

The VMARS News Sheet

A publication of the Vintage and Military Amateur Radio Society

Issue 64

July 2008

www.vmars.org.uk

MOVMW

Affiliated to the Radio Society of Great Britain

VMARS Committee contact details:

Chairman:

Bronek Wedzicha M0DAF
22 Farmers Way
Copmanthorpe
York
North Yorkshire YO23 3XX
+44(0)1904 708704
chairman@vmars.org.uk

Secretary:

John Keeley G6RAV
7 Parr Close
Myton Road
Warwick
Warcs CV34 6NE
+44(0)1926 831355
secretary@vmars.org.uk

Treasurer:

Brian Thomas GW4KYT
3 New Road
Trebanos
Swansea
West Glamorgan SA8 4DL
+44 (0)1792 846014
treasurer@vmars.org.uk

Membership Secretary:

Mike Bayliff
Glenbracken
Coxpark
Gunnislake
Cornwall PL18 9AZ
+44(0)1822 834373
memsec@vmars.org.uk

Ordinary Member:

Stuart McKinnon G0TBI
145 Enville Road
Kinver
Near Stourbridge
West Midlands DY7 6BN
+44(0)1384 872157
Stuartjmckinnon@aol.com

Star of the display was of course Joe Bell's Zil radio truck. This has been described many times in these pages, however for those who have not heard of it, briefly it is medium size lorry, of Russian origin ("Zil" is one of their manufacturers), kitted out with one of the most impressive radio systems you are likely to see anywhere. It is capable of about 3kW output (PEP) over the frequency range 1 – 60MHz. It has a variety of wind up telescopic towers, one of which was used to support a Vee doublet fed by balanced lines. It has a 38kW generator on board, but for reasons of fuel economy, Joe prefers to haul a (slightly!) smaller generator behind the truck. This has enough power to not only power the station, but also power that other very important activity – the making of tea! (yes – we even take electric kettles now).

Joe has to turn the Zil's transmitter down to about 1kW to meet the NOV conditions imposed to allow the beast to be used at all. The station was active on 80m on several days, as those on the AM net will know. Joe also made contact on 6m



Breakfast - with radio - at Kemble!

VMARS at Kemble MVT Show

VMARS was well represented again this year at the Military Vehicle Trust's national show at Kemble airfield, in Gloucestershire. And this was despite the weather, which managed constant wind and intermittent rain.

with Simon, G4GFN at Blandford, Dorset, and Tony, G3YNT, using a simple whip aerial mounted on top of the truck.

From one (modern) extreme....to the other

There were a number of other vehicles on display: Stuart McKinnon's lightweight Landrover, which had

- a Racal TA-4793 100W HF system, also known as the PRM-4790 (or Syncal 2000) with ALE;
- A VRQ-317 50W ground-to-air system, which can offer a frequency hopping capability
- A Racal BCC-67, 50W VHF set, offering voice communications in clear, encrypted and frequency hopping modes (also known as "Panther V").

On the table we managed to include three fully working stations. A WS19HP and a WS52 (complete station) both bought along by Mike Hazell, G1EDP. This was supplemented by a C11/R210 provided by myself.

The set in use most of the time was the WS52, which is excellent for demonstrating to visitors how radio worked some 60+ years ago. It has a nice clear layout, with the receiver and transmitter entirely separate. And it produces loudspeaker volume audio, so both sides of any exchanges can be heard.

As ever, there was steady trickle of visitors (limited probably by the bad weather). Being a unique display at the show, visitors tend to stay longer than at many other exhibits – we do our best to answer questions, and demonstrate particular features of the equipment if we can.

Antony Wedgwood visited the stand, and brought along a variety of sets, notably an Australian WS No.108, not often seen in the UK.



Antony's WS108 – outside and inside

Antony also brought a working WS46 manpack, and tests of its range were conducted very similar to last year's tests with



the WS68. Results will be written up in Signal in due course.

Mark Elliott, G8SAR, provided the base station end, with a fully operational C13 in his landrover. This fed a 43' vertical whip, tuned by the C13 ATU system, which we ran remoted down a long piece of coax.



A C13 ATU system in its "remote" configuration, at the base of a Larkspur 27' telescopic mast, with 16' whip also fitted on top, to make 43' in all

Richard Hankins, G7RVI

The International Museums Weekend

The International Museums Weekends were hard work but worthwhile. The purpose was to activate a WW2 Decoy Site which was close to home - 430 metres the GPS says. The Decoy Site is now overgrown with oak and elderberry trees and little more than an air-raid shelter. It is known by that name locally. Closer inspection shows massive plinths with large bolts set in them which, we presume, were for an engine and dynamo used for the searchlight. It is a place where an anti-aircraft gun could be brought to. The QLR was driven there and parked facing north. The aerial was east-west. Fortunately Phil, G8KLC, (RAYNET Zone 4 Co-ordinator) volunteered to help putting up the A13 masts. The QLR, a mobile museum on four wheels, was the centre with the 30' mast at the back. The standard dipole for me, was erected to the two A13 masts. (My dipole is 50' each side of insulated aerial wire with a dipole centre fitted with a 450 ohm ladder feeder to a 6:1 balun via a RG58 coax to an upside down aerial switch (G4GEN's idea). I, therefore, pre-tuned the IC706 Mk2G and the WS19 with RFA No.2 Mk3 to 3615 kHz. Switching between the transceivers is quick, although the WS19's dynamotors are slow to get up to transmitting voltage. This aerial has proved its worth. I get good reports all round UK, Ireland and Holland.

