

## Profile of EUG Member Gerry O'Hara, G8GUH

Gerry first became interested in electronics back in 1968 – initially inspired by his dad, who had constructed a Mullard 3-3 valve amplifier/pre-amplifier for Gerry's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday (his dad worked as an electronics technician at Spadeadam (<http://www.subbrit.org.uk/rsg/sites/s/spadeadam/>), so



the amp was probably built from rocket parts – no wonder Blue Streak was cancelled...). Fascinated by something that could be made to amplify music, he befriended similar souls. He and his pal John Birrell were soon experimenting with an electronic kit (produced by Philips?), making multivibrators, water-level detectors and simple radio circuits, as well as making pre-amps for the Mullard valve amp from scratch using OC71's wired onto tacks pushed through a piece of balsa wood (good grief!) – he blames

Clive Sinclair for that (and don't forget the infamous Sinclair matchbox radio!). This was followed by all sorts of other electronic 'gadgets': strobe units, disco light controls etc. Gerry's interest leant more towards radio in 1970 when his uncle George let him listen to his Murphy B40. George gave him a '19 Set' and Gerry finally got to receive signals on short waves. Gerry then took a weekend/vacation job at one of the local radio/TV shops in Carlisle for 5 years and was taught how to fix radios and other domestic electronics by a couple of old-school radio/TV repair guys. By some strange hand of fate, his girlfriend's dad happened to be a radio amateur (Gordon, G3MNL), who owned an Eddystone S.640 and an S.770R. Gordon taught Gerry some thermionic magic and amateur radio basics, and he became G8GUH in 1972. Gerry went off to Sheffield University in 1973, packing an Eddystone EC10 under his arm and graduated in..... *geology* (what on earth?! – pardon the pun). He became interested in microwaves for a few years in the early 1980's and was active on 10GHz – enjoying plumbing as a second career. As the years went by, Gerry became involved in other things – second degree (engineering), career moves, working away from home (including a year in the Falklands, callsign VP8BDE), then fathering a young family, move to Canada in the mid 1990's etc., thus losing touch with radio.....

A couple of years ago Gerry spotted an old brass-faced, mahogany cased, ebony-breadboard construction 5 valve TRF receiver on a stand at a local flea market. Feeling 'sorry' for it, forty bucks later he was carrying it home and it became his first restoration project. That radio re-kindled his interest in the hobby and since then he has had fun restoring around 15 domestic radios from the 1920's through early 1950's, all wood cased, all US or Canadian-made sets (Philco, GE, Westinghouse, Crossly, Zenith, Detrola etc) – some starting out as 'basket cases'. Latterly he became bitten once again by the 'Eddystone bug' and has now restored three Eddystones: an S740, donated 'free to a good home' through the EUG web site from Cedric in Madeira, and an S770R and an 830/4, these both from a connection with his local radio museum, SPARC (the Society for the Preservation of Antique Radio in Canada, (<http://www3.telus.net/radiomuseum/>)). Of course, he is always on the look-out for more Eddystones... got one for him?



Gerry resides in Coquitlam, near Vancouver, Canada with his wife, two teenage harmonics and two cats. When his job allows (he is a Principal of a major international consulting engineering company), non-radio interests include classic rock - not 'rock' as in 'stones' this time (groan), but more as in 'Zeppelin', not 'Zepp' as in aerial (aaarghh, the puns are getting worse!), playing electric guitar (more rock) and driving a Jeep (over rocks) - I see why he has a degree in geology. His email address is [gerryohara@telus.net](mailto:gerryohara@telus.net).

## Some of Gerry's Collection of Eddystone and Other Radios...



Gerry's 1952 **S740**  
Still working magic on  
the short waves after  
54 years – those old  
phones really help  
with the weaker  
signals.



The **S740** with Gerry's  
homebrew S-Meter.  
Something's coming in  
at S-9...

**830/4** – the Canadian  
forces/RCMP version of  
Eddystone's 'Jewel in  
the Crown' of valve  
general coverage short  
wave sets – Gerry uses  
this for 'serious'  
listening... this one is  
vintage 1968. The  
'matching feet' to tilt  
the front up are actually  
doorstops painted grey.







