



READING & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

# Reading & District Amateur Radio Club

## Annual General Meeting

### 8 pm Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2005

### Woodley Pavilion, Haddon Drive, Woodley.

#### Agenda

**Chairman opens the meeting**

**Apologies for absence**

**Adoption of Minutes of the 2004 AGM**

**Presentation of awards**

**Chairman's Report**

**Treasurer's Report**

**Election of new Committee members**

**Open forum discussion.**

**Close of meeting followed by cheese and wine.**

#### Chairman's Report

It is my pleasure to write the 2005 RADARC AGM Chairman's report after a very busy and enjoyable year. I could not have predicted just how much activity and variation there was going to be.

In 2004 the Club had around 50 members and we have 50 members this year plus 15 complimentary members who have passed the Foundation Course run by the Club. I regard this as a good sign at a time when the pressures on Amateur Radio are tending to make it a less well known interest. I refer to the fact that whilst there is less and less teaching of physics in schools, there are so many electronic interests available based on the PC, DVD, electronic games, music, (what's an Ipod!!) TV, voice over IP, instant messaging and of course the all pervading Cell phone. The irony is that a lot of this is now going "wireless" where, never the less, the user needs no knowledge of radio. Who on earth wants to string up bits of wire to try to talk to people all over the world when it's a doddle using Skype!! Of course those reading this know the answer, but so many young people do not know about radio communication, and have never seen real "Radio" in operation and don't know if it is an interest which appeals to them.

It has therefore been a great pleasure to see the efforts put in by Harry G3NGX, Simon G6ZTZ, Stewart M1XTN and others in running the Foundation Licence Course, (2 per year) now in its third year. In particular, making the effort to put on an HF Station which the candidates can operate and experience the difficulties and achievements of traditional communication by radio.

This brings me on to all the other events and activities which we as a Club have been involved in over the last year.

**Firstly the Club meetings.** Thanks to Chris, M1CYE, our retiring Secretary after 5 years of effort, we have had a full and interesting calendar, despite several last minute changes. I would specifically like to thank Colin G8BCO, for his talk on Bats (50KHz Band!) given at very short notice. And how can we forget James's Tesla Coil Club talk, demo and Barbeque at G8AKA's spacious establishment. We had 2 junk sales this year in order to reduce the amount at each sale. How wrong could we have been? We simply ended up with twice as much junk being sold! On the plus side, the Club made twice as much money so I guess we'll go on doing this. Please let us have more meetings ideas for 2006 as the new Club Secretary will appreciate some input. I would like to express special thanks to Graham, G3XYX for the very professional sound re-enforcement (PA to you and me) which he provides for each meeting, especially at the Junk Sales!!!

**Contests:-** Thanks to the organisation of Tom, G0VQR, RADARC has been thrust into the spot light by winning the QRP Section of HF Field Day last June. Tom personally collected the trophy at the HF Convention at Gatwick in October. Several others were involved in the effort and in particular thanks to, G4ELY, G0LHZ, G3XTT and M0DHO for supporting the CW contests. As usual Tom has been the drive behind Club entries including several other contests and this keeps RADARC in the listings in RadCom.

**The McMichael Rally:-** Looking at last year's Chairman's Report from Des, I can only repeat the thanks due to the many Club members who helped make this a most enjoyable and profitable event. I will, however, heap praise on to the Club Members who are on the Rally Committee and particularly Min, G0JMS who is the McMichael Rally Committee Chairman. We all owe a great deal to Min for this commitment. Also to Andy, M5ALG as bookings secretary and Denis, G4KWT for organising talk-in and sign posting. RADARC is a major player in this event and these members need all the support we can give.

**Club Visits:-** We had an evening visit to Martin Lynch & Sons on 28<sup>th</sup> April. This was very successful and the staff was very sociable and helpful and we certainly spent some money so I'm sure another evening visit in 2006 will be organised.

On Saturday, 12th November, I organised a visit to the Radar and Communications Museum at HMS Collingwood, at Fareham, the Royal Navy's main training base for engineering professions. This was attended by 12 members and we were given a conducted tour by Lt CMD Bill Legg where we saw the huge collection of old equipment.