Forty eight museums registered with Harry, M1BYT, and one joined us using last years number. I worked 21 museums (43%), 10 special event stations, 11 VMARS members using the WS19 and amplifier, 6 Royal Signals ARS members, 25 other radio amateurs and only had to make 4 CQ calls. As Bletchley Park Museum is open every day they did not register for these weekends. I worked mostly 80M with occasional trips to 40M. On 20M and 17M I found no other museums. 15M was dead. What happened to the other 57% of museums? Were they on other bands/modes? Were they not transmitting? Or, did I simply miss them?

One other radio amateur deserves mention. He was Ted Moore, G3EUG, founder of the Eddystone Users Group. He

was receiving LSB on his Eddystone 680X which, of course, has zero drift.

Peter Walker, G4PLW



VMARS at Flixton

The Flixton meeting on 25th May at the Norfolk & Suffolk Aviation Museum was financially successful!. It rained and rained so people went to the NAAFI and they made a profit. For the rest of us VMARS members (Ray Kidd, M0EVK, who was the organiser; Roger Basford, G3VKM; David Skeate, G0SKE; Laurie Atkinson, G4FAA; Peter Best, G8BLS; Peter Bridgeman, G3SUY; Brian Murfitt, M1JLM and myself, G4PLW) it was a washout.. Nevertheless the flag for VMARS was flown and we did get some interest. The pity was that I had gone with the QLR to Flixton via Rougham Airfield (an MVT Show) which was on the way. The weather was perfect. If only it had stayed that way for another day - if only.

Peter Walker G4PLW



Peter's wartime QLR radio truck. An all too rare sight at most military vehicle events.

Early transistor sets – doomed?

There is an interesting, if somewhat depressing, article in the July/August issue of *Elektor* magazine, entitled "The OC171 Mystery (solved)".

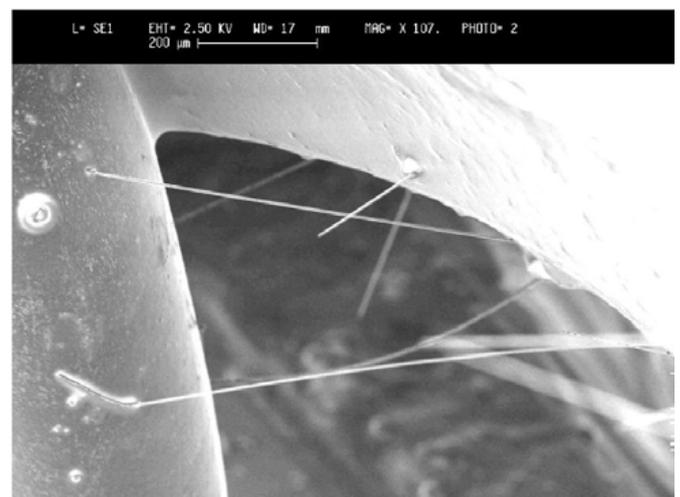
The content of the article will be no mystery to anyone who has tried repairing early transistor equipment, which uses any of the following transistor types: OC170/171, AF114 – 117, AC127/8, AC176, AC187/8. The OC170 and OC171 are

particularly prone to the problem, namely that the transistor can go short circuit to its metal can (shield), and as the shield is normally grounded, this completely wrecks the bias and thus the circuit stops working (apart from usually shorting the signal as well!).



A typical example of the type of transistor affected

What is less well known is the cause of the problem. Apparently these transistors were partially filled with an early form of silicone grease or petroleum jelly, which is around the transistor junction itself, but an air gap was left between the grease and the glass seal. This air gap reportedly grows microscopic conductive "hairs", which can short any lead to the can or to each other. A slide show of research on the problem carried out by NASA can be found on the web (put "germanium transistor" into Google) – and it has some very clear photos of the problem:



Microscope photograp showing whiskers shorting the can to a lead

Cutting the shield lead

The old trick of cutting the shield lead, thus isolating the can from ground and leaving it floating, is only a partial fix. If the hairs short a junction (e.g. emitter-base) then this cure has no effect. Indeed, it is hard to see what can be done to clear such a short, which does not also destroy the transistor. A discussion of some fixes can be found at: <http://www.vintage->

radio.com/repair-restore-information/transistor_transistor-faults.html

Even worse, the article points out that this is a manufacturing defect. You can buy all the “new old stock” ones you like from Ebay, etc, but it will avail you nothing – they will all go exactly the same way. In fact, if you buy a NOS example, chances are it will be dead on arrival.

Other fixes?

The NASA slide show indicates the whiskers can grow right through the grease in the can. I do wonder whether cleaning the can out, grease and all, and replacing with new silicone grease would provide such a transistor with a new lease of (relatively long) life.

Other possible fixes are to use other Germanium transistors free of the defect. The OC44 and OC45 *may* be suitable, but this has to be tested on a case by case basis. The article also points out that more modern silicon transistors (e.g. BF450/451) might be usable. However the biasing will have to be altered to take account of the very different base-emitter voltage drop (Ge: 0.2-0.3V, Si: 0.6-0.7V). Even worse the circuit *may* burst into oscillation, simply because of the far higher frequency response of the average Si transistor, compared to the rather naff Ge ones of early days – it would then need improvements to decoupling, and possibly the layout as well to re-stabilise the circuit.

The whole approach then opens the whole question of why we are restoring early equipment. Is it to keep it working at all costs? Or to demonstrate what technologies of earlier days were capable of? I have explored the question more fully in my editorial in Signal Issue 8.

