



Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society

Hon. Secretary Joe Kirk G3ZDF 111 Stockbridge Road
Chichester, West Sussex PO19 8QR
g3zdf@btinternet.com

MINUTES

Committee Meeting Thursday 9th February 2017

HMS Collingwood

Present:	Joe Kirk	G3ZDF	Secretary	
	Dave Lacey	G4JBE		By Skype
	Wally Walker	G4DIU	Membership Secretary	By Skype
	Doug Bowen	G0MIU		
	Colin Topping	GM6HGW		By Skype
	David Firth	2E0GLL		
Apologies:	Mick Puttick	G3LIK	Hon. Vice President	
	Adrian Mori	2E0JVM	Treasurer	
	Simon Tribe	G0IEY		
	Julia Tribe	G0IUY		

Tasks to be completed are underlined

The Meeting started at 19.27

- 1. Election of chairman** – candidate David Firth 2E0GLL (proposed by Doug Bowen G0MIU, seconded by Mick Puttick G3LIK).
Agreed unanimously.
At this point our new Chairman took the chair of the meeting.
- 2. Apologies for absence**
 - a. As above.
- 3. Minutes of the last two meetings**
 - a. Proposed by Wally and seconded by Dave and agreed unanimously.
- 4. Matters arising**
 - a. No matters arising not covered elsewhere
- 5. Chairman's Report**
 - a. David thanked the Committee for electing him as Chairman and said he looked forward to working with the members of the Committee and the wider membership. He prepared a short set of biographical notes that would be included in the next Newsletter.
 - b. He foresaw a busy future particularly with the proposed closure of HMS Sultan and the effect on HMS Collingwood. He also saw a need to make the Shack more used and usable so we could improve our case for staying in Collingwood.
Wally suggested we look for alternative sites for the HQ Shack outside of Collingwood even if we had to pay to rent them.
The Dockyard had been suggested previously but they will be working to absorb the Royal Marines Museum from Eastney over the next few years and that could make it more difficult for us to find a permanent site.
Chairman said he had had a discussion with the First Lieutenant of Sultan a few weeks previously and while he had drawn attention to

how long the move to Collingwood was likely to take he had also said that Fort Grange and Fort Rowner on the Sultan Estate were already accommodating a range of clubs. It was pointed out that if we went under the arches we could have some difficulty routing aerial cables.

6. Secretary's report

- a. I have received resignation letters from Simon as Maintenance Manager and from Julia as Almoner. Simon's health has deteriorated and he feels unable to give the job the attention it deserves. The Committee passed a vote of thanks to both Simon and Julia for the work they had done on the Committee.
- b. I sent handwritten Christmas cards sent to President & Patron
- c. Electronic cards were sent to other national naval societies
- d. Currently in discussions with Bob Jennings about Officers' email addresses to be available on rnars.co.uk, e.g. chairman@rnars.org.uk.
- e. HMS Otus will be active as DL0MFN for international museum day on 21 May. I hope to activate GB3RN and QSO with Otus, an 'old ship' of mine.
- f. I have ordered another 100 enamel lapel badges.
- g. Disabled access has still not been provided to the Shack but our ex-Officio has been tasked with providing same.
- h. On two occasions while we were using the shack we had a power cut. This meant the supplementary heating we had was useless. It also meant the GB7RN repeater went off air. On the first occasion I had to go into Collingwood and re-start it so David G6ORL could check it out and get it up and running. On the second occasion GB7RN restarted itself when the power came back on. At the moment it is not clear what the reason for the power failures are.
- i. The 2 members+ who took the Foundation Exam passed and are now licensed.

Joe G3ZDF

7. Membership Secretary's report

- a. Wally reported that Marc has taken over as Membership Secretary.

8. Treasurer's report

- a. Adrian reported that it had been a quiet period and that the balances were as follows:
Current a/c £2654.43
Deposit a/c £13162.02.
Long term deposit a/c £34,919.33.
He reported that we currently do not pay any bank charges.
He also said we were approaching the end of the financial year and asked for any outstanding expense claims to be sent to him

9. Carried forward from last Committee: Proposed amendment to Constitution by Dave G4JBE Under Para 4. Subscriptions sub para d.

