



# Worksop Amateur Radio Society NEWSLETTER

March 2015

Hello everyone and welcome to the March newsletter. Thanks for all the positive comments about my attempt with the January issue. Due to the way things have unfolded since, it looks like I will be putting together future newsletters—unless anyone else fancies the job of course! Lots to tell you about so read on....

*Sue Ferguson M6XAK*

## Committee News



I think most of you will know by now that **Roy Frettsome G4WPW**, after 14 years at the helm, has decided to step

down from his position as Chairman of the Society for reasons of ill health. Roy underwent a serious operation recently but the good news is that all went well and Roy is now back home. He and his family send thanks to

everyone at the Club for the continued support and good wishes.

Roy's resignation has created a vacancy for Chairman and the Committee has decided to call an **Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)** for the **21st April 2015** at 7.30pm. There is a notice on the screen at the Club and there will be further details once Peter returns from his holiday.

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## New licensees

Many congratulations to the following new licensees who passed the Foundation exam on 7th February 2015:

**Aiden Ashcroft (M6FDT)**

**Kevin Davies (M6WKW)**

**Chris Button (M6OHV)**

**Shaun Button (M6SNS)**

**Paul Mills (M6FEC)**



## Next examination dates

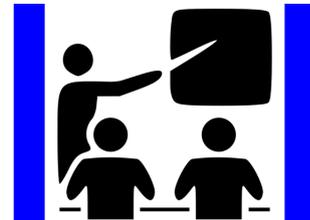
The **Intermediate** re-sit will take place on the morning of **Saturday, 11th April** followed by the **Foundation** exam and re-sits in the afternoon.

The next **Full licence** exam will take place on **Tuesday, 30th June**. The deadline for paperwork and payment is **1st June** please make sure your course tutor and the Exam Secretary have all the required information to enter you for this exam by this date.

*Good Luck!*

## Tuition Courses

The next tuition courses for all licence grades will begin in the Autumn.



If you know anyone wanting to join the **Foundation** level course beginning in **September** please get in touch with **Martin Fearn M0ZMF** at the Club.

The next **Intermediate** course will also start in **September**. Anyone wanting to join, please give your contact details to **Paul Archer M0PJA** by the beginning of **July**.

The **Advanced** course, for those wishing to study for the Full licence, will begin in **October**. In preparation for that **Steve Hambleton G0EAK** will run a **Maths Primer** starting in **September**. Names and contact details should be given to Steve and **Denis Soames M0USV**. Prospective students will be asked to do a mock Intermediate exam paper prior to the commencement of the course to help identify any possible weak spots that the tutors can then address.

We are very fortunate to be registered as an exam centre and we have some excellent, committed tutors/assessors, who give their time freely to help get you through the exams. Students signing up to courses will be expected to commit for the *whole* course and complete any home study/homework the tutors assign during the course.

## Club renovations and antenna update

The current phase of work is almost completed—here's some of what Martin has been up to since the last newsletter report, although a few words and pictures can never convey the amount of work Martin has put in over the past few months.

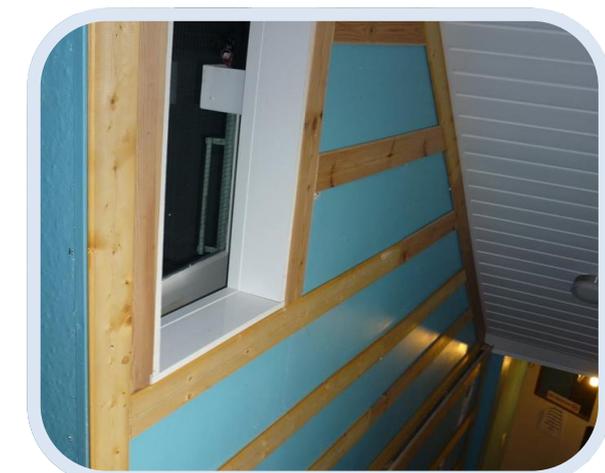
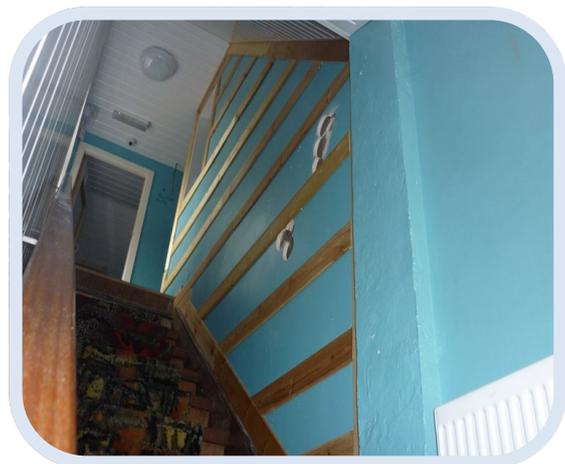