Richard Hankins, G7RVI

GARES visits Mike, G1EDP

Mike Hazell, G1EDP, had a visit from the Gloucester Amateur Radio and Electronics Society recently. Members came for a “vintage evening”, taking a look at Mike’s extensive collection of vintage amateur and military radio equipment. It even spread to a tent in the garden!



Anne Reed, 2E1GKY, Secretary of GARES, standing next to Mike’s WS12/R107 system.



A rare R103 receiver sitting on a much later B44 Mk.II transceiver, which itself is on the correct tripod stand



A WS18 manpack sitting next to a WS38 manpack

Most of the equipment pictured is working and some was demonstrated during the visit.



Mike, G1EDP, sitting in the tent, which contained a WS52, GRC-9, plus many other items (and dogs!)

VMARS Editorial & Archive Teams: new members

Ray Robinson, VK2ILV, has joined the Editorial team. His location on the far side of the world, shows just how powerful the internet has become in allowing people who are far apart to collaborate closely on a shared task.

Ray has a most interesting website, at <http://www.shlrc.mq.edu.au/~robinson/museum/>, where he has a long list of articles on sets, many of which are of Australian origin.

The Archive team has also expanded, with the arrival of William Blankley, G8CMK. Both are very welcome additions to teams that are very hard to staff. Even though the Society has some 350 members, those with the necessary skills and time are very thin on the ground.

Richard Hankins, G7RVI

Lets see your photos!

As Editor, I am very well aware that the photos we include in the Newsheet don't represent the full spread of members' activities or of our members themselves. More often than I would like, we have to use photos that are to hand – and those are usually photos that editorial team members have taken themselves. And the same suspects (both people and events) thus turn up time and again.

Sending in your photos, with a note of what they show (where, when, who, what), is one of the simplest ways of sharing what you are up to, in your neck of the woods. Photos of members' shacks, collections and activities are very welcome, but it doesn't have to be limited to that. You could send us the odd photo of a museum display that you found interesting, for instance.

Photos can be posted to me (address in Signal or member's list), or emailed to editor@vmars.org.uk.

Richard Hankins, G7RVI

Ebay quirks

Ebay can be quite fickle on the prices it throws up. Anyone who relies on it to establish "market value" is liable to be misled, unless they take an average of a lot of auctions for the same item.

Recently, a relay fetched around £80 on Ebay. Was it gold-plated (all over), or did it switch 1,000 amps? No – it was a very ordinary two pole relay in a box. It was in fact the "Relay Unit No.1", used to provide extra earthing for the R107 aerial feed, when used in conjunction with the high power WS53 transmitter. The only reason it fetched such a staggering price is that no-one has seen one for years – until now. Sadly, it has gone to a rather secretive collector in Switzerland, so the chance of getting some dimensioned drawings for others to create replicas has vanished.

At the other extreme there was a WS12 transmitter. These date from the early years of WWII, and are now getting quite rare. They typically fetch £250 - £350, even if not in working order.

However this example, claimed to be internally "above average for its age", only fetched £78. Was there something wrong with it? Well, the front panel had been badly hand painted and re-lettered. And the PA valve (ATP35) was missing. Does that justify it falling short of the normal price by at least £170?

Ebay is a lottery – for buyers *and* sellers!



The WS12 that was sold on Ebay for £78

Clansman EMERs released

The VMARS Archive has held most of the Clansman EMERs for some years: but because they are "Restricted" under the Official Secrets Act, we were committing an offence by simply holding them – let alone providing copies to members. So we have had a policy of not even admitting that we had them!

I have now pushed the MOD into deciding whether they really need to maintain this restricted status on such documents, by making a formal "Freedom of Information Application" to have them released. The MOD has decided that now Clansman is obsolete, they can release them, and have thus sent me a CD with the following EMERs on them:

- PRC-320 HF manpack
- PRC-351 VHF manpack (which includes the PRC-352)
- VRC-321 HF vehicle set
- VRC-322 HF high power linear

Those are all the ones I asked for. Plainly we can make a further application for other Clansman EMERs if necessary, however I think the principle has now been shown that Clansman EMERs are now free of OSA restrictions.

Some of the copies sent to me are very recent (dates in the late 1990s and early 2000s), and these I have not seen anywhere else before. They are bound to be of interest to those working on Clansman equipment.

There is a further difficulty however: Crown copyright still applies. This means we cannot just place the files on the VMARS website for all and sundry (i.e. non-members) to help themselves to. We can make a case for members having copies though, under the "reasonable use" provision in recent legislation. This allows individuals to make copies of copyright documents for "personal use, research use, and non-profit making purposes". That describes the sort of activities we undertake very well.

So, copies will be available on request from the Archive Team.

Dealers amongst the membership should note that they are welcome to a copy like any other member, but they are not entitled to start selling copies on their stalls. If they wish to ignore copyright with their own copies, that is their affair, but VMARS should not be involved in any way.

Richard Hankins, G7RVI

T1154 net – 19th July

Stuart McKinnon, G0TBI, reports a successful net for those with RAF T1154 transmitters. In all there were seven of these sets on the air. Stuart gives the following reports at his QTH in Kinver, Staffordshire:

- Alan G4GEN, using a T1154M & R1155B in Sussex: 3/3;
- Keith G8ELA, using a T1154M & R1155AL in Ravensdon near Bedford, 5/8 to 5/9
- Chris, G4BYZ, using a T1154M & R1155B in Reigate, Surrey: 5/5 to 5/8;
- Ken, G4KCF/P with a kite aerial, using a T1154M/R1155N in East Yorkshire: 5/7 to 5/9;
- Mike, G4EJM, using a T1154M/R1155A, in Stoke-on-Trent: 5/7;
- Mike, G1EDP, using a T1154H/R1155A, in Coleford Gloucestershire: 5/8.