**Other events:-** In April we helped with communication for the 45 mile **3 Towers Scout Hike** in the Berkshire Downs, west of Reading, which we have done for many years going back to the 1970's. The Comms. are organised by Peter Swynford, G0PUB, an ex RADARC member, with help from the Newbury and Bracknell Clubs. It is always a really good training exercise in radio traffic handling and is of great importance to the hike. We also helped with the **South Oxfordshire Christian Aid Walk** in early May and provided Comms. at the base station in Henley and at several checkpoints.

During the Summer, there was a lot of activity and hot air generated by Ofcom's consultation document proposals on the reforming of Amateur Radio Licensing which ranged from do nothing to, according to some interpretations, a totally licence free system. We were kept well informed by our local RSGB Rep, Dr Alison Johnson and she gave a very informative presentation at Newbury, hosted by the Newbury Club, in July. RADARC was represented by Robin and me. Several Club members made written submissions to Ofcom. We are optimistic that a new licensing system will result which is acceptable to all.

**Sale of Equipment:-** In one of the news letters this year I reported in detail about the exceptionally large number of equipment disposals the Club has been involved in over the last year so I will summarise as follows. We have cleared the shacks and sold all the equipment from:- Bill Wright, G8KJ, pre-1939 RADARC member, who died in December 2004. Sale of equipment for Club proceeds. The late Dr Tony Jackson, G3CDE of Guildford, Sale of equipment for Mrs Jackson (£1165) with a donation to RAIBC, and some items sold for the Club.

Mr Vernon Carswell, G4FNU, donated all his equipment to the Club for sale. This raised over £450 for the Club.

Denis Holloway, G3BBX asked the Club to sell his radio equipment with the proceeds going to the International Glaucoma Association. Well over £400 was raised.

Lastly, we got involved in the great "Reading University Cybernetics Dept. chuck out" We were given free range to remove as much as we wanted. The word soon spread around and a huge amount of stuff disappeared. Even so, quite a few items were subsequently sold for Club funds and a 2<sup>nd</sup> batch was sold at the last Junk sale.

All the above benefited from **the RADARC Web Site** where it was all advertised. Without this we would not have been able to dispose of so much so rapidly and efficiently. To this end we have yet again to thank Min, G0JMS who is the Web site keeper and editor. This year the Club has had considerable financial benefit from all these sales and more details appear in the Treasurer's report. The Web Site is one of the Clubs greatest assets and it is free to members to advertise items for sale, and to place articles, discussions etc.

Many other activities and interests could be mentioned. I think the Construction Contest proved this and thanks to all those who made this such a good Club meeting.

2006 will be RADARC's 72<sup>nd</sup> year and I cannot remember the Club being in better shape. In my humble opinion, the Club is well balanced, is involved in a wide range of activities and events. There is no pressure on members to do more than they wish, who may simply attend the meetings and drink beer and enjoy a chat with like minded people. We are all busy with many other commitments but in fact, the result is that many members are involved in and support many Club activities because they want to do this. This is greatly appreciated. The above is reflected by the activities mentioned above and the membership which has a good mix of backgrounds and age groups.

I will conclude by offering my thanks to the 2005 RADARC Committee members, Robin, Chris, Harry, Pete, Min and Tom, who have all worked very professionally to run the Club. I am very confident that 2006 will see RADARC involved in many more enjoyable events and activities. Let us not, however, become complacent. If we need to embrace new ideas, the committee wants to hear about them. Thanks to you all.

Regards  
**Vin G4JTR**

## Treasurers Report

December 2005

This year the club has maintained its financial strength, due partly to donations of equipment of considerable value and sold by Vin for the club, and partly because the membership has remained high compared with a few years ago. The McMichael Rally and Junk Auction continue to be a major support for our main commitments which comprise the cost of the meeting room and the insurance. With a real surplus we have been able to donate a £100 to the Air Ambulance, and we might consider a contribution to the Repeater Group and/or GB4FUN. The Foundation Licence work, masterminded by G3NGX is underwritten by the club, but this cost only a few pounds.

Fees remained at £12 for full membership, with a few at the reduced rate for students and retired members at £6, and those joining after June. Given the state of the funds, the fees will remain at the same level as they have for several years. Complimentary membership for under-16s are still issued, as full members, and RADARC Foundation passes are also on the books for a year as non-voting members as arranged by the change of constitution this year. The actual total of these is slightly vague, as I do not receive full addresses and email addresses for these. Regular membership is 51, including two under-16s and a life member. One (G3OUC) has joined late, but in view of his circumstances we have agreed that his membership stands for next year as well.