### VHF shack

The VHF Shack door now has a glass panel to allow more light into the room. All the materials so far have been recycled from within the building—the glass for the door came from old display cupboard from downstairs and another glass pane will go in the CW room door. The wooden sides of the cupboard have been made into shelves in the teaching room which is nearing completion with facilities for HF, Data, and shortly UHF and VHF.

### Stairwell

Work on the stairwell is almost complete – the walls now have cladding and there's just the stair treads to tidy up and the old carpet to be disposed of.



Not content with the building renovations, Martin has also been hard at work preparing for the installation of the long-awaited new antennas. First off, some clearing out needed to be done in the loft to create space for the mounting point for the rotator cage. Here's the framework in the loft.....



Martin then re-furbished the rotator cage—rotator and bearing fitted, all fixings replaced with stainless steel to prevent corrosion and finished with a nice new coat of paint



Sunday 22 March saw WARS very own 'A' Team of Martin, Seth, Steve, Fred and Jack in action, installing the rotator and the first of 3 antennas—the 5 element 4m Yagi which was put through its paces in the first 4m contest of the year on 31 March. This new set up will eventually also accommodate brand new 2m and 23cm antennas giving the Club much



enhanced capability on SSB. There are lots of photos of the antenna installation on the G3RCW Facebook page—including views of Worksop town as seen from the rooftop. <https://www.facebook.com/g3rcw?fref=ts>

Much careful planning, preparation and working around other jobs has been necessary to get to this stage and huge thanks go to Martin and to everyone who has assisted so far. Special thanks go to *InnovAntennas* for their help, advice and guidance on buying the right antenna to suit our location. New 6m and 70cm antennas will eventually be installed on the Club's other mast which again should see a significant increase in performance.

### New equipment

Since the last newsletter the Club has purchased a new transceiver—an Icom 7100 which covers HF, 6m, 4m, 2m and 70cm including D-Star. A new antenna analyser has also been purchased.



### WARS in the News!

Thanks to the persistent efforts of Paul Archer (M0PJA), WARS has appeared in several publications recently.



If you subscribe to *Practical Wireless* you might have noticed that on page 7 of the latest issue (April 2015) we get a mention regarding our **SOS Radio Week** special event station.

We also got a mention in the *Worksop Guardian* for the same event. (More about SOS Week later in this newsletter.)

We've also been featured in *Radcom*, the members' magazine of RSGB. The first occasion was in the January 2015 issue when an article originally written for WARS own newsletter by yours truly, about the **6m Delta loop build**,

was reproduced in Radcom's Last Word feature.

Paul himself was pictured in this month's issue (April 2015) in a feature on Train the Trainers—a pilot course he and Steve G0EAK attended on 31st January.

And WARS got TWO mentions in this month's issue of Radcom—in the 'Around your Region' feature regarding our support for SOS Radio Week, and we were also listed as a **regional finalists** for Club of the Year 2014.

**We now know that we are in the final 3 for Club of the Year (large club). Our fellow finalists are London Hackspace and Mid Ulster ARC. The winner will be announced at the RSGB AGM on 25th April. Fingers crossed everyone!**

## A round-up of events since the last newsletter



On the weekend of **24th/25th January 2015** the Club ran a special event station in support of **SOS Radio Week** with the call sign **GB1RNLI**. This was another successful and fun weekend with hundreds of contacts made across the UK and Europe. We operated from

10am on Saturday 24th January until late in the evening and again on Sunday 25th January from 10am to 8pm, on HF, 6m, 4m, 2m and 70cm, CW, voice and data.

