



THE VMARS NEWS SHEET

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M0VMW

Affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

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Some of our Members attending the Container Sale at Roswood Farm on 7th September

Forthcoming Events

“Are You Listening?”

Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th October 2013
Bletchley Park

VMARS Autumn Event

Saturday 26th October 2013
Baginton Village Hall

Further information regarding both events on
page 4

From our Chairman

Saturday and Sunday the 5th and 6th of October sees VMARS back at Bletchley Park to take part in their historical communications event "Are You Listening?", which is a celebration of all forms of message sending, from the use of carrier pigeons to satellite communications. It is worth visiting, if only to see the magnificent replica Colossus computer in operation, demonstrating its use in decoding the German Lorenz 'Tunny' codes. If you have ever wondered what 2,500 valves look like when consuming 4.5 kW, this is your opportunity to find out. Also to be seen is the smaller replica mechanical Bombe computer, originally designed by Polish cryptologists to help break Enigma codes and named after a Polish ice cream. If you think the ART13 mechanical tuning is complicated, the Bombe will amaze you. Charles Babbage would be proud.

As we all know by now, during WWII, Bletchley Park was the top secret code breaking centre known to a few outside the establishment itself as Station X, with a postal address of Box 111 c/o the Foreign Office. Although the entire establishment at Bletchley Park is now known as Station X, when it first opened in 1938 it was the wireless listening room set up in the mansion's attic that was designated Station X, being simply the 10th station of its type in operation around the country. It was quickly realised that these facilities were inadequate for the growing volume of wireless traffic being intercepted and that the impressive rhombic array aerial draped around a large tree was a clear manifestation of its activities, attracting unwelcome attention. The wireless room Station X was soon re-located to nearby Whaddon Hall and designated as a Y station, the first of a series of new larger wireless listening stations being set up around the country.

The Bletchley Park estate had been owned since 1883 by Hubert Leon, a wealthy city financier and Liberal Member of Parliament for Buckingham. The mansion itself is a ghastly mixture of Gothic and mock Tudor styles and, when Leon disposed of the estate to a property developer in the late 1930s, it was scheduled for demolition, being saved only by the uncertainties of an impending war. In 1938, a 'mysterious government official' who it was later discovered was the wealthy head of the Secret Intelligence Service, Admiral Sir Hugh Sinclair, had paid by cheque the considerable sum of £6000 for the estate from his own pocket in order to bypass government bureaucracy and quickly secured a suitable location outside of London for MI6. Sinclair, who was the second MI6 head to use 'C' as his pseudonym, had previously been Director of Naval Intelligence and was dedicated to a comfortable life, so much so that he set up his headquarters in the Strand in order to be near his favourite restaurant, the Savoy Grill. Along with Churchill and many other key establishment figures, Sinclair was certain that Chamberlain's appeasement policy would fail and war with Germany was imminent. He believed that the risks from air raids would be very high, largely demonstrated during the Spanish Civil War in April 1937, when the Luftwaffe Condor Legion and Italian Aviazione Legionaria, in support of Franco's Nationalists, bombed the undefended Basque town of Guernica, shocking the world with the scale of destruction and death that resulted.

The choice of Bletchley Park by Sinclair was inspired. It was within walking distance of Bletchley railway station, which provided a regular direct train service to London and, more significantly, direct connection to both Cambridge and Oxford on the 'Varsity Line' which linked both university towns and Bletchley. The two universities were identified as a major source of engineers, mathematicians, cryptanalysts

and linguists, and the location would facilitate close co-operation between graduates working at Bletchley Park and their former professors. The sudden arrival of a legion of workmen did not go un-noticed in the town and the rumour put about at the time was that Bletchley Park was to become an air defence training school. Sinclair had planned for the bulk of MI6 operations to be based at Bletchley Park and, on 18th September 1938, the majority of the Government Code and Cypher School, which did not number many people, along with various smaller specialist MI6 departments, were relocated there from Broadway Buildings, close to St James's Park Underground station, under the unlikely cover of being 'Captain Ridley's shooting party'. This did not fool the locals though, who were well aware that something unusual was going on. Although the true purpose of Bletchley Park was never revealed to them until many years later, when the activity in the area increased during the War, the Bletchley townspeople were made ever more intrigued, but totally mystified, by the increasing influx to the town by professorial types, chaps with long hair and huge numbers of young women. By the early stages of the War the need for secrecy and for quelling curiosity had been driven home by a major government poster campaign featuring, "Careless Talk Costs Lives", "Tittle Tattle Lost The Battle" and "Keep Mum" among others, which followed a series of military defeats and setbacks that had a very sobering effect on the entire nation, so people tended not to ask questions.

