

SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY

Promoting and Supporting Amateur Radio since 1961

THE CATSWHISKER - MARCH 2009

*Keeping members and
SDRS events and news*



*friends informed about
since March 1967*

**THE NEXT SDRS MEETING IS ON TUESDAY THE 10th OF
MARCH AT THE USUAL VENUE.**

**Nicky Marriott, M5YLO from the Blackmore Vale ARC will give a talk about
the all ladies DXexpedition to the Falkland Islands that took place in January.**

THE FEBRUARY MEETING

At the last meeting a discussion took place about the future of our society. Current membership level is at an all time low and subscription income is no longer sufficient to pay our essential annual expenses. A number of options were discussed but eventually it was decided that we should use our reserves to make up the difference between income and expenditure for as long as possible.

Furthermore we should continue to meet at our present venue and maintain adequate insurance cover to enable us to take part in special events. We should also maintain our RSGB membership.

Even if we continue to run at a loss, our treasurer reported that we should be able to stay in business at least until our 50th anniversary in two years time.

This recommendation will be made at the AGM next month.

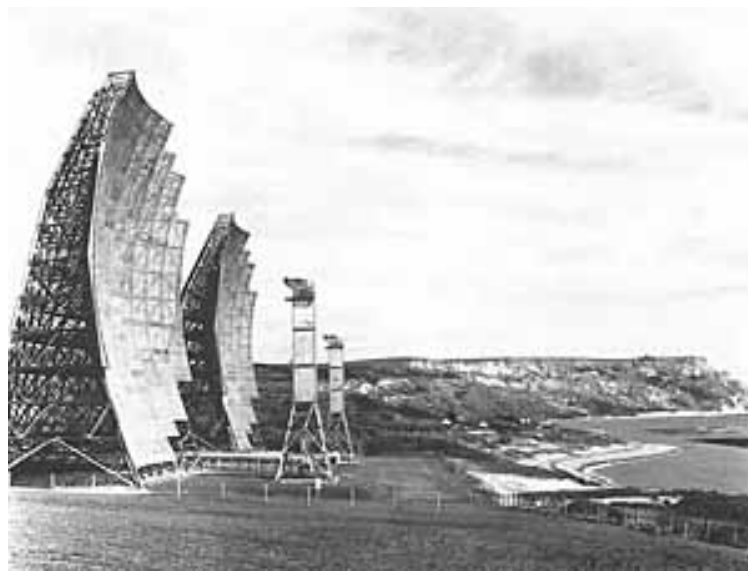
Geoff, G0EVW – President SDRS

SILENT KEY – SILAS NELMES G5AHX

Bill, G3EAT reports than Silas passed away on the 18th of December last year. Si was a member of the SDRS during 1968/69 while he was stationed on Portland with the United States Air Force and Bill had remained in contact with him ever since.

See the article below that explains why Si was here in South Dorset.

RINGSTEAD BAY TROPOSPHERIC SCATTER STATION



In the early 1960s a Radio Station was built at Ringstead Bay, near Weymouth in Dorset. The link operated across hundreds of miles to Gorramendi, near Elizondo, in the Spanish Pyrenees. Using massive 150ft high billboard-style reflectors to direct enormous amounts of radio energy into the troposphere, the novel 'tropospheric scatter' station was part of a network built primarily in order to link NATO heads of state together in crisis. A microwave link station located at the old RAF station behind the Verne on Portland linked the Ringstead Bay site to other similar stations via Bulbarrow Hill. Locally, USAF personnel operated and maintained the stations.

The Ringstead-Gorramendi link provided the High Wycombe Atomic Joint Co-ordination Centre with a direct connection to US nuclear forces straddling the Mediterranean in Spain itself, Morocco, at Wheelus Field near Tripoli in Libya, and further east.

Frequencies used by the tropospheric scatter transmitters ranged from 832.56 to 959.28MHz. The emission mode was F9 (frequency modulation, miscellaneous) with output powers of up to 50kW giving up to 10 megawatts effective radiated power!

Silas Nelmes, (UK callsign G5AHX) was serving with the USAF as one of a number of US personnel who operated and maintained the Ringstead and Portland stations. He joined the SDRS in 1968 and despite the high level of security existing then, Si managed to arrange a visit to the site for SDRS members.

