

Icom Press Release**31st October 2005**

Icom to support the 'Fessenden' Special Event Station

A group of local radio enthusiasts have been given the go-ahead by licensing authority OFCOM to re-activate the original 1905/06 radio site at Machrihanish. Moves were made to broadcast from the site after approaches were initially received from a group across the Atlantic in Brant Rock, Massachusetts, the other end of this historic, 100 year old radio link.

The local group, led by Duncan McArthur and friends, have organised a number of events to mark the centenary of the transmission. The site at Machrihanish was built by Reginald Fessenden in 1905 and from there the first voice transmissions were sent across the Atlantic. Until then



From left to right, Russell Carroll (MM3KRC), Willie Hunter (GM7BAS), Duncan McArthur (GM3TNT), Jamie McDonald (MM3BED) and Brian Thomson (MM3GTX)

the site had only been using Morse code when, by accident, a voice transmission which was only intended to go between Brant Rock and Cobb Island nearby was received at Machrihanish. At this station it was the first time CW contacts were repeatedly received BOTH ways across the Atlantic as opposed to Marconi's claimed one way.

The station will be reactivated at the beginning of January 2006 for two to three days. This time around the group will be using the Icom IC-756PROIII HF/50MHz All Mode Transceiver provided by Icom UK

Fessenden was way ahead of Marconi in many ways but, sadly, has become the forgotten man, Marconi having had a large financial backers whilst Fessenden, brilliant in many areas, was seen as an "also ran" and remembered only by a few.

Fessenden was credited as having given the first ever broadcast programme when, in 1906, he alerted his then Morse code stations to listen out at a particular time. The operators, expecting

an important message were astounded to hear Fessenden reciting from the Bible and playing Holy Night on his Violin.

To commemorate the centenary of the station, Laggan Community Council is hoping to erect a permanent memorial on the site, while a link is also planned between Argyll FM and WATD, the radio station for the Brant Rock Area.

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Corporate background

Icom (UK) Ltd was established in 1974 and is the sole UK and Republic of Ireland importer and distributor for Icom Inc., of Osaka, Japan. Based in Herne Bay, Kent, the company is privately owned with 42 staff.

A comprehensive portfolio of radio transceiver, receiver, navigation and computer products is maintained to suit the consumer, commercial, radio-amateur, marine and aviation markets. Equipment is available in fixed-base, vehicle-mobile and handheld formats to suit a wide range of specifications and applications.

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