

# STARLITE

*The Newsletter for Members and Friends of*

**G6OI**  
1938

## **Stourbridge and District Amateur Radio Society**

**G6SRS**  
1938

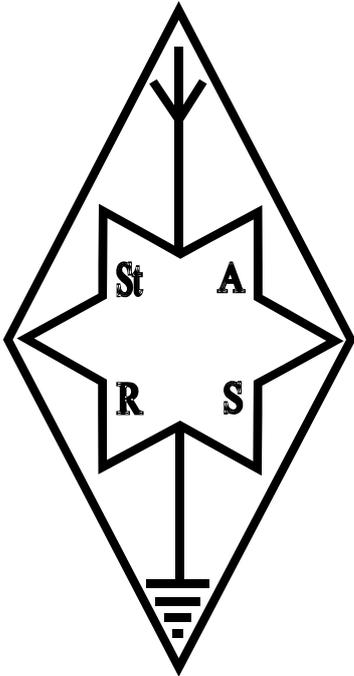
incorporating

**Old Swinford Hospital School Radio Club**

**G4CVK**

1969

**ISSUE**  
**01/04/12**



## **Table of Contents**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| EDITORIAL.....  | 3  |
| GRIPTON'S RADIO STORES.....                           | 4  |
| GEOCACHING GOT THE BUG PART 3.....                    | 7  |
| WINDOWS XP TOWER PCs FOR SALE.....                    | 8  |
| FROM OUR ROVING REPORTER.....                         | 9  |
| STARLITE CRYPTIC & GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD 2..... | 12 |
| YOUR COMMITTEE.....                                   | 13 |
| CALENDAR OF EVENTS.....                               | 13 |



# STARLITE

## MEETINGS

Visitors always welcome  
The Society holds its full meetings on the  
1st and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each Month at

**Old Swinford Hospital School  
Heath Lane  
Stourbridge  
(8.00pm – 10.00pm)**

Additionally the shack is open during the same times on the  
intermediate Mondays

Telephone Enquiries to :-  
Hon Secretary  
John Clarke M1EJG  
(01562) 700513

Or by e-mail to :-  
honsec@g6oi.org.uk

All correspondence/enquiries should be  
addressed to the Hon. Secretary :-  
STARS  
c/o The Mill House  
21 Mill Lane  
Blakedown  
Kidderminster  
DY10 3ND

STARS Web Site URL :-  
[www.g6oi.org.uk](http://www.g6oi.org.uk)



# STARLITE

## EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

This year's AGM was well attended with around sixteen members present with three apologies. In summary the committee was similar to last year but with the addition of Mark Hedges to the committee. Thanks go to Richard Carroll for his work, who has stepped down from the committee. Andrew Hill was presented with the G8GF rose bowl for his major contribution to the club during 2011/2012. See 'From Our Roving Reporter' for picture.

I have included a crossword in this month's Starlite. This crossword has been subjected to careful checking and it is hoped that it will provide some enjoyment. Wayne has kindly contributed a third instalment of his article on geocaching. Thanks go to James for the pictures from the Black Country Museum. I have added some words around the pictures that James has supplied and I hope this makes interesting reading.



John Scott is pictured below fitting a 'new' carpet to the Star's shack to complement the repaint that was undertaken by club members during the last few months. It is important that the club surroundings are attractive to newcomers and existing members alike.

As always I would be interested to receive contributions and feedback on any of the articles. I aim to make Starlite available for the first day of each month, so please can you submit any articles in time for this deadline.

Adrian Bryan (G0NLA) Editor.



# STARLITE

## GRIPTON'S RADIO STORES



Thanks go to James (G7HEZ) for the pictures in this article. One of Gripton's Radio Stores was situated in Birmingham Street, Oldbury and the shop has been rebuilt at the Black Country Museum. Two members of the club can remember the above shop, but can't recall going into the shop.

