

Worksop Amateur Radio Society

NEWSLETTER

September 2015

Hello everyone and welcome to the newsletter. Apologies for the delay in delivering this but events have conspired against me this time meaning that it is much later than intended. But—better late than never as they say! This issue has a definite ‘out-and-about’ flavour to it, proving that amateur radio is not just about sitting in your shack! Read on to find out what Members have been up to during the past few months—and it’s quite a lot!

Sue M6XAK

As usual we begin with a warm welcome to our newest Members who have joined us since the last newsletter
Hello to:

Gary Brotherhood M0HOB
Richard Carrington G0RRZ
Christine Fenton-Coopland G8EUV
Peter Fenton-Coopland G4ENC
Zoe Fletcher SWL

Ron Fletcher SWL
Joseph Greaves G3UXM
James Hay G1PPP
Tina Hayes SWL
Stuart Neale SWL
Bradley Oxley SWL
Tony Purnell SWL

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Exam and Tuition News

Exam successes:

Many congratulations to **Lewis Sadler** who passed his **Foundation** exam with flying colours in June—his call sign is M6YZV, and to **John Matthewson** who passed his Advanced exam last month. His new call sign is M0HXH.



Lewis M6YZV

Tuition:

There is going to be a slight change to the delivery of the **Foundation course**. Up until now it has tended to be on an 'on demand' basis. The plan now is to have three courses during the year, in January, May and September. Each course will be of 6 weeks duration with the exam date at the end of it decided by mutual agreement with candidates, tutor and Exam Secretary. The next Foundation exam will be at the end of September. Good luck to those who are sitting the exam.



The next **Intermediate course**, which is now fully subscribed, begins on **6th September** for 12 weeks. Candidates should already be aware of the study programme and the commitment required. There is a document on the Club's Facebook page (under 'Files') with details. The exam date has been set for 13th December 2015.

A four-week **Maths Primer** course will begin on Thursday, **7th January 2016** in preparation for the next Advanced course. Contact Steve Hambleton G0EAK for further information.

The next **Advanced course** will begin straight after the Maths primer and will last for 12 weeks. 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.

Dates for the Advanced exam are arranged by RSGB and you can find the proposed dates for 2016 on the [RSGB web site](#) . Currently looking at Friday, 6th May 2016

For those studying/taking exams after September....The RSGB has now published updates to the Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced training books to bring them in line with the new licence conditions and they are available on the 'Extras' webpages under 'Publications' on the RSGB website. Revised Exam Reference Data Booklets and sample exam papers will be available very soon. Please note that the old Licence Conditions will continue to be examined until the end of September.

Membership Database Update

Many thanks to those of you who have returned your database update forms—two thirds of the membership so far, so that's pretty good in my opinion!

Thanks also to Danno for his help with this. There are still some forms to be collected and completed, probably from folks that don't get to the Club very often. These forms will remain at the Club until the end of September after which time I shall try to contact people at their last known address.

Sue M6XAK

W.A.R.S, the Web and social media

Here are some ways in which you can keep up to date with Club activities:

1. Website

Have you had a look at the Club's new website yet? If not, log on to www.g3rcw.org.uk (right-click to open the link) and let us know what you think and what you would like to see on there by using the 'contact us' facility.

Before anyone gets in touch to say their call sign is incorrect or they are not on the Members' List, this was a cut and paste job from the old website and all will be put right just as soon as I've finished updating the database with the information you have kindly supplied on the membership update forms. It's not a 5-minute job so I ask for your patience! Thanks.



2. Facebook

This is perhaps our most popular social media tool and the quickest way for Members to find out what's going on .

The Club has a Facebook 'page' **G3RCW - Worksop Amateur Radio Society** which is intended to promote the Club and its future activities, events and amateur radio. This is a public page and can be viewed by anyone.

We also have three Facebook 'groups' -

- **'Members of Worksop A.R.S. G3RCW social discussion group'**, which is a 'closed' group. This is the place to find out what's going on. You have to be a member of the Club to use it. Currently 70 Members use this.
- **'Worksop Amateur Radio Society Contest Group'**, a 'secret' group for our contest team to discuss tactics etc out of view of other Clubs. Any new testers please contact Steve G0EAK to join.
- **'WARCC—Worksop Amateur Radio Camping Club'** a 'closed' group for members of the Club who would like to combine amateur radio with a spot of camping and caravanning. If you are interested, please look up the page and ask to join.