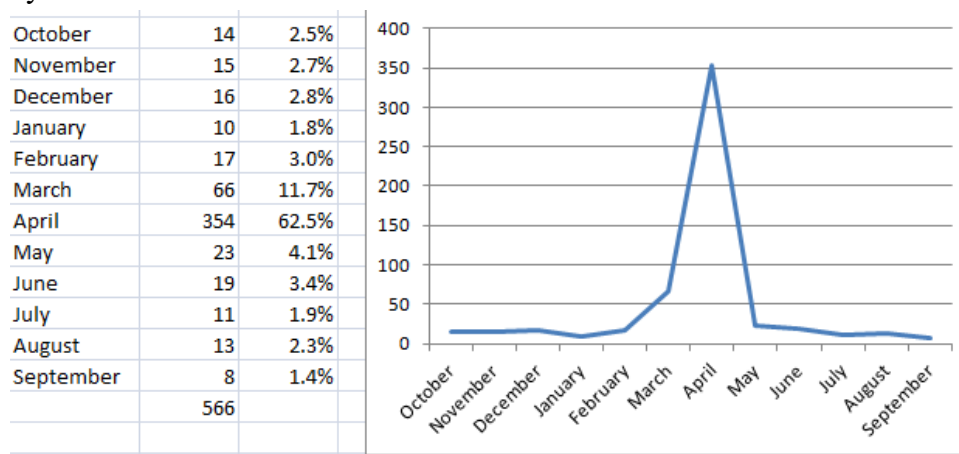
"A member shall be deemed to have resigned from the Society, if their subscription has not been received by the RNARS within Three Months of the Society's financial year-end"

I would like to propose that the deadline of 3 months be changed to 2 or

better 1 Month i.e. 4 weeks from the 1st April.

Dave said that there was an unnecessarily amount of admin having to be spent on membership and that he knew of no other organisation whose membership rules were as lax as ours. He proposed a cut-off after 4 weeks of non-payment. Colin added that as we did not apply a re-joining fee members could drop in and out almost as they pleased.

Joe said that he had created a report last autumn breaking down the payments by month.



An initial proposal to apply the 4-week cut-off was rejected by 4 to 3. A counter proposal to apply a phased cut-off – 2 months for the next membership year and 1 month thereafter was agreed unanimously.

10. Preparation for Collingwood Open Day.

- a. What we aim to do on the day

The unconfirmed date of the Open Day is Saturday 3rd June. As soon as it is confirmed or changed the Secretary will promulgate the date through all the usual channels.

The programme will be similar to last year's but with added digital mode displays. We will make arrangements with local members to be available to carry out QSOs with GB6COD so we are not left calling CQ to an empty channel.

We aim to make use of periscope.tv to stream live video from the Shack using mobile phones and also have members with video cameras so we can upload the videos to youtube.com. We have already registered RNARS on both these channels.

Colin said he hoped to be in Fareham/Gosport area for the Open Day. Any suggestions from members about what else we could do on the day would be welcome.

- b. Who will we have to do it

As last year Secretary will contact members within 20 miles to ask for volunteers for the shack.

- c. How will we do it

Secretary to prepare some paragraphs for the Open Day programme so that visitors are aware of who we are, what we do, where we are and most importantly how they can join.

- d. Confirmation of GB6COD

Secretary to apply for NOV for GB6COD.

11. Response to possible closure of HMS Sultan

12. Ideas and suggestions for the future of the HQ Shack and for the RNARS

- a. Items 11 and 12 were combined. Two sets of papers (attached) were presented with a variety of ideas and approaches that could be adopted. ALL MEMBERS not just Committee members were asked to review the reports and feel free to give their opinions on what had (and what had not) been proposed. Responses to be sent to the Secretary by any mode.
- b. Chairman said that from what he had heard the feasibility study of the Sultan move would take up to 2 years, the planning stage another 2 years and the whole move was unlikely to be completed in under 10 years.
- c. Dave G4JBE said we were a long-standing part of RN Communications history and should be able to capitalise on that by making our presence felt.
- d. It was suggested that we needed to get our message across to the Training Staff in Collingwood.

13. Suggestion by 2E1ILH that we establish a presence on HMS Bristol

- a. According to MOD: *Once a guardian of the Fleet against air attack and a veteran of the Falklands War, HMS Bristol is now a training and accommodation ship in Portsmouth Harbour.*
Designed to defend a class of aircraft carriers which were never built, HMS Bristol was the only Type 82 destroyer ever built for the Royal Navy.
She served her nation for 20 years – and saw action in the Falklands in 1982 – in an air defence/command ship role before she was decommissioned in 1991.
Two years later she was converted into a training and accommodation ship to replace HMS Kent.
Today, recently refitted, she is moored at the tip of Whale Island in Portsmouth Harbour.
Hosting up to 17,000 visitors, including Sea Cadets, annually for 50 weeks a year, she provides the closest thing to a sea-going experience without leaving port.
- b. Unlike other ex-RN ships such as Belfast and Cavalier that have amateur radio stations on board Bristol is not a museum ship and is not open to the public.
- c. The Committee determined that if members in the Portsmouth area wished to set up a club and station on board HMS Bristol the Society would facilitate that endeavour and support them in every way including funding the provision of equipment.

