

**GM4RIV**

**GM3W**



# Club Magazine



**Autumn 2003**  
**Issue 14**

# Editorial

A new session, a new president and a new editor. John McCulloch MM1DWJ started the magazine, then Richard MM1BHO took over and now GM0FSZ is having a go.

As most of you already know Neil GM4LQS, our secretary, passed away very suddenly at the end of August. Neil had been with myself, Jim VNW and Ian NBG at the lighthouse weekend only ten days before. We had a great time sharing the facilities at the lighthouse, sleeping on the floor and sharing the cooking. We had shared jokes, wine and beer, and there had been no hint of anything amiss with Neil. So as you can imagine when I got the 'phone call from Richard at 7.30am I was totally shocked.

Graham Mercer, GM4BES, has been in hospital recently for a very serious operation. He is now back home but it will be a long time before he is fully recovered. Again this was very sudden and none of us knew about it for a week or so. His emails are very cheery, but don't ask to see the pictures.

On a cheerier note, Ellis has taken over as secretary and Bill Couse is our new president. Hopefully you will enjoy this issue of the magazine, but don't forget, as always I need YOU to give me articles, photos or news for YOUR magazine.

73 Eric GM0FSZ

# Silent key



Neil Macdonald GM4LQS

Neil was a founder member of the club and served for many years as secretary before leaving to concentrate on his family and his work. He came back to the fold only four years ago and took up his previous post as secretary. He enjoyed organising events and taking part in all the activities of the club. At the last AGM he was made an honorary member in recognition of his services to the Club.

# CLUB AGM 2003

This years AGM was better attended than last years with twenty four people against last years nineteen. The outgoing president, Richard MM1BHO, chaired the meeting and read out the minutes of the last AGM. In the absence of Ellis, GM0HPK, the temporary secretary, Robin, GM3ZYE, took the minutes of the meeting.

A copy of the minutes and the presidents and treasurers reports have been sent to all members with email facilities, for those without email a copy is posted on the club notice board in the shack.

A list of all the committee is on the inside back cover of the magazine along with other club contact details.



**New president Bill Couse, MM0ABQ and retiring president Richard, MM1BHO**



**Retiring president MM1BHO making his last report**



**A very surprised Richard receiving the Hilda Kelday trophy  
from Gerry, GM4BAE**

# Lotto cash for local amateur radio group



Members of Wigtownshire Amateur Radio Club receive their Lottery fund cheque last week from MSP Alasdair Morgan (second from left).

WIGTOWNSHIRE Amateur Radio Club have tuned into a Lottery cash boost of almost £5000.

South of Scotland MSP Alasdair Morgan handed over a Lottery 'Awards for All' grant certificate to the radio club at a presentation ceremony in the Aird Building at Stranraer Academy last Thursday.

The club, which is dedicated to promoting interest in the development of amateur radio broadcasting, received a grant of £4521 from Awards for All.

The money will enable the Club to organise radio communication courses for interested members of the community. In addition, they will be purchasing a laptop computer, plus accessories, as well as a digital projector and tripod screen.

Handing over the cheque, Mr Morgan said "I

was delighted to be invited to make the presentation to the Radio Club. I know they will put this grant to good use, through the purchase of essential equipment.

"In addition, this equipment will be made available to other community groups in the area, which means that it will benefit various local organisations in addition to the Amateur Radio Club."

Sadly, the presentation was tinged with sadness, as Neil Macdonald, the Secretary of Wigtownshire Amateur Radio Club, died within the last week.

Mr Morgan added "Mr Macdonald was one of the stalwarts of the club and he will be sadly missed both by his family and the many members of the club."

# The long awaited goodies

As you can see from the facing picture that all of the equipment hadn't arrived in time for the presentation. However it did arrive on the following Saturday and after some arm twisting by MM1BHO some compensation was extracted from the computer supplier.



