

# STARLITE

G6OI  
1938

*The Award Winning NewsLetter for Members of*  
**Stourbridge and District  
Amateur Radio Society**

G6SRS  
1938

incorporating

Old Swinford Hospital School Radio Club



Old Swinford  
Hospital

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# 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**

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**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)**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

List of Rallies on RSGB website at <http://rsgb.org/main/news/rallies/>

Kelvin has been busy at Bristol University and created a talk:

<http://www.slideshare.net/goodnight033/introductiontoamateurradioforoutsiders> or watch it

on youtube at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=BqBojKwgQFk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=BqBojKwgQFk)

The committee are proposing 2 rules changes at the AGM, formal notification will be issued in due course, but basically increasing the standard subs from £17 to £20. All other rates will remain as a fraction of the base rate. Also change in the joining fee from £1 to the cost of an admin fee involved with joining the club. This will basically be the cost of the CRB (DBS) check. (approx £7 at present). The current society rules can be found at <http://www.g6oi.org.uk/constitution.htm>

Congratulations to Wayne Mcroft who won this years constructors competition and Dr Bob who won the quiz with a score of 11 plus 1 bonus point (12). Many thanks for Geoff who agreed to be the judge and Peter who was quiz master. An enjoyable evening was had by all.

I have noticed that Wilkinsons have recently introduced a new range of pic n mix. Rather than



sweets its nuts and bolts and other associated hardware accessories. Cost is £1.99 for a small bag and £2.99 for a large bag, you can get hell of a lot into a large bag – trust me!

Have you returned your freeview box and spotted the impending start of a TV channel for Birmingham and the Black Country on freeview channel 8. Its called Big Centre TV – further info at <http://www.bigcentre.tv/>

Finally StARS Logo TShirts and Sweatshirts are now available to be ordered. Black Fruit of the loom T Shirt / Sweatshirt. Complete with white StARS logo, complete with your name and callsign.

T Shirt £9 each / Sweatshirt £13 each.

See separate order form, complete your size requirements and your name and callsign to appear adjacent to the StARS logo, then pass a cheque or cash to Hon Tres – John for the full amount.

# STARLITE

## NEW FEATURE:-

### Round Membership Robin Questions (answered this month by Adrian Starlite Editor)

#### 1 When and how did you first gain an interest in Amateur Radio?

My initial interest in amateur radio was triggered by the legalisation of CB radio back in 1981. Following being swamped by Italian CB stations and being unable to make contact with locals a half mile down the road, I decided that it may be worth making an effort to look at Amateur Radio. It is easy to run down CB, but one learns about aerials, T and K brackets, Rawl plugs, SWR, talking to other radio users, working mobile, parking up on hills to make more distant contacts, being able to recognise AM and SSB signals, over deviated FM signals and not to buy an echo mike (ever). If you wanted to get a class B licence you needed to pass the dreaded RAE (the Radio Amateurs Examination).

#### 2 What was taking your course and exam like?

I never took a formal course for the exam. One could read and learn from the RSGB publication – Amateur Radio Operating Manual and BR68. The AORM was 200+ pages and was like the Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced manuals all rolled into one. BR68 was 30+ pages and was about the band plans and rules surrounding the use of radio. I spent about an hour a day reading, learning and understanding and memorising both books. If I got stuck it was mainly on the electronics and I could ask people at work. On Saturday morning I spent a couple of hours doing dummy examination questions and swotting up where I got answers wrong. I gave myself three months from starting studying to taking the exam. The examination was at Dudley College, I had over-prepared and the exam was not difficult. After about nine months, I decided I ought to take the Morse exam as that was the only way to get on HF bands. I enrolled on a course at Dudley College and I think it took between four and five months and it was difficult. Only half of the original entrants on the course finished not because of poor tuition, but because it was hard. 95% of the course was receiving morse and only 5% was about sending CW. A work colleague had worked in Military Intelligence and part of his job was to copy Russian CW. He had a speed of over 30 w.p.m. and used to take down CW using a typewriter. He told me where my sending needed improving. I took the exam and passed first time with a sending speed 16 wpm receive speed 14 wpm, but I found it difficult.