At its peak, there were between 9,000 and 12,000 people working at Bletchley Park which, at the time, covered about 50 acres. The requirements for accommodation, food and transport were significant and the majority of workers had to be billeted at hostels and private houses over a wide surrounding area. While some could travel to work by train, many more had to be picked up by coaches hired from local transport companies and by military lorries which made regular runs to cover the three 8 hour shift patterns. Among unsung heroes of Bletchley Park was a young Roy Jenkins, who had recently graduated from Balliol with a first class honours degree and who much later became Home Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Jenkins was a code breaker who made a notable contribution to cracking the Lorenz teleprinter 'Tunny' code used extensively for communications between the German High Command in Berlin and their various Army Commands in occupied Europe. We hear much about the incredible security surrounding the operations at Bletchley Park but they were far from infallible. John Cairncross, a Cambridge graduate recruited as a Soviet spy alongside fellow graduates and British traitors Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, Kim Philby and Anthony Blunt, managed to infiltrate Bletchley Park at the request of his Soviet spymasters, who were well aware of the importance of the site and had given it the code name 'Kurort'. From 1941, Cairncross, code name 'Liszt', passed hard won 'Tunny' decrypts to the Russians by simply stuffing the decrypts due to be destroyed in Hut 3 down his trousers and walking off the site with them. Like Anthony Blunt and many others who have never been publicly named by the security services, John Cairncross was never prosecuted for his treachery and, in 1995, he died in Britain at the age of 82. Although named as a spy on several previous occasions, it was not until 1985 that public confirmation of his spying activities at Bletchley Park came from Russian defector Oleg Gordievsky who had been a member the KGB since 1963.

Sadly for Admiral Sir Hugh Sinclair, he never lived to see the successful outcome of his early decision to buy Bletchley Park. He died quite suddenly on 4th November 1939 at the age of 67. It is believed that he was never repaid by the Government for the £6,000 that he personally spent on

purchasing the site and that it was eventually formally signed over to the Government by his sister. In 1945 the Bletchley Park Station X operation was substantially scaled down and renamed GCHQ on being moved to Eastcote in Middlesex. A GCHQ training centre remained at Bletchley Park until 1988. In 1952, GCHQ moved out of Eastcote to purpose built accommodation in Cheltenham, where it now occupies a new £350 million building employing 5,500 people. The days of stuffing secret decrypts down your trousers have faded into history. The danger now is of disaffected employees walking out with the nation's secrets on a digital memory stick.

Ian Underwood M0YMK

VMARS display stand

At the time of writing, the RSGB National Hamfest at the Newark Showground is a few days away and will take place on Friday 27th and Saturday 28th of September. VMARS are attending the show and are raising the Society profile with a new portable display stand promoting the use of vintage and military equipment and aimed at recruiting new Members. The display features several close up photographs of vintage wireless sets, along with a selection of photographs of VMARS Members operating their sets. Headsets will be

provided for use by visitors to enable them to listen to recordings of VMARS 3615 kHz nets and a small 12 inch video screen will show either a rolling selection of equipment photographs or suitable video of vintage wireless related subjects. The Bletchley Park "Are You Listening?" event taking place on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th of October will also host the VMARS display stand, which will be situated inside the mansion.

