

# THE SARC MAGAZINE

Issue 7 - October 1985

## From your Chairman

Few would argue with the proposition that Amateur Radio is a forward looking hobby - *State of the art, leading edge development, digital domain* - trip from the tongues of myriad radio buffs as though there were little to separate us from either NASA space scientists or the technocrats of modern industry. Perhaps we should feel a certain unease about such progress; after all, much of the *enabling hardware* has simply been provided for us by a colossally successful post-war Japanese economy and our destiny is, or so it might seem, tied more to the intricacies of international market forces than any truly human motivation. Ultimately, however, I believe the underlying strength of our hobby is bound up in that unquestionable pleasure we derive from being able to launch a feeble electromagnetic wave into the space that surrounds and separates us from the rest of our bewildering planet. And now we're back with Marconi as if the microprocessor had never been invented! *(Steve wrote this with a pen! - Ed.)*

Although indulging in the haphazard act of making a radio contact is in many ways a delightfully mysterious endeavour, the fellowship that results - whether it be local, national or international - is tangible enough.

I said at the AGM of our club on the 18 October, that I was determined to remain optimistic in the face of some very obvious problems. We do need to increase our membership quite considerably and this goal can only be achieved by providing much more in return for the annual fee of £10. Therefore it is important that a large number of club activities are planned in the next few months. This cannot be, nor should it be, a *one man job*. Every member, irrespective of whether they sit on the newly elected committee has an important role to play.

Amateur Radio is undeniably a great hobby, its relevance to so much that has occurred within the span of our own century, provides awesome testimony to this contention. So let's make the SARC a hyperactive club during 85/86!

Steve, G4BWE

SHIREHAMPTON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
Twylford House, Lower High Steet, Shirehampton, Bristol.

(Past) Chairman's piece

*(For various reasons, Dave was unable to present his final speech as 1984/85 SARC Chairman and it is therefore reproduced below).*

At these gatherings it is traditional for the outgoing chairman to utter a few words to review the previous year.

First the good news as they say - last winter we were able to maintain our tradition of arranging something at fortnightly intervals, with a variety of speakers and subjects. I was most impressed by the reservoir of knowledge amongst Club members who were able to speak on an amazing variety of subjects, not always amateur radio but always interesting. Next, we were able to enjoy two excellent Field Days and although we did not win anything, all concerned enjoyed themselves which is what counts. The Club also took part in an outdoor event at Blaise Castle as part of International Youth Year. There was also a successful minibus trip to the NEC. The usual skittles evening was also enjoyed by a sizeable throng. In the shack we have been able to start on the refurbishment of the aerials, now largely completed. The shack has been tidied up and a fair amount of junk thrown away. An ATU is being made which will save us a considerable sum of money. My thanks to all those who have worked in the shack during the year. Some of the work remains to be done but we are sometimes faced with the choice of having members volunteer to do this or that, with the delays that can be expected because people are doing things in their own time, or buying items off the shelf which we cannot really afford.

My thanks again to those who have devoted their energies to the running of SARC.

Now the bad news - the most noticeable thing has been the decline in membership and the decline in attendance on Fridays. This has been very disappointing when speakers have been arranged and the club programme has been on the notice board for all to see. I have read in RadCom that there seems to be a change in the pattern of membership nationally, in that fewer young people are coming into the hobby, perhaps more retired people are taking it up and the youngsters brought up in an electronic age find it uninteresting. Now that the cb boom has gone, that source of potential recruits has dwindled, I think many of those who became disillusioned with cb and turned to amateur radio, soon faded away from that scene as well (this is a personal opinion and not a club statement I hasten to add). Because of this your committee has shied away from booking outsiders to speak on a Friday night when it appeared that there could have been considerable embarrassment to all concerned if very few turned up. Perhaps the total number of active amateurs in Bristol is not enough to provide every club with an active membership. The fortunes of clubs rise and fall as first one becomes fashionable then another - I am sure that the Shire will rise again.