The net was highly popular with participants, and opinion has been voiced that it should be repeated with other sets, such as the WS19 or maybe equipment from an early amateur manufacturer, such as KW.

Saturday AM Net-Controller's Rota

Date	1 st op	2 nd op	3 rd op
26 th Jul	G4GEN	G4BQF	GW8TBG
2 nd Aug	G4BQF	GW8TBG	G8AQN
9 th Aug	GW8TBG	G8AQN	G1EDP
16 th Aug	G8AQN	G1EDP	M0TCM
23 rd Aug	G1EDP	M0TCM	M0DAF
30 th Aug	M0TCM	M0DAF	G0TBI
6 th Sept	M0DAF	G0TBI	G4GEN

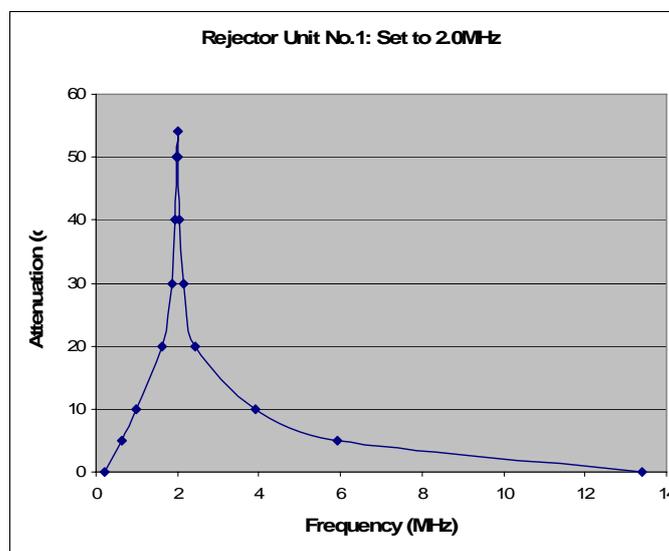
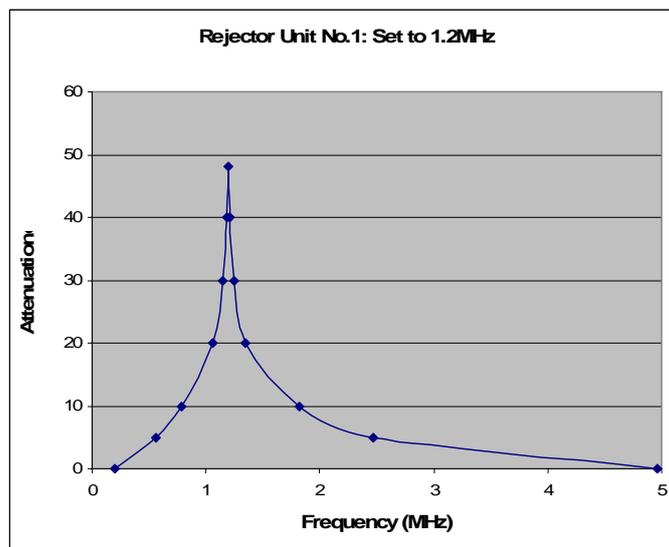
Helplines – Answers

63/1 A case of incorrect manufacture?

[Last month, Ray Bawley pointed out that his Rejector Unit No.1 was incorrectly wired. And the circuit in Wireless for the Warrior agreed with the wiring – and was also incorrect! Peter Lamb, M1AYI, has written in to report an examination and test of his own Rejector Unit No.1. – Ed]

I have an unmodified Rejector Unit No1 Mk2 ZA23831 which I have not as yet used. On checking, I have found that it has the same faulty circuit as that shown in the NS. Out of interest, I have had a look at its performance, as issued, using a sweep generator and spectrum analyser.

As expected, the lowest band (1.2 - 2MHz) worked well, with a tuneable resonance over the whole band and remarkably accurate calibration of the dial. Notch attenuation increased slightly with frequency, the signal being 48db down at the 1.2MHz setting, and 54db down at 2MHz. The response curves are shown below:



From this it can be seen that the curves are not entirely symmetrical, showing a fairly sharp entry but a slower exit. I also found some fixed points of resonance at higher frequencies, but whether these were caused by internal coupling or the set up that I used I am not sure, since they appeared at similar frequencies on the other bands of the rejector. On this lowest band these points of attenuation were 2db @ 15MHz, 5db @ 30MHz and 15db @ 60.05Mhz.

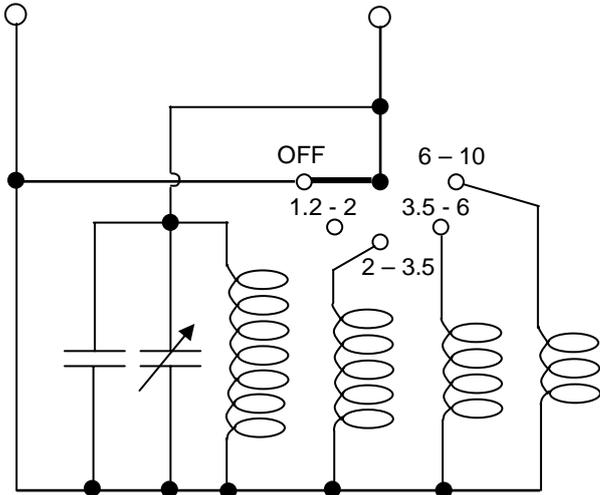
Needless to say, the other bands did not tune at all but they all showed the general signal level attenuated by 10 - 20db up to frequencies in excess of 70MHz. I did not pursue this effect.

