

The Newsletter of the
**Royal Naval Amateur
Radio Society**

1960 - Golden Jubilee - 2010

Summer 2010



HMS Valiant along side in La Spezia, Italy



The RNARS is affiliated to the RSGB

RNARS Officers & Committee

Patron: Admiral Sir Peter Abbott KCB RN
President: Capt P Sutermeister DL RN
The Gables, Barton le Street, Malton, YO17 6PN
Chair: Mick Puttick G3LIK 21 Sandyfield Crs, Cowplain, PO8 8SQ
Vice Chair: Doug Hotchkiss G4BEQ 54 Sanderling Lodge, Gosport, PO12 1EN
Treasurer: Adrian Mori M3ZNU, 33 Valerian Road, Southampton, SO30 0GR
adrian.mori@ntlworld.com
Mem' Sec: Doug Bowen G0MIU 14 Braemar Rd, Gosport, PO13 0YA
Gen' Sec: Joe Kirk G3ZDF 111 Stockbridge Road, Chichester, PO19 8QR
Ex Officio: PO Stan Scanlon, HMS Collingwood
Committee: Wally Blythe, Keith Ray, Ray Ezra, Mac McGuinness, Doug Bowen,
Toni Mori

Society Managers

Commodities: Doug Bowen G0MIU 14 Braemar Rd, Gosport, PO13 0YA
Awards: Glynn Burhouse GW4MVA 40 High Park, Hawarden, CH5 3EF
Call List: Sid Will GM4SID 53 Bishop Forbes Crs, Aberdeen, AB21 0TW
Website: Jim Banner 9H1RN jim.banner@global.net.mt
Data Comms: Diana Prothero G0RNO rnars2news@btinternet.com
Newsletter: Colin Topping GM6HGW – **See editorial for e-mail**
26 Crathes Close, Glenrothes, KY7 4SS - Tel: 07871 959654
HQ Station: Toni Mori M1AFM
35 Oliver Road, Woodmill, Southampton, SO18 2JQ
Area Rep: Wally Walker G4DIU
Co-ordinator: 26 Sketchley Court, Dogwood Avenue, Bulwell, NG6 7DL
HMS Belfast: Bill G0ELZ
Bridge Wireless Office, HMS Belfast, Morgans Lane, Tooley Street, London SE1 2.

Overseas Managers

Australia: Dave Lyddieth VK1DL
PO Box 2329, Tuggeranong DC, ACT 2901, Australia
West: Gerald Wild
Australia: 1080 Great Eastern Highway, Glen Forest, WA 6071 Australia
Canada: Ian Coombe - VA3ICC
254 Reynolds Drive Brockville Ontario Canada K6V 1X9
USA: Bill Cridland 57 Pinewood Road, Bolton, Mass, 01740, USA
South Africa: Mickey Warr ZS1WA 21 Steyn St, Barrydale, Capetown 6750, RSA

QSL Managers

UK: Marc Litchman G0TOC
26 Oak Tree Close, Loughton, Essex, IG10 2RE
Australia: Colin Whale VK4CU
237 Newman Road, Geebung, Queensland 4034 Australia
Germany: MF Runde DL0MF
USA: Vacant
New Zealand: Nigel Hardy ZL2TX
PO Box 15078, Otaki Railway, Otaki, 5543, New Zealand

QSL Printer
NL printers

UX5UO – Details: QRZ.com
Perfect Publications Ltd, Gosport, Hants, PO13 0FQ. Tel 01329 848628

Subscriptions

Please ensure your name and RNARS number appear on all transactions.

UK: £15 per year due on the first of April and to be sent to the Membership Secretary. Cheques and postal orders to be made payable to “*Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society*”; bankers orders are available from the treasurer.

USA: Payment may be sent to Bill Cridland, address above.

Australia: Dave Lyddieth, address above.

All other overseas members: Please send subscriptions in sterling (GBP) by international money order to the Membership Secretary.

The society banks with Lloyds TSB, 272 London Rd, Waterlooville, PO7 7HN. Sort code: 30 99 20 Account number: 0022643

Data Protection

Your details will be held on the society’s data-base by the membership secretary. The committee require your permission with regards to the release of any personal information held on the data-base. If no such instructions are received, it will be assumed that you have no objection to the release of these details to other members of the committee.

Items published in the Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the RNARS.

Contents

4	Chairman’s Chat
5	News of WW I relayed to merchant vessels
7	Submariner
9	Youngest WW II service death
11	Rally reports
13	Very frustrated MN RO
19	Scottish technology
20	HMS Belfast BWO
27	My first ship part II
35	EJM - QRT
38	MM0WPM Obituary
39	MN appeal
41	Contest results
48	Close down (editorial)
50	Caption competition

Chairman's chat

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Newsletter. I hope you will be enjoying the summer with better HF conditions.

I hope the weather will be kind this summer and everyone will get some bronzy time in.

Once again please look at the RNARS web site; **www.rnars.org.uk** which Jim 9H1RN has updated for you and hope that you will pass your comments on to him as you scan the various portions of the site, this is supporting you as members so please look and forward any updates or comments to Jim.;

I hope that you have all remembered to post off your dues to the Membership Secretary and that is correct amount of £15 per year from 1st April, those who pay by Bankers Order please check it is the correct amount to save chasing you. You have been warned as those who have not paid will not be receiving a Newsletter.

I am sorry there was not enough support for the 50th anniversary dinner in Collingwood on 26th June which we had to cancel, unless members support these occasions the Committee feel they are being let down.

We look forward to seeing quite a few at the Coventry weekend in August, where we hope to have a special station active for the weekend. Remember there is a special Award to be claimed from Glynn GW4MVA at a cost of £5 details are on QRZ.com under GB50RNARS.

Our Newsletter Editor Colin GM6HGW is hoping that members will submit articles for inclusion in the magazine, it is your articles that make the magazine so popular with everyone who reads it. Remember when submitting an article to Colin, only put **RNARS** as the subject or it will go into a spam filter.

Mick Puttick G3LIK - Chairman RNARS



How news of the First World War was relayed to merchant shipping

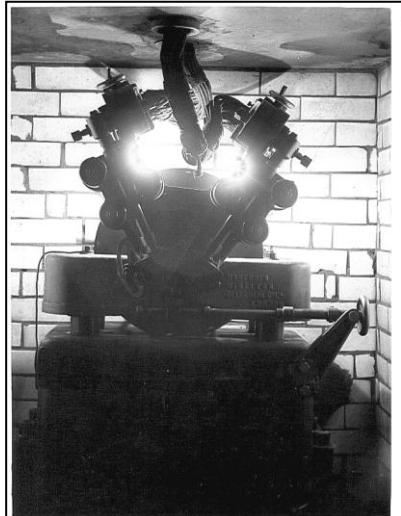
SS Calgarian, was originally built for the Allen Line, making her maiden voyage from Liverpool to Canada on 8th May 1914. Her sister ship was Alsatian. (Image copyright of the Imperial War Museum and reproduced with permission)



On 5th August the Admiralty sent a telegram to all British merchant vessels informing them that war had broken out and adding, fairly obviously, that as a result they should not go to German ports.

A copy of the message received on SS Calgarian is pictured at the end of this article. It was sent from station ZZ which was the Marconi station at Poldhu in Cornwall. Pictured to the left is the rotary spark discharger at Poldhu; photographed on the night of 4th August 1914 while transmitting the news of Britain's declaration of war on Germany.

On 15th September 1914 Calgarian was taken over by the Royal Navy as an armed merchant cruiser. Her naval career saw her take part in the blockades of the ports of Lisbon and New York and acting as a troop and passenger transport across the Atlantic.



52069 The rotary spark discharger at Poldhu photographed on the night of 4/8/1914 while transmitting to shipping the news of Britain's declaration of war on Germany

Calgarian was sunk on the 1st March 1918 by U-19 off Rathlin Island; Northern Ireland. The initial strike did not sink her as the crew managed to contain the damage. However the U-boat torpedoed her again and despite the protection of other ships, she was hit by 4 torpedoes and quickly sank with the loss of two officers and 47 ratings.

She was officially transferred to Canadian Pacific in July 1917 on its acquisition of the Allan Line. However, she continued in Royal Navy use until her sinking. The copy of the message was obtained from the records and archives of the late Tom Smith which were donated to the Marconi Centre at Poldhu by Tom's wife Shiela. Tom G3EFY was a keen Marconi historian and a member of Poldhu Amateur Radio Club. The photograph of the rotary spark discharger is on display at the Marconi Centre, Poldhu and reproduced with kind permission of Marconi plc.

The first news of the World-War. 3 am. 5th August 1914

Form No. 4. 1,000.—7/1/13. *Filed. Date 5 AUG 1914*

The Marconi International Marine Communication Co., Ltd.,
MARCONI HOUSE, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

No. *1* **CALGARIAN** OFFICE: *5-AUG 1914* 191

Handed in at *Q.S. O.H.M.S. Admiralty* CHARGES TO PAY. *38. 1/10* *40* *40*

This message has been transmitted subject to the conditions printed on the back hereof which have been agreed to by the Sender. If the accuracy of this message is doubted, the Receiver, on paying the necessary charges, may have it repeated without penalty. This Office is Office over the Company's system, and should any error be shown to exist, all charges for such repetition will be refunded. This Form must accompany any enquiry respecting this Telegram.

To *all British Merchant Vessels*
War has broken out between
England and Germany you must
not go to German ports
Admiralty London.

Thanks to **David Barlow** RNARS 4304 for submitting this item and clearing the copyright issues.

If you have access to the internet: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uua5cO3_26c

Submariner

In the early seventies as a young teenager my family visited friends in Southsea and their home looked out over the Solent. I remember waking early one morning and looking out of the bedroom window towards the sea forts and picked out the sinister looking shape of a submarine making its way slowly out to sea. Little did I realize that a few years later I would also be heading off to sea in one though a slightly different and larger model to the diesel boat I had witnessed heading out on patrol from Gosport that morning.

I joined the Royal Navy in September 1976 to began my life in a 'blue suit' as a Junior Radio Operator and after completing basic training at HMS Raleigh in Torpoint, Cornwall, headed for HMS Mercury, the Royal Navy Signals School that



had been established at Leydene House, East Meon, near Petersfield, Hampshire since 1941. Previously a signalling school had been formed at HM Barracks, Portsmouth in 1904 but this was transferred to Petersfield during the Second World War. HMS Mercury went on to house both the Communications and Navigations School of Maritime Operations or SMOPS. It trained many generations of Communicators and Navigators until it was decommissioned on the 31st August 1993 and all training moved to more modern facilities at HMS Collingwood.

A few months into communications training we were required to opt for a specialist field. Either Radio Operators Tactical or General both serving with the surface fleet or 'skimmers' or the submarine branch which required several more months of shore training before your first sea draft came through. Taking the submarine route was something of a challenge and I soon found myself at HMS Dolphin for the first part of my submarine training which included the basics of submarine operations and several 'runs' in the famous

escape tower. As a submarine radio operator you were also instructed in the use of both Radar and Electronic Warfare equipment together with control room tactical operations which included plotting and various duties as part of the 'attack' team.