14. Managers' reports

- a. **Shack Manager**
We hope to appoint a new Shack manager soon
- b. **QSL Manager**
No report.
- c. **Data Comms**
The group is steady at 138 members, one down from the last report. I

am currently sending out invites to each newly joined members of the Society, sadly very few take up the offer.

I hesitate to repeat the invites to individuals for fear that it may be counter-productive.

I do wonder however if the Yahoo Group is effectively "advertised" and explained to new joiners ? Something that we may like to investigate.

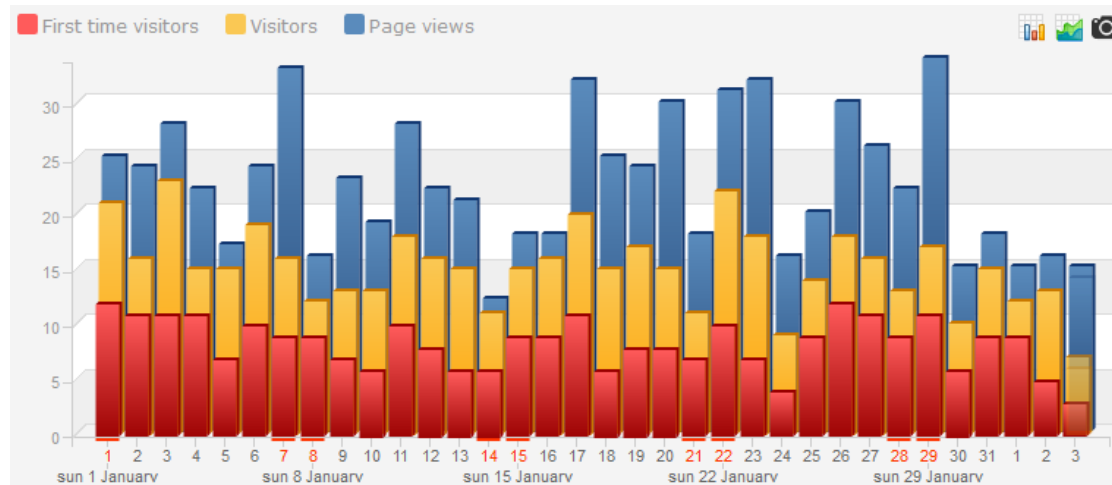
Only a couple of unwanted mails have entered the system since November, and did not actually appear on the Group, clearly Yahoo have tightened their security.

Traffic levels on the Group remain at a fairly low level at this time.

Dave, G4JBE # 0434, Data Comms Manager

RNARS Yahoo Group

Web Site



- d. No major changes to the site. Suggestions as always are very welcome
Joe G3ZDF

- e. **Area Rep Co-ordinator**

We continue to be represented at the main rallies.

Wally G4DIU

- f. **Newsletter Editor**

The Winter 2016 edition seems to have been well received. Several members have made positive comments on-air, e-mail and in short notes contained within Christmas cards and no drips.

Several members feel that we should retain the simple title "Newsletter" for the newsletter. Therefore, I will continue to use this unless there are objections.

Progressing well on the Spring edition, I may re-run the information on RNARS awards for new members.

I've not set a publication date for the Newsletter; but with my impending retirement from local government (politburo) and a planned visit to Spain in early March, I suspect the Newsletter will be ready to go out mid-March. Due to the remoteness of my Spanish destination, I may not have access to e-mail for a few days, therefore I would very much appreciate any notices that require to be promulgated to be received sooner rather than later

Colin

Addendum to Editor's report for committee meeting.

Please find attached final draft of the Spring Newsletter. All contributors have seen the final draft and any corrections made. I've retained a page for our new Chair to introduce himself. There's also a couple of inches at the foot of page thirty for any last-minute items arising from the committee meeting. I can also remove a couple of my pictures for any other late items. It would be useful if I can have any late items sooner rather than later.

All rally reports that come in will have to go in the Summer issue which as is the norm will carry official notice of the AGM in October along with a proxy form.