The full size of the display stand is a little over 3 m wide, 2 m high and 640 mm deep. For events where display space is limited, the stand can be assembled with fewer panels and reduced in size down to a total maximum floor area of 640mm x 640mm. The display stand follows the pledge to improve the public image of the Society made by the Committee at the Annual General meeting held at the Yorkshire Air Museum, Elvington, in July. The total cost of the project is under £1,000, which includes the printing of the display panels. The panels are fixed to the display with Velcro and can be varied to fit the theme of the event being attended. Feedback about the display, ideas and suitable high resolution photographs for use on future panels would be most welcome by the Committee.

Ian Underwood M0YMK



The new VMARS display stand which will be used at rallies and events to promote the work of the Society

"Are You Listening?"**5th and 6th October, Bletchley Park**

VMARS has been invited to take part in this year's 'wireless' event at Bletchley Park. The theme is "celebrating communication through Bletchley Park's history – from the Post Office and carrier pigeons to radio waves and the first televisions, right up to the age of computers and the internet."

VMARS will be putting on a display of 'classical' communications equipment together with vehicles on the Oval in front of the Mansion. The VMARS stand will be located in the Mansion. VMARS will also be operating a 1950's AM amateur radio station and a military station from a marquee situated on the lawns in front of the mansion.

VMARS Members intending to bring vehicles to take part in the military display at the front of the mansion are advised that, for safety reasons, there are restrictions on vehicle movements in the public areas during opening hours. Please contact Stuart McKinnon for advice on arrival times. Other than in military tents and vehicles used as part of the displays mounted by the various organisations taking part, overnight camping is no longer allowed on the Bletchley Park site. Bletchley Park Trust have asked participating organisations to ensure that tents used for overnight occupation are kept closed at all times during public opening hours.

Exhibitors are asked to contact Stuart McKinnon G0TBI for further information.

The Committee

**VMARS Autumn Event 26th October 2013
Baginton Village Hall, Baginton, Warwickshire**

The VMARS Autumn Event has been planned as a Social for Members and partners, to include an auction of Members' equipment, lunch followed by an afternoon social including a fascinating 16 mm film show.

The programme for the day is as follows:

- 8.30 Doors open
- 10.00 Informal auction of equipment brought by Members. This will be done on a no-commission basis.
- 12.30 Lunch. There will be no charge for lunch.
- 14.00 "The Sea Has Many Voices", a film in 16 mm produced by Post Office Telecommunications Marine Radio Service in the early 1970's and kindly provided by Ron Swinburne M0WSN. The running time is 25 mins, in colour with sound. Ron's projector is a BTH 451 with 30 W built-in valve amplifier, feeding a 12 inch speaker in its original period cabinet. The film includes plenty of footage of marine radio kit in action, plus an interesting story line including a SAR rescue helicopter and the RNLI. It highlights how radio communications really comes in to its own in emergencies. This should be a nostalgic experience in more ways than one.
- 16.00 Close

The idea of holding an auction comes from our experience that this is the best way to 'shift' equipment, but those who would prefer the more traditional 'swapmeet' approach may use the tables provided. Members who bring equipment to the auction are recommended to write down the details of the equipment and hand to the auctioneer when their item(s) come(s) up. Tables will be available for items that have not

been sold in the auction. There is also the opportunity for Members to display/demonstrate items not for sale but which may be of interest to others.



Ron Swinburne's 16 mm projector

If you are planning to attend the event, please advise a Member of the Committee, so that we can arrange adequate catering.

The Committee looks forward to welcoming Members and their partners to Baginton on 26th October.

The Committee

AWA Centenary

A celebration was held in Sydney on 28th July 2013 to mark 100 years of Amalgamated Wireless Australasia Pty Ltd (AWA) service. AWA was perhaps the largest electronics manufacturer in Australia, and is similar to the Plessey Company, producing domestic, commercial and military products. There were many speakers, talking about various aspects of the Company, from domestic receiver production, commercial equipment, military contracts, aviation products, industrial research, and valve manufacturing. There were several displays of equipment. Ray Robinson (VK2NO) and Ray Poularas (VK2GRP) were asked to put on a display of military equipment manufactured by AWA.

In July 1913, the Marconi and Telefunken interests in Australia were combined to form AWA, and made spark transmitters and receivers, for coastal wireless stations and ships.