After moving between Mercury and Dolphin for further training my first draft came through; I was to join the Comcen in HMS Neptune for a few months while waiting for HMS Renown to return from patrol so I could join the 'Port' crew and head to sea for the first time and complete my sea training and hopefully be awarded my 'dolphins' and therefore become a qualified submariner.



My career developed both above and below the waves over the next ten years but the 'Silent Service' is one of the few that still lives up to its name and unlike the many 'Special Forces' books around today most of our operations are unwritten and remain classified. Therefore, I will not bore you with the details but suffice to say I had my dolphins and served in submarines until I left the service in 1987. During this time I had moved from Radio Operator to Tactical Systems and served on Repulse (Starboard) completing a DASO (Demonstration

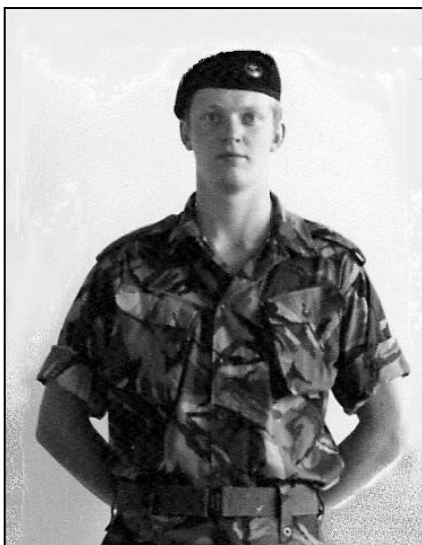
and Shakedown Operations) which involved test firing a Polaris missile in the States, submarine rescue trials with HMS Odin and the American DSRV (Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle) Avalon where we transferred several members of Odin's crew to Repulse without them getting wet!

Following this there was a month or so in Hong Kong with the 3rd Raiding Squadron, Royal Marines who were involved in the search for illegal immigrants and drug smugglers before returning to HMS Warrior, in Northwood, Middlesex in 1980 where I worked for COMSUBEASTLANT as a Submarine Movement Advisor.



Hong Kong patrol 1980 – Carl in the back seat

After a year or so there was a short spell on HMS Courageous in 1983 before being diagnosed with cancer and I then spent a 7 months 'P7R' while having treatment. In January 1985 I was passed fit and joined the first all-British designed and built nuclear submarine HMS Valiant (S102) which was the first of the Valiant class 'Hunter Killers' SSNs (Ship Submersible Nuclear). She was more affectionately known as 'The Skimmer Killer' and during her deployments we were able to visit Kiel in Germany, Gibraltar and then Sardinia, Naples and La Spezia in Italy before returning home to a refit in Rosyth in 1986.



Carl Mason - GWOVSW - 4238

14-year-old boy has been confirmed as the UK's youngest known service member to have been killed in WWII

Reginald Earnshaw was aged 14 years and 152 days when he died under enemy fire on the SS North Devon on 6 July 1941. The merchant navy cabin boy had lied about his age, claiming he was

15, so he could join the war effort. His sister Pauline Harvey, 77, will mark his birthday on Friday by laying flowers at his grave in Comely Bank Cemetery, Edinburgh.

Official confirmation of Mr Earnshaw's age by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) was made after his sister responded to their nationwide appeal for his relatives to come forward. During the graveside visit, Mrs Harvey and her great-niece Jenny will also meet relatives of Douglas Crichton and Reg Mitchell, who were also killed in the attack off the Norfolk coast. Mrs Harvey, a retired teacher from Epworth in North Lincolnshire, was nine when her brother was killed.

She said: "Reggie's death at such a young age and after just a few months at sea came as a great shock to the whole family. "I am immensely grateful to so many people who helped research my brother's forgotten story, and to the War Graves Commission for providing his grave with a headstone." Mr Earnshaw's story came to light after a shipmate conducted research to find out what happened to his friend. Former machine gunner Alf Tubb was 18 when their merchant ship was bombed by German planes on its way to Tyneside in July 1941.

He returned fire before rushing to the engine room to find Mr Earnshaw, but was beaten back by steam. Five other people died in the attack. More than four years ago Mr Tubb, 86, of Swansea, decided to find out where his friend had been laid to rest and tracked down information through an internet appeal. He discovered Reggie's body had been buried in an unmarked grave in Edinburgh and, following Mr Tubb's efforts, a permanent granite headstone was erected by the CWGC last year. It is now known that Mr Earnshaw was born in Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, on 5th February 1927 to Dorothy Earnshaw. She later married Eric Shires and the couple had two daughters, Pauline and Neva. The family moved to the Granton area of Edinburgh in 1939 when Mr Earnshaw was 12. He attended Bellevue School and left, aged 14, to join the Merchant Navy in February 1941.

Ranald Leask, of the CWGC, said: "Having last year erected a headstone at Reggie's grave, we at the War Graves Commission are very pleased that Mrs Harvey contacted us. "She will now be able

to choose an inscription for her brother's headstone and provide Reggie with a fitting final tribute." The youngest known service casualty of World War II was previously recorded as Raymond Steed, another merchant seaman who was killed aged 14 years and 207 days.

BBC Scotland NEWS

RNARS Kempton Park Rally

23 members signed in, 1 joiner Don G1LEV and four renewals. Members attending: G3ZJY, G1LKJ, M0IMJ, G0PPH, G0MPJ, G0TOC, G1DJI, G4PRG, G4TNN, G3BBR, G3LPN, G4BEQ, 2E0RPS, 2E0VAV, M0CPH, G4PSA, G4JSW, M5ALG, G4KLF, G4FRN, M5SST, G4BUW and G4CMQ.

Thanks to Harry G4JSW for the chocolates for Jackie who was not with me. Nice to see Sheila G4PSA as I had not seen her for some time.

Phil Manning-G1LKJ-2954 - E&OE

Wildhern Rally

Left home at about 08:40 to drive the few miles to the venue. Light rain and volcanic dust had fallen overnight. Sky dull and overcast and very misty but the temperature was 18 C. Arrived just before 09:00 and set up the stand in the Sports Pavilion as usual.

Some buyers were around and some 35 to 40 stalls were being set up in the field. By 10:00 the sun was out - but only for a few minutes - then back to dull and overcast; but fortunately no rain. Only two members signed in - no commodities were sold. I wonder if it is worth my time for so little support. I cleared the stand away just after 12:00 and had a look round myself

The rally was very well organised as usual by the Andover Club. The Coffee was only 40 pence for a large cup. All being well, I'll be at the autumn Rally (date to be arranged). It would be nice to have a little more support. Arrived back home about 13:30 and the sun came out.

George G3OZY RNARS 067

Norbreck Rally

A bright, sunny day in Blackpool on Sunday, April 11th for the 48th Annual Rally organised by the Northern Amateur Radio Societies Association, (of which I'm the Chairman). This is the largest one day show in the U.K., with over 100 trade stands and 37 club stands.

The Norbreck Hotel Exhibition Centre provides us with over 50,000 square feet of area, all on the level and with adequate free parking. I arrived at 09:00 after a pleasant drive up the M6 and M55; the Norbreck Hotel is only 10 minutes from the end of the M55, so it is very accessible.

Unfortunately, Bill G0ELZ who usually runs the stand was still down on "Belfast" for the Easter Event. I managed to get everything up and running with help from Ken G3RFH and Eric G0MRM from time to time. Twenty-three members signed in and a bottle of rum evaporated very quickly! It's amazing how quickly matelots can sense the smell of rum at tot time!

Over 2,000 punters flocked in through the doors at 11:00 searching the stands for all the bargains going. We always have several stands selling all those useful components and bits, not forgetting the junk stands.

The RSGB President, Dave Wilson M0OBW, was in attendance, they always put on a good show, with all the RSGB commodities for sale. As Dave is also the NARSA Exhibition Manager he was kept busy. I also had my NARSA Chairman duties to perform, so it was a full day for us all. The RAF and RS Cadets had set up a trailer in the Hotel grounds, with the callsign GB2NAR. Sadly, the local electrical interference was so high that very little H.F. stations were worked which was very disappointing for all concerned.

Two lapsed members re-joined so they got a double tot. We shut up shop at 16:00 and wended our way homewards. It was still a fine day, which had brought all the trippers out, therefore the M6 was quite busy, especially on the approach to Preston; speed was down to a crawl, but on passing the junction with the M61 it all cleared and it was back to 70 MPH again. I arrived back home in Warrington at 17:30, just in time for dinner and a welcome pint.

A good day, but it's a pity we don't see more people from further afield. We did have Trevor, G3ZYY from Saltash and Gavin, G6DGK from East. Sussex. Now we start organising next year's show.!

Fred G2IV - 1136.

Frustrations of the MN Single Operator Ship

When I first went to sea as a MN Radio Officer, the Area Scheme had recently ended and all long distance marine radio traffic to and from the UK was handled by Portishead Radio. The Area Scheme was an excellent arrangement whereby the world was split up into several areas. Each area had its own station and ship's radio traffic was received from, and transmitted to, the relevant area station which had a direct link with the UK.

The advantages of this scheme were that transmission distances were relatively short and traffic density at each area station was reasonably low. The disadvantage was that each area station was situated in a geographical location which was within Britain's rapidly shrinking sphere of influence and no long-term capabilities could be guaranteed. Consequently the Area Scheme was disbanded and all ship's radio traffic for the U.K. was handled by Portishead Radio.

The immediate disadvantages were that transmission paths were necessarily much longer and with all radio traffic having to be handled by a single radio station, ships inevitably experienced longer waiting lists. This scheme only worked as well as it did due to the superb skill of the operators at Portishead and by the huge technical endeavour on the part of the British Post Office in providing sufficient transmitters and efficient aerial systems. Never-the-less, it was not uncommon for ships after successfully calling Portishead to be given QRY15 which means 'You are turn number 15 on the waiting list.'

This was bad enough for WT traffic but if you had a high list number on the telephony bands then you were in for a very long wait, especially if a cruise ship such as the Oriana was before you. I have sat for hours being forced to listen to inane telephone calls from and to passengers about the weather, the ship's food, what

they thought of the cruise and anxious enquires about whether or not the cat was missing them. Often I had an impatient captain waiting to speak to his ship owner and fuming at the delay.

I often wondered if high traffic ships had dedicated frequencies but if they did, they either didn't use them or used them as well as hogging the normal Portishead frequencies.

The One-off Frustration

The position of Radio Officer in a one operator ship was a lonely one in that there was no one to consult with if he had a problem. There were multiple Deck and Engineering



Officers who were all aware of any problem appertaining to their departments. No one seemed to be able to comprehend the Radio Officer's problems, living as he did, in an esoteric world not readily understood by the uninitiated and he was often maligned if conditions precluded the possibility of any radio task.