3. Twitter

If you are a Twitter user we have a Twitter account **'Worksop ARS'** Why not follow us?

A look-back at the Summer

On the whole the Summer may well have been a bit of a wash out weather-wise but fortunately the sun managed to shine on the Club's outdoor activities this year.

Our first foray outside was an ADRF (Amateur Radio Direction Finding) event around Worksop on **11 June 2015**

Alternatively known as a 'fox-hunt' the idea is that someone volunteers to be the fox and the rest have to find him/her using radios to tune into a regular signal.

Gary Swift (M0ONI) volunteered to be the fox and to hide himself 'somewhere in Worksop'. Armed with an assortment of hand-held radios a group of us set off individually or in twos or threes to try and find him. It's not as easy as you might think but it was good fun! Fortunately it was a pleasant evening weather-wise and the first person to locate Gary was Steve G0EAK so it was Game Over and back to the Club for refreshments.

Unfortunately we don't have any photographs of this year's event so here's one from last year—WARS version of One Direction (or maybe No Direction is more accurate!)

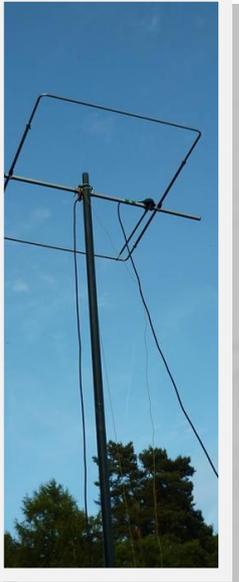


The next event was **/P in the Park with BBQ on 25th June**

Now this was a *really* good evening! It was very well supported with over 40 Club members turning up to Clumber Park for a spot of radio fun and a barbeque. A number of radios and antennas were in use - Paul (M0PCF) covering HF, Martin (M0ZMF) and others on 6m, Fred (G3XXN) on 4m, and several people on



handhelds covering 2m and 70cms. Again, the weather was kind to us— Sporadic E into Europe meant lots of contacts and because it was dry we were also able to have a practice run putting up the Club's new gazebo. LOTS of photos of the event—a few are reproduced here but you can view all of them on the Club's Facebook page. Click on 'photos' and scroll down the page.



Former colliery sites on the Air 2015

16th July



Paul Archer (M0PJA) came up with a new idea for some ‘out-and-about’ operating — activating former colliery sites in the area. Sadly, there are plenty of sites to choose from in South Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and on the night, several members went out and activated Manton, Kiveton, Dinnington, Brookhouse,

Ogreave, Shireoakes, Beavercotes and Ollerton. Those that were not able to get out worked the sites from home whilst Luke (M3NMW) manned the Club radio back at HQ. Some excellent feedback was received from other radio amateurs too, saying they would like to join in any future events and suggesting it could be held twice a year. Paul asked for logs from the evening to be sent in by 1st September (so I hope yours has gone in), together with any feedback, good or bad, to facilitate planning and making the event bigger and better next year.

Photo © Alan Heardman and licensed for reuse under Creative Commons Licence

The biggest outdoor event for the Club this year though was **VHF National Field Day** which took place over a 24hr period during the weekend of **3rd—5th July 2015**.

What are Field Days all about? The main drive behind the event is to encourage Amateur Radio Operators and Clubs to test their preparedness and ability to set-up emergency communications.

This work involves setting up a portable Amateur Radio Station, including the deployment of a number of antennas. Clubs may not use mains power, so generators, batteries, solar and wind power are used as they would have to be in an emergency.

There is a contest activity part of National Field Day where stations will try and make as many contacts as they can in a 24 hour period. Why is there a contest element? Well, this tests the group’s ability to plan the event ensuring that it can operate over a 24 hour period, providing Amateur Radio Operators to cover the station’s operation. Secondly by operating over 24 hours this tests the technical set-up of an Amateur Radio Station that, very often, will involve different people supplying different parts and constructed somewhat hastily.

Also tested, but very much part of the fun, is the group’s ability to camp out and provide food and drink for everyone during the contest. Read on for Steve G0EAK’s report on the weekend.....

RSGB VHF National Field Day weekend 3rd—5th July 2015

Well, after a couple of planning meetings and getting all the gear ready at the club on the Thursday evening we set off on the Friday lunchtime for Emley Moor, our chosen site for VHF Field Day. Huge thanks to Paul and Carol Archer for transporting all the heavy and bulky gear with their trailer, it was a great help.