#### 3 What has been your most interesting work job?

One Wednesday I was asked if I was prepared to work short term in Munich starting on Monday, the following week. The employer was a bank and the person I was filling in for had been fired. I was given a return plane ticket and £1000 in Deutschmarks as all transactions were in cash. I spoke no German, but this was no problem at work as almost everyone spoke good English and were friendly. The job itself was not particularly difficult and was fixing Oracle software problems and performance problems. I managed to have a look around Munich, but missed the October Fest which is held in September (because it is too cold in October). The job lasted a month and I returned back to my old job with a taste for German beer.

#### 4 Most memorable radio contact?

UB4JFW. My first HF contact using CW – 10 Watts - Mike from Yalta. It was the end result of lots and lots of practice. It was also interesting to be able to work the USA on 10 Watts using CW and contact with South America was easy at the time due to the sun spot cycle.

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## **5 Most frustrating electronic piece of equipment that you have ever owned or had to operate?**

I am not a fan of my Yaesu FT8900R. It covers 2 metres, 70 cms, 6 metres and 10 metres with 50 Watts output on all but 70 cms, which looks good on paper. It has 800 memory channels. If it were not possible to set it up with an Excel spreadsheet and a program by G4HFQ, I would have sold it ages ago. Technically the radio is very good, but the slim 68 page manual and the mass of obscure features the radio has in my opinion combine to make for a truly dreadful over all product. If the mobile phone is at one end of the scale as regards ease of use, the Yaseu FT8900R is at the other end of the scale and you could easily fit the distance from here to Pluto in between.

## **6 What other hobbies are you / have you been involved with?**

Electronics, computers, photography- take, develop and print, and cycling, weather permitting.

## **7 What has been your most memorable car you have owned /own?**

An Austin A30 which I bought jointly with my soon to be wife for £20. The oil light used to wink at us and we used to wink back at it. I had to drive it for 12 miles in second gear after the gearbox packed up. I think we had it for a couple of years and sold it for £15. My wife had already passed her driving test and I used the car to learn how to drive.

## **8 What event / activity / talk from your membership of Stars is most memorable?**

I enjoyed John Tracy's talk on IBM equipment as I had worked on most of this equipment.

## **9 Which member of Stars (past or present) has been most influential in your amateur radio life?**

This is a difficult one. One of the good aspects of belonging to Stars is the range of abilities the other club members have. This comes over in the hum of conversation at most club meetings. I doubt if there are many radio or computer related questions that you could not get an answer to on club nights.

## **10 What has been your most useful tool / piece of test equipment you own?**

A simple digital display multi-meter from Maplin Electronics which measures resistance, voltage, capacitance and continuity has to come first. This is followed by a bench drill which is handy for making aerials. It is tempting to think you can drill a hole at right angles to an aerial boom by hand, but you need a bench drill to do the job properly.

I nominate James to answer the above questions.

Nominee to answer question.

Nominee can then delete one question and replace with a question of their choice

Nominee to then nominate next person and pass on.....

Delete Question 6 and replace it with :-

6 What non-fiction do you read to relax?

# STARLITE

## FATHERS OF MODERN ELECTRONICS – AMPERE

### Historical Backdrop

You probably have trouble remembering dates in history. Here is an easy one to remember - seven, eight, nine or 1789 to be more precise which marks beginning of the French Revolution. France was bankrupt. Louis XVI had sided with America and declared war on Great Britain and left France in debt. To make matters worse there had been successive poor harvests followed by food shortages and an increase in the price of bread. To improve the country's finances Louis decided to raise taxes which was unpopular particularly amongst the middle class. It was against this background in July of 1789 that the mob invaded Bastille. Civil unrest spread to other parts of France and the various monarchies of Europe looked on in horror dreading that this should spread to their countries.



For the next ten years various factions vied for power and one of the earlier factions were the Jacobins. The main centre for the Jacobins was in Paris, but there were around 900 branches throughout France and their membership comprised leaders within their locality and could include merchants, tradesmen and skilled members of the workforce. The Jacobins were responsible for thousands of arrests, trials and execution by guillotine and the era was known as “The Terror”.