In addition to the usual crowd that support this type of event we had several other members calling in to say Hello either in person or on the radio. Here are a few photos of the event.....



Richard Hilton G4WZI operating 30m CW with Carol M6ZCA logging. Richard worked hard over the weekend making 139 contacts and was generously sponsored for each one, by his wife.



Paul M0PJA operating 15m PSK



Alison M6IAQ on 40m with Shawn SWL logging.



Steve G0EAK and Mark on 40m

Despite a few technical gremlins the weekend was a great success. We were delighted to see several new members on the Foundation course come in and have a go at operating under supervision. Thanks go to Steve G0EAK for organising it, all the operators and loggers and to Maurice and Sue for providing hot food, cakes and refreshments over the weekend.

We'll be able to give you the breakdown of the number of contacts made and money raised when Treasurer Peter gets back from his holiday.



We've had several interesting talks on Thursday evenings already this year ...

**January 8th** was a brief 'show and tell' with Dennis M0USV on the subject of Robotics, which included a little electronics and PIC programming.

**January 22nd** saw Paul Archer give a talk on '**Virtual Radar revisited**' - how to set up your own virtual radar using an inexpensive dongle and free software

**29th January**—John Rogers M0JAV asked '**What can RSGB do for you?**' This was a very interesting presentation and discussion about the work of RSGB and working together with local clubs. Everybody joined in with the debates and we all learned from each other. This was not a 'hard sell' to boost RSGB membership nor preaching to the converted by any means but it was encouraging to see how many club members were also members of RSGB.

On **5th February** Paul Archer M0PJA gave a short talk and demo on using DVB-T dongles as SDRs, covering both PC and Raspberry Pi use.

On **19th February** Paul M0PJA was back again with an interesting talk titled '**A beginners guide to amateur radio Data modes**' covering RTTY and PSK. Paul has uploaded his Powerpoint presentation to the Club Facebook page (for Members' use only please)

On 26th March there was a talk on **VHF / UHF and how to make the most of the Bands** by Steve G0EAK . Steve has uploaded his Powerpoint presentation to the Club Facebook page which includes several 'live' links to enable you to explore in greater depth. If anyone wants any further information on any aspect of the talk please don't hesitate to ask Steve.

### Coming up on Thursdays.....

**2nd April:** SDR Radio— talk by John M0JAV

**9th April:** Presentation from the RSGB Conference 2014

**23 April:** EMC Explained by John M0JAV

Do keep an eye on the Club calendar which you will find at <http://www.qsl.net/g3rcw/itevents.html>

## Contesting update

The club continues to improve in the Tuesday evening UKAC as we now have a few more members operating from home or portable. With the improvements to the antennas at the Club currently in progress we should also see an improvement in the results for G3RCW. With a good showing in the recent 6m contest and the 4m contest on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March we should hopefully progress up the overall table. Current standings:

| Band    | 2014 | January    | February   | March | Total Clubs |
|---------|------|------------|------------|-------|-------------|
| 2m      | 17   | 18         | 16         | 16    | 90          |
| 70cm    | 15   | 13         | 20         | 14    | 61          |
| 23cm    | 20   | 19         | 20         | 10    | 45          |
| 6m      | 13   | 9          | 13         |       | 62          |
| 4m      | 13   | No Contest | No Contest |       |             |
| Overall | 17   | 15         | 15         | 15    | 95          |

Ideally we would like more people to get involved either portable or from home as the more individual stations we can field, the better our Club scores will be. If you'd like to give VHF/UHF contesting a go, pop up to the VHF shack at the club on a Tuesday evening. Alternatively, if you are unable to get to the club on a Tuesday and want more information please contact Steve, G0EAK, who will be happy to help you. Be warned though, contesting can bring out your competitive streak and it's easy to get hooked!

