

The Newsletter of the

# **Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society**

**Spring 2011**



RRS James Clark Ross entering Montevideo  
(See page 6)

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The RNARS is affiliated to the RSGB

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Patron: Admiral Sir Peter Abbott KCB RN  
President: Commodore Paul Sutermeister DL RN  
The Gables, Barton le Street, Malton, YO17 6PN  
Chair: Doug Hotchkiss G4BEQ Lt Cdr. MBE QCB RN  
54 Sanderling Lodge, Gosport, PO12 1EN  
Vice Chair: Mick Puttick G3LIK  
Treasurer: Adrian Mori M3ZNU [adrian.mori@ntlworld.com](mailto:adrian.mori@ntlworld.com)  
33 Valerian Road, Southampton, SO30 0GR  
Mem' Sec: Doug Bowen G0MIU 14 Braemar Rd, Gosport, PO13 0YA  
Gen' Sec: Joe Kirk G3ZDF 111 Stockbridge Road, Chichester, PO19 8QR  
Ex Officio: WO1 Rosie Dodd, HMS Collingwood  
Committee: Wally Blythe, Keith Ray, Ray Ezra, Mac McGuinness  
Doug Bowen, Toni Mori, Les Horne, Phil Manning

### **RNARS Managers**

Commodities: Doug Bowen G0MIU 14 Braemar Rd, Gosport, PO13 0YA  
[rnarscommodities@btinternet.com](mailto:rnarscommodities@btinternet.com)  
Awards: Vacant  
Call List: Sid Will GM4SID 53 Bishop Forbes Crs, Aberdeen, AB21 0TW  
Website: Joe Kirk G3ZDF 111 Stockbridge Road, Chichester, PO19 8QR  
Data Comms: Diana Prothero G0RNO [rnars2news@btinternet.com](mailto:rnars2news@btinternet.com)  
Newsletter: Colin Topping GM6HGW – **See editorial for contact details**  
HQ Station: Toni Mori M1AFM 07729 959553  
35 Oliver Road, Woodmill, Southampton, SO18 2JQ  
Area Rep: Wally Walker G4DIU  
Co-ordinator: 26 Sketchley Court, Dogwood Avenue, Bulwell, NG6 7DL

### **Overseas Managers**

Australia: Vacant – Subs to the membership secretary  
West Australia: Gerald Wild  
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 DLOMF  
USA: Vacant  
New Zealand: Nigel Hardy ZL2TX  
PO Box 15078, Otaki Railway, Otaki, 5543, New Zealand  
QSL Printer: UX5UO – Details: [QRZ.com](http://QRZ.com)  
NL printers: Perfect Publications Ltd, Gosport, Hants, PO13 0FQ

## 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. **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 Road, Waterloo, 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.

**Very Important Contact News - Doug Bowen (membership and commodities manager).** Due to a problem with BT, the following addresses have been cancelled: [rnars.membership@btinternet.com](mailto:rnars.membership@btinternet.com) & [rnars.commodities@btinternet.com](mailto:rnars.commodities@btinternet.com) and been replaced. For membership enquires please use: **[rnarsmembership@btinternet.com](mailto:rnarsmembership@btinternet.com)** and for commodities: **[rnarscommodities@btinternet.com](mailto:rnarscommodities@btinternet.com)**

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## **Chairman's Chat**

I have designated 2011 as a **Recruiting Year**. We must seriously increase our numbers as they are decreasing at an alarming rate. I have asked Bill G3TQM, to update a slide show he prepared a few years ago to show to visitors to the HQ shack. Once this has been done it will be made available to all who wish a copy so that they can present it to their local club, be it radio, yacht, sea cadet or anywhere they feel they can drum up interest. Now that the rules of membership have been relaxed there is a great world out there to recruit from. I sincerely hope all members will take part, and not assume "somebody should do something"; as from today, you are officially rated a "Somebody". The committee will be taking a very active part in this in the local area.

Sometimes I wonder how many of you actually read the newsletter? Each year you are reminded about checking your sub payments, be it Bankers Orders or other means, the date which they are due and actual amounts. Every year the Membership Secretary has to send out reminders which not only takes time but also costs money.

In the last Newsletter I issued a reminder that my email address is **g4beq@btinternet.com** and has been for over two years and widely promulgated in this publication, Diana's weekly e-news and on the RNARS web site. Yet some of you still insist on sending it to my old address, which I rarely check. I try to answer emails addressed to me within forty-eight hours, but if you send it to the wrong address, how can I? Please check and if required, up-date your address book.

The Newsletter is now available by email which means quicker delivery, glorious colour and a great money saver for the society. If the majority of members received it that way it might be possible to reduce our subs which would be a great asset in these hard economic times. The cost of postage and printing is the most expensive outlay from our funds.

I am ever grateful to our editor Colin, and Doug for the hard work and dedication they put into making sure you get this publication.

Finally it has been brought up again for consideration that the AGM takes place in a different venue other than HMS Collingwood.

I and the committee have no objection to this taking. However, your suggestions and participation is required. If it is held elsewhere are you prepared to carry out all the arrangements needed? You will need to establish the costs involved, how many are willing to attend, is the venue easily accessed by public transport etc? Please let me have you views within the next month as booking these venues often requires several months notice. I should point out that Collingwood costs us nothing, price of lunch is very reasonable and we have the HQ Shack available for use as well as security of our vehicles, with no parking charges.

One moan we often get is that there is no accommodation. Those days are sadly gone forever. With establishments closing at a rapid rate and personnel being crammed into one area, accommodation is at a premium. Nowadays some service personnel who attend courses in Collingwood cannot be accommodated and have to live outside the establishment.

*Doug G4BEQ*

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### **RNARS on Belgian Television**

A member of our radio club (ON4OS), met a television crew filming in Ostend. He informed them that radio amateurs, could contact the world. The Producer was a bit sceptical about this and asked if they could come to our club and film us. We invited the



television crew and I was filmed during a CW QSO with my good friend Vince K7VV in Oregon. The production team were very impressed.

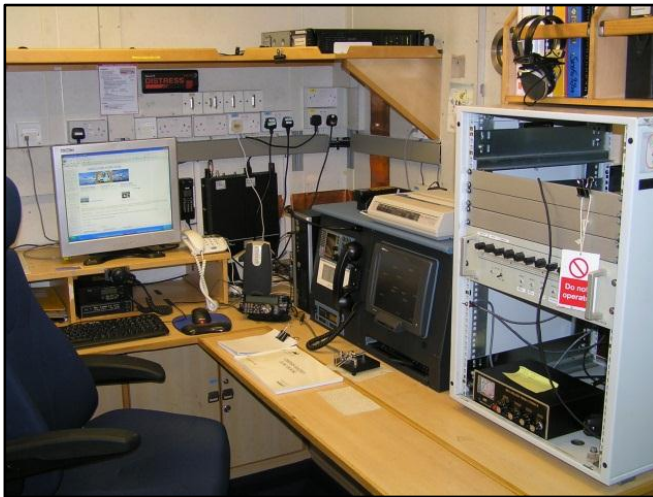
*Roger Vandebussche ON6WR RNARS 1282*

## **Frustration Free Communications**

This article is a follow up to the very interesting one written by **Roy France** in the Summer 2010 Newsletter.

I first went to sea rather late in life, having started my working life in a bank. With prospects not very good, the work somewhat tedious and the opportunities to see the world non-existent, I was saved when I spotted a small advert in my local paper that was titled; 'See the World as a Ship Radio Officer'. After three years of study and not a drop of salt water in sight, I qualified with the Marine Radio General Certificate.

At the time, in the late 80's, the job situation for a junior RO was not great and the only company that I could find employment with was the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. During my training I was lucky to meet up with Mike Matthews and Mick Puttick and so became a member of the RNARS. My career with the RFA was fairly short. The disadvantage of working with them was that there was at least three if not more Radio Officers on board, in order to cover all the watches, and as such the responsibility was not great. I think the most exciting thing was setting the crypto codes at midnight, it certainly was not going to far flung shores – my first foreign port was Oban!



