelihood of $5 \cdot 5 \mathrm{MHz}$ breakthrough depends on the screening and other factors. A very small adjustment of receiver tuning above or below 5.5 MHz will have little important effect on calibration, but if the shift away from $5 \cdot 5 \mathrm{MHz}$ is substantial the converter ought to be re-aligned to suit the actual IF output to be used. Chances of $5 \cdot 5 \mathrm{MHz}$ breakthrough will be very much reduced by using an aerial tuner, which will also allow best results with very weak signals. It is also possible to fit a 5.5 MHz trap in the aerial lead at the converter. It is essential to turn back VR1 with strong signals to avoid overloading the receiver.

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 aentor Television

## - TEN YEARS OF COLOUR!

Next month's issue is a special one to commemorate ten years of colour TV broadcasting in the UK. Pat Hawker sets the scene with an account of the debate over the choice of colour system - whether to go for NTSC, SECAM, PAL or one of the other variants. E. Trundle describes ten years' experience of servicing colour receivers, from the early valved monsters to today's solid-state, slim-line sets with in-line gun c.r.t.s. And Harold Peters takes you behind the scenes with an account of the problems the setmakers have had to solve.

## VCR SERVO FAULTS

Dealing with faults in VCR servo circuits is a relatively new aspect of the servicing scene. Steve Beeching describes a logical approach to finding out where the trouble lies in the twin servo (head and capstan) system used in the Philips N1500 series of VCRs.

## - CO-CHANNEL NOTCH FILTER

In some locations different ITV programmes are available on the same channel. Whichever is selected, there is the problem of co-channel interference. The vision carrier offset makes it possible to use a notch filter to reduce the interference however. Alan Latham describes an interesting $R C$ notch filter with an f.e.t. amplifier to increase the $Q$ factor. This can be inserted in the luminance channel

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## Coupled and amplified

A 50W audio power amplifier and a new family of LED/Photocell optocouplers are two new products to come out of NSL. The amplifier, which is mounted on its own heatsink is claimed to have a frequency response from 15 Hz up to 25 kHz with the addition

of only one external capacitor and power supply. Notated the Epitek 5070 A , distortion is put at less than $0 \cdot 15 \%$ at full power, with the additional advantages of S/C protection and automatic thermal shut-down over $70^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$.

The opto-couplers which have been given the title ' 5 S family' are encapsulated in a clear epoxy, with the detectors rated at $320 \mathrm{~V} / 250 \mathrm{~mW}$, with an LED current of 25 mA , giving maximum on, and minimum dark resistances of $2 k$ ohms and 100 M ohms respectively. These coupled pairs are available in either 4 pin TO5 size can, a cylindrical shaped package in which the detector and LED leads emerge at
opposite ends, and a $\frac{3}{4}$ in square module. The latter has the added advantage of housing either one or two cells. Prices range from $£ 2 \cdot 90$ to $£ 5.00$ plus VAT each, and for the Epitek 5070A power amplifier the price is $£ 16.50$ plus VAT for 10 ff but inincluding P\&P.
National Semiconductors Ltd., Stamford House, Stamford New Road, Altrincham, Cheshire. Tel: 061-928 3417.

## Get a grip on it!

Ideally suited to the electronic constructor is a new vice from Greenwood Electronics. If you've ever tried drilling a chassis or soldering components to a tag strip or PCB you know that a third hand is a necessity. This new vice, labelled the Oryx Model 1B is equipped with 3.5 in jaws and is fully adjustable to rotate through $360^{\circ}$ and can be locked in any position. Replaceable nylon jaw linings are included which protect delicate surfaces, while the finish is in stove enamelled green. The Oryx bench vice sells for $£ 19.95$ plus VAT.

Greenwood Electronics, Portman Road, Berkshire. Tel: Reading 595844.

## Philip's kits

Complete Kits manufactured by a reputable company usually have one big advantage over a project whose components have been bought 'piece-meal'-and that is the finished object looks professional. Of course by buying a complete kit, you have everything you need at once, together with instructions and probably useful hints and tips about the pitfalls a builder is likely to come across. A range of electronic kits have now been made available by Philips, and com-

prise a wide variety from a small multipurpose amplifier to a studio-quality mixer unit. An illustrated catalogue giving full details of the complete range of kits is available from the distributors, and with every kit there is a money-back guarantee.

SST Distributors (Electronic Components) Ltd., West Road, Tottenham, London N17. TeI: 01-808 4884.


## Packed-up

The latest products to join the bubblepack band wagon are a range of record and cassette care accessories from BASF. Called Checkpoint products, BASF state that 'they are the result of careful research into what the market really needs, and that the series is therefore limited to useful, nongimmicky products'. The items which make up the Checkpoint range are too numerous to list, but for the record enthusiast there are nine packs available, for the cassette and reel-to-reel enthusiast, 25 packs, and for the lucky person who has both record and cassette player, one pack.
As can be seen from the photograph, some of the packs are really comprehensive, with, for example, the Record and Cassette Care Kit containing such goodies as a record cleaning arm, cleaning pad, stylus cleaning fluid and brush, inspection mirror, two screwdrivers, index cards, self-adhesive

cassette labels, stroboscope speed check discs and a cleaning cloth. Packs start at around 30p for the Record Cleaning Cloth and extend up to $£ 7.94$
for the Record and Cassette Care kit. BASF (UK) Ltd., Haddon House, 2-4 Fitzroy Street, London W1. Tel: 01-637 8971.


## Now you see iti...

When you connected-up the PW 'Interwipe', or tried to repair that faulty TV, probably the most difficult problem that presented itself to you was in actually seeing what you were doing. There are many instances when the DIY enthusiast, electrician, technician or ordinary hobbyist needs a source of light that he can shine round corners.

Now, throwing a little light on this subject is GSPK (Sales) Ltd, who are marketing a torch that is designed to illuminate all those inaccessible spots. Called the 'Search Lite' it comprises a slim 140 mm pen light and a 165 mm detachable clear acrylic extension piece. It requires either HP7 or SP7 batteries.
Priced at $£ 1 \cdot 99$ incl. VAT it should be available just about everywhere. GSPK (Sales) Ltd., Hookstone Park, Harrogate, Yorks. Tel: 0423886641.

