

THE VMARS NEWS SHEET

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www.vmars.org.uk

M0VMW

Affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

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Regular contributor to *Signal*, Dave Porter G4OYX, with some of his fine homebrew equipment on the bench. Photo G0TBI

VMARS Membership Renewals 2014

VMARS Membership renewal forms for 2014 were circulated with the November Issue of *Signal*. The deadline for renewing your Membership is 21st January 2014.

From our Chairman

I sincerely hope that all VMARS Members were able to enjoy Christmas and that the appalling weather just prior to the festivities and on New Year's Day did not cause you too much disruption. I know of several Members who suffered prolonged power breaks over the holiday, as well as being affected by flooding and damage to aerial systems and my sympathies go out

to them. I very much hope that they have been able to resolve the problems quickly and put the difficulties behind them.

The traditional VMARS Christmas Day and New Year's Day AM nets on 3615 kHz welcomed a large number of Members who were able to escape briefly from other commitments to join the nets and send their greetings in person. Some of our Members rarely have the opportunity to join our usual Saturday nets and it was a great pleasure to hear so many of them take a few minutes to call in and say hello over the holiday period. On Christmas Day, 25 stations called in and on New Year's Day 15 stations had recovered sufficiently from the previous night's exertions to enable them to join in.

2013 has been a busy year for VMARS, with attendance and full Society representation at several events over what

turned into a gorgeous Summer period after an uncertain Spring time. As well as setting up stands at several rallies throughout the year, the Committee have organised a number of the popular and well-attended vintage equipment auctions for Members and the first VMARS social event, which was combined with an equipment auction and film show. Once again, the Committee wish to extend their grateful thanks to all of those Members who provided valuable input and who took an active part in these events. Without you we could not have had such a successful year.

During the 2012 AGM and following requests and feedback from Members, the Committee gave an undertaking to review the Society website and to look at the possibility of setting up an online 'sales, purchase and wants' site for Members using the internet. This was debated and agreed in Committee and, on March 1st, the new VMARS-Collector group started a 12 month trial period for trading of equipment between Members only and has proved to be very popular. The trial period ends soon and an overview and request for feedback appears elsewhere in this News Sheet. At the beginning of 2013, the Committee took the decision to have the Society website, VMARS.org.uk, professionally re-invigorated and brought up to date, as a result of which Toolkit Websites of Southampton were appointed to undertake the work. Working with the VMARS Committee, Toolkit Websites completed the changes over an eight week period and the new website went live for open public access on March 20th. Feedback from Members about the new site has been very encouraging, with particular interest being shown in links to radio-related films and the Nets and News sections. As part of the Committee's commitment to improve the VMARS public image, and made at the 2013 AGM in June, the Society invested in and commissioned a new exhibition stand in time to make its first appearance at the RSGB National Hamfest held at Newark. The stand made a second appearance in the following week at the 'Are You Listening?' event held in gloriously warm sunshine at Bletchley Park. VMARS Members continue to be represented at the influential RSGB Spectrum Forum and it is worth remembering that without this representation we would not now be able to operate AM on the 60 m band, something that has been available to us for 12 months now. As a direct result of all these activities, a number of new Members have swelled our ranks over the past 12 months and it is very gratifying indeed to see VMARS flourish and grow as the levels of interest in vintage and military equipment continue to rise.

Plans for 2014 are still being discussed and I hope that we will be able to provide more information after the next Committee meeting scheduled for January 25th. Arrangements for our AGM to be held at the Royal Corps of Signals Camp at Blandford in Dorset on Saturday August 9th are in preparation. The weekend coincides with the popular Flight Refuelling Amateur Radio Society rally being held nearby on August 10th and will provide an excellent opportunity for Members and their families to sample the delights of the spectacular Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, as well as the Royal Signals Museum, the Tank Museum and the sandy beaches of this lovely coastal area.