Then the ideal job came my way as the Radio Officer on-board the RRS Bransfield, working for the British Antarctic Survey. Long trips and full responsibility for all the equipment was what I was looking for at the time, along with working in a fantastic environment and also being able to operate Maritime Mobile on the amateur bands. In 1990 comms had moved on from Roy's era; although I did still use the key to send a TR on entering or leaving port, and sending the weather once in a while when bored. Most of our communications were via either fax or telex, using the original Inmarsat A satellite system. It would be unusual for us to send more than about half a page of A4 per day in 'official' messages. The main use of CW, apart from 500 kHz, was when I was receiving the weather forecast from Brazil as the ship headed either north or south.

About two years later I had progressed to a small laptop to prepare messages on but we still relied on fax for the bulk of our communications. At the time the cost of a satellite call was in the region of £6 per minute and so this was not really a cheap option. One of the great joys of this time was the daily HF schedules that we used to have with Faraday Base (down the Antarctic Peninsula) in order to pass on the weather numbers three times a day and to also catch up on gossip from all the bases. It was during these schedules that we would also arrange further scheds as and when required for the various folk on-board to chat to the bases. To call a base via the satellite would encounter a double hop and so cost twice as much. HF was free and generally worked very well.

During the early 90's I would often do HF calls via Portishead Radio, band conditions were good and the price was much cheaper than Inmarsat. One year I was in the vicinity of Halley Base (at about 76° South) when I heard Portishead finish a traffic list and have no customers and so gave him a call. Perfect conditions and excellent comms and when I told the operator that I had no traffic and just wanted to let him know how good his signal was, he asked if I would like the latest football results. A service that no one longer gets.

By the mid 90's we had acquired our first e-mail system, using a second hand VAX computer system (running Linux) which had been purchased off the back of a lorry in a pub car park, and this

saw an increase in the volume of messages. However, we were restricted in who we could send mail to, this basically was just within the British Antarctic Survey. My life was perhaps getting easier as all I had to do was package up the messages and fire them off and collect the incoming mail, print it off and pass it to the recipient. No mailboxes on-board at this time and the data connection was made just once per day.

Towards the late 90's the Inmarsat A terminals were replaced with Sat B, which gave us a cheaper mode of communication (down to about £2 per minute) and also allowing faster data transfer times. Also at about this time the PC had firmly landed on board. Initially all PC's fitted on ships had to be specially mounted in shock-proof frames so that they would not be damaged by the motion of the ship in rough weather. It was soon discovered that this was way over the top (having seen a PC flung from a desk across the deck and work without any trouble at all) this was soon abandoned and PC's were just bolted directly to desk and worktops. Direct e-mail also appeared at about this time and so now all on-board could send messages and attachments to anyone with an e-mail address. Whilst this is now taken for granted by almost everyone, in those days it was still a novelty to be able to send a message and get a reply within twenty-four hours and the data schedules would now be two or even three times in a day.





The other change in the mid 90's was the introduction of the Global Maritime Distress Safety System (GMDSS) which was the death knell for the Radio Officer, as distress operation moved away from CW and 500kHz to a simple to use (and as found in the years since the introduction; abuse) DSC calling system that operates on VHF, MF and HF and results in alarms being received from all over the globe and not just within a few hundred miles from your vessel. I still maintain that passing the responsibility of distress communications to a Deck Officer is not well thought out, as he is going to be far busier with other issues should his ship be in a situation that a distress need to be sent. Fortunately due to the requirement for talking with the Antarctic bases and ships on HF still, the role of the Radio Officer remained with the BAS, although there have been some changes in the job description, which I will mention at the end of this article.

The next advance for shipboard communications was the introduction of the VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) systems. These have opened up the world of communications on-board ships at sea. In effect they provide a 'pipe' between the ship and shore through which various types of data can be sent.

The RRS James Clark Ross has a 2.3m dish mounted on top of the radar mast in a huge dome (large enough to hold a party in should we be able to satisfy the Health and Safety Rules in getting lots of people up there in the first place). This gives us a 'pipe' of 128kb which is then split to allow four phone lines (all terminating in our office in Cambridge), e-mail and Internet access. Of course in the modern day of 20Mb broadband we are very slow, but slow is far better than nothing at all. This link is available 24 hours a day, subject to the satellite not being 'hooded' by any structures on the ship (in our case the Main Mast sits higher than the dish).

The advantages of this are numerous. We now have almost instant e-mail with the world. All on-board, crew and scientists, have easy and cheap communications with loved ones at home (via the telephone and using a range of calling cards to pay for personal calls), and we can keep up with news around the world via the Internet. We still receive a daily paper on-board via e-mail that is printed out and placed in public spaces, as not everyone is computer happy and also most folk enjoy sitting down and reading

from a paper sheet. This also helps with the crossword too. From a work aspect it allows ship staff to talk directly with manufacturers and also to easily source the correct parts required for a particular job, obtain instruction manuals and updates all without having to go through a third person who may not fully understand our requirements.

This has dramatically changed my workload. If a weather report is required it is now a case of just downloading the synoptic report direct from the appropriate website. As long as the satcom equipment is working and a man in a digger has not cut the fibre optic connection between the ground station and our head office, then there is very little that I have to do. Coverage is good enough for most areas that the ship operates in, although we only have coverage within the Atlantic Ocean (as we rent space on one particular satellite and so if we stray too far east or west then we move out of the footprint). As a back up to our VSAT system we also have modern Inmarsat Fleet 77 and Iridium systems, which have worldwide coverage between them.

For those of your who have fond memories of the Admiralty List of Radio Signals (ALRS) and the joy of arriving in port after weeks at sea to find a month or more worth of corrections, this is all a thing of the past. We now receive these corrections on the day they are published, along with all the required chart amendments so that the ship is sailing with all paperwork fully up to date. A typical week of corrections will be a file of about 4Mb and this can take between fifteen minutes to several hours to download – depending on the loading on the link.

HF communications with the bases and ships is now a thing of the past, most of the time, and two of the five bases no longer have any HF equipment and are solely reliant on satellite systems to communicate. Calling one of the bases via the VSAT system is free as the call is classed as internal, although there is still a double hop via the ground station (which is located in Aberdeen). Within the British Antarctic Survey HF is now mainly used for aircraft following and to keep in touch with the remote field parties, the latter do take Iridium systems with them that allow them to receive e-mail etc. Recently a HF packet system has been trialled for use

with the field parties but I am unsure if this will be used in future seasons.

With all this extra time on my hands, just what am I now doing? There is always a demand from the Bridge to fix items of navigation equipment throughout a voyage and so I spend a lot of my working day on the Bridge but I am now also responsible for washing machines and tumble dryers, all the internal and external lighting and anything else that either the Captain or the Chief Engineer can find for me to do.

So with such great changes in operating from sea, I have to admit that I do miss the fun of HF contacts and working coast stations around the world. I am fortunate to be able to continue with my amateur operation, either as **GM0HCQ/MM** or **VP8CMH/MM** during my time off using a Kenwood TS-430 which is fed into one of the main HF transmitting whip antennas.

More information on my work and operating periods can be found via my website, along with pictures etc, at: **[www.gm0hcq.com](http://www.gm0hcq.com)**

*Regards, Mike Gloistein GM0HCQ*



### **Pictures from the 2010 AGM**



HMS Belfast Contingant



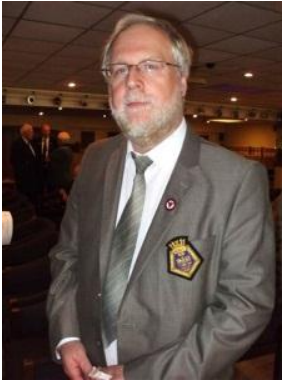
Jason



Decanter kindly presented  
to the RNARS by the  
Belfast Group



Commodore Paul  
Sutermeister DL RN



John G1DJI



Ray G3KOJ



Gavin G6DGK



Nigel GM8TVV



Alan G4CRW



Bill VE6BF & Paul



Prize draw



## **Holiday On The Air**

Jackie and I went on holiday for two weeks recently and apart from one day in France by Eurotunnel with the car visiting the Normandy area. During our stay, we visited St Omer, La Coupole and the former World War Two A4 and V2 rocket facility. Following which we travelled to Boulogne Sur Mer, Wimereux for lunch, Cap Gris Nez and Cap Blanc Nez on the coast and then back to Calais. From Cap Gris Nez I worked Roley; G3VIR in Deal, Kent a RSARS member on VHF simplex with my Yaesu VX7-R hand held as well as a station in Canterbury.