I remember being on one ship which was in the Pacific about equidistant east and west from Portishead whose signal was romping in at strength nine. The problem was, I was receiving him as two signals, one round the world from the east and one round the world from the west.

The two paths were not exactly equidistant however and one signal was arriving a micro second or so after the other and so the net effect was an echo which fell neatly into what should have been the spaces between each element, thus making the signal completely unreadable.

That was the only time I have ever experienced this phenomenon and feel that fate must have reserved it especially for me. Now the CW experts among you will know that this signal would have been completely unreadable despite its strength. Try to explain this however, to a person whose world consisted of the mathematics of celestial bodies in orbit and the complexities of cargo stowage or of thundering pistons and high pressure lines. The captain thought I

was an incompetent idiot not to be able to copy this rock-solid signal.

The Watch Keeping Hours Frustration

The watch keeping arrangement for single Radio Officer ships was archaic. Watch keeping was two hours on and two hours off starting at 08:00 and finishing at 22:00 hours ships time. This meant that the Radio Officer never got more than a two hour off-watch period between these times and often it was much less. In these off watch periods, if he was not engaged on some maintenance task, he tried to snatch a little rest.

I once sailed with a captain who must rank as the most unpleasant character I have ever met. He well knew my watch keeping hours and would hang onto traffic during my on watch period and then just before I was due to come off watch he would arrive in the radio room with his traffic. This then had to go straight away. No argument.

I had, therefore, to carry on into my off-watch time and call Portishead usually to be given a QRY 8 or longer. By the time I had cleared the traffic I was due to come back on watch and do another two hour stint. On more than one occasion he kept this up all day making me work 12 hours without a break before I could snatch a brief period before the commencement of my final two hour stint from 20:00 to 22:00. What he got from this, apart from sadistic gratification, was my undying hatred and a complete absence of respect.

I took a great pleasure in documenting his actions in the radio log which he had to sign on a daily basis. Of course he never read any of it nor did any one else for all I know but it let me give vent to some of my frustration. It was never part of my character to alienate a captain as there is no future doing so and I must say that I never encountered another one who deliberately tried to make life so difficult for me. Towards the end of my sea going career this archaic watch keeping schedule was changed to a more humane one. Radio Officers had to work a minimum of eight hours per day. The exact details escape my failing memory but I remember the hours could be arranged any way that the Radio Officer wished as long as at least eight hours were worked and a

statuary period during the forenoon and one in the evening beginning 20:00 was covered.

The Previous Radio Officer Frustration

The previous Radio Officer was always a paragon of virtue. No task had been beyond him. Radio communication difficulties for him did not exist and he could repair any equipment faster and better than I could. I remember joining one ship and spending weeks repairing equipment that had either not worked for months or had worked indifferently but lo-and-behold I was not a patch on the previous Radio Officer

We were once sailing across the Great Australian Bight when one captain came to me with a message that he wanted sending via Humber Radio. He was quite adamant about this and when I tried to explain to him that Humber Radio was a medium frequency UK station with an effective range of some 300 miles he calmly informed me that the previous RO used to send everything through Humber Radio.

Instead of waiting hours to send it through Portishead, I sent it via an Australian coast station which must have cost the shipping company far more. When the captain asked me if I had sent it through Humber Radio, I replied in the affirmative. (By this time I had learned to go with the flow.) I'm sure other Radio Officers must have been compared unfavourably with this superhuman being and drawn solace, as I did, from the fact that once I had left the ship, I in turn became elevated to the God-like status of 'The Previous RO.'

The QSB frustration

Long distance radio reception is subject to fading, known as QSB in the international Q code table. Every even hour, on the hour, Portishead would send out his traffic list for British ships. These were sent in alphabetical order starting at GAAA and then going on to the MAAA series. The big-name ships such as the Cunarders and the P and O fleet had, of course, calls early in the list and so would be hogging the working frequencies whilst we less fortunate types near the end of the list were still listening out for our call signs. Without exception every ship I ever sailed on had a call sign well after the half way point of the 'G' series or even well down the 'M' series list.

Now here is where the QSB frustration comes in. While waiting to see if my call was on the list, I would notice that the signal was starting to fade in and out. As the list neared my call the fading would get more and more severe and usually, in the run up to where my call would be due, Portishead's signal would go into a deep fade until it disappeared completely. As it slowly came back to a readable level I would be dismayed to hear he had reached call signs which were later than mine. This happened time and again and I was then faced with two choices. Listen out for the next traffic list in two hours time which should have been the start of my off watch period or call Portishead to ask if there was any traffic for me. The former put me at the risk of delay in receiving an important message, the latter of having to sit calling Portishead until acknowledged and then probably being told there was nothing for me.

The calling frequency frustration

At well run radio stations, a search operator would slowly traverse the calling band listening for calls. On hearing a ship, he would call it back, give it a QRY number and pass the details of the ship's working frequency to the traffic operator. He would then recommence his search of the calling band listening for further calls.

On not so well run stations especially during unsociable hours, only one operator would be on watch. He would search the calling band and when he found a caller he would transfer the ship and himself to working frequencies. The problem was, he would use his search receiver for working the ships traffic. When he had finished working the ship he would go back to the search band but of course he had no idea where he had reached on the band and so started again at one end. The net result was that only ships with calling frequencies near his starting end of the band had a chance of being heard.

Of course all the ships I sailed on seemed to have calling frequencies at or near the wrong end of the bands. One particular station that caused me this sort of grief was Rome Radio. I had an important message to get away and sat calling for many hours with no hope of ever being heard.

Trying to be smart I called Rome Medical to see if someone would be kind enough to inform Rome Radio of my problem. To my surprise, Rome Medical stopped his calling tape at my first call. I started to send my request but before I had got a few words out, his calling tape came on again and he ignored any further calls from me.

The Spot Frequency frustration

By the time of my last voyage the powers-that-be decided that all shore stations would cease to trawl the calling bands and would listen on spot frequencies. Every ship would be supplied with a selection of crystals to cover all the world's shore stations.

The only problem was that some shore stations jumped the gun and started listening only on their spot frequencies before every ship had been supplied with the correct calling frequency crystals. This caused great frustration during my last voyage (I was unlucky at this time to be on a ship not fitted with the correct crystals or a frequency synthesised transmitter.) While in Australian waters, all ships had to send a daily position report, (PR). This PR had to give the ships details, Name, position, where bound and ETA etc.

We left Newcastle NSW and steamed south and then west to traverse the south coast of Australia from east to west, bound for the Suez canal. I managed to get all my position reports off except what was to be the final one which would have to go to Perth Radio. Of course this station was one that had jumped the gun and I called in vain for hours on a frequency that was not being monitored.

I paid someone, somewhere the complement of having the intelligence to deduce from the last PR I had been able to send, that we were almost clear of Australian waters at that time and so would now be well outside the area where PRs were required. Big mistake! I had to call Simonstown Radio, South Africa a few days later to send a weather observation (OBS) report and this very efficient station answered my first call. I sent the OBS message and then he informed me that there was an air-sea search going on in Australian waters for my ship. I asked him to inform the Australian authorities that we were safe and well and to call off the search.

I waited with eager anticipation the chance to explain how this situation had arisen but I heard nothing more about it. It seems that the Authorities were always trying to play 'Catch up' with maritime radio communications and now they have achieved the ultimate in this age of satellites.

A Captain can pick up a telephone and dial his company office or send a telex direct thus making Radio Officers redundant. Gone are the days when the only time the Radio Officer came into his own and achieved some sort of status was when the ship's crew was bobbing about in life boats. If a ship sinks now, Emergency Position Reporting Beacons float free and within minutes their signal is picked up by orbiting satellites and the distress position is known within a few metres. I wonder if we were ever missed. So those were a few of the frustrations attendant upon being a Merchant Navy Radio Officer but don't let me give you the impression that it was all frustration and no fun.

There were many happy hours and the frustrations were accepted as just a part of a very interesting job. I would be interested to hear about other ex ROs who have suffered the same frustrations or any that I have not mentioned.

Roy France - RNARS 3953

Scottish Technology Discovery

After having dug to a depth of 10 feet last year, Irish scientists found traces of copper wire dating back 100 years and came to the conclusion that their ancestors already had a telephone network more than 100 years ago.

Not to be outdone by the Irish, in the weeks that followed, an English archaeologist dug to a depth of 20 feet, and shortly after, a story published in the Morning Herald read: "English archaeologists find traces of 130-year-old copper wire, have concluded that their ancestors already had an advanced high-tech communications network 30 years earlier than the Irish".

One week later, the Banffshire Advertiser reported the following: "After digging as deep as 30 feet in his farm near Enzie Braes, Banffshire; Jock Broon, a self-taught archaeologist, reported that he found absolutely nothing. Jock has therefore concluded that 130 years ago, Scotland had already gone wireless."

Makes you proud to be Scottish.

With thanks to Mick Puttick for this tongue in cheek dig.

History of the RNARS involvement with HMS Belfast by Tom Taylor GØPSE

Moored in the River Thames between Tower Bridge and London Bridge is the cruiser HMS Belfast. The Imperial War Museum maintains and runs the ship as a museum. The IWM has a web site: hmsbelfast.iwm.org.uk which goes into great detail on the history of the ship. I am going to concentrate on the history of a particular part of the ship, the Bridge Wireless Office.

The Main Wireless Office was near the waterline and protected by the ship's armour plating. If this compartment was damaged and put out of action, the ship would have lost all communications. Consequently, ships had two, three or four Wireless Offices dispersed about the ship so that alternative emergency communications were available.

It was not unusual for a ship to have a separate compartment designated Second Wireless Office, a VHF Wireless Office and a Third Wireless Office. It was normal practice for the 3rd Wireless Office to be used for Radio Warfare - also known as Electronic Warfare.

A ship the size of HMS Belfast would probably have an admiral on board as the Flag Officer in command of a Task Force. The Admiral would need his own lines of communications and he had his own communications staff. On HMS Belfast, the Admiral's communications were conducted from the BWO, which was located on the Admiral's bridge deck.

RNARS London Group

In 1971, Wally Walker was serving in the Royal Navy and also a radio amateur. I contacted Wally and he replied with the following: *"As far as the RNARS is concerned, during my final year, 1972, at HMS Mercury I got involved with the ship, in as far as I was 'volunteered' to start re-fitting-out the wireless offices.*

I was seconded to the HMS Belfast Trust, together with a three-ton lorry and a stores requisition book and went round the various dockyard stores looking for returned radio equipment, etc. Whilst I was gathering the various transmitters and receivers together and

delivering them to the ship, I happened to mention to the Admiral who was OIC of the Trust at that time, that if HMS Belfast was going to be a permanent fixture in the Pool of London, it could be a very good idea to install an amateur radio station on board to give an added incentive to the public visitors and to the world in general. The Admiral said that he thought that it was a good idea and that he would put it to the Trust.