This is an opportune time for me to thank my fellow Committee Members for their dedication, hard work and professionalism over the past 12 months. Organising Society events, providing Member services, publications, finance, media facilities and representing VMARS requires a variety of organisational, management and interpersonal skills which the team have ably demonstrated. It may interest Members to know that we don't sit around a table always agreeing with each other. We debate, argue and disagree, sometimes heatedly, but when the decision is

made, everyone on the Committee stands behind it and we remain good friends.

I wish all VMARS Members and their families a very happy and a healthy New Year for 2014. Please come and join us at any events where VMARS are in attendance and introduce yourself. This particularly applies to recently joined Members who may not yet already know individuals in the Society. You will find us a friendly and helpful bunch. If you can't get along to an event, please consider writing about your particular interest for inclusion in our News Sheet and Signal publications and don't forget to take advantage of our Members-only internet technical forum and trading sites.

Ian Underwood M0YMK

From the VMARS Publications Office



The VMARS Publications Office (above) occupies a corner of the 'wireless room' at M0DAF and comprises a computer, scanner and printer and, unlike the photograph above, a great deal of paper strewn about. The loop aerial on the window sill is attached to a small diecast box which contains a homebrew SDR receiver to monitor 3615 whilst working. The idea behind this short feature is a feeling that the publications process is probably a mystery to many of our Members and it would be good to highlight just what goes on 'behind the scenes' during the production of *Signal*.

Authors send copy, mostly by e-mail, to the Editor either via Colin Guy G4DDI or direct to myself. In some cases, material is sent as paper copy and we convert to a WORD file, either by scanning or typing. Except for situations where illustrations need to be copies of originals, e.g. to preserve authenticity or are particularly complex, many circuit diagrams are redrawn painstakingly by Colin, and other illustrations are either sourced or redrawn as required. On some occasions, Colin provides illustrations from the Archive from original high quality scans. It is at this stage that copyright owners are consulted to seek their permission to reproduce material in our publication, and most are only too pleased to be asked, but getting this step wrong can have serious consequences. This applies both to material which appears on the web and in print.

Having dealt with the preliminaries, I cast the article into our 'house style' which includes scientific reporting style, punctuation, grammar and layout as may be expected of a 'main-stream' technical journal. The aim is to achieve consistent style throughout, which can be a challenge when the contributions come from individuals with very different writing styles. Nevertheless, it is also important to retain the subtlety which characterises individual authors. The result is a 'first proof' which is circulated, usually by e-mail but sometimes by surface mail, to the respective author(s) for comment and approval. Invariably, we go through a number

of iterations, correcting and refining the text, until a final version is agreed. Colin maintains a server on the internet where backup copies of all files are saved, just in case of computer failure at my end.

The next step is when the 'fun' really begins because the final version of *Signal* has to fit a multiple of four pages, preferably 40 pages, with a recent issue occupying 44 pages. Ideally, all articles should occupy a whole number of pages. This is accomplished usually by moving, shrinking or enlarging illustrations but, horror of horrors, when all is assembled, I could be one, two or three pages short. Either I have to write something of my own or drop a number of pages from the existing issue, e.g. by carrying over to the next issue. In general, within the planned page-count, I aim to publish what I receive at the time so that authors do not have to wait too long to see their contributions published. Hence, usually, it is a matter of making up the required pages. On some occasions, when I have more material than can be accommodated, it is feasible to hold over an article or two to maintain a balance of subjects but, in general, the content is very much determined by what arrives on the desk in the three months preceding publication. Finally, there is the back page picture for which I am grateful to Members who rise to the challenge and provide some exceptional illustrations. Contributions are always welcome.

There is something about the process of publications which makes so much of it a 'last minute' affair and I am always grateful to our authors for their understanding of the urgency which surrounds the correcting of proofs.

Having chosen illustrations for the front page, read and re-read the whole issue, the final version is sent as hard copy to Peter Mellet G3PIJ who kindly does a final proof-read. It always amazes me how easy it is for me to miss errors, and Peter's role in checking the proofs for technical content, style and typography ensures that what you read is as accurate as possible. Usually, Peter completes this task in about a week and returns the hard copy duly marked up in green ink. I then correct the version on my computer and prepare the issue for printing.