HMS Kent; by Phil

The following week we went to Cornwall and stayed in an apartment in Hayle near St Ives. I have a Kenwood TMD700E radio in the car and with Jackie driving; it left me to operate the various amateur VHF and UHF repeaters from the passenger seat. During the course of the week we visited the Marconi Centre in Poldhu and Porthcurno Telegraphist Museum. On HF I managed to receive the 80 meter RNARS Monday night net with my Yaesu FT857D and portable MP1 vertical antenna.

Other places we visited were Port Isaac, Trebah Gardens, near Helston, Lost Gardens of Heligan, be it in the pouring rain and on Wednesday we flew to the Isle of Scilly and St Mary's by Skybus; a twin engine monoplane. It took off from Lands End airport on a grass runway; a first for us. We took a boat to Tresco and visited the Abbey Gardens and had a very expensive lunch in the only pub on the island. On returning to St Mary's we met up with one of our neighbours who was also on holiday; Colin G8BCO. I had made prior arrangements to contact John Goody; M1IOS the only radio

amateur on the island unfortunately I had left his details at home, so missed him out.

On our return to Penzance on the Scillonian Ferry we were shadowed by HMS Kent on a Naval Exercise. We were told there was a submarine in the area, but it never surfaced unfortunately. Other places we visited were the Minack Theatre, Porthleven, Mousehole, Lands End, St Michaels Mount (National Trust property) and the Lizard.

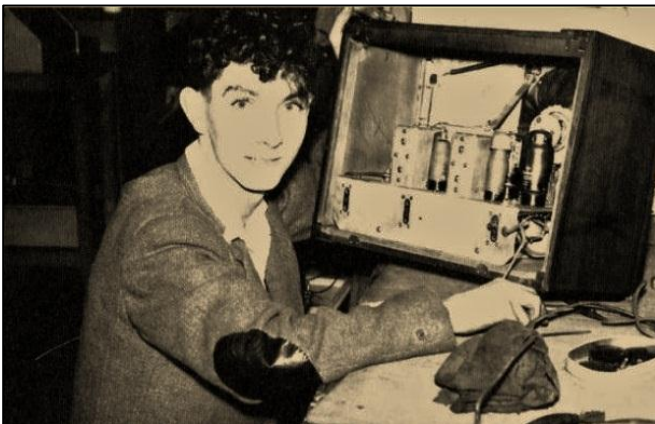
Prior to going I had contacted the Secretary of the Cornish Amateur Radio Society by email and he had alerted his members to our presence in Cornwall. I spoke to Barry MOPME (G8PME) an ex RNARS member through the St Ives repeater.

*Phil Manning G1LKJ 2954*



### **How it all started for Peter**

I started work at Park Wireless in Wally Range as a Radio and TV repair man, I was encouraged to attend Openshaw Technical College one day a week and two evenings this was good and I took City and Guilds Radio certificate also Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Radio and English exams. Working at park wireless was good as many new radio and TV models were then being produced also we were in competition with (Dawes Radio) not far from us.





### **The story of the faulty parts box**

Any faulty items taken out of items under repair were put into a box under the chief engineer's bench. We had a new apprentice joined the workshop, he was given a project to build a small radio.

He set off on the project and was left to get on and to ask the chief engineer if he required any assistance. A few weeks later he produced his task and a nice job too; only it would just not work. At last he consulted the chief engineer for help. Well lad looks a nice job but where did you get the components? "Oh! Chief I found a box under your bench full of all the bits I needed". The whole workshop burst into laughter, except the lad who was never seen again.

### **The store man's extras**

When we replaced valves the faulty ones were kept on one side in case the customer asked to see them? If not they were returned to the store, polished and boxed as new and returned to supplier as "faulty new". This allowed stores to keep extra stock in store. We used a large supply of resistors, capacitors, line output transformers and many other components supplied by Radio Spares who were in early days then and supplied good replacement components.

### **Odd jobs**

Sometimes we used to have get small mains powered radio's in for repair, the standard routine was to change the mixer valve and clean up the set then leave it on the soak bench for a week. Usually no further problems appeared. However some sets always seemed to cause problems as soon as returned. We later found that voltage settings were set low where in the workshop the mains were slightly high.

One day I was given a brand new radio gram that the customer complained of poor sound and lack of audio level. The set seemed OK except when turned full volume. I spent some time on his job banished to the back store room. In the end I fitted a larger speaker and made sure there were no loose bits. The customer seemed happy at last.



One day a massive radio gram came in, it took four of us to get it up to the workshop. It was a Decca DACORA with AC/DC supply, all HF bands, A/C record deck with massive twelve inch loudspeakers. Another feature was the A/C was supplied by a large oscillator at 50 Hz using two large valves. At this time in MANCHESTER area 115 or 220 Volt DC supplies were still in use. Any one heard of this monster?

*Peter G3RDR RNARS 241*



## **Correspondence**

Colin;

I noticed the small piece by Alex Dickson on pages 6 and 7 of the Winter 2010 Newsletter and I feel I must write to you about it.

I was drafted to HMMMS 1801 at Port Edgar in February 1954 after my Killicks course at HMS Mercury. Alex Dickson was Bunts and I was Sparks.

This turned out to be a short draft however because in a couple of months, when we were hauled out of the water at Rosyth to repair a leaking stern gland, the dockyard chief shipwright pushed his screwdriver straight through our rotten stern post. 1801 was condemned never to sail again and all 12 of us were dispersed. However, I still have my HMMMS 1801 cap tally and a good few memories of the short time aboard. Bunts Dickson was a football fanatic and he persuaded the skipper, a Lieutenant RN whose name I forget, to stand by the ship whilst the other 11 of us played against HMMMS 1878. During our game, the skipper turned up to cheer us on. He had "suggested" that the duty man aboard the next ship keep his eye out for 1801 as well.

Dickson was a Rangers supporter and I supported Aberdeen, as our teams were playing at Ibrox we set off to see the match. Aberdeen beat the famous Rangers by six goals to nil so I was not the flavour of the month with bunts.

Dickson and I trained at HMS Bruce at the same time. I was in class 205, I think he was in 206 and I well remember Lofty Noble there. He was a Yeoman of Signals but he wore square rig as he

was in his first year as a Yeomen and lofty was the last man I ever remember doing that. I came across lofty as a Chief Yeoman later in my career but I can't remember where. Possibly he was Chief on one of the Far East fleet cruisers.

Whoever let Alex Dickson see the Newsleter, please pass on my best wishes to him

*Regards, Sid Will GM4SID*



Colin;

Here's a picture of HMS Icarus taken from HMS Havelock when part of 14th Escort Group en route to the Bay of Biscay area on D-Day plus one.



We were on operations to prevent U-Boats entering the Channel and getting to the beachheads. Group consisted of HMS Fame (Capt D), Icarus, Inconstant, Hotspur and Havelock. I was in Icarus and happened to be OOW when the picture was taken. The group got one U-boat, possibly U767 which was found years later, there was only one survivor picked up by Fame.

*Regards, Roy Gauntlett G3VLL 0120*

## **RNARS 2010 CW Activity Results**

Pos'	Call	Mem No	QSO's	Points	Multi'p	Total
1	OQ3R	Non Mem	235	1639	12	19668
2	HB9BQR	Non Mem	201	1428	12	17136
3	OE6PWW	CA135	202	1345	11	14795
4	GB4RN	RN4	139	940	9	8760
5	G3RFH	RN175	121	868	10	8680
6	ON4CBM	YO 128	89	701	9	6309
7	PA50RNARS	RN944	83	614	10	6140
8	G4PRL	RN4844	69	609	9	5481
9	PE50RNARS	RN299	74	569	8	4552
10	UA3VVB	Non Mem	60	447	8	3576
11	HZ1PS	RN1440	35	422	8	3376
12	G0DID	RN2917	38	326	10	3260
13	YO4ASG	YO124	58	463	6	2778
14	G3ZNR	ROA213	46	334	8	2672 QRP
15	HE9SO	SWLMF758	45	360	7	2520
16	M5ALG	RN4869	14	220	6	1320
17	DJ7AC	RN3328	27	200	6	1200
18	RN1NW	RN4263	31	229	4	916
19	OE6NFK	CA58	13	112	5	560 QRP
20	OE6ES	RN4580	19	136	4	544
21	UR7CT	Non Mem	13	121	4	484
22	YO2DFA	MF75	8	35	233	466
23	VK4BUI	RN4534	11	83	3	249
24	MM0CJT	RN4593	9	72	3	216
25	DJ6TK	MF328	10	82	2	164
26	GB50RNARS	RN4238	17	143	1	143
27	PA0MBO	Non Mem	1	10	1	10

### **Comments – (the excuses)**

**GB4RN** Nice to hear a lot of stations taking part but the LZ contest spoilt things on 40 metres. Some Italian stations with strong signals but had no receiver to go with it. Sorry I did not hear IROXNM in memory of IT9XNM. Remember the multipliers are only RNARS countries signing with a RNARS number.