I also informed him that I was sure that the RNARS could get together a group of operators from the London area who would be pleased to operate on a regular basis from the ship. The RNARS were given the go-ahead to use the Admiral's Bridge for this purpose”.



HMS Belfast, Bridge Wireless Office

The HMS Belfast London Group was formed in 1973. Don Walmsley G3HZL was voted in as Chairman; London Group number: 001 and I was given 002 for my efforts. I then had to devote my time to getting a job in civilian life, as I had to eat and feed my family. I forget who made up the rest of the London Group at that time, but seem to remember that there were about ten of us to start with and we ran our first station from the Admiral's Bridge at Easter of that year.”

The HMS Mercury Wally refers to was the RN Signal School near Petersfield in Hampshire. The Signal School is now located at HMS Collingwood in Fareham, Hampshire. During the early years of the BWO being an amateur radio station, it was manned by serving Royal Navy personnel who held amateur radio licenses. They turned up for duty in uniform.

Don Walmsley G3HZL, the first Chairman of the London Group wrote an article in 1978 in which he stated; "The first involvement with HMS Belfast began in 1973, when it was decided to do something special for the RSGB's Diamond Jubilee. We applied to the Trust that looks after the ship for permission to set up and operate an amateur radio station aboard the ship. This was granted, and in the first week of September, we descended on the ship and established a station on the Admiral's Bridge. This was very much enjoyed by us and provided good publicity.



So it was decided to repeat it again in 1974. The date was moved to August so that it would coincide with school holidays, but when we approached the ship's authorities, they said that we could no longer use the Admiral's Bridge. Alternative accommodation for the station was suggested - we were shown a dark, dusty room on the same deck and this suited our purpose even better; the Bridge Wireless Office - much more room and a thousand times more suitable."

Callsigns

Another excerpt from Don G3HZL's article reads; "We (the RNARS) supported Portsmouth Navy Days in August, ran a mobile rally in June at HMS Mercury, supported Jamboree on the Air from HMS Mercury and since 1973 we have operated a station on board HMS Belfast. GB3RN is the call we try to use from all these locations and except for 1977, we have succeeded. The licensing authority suspended the use of GB calls throughout 1977."

During the 1975 CQ WW CW Contest, the callsign G4EOK was used by HMS Belfast. When the use of GB calls was resumed, the callsign GB2RN was applied for and granted as a Permanent Special Event Station and its use continues to this day. GB2RN is used when the ship is open to the public. At other times, G4HMS and G7HMS are available for use.

Chairmen

Having been Chairman since 1973, Don Walmsley was succeeded by Derek Barry G4WWP in 1990. Derek served for two years and then had to give up the post because he moved house from the London area. Until the next Chairman was elected, Phil Manning G1LKJ was Acting Chairman. After many years as the QSL Manager, Bob Wilson GØFEK became Chairman at the 1993 AGM. Bob held the post for ten years and was followed by Terry Barclay GØTBD in 2003.

Terry was Chairman until he stepped down in 2008 and was succeeded by Rodrigo Passannanti 2EØRPS. Rod was in the unusual position of working as a Yeoman on HMS Belfast, so he was in day-to-day attendance. What looked like an ideal situation was only to last one year, because Rod was promoted to Leading Yeoman and also became a father and although he would have liked to have continued as Chairman, his new commitments gave him insufficient free time to devote to the role.

At the 2009 AGM, Bill Cross GØELZ who had been serving as Secretary for the past year, took on the extra responsibility of being Chairman.

Equipment

The BWO of today bears little resemblance to when the ship was in

commission. In the latter days of her service, Radio Teletype was in common use. The BWO has seen quite a transition of equipment. During the AGM of Easter 1992, Don G3HZL said that the TS-520 transceiver is “getting on in years” and should be replaced. Chairman Derek G4WWP replied that they should write to Kenwood for a replacement. The last one had been donated by Trio later to become Kenwood.

During a 1992 committee meeting on board, Paul Balaam G4LNA became Shack Manager. This was to be the start of a long period of work by Paul in maintaining the equipment in the shack and building and erecting antennas. Paul made the terminated folded dipole which is still in use today and can be seen slung between the port yardarms of the Main Mast and the For'd Mast. Also in 1992, a morse generating machine was installed in the BWO so that, when the BWO was not occupied, it could be switched on and ran an endless tape of morse for the benefit of visitors passing by.

At the committee meeting on 19 May 1997 it was announced that, after a marvellous feat of representation by Ray Buddle G4UOX, we had been donated a TS-870S HF transceiver on permanent loan by Kenwood UK. In 1994, after another example of successful representation by Ray Buddle, Yaesu kindly donated a FT-990 HF transceiver for use in the BWO. In 1998 a Yaesu FT-747 transceiver covering HF, 6m, 2m and 70cm was bought by the London Group.

GB2RN/MM

On 4 June 1999, HMS Belfast slipped her moorings and was towed to Portsmouth to have her keel scraped. This was an opportunity to activate GB2RN/MM. On board were Bill Jennings GØIEC



and John van Dyke GMØRYD who operated CW and Bob Wilson GØFEK with Graham Chatfield GØLEH who operated SSB. Because of insurance restrictions, they all had to leave the ship when it reached Tilbury.

Ancillary equipment

Over the years, several Silent Keys have willed their radios and equipment to the BWO. These have been gratefully accepted and bear a plaque to recognise and honour the donor. In 2008/09, automatic ATUs were bought or donated and two computers were donated. The more common modes of CW and SSB were supplemented by RTTY and PSK31 datamodes via the soundcards of the PCs. One BWO PC was connected to the ship's internet server thus giving internet access. Besides giving members the opportunity to email home, it now became possible to access the DX Cluster.

Honour roll

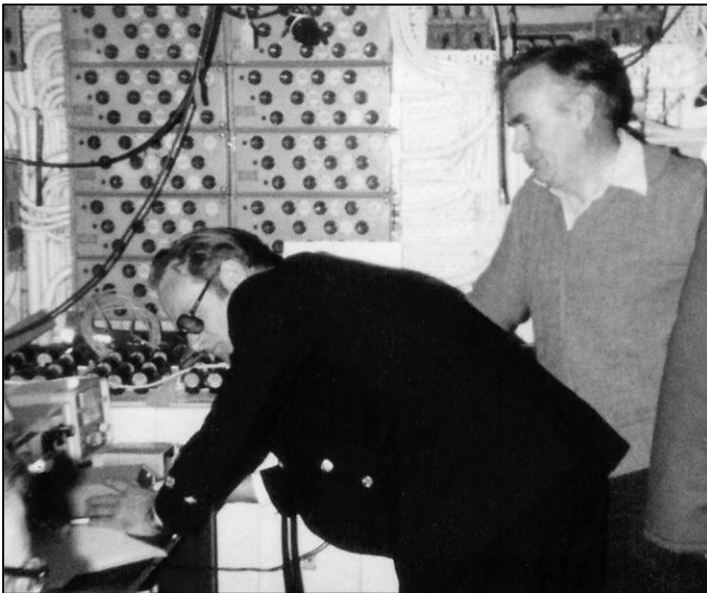
The London Group has been fortunate in having in its membership some individuals with distinguished service backgrounds or others who regularly contributed their time and effort in attending HMS Belfast to help in the continuation of GB2RN. At the AGM in Easter 1998, the Secretary was Ivor Morgan-Jones G6CZL. Ivor was Secretary until 2007. Ivor (now MØIMJ) continues to serve as a Committee Member. Another member who deserves a mention is Len Borley G4LIK (Silent Key) who served on HMS Belfast during World War II.

In the minutes of the 3 Sept 1998 Committee Meeting, Graham Chatfield GØLEH was shown to be Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Awards Manager and Shack Manager. At the 21 June 1998 Committee Meeting, it was announced that Phil Hunt G3LPN was joining the London Group. In 1939, Phil was serving on HMS Achilles at the Battle of the River Plate. Also In 1998, Bob GØFEK had made arrangements with a contact he had in the Tower of London, for the London Group to visit the Tower, to attend the Ceremony of The Keys. This was the initial visit that led to many others through the years.

In May 1993, a Merit Award was granted to Bill Jennings GØIEC for his continued attendance to activate GB2RN on Wednesdays. At

the 2009 AGM, a “bar” was added to his award when he received another certificate of appreciation.

Two stalwarts in the London Group during the first decade of the new millennium were the husband and wife team of Terry and Angela Barclay. They both made a significant contribution into the running of the Group. Terry GØTBD served seven years as Chairman and as he wryly cited in the GB2RN web page “Captain of the Heads”. Angela 2E1GDC took on the post of Catering Manager where she ensured Committee Members never went hungry during the bi-monthly committee meetings. Angela particularly excelled at the Easter Activity Week socials with the marvelous buffet lunches she laid on for the Group. Another stalwart of the same era was Bill Cross GØELZ.



G3LIK & G3JFF in the BWO

Conclusion

So far, I have dealt with the history of the BWO. What does the future hold? At a Committee Meeting in December 2009, Andy Curran, Conservation Manager of HMS Belfast was asked this question. He reported that the ship is well on track for the ongoing

repair program. The outer BWO is to be refurbished as it was back in the 1960s. The RNARS future on HMS Belfast is assured. There will be some cosmetic changes in the BWO to make the modern gear a bit more hidden from the public. The masts are still in poor condition and the situation is ongoing. If needed, the masts will be cut down to short stubs for safety reasons.

The content of this History is the result of reading or listening to the reminiscences of various members, some dead, some still with us. I have trawled through Committee Meeting and AGM minutes and as a result, hopefully members have learned some of the history of our Group. History is an ongoing event so there is room for gaps to be filled. There must be more to add, all contributions are welcome. Please E-mail them to: info@gb2rn.org.uk

My First Ship by your Editor – Part Two

Clear of Keil, we were only one day away from berthing in Gdansk. Now this was 1974 and pre glasnost. Poland was still in the grips of soviet style communism. However there was no real problem going ashore and the town centre was only a short taxi ride from the docks, although every ship did have a couple of armed soldiers at the foot of the gangway to prevent the locals defecting to the decadent West. However we did have to carry our passports or merchant seamans' ID card with us when ashore.

In France we were discharged in twenty-four hours with four massive forty tonne grabs, in Poland we were loaded with three grabs of one tonne capacity from seven tonne rail cars. It was painfully slow and we spent four days loading. In one way it was beneficial, as we could carry out several repairs and checks to the main engine which we couldn't whilst we were at sea.

There was a thriving black market, a taxi up to the town was a couple of packets of razor blades; the driver could sell individual blades for more than the fare. Next, find a pub or restaurant with a pretty girl serving and slip her a couple of bars of quality toilet soap; this resulted in several rounds of drinks or a good meal as good quality perfumed soap was a luxury commodity in Poland.