A final task is to compile mailing lists to accompany the month's publications to the Printer. Since, invariably, the *News Sheet* is published along with *Signal*, there are two lists required, one for those Members who subscribe to paper copies of the *News Sheet* as well as *Signal*, and one for those who subscribe only to paper copy of *Signal*. Colin kindly attends to the electronic distribution list for *the News Sheet* and this is handled separately from the printed versions.

The various files (mailing lists, *Signal*, *News Sheet*, other printed material, e.g. Membership renewal forms) are uploaded, together with an 'order', to Hertfordshire Display Print who provide a print and distribution service. We have enjoyed an excellent service from this company who deliver a high quality result. To 'tie the ribbons' all that remains is to send complimentary copies of *Signal* to any authors and contributors who are not Members or where permission to use copyrighted material demands that a final copy be provided.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our authors and contributors for choosing to publish their original work in *Signal*. It is your authoritative articles that have made *Signal* a leading technical publication. I would also like to thank especially Colin Guy G4DDI and Peter Mellett G3PIJ for all their work behind the scenes, ensuring the high standard of presentation of what you read. Finally, may I wish all our Members a happy and healthy New Year whilst encouraging

you to share your knowledge and expertise through our publications.

Bronek Wedzicha M0DAF

RSGB 'vintage' exhibit at Bletchley Park

RSGB have requested help to source the loan, for at least a year, of a piece of vintage military equipment for exhibition alongside the LG300 in the Bletchley Park National Radio Centre Exhibition. This has been discussed with several Members and the consensus is that a WS19 would be an appropriate piece of equipment because it was the set that brought numerous new radio amateurs on the air during the 1950s and 60s. The set does not need to be in working order, but should be cosmetically good and complete with cables and ancillaries if at all possible. Any alternative suggestions from Members would be most welcome.

Ian Underwood M0YMK

VMARS Members' badges

Once again, Stuart McKinnon G0TBI is taking orders for VMARS Members' badges, which he orders several at a time. If you would like to order a badge (at very reasonable cost) please let Stuart have details of your name and call sign as you would like for it to appear on the badge. He will be placing the next order shortly. My own badge is reproduced below to show the format though the font size of your name and call sign may be different.



Bronek Wedzicha M0DAF

VMARS-Collector site – 12 month review

The 12 month trial period of the VMARS-Collector group will be completed at the end of February. The Committee will be reviewing the performance of the site and are seeking opinions from Members about it before making a decision on its future.

Advertising by Members was banned on the Yahoo Group VMARS-Member technical forum site in 2011 after a series of inappropriate advertisements, disputes and abusive

comments were posted, causing a considerable degree of disquiet among many Society Members and at least one long-standing Member to resign. Advertising continued to be permitted in the monthly News Sheet publication for both Members and non-members alike and many Members still find this method of advertising equipment perfectly acceptable. Advertising in the News sheet has the advantage of being subject to editorial scrutiny so that inappropriate advertisements can be modified or disallowed and discussed with the individual concerned before publication. This is not an option on un-moderated internet sites, where the person submitting the post is wholly trusted to behave with integrity and to be polite.

The VMARS-Collector site was set up by the Committee following representations from Members who wished to have a Society facility to buy, sell and exchange equipment between themselves over the internet. A further discussion took place at the 2012 AGM when it was agreed by the Committee that an option for Members to advertise on the internet would be given further consideration.

At a subsequent Committee meeting a proposal to have a separate site for 'sales, purchases and wants' and to follow the format of the existing VMARS-Member technical forum, but solely for trading between Members only, was put forward. It would be fair to say that this proposal was not unanimously accepted and that some concerns were raised by Committee Members.

1. An Internet site of this nature was not needed by Members.
2. The site would be used by Traders who are Members for profiting from VMARS Members.
3. It would kill off advertising in the News Sheet.
4. It would create conflicts between Members in dispute and the Society.