VHF National Field Day (NFD) was a new venture for the Club and none of us had really been involved in an event of this scale before so it was a big learning experience for everybody. We arrived on site later than intended so we didn't get as much setting up done on the Friday as we had hoped but an early start on Saturday meant that we just about managed to be fully set up ready for the start of the contest at 3pm. Did we take everything we needed? Well, much to my surprise we did.

Radio conditions were not brilliant, especially on 70cms where mainly Paul Faulkner and Gary Swift spent many, many hours tuning around or calling CQ trying to find stations to work. 6m and 4m were better but still hard work although 2m was better, especially on the Sunday when activity levels seemed higher.

We managed to get most people operating at some point over the weekend although a few members were happy just to log, or erect/dismantle aerials whilst some were just happy to attend a Club event and socialise.

One of our newest members to the Club, Tina Hayes, who is about to take her foundation licence soon

had the opportunity to do some supervised "on air" work. She called CQ on 2m and her first 2 contacts were France and Belgium – an impressive start Tina as I know many licensed operators who have never worked outside England on 2m ! Look forward to hearing you on the air with your M6 call sign towards the end of September.

The members who attended for all or part of the weekend in addition to myself were Sue (M6XAK), Martin (M0ZMF), Andy (M0LLW), Jack (M6JMF), Paul (M0PJA), Carol (M6ZCA), Paul (M0PCF), Catherine (M6ZCJ), Richard (2E0FBF), Alison (2E0HUN), Gary (M0ONI), Ziggy (G1ZIG), Derek (M6AVF), Tina (SWL), Fred (G3XXN), Peter (G4ENC), Jim (G1PPP), Richard (G4WZI) and finally Alun (2E0HGB) who spent 4½ hours getting to the site on his scooter. A total of 20 members, assuming I haven't missed anybody out, my apologies if I have! That is an impressive total with most Clubs managing just a handful or so of operators – I have received envious comments from members of other radio clubs who have seen the group photo in front of our new gazebo at the event.



How did we do in the contest? The final result was as follows:

Band	Equipment	Power	Place	Total Clubs in
6m	Kenwood TS-590 + 5 el Yagi	100W	18	21
4m	Icom 7100 + 3 el Yagi	40W	14	17
2m	Icom 910 + 13 el Yagi	100W	12	18
70cm	Icom 7100 + 21 el Yagi	25W	7	10
Overall		Mix & Match	9	10

Whilst this is not a fantastic result, and I never expected to win, it is perhaps not as good as I had hoped for. Am I disappointed? No, not for one minute. We learnt so much about setting up a contest station which will hold us in good stead for the future but most importantly we all had a great weekend which included presenting Richard, 2E0FBF, with a skull and crossbones pennant for his caravan and celebrating Paul's, M0PJA, birthday with a cake made and decorated by Sue, M6XAK. It was fantastic to get so many club members attending the event for what was a good weekend of radio, with great camaraderie and a lot of fun. Finally, a big thank you to everybody who contributed to the weekend by

taking part, loaning equipment (including some members who were not able to attend the event), setting up the antennas, the radios, computers, videoing and photography, operating and logging (both computer and paper) as well as keeping the operators fed and watered. Everybody played their part in making it a great weekend. I can't list everybody by name again for what each of you did but Thank You! It was a pleasure to organise.

Looking forward to next year when we will put this year's learning experience to good use and improve on our results. Make a note in your diary for 2016 – 2nd and 3rd July, hope you can join us!

Steve Hambleton G0EAK

Some photos on the next page and more can be viewed on the Club's Facebook page and Jack Fearn M6JMF has put together a short video of some of the highlights. You can access this on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jk9ORAFd82U>



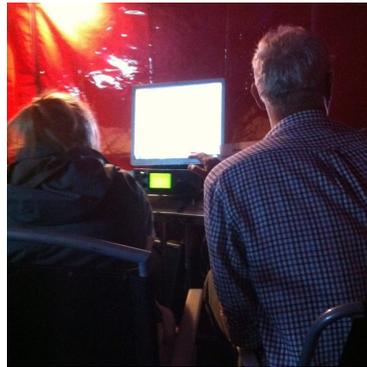
Masts up and ready to roll



Have shack, will travel



Inspiration for the cake!