As you all know I'm a part time pro' magician and I always like to see fellow magicians perform. The company agent had told me about a cabaret club in Gdansk that had a resident magician, so along with the Fourth Engineer, we visited the club. Our entry to the club was paid in razor blades, packets of duty free cigarettes and soap to the waitresses for a good meal while watching the stage show. The magician was the first I'd seen do a version of the girl levitation using working fluorescent light tubes as supports. I'd read about the trick in a magicians magazine and really enjoyed seeing it performed; and performed very well.

However, a fight broke out between a couple of Swedish sailors dancing with local girls just as the magician was finishing his routine. Suspiciously quickly the local police descended on the club and all foreign nationals were shoved into waiting police vans and carted off to the local nick. The Forth and I spent eight miserable hours in a cell measuring about 10' by 8' with three Germans. The stench really was stomach churning; no seats and as the floor was wet with urine, no where to sit. The company agent had us released on bail to be paid in Sterling or US Dollars. Seems it was one way of obtaining much needed foreign currency.

On return to the ship we never heard anything more about it and sailed about ten hours later. My meagre pay was deducted the equivalent amount paid by the agent to the police and again I got a long stern lecture from the Chief, but my good friend the Second Engineer Officer slipped me a fiver so at least I could have a couple of drinks in the saloon to celebrate my seventeenth birthday on our way back to La Havre via the Baltic, Skagerrak and North Sea.

It was on our way back to France and as we entered one of the navigation separation zones at the bottom end of the North Sea we had a calamitous power failure, it was about two in the morning when a deathly silence came over the ship as the main engine and number two generator failed. Under normal steaming, only one of the three generators was required, this allowed us time to undertake planned maintenance on one of the three, the other on standby. I can't recall the reason why the generator failed, but as the heavy fuel oil pumps and purifiers supplying fuel to the main engine were electrically driven, so the main engine packed in as well.

Several vital circuits including power to bridge, nav' lights, telephones and alarms should have switched over to battery power. However, they didn't for a plethora of reasons, chiefly lack of charge in the batteries and failure of the switching relays. It was the silence that awoke me; as I said in part one, my cabin was next to the main entry point for the engine room. Donning my boiler-suit and using a torch for illumination I made my way down to the engine room plates.

There's something very surreal about a deathly quiet engine room sparsely illuminated with the odd emergency light and faint flashes of hand held torches. There was no noise save that of distant voices and the sound of boots on the steel plates and gratings. Even in harbour whilst the main engine would be silent, there would be two of the gennys' running to provide the additional power for ballast and bunkering pumps, so the noise level would still be such that a normal conversation would consist of shouting and hand signs. On La Chacra the three gennys' were powered by Ruston engines of the same type that powered the RNR's EDAT (Extra Deep Armed Team) mine sweepers.

The first thing we did was to get the electrician to disconnect the generators at the main distribution board, fire up the stand by genny' and slowly put power back to the main board for engine room lighting and power to the bridge. This took about twenty minutes. Next we purged the main engine fuel lines of heavy fuel oil which had cooled and solidified. This allowed us to prime the system with lighter diesel oil used during starting and manoeuvring and didn't need heat derived from the main engine to make it sufficiently viscous to use as fuel as is the case with heavy fuel oil. With gas and paraffin blow lamps and lengths of long wire with rags attached rather like rifle cleaning rods, we opened up numerous couplings to clean out the fuel lines from the ready use tanks to the main engine injectors. With full lighting in the engine room this took about one hour; a filthy dirty job which I wouldn't wish on anyone. Heavy fuel oil is quite often washed up on beaches; it looks more as you would imagine road tar than oil.

As the main engine had cooled down, we had to flash up our steam boiler to provide warming steam to pass round the main engine to bring it up to working temperature. With great relief, the Second

opened the air start valve to turn the main engine over a couple of revolutions with the indicator cocks open to remove any fuel that had condensed in the cylinders. Closing the cocks and turning the main engine over there was a collective sigh of relief as the engine fired up. By now it was well into the watch that the Second, his junior and myself kept. Needles to say there was a lot of cleaning up to be done once the others had headed back to bed; there was sticky smelly heavy fuel oil all over the engine room, some of it needed a blow lamp to heat it up and make it easier to clean up.

Going off watch at 08:00 and following a quick shower and a change into uniform, myself and the junior went for breakfast in the saloon. On this particular ship, the Old Man (Captain) sat opposite the Chief Engineer Officer. Next to the captain sat the First Mate who sat opposite the Second Engineer and so it followed down the table. Junior engineers and cadets sat at their own table.

It was at this point that it became apparent that no one had put the Old Man or the Chief on the shake during the incident. Transpired there was a bit of a panic up on the bridge when the NUC (not under command) lights which should have switched over to battery supply didn't. The mates had to rake out the paraffin lamps which required paraffin, light them and hoist them up a signal halyard. The Second Mate later told me that even the marine VHF radio didn't switch over to battery power. This left only a couple of hand-held radios to monitor channel sixteen. Seems there were several calls from other ships in visual range asking if we were dead in the water and required help; probably thinking of a sizable salvage payout. The Third Mate told me our Irish Second Mate responded in a matter of fact way to these calls; *"No trouble at all, don't worry, the engineers are only switching over generators! La Chacra out."*

The Old Man and the Chief started shouting and swearing at who ever was closest to them. Conveniently, the table I was seated at was very close to the door, so I grabbed my plate of bacon, eggs and tomatoes and made to my cabin to finish it off missing out on my cup of tea and slice of toast.

We completed another two runs to Poland and then got orders for Murmansk to pick up a cargo of iron ore. Our Chief Engineer was due for leave and so another took over; Chief Engineer Underwood

was an amiable older man who never lost his temper the way our previous Chief did. He always wore a clean white boiler suit with epaulets of four gold rings on a purple back ground. Underneath his boiler suit he always wore a clean shirt and company tie and when on deck, his cap. It transpired that he spent the bulk of his time on passenger ships and continued to maintain the high standards as had been expected on passenger ships. By comparison we wore very little beneath our heavily stained boiler suits due to the heat in the engine room.

Our passage from France to Murmansk in Northern Russia took a little over a week. The pilot cutter made its way out to us, but rather than use marine VHF, communication was established with an aldis lamp after the Russians didn't respond to calls on marine VHF. The mates struggled being a little rusty on the lamp, but soon we had the pilot, immigration officer, border security officer and political officer (KGB) all aboard. Normally no one other than the pilot would board at the pilot station, any other formalities completed once we were along side.

The first stop for the political officer and border officer was the radio shack, all the main power switches were switch off or fuses pulled, tied off with ribbon and little blobs of hot sealing wax dribbled over them. Next, all personnel off watch were mustered in the saloon with our passports, ID's and discharge books and interviewed by both the political officer and immigration officer and given temporary passes. Each of us was informed that on no account were cameras to be used on the upper deck or taken ashore; the Northern Soviet fleet had a base within sight of the commercial harbour. Clearly they didn't want westerners taking pictures and as I didn't want to be transported to a Siberian salt mine, I never took any photographs.

Those of us with short wave receivers couldn't receive the BBC World Service on HF due to a heterodyne on all the BBC frequencies which Sparks thought had something to do with a van parked about fifty yards away with a couple of aerials poking though the roof. It was the only thing that seemed to run twenty-four hours a day.

The seals in the shack were inspected on a daily basis during our stay. We could however receive BBC Radio Four on long-wave at night; for some reason the authorities forgot about the LF (low frequency) DF (direction finding) receiver on the bridge. So there was a regular procession to the bridge to listen to the BBC on long-wave during the night, we even took notes of the main news headlines and posted them on a notice board for the guys on harbour watch routine.

I can't recall how long the pilotage lasted; it was late December and very cold on deck with the odd bit of ice passing by as we made our way up the river entrance. Once along side, Murmansk looked to me as one of the most dismal places on earth. There was a snow covering, but this did nothing to distract from the gloom. By 14:00 the place was illuminated only by a few distant street lamps and dockside arc lamps which required constant attention from an elderly man who spent his day going from lamp to lamp replacing or re-setting the the carbon rods. The blocks of flats in the distance only appeared to have one room lit at any time and by 22:00 there was a complete black out when the power to the town was shut off for the night.

Normally in any big town you would expect to see motor vehicles of all sizes driving along the roads, here there were only one or two cars and clearly they were ferrying people of importance with blinds drawn in the back, the rest were massive trucks going to and fro to the nearby naval base or the commercial port. The nearby rail freight sidings always had locomotives and trains moving the rail cars full of ore.

Loading began on Christmas Eve, with three cranes with small grabs. There were frequent stoppages as the cranes broke down regularly and required the service of a fitter to get them back on track. I even recall a wire snapping while the Chief and I were doing a weekly check on the lifeboat engines. The grab fell with quite a dunt into the ground narrowly missing a stevedore.

Each grab could take about four loads out of each rail car and then a gang of four workers were sent into each car with shovels to load the ore at the ends of the car which the grabs couldn't extract. How I felt for those poor guys labouring away at the heavy ore in

the freezing cold and falling snow. With electrical power for the cranes only being available for about ten hours a day, we all soon realised that it would be after the New Year before we departed and with nothing ashore other than the Mission to Seaman, it was going to be a very dismal and depressing festive season for us.

In most commercial ports the Mission to Seamen is a haven; a place to exchange library books and the ship's stock of 16mm films (no videos or DVD's then), have a meal, a drink, game of snooker or buy presents for the return home. Due to the restrictions on our movement ashore, we could only go to the mission when it had been prearranged one day in advance and with the associated paperwork all correct. At the prearranged time a mini-bus which was probably built before the invention of the wheel and converted from steam to diesel would stop at the gangway and half a dozen of us would head for the mission.

Once inside the mission we were herded into the library and given a lecture on some aspect of how great it was to live in the USSR and all that was wrong with living in the decadent west. This went on for about half an hour before we could escape to the bar, exchange books or whatever. This occurred every time we visited the mission. Needless to say, after two groups of us had visited and word had got round the ship, no one else intimated any desire to visit the mission and with no night life or tourist spots ashore, we stayed aboard for the rest of our time in Murmansk.

Fortunately our purser had sourced turkey before we left for Murmansk, so Christmas lunch brought some cheer but due to the poor selection of films available at the mission and having viewed the three films we had on board, Chief Underwood hosted a Christmas party with much joke telling and I performed a couple of magic routines. I'd even made up a set of magical linking rings with welding rods from the engine room store.

New Year was much of the same, except this time the agent and port officials visited us bringing a couple of crates of their best vodka. This was possibly the foulest tasting thing to date I've ever put in my mouth. One of the lads was able to run his petrol lighter on it such was the flammability. When I paid off at the end of January, only two bottles of the vodka had been consumed, even if

it was free, we preferred paying for something we could enjoy and didn't leave you voiceless.