The books are balanced with a reasonable increase in funds of £857.21 Memberships totalled £480 and there was an income of £387 from the McMichael Rally, plus £110 from the club table. It is still the case that we will depend on the McMichael rally for future funding, although the spring junk sale brought in £178.05

Essential expenditure consisted of the rent for the tea room (this room) at £369.23 insurance at £254 and the RA licences for G3ULT and M0EEE, together with the RSGB affiliation totalling £72.50. Thus the club needs about £700 p.a. to exist.

The sale of equipment from various sources, but especially G3FNU totalled £600+, PIC boards at £60 and oddments coming to about £80. Tom's batteries came to £88 over the year.

This year the committee agreed to my request that accounts run from 31<sup>st</sup> October. This makes the checking and auditing possible before the AGM. The current account stood at £3,259.10, compared with £2,442.11 at the start of the year and the cash in hand is similar at £49.52 compared with £47.25. Building Society interest came to £37.45

Members are urged to join as soon as possible – we may know you as long-standing members, but if an accident occurred our insurers might take the view that you are not covered if you haven't paid up – and we all know that some of them will look for any cop-out. Once again please check your membership form for correct call sign (they do change!) and name and address especially your current email address which is prone to change more often. It is not necessary to fill another form in, if you check over the one you did last year and correct it if required. If you pay for two members by cheque, write BOTH call-signs on the back, please. Collect your card and make sure the treasurer or his stand-in have your call sign on the list – it's easy to miss one in the rush of a dozen or so wanting to pay.

<u>Balance brought forward (Nov 2004)</u>	<u>£4,544.61</u>
Cash-in-hand	£47.25
Lloyds TSB current account	£2,442.11
Nationwide building society	£2,055.25
<u>Balance carried forward (Nov 2005)</u>	<u>£5401.82</u>
Cash-in-hand	£49.52
Lloyds TSB current account	£3,259.10
Nationwide building society	£2,093.20
<u>Surplus</u>	<u>£857.21</u>

**Robin Caine, G4IWS**  
**Treasurer**  
**30<sup>th</sup> November 2005**

## Programme Secretary's Report 2005

After years of having my ears bashed by the committee about organising a summer BBQ event I finally got the opportunity. A golden opportunity presented to me by James G8XML and his partner Anne. My grateful thanks to them for their efforts and Trevor G8AKA and partner for the venue. It was a truly social evening that bought the club members together. Any one who went will never be short of a talking point; James having brought us closer with his excellent after dark show. The mixed smells of burning ozone and burning burgers etched on my mind, it was an event I am simply proud of.

18 club meetings for the second year running. I tried to line the presentations up in an orderly fashion only deviating from plan on a couple of occasions due to unavoidable 11<sup>th</sup> hour cancellations. I think the agenda was interesting and successful.

One of my favourite events is the Christen Aid Walk. This year I was posted as sweeper, a post traditionally reserved for chairman. I took my daughter for company she spent most of the 15 miles running circles around me, arriving and removing the signboards before I even reached there. I hope we get to support this event again next year as it is pleasant excuse to play radio.

Not strictly social events; the foundation courses and contests deserve a mention since as a club we come together again with a purpose. They both provide opportunities for socialising despite primarily having a serious side. The club provides us with many areas a single ham alone would not enjoy. I summarise by reporting another good year for the club.

**Chris Catt MICYE**

### Contest Report 2005

#### Reading Trophy Comes Back Home

For 7 years the Reading club has been trying to bring back home the Reading High Frequency National Field Day QRP Trophy. This year we managed to get Don G3XTT to join the Reading team. With Don's operating skills and propagation knowledge we found out where we had been going wrong over the past few years. The other operators were G0LHZ, M0DHO, M5ALG, G0VQR and I. The operating times in the QRP section is only for 12 hours out of the 24. Operating short skip on the low bands to UK and European portable stations with maximum effect is very important. (Portable stations are worth more points than fixed stations). 160 Meters is a very important as you get double points on this band. You also get double points on 10 Meters but at this stage of the Sunspot cycle, band conditions are not very good, although you can get some good openings to the UK and Europe when sporadic E is about. These openings normally do not last for long.