## Display digits

A $3 \frac{1}{2}$ digit panel meter, featuring auto-polarity, auto-zero, and an accuracy of $0.1 \%$ has recently been announced by Lascar electronics. Available with sensitivities of either 199.9 mV or 1.999 mV FSD, the purchaser can also choose between a 0.3 in or a 0.43 in red LED display. Over-range input is indicated by suppression of the last three digits, and the left-hand decimal point is programmable. Measuring $76 \times 70 \times$ 10 mm , both versions can be obtained for the 'not unoriginal sum' of $£ 19.99$.

Lascar Electronics, PO Box 12, Module House, Billericay, Essex, Tel: 027743394.


This month we are going to take a look at the solution to a simple problem which covers some very important points, many of which we have not really considered in previous projects in this series. The background to this project is that a little while ago we went to visit a friend who, seeing us arrive, gestured wildly from his window for us to be quiet and then came out to meet us. The reason for this charade turned out to be that he was trying to copy a tape from a reel-to-reel machine to a cassette recorder. The problem was that the output socket of the first machine was inadequate to drive the input of the second. He was solving this problem by recording from loudspeaker to microphone!

Now one doesn't need to be a dedicated $\mathrm{Hi}-\mathrm{Fi}$ fanatic to realise that this is a horribly unsatisfactory way of recording, for more reasons than the inhospitality it creates so we resolved to settle the problem electronically.

## Specification

A little delving around in the typically inadequate booklets supplied by the manufacturers of the machines revealed that we needed an amplifier with a voltage gain of about ten, an input impedance of at least $20 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ and an output impedance of less than $5 \mathrm{k} \Omega$. Choosing a supply voltage of 9 volts which should prove to be a simple and practical value, completes the basic specification.


Fig. 1: A typical "feed-back pair".
With regard to the type of circuit that we are going to base the rest of our design on, the next thing to consider is whether a two-stage transistor amplifier is necessary or whether one stage is sufficient. The great advantage of "feedback pair" arrangements such as the one shown in Fig. 1 is that you effectively "design out" the transistor characteristics by
using masses of feedback. The reason for doing this is that the essential characteristics of the circuit are then almost independent of the parameters of the individual transistors used, which may vary quite a bit between individual specimens. These characteristics are then dependent on the passive components present.
Is it possible to achieve this desirable state of affairs using only one transistor? Well, the real reason that the circuit shown in Fig. 1 works is that the two transistors used have a much higher gain than that of the overall circuit, this gain being settled by the feedback network. As the gain of a single transistor common emitter stage is in principle a couple of hundred and since we only want a gain of ten there seems to be plenty of scope for producing a stable circuit using negative feedback. The reader may well be acquainted with the technique that we are going to employ, but possibly does not recognise it as feedback.

## Feedback

There are essentially two ways to apply negative feedback to a one transistor stage; these are shown in Fig. 2. Although both of these circuits stabilise the gain they differ in many respects-it is useful to have some idea of why this is so. First let us look at the series version shown in Fig. 2(a). The operation is fairly simple: when the base voltage rises a little the collector current increases, however this means that the emitter current increases as well which causes the emitter voltage to rise. The total effect is that the emitter voltage tends to "follow" the base voltage and hence the voltage difference between the base and the emitter doesn't change nearly as much as the base voltage itself does. The result of all this is that the voltage gain is reduced and the input impedance is increased. Putting these facts in terms of formulae: the voltage gain becomes RL/Re and the input impedance is hFE $x$ Re in parallel with the bias resistors. We should point out in passing that these formulae are at best only approximate and cease to be valid if you are overly ambitious and try to produce more gain than the transistor can provide. In particular a resistance of $25 / \mathrm{Ie}$ (where Ie is the emitter current in mA) should be put in series with Re for the purpose of both the above calculations. The circuit should be fed from a source with a low output impedance compared with the inputimpedance, otherwise the feedback will not work as intended. The operation of the shunt feedback arrangement shown in Fig. 2(b) is entirely different. Here we require a high impedance source and the
idea is to make the signal current taken by the base of the transistor negligible compared with that flowing in RF and the signal source. Under these conditions the current gain becomes Rf/RL and the voltage gain from the unloaded source to output is then Rf/Rs where. Rs is the source resistance, This is essentially a current amplifier and the feedback will not be realised unless the source is a current source i.e. has a high internal impedance.

It is fairly clear that our application is one that requires a voltage amplifier and so we will base our design on the circuit of Fig. 2(a). Given the basic framework of the circuit, let us now proceed with the detailed design.


Fig. 2: Series and shunt feed-back circuits.

## Design

The first thing to do is to decide on the static (i.e. DC) voltages and currents and select a suitable transistor. In the higher echelon of the designing business it is normal to design the circuit, find out what specifications are needed for the transistor and then select the transistor type from the multitudes available. It is a lot easier here to say that we will use a BC109 because it has high gain, low noise, and is readily available. Readers who have ever looked up data on the BC109 will have found that most of it is given for a collector current of 2 mA , but 1 mA seems quite adequate for this job. Our supply voltage is 9 V and it is sensible to space out our collector and emitter voltages as much as possible so as to have a large margin for possible error. Lets settle for an emitter voltage of 2.7 V and a collector voltage of $9-2.7=$ $6 \cdot 3 \mathrm{~V}$. This means that we will require a base voltage of about $2 \cdot 7+0 \cdot 6=3 \cdot 3 \mathrm{~V}$. This stage of the design is shown in Fig. 3: all that we have used here is Ohm's Law and the well known facts that the forward bias on the base-emitter junction of a silicon transistor is about 0.6 V and that the emitter and collector currents will have about the same value.