Iron ore is a dense cargo, so most of the holds were only about three quarters full before we were down to our load line. Iron ore is possibly the dirtiest cargo known, the coal we'd loaded in Poland wasn't dusty at all and quite clean. Iron ore is dusty and even in the freezing damp, it lay as like desert sand across the ship. Our Somalia ratings spent most of the day-light hours cleaning the stuff off the deck; they clearly felt the cold more than we did wearing every ounce of clothing they had. Between the two generators and the boiler for domestic hot water, we burnt about 2 tonnes of fuel per day such was the demand on energy to keep the accommodation and engine room warm. Alongside elsewhere we burnt about one tonne in any twenty-four hour period.

And so we sailed on the third of January 1975, one of the few dates etched for ever in my mind. We spent four rather than two hours warming the engine through with steam from the boiler in case we induced thermal shock. With the sea temperature well below zero centigrade the engine ran for a lot longer than we expected before we had to introduce sea water to the heat exchanger through which fresh water from the main engine circulated. We'd even experienced problems with ballast water freezing in the tanks when we were pumping out to take on cargo; such was the bitter cold which words fail me to describe adequately. No wonder there was such a high casualty rate on the convoy runs to Russia during World War Two; many of the poor souls must have perished in lifeboats because of the cold.

Our run to Bremerhaven wasn't without incident, after entering the North Sea we hit a storm which forced us to slow right down and sail into the westerly gale for a couple of days before we could turn south again. This delayed our arrival by three days. From there it was a quick flight to London and then the sleeper train home before starting two years at college, boring by comparison but good fun never the less.

Colin – GM6HGW - 1870

EJM closes down on five ton

A Winter night, the wind blowing in off the Atlantic, snow on the mountains nearby. Inside, the warm glow from radio equipment in a radio station perched on the edge of Ireland's North coast. I pulled the Morse key a little closer, peered at the small message notepad on the desk, glanced at the big radio room clock, watching the second hand tick ever closer to midnight. It was the night of the 31st December 1988, a bit of history in the making. Malin Head Radio, callsign EJM was going off the air, for the last time on 500 kHz, and I was the guy rostered to do the honours.

An hour earlier, my fellow Radio Officer, who was manning 2182 kHz and the various VHF channels, glanced at me in surprise as Scheveningen Radio PCH, in Holland, suddenly came up on 500 kHz with a huge signal and announced they were closing down on 500 kHz and 2182 kHz with immediate effect. To say we were surprised was an understatement. Along with Norddeich Radio DAN, in Germany, they were the dominant and most powerful signals on MF. We had long suspected they were running huge amounts of power to a massive antenna. Indeed for a time, Scheveningen Radio had caused us an amount of grief, since they shared our working frequency of 421 kHz and their traffic list broadcast coincided with our 0848 GMT weather broadcast. Imagine how we felt when ships complained that our 1 kW signal was being blotted out by PCH, way off the north west coast.

Our signal was not behind the door, we did get out well to the west, north and the south Irish sea, yet we were trounced good and proper by our Dutch friends, who, obviously, had access to transmitter power well beyond what we had available. So we were surprised to find that they had just taken themselves off the air, just like that, 'in an instant'.

During daylight hours 500 kHz provided solid ground-wave coverage, an excellent system for distress coverage. The provision of numerous coast radio stations, like Malin Head and Valentia Radio, EJK, plus the many thousands of ships all manned by trained Radio Officers, meant that 500 kHz had many many pairs of ears, all listening for any distress, urgency or help, in return.

On the 31st of December 1999, all requirements for the use of 500 kHz ceased, many coast radio stations closed down completely and

ships were no longer required to have a radio officer. Most ships had already been fitted with satellite communications equipment for distress and normal ships business, supplemented by short range VHF and Digital Selective Calling on 2187.5 kHz, plus the Navtex system of broadcasting weather and navigational warnings on 518 kHz and 490 kHz.

However, those of us who had sailed at sea and served ashore in marine radio, mourned the passing of a service on 500 kHz that had proved it's worth and had helped in the saving of many lives since its inception nearly a hundred years before it's eventual closure.

Down in the transmitter room, or High Tension room, as us old timers called it, the big all valve 500 kHz transmitter blowers whined away, masking the gusts of wind beating against the windows. Two banks of Pye 512 kHz 500 kHz and 421 kHz rigs, main and standby, all nicely lined up. A bright warm glow from one cabinet, the common modulator section for all three channels, was visible through a glass panel. The pair of one foot tall, 4212e Triode valves, the output stage of the modulator, produced 500 watts of audio, at a tone of about 800 hz, to fully anode and screen modulate the final stage of the one KW transmitters. The much smaller SSB transmitters, in a row, at the far end of the room, kept silent and waited in respect for their bigger brother's time in history.

Once again I adjusted the Morse key on the 500 kHz desk, the notepad with the close down message was scanned..... again. The 3 minute Silence Period, the time, twice in an hour, when all stations remained just that, SILENT. A chance to hear weak distress calls, from 15 to 18 and 45 to 48 every hour. 2348 GMT, a weak CQ from the Black Sea, Bulgaria on the air, then a rapid stream of Morse from Trieste Radio IQX, belting out his traffic list announcement, followed by Mariehamn Radio OHM, up in a frozen Finland, then a gap.

It was time....CQ CQ CQ DE EJM EJM EJM.... My hand firm on the key, yet inside a mixture of emotions, glad I had been given the chance to send this final transmission, yet very sad, that we were going off the air on 500 kHz; forever. The transmission finished,

500 kHz burst to life, ships and coast radio stations, calling, wishing us good luck, thanks for our service over the years, best wishes for the New Year, one even commenting that their time would also soon be upon them.



Fast forward to 2008 and the IRTS announces their intention to apply for permission for Irish amateurs to operate near 500 kHz, in the 501 - 504 kHz band. Permission is granted by ComReg and I dash off my application for a licence. Imagine how pleased I am to receive permission to put a signal out on 501 kHz all these years later. To say that the band has not disappointed is an understatement. It has given me immense pleasure and pride to radiate a signal there, once again. Working stations across the Atlantic to Canada the USA, to Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland and the UK. Cross band, usually to 80m on 3566 kHz, with France, Germany,

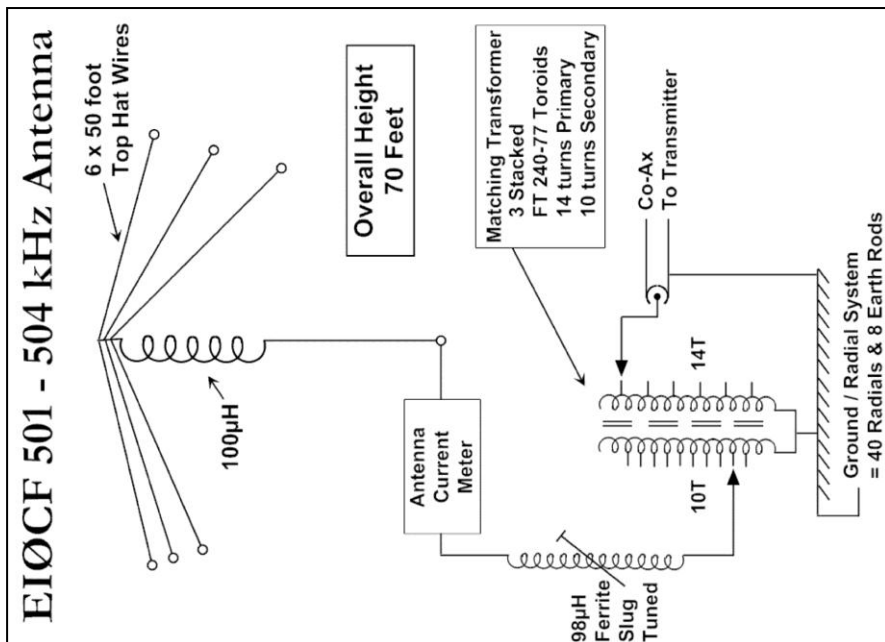
Ukraine, Finland etc, has been a terrific experience. Ireland is on the air again on MF CW. I would urge those considering operating on 500 kHz to have a go, it will widen your operating horizons.

Don't imagine that Morse will be sent at a very fast speed. It is a most leisurely rate, sent by people who would just love to welcome you aboard and help you reach your new radio destinations. If digital and data is more of an interest, WSPR is quite popular, and the WSPR programme and help files are easy to download. My reception of weak signals from the UK, Europe and the USA prove it is a viable means for those with low power, small antenna or minimal ERP. Set your receiver to 502.4 kHz USB and let the WSPR programme decode the results. You can then upload what you have received to a common site and those experimenting can see how far their signals are radiating and at what time.

Many more countries are joining those already allowed to operate on MF. Let me take this opportunity to thank the IRTS for their work in making all this possible on 501 - 504 kHz.

Finbar O'Connor, EI0CF

Malin, County Donegal



Obituary - Bill McConnachie MM0WPM

The funeral of the late Bill McConnachie took place at Inverness Crematorium on Friday 19th March 2010. Several members sent messages of condolence and the Society was represented by John, GM4VUG. During the Service a letter from our Chairman, G3LIK was read out. This was well received and appreciated by Bill's family.

Avimore is perhaps best known as a Winter Sports venue, but to radio amateurs worldwide, it is perhaps, better known as the QTH

of Bill, who, with his strong signal and the familiar call, both on SSB and CW of; "Mike Mike, Zero, Whisky, Papa, Mike" certainly placed it on the map. Bill joined the RN in 1942 and trained as a telegraphist, starting perhaps his long fascination with radio communications. In 1948 Bill married His late Wife, Dorothy and was shortly afterwards posted overseas to the Middle East and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). He also saw service at Bletchly Park.

After leaving the RN in his mid 30's Bill lived in Surrey before in 1971 returning to Scotland and settling in Avimore, He purchased a public house called The Winking Owl (which, by the way is still there). Through good friendly management and ably assisted by His family, the "Winky" soon became the centre of friendly activity when Winter Sports made Avimore a household name. Even through this busy period Bill retained his enthusiasm for radio by being a SWL. When he eventually retired Bill acquired the call of MM0WPM and using both CW and SSB Bill made contacts and friends worldwide. One day in 1999, during the early hours Bill picked up and deciphered an SOS from a ship reporting to be drifting and on fire off the Venezuelan coast. Bill relayed this to the coastguard at Aberdeen and later received acknowledgement and appreciation from the international rescue co-ordinator in Swansea who confirmed they had been unable to pinpoint the vessel until they had received Bill's information. This confirmed Bill's faith in, what is now perhaps seen as old fashioned CW, of which He remained a great exponent right up to the end.

Bill appreciated His membership of the Society, such, that at the grand age of 80 He made the long trip to Collingwood to attend the RNARS AGM

A very modest, honest and genuine person Bill will be missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

John - GM4VUG

Merchant Navy tribute appeal

A public appeal has begun to help pay for a new memorial to the thousands of Scottish merchant navy personnel who lost their lives at sea. The Merchant Navy Memorial Trust (Scotland) aims to build a 15ft (4.5m) sandstone column at the Shore in Leith. It has been

designed by award-winning Scottish sculptor Jill Watson, but will cost £180,000 to erect.

