

SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY

Promoting and Supporting Amateur Radio since 1961

THE CATSWHISKER - JANUARY 2009

*Keeping members and
SDRS events and news*



*friends informed about
since March 1967*

Happy New Year!

NEXT SDRS MEETING - TUESDAY THE 13th OF JANUARY

DECEMBER CLUB MEETING - DORSET SEARCH AND RESCUE

Jamie, 2E0WON presented a most interesting account of the communications side of DORSAR - Dorset Search And Rescue.

The teams are called out usually when there is an emergency, such as a missing person (Misper in their abbreviated vocabulary), though they are usually under the authority of the police - so are, temporarily for the occasion, regarded as police officers.

Such local emergency squads are to be found all over the country, but being coastal this area carries special hazards and opportunities. Quite often they find themselves also in close liaison with Coastguard and the RNLI and again come under the guidance of those organisations.

As they have to be prepared for any eventuality each team carries both basic and advanced equipment to communicate with each other, and to do their job. The handheld portable radios they are issued with (one per team) are very sophisticated pieces of equipment capable of wide frequency and multi-mode working.

The emergency is co-ordinated from a communications vehicle where the operators have access to radios, mobile phones and the police network; on occasion they may also resort to a more direct approach - using runners. There are other vehicles too - 4x4s which are essentially ambulances, and members' cars.

Jamie made a valid point about the portable radios they use - they very rarely use earphones unless there is an absolute need for it, because they need their ears to detect the slightest relevant sounds when searching or listening.

Thank you Jamie - what a pity there were only nine members there to hear it.

John Rose, M0BQO

SEBASTIAN GREEN – 2EIHL

Having accomplished a walk around the coast path of the British mainland, Sebastian has been very much in the news during 2008.

He wanted to make amends for a misdemeanour committed a few years ago, when the RNLI rescued him from a small boat he was involved in taking; the publicity he got highlighted the work of the RNLI and more than paid for the cost of the rescue.

What wasn't so well publicised was that Seb is also a radio ham. He obtained his licence and joined the South Dorset Radio Society some seven years ago, and regularly participated in the 70cm net. But as with so many youngsters, other distractions coupled with the thrill of growing up were too much, and eventually his membership lapsed.

However, his licence, which is recognised worldwide, is for life. He will always be able to use it should the opportunity arise.

Sebastian has grown in self-confidence and responsibility, and judging from his interviews on TV and radio he is also a very articulate speaker.

Let us hope that this outstanding young man won't be lost to the world of Amateur Radio and that, having shaken off the exuberances of youth, he will find his way back to the hobby.

John, M0BQO

RSGB YEAR BOOK – 2009

The Treasurer, John Rose, M0BQO has the latest edition of the RSGB yearbook (2009), which is sent to all affiliated societies. It is available for any member to borrow, upon request. There is also a CD containing a number of useful computer programmes, including RTTY, Ham Radio Deluxe, a Morse trainer and MixW2.

TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGING!

Since Albert Einstein, time is much more difficult to understand than most people had previously thought and of course in 2008 we gained an extra second to compensate for the slowing down of the Earth's rotation.

However, I was still surprised to receive a QSL card by post, complete with two dollar bills and a self addressed envelope from a Canadian amateur in Ontario, requesting confirmation of a QSO he had with the SDRS in May 1994! The QSO was with the special event station GB5OD that the SDRS operated to commemorate the 50th anniversary of D-Day. Fortunately I still have some cards and of course I will be happy to oblige but quite why it's taken him so long to get around to asking for it remains, at least for now, a mystery.

Geoff, G0EVW

SILENT KEY – TOM BIDDLECOMBE G3WAO

It has come to our notice that Tom died recently aged just 62 years. He was a member of the SDRS from 1974 until 1981 while stationed on Portland with the Royal Navy. Tom was the driving force behind our society's trip to Alderney in 1976 where we took part in VHF NFD. The excerpt from the Catswhisker archives of the time can be read below. He was a very active member of the RNARS for many years and will be sadly missed by his many Amateur Radio friends.

Geoff, G0EVW December 2008

FROM THE CATSWHISKER ARCHIVES

Taken from '40 YEARS OF AMATEUR RADIO' by John Rose, M0BQO

(Published in booklet form in January 2002)

VHF NATIONAL FIELD DAY - 3rd and 4th of July 1976

March 1976: Plans are in an advanced stage to establish the SDRS on ALDERNEY with a four-station entry this year!

I should stress at this early stage that nothing is finalised - it could all crumble around my ears - but, the boat is booked and early logistics are arranged. It is a Joint Expedition to take 25 people to the Island on Fleet Tender 'CRICKLADE', consisting of 25 personnel, mainly from my Division of men, for whom it is an Adventure Training Exercise, plus 10 members of the RNARS affiliated SDRS.

The Station Heads are: G3VPF (4m), G8HVY (2m), G4CNV (70cm) and G3EGV (23cm).

June/July/August 1976: In case there are any club members who had not heard the details of VHF NFD 76 it has been decided at no extra cost to relate the experience.

At 5am all the members of the expedition were on board and the crossing to Alderney began. After an uneventful trip the ship was unloaded by mid-day and a quick lunch eaten before transporting the gear up to the transmitting site. During the afternoon there were a few worries due to the thunder and lightning around us. By the time the contest started all was well with the weather again. In the evening we were visited by the press and the police, a few photographs were taken and then it was back to the contest.

SCORES

GC3VPF/P (4m) 4122 points, 116 contacts. Maximum distance worked 674km.

GC3SDS/P (2m) 4218 points, 379 contacts. Maximum distance worked 770 km.

GC4CNV/P (70cm) 7572 points, 106 contacts. Maximum distance worked 994 km.

GC3EGV/P (23cm) 8233 points, 24 contacts. Maximum distance worked 758 km.

TOTAL POINTS: 24154

Tom Biddlecombe, G3WAO

SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY 2008/9

G3SDS G8SDS M2Z

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SDRS Web Site: www.g3sds.org.uk Pictures here: www.sdrs.zoomshare.com

SDRG (GB3SD/DR) Web Site: www.gb3sd.radiouk.com

WORDS OF WISDOM

'Mathematics is the key and door to the sciences.' – Galileo
(The Scientist who was punished for his claims that the earth revolves.)

THE CATSWHISKER

Our Society's Newsletter has been called 'The Catswhisker' since its inception. The word is defined thus in the Oxford Concise Dictionary.

cat's whisker n.
a fine adjustable wire in a crystal radio receiver.
the cat's whiskers (or pyjamas) slang an excellent person or thing.

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION

Until a new editor/producer can be found, the SDRS Newsletter is being produced and edited by our President, Geoff Watts, G0EVW. Please send any material for inclusion in Catswhisker to Geoff using e-mail g0evw@g3sds.org.uk. Or by post to: 46 Links Road, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 0PE. You can also phone or send a text message to Geoff on 07502198447. Please note that news material needs to arrive *at least* 10 - 14 days before each meeting.

SDRS 2008/9