## CORSEWALL WEEKEND

(by Jim GM3VNW)

A fine fair Friday morning greeted the gang, Eric FSZ, Ian NBG and Jim VNW as they arrived on site. Gavin MOU and XYL Angela turned up to lend both moral and physical support, nice to see Gavin looking so well after his recent illness. Viagra and the two yagis were installed although not before FSZ had bounced his car off an undetected boulder in the long grass. Should have had the radar switched on! Neil LQS and Andy DFS arrived and helped to finish setting up the station. Equipment used comprised the two HF rigs TS850 and TS570 while the antennas were the three element yagi for 20, 15 and 10 as well as our new acquisition the three element yagi for 18 and 24. We also had Eric's Hokushin vertical for the LF bands ground mounted. We tried out a delta loop for 15 and briefly a Top Band dipole. Log-EQF was used for logging, keying was by both straight and Iambic keys. By Friday evening we were QRV with the club call GS4RIV which changed to GB2LCP at midnight on Saturday. Lucky us, weather and propagation conditions were both FB with a quiet magfield, low A and K indices and a 120 plus flux. Neil, Eric, Ian and Jim were busy on air until about 3am clock time before a retreat to the lighthouse, a late supper and some shuteye, which latter was somewhat delayed while Eric performed heroics pumping air into airbeds which seemed possessed of a frustratingly high impedance to inflation. Saturday dawned bright and warm so having breakfasted and the older members having downed their pills, it was back to work. Jimmy LPT, Rod NGR, Jim CNF and Gillian FQI were doing their bit and all the way from the USofA Leo was there to stir up things on SSB. Frank JKS armed with his own secret weapons for CW appeared. At that very instant Neil and Jim were in QSO with a G4 operating in West Malaysia. The G4 turned out to be an acquaintance of Frank—a small world indeed. Frank was let loose on 20m cw and proceeded to give us an exhibition of very high speed contest type operating. It made one GM3 suddenly realise how slow his CW speed had become with advancing years. A vow was silently made to get some practice in at something a wee bit over his usual 12wpm! Having boosted our QSO total Frank duly departed to the Barrhill highlands. We carried on for a few more hours into the wee sma' oors. Sunday saw more visitors. Jimmy LPT, like Eric, forgot his radar and rammed an innocent obstacle, luckily without too much damage. By late Sunday evening the Girvan trio were on their own, so the gear was fired up for a last fling and some CW just a bit over 12wpm was used to boost the total number of contacts. Technically and socially the weekend went very well with no gremlins and only a little interference between the sets. We were very careful about the frequencies we used. Eric's vertical performed well and both yagis were very effective. All continents except Antarctica were worked. Total QSOs numbered over 700 and the best DX was a VK8 in Humpty Hoo, really that was the QTH, near Darwin in Northern Australia. From the rotator bearings we could tell it was Long Path, well done Viagra. A worthwhile effort thoroughly enjoyed by all and it is good to recall how much Neil and Effie contributed and how much enjoyment Neil derived from the weekend.

The new banner, the two beams and the vertical.



Working by the light of a posh lamp.

Frank demonstrating high speed morse.



# YOUR SHACK

Get your digital camera out. In each magazine I'll put in pictures of YOUR shack. So get snapping and let everyone see where you are 'coming' from.



This is the shack of Dave MM0KBT. It looks as if his wife has just been in tidying it. I have **NEVER** seen anyone's shack as tidy as this, so Davy's shack gets "poser of this issue" award.

Now this is a REAL shack, or a part of MY shack. To the left there's more and to the right my workbench with lots of projects which are in "mañana" mode. A shambolic shack indeed, but cosy.



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# REFLECTIONS OF AN OT

(by Jim GM3VNW)

Our hobby has changed, is changing and no doubt will continue to change. Sometimes we OTs will "girn" It's no' the same. So? water which never flows becomes stagnant.