I have not yet tried modifying this Rejector Unit. I thought that I would wait until we have a clearer picture first.

Peter Lamb, M1AYI

[However John Roper writes as follows – Ed]

I have a Rejector Unit No.1 Mk.2 acquired at a junk sale, but never used. After seeing your article, I checked the wiring, and it is as below. Also I believe incorrect, as when switched to the three higher frequencies, the lowest is switched in parallel. i.e. the lowest frequency coil is always in circuit, except when it is shorted out in the OFF position.



[Comment from Richard Hankins: The circuit John reports will work correctly, and is rather different from the other two. On the higher frequency ranges, smaller inductors get switched in parallel with the main tuned circuit, reducing the effective inductance and thus resonating at higher frequencies.

One can imagine some units being miswired – i.e. a production line mistake – but in this case even the *official circuit* (as published in *Wireless for the Warrior*) is incorrect. Not just a manufacturing fault – but a design one too!

I do wonder if there is a missing EMER somewhere that corrected not just units in the field, but also the paperwork.

Helplines – Queries

64/1 A home for a Muirhead D300 Fax?

You must have received many emails on the topic of disposing of old equipment but I thought I would try you with my particular problem.

I have been involved with the amateur weather satellite scene for the past 40 years and have worked my way through all technologies right up to the current Eumetcast Direct Video Broadcast system.

I have also kept my feet on the ground by retaining original electro mechanical photo processors working, not operational in the image producing sense but capable of showing interested parties how it was done. Units owned over the years, were designed to run 24/7/365 mainly in the newspaper and news agency field. This as you will rightly suspect means...large!

I am now down to the first unit that I bought some 25 years ago that was owned by Strathclyde Police and was used for receiving fingerprint images from Interpol on a dedicated landline.

I paid a fair amount of money then, around £500 for a unit that had a delivered price of some £17,000 five years previously. Over the following years I obtained another 5 units and distributed them to other like minded souls. Eventually they all ended up on the scrap pile, as no organisation was interested. I tried museums, universities and innovation and heritage centres, but all expressed little interest, so scrapped they were.

The last unit a Muirhead D300 is complete and operational, with all documentation including the original dyeline blue prints. There is a complement of spares and consumables including the original newspaper optimised machine unit.,



Currently the machine unit is configured mechanically for weather satellite reception.

I hope you will allow me to blow my own trumpet a little, this unit represents how we as amateurs pushed the boundaries of what was possible with limited funds and enabled us to see



the same imagery that professional organisations were obtaining for astronomical investment. It is impossible to calculate the hours of fun had along with other amateur friends in getting the unit up and running. The results obtained against all the odds, were stunning.

I have attached some images of the unit and you will gather it's substantial in size and weight. It's offered to anyone who would cherish it for free although if distance is involved help would be needed to move. The case unit could fit in a Volvo size estate but a small van would accommodate it easily.

Other than that I am sorry to say it will end up in the local scrap yard.

Any help would be most appreciated and if you wish to publish the images to encourage new ownership I can provide some higher definition versions.

Peter Stein G8WQB

[Responses should be sent to Bronek Wedzicha in the first instance – his contact details are on the front page of this NS – Ed]

Letters

From Richard Hankins, G7RVI

When I wrote in NS62 about the case of "member x", I did so with one purpose in mind. That was to alert members to the need to alter the constitution, so that the case could be dealt with effectively. So I regret to see in NS63 that two of the protagonists could not let the process proceed without further stirring up the muddy waters.

Tony Helm has thrown away the anonymity I offered him. As he has dispensed with the "member x" – I will do so too.

I take issue with Bronek, our chairman, with some reluctance, however his statement about the conduct of the matter so far cannot go unchallenged, when we are about to vote on a change of constitution to get the matter sorted out. Members might imagine that with "tens of hours" apparently spent on this issue, that some of that time might have been spent talking to me. Quite the opposite – Bronek's writings are the first detailed feedback I have had all year.

A matter of principle or just being awkward?

Bronek clearly believes he wrapped the whole thing up last Autumn, and I am thus pursuing some agenda of my own in making it public now. A "squabble between two members" is what he calls it.

To state the obvious, I really do have better things to do with my time than to go around conducting personal squabbles in public. It is most definitely a matter of principle, which I shall explain. The principle concerns fair and honest trading in a context where "collecting" can be more of a disease for some people than a hobby – and the credibility of VMARS as a body running sales. Some collectors will go to any lengths to get something they want, and VMARS most definitely has a role in regulating this potential "snake-pit".

Why does VMARS have such a role? Firstly, because two of its aims are:

- To encourage and facilitate the collection, preservation, restoration and use of radio equipment;
- To facilitate the interchange of radio equipment between members;

VMARS thus has a direct interest in setting up a "market place" where equipment can be traded between members.

Such trading is essential for the restoration of vintage equipment: we all want bits and piece to move about from those who have but don't need them, to those who want them.

All trading depends on trust, and on all parties observing whatever rules have been put in place. In the case of the Royal Signals Museum sales, the rule was "highest bidder by a certain date". Everyone except Tony Helm observed that process. Tony went direct to the museum, and decided the process didn't apply to him.

It should be obvious to everyone that the credibility of VMARS as a "sales agent" is at stake here. Why would sellers, or other members, accept the process, if anyone can bypass it at will, thus cheating the seller and other buyers?