Radios were initially battery powered in the early days of radio and a large number of homes did not have have mains electricity. This problem was solved by having lead acid batteries or



accumulators, as they were known, delivered to one's house. Delivery and charging was done by shops like Gripton's and this would be an important source of income for Gripton's. Accumulator charging would also be available from some car repair garages. It should be noted that mains radios were available, but these were more expensive. A radio required two power sources for it's electrical supply. A low voltage supply and a high voltage supply. The low voltage was supplied by the afore mentioned accumulator which was a 2V supply and the high voltage of around 100V or more was supplied from a dry battery which was made up of multiple zinc-carbon batteries connected in series. The 100V battery would have a life of around 20 hours and listening was carefully planned to reduce running costs. The BBC was the main source of broadcasting for listeners and broadcasts would cover from 6:30-9:30 in the morning, 12:30-14:00 at lunch time and 17:00-22:00 in the evening and



# STARLITE

was shut down at other times. The two main frequencies provided by the BBC were the Home Service on medium wave and Droitwich on long wave.

In radio terms, World War 2 had a major impact for the British public's radio programmes. There would be no weather forecasts as this may help the enemy. Broadcasting would be shut down in the evenings, as this may help the enemy to navigate on their night-time bombing raids. The medium of Radio was a particularly important source of information during the World War 2 much more so than today. Newspapers were available, but radio was the main source of information for the general public. During the war years valves became difficult to obtain and crystal sets became a practical and cheap means of listening to radio. Crystal sets required no active components or batteries and one would have to listen to broadcasts on headphones or more often on a single headphone with a finger blocking the free ear as an aid to concentration!

Returning to the pictures: it is interesting to note some of the prices in the picture on the next page. Some radios are priced in pounds, shillings and pence and some radios are priced in guineas (one pound and one shilling). I can't remember why the price would change from £sd to Guineas but I think there was a measure of snobbery involved and the higher priced items would be in guineas and the lower priced items would be in pounds, shillings and pence. It can also be seen that there was considerable variation in the design of radio cabinets. Some items were free standing and other radio sets were designed to sit on top of a table or sideboard. Perhaps some of the Starlite readers can recognise some of the makes and models on display overleaf. All of the radios would work better if provided with a reasonable outdoor aerial and this would often be a long wire aerial, although the aerial would often end up being any wire that came to hand and could be arranged around the picture rails that most houses would have. Sets would, in most cases, be TRF (tuned radio frequency) sets which converted from RF to audio in a single step.

For more information please visit [www.bclm.co.uk](http://www.bclm.co.uk) or better still visit the Black Country Museum.

See next page for more pictures of the inside of the shop.

I wonder how long it will be before the television shop makes an appearance in the Black Country Museum. Locally there are few shops which just sell TVs. There are shops which sell say Panasonic or Sony branded items only, with Geoff Hill's being a possible exception. Nowadays TV purchases seem to be from the likes of Comet and PC World.



# STARLITE



Photographs by James French (G7HEZ)  
Surrounding text by Adrian Bryan (G0NLA)



# STARLITE

## GEOCACHING GOT THE BUG PART 3

Well I arrived safe and well in Austria armed with the Micro Cache and also some paperwork relating to Geocaching.com in English, German and Dutch these being the most popular visitors to the area, but this year there seemed to be an influx from Denmark but most of them speak English anyway. After settling in to my hotel and sorting out my skis and re acquainting myself with the delights of the BOBO bar most of the day had past and it was time to get changed for supper and then an early night much to do tomorrow.

The morning came and the sun was out too so looks like a good day was to be had, I set up the new High Definition video camera on my ski helmet, which was going to get a good testing this week.

I thought I would check out the location of the Cache Schönbühel, located at the top of the mountain. After several cable cars and lifts I reached the summit and used my Smartphone GPS to get a fix on the location of the hidden cache, this was going to be problematic as from the one direction it was claiming to be 9 m ahead of me, and according to my view that was an area of snow covered ground. I relocated to an alternative position and took another reading this time it said I was 6m past it in the other direction so none of the readings were tying up or even giving me a triangulation point. So I had to resort to the other method used in these circumstances, “ best guess method” the clue was to look out for skiers and ski-lift operators and that it was magnetic. Well I must have looked on, under, inside and around every bit of metal in that area and this cache was not going to be found by me today, or any other day it turns out. I must have looked every day to see if I could see foot prints going to an area I had not searched as while I was there I had e-mails from geocaching.com to say someone had found the cache during my stay. The cache can obviously be found, but not by me it seems so I must have not been looking in the correct location. So this will have to be next years search.