The club registered 3 stations this year (G3ULT/P, M0EEE/P and G0LHZ/P) which most of the time were running at the same time. David M0DHO was using M0EEE/P.

This created a lot more work as we had a mast for each station with 3 multi band antennas for 10 meters to 160 meters. The club finished:-

**1<sup>st</sup> G3ULT/P, 3<sup>rd</sup> M0EEE/P and 5<sup>th</sup> G0LHZ/P**

Congratulations to all the operators and a big thanks to all the helpers because without you we could not have done it. See you all next year.

#### SSB Field day

The club put on a station at Sonning farm for SSB field day. We had a good turn out for setting up and operating during the day and evening. It was a different story during the night. I was left on my own from midnight to 0930 Sunday morning. Next year if we put on another station I will be more organised and put a list together with 2-hour time slots and make sure it is filled for the 24 hours of the contest with names of operators. We are still awaiting the results.

#### AFS CW

This year the club started the contest season off with the AFS contests. The first leg was CW. I was unable to operate this year, so with only 2 operators Jim G0LHZ and Andy M5ALG. They did a sterling job representing the club. They were 57<sup>th</sup> out of 87 teams.

#### AFS SSB

The club had 4 operators enter the SSB contest. M0DHO, G3XTT, G0LHZ and G0VQR. David M0DHO made a fantastic 250 contacts in the 4 hours of the contest. The club came 14<sup>th</sup> out of 98 teams.

#### The Club Championships

The club championships were not so well supported this year by the members. In 2004 we were 15<sup>th</sup> out of 62 teams. In 2005 we were 35<sup>th</sup> out of 73 teams. Let's see if we can do better next year.

#### Club Call Contest

Only 3 club members took part this year. One problem with this contest is that it is on 160 Meters and not many Radio Amateurs have big enough gardens. I used the club call MX0EEE plus we had Jim G0LHZ and Ian G8NXJ.

That's it for this year. Let's hope we can repeat our performance in HFNFD next year.

See you in a contest soon

**Tom G0VQR**

## McMichael Rally 2005 Report – Dust Devil Sticks

This has been my second year as Chairman of the McMichael Rally Committee and another further successful year on the RADARC committee. With all the things going on at work and RADARC Website & the club committee this year time seems to have flown by and it's now time that we start thinking about Christmas and new committee for both Committee's. The club members this year have yet again supported the rally with their great efforts again during 2005 with the fantastic jobs of the MMR committee members Denis G4KWT doubling up on many tasks from a sign maker and provider of the talk-in station which he does so smoothly that I think he could do it with his eyes closed. Maureen & Andy M5ALG for the booking and organising of the special interest groups which have increased year after year, keeping the spirit of Amateur Radio alive.

The 2005 MMR Rally was a hot day following a very warm period and all went well after the normal early morning panic of "are the tables turning up"? "Can we get into the hall earlier than normal"? The extra organisation for the HF station and positioning of it away from the PA system went well and the laying out of the stalls and parking taken on by the other clubs in the MMR group caused no problem. Something new was a demonstration of McMichael Radios by Harry G3NGX which attracted a good number of people who said they still one at home or had one some time in the past. This may become a future exhibition with the interest shown.

During the rally annual prize draw it was disturbed by a Dust Devil which struck some of the stalls after building a whirlwind on the rugby pitch some distance away from the marshals tent and the first we heard was the cries and saw the items of polystyrene and lightweight goods going up in the air off the stalls. Minor damage was restricted to destroying several sunshades or the gazeboes of exhibitors, even knocking one of Harry's G3NGX displays of McMichael Radios to the ground. It was report that Harry and Vin G4JTN were seen holding on to the gazebo for dear life. Luckily no serious damage was done and only a few sunshades got tuned inside out and it was a surprise too us all.

The attendance was slightly down due to the hot weather but we had an increase in the special interest groups attended again with news ones enjoying their first time at MMR. The barbeque was cancelled due to the risk of the catering staff getting burnt (truly Barbequed on the outside) but all had plenty to eat and drink. I had many people come and say they were glad the MMR kept going, unlike many other rally events that had closed or failed in the past years. They added that the items on sale were good and of interest with some real god bargains to be found. The MMR committee found a new microphone for the Reading Rugby Club and presented it to them and we spotted the staff out buying bits later on for their club house.