## Bias Network

The time has now come to assign values to RB1 and RB2. There is a rule of thumb which states that the current flowing down the resistor chain should


Fig. 4 : Blas nelwork equivalent circuit.
be at least five times, and preferably ten times, the maximum base current. There is, however, a much better way of calculating the resistor values: this involves regarding the bias network as a simple voltage source with an internal resistance. In our case the voltage is given by $\frac{9 R B 2}{R B 1+R B 2}$ and its internal impedance is RB1 in parallel with RB2 (written RB1 || RB2). An equivalent circuit of the bias network is shown in Fig. 4. We must now decide how great we can allow this source impedance to be. Now the static DC gain (hFE) of a BC109 at Ic $=2 \mathrm{~mA}$ is quoted as $200-800$, so let us play safe and assume a value of 150 . In this case the maximum base current


Fig. 5: The potentiat divider values.
is going to be $1 / 150 \mathrm{~mA}$. It is probably quite safe to let this have the effect of dropping the bias voltage by half a volt, so we set a maximum on RB1 || RB2 of

$$
\frac{1}{2} \div \frac{1}{150} \mathrm{k} \Omega=75 \mathrm{k} \Omega . \text { So we want a potential divider }
$$

which produces a voltage of about $3 \cdot 3 \mathrm{~V}$ off load and which has an impedance of about $75 \mathrm{k} \Omega$. A calculation reveals that $\mathrm{RB1}=180 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ and $\mathrm{RB} 2=100 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ satisfy these conditions and have a source impedance of about $64 \mathrm{k} \Omega$. If you calculate it yourself you will find that these values give almost exactly five times the current in the divider as is expected in the base, confirming the value of the rule of thumb approach. The method that we have used is, however, more instructive and is applicable to cases when there are several different supply rails. Anyway, back to business: we have now reached the stage shown in Fig. 5.


Flg. E: Decoupling added to modify im pedance:

## Gain and Impedance

It is now time to look at the voltage gain of our circuit. At the moment it is just less than one, so to realise our aim of a gain of ten at audio frequencies we will need to reduce the impedance to AC signals at the collector. This is done with a decoupling capacitor. We have already mentioned that the gain continued on page 606


It is very important that the speed of small motors used in tape recorders and record players shall remain constant or the frequencies of the audio notes reproduced in the loudspeaker will vary. The speed of mains driven synchronous motors is locked to the frequency of the mains supply but the speed of battery-driven motors used in portable equipment can vary with the ambient temperature and with the supply voltage, whilst variations in the mechanical resistance opposing the movement of the motor spindle can also result in speed variations.

## Regulator Devices

A series of monolithic motor speed regulator devices manufactured by Thomson-CSF Ltd. can be used in extremely simple circuits to stabilise the motor speed. It is important to note that these devices can be employed only for the speed regulation of small permanent magnet DC motors; an entirely different type of motor speed regulator is required for use with AC motors.

Although the devices to be discussed have been developed especially for use with portable tape recorder or record player motors and for similar equipment used in road vehicles, they can also be used to regulate the speed of any small DC motor. Indeed, they can be used in applications not involving motors where one requires a voltage source which increases in value with the current taken from the output. However, care must be taken to ensure that the maximum permissible output current is not exceeded.


Positive supply
Output to motor
Negative supply and substrate
2 Positive supply K236

Fig. 1 : Packaging and pin connections.

## Types

The TCA900 and TCA910 devices are encapsulated in a plastic package of the type shown in Fig. 1; this is known as the TO-126, SOT-32 or CB-16 package. The rear metal face of this package is designed so that it can be clamped to a heat sink if necessary.


Fig. 2: The basic control circuitry.
The TCA900 and the TCA910 have different operating voltages. The TCA900 must not be used with a supply voltage above the absolute maximum limit of 14 V or it may be damaged; this device is especially suitable for controlling the speed of motors in portable cassette players operating from power supplies in the range $5 \cdot 5 \mathrm{~V}$ to 12 V . (The operating voltage should always be somewhat less than the maximum permissible value). The TCA910 has the higher absolute maximum voltage rating of 20 V and is suitable for use with motors operating from supplies of up to 18 V . For example, equipment in a vehicle operating from the nominal 12 V (which can rise during charging) should use the TCA910.

The ESM900 and EM910 devices are rather similar electrically to the other two types, but incorporate a circuit for automatically stopping the motor at the end of a tape when the conducting aluminium foil at the end shorts a pair of stop contacts in the tape transport mechanism. The ESM900 has an operating voltage range similar to the TCA900, whilst the ESM910 has the same operating voltage ratings as the TCA910.

The ESM900 and the ESM910 are encapsulated in the TO-12 type of package shown in Fig. 1; it is a circular metal transistor-like package with four leads, the additional lead being used for the tape stop contacts. If no heat sink is used, the package of Fig. 2 can dissipate a maximum of only 0.5 W at ambient temperatures up to $60^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$, whilst the plastic package of Fig. 1 can dissipate up to 0.8 W at ambient temperatures up to $70^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ without any heat sink. The plastic package can dissipate up to $3 \cdot 3 \mathrm{~W}$ with a heat sink of thermal resistance $15^{\circ} \mathrm{C} / \mathrm{W}$ at ambient temperatures up to $70^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$.

## Circuit

The circuit for use with the TCA900 and the TCA910 is shown in Fig. 2 and is striking for its simplicity. The speed of the motor can be adjusted by means of VR1 which should normally have a value of between $2 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ and $5 \mathrm{k} \Omega$. The maximum output cur-

Continued on Page 606

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| :---: | :---: |
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| Input Impedance | 100,000 Ohms |
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| Maximum Current Drain | 200 mA @ 10 volts |
| Maximum Input Frequency* | $10,000 \mathrm{~Hz} 50 \%$ duty cycle |
| Operating Temperature Range | $0^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ to $50^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ |
| Weight | 3 ounces (85 grams) |
| Maximum Dimensions | $4.0 \times 2.0 \times 1.8^{\prime \prime}$ |
|  | $102 \times 51 \times 45 \mathrm{~mm}$ |
| *LM-1 will respond to signals up to 0.1 MHz when the input signal swing exceeds the threshold voltage by more than 0.5 volts. |  |

## Applications

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## IC OF THE MONTH-continued from page 604

rent from any of the devices under discussion is $0 \cdot 5 \mathrm{~A}$. The voltage between pins 1 and 2 should not be less than about $1 \cdot 5 \mathrm{~V}$, as the drop-out voltage between these terminals at which correct operation ceases is typically $1 \cdot 2 \mathrm{~V}$. The capacitor C 1 provides the normal power supply decoupling at high frequencies which should be used with all types of linear integrated circuits.
The value of R1 should be about 8.5 times the resistance of the motor, but a higher value of R1 may result in oscillation. A lower value of R1 will result in the speed regulation being impaired when variations in the mechanical load imposed on the motor occur. Typical values for R1 are in the region of 100 to $400 \Omega$.