**G0DID** Thank you for the Activity once again, I really enjoyed it again this year, always hope to make more contacts but it's the taking part which counts.

**G3ZNR** Using QRP I was very pleased to have a QSO with HZ1PS, 9H1BX and PA50RNARS for the multipliers and also points for the GB50RNARS Award. I only wish that I had a filter to notch out the LZ contestants. Enjoyed the contest and hope that next year we might have some activity on 21 & 28.

**G4PRL** Good fun again in spite of the QRM from the other contests running at the same time, I found QSO's on 80mtrs very sparse, and finding multiplier stations very difficult but once again our Italian friends provided plenty of contacts.

**MMOCJF** Not much better than last year but never the less quite good for me. I was late in getting started as my neighbour did not start work till 1800, so only 2 bands open for me 80 & 40 meters with little UK activity and lots of QRM, that is life roll on next year. GB50RNARS I managed a short spell in the November Contest. As usual there was another contest running at the same time which made it very difficult to work most stations particularly on 40m.

**HN9BQR** It was nice to meet you all, I enjoyed it. The QRM was very bad, two or three other contests and a DX pile up. Many RNARS countries were missed, no SM, ZL, ZB, OY were heard this year.

**OE6NFK** I used the FT-817 (<3 watts) with MP-1 mobile antenna. The conditions were very fine but I only had 2 hours time for the contest (rest QRL and family). I enjoyed the event and operating QRP again.

**VK4BUI** Attached my log for this year's event. Rather disappointing early on to hear G0DID, HZ1PS & GM4SID and not work them. Picked up a bit on Sunday however so no complaints (who would listen?)

**RN1NW** Unfortunately, this weekend I had very few time for the contest.

**OQ3R** Sorry for the excessive low number of RNARS members taking part to the Club Contest! Where are the other hundreds and hundreds of RNARS fellows still alive?

**HZ1PS** A slightly better effort than in the past. Thanks to RNARS for the contest and to all for the contacts. Conditions only fair with 20 mtrs closing here at around the 1600 UTC on Saturday. I did go down to 40 mtrs but lots of QRM from the LZ contest and no RNARS/Navy stations heard around the 7020 frequency. Contest was over by the time I got back from work on the Sunday.

**PAORNARS** Another nice contest, pity about the bad conditions.

**PEORNARS** A lot of professional testers with high power. Not so pleasant. Is there may be a solution? Talk with the LZ committee and suggest to divide frequency bands in two parts. One for LZ contest and one for RNARS/INORC.

**UA3WB** It seems had some crossed QSOs of LZ DX Contest. Best wishes from Russia. 73!

**G3RFH** Lots of Italians, thank goodness, but where were RNARS members? Nice to meet old friends again.



### **RNARS CW Activity Contest 2011**

**Date & time:** 12:00 GMT 19 Nov - 12:00 GMT 20 Nov

**Bands:** 3.5, 7, 14, 21 & 28 MHz

**Exchange** RST and Naval Number (use only one throughout the contest)

**Scoring** 10 points with each Naval Station  
RNARS, MF, INORC, MARAC, YOMARC, FNARS, ANARS, BMARS, ACRS, ROA. 1 point for all non naval contacts.

**Multiplier:** each RNARS signing members COUNTRY worked  
Count only once regardless the number of bands worked on. VE, VK, W, ZL & ZS call areas plus GB4RN all count as a separate Country for this Activity.

## **Logs**

Separate log for each band please and send to:

Mick Puttick G3LIK, 21 Sandyfield Crescent, Cowplain

Waterlooville, Hants, PO8 8SQ, UK

Logs can also be e-mailed to Mick: **mick\_g3lik@ntlworld.com**

Logs to be received by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011



## **Breakdown At Sea**

In November 1957 I was Radio Officer aboard the La Orilla. Almost new, she was a general cargo vessel of some 7000 gross registered tons and engaged in the tramping trade. She was owned by the Buries Markes Company and on the British Register, though insured at Bureau Veritas in Paris.



MV La Orilla – Capetown November 1957

While La Orilla was in Capetown, some work was done to the engine. To the best of my recall, it was a Doxford type, with two opposed pistons in each of its' six cylinders. Not being directly involved I am not aware of the detail of the work, but this certainly included drawing the pistons from at least one cylinder, and sending a lubricating oil sample home for analysis.

While in Capetown, in addition to discharging the load of phosphates that we had carried there from Casablanca, La Orilla had undertaken a routine dry docking and then loaded somewhat over 10,000 tons of bulk Maize. This we were to take to Tampico

in Mexico, calling at Port of Spain in Trinidad on the way for bunkers

Sometime after we sailed, I received a radio message for the Captain from head office, warning that sea water had been found in the sample of lubricating oil that they had received from us.

One afternoon, after we had rounded St Helena and were about half way across the South Atlantic towards Brazil, there was a loud bang from below, followed by lots of clattering and vibration. This was soon followed by silence as the engineer of the watch had immediately shut down the engine.

Fortunately it was fairly calm, as we then drifted without power, rolling slightly to a gentle swell, for several days. It transpired that a fist size hole had blown through one cylinder liner into the cooling water jacket. This was quite a problem, as, in common with most ships of her type, La Orilla had only the one engine, coupled directly to her single screw.

Although we carried a spare, replacing the cylinder liner at sea, without guarantee of several days of absolutely flat sea, was impossible. Even drawing both pistons from the affected cylinder was a major job, taking several days to achieve. Once the engineers had done this, the engine could be restarted, albeit at minimum revs and with a lot of vibration.

While the repairs were taking place, urgent radio messages were exchanged with head office in London. After some debate it was decided that we could not go to Belem near the mouth of the Amazon. To go there has been the owner's original instruction on learning of our problem as this would have caused the shortest possible diversion from our intended route. However, on checking, our Captain discovered it only offered 28 feet of water, which was clearly not enough for our fully laden draft of 31 feet. It was eventually decided that we must instead divert to Recife the nearest port that could offer the shelter that we needed. As Radio Officer, this kept me both very busy and fully involved. As the sole representative of my department aboard, my regular pattern of watches was forgotten and I just went into the radio room and stayed there until it was all settled.

I tried for quite some time to make contact with Olinda Radio, call sign PPO, the nearest station to Recife, to make arrangements with the Companies' agent there for our arrival, but without success. As my first encounter with Marine Radio Stations in South America I was a little surprised at this failure, as I had just previously been exchanging signals with Portishead Radio without problem.

After I had been calling PPO for some time, the Radio Officer of a Blue Star line meat boat, passing some way off on its way to the Argentine, called me and advised that this level of service was normal. He warned that, even if I did manage to contact Olinda Radio, our message would probably not reach Recife through the Brazilian inland telegraph system. He informed me that all the regular ships on that run sent their messages back to Portishead for forwarding by the Western Union cable.

Once under way again, we limped slowly on towards Recife. As well as the vibration from the unbalanced engine, we had the further discomfort of restrictions on our fresh water supply. During all the excitement of the breakdown and the subsequent repair, someone had turned some wrong valves down below and pumped eleven tons, a large part of our stock, over the side, so we were then a bit short. In common with other ships of its type, La Orilla did not have the facility to make fresh water, but rather we relied on supplies loaded at our various ports of call.

While we made our slow way towards Recife there was another matter to attend to. Custom requires visiting merchant ships to fly the flag of the country being visited at the starboard yardarm as a mark of respect. Not expecting to visit Brazil we didn't have one. Harbour authorities in this part of the world were very enthusiastic to discover breaches of the regulations, as this involves a fine. This, it was commonly believed, formed a very welcome, if unofficial, supplement to their salary. We could radio the agent to send a flag out with the pilot and it could be expected that he would somehow fail, as he could then share the ensuing fine with the harbour master. Fortunately we had some green bunting and, armed with a few tins of paint, plus picture of the flag that someone found in a book, one was made. Not perfect, but once in place high at the yardarm, no one could tell.