I'd also like to receive views on retaining the net lists of RAFARS, Royal Signals ARS and joint service 5 MHz net. Due to space constraints, I have removed them from this edition.

Colin GM6HGW Newsletter Editor

g. **Commodities Manager.**

Sales in the few months have come to just under £100.

Doug G0MIU

Colin reminded members that Doug and his XYL Judy were also responsible for the printing, enveloping and despatch of the printed Newsletter. He proposed a Vote of Thanks to them both and that we send a bunch of flowers to Mrs Bowen. Agreed unanimously.

Secretary to arrange.

h. **Almoner**

I haven't much news to report regarding Almoner..... But here is the latest since the AGM.

X2 cards sent as Thinking of You.

X3 Condolence cards sent (this includes Nigel's families and Ken Ward.

88 Julia G0IUU

As reported previously Julia has resigned her position as Almoner. The Committee passed a Vote of Thanks to Julia for the work she had done and asked the Secretary to write accordingly to her.

Colin undertook to take over the work of Almoner.

i. **Maintenance Manager**

The following is my report for the committee meeting on the 9th February 2017.

Nothing much has changed since my last report unfortunately.

Julia and I visited the HQ Shack on Monday 6th February 2017 in order to test some keys that Nigel's Son Mathew has passed onto us that he thought Nigel had used at the Shack.

The result of which is that I now have the keys for the 2 Grey metal cabinets immediately inside the shack door including the padlock one.

A key for the 19" rack containing the D Star repeater and a padlock key for the North mast winch chain.

Unfortunately there was no key for the locked cabinet in the Work Room (the far right one) so it may be necessary to drill the lock out for access to that, as I believe Nigel had the only key for that cabinet. It contains as far as I know some tools. Hopefully none of them Nigel's own ones?

The mouse infestation, signs at least, are still visible.

The heating is still not functioning. We met a gentleman who is in occupation in the other end of the building for the next 2/3 months who advised there were no plans to fix the heating, and that the electrical supply had recently been fused at 32A for the whole building hence the drop out of supply from time to time that has I understand been experienced of late. He also made a statement that the building would be pulled down before the heating would be fixed!

The rotator on the North Mast needs a multi pin inline plug & socket installing in place of the tag strip hanging under the bench. The Rotator also needs removing and corrosion removed and repainted. 6mm thick and shaped spacers (preferably made of stainless steel or heavily painted aluminium), at each bolt fixing location. They need to be installed between the rotator base and mast rotator cage in order to reduce the capillary retention of water beneath the rotator and hence reduce the return of corrosion.

73 de Simon GOIEY

HQ Shack Maintenance Manager.

As reported previously due to ill health Simon has resigned his position as Shack Maintenance Manager. The Committee passed a Vote of Thanks to Simon for the work he had done and asked the Secretary to write accordingly to him.

15. Date of next Meeting

20th April 2017 – 3rd Thursday in the month (2nd Thursday is Maundy Thursday)

The Meeting closed at 21.20.

Reports

A report from Simon GOIEY was laid before the Committee and Simon asked that distribution of the report be limited to the Committee.

SOME IDEAS FOR THE SHACK

1. Because of the recent news that HMS Sultan will be closing in an assumed time period of 10 years or less, there is concern that the pre-cursor to Sultan moving to HMS Collingwood will increase pressure on the use of the MOD's estate at Collinwood. This could mean that our RNARS HQ building housing the radio shack would be earmarked for reuse, or worse, demolition during the feasibility study or later survey during the planning stage. That would be somewhat of a disaster for us, but we may be able to help ourselves in a number of ways that have been suggested below. The goal here is to present the club's premises under a clear banner of 'well kept' useful, and providing a service to those in uniform.' It is hoped that a combination of spring cleaning, grant applications for refurbishment and the availability of courses such as the Foundation Licence to service and civilian personnel. I think we can all agree among ourselves that this once thriving club and resource is slowly declining with the age of its members and we may not have a second chance to survive the reshuffling of the military estates in the near future.
2. The way forward
 - a. Looking at the condition of the shack in general terms we have had no heating for something over a month, and although the boiler is being replaced it means that for most of us we are huddling around radiant heaters trying to keep warm while there is not enough actual radio activity. The rumour is that site maintenance has this in hand. It has to be said also, that it appears un-attractive with age old carpeting, and coils of cables and connectors strewn around the bays looking unsightly. I ask myself this question of myself every time I walk in to my own shack, "What do I want my shack to look like in the small space that I have allocated?" And I think we should all think about the shack at Collingwood in the same way. In essence, it needs a general spring clean and tidy up. And perhaps, if we have too much cabling, we could start fitting them into the radio infrastructure, and that is something we have to do ourselves.
 - b. While we are in receipt of the freedom of these premises at the current time it may be appropriate to keep a defect log so that we can keep ourselves informed as to the status of building and utility maintenance and repairs. However, we have at least one project held in abeyance because a willing volunteer is now unable to start the work of installing the electrical trunking that has been stowed underneath the communication bays. Can we not cast our net a little wider and help ourselves -perhaps, put out a call for a couple of volunteers on the Collingwood daily orders or on their network?
 - c. We must have a marketing strategy in order to attract new and younger members into membership which means advertising and some kind of inducements, pin badges, badges, pens and other marketing paraphernalia such as small posters. We could also extend our presence at the Freshers' Fair activities at Collingwood to include the fair at HMS Sultan; maybe at other shore establishments -if there are any left after this round of cut-backs. If there is a general usage area on the

