

TDARS

# Newsletter

Issue 224

July 2007

[www.TDARS.org](http://www.TDARS.org)

## Programme

[www.telfordhamfest.co.uk](http://www.telfordhamfest.co.uk)

- July 18** Field Work at Club QTH. Check 2/70cm antenna. Bring tools etc !
- July 19-23 (Thu-Mon)** Expedition to Isle of Arran, Scotland. Contact G3UKV for details. You can still join us in IO75 !
- July 25** Spaceguard Centre Visit. Astronomical observatory nr Knighton, Watching for NEO (Near Earth Objects). Meet entrance 7.30pm. £6 admission.
- August 1** HF OTA and Open House + Committee Meeting
- August 8** Direction Finding/Fox Hunting & how to do it. Dave G4EIX
- August 15** Local Area Walking 2m. "FoxHunt" (direction finding 2 metres)
- August 22** Antenna Support Competition—Telford Town Park (Behind Focus Do-it-All) Guaranteed entertainment & laughs! (G3UKV/G0UFE)
- August 29** Weather Satellites reception. —Jim G8UGL
- Sept. 5** HF OTA, and Open House + Committee Meeting.
- Sept. 12** Aerials and Things. Mini Talks series on useful ideas.
- Sept. 19** Hamfest Preparations—please be there...
- Sept. 26** Using a 2-tone generator. - Mike G3JKX
- Sept. 30** TELFORD HAMFEST at ENGINUITY, COALBROOKDALE. Prep. Sat pm.
- October 3** Usual First-in-the-Month + C.M.
- October 10** Telford Hamfest De-Brief and Ideas Sharing Session.

**G3ZME**

*Telford & District Amateur Radio Society. Founded 1969*  
*Dawley bank Community Centre, Bank Road, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire. TF4 2AZ*

**G6ZME**

# Editorial

Elsewhere in this Newsletter are details of our annual VHF NFD excursion to the Long Mynd and claimed scores afterwards.

A couple of things struck me, apart from the rain on Sunday afternoon. Whilst up there last weekend, we were visited for the first time for more than ten years by an RSGB representative—Roger G4BVY— who lives in Malvern, and is a very experienced VHF contest operator and adjudicator. He came to “inspect” us, to make sure we obeyed the rules and spirit of the contest. All was well ! He is the guy to whom we’ve e-mailed or posted our VHF/UHF RSGB Contest Entries to for many years.

It gave me the opportunity to quiz him a bit about last year’s results, and the fact that our claimed scores on all 4 bands were reduced by around 10% - about double our usual rate of recent years. There was no clear outcome, as the rules of score deduction he assured me had not been changed in recent years, nor was there any truth in the rumour that if any station only appears once in all logs received by an adjudicator, the QSO is automatically discounted. In fact, I’ve since checked the claimed and listed scores of another well known radio club (Newbury), and indeed their claimed/published scores are much better than ours. So it seems we are losing more points than other comparable entries. It’s perhaps worth remembering that if EITHER side of a QSO logs incorrectly (eg missing /P, or incorrect serial nr), points are lost by BOTH stations, regardless of whose fault it is. It seems to me therefore that we need to take more care in ensuring the other guy has got all our info correctly, 100%, as well as getting his details down perfectly at our end. My guess is that this is where we lost points in 2006. I hope we fair better this time round.

The other comment Roger made was how many people and cars were on site—almost half our membership turned up at one time or another over the weekend. He noted that several well-known Midland’s clubs had withdrawn this year, and that our numbers were well above average. I know of another group up north who simply couldn’t get enough folk together to run more than one station, despite a high interest and usage of VHF at their club. It really gives a great morale boost when members turn up—even if only for an hour or so.

So—thanks everyone for your support. An excellent weekend was had by one and all.

**MIV**

**P.S.** Thanks for Newsletter articles and photos sent in by M0RJS, M0FHM, M0TAW, G3JKX, John SWL, G0EYX, G0CER, G8UPF, M0KZB

# QTC? News & Information

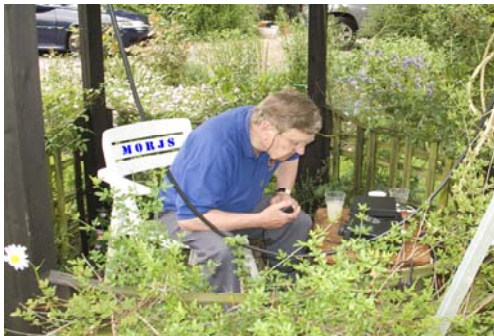


Just got the club gazebo up in time before the heavens opened (again) at last month's **barbecue** in the Club garden area.

Can you spot G4AUZ, M0TAW, 2E1HTU, G0BYA, G7LZB, G0EYX, M1AQS, Norma, John, G0WQX ?

Thanks again to Derek for all his hard work.