Anyway I had a cache to hide in Lofer myself and I had spoken to Christoph Sturm the owner of the ski school and hire shop and most importantly the bar for the après ski and he was very interested and happy to help with location of the cache. He did say that I could hide it inside the shop! But I don't think had fully grasped the concept that the cache needed to be able to be found at any time night or day. I did have a look around the outside but there was plenty of metal but none that could conceal the magnetic cache but then I hit me, I was standing on the perfect place.



The area had just been refurbished and a new cable car station had been built, also the Ski school and bar had been extended during this process and a galvanised staircase fitted from the bar level to the ground floor so I asked if the staircase belonged to them. It did not, it was the property of the Lofer Alm Cable car company, but this was a small village and Christoph new the owner personally and said he would speak to him and get it cleared.

So this was my safe hiding place I can't show you a picture of it in situ but the arrow below shows roughly where it is. The magnet holds it under the top tread of the half landing too high for anyone to see from below and hidden from the side but you can just get your fingers in between the treads



# STARLITE

and retrieve it and replace it. So it was filled with new log and my username Marconi2 signed as



planted and dated and the cache was hidden. You won't believe how long it took me to hide it as soon as I got to the landing of the stairs someone either came up or down so I had to resort to diversion tactics. As I got near the tread I "accidentally" slipped and dropped my hat , gloves, ski poles and some papers and leaflets from the ski hire shop, which went everywhere. While everyone was kindly

helping me to pick it all up I slipped the cache with a "clunk" of the magnet under the tread, mission accomplished! No one was any the wiser what had really happened and I thanked them in my best "Black Country German" and carried on to the top and enjoyed a steaming hot mug of Gluh Wein in celebration.

All I had to do now was to take several readings from the GPS while standing over the now hidden cache and to log its existence on the Geocaching.com web site so that it could be approved before it went live. 123BOBO was now active in Lofer Austria, or so I thought you will see next time why I was so wrong.....

Wayne M5LLT (aka Marconi2)

To be continued.

## WINDOWS XP TOWER PCs FOR SALE

**Second user PC's various specs all Windows XP ready to go. Towers only**

**£40 all enquiries to :-**

**M5LLT**



# STARLITE

## FROM OUR ROVING REPORTER

### Starlite Report March 2012

Although I was unable to attend the Wythall Rally I understand from other STARS members that Stourbridge was well represented at the rally. Over the past few years I have usually attended the rally with Ian [BBC Cameraman] G4IKP. Ian has been so busy that he decided not to visit the rally this year. Instead he invited me to his shack on the afternoon to get my Yaesu FT101 ZD on air. I have never operated from home because I do not have an earth lead in the shack in the bedroom. I listen on all bands using a VS1AA aerial which requires a suitable earth to tune against with the ATU. Ian has everything set up with a full size G5RV. Thanks to John, our treasurer I will be installing a half size G5RV that I have had lying around for some time and this should provide something to tune against. The first contact from Ian's was Denmark on 80 and others on 80 and 40 were much distant and prove the rig is working well. Whilst drafting out this report, I was en route back from the NEC. At one of the exhibitions I was attending, I came into contact with Russell G3VDX and, two weeks later I was to come in contact again at another exhibition at the NEC. Russell still operates on air, perhaps you may have come into contact with him? From his QTH at Barnt Green, Russell used to commentate at the sports at The Driotwich Worcester radio rallies.

I am always pleased and relieved when the AGM has passed. I always remember one AGM I was present at in 1990 the West Midlands; the Old Thyme Music Hall Society folded because one of the committee members decided to stand down there was no one to take his place. So that was the final curtain for that society! I am delighted to be on the committee having being a member of STARS now for 61 years. I have seen a number of committees over the years, this year it is 74 yrs since The Stourbridge and District Amateur Radio Society was founded so next year will be special.



[See photo of James Our President awarding the trophy to Andrew at 2012 AGM] As many of you know I have many interests, one of which it is attending organ concerts at Shrewsbury Buttermarket.