The trust has already raised £125,000, and has appealed for public donations to help raise the remainder. HRH The Princess Royal, who is patron of the trust, has backed the public appeal. The memorial, which the trust aims to unveil in November, will commemorate the 6,500 Scottish merchant navy personnel who gave their lives in the two world wars, other theatres of conflict and during peacetime, in service along the trading routes of the world.

It will also recognise the 132 years of service dedicated to the merchant navy by Leith Nautical College and its training ship; Dolphin. The Shore was chosen as the location for new memorial as Leith was Scotland's premier port for more than 300 years, and served as Edinburgh's trading port for more than 700 years.

Edinburgh Lord Provost George Grubb said: "There are countless families here in Edinburgh, across Scotland and beyond whose forebears served this country at sea; "I very much hope this call for support will be answered and allow us to erect this permanent memorial here in Scotland's capital. This monument will be of national and international importance and significance."

William Thomson, chairman of the Merchant Navy Memorial Trust (Scotland), said: "Having spent my working life involved in the merchant navy, I am delighted that at last proper recognition is to be given to merchant navy seafarers, whose contribution to our nation's welfare has gone almost unnoticed. This is so deserved. We aim to raise £180,000 to achieve the objective of the trust and so far have raised, mainly from shipping sources, just over £125,000. We still have some way to go and are appealing to the general public, particularly those with merchant seafaring connections, to support this very worthwhile charitable cause which is already attracting international interest."

For more information: www.merchantnavymemorialtrust.org.uk



International Naval Contest Results - 2009

Class "A" – All Band, Mixed Mode, Single Operator

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	DF4BV	MF742	1622	111	180042
2	ON25BELGICA	BM005	1236	61	75396
3	G3LIK	RN004	955	73	69715
4	ON4CBM	CA082	767	57	43719
5	DF7PM	MF777	484	36	17424
6	CT1ANO	PN067	463	36	16668
7	YO4AAC	YO025	439	35	15365
8	CT1EKY	PN010	368	26	9568
9	CT1CZT	PN001	249	23	5727
10	IQ9MQ	MI300	243	23	5589
11	HB9DAR	CA111	205	20	4100
12	IT9DTU	MI014	187	18	3366
13	F8ATS	PN068	210	16	3360
14	CT1IPB	PN069	152	8	1216
15	DL1NL	MF779	40	4	160

Class "B" – All Band, CW, Single Operator

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	LY2MM	MI426	2104	128	269312
2	4Z5LA	MF936	1890	109	206010
3	PA2PCH	MA467	1098	90	98820
4	DL2HUM	CA031	917	66	60522
5	I6HWD	IN337	857	69	59133
6	OH1LD	FN001	850	60	51000
7	DK6LH	CA141	801	62	49662
8	HA2RQ	MF582	828	52	43056
9	PA3CTK	MA003	667	50	33350
10	PA2REH	MA153	603	54	32562
11	DL2AMF	MF508	589	49	28861
12	PA3CWG	MA010	567	46	26082
13	DL3HRH	MF542	560	45	25200
14	DL9CM	IN575	518	46	23828
15	DJ9WB	MF025	546	43	23478
16	PA3EVV	MA314	501	40	20040

17	PA3EBA	MA112	502	38	19076
18	DK2VN	MF857	472	40	18880
19	I1MQ	IN419	459	40	18360
20	OH3VX	FN016	495	37	18315
21	DL6BAI	MF343	442	41	18122
22	PA3DNH	MA099	427	35	14945
23	DJ6TK	MF328	421	35	14735
24	OE1JJB	CA043	392	34	13328
25	G32NR	RN4496	407	32	13024
26	PA0MBD	MA422	385	30	11550
27	DL6KHW	MF793	338	31	10478
28	HZ1PS	RN1440	346	29	10034
29	SP6LV	MF814	341	29	9889
30	PA2CHM	MA026	331	28	9268
31	PA3CCQ	MA330	317	28	8876
32	DL5HCS	MF308	283	28	7924
33	DJ1PQ	MF588	337	23	7751
34	G3YAJ	RN3384	303	23	6969
35	PA5P	MA451	270	25	6750
36	IK7TVE	IN348	253	23	5819
37	OE1TKW	CA109	243	22	5346
38	DL9LBQ	CA029	245	21	5145
39	ON7CK	BM124	248	20	4960
40	OE4PWW	CA135	232	20	4640
41	CT1BWW	PN053	227	20	4540
42	PI9MER	RN2176	219	20	4380
43	DL1EV	MF245	216	19	4104
44	G0IBN	RN3314	206	19	3914
45	G0PSE	RN4831	162	15	2430
46	EA8CN	RN4240	156	14	2184
47	DF1RL	MF721	163	13	2119
48	PA3EVY	MA164	160	12	1920
49	OE6NFK	CA058	118	10	1180
50	OH8UL	FN048	104	9	936
51	ON6PQ	BM125	88	7	616
52	DP1POL	MF932	77	7	539
53	PD0LGG	MA465	60	5	300
54	OK1FCA	RN4639	69	4	276

55	DL8NBM	MF321	52	5	260
56	OE1WED	CA079	40	4	160

Class “C” – All Band, SSB, Single Operator

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	CT1EHK	PN055	228	9	2052
2	DF7QN	MF778	72	7	504
3	CT1AKJ	PN024	60	6	360
4	CT1FAN	PN011	62	5	310

Class “D” – All Band, SWL, Single Operator

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	R3A847	SWL	894	88	78672
2	HE9SOL	SWL	800	78	62400
3	LZ1G42	SWL	712	65	46280
4	OE1 -1001007	SWL	453	37	16761
5	USQ73	SWL	299	29	8671
6	OK1-11861	SWL	135	12	1620

Class “E” – Naval Club Station, All Band, Mixed Mode, Multi Op

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	OH1NAVY	FN150	2107	135	284445
2	II2IGTO	MI850	1172	90	105480
3	OZ0MF	MF960	1014	83	84162
4	DL0MFH	MF900	1002	77	77154
5	DL0MF	MF1000	905	83	75115
6	PI4MRC	MA199	780	71	55380
7	CS5NRA	PN100	566	46	26036
8	DK0MHD	MF1005	411	38	15618
9	DL0MFS	MF600	366	32	11712
10	CS5DFG	PN150	223	17	3791

Class “F” – Non Naval

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	UA9CSA	Non member	1911	115	219765
2	UA4LS	Non member	1231	135	166185
3	G3RFH	Non member	1291	89	114899
4	YO9AGI	Non member	1010	72	72720

5	DF7GG	Non member	951	67	63717
6	PA0JED	Non member	822	60	49320
7	UW1WU	Non member	809	57	46113
8	LY3QA	Non member	814	56	45584
9	HA1AG	Non member	668	60	40080
10	HG8C	Non member	631	51	32181
11	DK8NT	Non member	653	47	30691
12	RK3MWC	Non member	623	48	29904
13	RA3XA	Non member	570	46	26220
14	RA1TV	Non member	547	39	21333
15	YT8A	Non member	490	42	20580
16	UT3EK	Non member	591	34	20094
17	YO9OC	Non member	525	38	19950
18	RU4SO	Non member	533	33	17589
19	LZ1FJ	Non member	450	38	17100
20	RA3BQ	Non member	444	35	15540
21	ES4MM	Non member	425	34	14450
22	UA1ZZ	Non member	399	29	11571
23	CT4CH	Non member	380	30	11400
24	YO3JW	Non member	345	30	10350
25	HA8WP	Non member	339	30	10170
26	DL3SEM	Non member	363	28	10164
27	LY3BY	Non member	338	26	8788
28	RV3ZN	Non member	304	24	7296
29	RZ6AK	Non member	314	21	6594
30	RA9CEX	Non member	266	21	5586
31	DL1EAL	Non member	246	21	5166
32	LY2SA	Non member	234	21	4914
33	EU1DZ	Non member	218	18	3924
34	RA0AA	Non member	230	16	3680
35	UN7CH	Non member	206	17	3502
36	UR5AW	Non member	211	16	3376
37	LZ7H	Non member	198	16	3168
38	RK4PB	Non member	186	16	2976
39	EW6GF	Non member	196	15	2940
40	EA1PX	Non member	191	15	2865
41	RV3NB	Non member	197	13	2561
42	CT1END	Non member	201	12	2412

43	PA0HGL	Non member	151	15	2265
44	PA3CLQ	Non member	161	11	1771
45	RA3XCZ	Non member	149	11	1639
46	PA3CLQ	Non member	161	10	1610
47	RN2FQ	Non member	146	10	1460
48	RW0AJ	Non member	127	11	1397
49	OH1AL	Non member	119	11	1309
50	DL4VQ	Non member	101	10	1010
51	IZ3KMY	Non member	105	8	840
52	DC3HK	Non member	84	8	672
53	DL0SM	Non member	75	7	525
54	LY1RB	Non member	70	6	420
55	DL2ZA	Non member	64	6	384
56	OH1BOI	Non member	63	6	378
57	DJ6BQ	Non member	67	5	335
58	UR5FCM	Non member	65	5	325
59	CT1AGF	Non member	42	4	168
60	DH5MM	Non member	50	2	100
61	DL2SWW	Non member	30	3	90
62	YO3FVR	Non member	27	2	54
63	TA1DX	Non member	11	1	11
64	SQ9FMU	Non member	10	1	10

RESULTS BY NAVAL CLUBS

ARMY

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	LY2MM	MI426	2104	128	269312
2	II2IGTO	MI850	1172	90	105480
3	IQ9MQ	MI300	243	23	5589
4	IT9DTU	MI014	187	18	3366

BMARS

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	ON25BELGICA	BM005	1236	61	75396
2	ON7CK	BM124	248	20	4960
3	ON6PQ	BM125	88	7	616

MFCA

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	DL2HUM	CA031	917	66	60522
2	DK6LH	CA141	801	62	49662
3	ON4CBM	CA082	767	57	43719
4	OE1JJB	CA043	392	34	13328
5	OE1TKW	CA109	243	22	5346
6	DL9LBQ	CA029	245	21	5145
7	OE4PWW	CA135	232	20	4640
8	HB9DAR	CA111	205	20	4100
9	OE6NFK	CA058	118	10	1180
10	OE1WED	CA079	40	4	160

FNARS

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	OH1NAVY	FN150	2107	135	284445
2	OH1LD	FN001	850	60	51000
3	OH3VX	FN016	495	37	18315
4	OH8UL	FN048	104	9	936

INORC

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	I6HWD	IN337	857	69	59133
2	DL9CM	IN575	518	46	23828
3	I1MQ	IN419	459	40	18360
4	IK7TVE	IN348	253	23	5819