Hove to off Recife, we had to await the services of the pilot who was currently bringing another ship out to sea. Our Captains' confidence must have taken a bit of a nose dive as he watched the pilot run this ship, a smartly painted wartime Liberty ship, aground on a mud bank just outside the breakwater. He tried full power astern, evidenced by a commotion under its counter but to no avail, so he then boarded his launch to come to us, abandoning his previous charge to await some tugs. Fortunately, as he had just established the position of the mud bank and so clearly marked it, he was able to guide our Captain into the port without problems.

Once inside the harbour, as we did not need to hire expensive wharfage to load or discharge cargo, as we lay more economically between two buoys. With the engine still warm, and Recife being not far from the equator, it was almost intolerably hot to work in the engine room. However, needs must, and the engine room staff, with assistance from some members of the deck gang, set to work. Every so often a small group of very thirsty, sweaty and exhausted men would retreat topside first for a long drink, and then to swim in the harbour to cool off. They jumped straight off the deck, swum around a little then climbed back up the companionway, which had, by then, been lowered over the ships side.

To go ashore in Recife it was necessary to negotiate a price with a boatman with a rowing boat. In the evenings a cargo cluster of lights was rigged over the companionway, to light the way. Leaning on the rail one evening, the Carpenter and I swapped yarns while awaiting a boat. Chips stopped in mid-sentence, gave a sudden gasp of horror, and pointed down into the water, rendered completely speechless by shock. Just where he had previously been swimming a little earlier, clearly visible in the light cast by the cluster and undulating slowly as it stemmed the tide, was a very large sea snake. No one cared to swim after that.

For the next journal I will send the editor an account of our visit to Peru on the other side of South America.

*Alan Pink G3RMZ 4349*



## **SS Shieldhall - Steam Radio**

Two RNARS members, Richard G3ZGC and Simon G1VGM, have become involved in running a maritime mobile amateur radio station aboard Steam Ship Shieldhall which in 2009 was the flagship of the national historic ships registry. The ship needs to be promoted more as it may unfortunately be laid up unless it gets funds for a dry docking due early in 2011. More information can be found on the website: **[www.ss-shieldhall.co.uk](http://www.ss-shieldhall.co.uk)**



The first day of amateur radio operation was on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2010 when 156 contacts were entered in the log during a five hour period of operating. A few RNARS members were worked and Richard and Simon joined in the Sunday eighty meter net run by Mick G3LIK.

Amateur radio operation aboard involves members of the Newbury and District Amateur Radio Society with a G5RV run between the masts which gives excellent results. There are plans for more operations in the future but exact dates are not yet known.

In 2009 it became flagship of the UK national historic ships registry and is the largest working steamship in Northern Europe.



Simon G1VGM – RNARS 80M Net

Shieldhall was built in 1955 by Lobnitz and Co Ltd on the Clyde at Renfrew for Glasgow Corporation. She operated on the Clyde until 1977 as a sewage dumping vessel. The owners used to carry passengers free of charge and it was a very popular day out “doon the watter” for Glaswegians, particularly so for bird watchers.



In 1977 the vessel was sold to Southern Water for use on the South Coast. In 1988 it transferred to the Solent Steam Packet Ltd for use as an excursion vessel. At sea the bridge and machinery spaces are open to the public. It has also been used for both TV and motion picture filming.

All work associated with the society and Shieldhall is carried out by a band of willing unpaid volunteers in order to keep her in a seagoing condition. Recently the saloon has been restored and the galley brought up to date.

Crewed by volunteers, Shieldhall is a frequent sight around the Solent running excursions. She has also ventured to foreign ports; Netherlands for the Dordrecht Steam Festival and has been a regular attendee at each of the International Festivals of the Sea at Bristol and Portsmouth.



### **Shieldhall facts and figures**

**Laid down:** October 1954

**Launched:** 7<sup>th</sup> July 1955 and entered service October 1955

**Callsign:** GNGE **MMSI:** 232 003 964 **IMO:** 5322752

**Boilers:** Two riveted construction oil fired scotch boilers, each twelve foot diameter and twelve foot long with 320 fire tubes producing steam at 180 lb/sq inch.

**Main Engines:** Two triple expansion engines built by Lobnitz & Co, each producing 800 horsepower with a stroke of thirty inches from a HP cylinder diameter of 15", IP cylinder of 25" and LP of 40"; giving a service speed of nine knots at 86 RPM and a top speed of thirteen knots at 120 RPM.

**Auxiliary Engine:** 25kW diesel generator (not original fit) to power modern equipment, all other auxiliary winches and pumps are driven by steam.

**Dimensions:** 1792 GT 1003 NT LOA 268' Breadth 44½ feet and maximum draught 13' 3".

*Richard G3ZGC 508*



### **Refurbishing a Jaybeam TB3**

The amateur radio station and equipment of Brian Davies GW0JXW was bequeathed to the RNARS. His family asked me to travel to his house in North Wales in August 2010 to collect it all, and, to dismantle and take away the HF beam. This was mounted on a 20ft scaffold pole in the garden. Pictures of the house and installation are adjacent and below. The removal of the aerial from the pole was undertaken in drizzle with the help of one of the family members.



The driven element was removed first to lighten the aerial a little and to keep it balanced before lowering it down the mast. The clamps holding the driven element to the boom were all rusted so a hacksaw was used to cut through them to release it before manhandling it to the ground. This was not an easy task when you realise this element is about 7 metres (23ft) long and that the drizzle turned to rain for a while.



The boom assembly with the reflector and director were then lowered carefully after cutting more clamps, not an easy job up a ladder in the drizzle. The aerial was turned so that the boom went through the gate into the field and the director landed in the field whilst the reflector landed in the garden. The gate in the garden wall can be seen in the picture of the view from the air.

The rest of the clamps were cut using a hacksaw and everything moved into the road for sectioning to fit inside the car (Ford Fusion saloon). All this took place between a skip arriving and then having to be manoeuvred into a driveway across the street. The aerial and station equipment were safely transported back to our home, a journey of some eight-six miles.

New clamps, Jubilee clips, nuts, bolts and washers, etc. – some in stainless steel this time - had to be purchased to replace the rusty ones that had been removed.

Luckily, the Jaybeam TB3 handbook came with the aerial. The handbook also lists all the parts including sizes, etc. There was another handbook too for the TB2 which is the two-element version of the three-band aerial.



The condition of some of the clamp and bolts that were removed.

It was decided to refurbish the driven element first and check its operation before continuing with the rest in sequence: reflector next, then director. The work involved included parting the element sections and cleaning and de-burring the tubes. Emery paper, crocus paper and wire wool were used to effect a good finish to the relevant connecting parts of the tubes that make up the elements. The parts were then assembled to make up the driven element.

A 25 metre length of brand new UR67/RG213 50Ω coax was made up into the feeder which includes a choke of 6 inch internal diameter. The aerial end of this feeder was made up as designed in the handbook, as was the choke. The feed end was waterproofed with self-amalgamating tape and proved to be fortunate because during the following tests, it rained quite heavily. Replacement nuts, bolts and washers were fitted to the driven element for connecting the feeder.

The boom was assembled and used as the mast for the driven element for the first test. The element was set “pointing” towards south-south-east, roughly in the direction of Italy and Malta.

My Yaesu FT100, a MFJ ATU and a SWR bridge were used as the testing station. After checking that the SWR on all three bands (20m, 15m and 10m) was satisfactory, contacts were made on CW with the USA and Europe followed by a contact with 9H5SN in Malta on 20 metres SSB. The reports, in both directions, were 5 and 9. Later 9H1JL joined in and his signal was slightly weaker at only 5 and 8. This was a good start and an encouragement to continue.

Next day, the reflector was refurbished and assembled with the driven element as the two-element version of the aerial (TB2). A separate pole was used as a boom and mounted on the Jaybeam boom which was being used as a mast once more. Contacts were again made with Malta and this time were 5 and 9 plus each way, proving that everything so far was working well.