The grub was **excellent!**



And there was that **visit to Jodrell Bank**. Perhaps cheap and cheerful would fairly describe the reactions of those there—but followed by a very pleasant visit to Bob's QTH up there in Mow Cop. Thanks once again (flowers already sent!) to Jackie (Bob's fairer half) who provided refreshments at Chez M0RJS.

Is that Amazon jungle, Bob ?

On a sadder note, we record that past TDARS Member, **Eric Smith G3VUV**, died aged 70 on June 12 at the Morris Care Centre in Wellington. In recent years he moved to live in Wolverhampton after living in Randlay. For the past few winters, he rented property in Spain to avoid our climate! He was a popular bloke, with a droll sense of humour. I recall how once he said he refused to stick a postage stamp on any letter he sent out that was settling a bill—he had paid his due with the enclosed cheque! He hadn't been heard on-the-air in recent years. **RIP, Eric.**



## Mike's Piece

What do you write about in a hurry, when Martyn rings up and says 'For once I don't have a piece from you to put into the next newsletter'. All very well, but I have been out of the country, on and off, for nearly 2 months. Any spare time has been used up with Open University work. However, I remembered that when I got back from Russia, there was a packet of QSLs from the bureau waiting. There were some good ones too. Market Reef (OJØJ) on 80 mtrs and Cocos and Keeling (VP5) on 30mtrs. Another couple of islands to add to the collection. So here's a line or two on that subject.

There were also the usual crop of cards from my time in Brunei (V85KX) and one from my 1988, 4 month sojourn down in the Falkland Islands, as VP8BNW. Why do I mention these? Well look at the time it has taken for someone to want a card from me. 19 years in the case of the VP8 one. 16 years for the V85 ones! So, whatever you do, don't throw out old log books. Interestingly some of the QSL requests are duplicates which have been answered previously. I always mark all my incoming cards to show that they have been dealt with and of course my log book is also so marked. What happened to the originals, I asked myself? Did my QSLs go the wrong amateur? Got lost in the post? I'm afraid you must grin and bear it and send another one.

Oh yes...logbooks...no longer a legal requirement...Well I for one will continue to use one and I shall encourage all of my Foundation students to do the same....not only from the QSL standpoint but the proof that you have when the man from the ministry comes knocking on your door about interference. It is not possible to remember which frequency or mode or what power you were running last Tuesday week when something interfered with next door's television set. Always keeping a log puts you one step ahead and even if you were guilty, allows you to know which frequencies to avoid in future.

Why a modern digital TV should be interfered with is another matter however. The usual reason is that digital TV needs a much better signal than the analogue system does. Remember, all TV sets (and radios for that matter) use an automatic gain system. If the signal from the aerial is weak, then the set automatically boosts its RF gain to ensure a useable signal for decoding. This means that any interference from you will be boosted too and, low and behold, you are in trouble because the chances are that next door is using the same old aerial and coaxial cable that's been used since the house was built. Here in Telford many people only have indoor aerials pointing at the Wrekin mast. This *just will not do* for digital TV. An outside aerial with some gain is needed and pointed in the correct direction. (how many do you see which aren't!) AND the coaxial cable needs to be NEW and of good quality. I am afraid that most of the cable sold by the big stores is poor or worse, with inadequate screening. Copper is expensive so they cut the screening down to a minimum...but that makes the transfer of signals inefficient and allows interference to get in. So it is a good idea to persuade your neighbour to invest in a new, properly sited aerial and some good feeder too. Point out that radio interference from taxis, local utilities, buses, CBers, hair driers, drills, thermostat noises and the local garage's arc welding machine will all be eliminated in one fell swoop. You could offer to install it if you have real interference problems. Whatever, the length of coax outside the house should be renewed and the aerial checked for corrosion, good joints and correct direction. Just cleaning the connections between the coax and the dipole can improve the signal no end and therefore reduce the gain needed by the TV to produce an interference free colour picture. Remember that air and water are corrosive to copper





the same type of people whose enthusiasm for the hobby borders on 'professionalism'. When I saw one member achieve QSOs with three Portuguese stations, who were all operating split frequency operations, by spinning the dial of the old single VFO rig after each 'over' I felt that this was a real example of how the Brits have always 'managed' to succeed.

As we packed up following an unwelcome cloudburst I felt it had been a great weekend – companionship, doing something worthwhile and in pleasant surroundings.

This club – our club – is worthwhile.

**[And here follows a selection from the dozens of NFD photos received —Editor]**



GOUFE. Hatless— and who's holding the ladder?



Will the RSGB publish it this time?



2m stn.



That's sorted then .... Next year we'll....

4 gallons equals ??? Litres = ????? hours operating...



...and inside..... G3UKV, G0EYX

Checking the 4m station M0ECM, M0EMM, M0EAK, 2E0BDZ