Decisive action already taken?

Bronek states that his committee took decisive action last Autumn. I am unaware of any such action, probably because of the quite excessive secrecy that the committee likes to work under. The only time such secrecy can be justified is if the culprit (Tony Helm) is entirely innocent. In any other case, then the findings of the committee should be fully aired in the Newsheet for all members to be made aware of. Members are entitled to know precisely who has broken the bonds of trust that the rest of us observe scrupulously, so that they can then avoid that member if they wish to do so.

I can only guess that if the committee took some action it was something to do with Tony Helm's sudden disappearance from the committee. Even then I instigated it, by telling them I would not deal with a committee that had someone as dishonest as Tony Helm as one of its members (in the context of handling SK sales).

Coming back to Bronek's "personal squabble" thesis – for this to be true, I would need to be an "injured party". I certainly came in for my share of flak once I raised the issue, but the primary "injured parties" in this case are the Royal Signals Museum, specific members of the Society and VMARS itself. I am a "whistle blower" here, and intend to go on blowing my whistle until some definite action is taken.

Problems in the committee

The one point I did agree with Bronek last Autumn was that the committee had done as much as it could – given that one of its members was the accused, another was his friend, and three more members themselves stood accused (by Tony Helm) of running a scam. With that sort of mess, there was no way the committee could reasonably examine the case itself, and come to any reliable conclusion. And yet the constitution as it stands now, gives authority only to the committee to take action in these cases. It does not authorize them to offload the job to any other members – hence the current *impasse*.

Even so, we might still ask what the committee made of the evidence. Bronek reports the evidence as "confused". I suggest it was the committee itself that was confused. Why? I have been told by a committee member who was present at all the meetings concerned, that the accused (Tony Helm) and his sidekick (Mike Bayliff) were not asked to leave the room while the case was discussed. They were in effect part of the discussion. This is a clear and fundamental breach of normal committee procedure, where any member who has a personal interest in a matter, must leave the room while it is discussed. Their personal influence in the matter can only invalidate anything the present committee has to say.

No eyewitnesses?

Bronek states "We would have to obtain evidence from several eyewitnesses". Fine – in that case why has he not done so?

I am an eyewitness, and as such I would expect to have been called, in person, to explain my evidence. I would also expect the other eyewitness to have been called. Neither of us has appeared as an eyewitness before the committee – and yet the Tony Helm/Mike Bayliff team has been able to influence the committee *in person* throughout!

The second eyewitness was actually at the Royal Signal Museum when the incident I mentioned in NS62 occurred. He reports that both of them were told that certain items were subject to a sale by VMARS. And yet Tony Helm went ahead and negotiated the purchase of a Racal Syncal 2000 transceiver and Torn E.b. receiver, both of which already had bids and enquiries about them from other VMARS members. He paid just £200 for the Syncal and £30 for the Torn E.b. When they left the museum, our eyewitness said to Tony: “*You have just put your VMARS membership in jeopardy*”.

Given that I had a bid of £800 on the table on the Syncal 2000 from a member, it is evident that the museum lost out rather badly on this one item. As the museum director put it to me afterwards “*The Museum has been taken to the cleaners*”.

I call that “cheating a fair sales process”. And I also call it an “open and shut case”. The quality of evidence against Tony Helm on this and other matters is outstanding. I have yet to see any evidence *from* Tony Helm in his defense.

A reformed character?

Bronek says the aim of any disciplinary process is to ensure the problem does not recur. Quite right. But Tony Helm will only avoid re-offending if he is a reformed character – I can detect no sign of that whatsoever. You only need to read his letter in NS63 to see that he is still denying absolutely that he has done anything wrong at all.

Bronek says he is satisfied that Tony Helm will not repeat his offence (at the RSM). Of course he won't. For one thing, he is now *persona non grata* at the museum – he will not gain access to the private areas of the museum again. This is not a one-off incident: Tony Helm has history stretching back to 2004, and there is a list of complaints against his name. I do not share Bronek's confidence that there will not be further incidents.

But we should not be debating this question at all. VMARS is exceedingly short of resources to allow it to function. The last thing it needs is its most active members spending many hours on a case like this one. What we need is a fair, but quick and decisive process, where expulsion for such offences is the norm. **If you offend – then you are out – end of story.**

Bronek talks about disliking “punishment”. I call it “holding people to account for their actions”. Bronek is far too focused on the offender – what about the rights of the rest of us, which have been conveniently shelved here?

Libel?

As editors of the Newsheet, Bronek and I are both obliged to remove any material we regard as libelous. Bronek however published it all last month – so I can only presume he doesn't really believe his own words.

I have edited this Newsheet. I have the advantage of knowing that libel only arises if the defamation involved cannot be proven. The quality of the evidence in this case is very good.

Resolving the matter

Bronek no doubt did his best in a difficult situation – however he should have realized that it is well beyond what the committee - under the current constitution - can resolve. He

should be backing action to alter the constitution – but instead appears to be trying to block it.

Given the history, I thus call on Bronek to stand aside, as far as this matter is concerned. We need a fully independent review team to look into it properly. I cannot see that any present committee member can have a place on that review team *and* provide us with a credible result. (I should add that Bronek has been invited to make further comment on this letter before publication – but has declined to do so.)

I also ask members to put my proposed new rules (Motion 7.6) into force at the AGM. If you don't like them, don't just vote against: make sure you communicate *why* you don't like them. New rules are essential to resolve this matter: if we don't do it at this AGM, then we will probably need an EGM later in the year, which is a pain for everyone.