A new event for 2005 was the HF station ran by Nick 2E1LOK under the supervision of Dave Honey M0DHO which attracted much interest and gave Nick experience in project managing the radio station. He used the club call MX0EEE and they made plenty of contacts on 20 & 40 M Bands. I hope this will be repeated again next year 16<sup>th</sup> July 2006 as we have been asked back by the Rugby club.

Denis G4KWT did his splendid job of supplying and setting up the "Talk in Station" for the rally assisted by all the helpers that sat in and gave the few lost travellers directions. Tom reliably chased around with the transport, tables and running the club boot sale stall with several club helpers doing their bit.

Graham G3XYX setup the sound system for the fields and internal rooms for all and I enjoyed being his apprentice for the day even if it was doing the fetching and carrying for him, but it went smoothly and really helped to get the prize draw people in when the time was due.

The essential club members and helpers pulled out all the stops again as they are always do. They are needed too get an event like this put together speedily and smoothly. The help just in the setting up, on the club table selling items, just clearing up or packing away at the end is great and essential as everybody contributed to the club funds with their support at the rally.

Thank you all from the MMR Chairman & committee.

The Website has been successful in 2005 selling items provided by members or silent key sales with members servicing and testing the items sold, bringing in further funds. The email and website still needs your notices, information and special interest items to keep the website interesting. It's our window to the world and brought in new members and foundation course enquiries from far and wide, so get thinking what you want to see on [www.radarc.org](http://www.radarc.org).

I can't believe that it's now another year past and I keep thinking what more can I do for the club which brings me pleasure, interest and friendship. See you all at the club dinner for a great night.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all RADARC Members

**Min Standen G0JMS**

## Foundation Courses Report

RADARC has organised two courses in 2005 with nine candidates overall, to add to those of 2004.

Our people have come from amazing distances and worked with great energy to get their ticket. We would have expected more Reading-based people to be interested, but some have preferred the single weekend grand-slam approach offered by Newbury.

The Reading course has run on a Friday/Saturday, two week gap, then Friday/Saturday pattern, which allows private revision after the major stint of instruction, leading up to the Examination on the second Saturday.

The club has seen fit to subsidise the expenses of the course, keeping the overall cost down to £25. However, we only manage this with generous gifts of time from all the Instructors, Vin, Robin, Chris, Simon, Stuart and Harry and the trouble-free use of the Scout Hut in Caversham. Several people have asked for the Intermediate Course, but we have not yet felt able to prepare this. We are, however prepared to offer help to self-taught candidates and to organise an examination venue for both the Intermediate and Advanced Exams.

Old Timers should note that Foundation Licensees have to conduct QSOs on VHF and HF as part of their training as well as getting to grips with Ohm's Law, UK Licence Law, Hertz, wavelengths and Repeaters. On the second day of the Course with a VHF station and an HF station, our candidates all suddenly come alive with the experience of talking over the air, supervised by an Instructor. You can just see them planning what to buy and how they are going to set up their own station.

### Dates for 2006

7th/8th and 21st/22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2006 and 6/7<sup>th</sup> and 20/21st October, 2006.

Who in your family ought to become a Radio Amateur?

The Course booklet, "Foundation Licence Now" is available from RADARC at £4, prior to the course. If you have the booklet, only £21 remains to pay. All the answers are in the book.

Harry Hogg - Exams Administrator, RADARC.

### The RADARC Bookstall.

Members will have been aware and taken advantage of large discounts offered on new RSGB books ordered through the Club. A one-third discount on the full, non-members price, if you get a bulk-order to RSGB. This means £20 for a RSGB 8th Edition Handbook, instead of £25.49 members price from HQ. (ARRL titles can be had for 15% discount.)

This year's best-sellers are Don Field's Operating Manual, The 2006 Yearbook and the RSGB 8th Edition Technical Handbook. All attract one third discount. I am currently taking orders for Peter Hart's Rig Review Handbook, covering nearly all the rigs you can buy and some you can't!

### Harry G3NGX

As we have a little space left on the last page, may I on behalf of the Committee wish all members and their families a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

### Pete G8FRC

