

# Thames Amateur Radio Group

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## A new meaning to going Portable



Our Secretary Andy M0IXY his Wife Maggie M7LCF recently travelled by expedition ship to the Antarctic Peninsula, stopped off at the Falklands before returning to "Ushia" the farthest recognised city South on Earth at the toe of South America.

Andy took an Elecraft KX2 with integral ATU and internal battery selected for this trip as having the correct balance of portability and performance.

The antenna was a 1.5M telescopic with interchangeable base loading coils for each band and a counter-poise with a variable capacitor built in.



All of this was mounted in a small front / back pack. Andy obtained a Falkland Islands Callsign VP8EBO.

The ship's expedition leader in charge of British Antarctic Territory landings said that he would not allow Andy to land with his radio kit due to the strict tourist biosecurity regulations that cover Antarctica. The only part of a tourist that is allowed to touch the White continent are their disinfected boots. But the Captain gave Andy complete freedom to TX from onboard.

Andy TX'ing as M0IXY/MM made seven FT8 contacts all confirmed from the ship station keeping close to the (BAT) shoreline at two locations. And, on the Falklands as VP8EBO at Port Stanley and New Island in West Falkland 23 FT8 contacts with 9 confirmed. The farthest contact was Kuwait 9K2ES. Andy even had a QSO with a TARG member in Kent G0BIX Terry!

Andy selected FT8 as the operating mode for his QSO's after testing SSB Phone & CW as, at all times the WX was very windy and cold just above freezing. Part of the Captains conditions for working from the ship stipulated that equipment could not be fixed to the ships structure.

Once, when operating from the cabin balcony, the wind was strong enough to move the small but heavy table the antenna was on and the only thing arresting its motion was the quite flimsy counter-poise looped around the handrail. Practical radio!



Do you recognise this famous building?

## In Person Meetings



The March meeting was about hot spots and a chance to socialise which is a benefit of being a club member. On the 5<sup>th</sup> April you'll meet Lora – to find out who she is, check the TARG website.

## DMR – casting the net wider

The Friday night net is an easy way to access a wealth of experience. The TARG net is ideal for newcomers to the hobby and, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month, it is on DMR meaning anyone with an internet connection can either listen in or, if they have a licence, join in. Full details are on the TARG Diary Page of the website. If you are reading this, then please make an effort to participate and welcome new members into the hobby.