The whole aerial has now been refurbished. Unfortunately, there isn't enough room for the three elements to be assembled as the full beam and tested in our garden because the new conservatory is in the way. However, I have no doubt that this aerial will work well and will be a useful asset to the RNARS HQ when it is eventually delivered there. The elements and boom have been labelled, split into manageable lengths, tied together and stowed in the dry. They are now all able to fit into the car once more for the future journey to HQ.

SWR curves for each of the three bands have been produced in A4 (and archived) for when it was in the two-element mode and show that the aerial SWR is good across each band. This bodes well for any future operation as the full three-element aerial. Final tuning will have to be checked in accordance with the handbook. Tests will then have to be carried out prior to final installation to ensure that the aerial is working satisfactorily.

The labour, new parts, new coax cable feeder, etc., are donated as a continuation of my support to the wellbeing of the Society. The refurbishment should ensure that the aerial will operate well for many years to come.



Jaybeam Tribander Three Element Beam Type TB3 for 10, 15 & 20 meters.

Electrical and Mechanical Specification

Input impedance	50 ohms
Gain	8 dB peak
Front to back ratio	25 dB
Maximum input power	2 kW PEP
VSWR at resonance	<1.5 : 1
Boom length	420 cm
Boom diameter	51 mm
Turning circle	902 cm
Mast diameter	4 7 - 5 1 mm
Net weight	1 7.3 kg
Wind loading at 130 KPH	52 kgf

*WL Mahoney, RNARS 328*



## **The G5RV Aerial Revisited**

### **My experiences and thoughts over 33 years**

Louis Varney G5RV introduced this antenna to the amateur scene in 1946, since then it has become well known throughout the world to all those interested in radio. I have operated one since first becoming licensed, albeit along the way I have also tried and played with Verticals and Magnetic loops and other "pieces of string". However, the G5RV has always been the main antenna.

I submit this appraisal to the Newsletter in the hope that those who have never used one, and in particular to those who still make their own will give it a go. I would point out that it is NOT intended as a technical appraisal. For those who are interested, I can assure you that for successful operation the dimensions which can be found in many publications and on the internet are critical

There are certain requirements, which I have found important in order to get the best from this antenna to obtain acceptable DX results and counteract various EMC problems are as follows:

- A Low Pass Filter should be incorporated immediately after the TX, in the 50 Ohm line.
- An efficient ATU is a MUST, as is a good earth system. I

have used artificial earths to good effect especially when I lived in a flat.

- A suitable SWR Bridge with preferably a power meter incorporated is VERY NECESSARY.

Note. The earth arrangement referred to earlier should be as short as possible and consist of heavy stranded copper wire or copper braid.

Anyone who contemplates giving the G5RV a trial run, will, I know, be wondering if their garden provides enough scope to erect such an antenna. It is possible to drop the ends of each leg by 1/16th (8.5ft) at right angles to the "Flat Top". This is permissible by the fact that the antenna is resonant at a distance of 2/3 of its length from the centre, generally speaking.

The Flat Top should run in a straight line, but if this is impossible, a variation can be made. What happens to the lobes remains in doubt but I have achieved good results doing this. The optimum height for most people would be in the region of 30 to 35ft. Louis Varney suggests 34ft as being suitable. At present I'm running my inverted V configuration at 25' to the central feed point and it works very well, even on Top Band.

The height I am using is low for bands below 30M but a compromise has to be reached to fit in with the space I have available. When using the G5RV as an inverted V, the angle at the apex should not be less than 120 degrees. At my home the current inverted V is 25' to the feed point and the lower ends are secured to the top of a six-foot fence and to a short steel pole 10' above the ground, necessitated by the fact that this leg has to straddle the house.

I do not use a unbalanced type of feeder (coax) because my Z Match does not accept this type of feeder and it was not until 1984 that G5RV concluded that coax could be satisfactorily used continuously into the ATU without causing any serious misgivings. Should anyone wish to operate using a coaxial feeder, either 50 ohms or 75 ohms can be used, always providing it is of good quality and not exceeding 70' in length

Note: The use of unbalanced feeder was originally thought to

require a Balun. It is now known that this is not required (G5RV issued an amendment about 1984 to this effect) because, if a Balun is connected to a reactive load presenting an SWR of 2:1 or more, its internal losses increase resulting in the heating of the windings, in adverse cases causing the Balun to burn out. THE WHOLE SECRET IS A GOOD ATU.

G5RV also issued a statement in 1984 to the effect that a coax feeder, be it 50 or 75 ohms, could be run direct from the Flat Top to the ATU, providing the ATU had unbalanced input and unbalanced output.

Although the feeder will have a fairly high SWR, this will not result in insignificant losses, always providing the coax is of good quality and not in excess of 70'. To return to the subject of feeders, and I have tried most configurations over the years, it is suggested that 3 variations can be used:

- Open wire feeder to the matching stub, plus 75 ohm twin lead in.
- 300 ohm ribbon feeder to the matching stub, plus 75 ohm twin lead in
- 300 ohm slotted ribbon feeder to the matching stub, plus 75 ohm twin lead in.

The results have proved without doubt that the open wire feeder has the edge over the others on account of the following observations:

- "Detuning" does not occur with changes in climatic conditions.
- Winds do not inflict violent "flutter" causing breaks.
- Little or no TVI problems reported or having to be tolerated on one's own equipment.

A major point against however, is the fact that high winds cause the ribbon to flutter and try as one may to secure the junction with the Flat Top, sooner or later a break occurs or water infiltrates at the central insulator.

The matching stub, whether it be open wire or ribbon, should if possible be allowed to hang vertical for some 20 feet. This is not always possible but where it has to be in variance, I have noticed

that there is a variation of SWR. So if possible try to stick to the recommendations of G5RV. The junction at the lower end of the matching stub to the 75 ohm twin balanced section of the feeder does not normally present any problems.

The antenna loads quite well on the whole range of bands including the WARC bands and I have never had a greater SWR than 1:1.5. In my own case the 14MHz band certainly gives an excellent match of 1:1 across most of the band.

Finally, I would stress that this is not a technical description of this antenna, just my experiences with it. I am sure there are better-qualified people amongst the readers than I and perhaps they might like to add their knowledge to those of us who only dabble. I have worked some 200 countries over the years with this set up, so, in my book, it is certainly an excellent and easily made antenna. In the past 3 years I have concentrated on QRP operations only and have no trouble with this antenna and 5 watts working across the pond and down into ZS, however VK has proved out of reach so far. In fact going in an easterly direction my best effort has been the 9V call area. Still, not bad on 5W, with CW of course!

*Doug Hotchkiss G4BEQ*



### **Two weeks on a “Ton”**

On a grey Saturday morning HMS St David, the sea tender to the South Wales Division RN Reserve, set sail from Cardiff to rendezvous with HMS Venturer from the Severn Division RNR. HMS St David was a “Ton Class” coastal Minesweeper (HMS Crighton when in service with the RN). I was the RO and we were to take part in a five-day minesweeping exercise in the Moray Firth followed by a five-day courtesy visit to Ellsinore in Denmark. After a fairly smooth passage up the Irish Sea we rendezvous with HMS Kilmory off Belfast, and rounded the top of Scotland during the hours of darkness eventually tying up alongside at Invergordon. The next five days were hard work for the crew on the sweep deck, and hectic

in the W/T office decoding and encrypting messages and running communications in general. If my memory serves me right we swept five practice mines, which we had to bring inboard for re-use in future exercises.



HMS St David

The following Saturday we set sail in a force six for Denmark with a very rough passage through the Skagerrak. We were passed by a cruise liner which did not seem to be affected by the gale one bit, whereas we were pitching and rolling as Tons are prone to do in anything more than a stiff breeze. In the Baltic we were approached by a Russian warship to within a few cables and we could see them studying us through binoculars, our CO told everyone not closed up on watch to go onto the upper deck with their cameras and train them on the Russian, with that he took off at high speed and soon vanished over the horizon.

We berthed in the centre of Ellsinore near the Danish Royal Yacht, and my first job was to collect the mail. On the quayside I asked a nautical looking chap in yachting cap, tee shirt, shorts and flip-flops directions to the Post Office and was directed in perfect

English. I was later told the nautical chap was in fact the King of Denmark.