MARAC

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	PA2PCH	MA467	1098	90	98820
2	PI4MRC	MA199	780	71	55380
3	PA3CTK	MA003	667	50	33350
4	PA2REH	MA153	603	54	32562
5	PA3CWG	MA010	567	46	26082
6	PA3EVV	MA314	501	40	20040
7	PA3EBA	MA112	502	38	19076
8	PA3DNH	MA099	427	35	14945
9	PA0MBD	MA422	385	30	11550

10	PA2CHM	MA026	331	28	9268
12	PA3CCQ	MA330	317	28	8876
13	PA5P	MA451	270	25	6750
14	PA3EVY	MA164	160	12	1920
15	PD0LGG	MA465	60	5	300

MF RUNDE

Place	Call Sign	NavY No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	4Z5LA	MF936	1890	109	206010
2	DF4BV	MF742	1622	111	180042
3	OZ0MF	MF960	1014	83	84162
4	DL0MFH	MF900	1002	77	77154
5	DL0MF	MF1000	905	83	75115
6	HA2RQ	MF582	828	52	43056
7	DL2AMF	MF508	589	49	28861
8	DL3HRH	MF542	560	45	25200
9	DJ9WB	MF025	546	43	23478
10	DK2VN	MF857	472	40	18880
11	DL6BAI	MF343	442	41	18122
12	DF7PM	MF777	484	36	17424
13	DK0MHD	MF1005	411	38	15618
14	DJ6TK	MF328	421	35	14735
15	DL0MFS	MF600	366	32	11712
16	DL6KHW	MF793	338	31	10478
17	SP6LV	MF814	341	29	9889
18	DL5HCS	MF308	283	28	7924
19	DJ1PQ	MF588	337	23	7751
20	DL1EV	MF245	216	19	4104
21	DF1RL	MF721	163	13	2119
22	DP1POL	MF932	77	7	539
23	DF7QN	MF778	72	7	504
24	DL8NBM	MF321	52	5	260
25	DL1NL	MF779	40	4	160

RNARS

Place	Call Sign	Naval #	Points	Mlps	Score
1	G3LIK	RN004	955	73	69715
2	G32NR	RN4496	407	32	13024

3	HZ1PS	RN1440	346	29	10034
4	G3YAJ	RN3384	303	23	6969
5	PI9MER	RN2176	219	20	4380
6	G0IBN	RN3314	206	19	3914
7	G0PSE	RN4831	162	15	2430
8	EA8CN	RN4240	156	14	2184
9	OK1FCA	RN4639	69	4	276

YO-MARC

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	YO4AAC	YO025	439	35	15365

NRA

Place	Call Sign	Navy No	Points	Multiplier	Score
1	CS5NRA	PN100	566	46	26036
2	CT1ANO	PN067	463	36	16668
3	CT1EKY	PN011	368	26	9568
4	CT1CZT	PN001	249	23	5727
5	CT1BWW	PN053	227	20	4540
6	CS5DFG	PN150	223	17	3791
7	F8ATS	PN068	210	16	3360
8	CT1EHK	PN055	228	9	2052
9	CT1IPB	PN069	152	8	1216
10	CT1AKJ	PN024	60	6	360
11	CT1FAN	PN011	62	5	310

Closing Down - Editorial

Firstly a gripe; mistakes do and can occur; it is human nature. Living in Scotland I can't attend the AGM or other functions due to time, cost and other constraints. Therefore I can't always put names to faces when pictures are sent in by willing volunteers without whom there wouldn't be reports from the various gatherings and rallies. The Newsletter needs contributors; otherwise there simply wouldn't be a Newsletter. All I ask is that you contact me first if you spot any inaccuracies; not post your comments on internet forums or send them to the committee. If after sending your comments to me and you feel there is still an issue, then by all means make your views known to the committee; but please don't half cock your pistol with a few grains of damp black-powder followed by an ounce of mixed shot and fire off

before contacting me; and if you think you are immune from making mistakes and can do better, the role of editor is yours.



Now that I've got that off my chest, thanks again to everyone who has contributed to this issue, as always it's a welcomed relief to have the support of so many members who take the time and effort to submit items and send their views to me by letter, e-mail or telephone; thanks to you all.

As editor of the Newsletter, I have to remind myself of its purpose and therefore what order and preference I give to submitted items. Well, it is a Newsletter, so RNARS news is the first priority; therefore reports and items from the committee take the highest priority; ever mindful that not all members can join in nets or receive the weekly e-news service. Clearly much of the winter issue has to be given over to the AGM as the Newsletter is still the principal way this information is received by members. Next on the list; reminisces and accounts of service life. This is followed by radio related items, however this is one I have to juggle with when short of space as there's a plethora of published articles in books, magazine and on the 'net, but never the less, if I can, I will always try and find space for them.

Important – E-mailing me

My e-mail address for Newsletter related items is: **rnars@colinsmagic.com** I'd also like to remind everyone, when using this address, please remember; **ensure only one of the following is in the subject header; Newsletter, RNARS, RN, NAVY, or MN** (upper or lower case can be used). Anything else or any additions in the subject header and your e-mail will be treated as spam by the server I use and automatically deleted. I always acknowledge received e-mails, so if a couple of days pass and you haven't received an acknowledgment, please check the address you used and what was entered in the subject header and re-send your e-mail.

As always, pictures are very welcome. When I set out the Newsletter, I normally add images to relevant articles a week or so before sending the completed Newsletter to Doug Bowen to take to the printers. This allows me to resize and adjust the pictures to the space available, so the higher the resolution the better as it allows me more leeway when cropping and sizing the images into an article.

Now that size as well as weight dictates postage costs, in order to keep within the limits set by the Royal Mail, this and subsequent issues will be maximum of fifty-four pages.

Other than AGM reports, the **closing date for the winter issue will be the 10th October**. In his capacity as Secretary, Joe Kirk was quick off the mark to get all the reports to me just a few days following the last AGM, for which I'm grateful. So please note that only AGM minutes from Joe will be accepted after the tenth as they have priority; until the winter edition, all the very best to you all and keep the reports and articles coming in.

Aye yours, Colin GM6HGW

50th Anniversary Lapel Badge



Available now and can be ordered on the commodities order form. The badge is produced in full colour, reproduced here in black and white. It is about 3cm wide featuring the society's logo against a white ensign.

Caption Competition

I had a total of thirty-two responses to the last caption competition; sadly I suffered a catastrophic failure of the lap-top I was using for the Newsletter and lost the replies, my apologies to all who sent in an entry. I've since had to purchase a new lap-top. So here's another picture for you and I hope that you'll all have some fun coming up with a caption.



RNARS Nets; all frequencies +/- QRM. DX nets are all GMT, UK nets are GMT or BST as appropriate, any changes, please let Mick know.

UK Nets

Day	Time	Frequency MHz	Net	Control Station
Sun	0830	3.667	SSB Net-News at 0900	G3LIK
	1000	7.055	Northern Net	GM4BKV
	1100	145.4	Cornish VHF Net	G0GRY
	1100	7.02	CW Net	G4TNI
Mon-Fri	1030-1330	3.74 / 7.055	Bubbly Rats	G0HMS-G0GPO G3OZY-G0VIX
Mon	1400	3.575	QRS CW	G0VCV-G3OZY
	1900	3.743	North West SSB-News 22:00	G0GBI
Tue	1900	3.528	CW	G3LCS
Wed	1400	3.74 / 7.055	White Rose	G3OZY
	1930	3.74	SSB & News 22:00	Vacant
	2000	145.4	Stand Easy	G1HHP
Thur	1900	3.542	Scottish CW	GM0RNR/P
	2000 GMT	1.835	Top Band CW	G0CHV/G4KJD
	2000	145.575	Scottish 2M	GM0KTJ/P
Fri	1600	10.118	30M CW	SM3AHM
Sat	0830	3.74 / 7.055	NE Saturday	G0DLH/G0VIX

DX Nets

Day	Time	Frequency MHz	Net	Control Station
Daily	0400	7.075	ANARS SSB	VK2CAM/VK2SEA
	0430	14.275	ANARS SSB	ZL1FON/ZL1SEA
	0800	14.303	Maritime Mobile	G4FRN
	1800	14.303	Maritime Mobile	G4FRN
Mon	0930	3.52	ANARS CW	VK4CWC
	0930	3.615	VK SSB	VK1RAN / VK2RAN
Wed	0118 - 0618	7.02	VK CW	VK4RAN
	0148 - 0648	10.118	VK CW DX	VK4RAN
	0800	3.62	ZL SSB	ZL1BSA
	0930	7.02	VK CW	VK5RAN
	0945	7.09	VK SSB	VK1RAN/VK5RAN
Sat	0400	7.09	VK SSB	VK2CCV
	1330	7.02	VK CW	VK2CCV
	1400	7.09	KV SSB DX	VK2CCV
	1430	21.36	RNARS DX	WA1HMW
Sun	0500	14.052	ANARS	Vacant
	0800	7.015 / 3.555	MARAC CW	PA3EBA/PI4MRC
	1230	14.335	Isle of Man	GD3LSF/OE8NIK
	1430	21.36 / 28.94	RNARS DX	WA1HMW
	1800	E-QSO	When cond' poor	VA3ICC
	1900	14.305	N American	WA1HMW

RNARS activity frequencies:

FM	145.4								
CW	1.824	3.52	7.02	10.118	14.052	18.087	21.052	24.897	28.052
SSB	1.965	3.66	3.74	7.055	14.294	14.335	18.15	21.36	28.94

RNARS Commodities List and Order Form

Feel free to use a photocopy of this form

Write clearly and use block CAPITALS

Call-sign & RNARS No: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Phone number: _____

Item	Qty	Size	Price	P & P	Total
Sweatshirt (Grey or Navy) with small logo			12-50	2-50	
T Shirt (Navy blue) with large logo			6-50	1-00	
Tie (Navy blue) RNARS logo			5-50	0-50	
Logbook (if ordering one)			3-10	1-40	
*** Logbook (if ordering two) ***			6-20	2-30	
Baseball cap with RNARS logo			4-50	1-00	
Car windscreen sticker			0-40	SAE	
Blazer badge with logo in gold wire			8-50	SAE	
Tea / Coffee mug with logo			1-50	1-00	
Coasters with logo			1-00	0-45	
Lapel badges			1-50	0-45	
NEW 50th Anniversary lapel badge			3-00	0-45	
Total enclosed					

Sizes: Small 32-34, Medium 36-38, Large 40-42, X-Large 44-46+

***** Buy two logbooks and save fifty pence! *****

Please send form together with PO or cheque made payable to RNARS to: Doug Bowen GOMIU 14 Braemar Rd, Gosport, PO13 0YA

Overseas members, please add £5-00 to cover additional postage.

Please allow fourteen days for delivery and while these prices are correct when going to press, prices do vary and are subject to change.