From those who viewed the proposal positively the following responses were made:

1. After publication of the proposals in the News Sheet, some Members had expressed opposition, largely on the grounds listed above. A much larger number of Members had demonstrated their support for such a site, with several actively pursuing its implementation.
2. Traders are already permitted to sell through News Sheet advertisements. The problem arises with purchasers buying with the express purpose of selling on at a profit, probably on e-bay, thereby taking advantage of Members selling equipment at low cost or even giving it away to a 'good home'. This has already occurred through News Sheet advertisements, as a result of which a Member was expelled from the Society. This is not easy to control, but the innate fairness of VMARS Members means that if they see something like this going on they bring it to the attention of the Committee, as has already been the case. The VMARS-Collector rules make it clear that this practice is not acceptable and any Member discovered to be using the site for this purpose risks expulsion from VMARS. For Members who are also Traders, as with the News Sheet, advertising items at a profit does not present any problems. It is up to the purchasing Member to decide whether or not they are prepared to pay the price being asked. The important factor is that our Members at least have an opportunity to purchase the item if they wish, which may otherwise go to e-bay, a rally or similar sales event.
3. While it was not known if advertising for Members in the News Sheet would be adversely affected by using a

Member's internet facility, it was clear that a considerable number of Members did not use this facility because of long lead times. A similar advertisement could conceivably be placed on VMARS-Collector, the item purchased, paid for and collected all on the same day. I have had personal experience of placing an advertisement for the sale of a DX100U on the VMARS-Collector site, attracting a buyer who was a Member I did not know at the time and who collected and paid for it all on the same day.

4. The Terms of Use of VMARS-Collector state that "VMARS does not accept any liability for misrepresentation or for faulty goods and will not enter into any dispute between parties. Disputes between parties shall not be conducted on this group site"

The Committee vote in favour of implementing the VMARS-Collector site was carried by four votes to two, with the proviso that the site would be operated for a period of one year, at the end of which VMARS Members would be asked for their opinions as to whether or not it should continue and their reasons why.

Since March 1st 2013, 174 VMARS Members have joined the VMARS-Collector site (VMARS-Member 193) and there has been a regular stream of equipment and spares changing hands between Members, quite often at no cost. Members have been careful to adhere to the 'Terms of Use' and there have been no trading disputes, impoliteness or abuses of the site. As the site Moderator I have kept a deliberately light touch on the very few slight diversions from the 'Terms of Use' that have occurred and Members have responded positively when these have been pointed out. There is no evidence of a decline in advertising in the News Sheet, which for some Members remains to be the preferred method of selling items.

Please note that the Committee are not asking Members to vote for or against keeping VMARS-Collector site permanently; that is an executive decision for the Committee, but we would welcome feedback from Members of their own experiences, thoughts and any ideas that you may have for consideration and which we will take into account when deciding on the future of the site in March.

Please let us know whether or not you have used the site, whether or not you think it should continue and your reasons why.

Ian Underwood M0YMK

A long absence

On 4th January, I was able to fulfil my duties as VMARS Net Controller on the Saturday morning AM net that takes place at 08.30hrs local time on our usual frequency of 3615 kHz. I titled this piece *a long absence* since, as many of you will know, I have recently suffered health problems. I am glad to say that, following an operation back in November, I am feeling a whole lot better. My thanks to those who telephoned and sent cards.

The net on the 4th was fairly busy and, as one contributor commented, we all certainly had a good ground plane to assist our signals, although not so good for those suffering with floods and electricity supply problems. Being somewhat inland, we seem to escape the worst, so the tower remained standing and the dipole needed re-hanging only once during the past two weeks.

I had been preparing for the net a day or two before and had contemplated either the Heathkit DX-100U, which I had been operating for a few weeks, or to try out the partially

repaired RCA ET-4336. The 'great' sound of the C11 Sender and associated R210 receiver made that combination a third contender, but Anne M3TBI suggested that I should wire up my KW Vanguard as it was the KW weekend. The Vanguard had not been on the air for well over a year so it was frustrating, to say the least, that whilst carrying out checks there was no indication of PA or grid current or modulation. The time-honoured approach of tapping the meter soon revealed the fault as the transmitter apparently burst into life, and subsequently gave a good account of itself with c. 40 W of carrier and reports on the modulation were very positive. The receiver was as RA17.