## Tape Stop

The circuit for the use of the ESM900 and the ESM910 is shown in Fig. 3. The pin connections differ from those of Fig. 2 and a stop switch is shown. The typical current which must pass between the contacts in the tape transport mechanism to stop the motor is 2 mA ; the motor starts again when the

aluminium foil at the end of the tape is removed from the contacts. This stop mechanism may be used for other purposes when a motor must be stopped.

The value of R1 in Fig. 3 should be about 10 times the resistance of the motor, but otherwise the performance is almost identical with that of the other two devices of Fig. 2.

## Conclusion

One may regard these devices as over-compensated voltage regulators. The voltage supplied to the motor is not merely kept constant as the load current increases, but actually increases with the load current.

The devices are available from Phoenix Electronics Ltd., 46 Osborne Road, Southsea, Hants., PO5 3LT, and other advertisers in PW.

## DESIGN YOUR OWN PROJECTS-continued from page 603

is the ratio of the load resistance to the impedance in the emitter so for a gain of ten we want, to be on the safe side, the AC impedance at the collector to be about $200 \Omega$. We already have $25 / \mathrm{Ie}=25 \Omega$ internally which we mentioned earlier, so $180 \Omega$ in series with a capacitor should be fine (see Fig. 6). As for the value of the capacitor, we want its impedance to be small compared with the $180 \Omega$ for the lowest frequency at which we want the circuit to operate. If we take this frequency to be 30 Hz , and say that the
impedance should be about $20 \Omega$ at 30 Hz then we have, using the expression for the impedance of a capacitor,
$X=\frac{1}{2 \pi f C}$
$20=\frac{1}{2 \pi 30 \mathrm{C}}$ so $\mathrm{C}=\frac{1}{1200 \pi}$
so a value of $250 \mu \mathrm{~F}$ should be adequate.
Now for a check of the input impedance of the circuit. This is given by the input impedance of the transistor in parallel with the bias network. We said before that the transistor's input impedance is $\mathrm{hFE} x \mathrm{Re}$. hFE for the BC109 should be at least 200, so this becomes $40 \mathrm{k} \Omega$. Now $40 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ in parallel with $64 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ (the bias network) will give a value well over the $20 \mathrm{k} \Omega$ required by the specification, so we're OK here. We can easily allow C1 to have a value of $2 k \Omega$ at our

low frequency limit, so anything over about $2 \cdot 5 \mu \mathrm{~F}$ should be adequate. At the output it seems reasonable to let C2 have an impedance of about $20 \Omega$ at 30 Hz so this gives $\mathrm{C} 2=25 \mu \mathrm{~F}$. The final design is shown in Fig. ${ }^{7}$.

BOOK REVIEW-continued from page 593
the degree of detail to present to the reader. Or even who his readers are. In one glib breath he talks about "four dualrank master/slave flip-flops internally connected to provide separate divide-by-two and divide-by-five counters." In another he describes a bottle of nail varnish for marking unknown ICs: "Partly serviceable devices are always handy for experimental work, and it is a good plan to mark them so that the good sections are easily identified. Coloured nail varnish is ideal for this purpose. It comes in bottles complete with a little brush for immediate use, and quickly dries." It could have been safely assumed that even the most butch amongst the potential readership would know all about the properties and packaging of nail polish.
The author is pedantic in detail yet leaves yawning gaps in useful information. Accepting that the book is intended to deal more with devices than Boolean algebra and system organisation, it gives virtually no mention of logic families other than the 74 series. Of these it deals only with simple gates, flip-flops (JK type), a counter, Schmitt trigger and a line decoder (for driving Nixie gas tubes). It mostly fails to do justice to this limited repertoire; from simply reading the book, one would never learn about shift registers, adders, latches and the exclusive OR. Never mind compounded functions within LSI packages (remember that the book is supposed to be about hardware). As for C-MOS, who ever heard of it anyway?

As reviewer, I could take issue with the few design circuits that the author has provided. I could get bitchy about unnecessary chapters such as the one concerning the salvaging of unidentified ICs from gash equipment. I could make unpleasant noises about the lack of useful chapters, or even useless ones ( 76 pages for 95p). However, I won't. I will simply say that it's a tough job writing about logic devices-or anything-for beginners and that the author simply isn't up to it.

Frank Ogden

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# A.H.SUPPLIES 

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## by Eric Dowdeswell G4AR

It will come as a surprise to readers to learn that $P W$, with certain other magazines of the Practicals Group, is moving to Poole, Dorset, in the very near future, together with a new Editor. Yours truly will not be going with them but I hope to continue the column as an outside contributor. So do keep writing to me, at my home QTH.

Reports are rather scarce again this month, so far. I am off to Greece for a couple of weeks and I hope to be able to squeeze in some more news at the end, from the letters that will have arrived in the meantime. We start off with Nick Smith (Leamington Spa), who first wrote in 1975 but who has obviously learned a lot since then! His trusty Bush valved radio has finally given up the ghost so he is looking for something a little more sophisticated. What better source of ads than Short Wave Mag or Radcom OM? The price bracket is $£ 20-£ 30$, so if you can help Nick drop him a line at 59 Wellington Road, Lillington, Leamington Spa.

Michael Walker, aged 15 , is full of praise for the White Rose Radio Club up in Leeds and enjoyed getting his hands on some exotic gear at one of the Field Days. He will have started on his RAE course by now, so good luck, Michael. One year older Tom Higgins of Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, says he found the column "inspiring" and has been listening now for about a year and he too hopes to take the RAE when he can find time away from his regular studies. At the moment he has a home-brew TRF set but his problem is getting a decent aerial up, plus TV QRM. A shorter aerial, well away from the TV set, might be an answer OM.

Yet another young man who should now be in the throes of swotting for the RAE is Robin Bayley, in Kemberton, Salop. He has just passed an electronics exam at the local college which ought to be a good start towards getting a ticket. He still finds time to look around the HF bands. FP8 and HK0 can't be bad on 80 m in the summer! Regular log-sender Brian Harrison tells me of a new club just formed in Hastings, using the call G6HH, the first club there, apparently, since the ' 30 s . If you want any more info then you'd better write to Brian at 99 Farley Bank, Hastings, Sussex. Brian stuck to SSB on 10, 15 and 20 m . He found a new prefix on 15 m in the form of P29JS, better known as New Guinea. A51RG in Bhutan is a very rare one indeed so let's hope it turns up trumps with a QSL!

