

This is special event station...□□□

Isn't it amazing how whenever you hear a GB special event callsign there's always a pile up of people dying to make contact? Do you really enjoy queuing up to hear about the special event or is it just the QSL card that you want to collect? Well, whatever your reason,

had to pay the cost of an annual licence fee for the privilege. But since then everything has changed and they are now issued via the Radio Society of Great Britain at no cost to the licensee. The processing of applications by the RSGB was supposed to be an experiment

callsign. The gentleman I spoke to at the RSGB said that they had never, to their knowledge, issued a callsign to a non-licensed person! The class of licence issued must be the same as that of the applicant ie, a G2, G3 or G4 licensee can have a GB2 or GB4 callsign enabling the HF bands to be used whereas a G6 or G8 amateur can only have a GB8 special event callsign with all the usual class B frequency restrictions. The moral of this is that if you, as organiser, hold a class B licence and want to play HF, you enlist the help of a friendly class A licensee to be the applicant and supervise the station.

By Sharon R. Metcalfe, G6LCC

you may be wondering how 'special' special event callsigns are, who can get them and for what events, what is it like to operate the station and how do you forward the QSL cards you write? I'll attempt to answer these but you'll have to forgive me if I keep harping back to GB4HHC (Haywards Heath College in Sussex) which is the only special event station of which I have had experience.

Up until 1977, special event callsigns were issued directly by the Home Office and the licensee

during Silver Jubilee Year, but proved so much more convenient all round that it stuck.

From 1978 to mid-July 1983, 2110 special event callsigns had been issued. This may or may not seem many to you but, to put it in a more comprehensible form, 60 were issued in the six week period from 1st June to mid-July this year and applications were still pouring in.

Any licensed British radio amateur (not just RSGB members) may apply for a special event

Whys and wherefores

Indeed you may wonder why special event callsigns are issued. I would say that it is to promote amateur radio to a wider range of people ie, it is just one huge publicity campaign! With that in mind, the events for which these callsigns can be issued can be examined.

If specifically requested, the RSGB's computer will happily churn out a list of recently issued callsigns and interesting reading it makes! The events range widely from school fetes, college rag weeks and village days to anniversaries and centenaries of famous people and even to the celebration of the Royal birth last year by GB2RB. However, the most well-known events are likely to be talk-in stations to mobile rallies and stations operated by local radio clubs or scout and guide companies. The possible events for which callsigns are wanted are limitless and no reasonable request is rejected by the RSGB. In fact over the last year only a couple of applications have been turned down as not suitable (remember the publicity you are supposed to attract for amateur radio?), most probably because the

The happy band at GB4HHC Special Event Station