## A cautionary tale if you're contesting portable *by M0PCF*

Just a little warning for those going /p. On 10<sup>th</sup> March, Catherine and I were /p in the motorhome. This was the nicest evening for a while, no wind or rain and a nice quiet spot on the hills. After a while the temperature started to drop so we decided to start the motorhome engine to warm ourselves up and top up the batteries. After a few minutes, we both commented on feeling a bit queasy (no, it wasn't the chicken curry or an excess of chocolate Hobnobs) then ..... beep beep beep .....the carbon monoxide alarm activated. We quickly ventilated the cabin and turned off the engine. This was the first time we'd had super weather and no wind - but the

doors and windows closed (normally, in summer, we have the windows open.) Even after venting, our alarm activated again 20 minutes later.....

If you sit in your vehicle (car or motorhome) whilst /p, and especially if working alone, please consider purchasing a carbon monoxide detector. Battery-run ones cost around £20 and need no installation.

Stay safe!



## Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB)



My impression from reading posts on various Facebook groups and pages recently is that to some people RSGB is like Marmite—you like it or you don't.

I'll say straight off that I am a member—I joined as soon as I got my licence but this is not meant to be the 'hard sell'. We've had a lot of new Club members recently so I'm just going to highlight some things available from RSGB which, new licensee or not, you might find of interest (then you can make your own mind up as to whether RSGB is an organisation you might like to support by becoming a member)

Have you ever visited the **RSGB website**? OK so it's not the best example of a user-friendly web site but there's a lot of information on there (and you don't need to be a member to access a lot of it....)

<http://rsgb.org/main/>

### Training Resources

- Course finder
- Student information—Foundation licence, Intermediate licence, Full licence (Advanced exam), paying for your exam
- Student resources—links to websites with relevant materials; mock exam papers
- Fees—currently, Foundation £27.50; Intermediate £32.50;

Advanced £37.50

- Trainer information—guidance; exams spec; advice and training materials; instructors newsletters; optical marking system; exam forms

### Get started

- First steps
- Setting up your station
- Buying new or used transceivers
- Other equipment
- Shack safety
- Antennas
- EMC Considerations

### Operating

- Operating guidelines; link to DX code of conduct (<http://dx-code.org/english.html>)
- Band Plans and information—LF and MF; HF, VHF, UHF and Microwave
- Beacons and Repeaters lists
- Licencing—UK; operating abroad; operating for visitors
- Special Event stations
- On-line NoV applications
- International prefixes list
- Live DX cluster
- Live solar data
- Morse
- Help with planning permission for aerials (members only)
- QSL Bureau
- Propagation predictions
- Web SDR receiver

## Technical

- Info on EMC, propagation, microwaves, space and satellites
- Useful apps
- List of technical forums you can consult or join

## Radio sport

- Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF)
- HF and VHF Contesting
- Islands on the Air (IOTA) contests

## Publications

- Radcom monthly members magazine in print and online  
Back copies available to read online.
- RadCom Plus, electronic supplement to be launched shortly, aimed at extending the range of technical information available (members only)
- Over 200 Books stocked in the RSGB Shop (15% discount for Members)
- RSGB New Starters newsletter (Members only) soon to be re-launched as Radcom Basics
- Planning advice booklet (members only) plus further help on a one-to-one basis available through the RSGB Planning Board.

## Want to join?

Visit the RSGB website and click on 'join'!

**Free 3 month trial membership available** (includes 3 issues of Radcom) See the website for a downloadable form.

**Individual membership** costs £51 per year or £47 if you want to spread the cost and pay by monthly direct debit

**Family membership** is £60 per year or £56 if you pay by direct debit. All people in the household are considered members in their own right and have the same voting privileges etc as other members. The only difference is that only one RadCom is posted to each address. One lead member pays the subscription and all other family members have free membership whilst the lead membership is current.

**Junior Membership.** RSGB offers **free** membership to UK licensed amateurs under the age of 21. They have Full member benefits however under 18s cannot vote in RSGB elections and are known as Associate members until their 18th birthday.

**Student membership** is **free** to any licensed amateur aged 21-25 years, in full-time education

**Did you know** that RSGB Members are entitled to free admission to the world famous **Bletchley Park** heritage site and tourist attraction—as well as entry to the RSGB National Radio Centre—on production of a voucher. Members can download a voucher from the members area.