Some late night/early morning operating



Our resident pirate

WHF National Field Day Weekend 2015



Jack operating on 6m



Paul M0PJA's birthday on 4th July



Tina doing some on-air work

Backpackers and Hilltoppers Trophy

For those wishing to combine fresh air, exercise and radio there's always the RSGB Backpackers 144MHz Trophy. A series of contests is held during the year, the trophy being awarded at the RSGB AGM to the leading station. If you are the energetic sort there is the 3w Backpackers section where you cart your equipment to a suitable spot to make your contacts using only battery, wind or solar power. If you are less mobile or less interested in the exercise element there is the 10w Hilltoppers section where operation from a vehicle is permitted. We have a few members who take part and in the first contest of this year Steve G0EAK and Carol M6ZCA both won certificates, Carol for Leading Foundation Licencee in the Backpackers section and Steve Runner-up in the Hilltoppers section. The 5th and final contest in the series took place on 6th September. Current standings for Club members:

3w Backpackers—Paul M0PJA is 20th and Carol M6ZCA is 24th;

10w Hilltoppers—Steve G0EAK is 3rd and Paul M0PCF is 12th

Not all have competed in all the contests in the series. It is only for fun after all! If you are interested for next year all the info is on the RSGB website—or just ask Paul/Paul/Steve or Carol.

RSGB Convention 2015 9th—11th October 2015

At least 6 members from WARS are looking forward to attending this year's RSGB Convention in Milton Keynes. Full details of the workshops and the provisional programme for Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th October are now available on the [RSGB web site](#). Have a look and see if anything interests you. Martin Lynch and Sons sponsor the event and they will be there with their stand along with other exhibitors.



It's not too late to book and if you can't or don't want to do the whole weekend package you can attend for just one of the days if you wish for just £15 on Saturday or £10 on Sunday, or both days for £20. (no accommodation or meals included)

The conference centre is around 4 miles from Milton Keynes railway station + 10 mins taxi ride or 2hrs down the M1 by car—why not car-share if there is a group of you who would like to attend?

UK Affiliated Clubs VHF contests

The Club continues to do well in the Tuesday evening UKAC VHF contests. On all bands we are currently higher placed than last year so we are improving our score. This is a combination of improved equipment, improved operating techniques and getting a few more members operating their own stations either from home or out portable. We have missed Paul Faulkner's (M0PCF) contribution over the last couple of months due to his work commitments and I missed the August 2m contest due to illness but the results demonstrate that we are not totally reliant upon 1 or 2 stations. However, on most bands there is the opportunity to improve our placings which will also improve our overall score if we can get all the occasional contributors to the club score operating more frequently and a few more operators joining in would be great as well. Welcome to Andy Fletcher, M6ZAB, as the latest recruit to contesting. He operated for just 25 minutes at the end of the August 6m contest and managed 9 contacts. There were a number of scores lower than Andy's and his 1,000+ points ensured that the club retained 11th place.

Thanks too should go to Luke M3NMW who made a special effort to operate from JO03 square whilst on holiday, with borrowed equipment, gaining us valuable points on 2m—and 321kms to IO72 square in SW Wales is an impressive contact with 10w to a folded dipole at sea level. If anyone else would like to try out contesting but doesn't have the equipment the Club has various bits including radios and antennas which can be loaned out. Get in touch with Martin. Where are all those 6m delta loops that were built last year I wonder?

Our current position in the league table:

Band	2014	January 2015	February 2015	March 2015	April 2015	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	August 2015	Total Clubs
2m	17	18	16	16	14	14	13	13	13	112
70cm	15	13	20	14	14	13	13	13	13	78
23cm	20	19	20	10	11	11	12	15		54
6m	13	9	13	8	7	8	11	11	11	80
4m	13			7			7			48
Overall	17	15	15	15	12	12	12	13	13	121

IOTA HF Contest 2015 – Isle of Arran joint expedition

The weekend of 25/26th July saw Paul M0PJA, Carol M6ZCA, Sue M6XAK and myself from Worksop ARS join with members from 93 Contest Group (Mike G0NEY plus wife Anthea and John G4LKD with wife Carrie) and Sheffield & District Wireless Society (Peter G3PHO with wife Judy, Dave M5DWI with wife Pat, David M0GDX with wife Bea, Dave G8EQD, Krystina 2E0KSH and John M6JIJ). With the exception of Peter most of the operators had little or no experience of HF contests although there were a number of experienced VHF contesters amongst us.

With no HF contesting experience, entering IOTA, one of the biggest worldwide contests in the year, was a baptism of fire but Peter, G3PHO had put together an excellent station using his Yaesu FTDX-5000 radio together with various wire antennas for 80/40/20/15/10m. With the antennas being at the edge of the sea this gave us excellent low angle radiation.