CLUB NEWS The first issue of the Edinburgh and District ARC's newsletter "Ham News" looks good and the club has many interesting events coming up. Meetings

Tuesday nights at the high spot of Edinburgh, the clubroom of the Edinburgh Astronomical Society, at 1930 hrs. President Norman King has just passed his RAE so hopes to be active soon while the call GM4HAM has been reserved for the club and should be issued before very much longer. Secretary is Jim Martin, 22 Ross Gardens, Edinburgh EH9 3BR, telephone 667 8707. Another newlyformed group is the Brighton and District RS and their newsletter is also very well produced and printed. Hon. Secretary is Nigel Hewitt, G8JFT, of 74 Carlyle Street, Brighton, Sussex. However, I must castigate both Hon. Secretaries for not putting their addresses, or anyone else's for that matter, on their broadsheets! Callsigns are just not enough! The same as the use of "QTHR" in ads always annoys me! It takes a while for newly-licensed people to get into the call books and anyway a callbook is not always to hand. Why not put the town, at least?

Yet another new club is the Ormskirk ARC. For the moment meetings are held at members' homes, on Wednesday evenings. They make a point of being on VHF on those evenings from 1930 to 2030 hrs on 145 MHz so try to QSO for details or contact Peter Kay, G4GCB, at 24 Laurel Avenue, Burscough, Ormskirk, Lancs.

Paul Farnsworth of Adlington, Lancs, writes again to say he now has his home-brew set going. It is the design in the May 77 issue of Radio Constructor. One problem that comes up time and time again, in correspondence from newcomers to the amateur bands, is whether to buy or build a receiver. Unless the writer is experienced in the construction of electronic gear my answer always is "buy one"! Then a start can be made on listening while the enthusiasm is running hot and there is a fair chance that the newcomer can find the bands quite easily. There is nothing so depressing as spending weeks or even months on making a set and then running into alignment and calibration problems. Another bit of advice is never to rely upon the dial calibration of any set, particularly if it is secondhand. If an internal calibrator is fitted all well and good but otherwise an external crystal-controlled calibrator is, to my mind, just as important at the outset as the receiver itself.

Plenty of logs sent to me contain the calls of stations which are obviously outside the ends of an amateur band, because the user has relied upon the dial calibration. In some cases, of course; the stations concerned are rightfully using a shared band and only experience aided by a prefix list can sort this matter out. A suitable calibrator starts with a 1 MHz crystal with dividers down to 100 kHz , and 25 kHz , or preferably, 10 kHz .

## Log extracts

B. Harrison:-20m A51RG DX1PH HZ1BS OF1AJ/OJ0 (Faroes) 15m KG6JEH P29BB TA1MB 10m EA9FJ HI8MRF LU2MHG PJ2FR 8R1J (Guyana) 9Y4NP
R. Bayley:- 80 m A2GCO AP2AD FP8DH HK0COP 40 m DU1DBT FP8DX HK0CAT KH6PP 20 m VK9XY ZL3AK 15m E'A9CR VK6WH
T. Higgins:- 80 m ZS5LB 40 m VP1EDE

All stations were received on SSB.


## SHORT WAVE BROADCASTS

## by Charles Molloy G8BUS

The recent tests on 5925 kHz by Austrian Radio (ORF) which have now been completed, have brought some comment from DXers about out-of-band transmissions. It is not illegal, as has been suggested, to operate outside the international shortwave bands. The ITU (International Telecommunications Union) regulations allow out-of-band broadcasting provided no interference is caused and many authorities, including the BBC, make use of this facility. There is incidentally, an interesting in-band programme from ORF on 6155 kHz at 1805 GMT when Austrian Shortwave Panorama can be heard in English.

The areas beyond the band edges are used, not only by well-established broadcasters but also by countries coming onto the short waves for the first time and looking for space. These areas are interesting places for the DXer to explore. Egypt and Israel seem to concentrate around the band edge as do China and some Eastern European outlets. Stations heard recently by the writer include:

5935 kHz Riga, Latvia with programmes in Latvian and Swedish at 2020
6205 Mebo 2 in Libya, testing with pops in the evening
6225 Peking with Chinese music at 2100
6230 Cairo at 2045
9915 Delhi in English at 2210
11620 Delhi in English at 1925
11655 Tel Aviv in English at 2000
12085 Kuwait in English until sign-off at 2000
Kuwait is also reported at 1930 by Robin Beyley from Kemberton, Salop, who uses a Marconi R1475 and longwire.

Following up last month's request for information on Radiostantsia Rodina, Charles Hardie, St Andrews reports hearing this programme on 14200 kHz at 2000 using his JVC portable radio/TV which has a telescopic aerial. Charles asks about a peculiar sound, almost like a machine gun, on and around 7 MHz and 9 MHz . This noise is over-the-horizon shortwave radar coming from somewhere in Eastern Europe. It jumps about in an unpredictable way and is believed to be linked to ionospheric sounding equipment in such a way that the radar automatically operates near to the critical (penetration) frequency so that optimum propagation is obtained. This type of transmission is contrary to the ITU regulations and it has led to a number of international protests. If it continues and is copied by other countries then it will eventually put an end to all international broadcasting on the short waves.

Tony Cook writes from Gibraltar to say that he keeps his HAC radio permanently tuned to Radio Nederland because their programmes are so good. DX reported by Tony covers Peking on 9100 kHz at 2030 , Johannesburg (Radio RSA) on 9585 at 2030 and Jerusalem on 9425 at 2030. Roy Patrick (Mackworth, near Derby) has a Trio 9R59D communications receiver and a Joystick antenna with which he pulled in the Voice of Kenya on 4915 kHz in the 60 m band, Budapest in English on 5955, Malta Calling on 5990 on Saturdays at 2045 , Ankara on 9515 in English at 2200, Lisbon 9740 in English at 2030, Israel on 11655 in English at 2200 . Roy mentions that he does quite a lot with Latin Americans on 60 m during the winter and reports of this would be of interest to readers.

Simon Hicks writes from Swindon to say that Radio Nederland will be altering their format from 90 to 50 minutes on November 7. Full details of the times and the frequencies in use are obtainable from Radio Nederland, PO Box 222, Hilversum, Holland. Simon gives news
of a new 90 minute programme from Radio Finland which is on the air on Sundays at 1325 GMT on 11755 kHz for Europe and 15105 for North America. A DX programme is included in this transmission.