The net list was as follows: Paul M1PVC, Sussex, DX-100 (5/9-5/9); Les 2E0IBN, Sussex, RT-320 (5/7-5/9); Fred 2E0MKC, Cambridgeshire, FT1000MP (5/8-5/9); Robin G0GNE, Surrey, RT 321 (5/8-5/9); Ian M0YMK, West Sussex, Larkspur C11/R210 (5/9+-5/9); Bob G6AVI, Norfolk, Minimitter/75A3 (5/8-5/8); Bronek M0DAF, North Yorkshire, H/B TT21 TX/RA17 (5/9+-5/9); Tony G8AQN, Warwickshire, KW Vanguard/SP-600 (5/9+-5/9+); Martin G4JSX, Leicestershire, Redifon GK203N with H/B amplifier (5/9-5/8); Mike G4EJM, Stoke-on-Trent, H/B TT21 TX/75A2 (5/9+-5/9); Alan G4GEN, East Sussex, WS53 (5/7-5/8); Max M0GHQ, Dorset, Collins 32V/75A4 (5/8-5/9); Martin M0MGA, Hampshire, WS12/R107 (5/7-5/8); Keith G7HWK, North Staffordshire, Minimitter/RA17 (5/8-5/8); Phil 2W0KGP, Wrexham, WS19HP (RF Amp No. 2) (5/7-5/8);

Jan PA3FAU, The Netherlands, T1154/R1155 (4/4-5/5); Tony G3YNT, Gloucestershire, FT 817 (5/7-5/8); Colin G1PCU, Oxfordshire, 756 Pro (5/7-5/8).

I enjoyed the net after quite an absence, so am looking forward to being able to run up some other kit soon, Happy New Year to all from the Kinver QTH.

Stuart McKinnon G0TBI

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

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

7 Herrick Court,
Clinton Park,
Tattershall, Lincs. LN4 4QU
Tel 01526 344715 g4ddi@vmars.org.uk

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

Saturday AM Net-Controllers Rota

The Saturday morning AM Net is one of the most important public demonstrations of VMARS activity and has been recognised for its high standards of operating and for the technical content and the general interest in vintage and military equipment it arouses. We also have numerous listeners and it is not unusual to receive unsolicited signal reports by e-mail or phone, invariably complimenting those taking part. Much credit has to go to our team of Net Controllers whose task has often proved to test their operating skills, especially when conditions are poor and the band is plagued with local interference or Continental sideband stations. It is pleasing to see the list of those who are willing to act as Net Control Stations grow which means that the task becomes less onerous on individuals. As the coordinator of the Rota, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our Net Controllers for their invaluable contribution to this public face of VMARS over the past year and I look forward to meeting up with you on the Net during 2014.

Date	1 st op	2 nd op	3 rd op
11 th Jan	G4GEN	G4BQF	GW8TBG
18 th Jan	G4BQF	GW8TBG	G8AQN
25 th Jan	GW8TBG	G8AQN	M1PVC
1 st Feb	G8AQN	M1PVC	M0YMK
8 th Feb	M1PVC	M0YMK	G3XGW
15 th Feb	M0YMK	G3XGW	M0TCM
22 nd Feb	G3XGW	M0TCM	M0DAF

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

Bronek Wedzicha M0DAF

Committee Notices

Applications for Membership

We wish to welcome the following new applicants for VMARS Membership:

Name, Callsign (Region)	Interests
Mr P Carr 2E0HYT Southampton, Hampshire	WWII equipment. Valved equipment.
Mr P Burton G3ZPB Old Coulsdon, Surrey	Project leader for Brooklands wireless communications collection at Brooklands Museum in Weybridge.
Mr MN Sweeting G3YJO Surrey	WS19, WS52, WS53, WS62, R107 equipment.
Mr TK Surgey G3ZST Southam, Warwickshire	Interested in home construction. Member of RAOTA for 10 years. Member of the Southam Rotary Club. Interested in Photography. Owns Canon DSLR.
Mr W Whiffen Woodford Bridge, Essex	Have owned in the past CR100, WS19, R1155, AR88. Currently own a R206. Have designed regen receivers using valves all working on 12 V. Previous design published in PW, January 2013.
Mr K Weller G3WBL Kidderminster, Worcestershire	QRP CW. Antenna design. Clansman 320. Served in Royal Signals. Used many radio systems from 19 Set through to Clansman.
Mr SE Harris 2E0WFO Worcester, Worcestershire	Vintage radio. Motorcycle restoration. Antique firearms. Engineering. Theatre piano and organ systems.
Mr A Harris 2E0BAY Gillingham, Kent	Landrover, radios, camping, computers, etc.

[Membership rules require names of applicants for Membership to be published, before they are formally accepted as Members. This allows existing Members to object, if they wish. If you want to object to any of the above, please write to our Hon Sec, John Keeley – Ed.]

Helplines

129/1 No. 19 Set Mk3

I am an amateur G4YVM but a friend of mine, Dave Lucey who is not an amateur, is restoring a 1942 Jeep. He has, in fact, restored several vehicles to ex-factory condition and makes a superb, no expense spared, job of them. For his Jeep, he is after a No. 19 Set Mk3 as used by the LRDG in c. 1942. We both think the Mk3 Set is the version used at that time.

I am not a VMARS Member but I wonder if you could ask on my behalf whether anyone has a non-working No. 19 Set they would like to sell? In fact, Dave doesn't even need the innards - an empty case would do just as well. He is prepared to pay a proper price for the radio in order to get his Jeep finished to concourse condition and it might be a good way for someone with a basket case radio to reap

some cash for another project. Contact David G4YVM 07749199453

Letter to the Editor

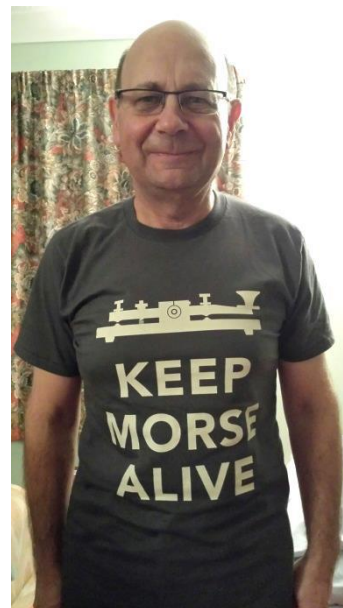
From Tony Barron G3YYH

I've been a Member for six months now, and have had the pleasure of meeting or having QSOs with many of you. I'm a 'lapsed returner', licenced in 1969, but essentially out of amateur radio since about 1971 until some sort of epiphany in the wireless room of RMS Queen Mary in Long Beach last June. I wanted to use the New Year as an excuse to say just how much I valued VMARS and its Members; I've found nothing but positive, friendly, constructive support, even when I've asked the most naive questions.

I think that Signal is the best publication of its type, that the News Sheet is invaluable for snippets and knowing what's going on, that the nets on 3615 and 5317 are great... but the Yahoo Reflector might well top all those for real value, both actual and potential. I've used the Reflector several times, and have often got helpful answers within minutes. I'm now the proud possessor of Collins TCS12 and Hallicrafters HT11 projects, I know where the TCS power connectors are to be found, and much more. I think the knack is to ask closed questions that can be answered readily.

Please keep it up. It's important to the Society's objectives that we help each other, that we celebrate each other's successes (maybe I should hold an HT11 inauguration party?) and that we're supportive on black days when nothing goes right. I'm looking forward to getting more involved in 2014.

Here is a photo of me wearing a Christmas present from my daughter; she was present on the Queen Mary, and worries that I've gone geeky.



Advertisement

WANTED: I would really like a 76 Sender from WWII, complete or in bits.

Geoff Wooster 01634 891017 gw.woo@btinternet.com

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