I have been heard to utter words along the lines of “I love VHF contesting but I don’t do HF” – well after operating such a good station with resonant antennas for all bands I have to admit it was a great buzz operating the pile ups – Arran is a relatively rare IOTA reference so we were popular. At one point I was running at the rate of 120 contacts per hour and doing the computer logging at the same time! I could be persuaded to join in again.....

We all had a great time up on Arran where we spent a week in total combining the contest with a holiday. Paul and Carol also managed to climb Goat Fell and activate it on SOTA but Sue and I are not that energetic (or crazy enough!) to join in with that – see separate article from Paul.

For a more detailed write up of the IOTA expedition and more photos please read the excellent article written by Peter Day, G3PHO, the main event organiser. <http://tinyurl.com/pjnptj5>



Seal Shore Campsite, Kildonan, Isle of Arran

Now here's real dedication to radio sport for you.....(or utter madness depending on how you look at it!)

Washed , Frozen, Baked and Eaten by Paul Archer M0PJA

Washed, Frozen, Baked and Eaten - but not necessarily in that order—sums up the very different SOTA Summit of Goatfell on the Isle of Arran. The Guide book said “*Goatfell is a fine pyramidal peak and a magnificent viewpoint*” It is the highest peak on the Isle of Arran, and made up of the culminating point of some dramatic granite ridges.

Carol and I had picked out Goatfell as being an easy one to activate and get some much needed SOTA points whilst we were on Arran for the Islands On The Air (IOTA) contest with Sheffield and District Wireless Society. Goatfell is around 874 metres high and the route we took was around 10km, however you *are* walking up from sea level.

The route started off nicely travelling over some forest near to the island's Brodick Castle. It was at this point I started to get EATEN by the islands midges (worse was to come but I didn't know that) As we climbed slowly through the wood land, I was hoping the midges would leave us by the time we left the tree line.

I have a medical problem with my legs which meant we had to keep stopping and at such stops the nibbles the midges were having on me turned into a feast !

As we cleared the tree line on came the rain - well that WASHED them away and kept them off me for a short while.

We were now picking our way along a boulder strewn path and I stopped for a rest and ran my hands through my hair— my hands were black with the midges. I had to resort to wearing my t-shirt on my head to try and keep them at bay.



The final stage of the climb was very steep and I needed to use my improvised walking sticks more and more and the number of 'false summits' did not help. I would not have made it up Goatfell without the encouragement of Carol.

The cloud came in as we got to the summit and the visibility was down to a few metres. We very quickly got setup for VHF operation, partly because it was cold and we were FROZEN, and partly because the midges were *still* biting at the top.

In a packing error I had forgotten my fishing pole and my walking poles both of which I use to setup antennas, so I walked up Goatfell with a couple of windbreak poles. Fortunately being good at knots I lashed them together to make a pole for my 2m Sotabeam, which we had previously tried out at the camp site.

Connecting my FT-817 up to the antenna and external sealed lead acid battery we were soon operating on 2m and we made quite a few contacts, mainly in Northern Ireland because due to the wind that was the only direction the antenna would stay put ! However we did manage to make a couple of contacts on the mainland too.

We had planned to operate on HF too, however due to changeable weather and the midges, we made a decision to call it at day and made the descent back to Brodick.



As we descended the sun came out and we soon began to BAKE - and whilst I have encountered the Scottish midge before, they have never been as bad as they were on Goatfell so I didn't want to take too many layers off. Normally Avon skin so soft keeps them at bay but it didn't work this time.

During the day from time to time the cloud did clear and gave us some stunning views over the Island. Before going back to the campsite we called into one of the shops in Brodick and we each purchased a T-shirt with the legend 'I survived Goatfell' . It took several more days and antihistamines for the bites to go away!

You too could be a Mountain Goat—or a Shack Sloth!

SOTA (or Summits On The Air) is an award scheme to encourage portable operation in mountainous areas but it's not just for mountaineers. You can be an 'activator' (the mountaineer) or a 'chaser' (someone who operates from home or a local hilltop). Each summit earns activators and chasers points relating to the height of the summit and certificates are available for various scores, culminating in the awarding of Mountain Goat and Shack Sloth trophies, Find out more at <http://www.sota.org.uk/AboutSOTA> or have a word with Paul Archer M0PJA. One of the lectures at the 2015 RSGB Convention will cover SOTA.