Collingwood net perhaps we could insert an advertisement. Do we have a mission statement and a strapline?

- d. In terms of refurbishment we know this takes time and money, so the thought is that maybe we could apply for a grant from any one of the service charities (even the lottery???) to help us redesign our facilities to bring them up to date and look much smarter, including the labour to carry out the work for us. Go around any merchant ship, trawler or any Grey Funnel and we will find equipment fitted behind facias with, all the unsightly wiring hidden behind and the front ends of the comms equipment and associated displays neatly presented for use. No electrical 'spaghetti' in view. This means that we must have a clear indication of what we want to have as a fully modernised shack. In terms of equipment we have two 'massive' Yaesu transceivers; one of which is up for repair. a portable VHF D-Link unit, and a portable HF unit both of which are looking 'lost' in two of the bays. Is there any room for improving the layout? On the other hand, can we think of updating to an up to an HF rig like the Icom-7300 which seems to have a lot of the features that the mobile phone generation might find it easier to work with?

There is a thought that we could also plan to better arrange the aerial system(s) that we have entering the shack. Perhaps, arrange for aerial patching to replace the current system of plugging/unplugging aerials according to need.

- e. For recruitment of the next generation who, it is hoped, will follow on from us there is the need to find a means of recruitment and retention. One suggestion is that we find our way into a little subtle advertising by poster on teaboats and rest areas, but also having a presence -if not just on a verbal basis of recommendation to each of the appropriate classes by their instructors. The other suggestion is that we provide training for the Foundation certificate which will give youngsters a 'leg up' in their understanding of radio in this great information age that we live in... maybe could start by having an open day for instructional staff to show them what we do and to pass on the message.
- f. Hours of business appear to be from somewhere between midday to four or five in the afternoon on Tuesdays, which means the shack sees very little use –heating permitting. From what I have seen in another place there was an -'Internet Cafe'- run by Aggies for a few years where trainees could drop in and use the equipment during the evenings. There was always a duty supervisor for the cafe taken from the duty watch, perhaps we could enlist some help from suitably qualified Leading Hands or Petty Officers by way of a 'blue card' job and have the shack open. The provision of liquid refreshment and nutty/crisps being supervised by the duty 'Shack Manager.' perhaps we could think about this type of arrangement for two or three times a week. Or run a pilot scheme...

- 3. Well there you are, some ideas to make changes, getting help to carry them forwards, and then continue in to the future for the next generation to take on.

David/2E0GLL

The informal meeting was held in the unheated HQ Shack on Tuesday 10-Jan-17 to consider how to:

1. attract new members into the Society
2. encourage more serving RN members to come into the shack to expose them to amateur radio and ultimately to join the RNARS
3. entice more existing members back into the HQ Shack
4. offer more benefits for current members

Number of suggestions were made to spruce up the shack.

1. Give the shack a more professional appearance
2. Replace the existing carpet. .
3. Remove the old chairs and look at updating our seating arrangements.
4. Recommence the rewiring of the Shack in order to comply with current regulations and to make operating easier.
5. Fit a 'kill' switch in the shack.
6. Consider applying to charities for grants to upgrade the shack, charities such as the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust. Martin Longbottom undertook to investigate which charities might be most suitable to apply to.
7. There may be some mileage in asking the Victory Squadron to redecorate the shack although we would have to do quite a lot of preparation.