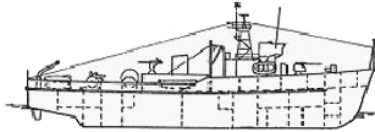
The Danish authorities had arranged a football match against a local side and a visit to the Carlsberg Brewery in Copenhagen with the evening free in the city. After a very interesting tour of the Brewery we were taken to a large reception room in which were tables heaped with all their different brews, within a few minutes the tables had been emptied and a team of young ladies came in with fresh supplies telling us we were to drink as much as we wanted (a silly thing to tell Jack!). Later a very happy band of sailors staggered out to the buses to be taken into the centre of Copenhagen and told we would be picked up for return to the ship at 01:30. We all headed for the Tivoli Gardens and had a good meal before exploring the gardens and sampling more of the local brews. After a memorable evening we found our buses and returned on board, we were all the worse for wear but all behaved ourselves in true naval fashion.

The following day I went on another trip to Copenhagen and spent the day exploring this fine vibrant city followed by the customary visits to the local bars and nightclubs. Two of us took a ferry across the narrow straight to Sweden with two young ladies we met in Ellsinore, on the return trip, being gentlemen, we offered to carry the ladies bags off the ferry realizing too late that they were bringing back well over the allowance of cigarettes and spirits and goodness knows what else. Fortunately we were swept through Danish customs with no problems; perhaps they did not want to spark off an international incident.

We were made very welcome by everyone we met and were sad when the time came to leave. We came back via the Kiel Canal where we took on board a pilot, we were astern of the other two ships and when about half way through the vessel ahead of us stopped for no apparent reason and our pilot made no attempt to avoid her, a collision was only averted by the prompt action of our CO going full astern and stopping with a few feet to spare. The passage up the English Channel was a bit hairy with thick fog and relying on radar to avoid the many craft plying up and down as well as across the channel.

We bade our farewells to Kilmory off Lands End and turned into the Bristol Channel and said good-bye to *Venturer* before docking in Cardiff, our fourteen days annual sea training completed for another year.

*George Dance*



### **“THE NAVY’S COMING”**

In 1954 I signed on the “Southern Atlantic”; a tanker belonging to the Salvesen fleet.

The ship was in Rotterdam undergoing an overhaul before she set sail for South Georgia. The crew came from the Leith “pool”, so there was a mixture of locals and Shetlanders. The Bos’un was from Shetland, a quiet man, but because of his size and physic no one would dare to cross him.

Two members of the crew (Senior Ordinary Seaman) were ex-RN ratings, who had decided they wanted to come back to sea because there was decline in the work market at home. During the voyage one of the ratings was always expressing his views that some the work was “not how it was done in the Royal Navy.” At first we would explain that we did not have the same numbers on a merchant ship that the Royal Navy had on warships. The only person who made no comment was the Bos’un.

We were about six months into the voyage and heading back to South Georgia with another load of fuel oil, and had put into Port of Spain, Trinidad for some repairs. We had been working until about 20:00 hours, and were getting cleaned up, when once again the phrase, “we didn’t do it like that in the Royal Navy”. This was the last straw for the Bos’un. “Royal Navy; I rather have the Brigade of Guards to the Royal Navy. At least they kept their promise; more than the Royal Navy did”.

We all sensed there was a story in the Bos’un’s comment. So we all pressed him for more. “I was on the *Benarty* in 1940, on passage from the Far East to the UK, when we were attacked by a German

Raider in the India Ocean. It flew the signal; 'do not open fire: do not scuttle: do not transmit'. No one paid attention to the signal, for the first shot from us was a direct hit on the German. In the meantime Sparks got a message off that we were under attack. Durban Radio came back. 'Hang on chaps, Navy's coming'. Five years later the Brigade of Guards released me from a POW camp in Germany."

There was silence for a few minutes then we all started to laugh. There were no more comparisons with the Royal Navy after that. The Benarty was sunk and the crew taken prisoner and the German Captain congratulated the gunners on their shooting.

*Bill Connolly GM4ZET 2664*



### **Swinging the Lead**

Hands up all those who can remember either seeing, or doing this duty? Another good reason why I volunteered for submarines. The phrase infers backsliding, doing a dinger, or swinging the lead. Anyone who has been a Leadsman in a ship during the bitter winters of Scotland's East Coast would not agree.

The Chains were on the starboard side for'd. Without any previous experience or advice, at first my twin dreads were either the 4lb lead landing on my head, or impaling the Cable Party. Of course, as boys we knew the leadline markings by heart. As my confidence improved, to impress, I would sing out the odd, "and a quarter less 7". When anchoring or weighing, my lead was kept on the bottom.

Whether the Captain was dependent upon my ideas of soundings of the well charted Fife coast, is debatable. Likewise could swinging of the ship or movements ahead and astern be noted by other means?

The Seamanship Manual states that experienced Leadsman use an under armed swing, my pride was not chancing the probable rebuff to request such a concession. Trained at HMS St George, Isle of Man, this would have been considered sacrilege, apart from a heavy dose of running round the parade ground with a Lee Enfield on my shoulder.



For some reason, the duties as Leadsman included rigging the boom and operating the Sounding Machine. Still retained in the memory are items such as 'feeler', sounding tubes filled with chromate of silver, and the boxwood scale to which the tubes were applied. One hoped to show the Captain a clear cut line on the tube as opposed to all red by allowing the lead to overrun.

*Doug Hotchkiss G4BEQ*



### **CQ - Calling all members in Scotland & North England**

I know this idea is one I've put forward before, but wonder if there's sufficient interest amongst members and possibly partners, particularly, but not exclusively in Scotland and the North of England for a lunch time meet in a similar vein to the Bubbly's annual luncheon?

As for a venue, it would need to be a fairly central point and Perth had crossed my mind with its road, bus and train links connecting most parts of Scotland. For those over a "certain" age and qualify for their nationwide bus pass, Stagecoach, National Express and Citylink all run into Perth with Glasgow, Edinburgh and points north just a couple of hours away. If Perth doesn't suit, then there's Dundee which also has similar transport links. I had thought about Edinburgh, but when I checked prices in some of the city centre restaurants, I put that plan on the back burner; unless you fancy a burger from a fast food joint?

If you are interested, please contact me (editor) as per my details below and we can perhaps progress the plan further. If there are particular dates that suit and have a preference for a venue please let me know.

*Regards, Colin GM6HGW 1870*

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### **Vacancy - Awards Manager**

After many years of service to the Society, Glynn GW4MVA our Awards Manager has decided to call it a day. The Society is therefore looking for a volunteer to take on the duties of Awards Manager. The job entails checking applications for the Society's

awards, preparing the certificates with the recipient's details and despatching them.

According to Glynn the number of applications for awards in recent years has reduced considerably so the job is not too demanding. If you are interested in taking on this role please contact the Secretary:

Joe Kirk G3ZDF

111 Stockbridge Road, Chichester, PO19 8QR

E-mail: [joe.kirk@btinternet.com](mailto:joe.kirk@btinternet.com)

Telephone: 01243 536586



***If** you can keep your nerves when all about you  
Are stations jamming hard and blaming you;  
If you can hold the air though others flout you,  
Until you get your longest message through:  
If you can send and not grow weary sending,  
Nor overtire the man who has to read;  
If your mistakes are rare but prompt their mending,  
If you believe that haste is never speed.*

***If** you can calmly contemplate the chatter  
Of greenhorn operators fresh from school;  
If you can sit with messages that matter  
And wait until they've finished – and keep cool.  
If you can read through half a dozen stations  
The weaker signals that are meant for you  
And pick 'em out with few interrogations,  
Yet never feel ashamed to ask those few.*

***If** you're a Jack of All Trades, tinker, tailor,  
If there's scarce a thing you cannot do,  
If you're an electrician and a sailor  
Telegrapher, accountant, lawyer, too;  
If you're propelled by energy that's tireless,  
If you don't fear a job that's never done,  
Then, take my word, you're fit to work at Wireless  
And anything you get – you'll EARN, my son.*

Wireless World 1913

## **Obituary**

Gary Kift, GWOLDQ 3576 became a Silent Key on 13th February 2011 at the age of 90. A staunch supporter of the RNARS, he always supplied a bottle of rum so that members attending rallies in Wales could have a tot.

Born in Swansea in 1920, Gary first went to sea at the age of fourteen and spent the next twenty-five years in the Merchant Navy; sailing on many types of vessels. During WWII he served on several ships on both the Russian and Atlantic convoys.