Time was to get on the air we had to write several foolscap pages of essay type answers, draw circuits, and describe the function of every component in a radio stage. Then a 12wpm morse test at one of the Coastal Radio stations where the chief Radio Officer would really put you through it and five dots meant five NOT H. Still the changes came, multi choice RAE, B Licences , 5wpm Morse tests, the Novice and Foundation Licences all arrived with even more OT mutterings. Equipment changed as well. All gear used to be either ex service or home brewed, separate receivers and transmitters were the norm and of course valves, tubes or bottles did all the work. Tuning was by the Load and Dip method and SWR meters had not even been heard of. My own most traumatic experience came with the introduction of transistors which we were told worked by the movement of holes. Just how do you move a hole? By then I was earning my daily bread teaching English, History and Geography so my pride would not let me surrender and before long words like base, emitter and collector were dropping off my tongue just as anode, grids and cathodes. SSB was another landmark, new wavebands, computers, PSK31 and Echolink followed. AND did you know that there are buttons on my new set which all by themselves send CQ. I would like to think that I have got used to it all and though a few lingering doubts remain I am sure that on balance our hobby has benefited, especially from the influx of new blood from the Foundation courses. I do wonder how many MM3 stations will progress to the full RAE and of course we still await the new exam curriculum. An amateur is someone who does something because he loves to do it and my hope is the hobby will go on being loved and like Spock will live long and prosper. Finally, it matters not what type of licence you hold , which mode you use, just so long as you get as much as I have from the hobby and make as many good friends , then all will be well.

73, GL, and as we are wont to say in Girvan, Tick Tick.



Jim GM3VNW with his new rig, a Kenwood TS2000



What's this? Old faithful being consigned to the bin!!  
NO! Only joking. It's in the shack on 40M

1	GM0FSZ	ERIC	GIRVAN	21	MM0AIW	BERT	STRANRAER
2	GM0NBG	IAN	GIRVAN	22	MM0CNF	JIM	DRONGAN AYR
3	GM0HPK	ELLIS	LOCHANS	23	MM0DFS	ANDY	NEWTON STEWART
4	GM0HPL	TOMMY	STRANRAER	24	MM0KBT	DAVY	KIRKCUDBRIGHT
5	GM0JMO	JOHN	GIRVAN	25	MM0LEO	LEO	PORTPATRICK
6	GM0UDY	ANDY	GIRVAN	26	MM1BHO	RICHARD	KIRKPATRICK DURHAM
7	GM0URZ	FRAZER	NEWTON SREWART	27	MM0GOF	JOHN	GATEHOUSE OF FLEET
8	GM0SWX	JOHN	STRANRAER	28	MM1DWU	GEORGE	GIRVAN
9	MM0NGR	ROD	STRANRAER	29	MM1ECE	STEWART	GIRVAN
10	GM3JKS	FRANK	BARRHILL	30	MM3BOJ	DAVID	MAYBOLE
11	GM3VNW	JIM	GIRVAN	31	MM3FQI	GILLIAN	DRONGAN AYR
12	GM3ZYE	ROBIN	NEWTON STEWART	32	MM3GIR	KEVIN	GIRVAN
13	GM4BAE	GERRY	STRANRAER	33	MM3KMR	KIM	DALBEATIE
14	GM4BES	GRAHAM	PORTPATRICK	34	MM3NCM	NEIL	GIRVAN
15	GM4FGD	ARCHIE	LOANHEAD EDINBURGH	35	MM3SCO	ROBIN	CROCKET- FORD
16	GM4GDF	JOHN	WIGTOWN	36	MM3SLD	JOHN	KIRKCUDBRIGHT
17	GM4LPT	JIM	STRANRAER	37	MM3UDY	DAVY	GIRVAN
18	GM4YYF	STUART	PORTPATRICK	38	MM5WIG	IAN	WIGTOWN
19	GM4ZTO	JOHN	BALLANTRAE	39	SWL	ROBIN	STRANRAER
20	MM0ABQ	BILL	WIGTOWN	40			

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# Don't forget!!

18th October  
JayCee's open day

26th October  
Galashiels rally

Edited by  
**GM0FSZ**