### André-Marie Ampère

Jean-Jacques Amperè was the father of André-Marie Amperè (henceforth Ampere). He was prosperous and had residences in Lyon (450 Km from Paris) and in the country. Prior to 1789, it was an age of philosophical awakening and Ampere's father decided that his son should not attend school and was partly schooled by his father at their house in the country. His father had a well stocked library and Ampere, who must have been academically gifted, taught himself from the library. At the age of 15 Ampere submitted a mathematical paper to the Academy in Lyon which was not accepted, but this served only to make him redouble his mathematics studies. Ampere's abilities were not limited to mathematics and he excelled in many subjects that caught his attention.

Prior to the Jacobins seizing power, Ampere's father was drawn into public service and served as a Justice of the Peace at a small town near to Lyon. When the Jacobins came into government, Ampere's father's views ran counter to Jacobin ideals and he was arrested and guillotined in 1793. It was not just the aristocracy that were rounded up during the purges. Criticism of the government was seen as counter-revolutionary and punishable by execution. So to put things into context, Ampere would have been 18 years old at the time of his father's execution. Not surprisingly Ampere was deeply affected by his father's death and he abandoned his studies for 18 months. Ampere next undertook a job as a teacher and this stable financial base him allowed him to marry and have a son by 1800.

Continued on next page

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## Accademic Life

By 1802 he was appointed Professor of Physics and Chemistry at the university in Bourg-en-Bresse which was distant from his wife in Lyon. During his time at Bourg he submitted a paper on Games Theory to the Paris Academy in 1803. Due to his wife's declining health he moved to Polumieux to be closer to his wife who sadly died in 1803. Ampere had a sad personal life and his subsequent marriage to his second wife, and problems in his children's, lives brought him further unhappiness. Despite these personal tragedies Ampere was able to concentrate on his scientific and mathematical studies. One could speculate that his academic activities were an escape from his unhappy personal life, who knows? Following the death of his wife Ampere moved to Paris and to a post at the École Polytechnique in Paris in 1803. It is incredible to think that his career advanced so quickly considering his lack of formal qualifications. One can only speculate that his abilities and personal presence must have singled him out as particularly gifted (at the age of 28). Other chroniclers of his life recall that such was his memory that he was able to recite entire texts he had read many years previously. All this was taking place against a backdrop of France fighting the Napoleonic wars which would continue until 1815 (the Battle of Waterloo).

Ampere was appointed to various posts at the Ecole Polytechnique until 1828 where his interests ranged across physics, chemistry, astronomy and metaphysics where he made major contributions across all these areas of science despite his post being mathematics. One of his contributions in the science of electricity occurred after reading a paper by the Danish scientist Ørsted in 1820 that noted the deflection of a magnetic needle when in proximity to a wire carrying an electric current.

Whilst still holding posts at the Ecole Polytechnique Ampere began to teach at the College de France in 1826 which gave Ampere the freedom to create courses to his own specification. In retrospect it was clearly a time of enormous advancement and learning for many of the sciences and mathematics.

Ampere has a strong Christian faith and during part of his life and for a short time he invited a student by the name Antoine-Frederic Ozman into his house. Ozman was one of the founding members of the Conference of Charity, known to Roman Catholics as the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. The Society is based on the life of Saint Vincent de Paul, a priest from the 1600's who dedicated his life to helping the poor. On his deathbed in 1836, Ampère ordered that an inscription be placed upon his tombstone "Tandem Felix" (Happy at Last).

Any errors or inaccuracies in the above text are mine.

Adrian (GONLA)

# STARLITE

## YOUR COMMITTEE

Hon. President	JAMES	G7HEZ	
Vice President	NICK	G6DQN	
Hon. Secretary	JOHN	M1EJG	(01562) 700513
Hon. Treasurer	JOHN	G8UAE	
Committee Members	MARK	G7EDZ	
	KEITH	M0HPY	
	SEAN	M3XMJ	
	PETER	M6ZXH	
	MALCOLM (Co-opted)	G8BOP	
	ADRIAN	G0NLA	

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

March	Mon 2nd	Pre AGM Committee Meeting
	Mon 16th	2015 AGM
April	Sat 11th	Roof Visit and Shack Work 10:00 am
	Mon 20th	Vintage Radios (Phil G4SPZ)
May	Mon 18th	Software Defined Radio on the cheap - Wayne
June	Mon 15th	Sheepwalks BBQ
July	Mon 20th	Tim 4x4 Response
August		No Main Meeting