November is the first month of the winter season on the short waves as many international broadcasts will be on new schedules and there will be changes of frequencies. The four seasonal schedules issued by the International Frequency Registration Board (IFRB) of the ITU are:

November schedule, for the period November to February.
March schedule, March and April.
May schedule, May to August.
September schedule, for September and October.
Thus there are two periods of four months and another two periods of two months when changes may occur. Although some countries do not change at every period the majority do change. Up-to-date information is to be had for the asking from most stations and DXers need not be put off if the station's address is not announced over the air. Radio Finland, Helsinki, Finland will certainly find this station even although the full address is PO Box 528, Helsinki 10.

News of activity on the 11 m band $(25605 \mathrm{kHz}$ to 26095 kHz ) comes from St Leonards-on-Sea where Harold Brodribb picked up Tel Aviv in Hebrew on 25065 between 1430 and 1540 GMT using his CR100 receiver and an outdoor aerial. A number of Italian speaking stations, probably Citizens Band, were heard around 27 MHz indicating that the higher frequencies are gradually picking up again. This is the first report of a logging on 11m for some time.

A letter from R. J. Irvine, Birmingham, asks if a varicap is the same as a variable capacitor. No it is not the same, but it does the same job by providing a capacitance that is easily adjustable and therefore can be used for tuning. The traditional variable capacitor is a mechanical device that has a spindle attached to a set of moving vanes. When the spindle is rotated one way, the moving vanes mesh with a set of fixed vanes to increase the capacitance between them. Turning the spindle the other way will decrease the capacitance.

A varicap is a semiconductor variable capacitor. It is really a reverse-biased diode whose capacitance depends on the value of the bias voltage. The latter is applied to the varicap by means of a potentiometer, and the combination of the two provide a convenient means of tuning a receiver when space is limited.

In the July issue of PW, John McFadden asked if it is possible to hear Latin American stations working with less than 1 kW . Harold Buggins (Cowley) has a verification letter from HHCN Port au Prince, Haiti at the time when they were using 150 W on 5660 kHz and also a QSL card from PZH5 Paramaribo, Surinam, when it was on 5945 kHz with 300 W . Are these really LATIN Americans? One is French speaking and the other Dutch!

Harold has been DXing on and off since 1939 and he recalls how he won a prize of two pounds of coffee beans from TGWA Guatemala in 1940 for being the most distant listener to one of their programmes. Every Latin American country has been verified except Bolivia which is still on the wanted list.


A new station in Newfoundland is reported by Alf Cosham who lives in Steyning in Sussex. Listening on approximately 620 kHz with his Trio 9R59D receiver and 75 ft longwire at 0520 on September 8 he heard the call CJYQ

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and a reference to Newfoundland. Alf was probably listening to CJOX Grand Bank Newfoundland on 610 kHz which is part of the CJON network. The 'CJON Radio Service' is a network of stations in Newfoundland centred on the 50 kW CJON 930 kHz in St John's. Others, in addition to CJOX are CJNW Musgravetown on 670, CJCN Grand Falls on 680 and CJCR Gander on 1350 kHz . A station at St Anthony is under construction according to the World Radio Handbook but no frequency is given. Unfortunately, this mini-network often carries a single programme and the announcement will either be 'CJON Radio Service' or a list of the calls of the members of the network. All this is very confusing to the DXer. Probably CJYQ is the new station at St Anthony but it might be a change in callsign of one of the members of the network.

Another chain of privately owned stations with VOCM in St John's on 590 kHz as the key station, includes CHCM in Marystown on 560, CKCM Grand Falls on 620, CKVO Clarenville on 710 and CKGA Gander on 730 and this network, too, sometimes carries a common announcement. The CBC is represented by CBT in Grănd Falls on 540 kHz right at the bottom of the band, CBN in St John's on 640, CBY in Corner Brook on 990 and a real challenge to the DXer, CBG in Gander on 1450 with only 250 W .

Newfoundland is a fascinating place for the medium wave DXer. The majority of the stations mentioned here, including CBG, have been logged in the UK. There are others as well including two religious outlets with the old V prefix, VOWR on 800 and VOAR on 1230 kHz , both in St John's. Finally; there is an AFRTS outlet at the US base in Argentia Bay which transmits with 50W on 1480 and it too has been heard in the UK.

I have always been interested in the medium waveband writes Malcolm Laugharne from Oxford who DXes with a Philips portable receiver. "Interference is bad when I use the mains earth and using the ATU I get a lot of whistling." A transistor portable is designed for use with its internal derial and many of these receivers especially the more sophisticated ones, perform very well on the medium waves as they are. Trouble is inevitable though if an attempt is made to hot-up performance with a longwire aerial, with or without an ATU. Even where an external aerial socket is provided this is usually for use with a car aerial. Overloading and the generation of whistles will occur unless the longwire is very loosely coupled to the receiver via a capacitor of about 5 pF . A mains earth may be unsuitable for use with any sort of receiver if the earth wire is long or it is a third conductor as part of the house wiring. Malcolm is thinking of changing to a communications receiver and this is probably the best thing to do if the portable is not living up to expectations.

Is it possible to hear Torshavn, Faroe Island, in the UK and does this station have English programming, asks Malcolm. Torshavn is on 584 kHz with a power of 5 kW but it shares this channel with high power outlets in Austria, Spain, USSR and T'unisia and also with a 10 kW löcal station in Paris. Torshavn has been logged by the writer at 0715 when it signs on for the day but there is so much QRM that reception is very difficult. The language used is Faroese. A high power station at Torshavn is planned for the new channel on 531 kHz which is allocated to the Faroe Island under the new Geneva Plan which comes into operation in the autumn of 1978 and when this comes on the air it will provide an interesting new country for medium wave DXers.

Derek Taylor (Preston Lancs) has swapped his DX160 for a Yaesu Musen FRG7. When used along with a 48 in loop the new rig pulled in three Latin Americans, Radio Oriental Montevideo in Uruguay on 770 kHz at 0144 , Radio Margarita, Venezuela on 1020 at 0035 and Radio Litoral also in Venezuela on 1130 plus the VOA relay in Kavalla in Greece on 791 kHz at 2000 . Two recent QSLs from North America are from WWWE 1100 kHz in Cleveland, Ohio, and Radio $1470(\mathrm{kHz})$ WLAM which is owned and operated by 'The Great Down East Wireless Talking Machine Company Incorporated'.