Part of Gerry's basement workshop – 'the operating table'. Here a nice old Westinghouse from 1934 gets a service and a spruce-up. The chassis on the bench next to the keyboard is a 1926 Atwater Kent – it was the first mains-powered TRF made by Atwater – unfortunately, this one has a burnt out power transformer, so it could be quite a while before it is playing again.

Note the motley collection of test gear, including Triplet and Supreme RF signal generators (dating from the 1940's and 1950's) – used with a 1980's frequency counter for better accuracy, a Heathkit valve tester (not used much – prefers his Precision 10/12 model, not shown here), a Heathkit AF function generator, three VTVM's (the Eico, hiding behind the wires above the right hand side of the Westinghouse, is the most used), a capacitance/inductance/temperature/frequency meter (very handy), a 1960's Triplet analogue multimeter (by far the most used instrument of all) plus several other analogue and digital meters and a Hitachi dual trace scope. Most of this kit was bought on local flea markets or on EBay at very reasonable prices. You don't need fancy kit for most servicing jobs – in fact you can get by at a pinch with a good analogue multimeter, a screwdriver 'signal injector' and a collection of a few substitution parts for basic fault-finding: only when a set needs re-alignment or there is an 'odd' fault does the rest of the kit really get used....



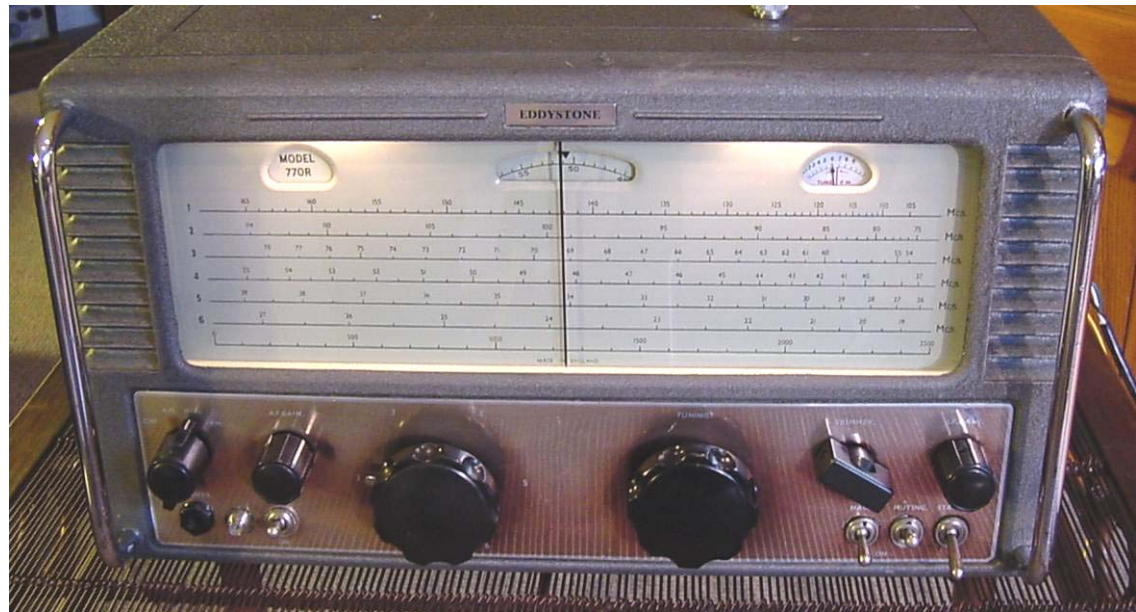


A 1930's Detrola (left) and Crossly feeling at home in Gerry's lounge.



Two 1930's Zeniths and the 1924 'Kings Hinners' TRF and horn speaker combo that re-kindled the radio 'bug' in Gerry.

Gerry's **S770R Mk1** from 1960 receiving Vancouver's 'Classic Rock 101' on the FM broadcast band on a piece of wet string after its preliminary restoration.



A quiet corner in Gerry's office where a mid-1930's Airline is cozying up to a wooden cat...