- 1913 The Marconi School of Wireless was opened.
- 1920 Valve manufacture began.
- 1923 Domestic radio broadcasting began, and domestic transmitters and receivers were made.
- 1926 AWA setup the 'Beam Wireless' telegraph service to Great Britain, then in 1928 to Canada, and in 1930 a radiotelephone service.
- 1932 AWA 'Empire State' domestic receiver model.
- 1934 To instruct engineers on how to use AWA made valves, the Radiotron Designer's Handbook was written by Fritz Langford Smith, and the expanded 4th edition published in 1952.
- 1956 AWA made black and white television receivers and transmitters.
- 1957 AWA made transistors and, in 1967, designed and manufactured integrated circuits.
- 1975 AWA made colour TV receivers and transmitters.
- 1987 AWA experienced financial difficulties, and major sections were sold off, in 1991, to Plessey and British Aerospace.

Today, AWA continues to operate as an IT services business.

Domestic radios with the AWA branding are made in China and sold in Woolworths.



Figure 1. AT21 transmitter, AT5 transmitter, AR8 receiver, FS6 transceiver



Figure 2. WS No.19 transceiver, WS No.11 transceiver, 3BZ transmitter, C17020 Amenities receiver



Figure 3. A510 transmitter receiver, WS No.19 transceiver, WS No.11 transceiver



Figure 4. PRC-F1 transceiver, Australphone transmitter receiver, A510 transmitter receiver



Figure 5. Barra sonobuoy, PRC-F1 transceiver



Figure 6. Radio station 2CH



Figure 7. Test Instruments

Ray Robinson VK2NO

GB1LCT

Chorley and District Amateur Radio Society are running GB1LCT from Leyland, Lancashire. The station is a tribute to the men and women who built the Centurion tanks in the old Leyland motors factory from the 1940s through to the early 1950s. The tank is mounted on a plinth at the entrance to Leyland and the operators will be alongside the tank, so operations are very weather-dependent. The call is on the air from 6th October and for the whole of October. More information is on QRZ.com and QSL info.

Mark Procter G1PIE

Saturday AM Net-Controller's Rota

Date	1 st op	2 nd op	3 rd op
5 th Oct	G3XGW	M0TCM	M0DAF
12 th Oct	M0TCM	M0DAF	G0TBI
19 th Oct	M0DAF	G0TBI	G4GEN
26 th Oct	G0TBI	G4GEN	G4BQF
2 nd Nov	G4GEN	G4BQF	GW8TBG
9 th Nov	G4BQF	GW8TBG	G8AQN
16 th Nov	GW8TBG	G8AQN	M1PVC

We are very pleased to welcome Paul Craven M1PVC to the Net Controller's Rota; his first session is scheduled for the end of November. Paul puts out an excellent signal from

Hartfield in East Sussex and we look forward to hearing him operate in this new capacity.

Whenever possible Ian Underwood M0YMK posts a recording of the Saturday AM Net from his QTH in West Sussex on the VMARS website:

http://www.vmars.org.uk/Regular_NETS_Details

Sending in articles, news items, letters and advertisements for VMARS Publications

Please send copy to Colin Guy, G4DDI, by post or e-mail,

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The copy deadline for the next issue of the News Sheet is **15th October**. For articles for the next issue of Signal the deadline is **9th November**, but copy would be appreciated as far in advance as possible.

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Advertisements

FOR SALE: Station Radio D13/R234. Complete set-up including Transmitter D13, Receiver R234, power supply, ATU, operators control unit, harness cables and manuals. Some spares are also included. This is a large and impressive piece of kit as fitted in the Austin K9; e-mail for pictures and more details, viewing welcome. Offers around £825. A part of this equipment was pictured on the back page of Issue 27 of *Signal* (May 2013). The overall view of the set-up is shown on the right.

Station Radio C12 complete with 24 V power supply unit, ATU and cables. £350.

Rod Hawkins MW0XWD Magor, South East Wales
07999 198199 rod@75ohm.co.uk



VMARS Autumn Event

26th October 2013

Baginton Village Hall

Please see page 4 for further information