

## **My Favourite receiver**

### **Jack G4TVC**

I started in Radio in 1955 when HM the Q. decided that I should join up and be a Signaller in her Royal Corps of same. I joined the Caterick Radio Club and purchased a kit of bits to make a 4 valve battery portable called a "Rambler". This was to be a Christmas present for my YL but by Easter she had forgotten all about it and the Corporal who said he would line it up was wishing he hadn't! Full of dry joints, mistakes and flat 90 volt batteries it was months before it finally delivered Radio Luxembourg (Your station of the Stars) on 208 metres. That was all we could get in the evening up on the moors on the medium wave at that time using the frame aerial in the lid.

Not strictly a receiver but just as useless was a small gramophone using the latest small turn-table for the 45 RPM records then becoming available. Again battery driven it sounded as if Johnny Ray was singing from the bottom of a dustbin!

After demob, a job with Grundig (GB) Ltd at Kidbrook (some RAF types will remember that place) gave me access to some quality components and pretty soon I had built a look-alike Mullard 3-3 using bits 'borrowed' from the Service Department stores. EF86's and EL84's were common stock in the tape-recorders of the time and the transformers did an admirable job, however it was usual with the German manufacturers to use a single winding for the HT with a selenium full-wave rectifier which occasionally failed to give rise to an 'orrible pong!

Having got used to the quality of sound at this employment I decided to build something for this new fangled Frequency Modulation radio being broadcast and I settled on the Jason FM Tuner to precede my 3-3. Kits of parts were available for this Radio Constructor design and for two shillings I bought the constructional handbook. The kit required some saving up for as I was buying a motorbike on HP at the time but eventually I purchased the drilled chassis, J.B. dial, coils and cans, 4 BVA valves (EF91's) and all components for £6.10.0. I was most surprised when it worked more or less first time and it soon went into a plywood box with the amplifier and a 6 X 4 elliptical speaker. The quality of sound was superb to my hearing and I spent many happy hours listening to the BBC,

Police, Ambulances and Fire engines plus several other undetermined signals.

Transistors were now available at less than a days pay each and I invested in three dubious "Red Spot" to build a TRF receiver powered by a torch battery. I soon got fed up with the "Overseas Service of the BBC" which was all I could pick up, so we can forget that one!

Much later in life, Radio Control reared its head with lots of super-regenerative receivers with ranges of 3 to 300 yards, soon to be replaced by crystal controlled superhets, themselves to be shot down by the "breakers" on 27 megs! During this time an interest in ground to air workings arose due to the availability of OC171's. With these versatile devices made up into airband super-regens followed by a simple audio amplifier, many of us could listen to the pilots flying into and out of Gatwick. Some years later whilst chatting to Lech about Airband Listening he followed my comment about probably hearing him at times with "and we could hear you"!