Libreville, Gabon, on 1554 kHz has been logged and
identified at 2310GMT by Harold Emblem who DXes in Mirfield, Yorkshire, with an Eddystone 730 and a medium wave loop. This channel is occupied during the evening by Nice which transmits with a power of 300 kW . Once Nice is off the air for the night then the only QRM is from Kaunas in Lithuania which occasionally has an English programme at this time. Libreville signs-off at midnight GMT. Another African reported by Harold is Ougadougou in Upper Volta on 746 kHz which sent a QSL in six weeks.
An Eddystone 680 communications receiver and an 80 ft longwire with ATU are used for MW DXing by newcomer to the band S. E. Webb of Reading. He reports that some of the North Americans heard were so clear at the time that he felt sure they must have been relayed by AFN. Highlights from the log are CHCM Marystown in Newfoundland on 560 kHz , WOR New York City on 710 , CBM in Montreal on 940 , CFRB in Toronto on 1010 kHz , WHN New York on 1050, WCAU Philadelphia on 1210 and WMEX in Boston on 1510. From midnight onwards is the time to look for these stations.

A new reporter to this column is J. Edwards who lives at Bryn near Wigan in Lancashire. With a Realistic DX160 receiver and a 100 ft longwire with ATU, CBNM in Marystown, Newfoundland, was heard on 740 kHz , WINS in New York on 1020 and WHAM in Rochester N.Y. on 1180, all between 0130 and 0300. A loop is now under construction. David Harley of Chesterfield has not been so lucky. Two attempts to locate CJON on 930 and WINS on 1010 with a homebrew receiver were unsuccessful. "All I got for an early setting of my alarm was an unidentified Spaniard" (or Latin American?). Propagation on the medium waves over the North American path is uncertain. Sometimes reception is good and at other times it is bad with stations inaudible. Try around midnight during the winter and if unsuccessful try again a few nights later. Poor concitions seldom last for long on the medium waves.

The Voice of Peace is back on the air again with tests on 1540 kHz and it should be audible in the UK after dark. When it was last operational it could be found with English announcements sandwiched between Mainfingen, West Germany, on 1538 kHz and the UK local radio chanmel 1546 kHz . The Voice of Peace will QSL if an International Reply Coupon is enclosed with the reception report which should be sent to PO Box 4399, Tel Aviv, Israel.


The tropospheric opening on Sunday, September 11, will be remembered for a long time and thanks to the vigilance of our readers, much of the event is herewith recorded for posterity.

It all began around midday on August 27, when, after a period of unsettled weather, the atmospheric pressure went above $30 \cdot 0 \mathrm{in}$ and was still there on September 21 when this report was prepared. By midnight on the 28th the AP was $30 \cdot 3$ in and gradually fell back to $30 \cdot 0$ in by noon on the 30th. True to form, the VHFs opened up with the higher AP and at 2124 on the 27th, Alan Baker, G8LGQ, Newhaven, heard PA0CIS and at 2258 on the 28th he had a half-hour, solid copy, QSO with GW8EQH on 2 m SSB.

Just before midnight on the 28 th, I received 539 signals from both the Emley Moor and Sutton Coldfield beacons on 70 cms and at 0015 on the 29 th I heard signals via the 2 m repeaters in Buxton and the Bristol Channel area. It is worth remembering that the aerial polarity of the repeaters is vertical, therefore I was getting better results on my vertically polarised dipole than I did with my horizontal beam.

During the evening of the 29th, Ken Smith, BRS 20001, Horsham, heard several French stations on 2 m and G8LGQ worked a couple, heard a GD, and had a contact with GU3JHM/P on Alderney. Around this time both Ken and myself noted the predominant number of French broadcast stations in Band II.
By midnight on Friday, September 2, the AP was rising again just right for the weekend 2 m contest, at midday on the 4 th it was $30 \cdot 3 \mathrm{in}$ and throughout the day continental broadcast stations were audible in Band II and GB3SUT on 70 cms was 539 .

The Martlet Contest Group, G4DZO/P, situated on Firle Beacon, near Eastbourne, some 700 ft ASL on the South Downs Way, worked 346 contest stations during the 24 hour event and heard well over 400. It is not surprising that the group, comprising of G3XUS, G8LGQ, and recent members of the Cambridge University Wireless Society, were delighted with their efforts when they had EA1CR ( 923 km ), northern Spain, several French stations near Andorra, DB5FG/LX/P, HB9AYX and HB9AMH/P among their DX in addition to stations from Germany through to the Channel Islands, southern France to Yorkshire and very strong signals from Cornwall and GW.

These competitors used 150 watts of SSB from an IC201 transceiver plus G8LGQ's home-brew 4CX250B linear, into a 10 -element Yagi approximately 45 ft AGL.
Before the contest began, John Branegan, Fife, heard GM3PLR/P testing on top of Cairngorn mountain and during the event he heard GM4BWT/P, G3FPJ/P Yorkshire, G14COJ/P, and three GWs all with a loft mounted 7 -element Yagi. Although John normally gets strong signals from the Angus beacon, GB3ANG, and varying strengths from the Northern Ireland beacon, GB3GI, he uses them, along with his barometer and the Central Scotland repeater, to indicate the prevailing 2 m conditions. On August 28, John, using his newly acquired Microwave Modules 2 m converter into his FRG-7, heard a contact between G3GZX, Merseyside, and GM3OGJ on SSB as well as $G$ stations working through the CS repeater.

By the end of the contest the AP was down to $30 \cdot 2$ in where it remained until 0200 on the 9 th when it rose sharply to $30 \cdot 4 \mathrm{in}$ by 1400 and set the stage for the big tropospheric disturbance which accompanied the falling AP on the 10th and 11th.