A number of other suggestions were made that would be worth exploring:

1. Many organisations run 'acquaint' courses as a way of introducing people to a topic or piece of equipment. We should consider running equivalent courses for amateur radio in the shack which would serve as a kind of pre-Foundation licence course.
2. One of the training courses in Collingwood (the successors to the bunting tossers of old) have to learn to send and receive Morse using flashing lights. Should we install a training light in the shack to encourage those members to come into the shack?
3. We should draw up a list of all Sea Cadet Corps, Sea Scouts and Nautical Training Corps groups in the area so that we can issue them an invitation to come individually to an open evening in the shack. We could run a few short videos about amateur radio, explain about the overlap between their communications syllabus and the Foundation syllabus, offer to run some short Introduction courses and attempt to recruit them to the society. (Subsequently - Marc G0TOC our Membership Secretary is involved with the SCC and said he would be able to supply this information.)
4. Looking specifically at any serving member (or SCC member?) we should also look at the possibility that any of them that takes and passes the foundation exam through the RNARS is offered some incentive such as
 - a. the loan of a handheld transceiver either permanently or on a long loan.
 - b. free membership of the RNARS for the first year It was pointed out that the RSGB offers free membership to members under 21, Should we do the same?
 - c. Some other incentives that we could offer like the computer on a chip such as the £5 Raspberry Pi zero (<https://www.raspberrypi.org/products/pi-zero/>) or the \$9 computer on a chip(<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1598272670/chip-the-worlds-first-9-computer>).
 - d. An equipment library where we can offer equipment on short term loans.
 - e. Offer of a cheap radio receiver such as the DVB-T dongle.
5. We need to make our presence and the accessibility of the Shack better known.
 - a. We should have an a-frame for positioning outside the shack every time anybody is inside the shack so that any passersby know they can drop in.

- b. We need to consider having the opening hours of the shack on the door as well as trying to staff the shack on a more regular basis.
 - c. We should provide some marketing communications for the WO & SRs mess and for the Wardroom.
 - d. Investigate what marketing communication resources the RSGB can offer.
6. Broadband Internet connection needs improving because it only offers a slow throughput at the moment.
 7. Should we use different callsigns for different themes for different days or different activities?
 8. Fit the operating base on the left-hand side of the shack as a general purpose receiving bay that could be for receiving CB or any other frequencies that are available for which we have the equipment.

JJK/15-Jan-17

RADIO CLUB IMPROMPTU MEETING

A casual meeting was held at a moment's notice to solicit ideas from our members present last Tuesday afternoon. From my notes I record from best memory what was indicative.

Refurbishment of the premises

1. Change the bays to a more professional RN type finish, aerial patch-boards, hidden cabling behind panels, etc. Change the general decor, repaint and replace carpet and furniture to make the place more welcoming. Also find a contractor to finish installing the wiring and associated conduits on the wall behind the bays.
2. Finance to complete refurbishment of the premises and other items requiring funding. There was mention of several charitable sources from both military and civil areas: RNRM charity, RNBT, Veterans groups, Nuffield Trust, Gosling Foundation, lottery fund, etc. We do have some funds of our own, but it would be appropriate to confine ourselves to using those for equipment repairs and other maintenance initially.
3. Opening Times. The club is mainly used by older ex-forces civilians and we have to remember this is a club for service personnel as well. In order to make the Shack available to service people we should consider more appropriate and regular opening times when they are free from their day to day duties. This is usually in the evenings in the 'Dog watches.' There may be a need for duty personnel to be rostered from among our own ranks as much as from the military in Collingwood itself. A blue card job for evening supervisors and or the Victory Squadron -all under general supervision of key shack members.
4. To attract more members will require advertising in key public areas, and perhaps in meeting places or on mess notice boards.
5. Equipment and training. To widen our remit we could be looking at other areas within the radio sphere. CB and PMR radio are here to stay and with the advent of non licenced equipment in these areas we could expand our shack to accommodate such equipment since a core of amateurs actually came through the old CB world into amateur radio. We could also introduce a simple introduction to radio protocols on how to behave on the air. There is also the fact that a lot of people prefer to be SWLs and Dxers without taking interest in transmitting; we could consider this as another target area whether it be listening to marine and aeronautical radio, broadcast channels, etc. Also with regard to training we could provide basic training on amateur principles if not a course on the Foundation Licence.

6. In terms of new equipment: Pi computers, CBs, PMRs, and perhaps digital modes in HF
DG Firth/2E0GLL