Fig.2. The local system in the Hampshire south coast area.

(Figure labels:)
Newbury, Berks
144.675
Users — NEW675
NEW7
432
Reading, Berks
145.65
GB7BRK — User Access

Blandford   432
50MHz
GB7SIG
        CFORD7
GB7AEU *   CFORD2
        1299
GB7KCM **   CFORD6
        CFRD23
GB7XJZ * 1299   CFORD1
        CFORD4
GB7BNM
        70MHz   Chandler's
Bournemouth   Ford

Portsmouth   Portsmouth
        144.65
HP2   GB7HJP
144.65/Users
        145.65
EXP2   BR2
        1299
EXP23   BR23
1299
Portsmouth ↑   Brighton
144.675   To NEW675
SOTON   Users
        144.675

* Local BBSs, (144.65 User access)
GB7AEU: Southampton
GB7XJZ: Chandler's Ford, Hants

** Trunking BBS;
GB7KCM: Totton, Hants (NTS Only, no user access)

Wakefield Repeater Group who run the BBS and WP nodes as a free service for all users.

Similar systems are of course used in other areas, where the local BBS runs a computer-handled node as well as a BBS, the BBS ID being 'HJPBBS', 'KCMBBS', 'BNMBBS' etc. of which you may see examples when requesting a 'nodes' listing on your local network node. If a local packet group provides the funding for the local nodes and/or BBS you regularly use then do consider joining.

Typical Local Area Network

Fig.2 shows the local system in the South Coast area around Hampshire, as promised in last month's roundup (note some nodes are currently being set up and hence may not be in use at publication date). This is a typical example of a local network which is still evolving and expanding, but progress is being made in getting BBS forwarding and Inter-Node traffic off the busy 144.650.

Taking the example of National Trunk System (NTS) BBS forwarding, NTS mail comes into GB7BRK at Reading, this goes through the dedicated forwarding port on 432MHz to NEW7 in Newbury, from there again on 432MHz to CFORD7 in Chandler's Ford, then via an RS232 Link to CFRD23 and out on 1299MHz to BG7KCM who acts as a dedicated NTS BBS, acting purely as a sorting office. He then distributes mail to his

'satellites', for example messages or bulletins destined for GB7XJZ users go through a dedicated 1299MHz link to CFDR23 and then onto GB7XJZ again on 1299MHz. This means that someone can be using GB7XJZ on the user port of 144.65 even while high-speed forwarding to and from the BBS is taking place, very often the entered message has been automatically forwarded even before the user has disconnected from the BBS!

Let's now take the example of a User QSO between stations in Portsmouth and Southampton. G1AAA in Portsmouth connects to his local node EXP2 on 144.650, he then enters 'Connect SOTON' at his terminal. EXP2 then automatically links to EXP23 via its RS232 link, then on 1299MHz to CFRD23, then through its RS232 link to CFORD1, then via 144.675 to SOTON, when this has been done (the connection typically taking only a few seconds) G1AAA gets the 'Connected to SOTON:G4VAS — 4' reply. He may then connect on to G1ZZZ who's TNC is waiting on 144.675. All the Inter-Node routing is performed automatically.

Hardware

I have recently received a Pac-Comm PC-320 TNC, kindly loaned to HRT by Andrews Computer Services. This is a 'TNC on a pcb' that simply fits in a standard size expansion slot inside an IBM PC or clone. It offers

facilities for user interface to either COM1, 2, 3 or 4 ports, even if these are not physically fitted on the rear of your computer, and gives a personal message store facility similar to other PacComm TNCs as well as all the normal commands. Two RF ports are provided, these having separate audio and ptt switching lines to both your HF and VHF rigs may for example be wired up without the need for lead swapping operations. Unlike other PC TNCs, the PC-320 has a separate 13.8V DC input connection provided, although in normal use the pcb is powered from the computer. This facility may be used for a backup supply, keeping your packet station operation for personal message handling when the computer is off.

9600 Baud

Following the G3RUH 9600 baud modem information given last month, I have received numerous requests for sources of supply of these. Modem pcbs as well as eproms and ready built units are available from G3RUH direct (he is QTHR) but remember to enclose an SAE or equivalent if requesting details. Alternatively, units may be obtained from UK distributors such as Siskin Electronics and AMDAT.

It is interesting to note that TAPR in the USA are currently designing a five-channel 25W 2m rig with an inbuilt K9NG 9600 baud modem, to interface with a standard TNC.

End of Message — CTRL-Z

Well that's it for this month, next month I'll be giving details on Digicom, or in other words how to get going on packet with just your Commodore computer and a simple interface pcb, giving you packet communication, a personal mailbox, node, and digipeater, all without the need for a TNC. I'll also be featuring the activities of DANPAC, the Derbyshire and Notts Packet Group, with details of the network in that area.

Thanks for your many messages through the packet BBS network, please do keep them coming as this IS a two-way feature. I can be reached via packet with a message routed to G4HCL @ GB7XJZ. If you prefer pen and paper, then letters addressed to Chris Lorek, c/o HRT Magazine at the editorial address will also get to me, but please note that my callbook address is not correct. Till next month, 73 de G4HCL.