My thanks again to all those that have helped during the year and also not forgetting our friends in the Education Office.

Two last points - the Club rules allow the committee to elect extra members and I urge the next committee to co-opt a couple more, it can come in useful during the holiday periods to keep up a respectable turnout at meetings. For those of you who do not like being involved with committee membership, please keep in touch with the Club officers and make your views known, it is your club.

Dave, G4DPJ

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Twyford House, Lower High Street, Shirehampton, Bristol.

## Book review

Amateur Radio Software  
John Morris GM4ANB

Published by RSGB at £5.90  
Hardback 328 pages 9.75 by 6.75 inches

One's first impression, on leafing through this sizeable offering, is that the layout and text appearance leave something to be desired. Attractive it definitely is not and the drabness of presentation can be mainly ascribed to the fact that the entire book, so I'm informed, was composed on a standard BBC micro. Final typesetting then involved linking the BBC directly to the RSGB IBM processor - surely a feat worthy of Heath Robinson himself! Joking aside, this relatively cheap "in-house" production method has enabled the RSGB to achieve a commendably low cover price (£5.90 to members).

By far the greatest problem in preparing a book of this nature is that there are so many different types of home computer on the market, each with its own dialect of BASIC, constituting a kind of built-in incompatibility. GM4ANB has tackled this problem in a laudable fashion by presenting programs that use only the most common, and therefore fairly universal, BASIC commands. Where total compatibility is impossible (and this, unfortunately, is often the case) helpful tips are given concerning the modifications necessary to suit specific machines. Furthermore, customised listings are provided for particular machines where this is deemed appropriate. Altogether 97 programs are reproduced covering, amongst other applications, CW, RTTY (although there is only a description of the programming requirements for AMTOR), locators and satellites. There is nothing on SSTV and aside from the BASIC programs we have just a few examples of assembler listings.

The whole work is clearly written, with only a modicum of computerspeak. Nevertheless, the complete beginner cannot expect instant results and the painstaking procedure of typing-in each program has to be tackled in a patient, dedicated manner. But that's enough of the lecturing - GM4ANB (who writes the RadCom Computing feature) deserves much praise for this largely successful attempt to encapsulate so much in a single, unpretentious volume.

## Events

SARC is launching a very active programme for the forthcoming year. We intend to make every other Friday evening an *Activity Night* so that members will be able to look forward to a variety-packed schedule of lectures, demonstrations, films, videos and much more! Club visits have proved both popular and stimulating during previous years: remember our trips to HTV, Bristol Police, Lulsgate Airport and the West Drayton air traffic control centre? There must be many other places of interest just waiting for an invasion by SARC... Perhaps members would like to put their thinking caps on and produce some suggestions?

Needless to say, your new committee will work hard to make such ventures a reality but ordinary members really do have an important role to play. So if you can organise an activity or know of an organisation or individual willing to give a talk - please let us know post-haste!

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## Club Diary

- |             |                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 November  | Auction/Junk Sale                     |
| 8 November  | Chat evening                          |
| 15 November | Talk about CEBB<br>transmission lines |
| 22 November | Chat evening                          |
| 29 November | Flying instruction G3HKA              |
| 13 December | G4BWB tv spectacular                  |
| 20 December | Chat evening                          |

The next club beer & skittles evening will be held on Saturday January 11 1986 at the Royal Oak, Nailsea. Usual excellent buffet and raffle. Starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £3.00 each available from Bob, G4BWB.

Ron, G4STD

SHIREHAMPTON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Officers and Committee for 1985/86

Chairman	G4BWE	Steve Price
Secretary	G4GTD	Ron Ford
Treasurer	G4GAR	John Cook
Committee	G4DPJ	Dave Wear
	G4DQW	Pete England
	GB20E	Steve Trott
	G3HKA	Gary Booth

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Just a reminder that articles are always welcome for inclusion in SARC Magazine. It is hoped that the next issue will be out late Nov/early Dec.

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Twyford House, Lower High Street, Shirehampton, Bristol.