# STARLITE

If the organ concerts on the Wurlitzer should ever re-start again now the building has been purchased and £1,000,000 is being spent on refurbishment, this would be great news! The organ belongs to The Shropshire Theatre Organ Trust of which I am on the committee. I also attend classical organ concerts in Town Halls and Churches like St James Church on Pensnett High Street on Sunday 18th March. A friend from Hereford Warwick Wolsley FMRCO [Royal College of Organists I am always asked if I would mind turning the pages over [See Photo]



With the country looking forward to The Queens Diamond Jubilee I have been looking back through a STARS Newsletter of 1977 (The Queens Silver Jubilee Year) which was before the AGM of that year. To celebrate the event STARS, had permission to have a station in Mary Stevens Park. A special call sign ER6OI would be issued: in fact 20,000 Amateur Radio Stations on that special day would be allowed to have ER as the prefix letters and 10,000 visitors would be in the Mary Stevens Park on that day. That was the intention, however, it was changed because of the pressure on the Home Office to issue the special call sign. Instead GB4SJ was applied for. I will be doing some more research to see if that went ahead. Nick Hingley was the newsletter editor then who had just been issued with his G8 Licence – G8MFS. He had decided to step down as editor at the AGM. Tony Dewsbury, G4CLX was also on the committee. Tony used to have the Amateur Radio Shop in the Lower High St in Stourbridge My FT101 ZD was purchased from Tony by the previous owner the label is still on the back. Three new members had just recently joined the society thus bringing the total of new members for that year agm-agm to seven. Not bad for a year. The meetings at that time, were held at Longlands School, with informal meetings at Shubbery Cottage. I will have more from that news letter of 1977 in next month's report.

Now it is time to spare a thought for the family of a former student from Old Swinford Hospital who recently lost His life in Afghanistan Captain Rupert Bowers.

That's All For Now Have A Happy Easter



# STARLITE

By way of a postscript

I made reference to G8 three letter Licences. They were issued in the late 1960s for any one who had passed the RAE but they were only intended for operation on 70cm, to encourage that band to be used. In 1968 shortly after I had been notified I had passed the RAE [Dec 1967 at Matthew Bolton College Birmingham] it was announced the Licence could be used on 2m. I applied for the licence and was issued with G8BOP that arrived in May 1968. I was on Air that same day from a work colleagues flat in Wolverhampton 55 Neal House. It's all gone now and my colleague Derek, who later had call sign G8DKF became a silent key seven years ago. Currently, G8 three letters call signs can operate on all amateur bands something that my colleague was looking forward to and he was set up ready to go.

