

DUNDALK AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

DUNDALK REPEATER EI7DAR

The Dundalk Repeater has recently begun to make its presence known to a wider circle of users than had been possible during its various sojourns on temporary sites throughout the last two and a half years. Its final location in the Cooley Mountains, courtesy of RTE, was always the intended first choice of location, with suggested secondary alternatives at Loughinlea, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan, Mount Oriel, Collon, Co. Louth, or Fieldstown, Monasterboice, Co. Louth.

The Repeater is operated by the Dundalk Amateur Radio Club, which is, in effect, the Dundalk Repeater Group for this purpose. It was the first Repeater to be mooted in the Republic of Ireland, and the only one mentioned in *The International VHF-FM Guide, 1979*, as being under construction.

However, groups in Dublin and Limerick forged ahead and got their repeaters operational before Dundalk, which came on the air from the Regional Technical College in Dundalk, using two antennas and locally constructed filters, in the autumn of 1979. Within the limits of a site little, if anything, above sea-level, this operation was successful in allowing various teething troubles to be run down and eliminated, but the major one of the filters was masked by the use of different locations in the college for different parts of the repeater.

When it was decided to try out other more elevated sites, first choice was the QTH of Dermot, EI2AK, at Fieldstown, Monasterboice, where the repeater was established on Christmas Eve, 1980, still using two antennas. This operation was reasonably successful, but the shortcomings of the filter system, and intractability in tuning to the required frequency, became apparent, and a decision to go all out for the Wacom filters was taken.

Around Easter 1981 the Repeater was moved from Fieldstown to the QTH of Tom, EI9CJ at Rockmarshall, Dundalk, and later to Anaverna, on the side of the mountain where it now is. The new filters came and were installed at Rockmarshall. After Anaverna, from where coverage was limited in direction, the repeater was for a while at the home of Seamus Hanratty, from where it was taken to the QTH of Doug, EI2CN, at Coolfore Monasterboice, in the hopes that it might be of use to the mobiles approaching Ballymascanlon for the October '81 GI-EI Convention. Sadly its operation on the occasion was all-but disastrous, due no doubt to its rather rough journey from Dundalk to Coolfore, with no time to do more than the minimum of adjusting before the Ballymac weekend. Perhaps just as well, as a determined onslaught on the problems was made

immediately after and with a second move to Fieldstown and some antenna changes, the repeater behaved well for more than a year preceding its installation, on 3rd December 1982 on its present site.

The peak of Clermont Carn is marked on all the maps as 1674 feet a.s.l. The RTE station is about 30 - 40 feet below the peak, but the repeater antenna is two thirds way up the 300 foot tower. This gives a truly impressive command of country, with some shadowing in the lee of Slieve Foy to the S.E., the Mourne to the East, and Slieve Gullion in the direction of the Omagh-Enniskillen road. Despite the antenna's being on the S.W. leg of the tower, the coverage towards Belfast and Ards Peninsula has been excellent. Places to the S. and S.W., like Drogheda and Navan have not fared so well in their mobile reception, but the Belfast to Dublin mobile is very adequately served all the way. That alone fulfils one of the repeaters main aims.

None of this has been achieved cheaply, and it is with confidence that the organisers of EI7DAR appeal to users of the repeater. Most of the funding to date has been by private loans from club members, and club funds. Many people have already enquired about subscriptions, and to those we say "thank-you".

Any member of the club will pass on subscriptions to the Hon. Treasurer, who is Sean Taaffe, EI0CP, San Marino, Muirhevna, Dublin Road, Dundalk. Other club members are: Tom McDermott, EI9CJ, Rockmarshall, Jenkinstown, Dundalk, Laurence McGriskin, EI9CN, Ard Easmuinn, Dundalk, Jim Bellew, EI4BX, 37 Meadow Grove, Dundalk, Douglas Turnbull, EI2CN, Coolfore, Monasterboice, Co. Louth, the Rev. P. J. Kelly, EI5DA, Tullyallen, Drogheda, Eugene Larkin, EI3K, Thomastown Cross, Donaghmore, Dundalk.

TECHNICAL DATA

Input Frequency: 145.075 MHz. Transmitter: Spectrum

Output Frequency: 145.675 MHz. Receiver: Spectrum

Antenna: HMP - CX2

Logic was constructed by students of Regional Technical College, Dundalk, under the guidance and tutelage of Doug EI2CN.

The only "pip" is a single K, about five seconds after the over has been passed, from when there is a four minute time-out. Normally time-out is only reached after a number of overs have been passed without waiting for the K.