

GB1SMB – 10th September 2016
Churches and Chapels on the Air



Planning for a Special Event station at St Mary's Church, Buckden had started back in April this year when we said we would support the Church at Buckden in setting up our station for the "Churches and Chapels on the Air" event.

It was decided to erect the G5RV Antenna in the grounds of St Mary's Church on the Friday before the event so as not to interfere with other activities and events that the church had planned for on the Saturday.

The erection team of Steve (G1KWF), Brian (G8CHC) and Mervyn (G4KLE) arrived at 10:30 on Friday. From a previous recce we had identified two suitable trees that would be used to hold up the ends of the G5RV. After a couple of attempts to throw the lead cord over high branches, we succeeded in hoisting up the antenna. We confirmed with the Church Wardens our area within the Living Stones Room, which had good access to the outside via the fire door. Weather on the Friday was dry and very warm.

On Saturday morning we arrived at the church to very different weather conditions, it had been raining all night and it was still raining quite heavily (good decision to erect antenna on Friday). Unfortunately the rain had worked on the ropes holding up the G5RV and with shrinkage; one end of the antenna was now laying on the ground. A quick repair and we were in business again, but with a slightly lower to the ground antenna. The Icom 7200 was installed, earth fitted so up and running by 09:20 (local). Our first contact was at 09:30 with Steve on the Mic talking to GB1SKC, St Keverne, Cornwall - the operator at the other end was Ivan, a former Chairman of the Huntingdonshire Amateur Radio Society, a great start.

We had a very lively period where we had QSO's with a number of Churches and Chapels including Gloucester Cathedral, who had erected their Long Wire from the top of the Cathedral – approx 200 feet high.



Bishop David of Huntingdon
on the Mic

We also had a visit by **Bishop David (Bishop of Huntingdon)** who showed a great interest in our activities and asked many questions, we also managed to let him take over the Mic, unfortunately we had

no QSO's at the time. During the day there were a number of Ladies and Gentlemen from the church visiting for Tea and Cakes who came over and were very interested and asked questions about Amateur Radio.

We had a total of 29 QSO's throughout the day, 12 being with other Churches and Chapels. One contact was with OT4ERW/P a small chapel in Belgium. We also managed to cover the UK from Bottom to Top, our first contact (as mentioned) was with GB1SKC near the Lizard (Cornwall) and then to GB0SBC – the most northerly church on mainland Scotland - Land's End to John O Groats

Members on Saturday were – Steve (G1KWF), Brian (G8CHC), Richard (M6TXR), Clive (G3NKQ) and Mervyn (G4KLE), who all took turns in Operating and Logging. We also had a visit by Stev (G1MVF) from Leicester.



We would like to thank the **Revd Jes Salt** and all members of **St Mary's Church**, Buckden for making us very welcome, and could we do it again next year.

Mervyn S Foster
G4KLE