I am heartily sick of these rows that occur in VMARS about every two years. It should be clear by now to everyone that they aren't going to go away – and thus a new way of dealing with them, quietly and quickly, must be found.

From Mark Elliott, G8SAR

Imminent Demise of V.M.A.R.S..... A Possible Solution

Over recent years I have been a Member of various clubs and societies, that have effectively self destructed due to infighting between members and unfortunately, VMARS. seems to be on the slippery slope to this demise.

I find it incredible that our chairman Bronek should have to spend large amounts of his time sorting out what amounts to petty fallouts between members.

As a solution to this I would like to suggest an amendment to the Constitution of the Society and for the good of ALL Members.

In times gone by, children falling out would have had their heads banged together by their parents and sent to their rooms until they had sorted out their differences. In today's Wishy Washy Society they would be sent to sit on the Naughty Stool until they had sorted things out between themselves!

I propose a very similar solution to our predicament and respectfully suggest the following amendment to the Societies Constitution.

1/ The aim of the Society is to preserve Vintage Wireless equipment e.g. (as per the current aims of the Society) and **not** to mediate over politics or disputes between Members.

2/ All fall outs/Disputes between Members **will** be dealt with in PRIVATE by those Members, possibly with the assistance of an Independent Mediator sourced by them and that V.M.A.R.S. will have **no** involvement whatsoever in this process.

3/ Disputes between Members that spill out to the Public Domain **WILL** result in **Both** parties being **Suspended** from **all** activities and or Positions within the Society **until** the matter is resolved in one of Two ways i.e.

i/ The matter is resolved amicably by the individual parties between themselves and a joint Notice of Resolution to this effect is published in the Newsletter.

ii/ The Matter is dealt with by way Via the Judicial System of the Land. (To assist in this I have added some Legal Guidelines below.)

For example if an allegation of theft is made, a complaint be made to the police by the relevant party so that an investigation may be started by them, with a view to arresting

the alleged offender(s) , premises being searched, property recovered and the offender(s) being placed before the criminal courts.

Alternatively if a person feels that his reputation is harmed by another member in some way they refer the matter to a solicitor with a view to taking action through the civil courts for libel, slander or defamation of character.

4/ Persons found guilty of offences by the courts would be permanently excluded from the Society.

I believe that the above proposal would force all Warring Parties to “Put up or Shut up” and therefore protect the overall society from further Harm caused by Belligerents.

Legal Niceties

The definition of theft under Section 1of the **Theft Act 1968** states that a person is guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

The Criminal Act of the offence is appropriating (taking Possession) of property belonging to another and the offender will have the necessary guilty knowledge if he does this in a dishonest way, intending to permanently deprive the true owner of it.

Part of the Act states that any assumption by a person of the rights of an owner amounts to be an appropriation, and this includes, where he has come by the property (innocently or not) without stealing it, any later assumption of a right to it by keeping or dealing with it as owner. Based on this, therefore, a person appropriates property when he or she assumes the rights of the true owner.

This offence is dealt with by way of the criminal courts and the matter should be dealt with by the police.

In law, **defamation** (also called **vilification**, **slander**, and **libel**) is the communication of a statement that makes a false claim, expressively stated or implied to be factual, that may give an individual, business, product, group, government or nation a negative image. Slander refers to a malicious, false, and defamatory statement or report, while libel refers to any other form of communication such as written words or images. Most jurisdictions allow legal actions, civil and/or criminal, to deter various kinds of defamation and retaliate against groundless criticism. Related to defamation is public disclosure of private facts which arises where one person reveals information which is not of public concern and the release of which would offend a reasonable person.

(Source Wikipedia)

It should be noted by members that purely as a member of the publishing Society, in certain circumstances the individual members can be found individually financially responsible for the libel by a court of law.

These offences come under civil law and as such advice should be sought from a solicitor in order to place the allegation before a civil court (in much the same way as a Debt etc.)

[Response from Richard Hankins:]

Mark's comments are based on almost entire ignorance of the case in hand – being an echo of Bronek's limited (and in places, incorrect) view of the situation that he wrote about in NS63. Bronek has the unfortunate habit of presuming to work out the motives of the people involved, and then making a judgment based on his conclusions. He has already been obliged to apologise to me for doing just that on another matter in the past year. The proper way to look at cases like this is to consider only the actions of the people involved, and the evidence.

Mark states this is a “*petty fallout between members*”. If it were, I would be entirely in agreement with him. However it is nothing of the kind. To allow the behaviour that I am reporting to go unchecked would indeed spell the end of VMARS – all the decent people would eventually leave in disgust.

Mark has a touching confidence in resort to the law of the land, but the police are not known for taking meaningful action in such cases. Civil action is fine for those with very deep pockets and infinite patience – is he seriously suggesting that VMARS subs should double or triple, to set up a “legal fund” to fund solicitors to deal with our own misbehaving members? And why should individual members take on a case like this on VMARS behalf? I am happy to be a volunteer – but that is ridiculous!

Mark's proposals for amending the constitution are too late for this AGM (they have to be on the agenda, which was published last month). However I would not support them, because I think he (and Bronek and probably many others) are not taking account of the realities of the collecting world. **Collectors can be nasty, vicious people, who will go to any lengths to get something they want, including lying, misrepresentation, and outright theft. I say that VMARS should have a zero tolerance policy to such activities.** And that will only be achieved by putting in place the most robust procedures to ensure that any cases of this kind of behaviour are quickly and carefully examined – and if found proven, the perpetrator is expelled immediately, and his activities made known to all members.