73s for now

Your Roving Reporter Malcolm G8BOP

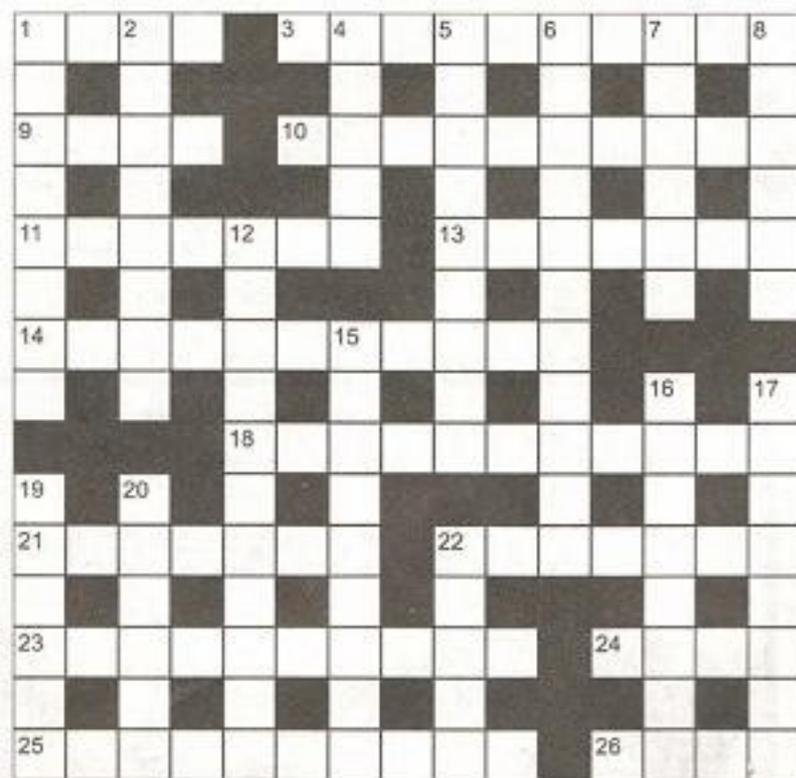


Above a picture taken during this year's AGM



# STARLITE

## STARLITE CRYPTIC & GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD 2



### Across

- 1 Catch sight of and resolve the Spey (4)  
 3 Seemingly, a word used by speakers to avoid committing to the truth (10)  
 9 A lass who lets the light in (4)  
 10 You don't want to star in this film (5,5)  
 11 Transistor material that sounds like a stupid trick (7)  
 13 This stone was Greek to some and hieroglyphics to others (7)  
 14 Father of the A-Bomb? (11)  
 18 Hams like their ducting here (11)  
 21 Smoked perique out and refurbish (2-5)  
 22 A batters turn to sort out sinning (7)  
 23 The wrong place to be financially (2,2,3,3)  
 24 Headless witches meeting where lasagne al forno is made (4)  
 25 It ceases to do this when the bubbles stop (10)  
 26 What became of the Ulster Police Force? (1,1,1,1)

### Down

- 1 Point and task cause and escape (8)  
 2 Less an 'L', maker or the OC71 transistor (8)  
 4 Mark the spot on the map (3,2)  
 5 Jeremy says "buy one of these, if you want to be on first name terms with your garage mechanic" (4,5)  
 6 What the 2m radio police do before they swoop on their next victim (9,2)  
 7 Up until now (2,4)  
 8 An ancient smallholder (6)  
 12 Did the club have one turn up on the 20<sup>th</sup> February? (11)  
 15 One of the earth's outermost regions (9)  
 16 Often has its head in the clouds in Scotland? (3,5)  
 17 OH lands capital (8)  
 19 Elbert resolved threefold? (6)  
 20 Outstanding wall decoration (6)  
 22 Appertaining to the ileum for confused Alice (5)



# STARLITE

## YOUR COMMITTEE

|                   |              |       |                |
|-------------------|--------------|-------|----------------|
| Hon. President    | JAMES        | G7HEZ |                |
| Vice President    | ADRIAN SIMMS | M3HBA |                |
| Hon. Secretary    | JOHN         | M1EJG | (01562) 700513 |
| Hon. Treasurer    | JOHN         | G8UAE |                |
| Committee Members | NICK         | G6DQN |                |
|                   | MARK         | G7EDZ |                |
|                   | MALCOLM      | G8BOP |                |
|                   | ANDREW       | M6APJ |                |
|                   | ADRIAN BRYAN | G0NLA |                |

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**It should be noted that the Shack will be open every Monday evening unless shown otherwise in the Calendar**

|           |          |                                     |
|-----------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| April     | Mon 2nd  | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 9th  | Bank Holiday                        |
|           | Mon 16th | Talk on the Titanic - Peter Smith   |
|           | Mon 23rd | Committee Meeting                   |
| May       | Mon 30th | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 7th  | Bank Holiday                        |
|           | Mon 14th | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 21st | T.B.A                               |
| June      | Mon 28th | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 4th  | Bank Holiday                        |
|           | Mon 11th | T.B.A                               |
|           | Mon 18th | BAR-B-Q Sheepwalks                  |
| July      | Mon 25th | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 2nd  | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 9th  | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 16th | T.B.A                               |
|           | Mon 23rd | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
| August    | Mon 30th | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 6th  | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 13th | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 20th | T.B.A                               |
|           | Mon 27th | Bank Holiday                        |
| September | Mon 3rd  | Open Shack Night - On air or natter |
|           | Mon 10th |                                     |
|           | Mon 17th |                                     |