After leaving the Merchant Navy, Gary worked for the BBC doing various jobs until his retirement. He was one of the founder members of the South Wales radio nets that ran for many years, and will be much missed by many people in the South Wales area.

Gary's funeral was held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.



## **Committee meeting minutes**

**Thursday 17th February 2011**

### **Present**

Doug Hotchkiss (Chair), Mick Puttick, Les Horne, Doug Bowen, Ray Ezra, Adrian Mori, Wally Blythe, Keith Ray, WO1 Rosie Dodd, Joe Kirk, Tony Mori, Phil Manning. **Apologies** Mac McGuinness.

### **Chairman's opening remarks**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He mentioned that some progress had been made with the installation of broadband to the shack. The new line had got as far as the Collingwood switchboard which is just in front of the Shack. A new phone number has been allocated by BT: 01329280385 and this will become the incoming line for the shack once the installation is complete, replacing the existing number. He also commented that as part of testing the BT Broadband Router, a lack of power sockets became apparent and it appeared there was not an extension lead in the shack. Mick G3LIK mentioned that there was at least one in the Store Room.

### **Chairman's report**

The Chairman said that he had had a number of comments about how current the reports on the Society's website were. There had

also been a report that the webmaster had been very busy at work and had less time available to manage the site. Consequently the Chairman had written to the webmaster thanking him for his work over the years and said he had asked the Secretary to take over responsibility for running the site. The Secretary said he had published a temporary page whilst developing new site content.

### **Secretary's report**

The Secretary reported that the Awards Manager had resigned as well as giving up his callsign and that there was therefore a vacancy for an Awards Manager. Volunteers were being sought.

Les GWOJTE submitted an information booklet and invited comments. The Chairman said that Les had suggested a new Society crest and that he had looked a number of crests especially that of HM S/M Oracle. The Secretary will look at these crests and come up with some drafts for the next meeting.

### **Membership Secretary's report**

Total membership stands at 816. The net gain over the period was 5. Doug reported that we were still looking for a VK manager. There had been some expressions of interest which he was following up.

### **Treasurer's report**

The Treasurer reported that we had £594.20 in the Current Account and £17,936.78 in the Savings Account. The long term savings account contains £22,053.99. He was also continuing to investigate PayPal as a method of payment.

### **Membership Questionnaire**

The Chairman canvassed the opinions of the Committee on a campaign to modernise the Society and increase membership. He said we should consider publishing a questionnaire to get the feelings of the Society membership and there was a discussion about the best form the questionnaire should take. Some members had submitted initial thoughts on what could be done and after the discussion members were asked to reconsider and send further thoughts to the Secretary within the next 2 weeks (5th March).

### **Sympathy Cards**

The Chairman said he regularly had to write sympathy letters to the relatives of silent key members. He suggested that we have a small number of sympathy cards printed with the Society logo and that they would be sent instead of a letter. This was unanimously agreed.

### **Data. Comms. Manager**

My weekly eNews bulletins are now being sent out only via the RNARS Yahoo Group. The change of operation has been interesting. A handful of members tried the new system but disliked it and left the group within in a matter of days. Many of the others, once they had learned of the option, switched to receiving just one Daily Digest rather than individual posts. One or two complained that they were not receiving mail, but this turned out to be the result of their ISP's anti-spam filters. That problem was resolved once the people concerned added the Yahoo Group's email address to their contact lists. About sixty people from my original distribution list did not respond even to individual invitations to join the group. Three or four others could not understand the need to reply to confirmation requests from Yahoo, but having had their permission to do so I was able to manually add their addresses to the mailing list.

**Presentation to G3LIK** Before the meeting ended the Chairman made a presentation to Mick G3LIK the retiring Chairman of a laptop computer and a set of drinking glasses. The Chairman thanked Mick for all his work and efforts on behalf of the Society. Some photos below.

**Date of next meeting:** 19:30 5<sup>th</sup> May 2011



### **Closing Down – Editorial**

As is the norm, I'd like to thank everyone who has taken the time to send in articles, without contributors there simply wouldn't be a Newsletter. Special thanks to Mike, Doug, Richard, Alan, Bill and Phil.

**Closing date for the Summer edition will be the 30<sup>th</sup> July.** As you'll see, this edition is a little light, I have nothing pending for the Summer issue, so I'm calling upon the membership for articles; otherwise there might not be a Summer edition. I'm desperate for items; please help me to keep the Newsletter going.

Now for a couple of reminders; I edit the Newsletter and arrange the distribution via e-mail, I am not responsible for Newsletters sent out in the postal system, that's the domain of our hard working membership and commodities officer; **Doug Bowen**. His details are listed on the inside front cover. So please contact Doug if you have

any problems receiving your copy in the post and **please note the changes to Doug's e-mail addresses on page three.**

Next off, I am a very busy guy and when no one else was volunteering to take over the role of editor to keep this vital facet of the society going, I offered my services. However due to other commitments I am sorry that I do not have the time to type out lengthy hand written or typed articles. If you want to submit an item and don't have access to a PC or e-mail, ask a friend or relative if they can send the item for you or copy the article to disk and send it in the post? Additionally, I am not the RNARS press officer and therefore not responsible for RNARS related items in other publication. If you have any comments regarding RNARS articles in other publication, please contact the author or editor of the publication concerned; thanks.

**Contacting me:** E-mail address for Newsletter related items is: **rnars@colinsmagic.com** Enter only one of the following in the subject header: **Newsletter, RNARS, RN, NAVY, or MN** (upper or lower case can be used). Any additions in the subject header and your e-mail will be treated as spam 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. Due to plans to changes address in the very near future, please send postal items to my parent's address:

**17 Mount Melville Crescent  
Strathkinness, KY16 9XS**

The best way to contact me is via e-mail or my mobile number **07871959654**. I know mobiles can be expensive to call, but as long as your number is not withheld, I will call you back.

### **Newsletter by e-mail**

If you wish, you can have your Newsletter delivered via e-mail. Doing so will save the society money in printing and postage costs, and you'll get your PDF copy within a few days of the final date for submitting articles. If you wish to subscribe to this service, please e-mail me; **rnars@colinsmagic.com** and **ONLY** enter "**Newsletter Subscription**" in the subject header. Include your name, call-sign, address and RNARS number so that I can pass the information to

Doug Bowen to ensure that he doesn't send a newsletter to you in the post.

As always items for inclusion in the Newsletter will be warmly welcomed, more so if there's a good picture to go with the article. However, please no back of head shots. Over the last year I've been inundated with pictures of the rear someone's head while they speak into a microphone or key up. And if you are at a rally and have set up a stand, please put some bodies in the picture. Again I've a great collection of images of RNARS stands from all over the country with a table full of commodities and no one in the shot. I try to make this a member led publication, so let's see what you look like please.

The last photo' **caption competition** led to six responses, the best coming from Doug - GOLDJ 3686.

*Caption for picture of Barry Humphries! Change Barry's name to; "Captain HMSM ASTUTE" and the caption to read: "Jimmy, send a signal to Captain Submarines: BOTTOMED whilst on INDEX request Tug ASAP."*



So let's hear what you can come up with for this picture, no prizes other than a mention in the next Newsletter.

So with spring almost here and a fresh coat of paint and antifoul on the yacht, I'm off sailing as soon as tide and weather allows.



*Best wishes to you all, Colin GM6HGW 1870*



**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

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Frequ MHz</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>Control</b>
Daily	2359	145.725 (GB3SN)	Midnight Nutters	M0WRU
Sun	0800	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 to				G0GPO / G3OZY
Fri	1030	3.74 / 7.055	Bubbly Rats	G0VIX
Mon	1400	3.575	QRS CW	G0VCV / G3OZY
	1900	3.743	North West - 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	GM3XRX
	2000 <b>GMT</b>	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

	<b>Time</b>	<b>MHz</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>Control</b>
Daily	0800	14.303	Maritime Mobile	G4FRN
	1800	14.303	Maritime Mobile	G4FRN
Mon	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	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
	1900	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	
<b>*** Logbook (if ordering two) ***</b>			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	
50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary lapel badge			3-00	0-45	
<b>Total enclosed</b>					

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

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

Please send form together with PO or cheque made payable to RNARS to: Doug Bowen G0MIU 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.