I was fortunate to be among those to be invited. The station was impressive, and well equipped. However for me the most memorable thing was a bucket! The huge Magnetrons were water-cooled and a small leak was dripping onto the floor from above. The strategically placed bucket was a simple, low tech but nonetheless effective response.

Although it was only completed in 1963 the station was closed around 1969/70 and dismantled in 1974. Little or nothing remains to show it ever existed today.

Geoff, G0EVW

KNOW YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS



Immediate Past President and Founder Member, Bill Burden, G3EAT relaxes during the February meeting.

(We would like to assure readers that the pink Teddy Bear did not suffer any harm during the taking of this picture!)

SDRS MEETING VENUE

The Society meets on the second Tuesday of every month (except August) at the Chickerell Youth Club Hall.

Directions: From Weymouth, proceed northwest towards Chickerell along the B3157 (Chickerell Road) from its junction with the B3156, Lanehouse Rocks Road (or the Marquess of Granby junction) for approximately one mile. Passing the Army Camp on your left, at the bottom of a dip, turn right into Glennie Way. Follow this road until you pass the Willow Bed Hall on your left. At the bottom of the hill, take the next turning left into Lower Way and then left again into Rashley Road. Ahead you will see the entrance to Chickerell Primary School with the Chickerell Youth Club building to the left. Please note that you have to use the entrance at the side of the building accessed from Fairfield.

CATSWHISKER DISTRIBUTION SURVEY

The response from the recent survey suggests that almost everyone is able to read the Catswhisker from the Internet link that is now sent out to members each month via e-mail. In fact all the responses were positive! However, there was a query about the file size and how much room it takes up on the member's computer.

The average file size is approximately 250KB. This is smaller than a single image file stored on a modern digital camera and totally insignificant in terms of storage space on a modern computer hard drive. Assuming you actually use your computer to 'surf the net' you will be downloading very much larger files every time you do so! In fact the entire SDRS Web Site that holds all the Catswhiskers produced since August 1999 requires less than 80MB of storage space. That's only 10% of the space on a single data CD!

Geoff, G0EVW

SDRS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Tuesday 14th April 2009 at 7.30 P.M. at Chickerell Youth Club.

AGENDA

- 1) The reading and acceptance of the minutes of the A.G.M held on the 8th April 2008
- 2) The presentation of reports by the Treasurer and Chairman
- 3) The presentation of Society trophies and other awards
- 4) The resignation of the present Committee, all members being eligible for re-election
- 5) The election of Officers and Committee members for the ensuing year.
- 6) The fixing of subscriptions for the ensuing year.
- 7) The nomination of 2 auditors (inspectors) for the Coming year.
- 8) Discussion and suggestions for activities and meetings
- 9) Any other business which shall affect the well being of the Society and which may be properly discussed at a A.G.M.
- 10) Closure of the meeting.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 8 March - Bournemouth Radio Society rally.
- 19 April - Andover Radio Club boot sale.
- 25 April - International Marconi Day for us at Bradford Peverell.
- 26 April - QRP rally at Sherborne.
- 21 June - Newbury Radio club boot sale and rally.
- 28 June - West of England Rally at Frome (the old Longleat event).
- 9 August - Flight Refuelling's Hamfest at Wimborne.

These are all listed in greater detail in PW and Radcom, also on various clubs' websites.

John, M0BQO

SOUTH DORSET RADIO SOCIETY 2008/9

G3SDS G8SDS M2Z

CONTACTS

CHAIRMAN: Graham Webb, 2E1GOQ 2e1g0q@g3sds.org.uk 01305837356

SECRETARY: Carol Hodges, 2E1RBH 2e1rbh@g3sds.org.uk 01305820400
Marine Cottage, 1a Clements Lane, Chiswell, Portland, Dorset. DT5 1AS

TREASURER: John Rose, M0BQO m0bqo@g3sds.org.uk 01305832057
45 Ringstead Crescent, Weymouth, Dorset. DT3 6PT

Arthur Werrett, M0VAW
Fred Talmage, G0LVF
Jamie Wrightson, 2E0WON

President: Geoff Watts, G0EVW
Vice President: Robert Hodges, G0RYL

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

"Few people are capable of expressing with equanimity opinions which differ from the prejudices of their social environment. Most people are even incapable of forming such opinions."

Albert Einstein

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