And just for the record, I like Marmite!

*Sue M6XAK*

## Bits and Pieces

### Amateur Radio phone apps

#### For android

- **RepeaterBook**—locates and gives details of repeaters near you.
- **HamGPS**- Basic GPS with extended Locator for Ham radio usage. Display your current Maidenhead locator with 10 digit precision
- **WAB Finder**—Simple app to support the Amateur Radio Worked all Britain Award, WAB Finder will use the GPS and mobile data services to figure out your WAB Square.
- **DroidPSK**—A tool for portable Amateur Radio PSK operation
- **DroidRTTY**—an application to decode and encode Ham Radio RTTY
- **SOTAFinder**. Easily find SOTA Summits near you.
- **SOTAwatch**—a simple interface for sotawatch.org spots
- **SOTALogger**
- **QTH LocatorDroid**—"Maidenhead Grid Locator" using Google Maps to show and calculate source and destination locator
- **Aurora Notifier**
- **Ham Radio DXCC Lookup**— Search amateur radio callsigns to find the DXCC, Continent, CQ & ITU Zone and a central latitude and longitude
- **Antenna calculator**— useful tool if you cannot remember the maths to calculate the frequency or length of antennas.
- **Morse Code Trainer**—Choose from either transmitting or

receiving to practice your skill . Select a custom set of letters to work on so that you can focus on the areas that you are lacking.

If you have any more, please let me know, iphone apps too.

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### G3RCW NET

The Workshop Amateur Radio Society net is operational on Sunday evenings at 7.30pm to 9pm local time.

Frequency 70.275FM  
Net controller is Paul M0PJA

All radio amateurs are welcome, including non members

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### Satellite, TV and radio antenna—do you need permission?

Visit the Government planning portal at <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/antenna> for planning regs and info.

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### Praise for Tom's quick thinking

Tom Heath (M6TIW) has received a letter from South Yorkshire Police District Commander thanking him for his quick response in helping an unconscious man. Tom was on his way home from 103 Squadron Air Cadets meeting and went to the aid of a man who had collapsed and wasn't breathing. Tom delivered life-saving first aid and got the individual breathing again before paramedics arrived. Well done Tom!

## George Pool G0DKQ

As reported in the last newsletter, George, a past President of Worksop Amateur Radio Club, passed away in December, aged 85 years. A service and cremation took place at Sherwood Forest Crematorium, Ollerton on 12th January 2015. W.A.R.S sent a wreath on behalf of Members and the Club was well represented at the service.

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## RSGB VHF National Field Day

The club has committed to entering the RSGB VHF National Field Day this year which is on Saturday/Sunday **4th and 5th July** 14:00 UTC to 14:00 UTC.

Details are still to be finalised but we are intending operating on 4 bands at the same time for the full 24 hours of the contest, probably 6m, 4m, 2m and 70cm.

We will therefore need plenty of operators, loggers and general helpers so please put these dates in your diary. There will be a planning meeting to be arranged for a Thursday evening within the next few weeks.

I hope that you will be able to join us for another great learning experience, whether you camp on site or just visit for a few hours. Full details to be published in the next newsletter.

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Have you any suggestions to make regarding a name for this newsletter? Come on all you creative thinkers! Something witty, radio-related (and clean) please!! Small prize for the best one.

## Diary Dates

### April 2015

- 7th: Tuesday, club night and UKAC 2m contest
- 11th Saturday, Foundation and Intermediate exams
- 9th: Thursday, club night—video presentation from RSGB Convention 2014
- 14th: Tuesday, club night and UKAC 70cm contest
- 21st: Tuesday, WARS .E.G.M. UKAC 23cm contest
- 23rd: Thursday, club night—EMC Explained John M0JAV
- 28th: Tuesday, club night UKAC 6m contest
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Well, that's it for now. If you have any news or articles for the next newsletter, (or any future newsletters for that matter) you can contact me via email at

sue.ferguson89@gmail.com

I'm going to stick with bi-monthly newsletters for now, so unless I get inundated with articles (!) the next one will be May.

Sue M6XAK