At 1430 on the 10th, Pete Simmons, G3XUS, Newhaven, called Alan Baker, saying "There is a lift on, I have worked HB 9 , do you want one?". As a result, Alan worked HB9MHN/P, Lucerne, and F1KBF in Paris. Pete, only 300 metres from Alan said "Mind your front end I am going after him'. Alan heard other HB9s and then joined the queue and eventually worked F1CYO/P near Bordeaux. The signal paths were good down to central France, at 2320, Alan, using 10W, contacted F1ELY, Montrevil, via the FZ2THF repeater (RO $145 \cdot 600 \mathrm{MHz}$ ) and at 2334 he worked F9PH, the repeater controller, who was particularly interested in the QSO Alan had a few minutes previously with G2BHW in Cornwall, a distance of 2000 km from Newhaven to Falmouth via this Vichy repeater.
The tropospheric influence over VHF/UHF signals expanded rapidly and at 0820 on the 11th, I counted 17 very strong signals from continental broadcast stations between $87-100 \mathrm{MHz}$ and by evening Band II, like the 2 m band and the TV bands were in total disorder.

Like many others, Gordon Goodyer, BRS 37345, Petworth, often lost colour on his UHF TV as the signals fluctuated, and it was this interference that sent Gordon, Cyril Fairchild and several others hurrying to their shacks to look around 2 m . Gordon heard amateur stations from the extremes of G, GW, EI, and GM, while Cyril, mainly an HF man, with only a loft ground-plane aerial, heard GM, GU, DJ, F, ON, PA0, and OH, and has never received such strong signals from the Wrotham and French 2 m beacons.

The direct paths between PA0 and GW seemed very easy and both ends were also getting into the London repeater with little difficulty. I heard a rock-crushing signal from PE1ABX/M working through GB3LO and PE1AJE via


GB3SN, with a vertical dipole feeding my receiver. I also heard signals through the Ipswich and Bristol Channel repeaters while G8LGQ worked G and F stations via the Belgian repeater, ONOHT (R2), and at 0123 on the 12th, he had QSOs with Dutch stations via the Antwerp repeater, ONOAN (R8). How many more, like Alan, stayed on the air until past 0400 on the 12th working the strong continental signals which presented themselves on FM, SSB, or via the repeaters? A delighted G8LGQ said afterwards that at 0125 on the 11th he contacted EAICR, Gijon, and heard the Cornish beacon, GB3CTC, from his home QTH for the first time.
Joost Berden, G3RND, Isle of Wight, sent a copy of his barograph chart for the period September $5-11$ which compares favourably to mine, he also sent a map of Europe with the area EI to ON and F to GW and north of Lendon ringed, Joost is of the opinion that a great deal of ducting took place within this region. Around 2000 on the 11th, he had solid-copy QSOs on both 2 m and 70 cms with stations in Antwerp after which he had contacts on 2 m with stations in Liverpool, Norfolk, and the Midlands, and points out that his signal was reaching them at 9 plus, but their signals were much weaker with him, while EI9Q was very strong on the back of Joost's 2 m beam.

It is not uncommon for beam headings to become less critical during a tropospheric opening as Joost pointed out in his letter; "G3AUS (Exeter) maximum signal on 70 cm , changing direction of beam had no influence on his signal". Both the Cornish and Wrotham beacons were 9 plus 20 dB (usually S2) with Joost.

During the evening of the 12 th the AP rose again sharply and by noon on the 13 th it reached $30 \cdot 5$ in setting the scene for another VHF opening. As the AP fell on the 14th, I counted 11 continental broadcast stations in Band II and received signals from both GB3SUT and GB3EM on 70 cms . At 2200 on the 14th, Alan Baker was driving along Brighton sea front and heard GU5MEM/A working a GW via FZ8THF and at 2346 he contacted DD2EK and OE9NHI, from home, via an unidentifiable German repeater.
While our VHF addicts reaped their DX harvest, our solar observers also found life interesting. Both Cmdr Henry Hatfield, Sevenoaks, and John Smith, Cranleigh, have been watching the progress of several sunspots, optically, since late August. Henry, using his spectrohelioscope, located a small flare on September 9, and a filament on the 15th, and on the 12th he observed the largest sunspot group for three years. Henry, John and myself recorded radio noise, associated with these sunspots, around 136 MHz , on August 28, 31, and September $7,8,11,14,15,16,17,19$ and 20 . The most intense solar activity was on the 19th which was no doubt responsible for the Delinger type fade out, affecting some HF' bands on the same day.

John Branegan has now built his own orbital plotter for OSCAR and has found that the down link, with 9 or 10 orbital passes each day, is an excellent reference for comparing home made VHF aerials. At 1148 on August 30 John heard KV4, in Virgin Islands via OSCAR-7 and says that there was a QSL rush after him, I'm not surprised.
Thanks again for your most interesting and detailed reports and I look forward to hearing from you all again in the future.

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| ${ }_{\text {A }}{ }_{\text {A C14 }}{ }^{\text {Cli }}$ | 0.25 <br> 0.20 | BA145 | ${ }^{8.15 *}$ | ${ }_{8}^{8 C 184}$ | ${ }_{0}^{0} \cdot 11^{\circ}$ |
| AC141 ${ }^{\text {A }}$ A 141 K | 0.20 0.30 |  |  |  |  |
| ${ }_{\text {A AC14, }}{ }^{\text {A }} 142$ | 0.20 | BA155 | 0.12 | ${ }_{8} \mathrm{BC213}$ | $0.14{ }^{\circ}$ |
| AC142K | 0.25 | BA156 | 0.13 | BC214 | -17* |
| AC176 | 0.25 | BAW62 | 0.05 | $\mathrm{BC}^{\mathrm{BC} 23}$ | $0 \cdot 17{ }^{\circ}$ |
| ${ }^{\text {A Cli }}$ | 0.25 | ${ }^{\text {BAX13 }}$ | -0.07 | ${ }^{\text {BC }}$ B238 |  |
| ${ }_{\text {ACry }}$ | - 0.65 | ${ }_{\text {BC107 }}$ |  | ${ }_{\text {BC303 }}$ | 0.45 0.60 |
| ACY18 | 0.65 | ${ }^{\text {BC }}$ 108 | - 12 | ${ }^{8 C}$ | $0.20{ }^{\circ}$ |
| ACY19 | 0.65 | BC109 | $0 \cdot 13$ | BC308 | $0.18{ }^{0}$ |
| ${ }^{\text {A Cry }}$ | 0.65 0.65 | $\mathrm{BC1}^{13}$ | $0.15{ }^{\circ}$ | $8 \mathrm{BC337}$ | $0^{0.22}{ }^{\circ}$ |
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| 74145 | $\mathbf{1} \cdot 00$ | 7417 |
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|  | 7445 | 1.75 |


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Total Building Costs
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Com-
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