As far as I am aware in VMARS' history, there have never been any “petty disputes” between members that have reached the Newsheet. The Society (usually represented by the committee) has had a string of problems with individual members (some threatening to finish the Society). These have been exacerbated by poor processes – which is why I have proposed a new one, involving an independent review team, which I believe will deal with these things cleanly and quickly.

VMARS is not in danger of demise just because it needs to put its house in order. It may not seem like it, but challenges like this enable VMARS to become a more robust body, well able to take on anything that “life” might throw at it in the future. All it takes is those of goodwill and good sense to agree a carefully considered solution. The one I have proposed may not be the best possible – but at the moment it is the only one on the table.

Events Diary

The diary is a list of events which are either ones where VMARS is formally represented (**bold**), or those where there is known to be a reasonable chance of finding or seeing vintage electronic items (*plain*). It is not intended to be a complete list of all available events (which can be found on the internet). Information is checked as far as is practical, but we can't guarantee its accuracy – its always best to check with the contact person if you are travelling a long way to attend.

Date (2007)	Event	Location	Contact	Type A=Amateur, M= Mil. V=Vintage (non radio)	VMARS Attending
2 nd August	VMARS AGM	Kineton Village Hall	John Keeley	V	Yes!
10 th August	Flight Refuelling ARS Rally	Flight Refuelling Sports & Social Club, Merley, Wimborne, Dorset,	Mike, M0MJS, 01202-883479. http://www.frars.org.uk	A	-
23 rd August	Garway Village Show	Garway, Herefordshire (village green)	Richard Hankins, 01989-769654, g7rvi@vmars.org.uk	-	G7RVI
25 th August	Lea Village Show	Lea, Herefordshire	Ray Hill, G0IMV, 01989 562906	-	G0IMV, G7RVI
30 th August	Rugby Amateur Radio Rally (Open 10:00-16:00. Entry £2)	Stanford Hall Lutterworth, LE17 6DH, Nr Rugby, just off the A14 NGR: SP586788. Follow brown signs for Stanford Hall from M1/J20	Tony, G0OLS, 07759-684411, EMail: tonyg00ls@aol.com http://www.rugbyats.co.uk	A	
6/7 th September	Gatwick Radio Family Vintage Military Radio and Radio Vehicle weekend	Hunters Moon Reigate Road Hookwood Surrey RH6 0HU TQ262438	Michael Buckley 0208 654 2582 mikeb@vmars.org.uk www.radioclubs.net/m0vog	V/M	M1CCF G8JAC M3IBN G4GFN
28 th September	The Third Telford Rally (Opens 10:30. Admission £2.50)	Enginuity Technology Centre in Coalbrookdale, Telford, TF8 7DU	Martyn, G3UKV, 01952-255416 http://tinyurl.com/3232sl	A	-

Advertisements

FOR SALE: Avo valve tester in good condition. Also "J" switch.

J.Roper, 9, St Benet's Avenue, North Walsham, Norfolk NR28 9HT. Day 01692 402134, Ev 01602 403768

FOR SALE: Spares or repair, Trio 9000, was working then popped. Complete with microphone. £20

David Waters, 07974 196851

FOR SALE: HT and LT power unit made by Plessey. Good quality unit built into a nice case – but not currently working. Mains transformer has 375-0-375V secondary. Regulator valve is KT88. LT power is unusual, providing 0 – 10V AC, fully adjustable and metered. HT metering also, but meter glass is broken. £15





Larkspur K-box (morse key), with carrier Needs a repaint, otherwise OK. £9



Items can be posted at cost. Or I will bring to the AGM on 2nd August if that is convenient for you. (that applies to anything on my previous list as well).

Richard Hankins, G7RVI, tel: 01989-769654, email: g7rvi@vmars.org.uk

GOOD HOME WANTED: for a rather tatty Hallicrafters R-44/ARR5. It's a shame to skip it. Covers 30 to 143 MHz.

QTH is 3 miles north of Newcastle on Tyne. Collection required - it's heavy!

Johnny G3LIV 0191 2843028 johnny.g3liv@gmail.com (NM)



WANTED: Bottom tray for 19 set, or good copy. C42 top and bottom trays. Larkspur wing box. Battery case/battery for Racal TRA965/3

David Waters, 07974 196851

WANTED: Quartz crystals in type 10X bakelite holders. These were used in Wireless Set 46 and other WW2 equipment and often bear a coloured spot followed by the letters 'S' or 'R' together with the operating frequency in kHz. I am particularly looking for white or red spot 'S' (send) crystals covering the phone sections of the 40m and 80m bands. Any offers gratefully received.

Colin Hindle, M5CJH. 01388-819949
cjhindle@hotmail.com

WANTED: For Wireless Set (Canadian) No 29, any connectors, control boxes or other parts, working instructions etc for restoration of almost complete station. Also wanted: Aerial Matching Unit No C1.

Mike Taylor (G3UCT), Orchard House, Leigh, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 6HL. 01935 872959.
mcknighttaylorltd@btinternet.com

WANTED: Coils for an MCR 1 receiver ranges 2,3 & 4. These are palm size five sided metal boxes with a metal scale, the sixth side being paxolin and bearing the connections.

Ken Brooks 01453-845013 mail@ken-brooks.fsnet.co.uk

WANTED: Circuit diagram and/or manual required for the PYE PTC110 HF Marine Radio telephone, also case is missing if you have one?

Ted Beddoes G8MTQ. 07785-200191, email: TedBeddoes@theiet.org