

TDARS

Newsletter

Issue 223

May 2007

www.TDARS.org

Programme

www.telfordhamfest.co.uk

May 23 Am. Radio Software. Bring your favourite on a memory stick or Laptop.

May 26 (Saturday) Visit to Jodrell Bank Telescope.(Cheshire) Families welcome
Share cars or meet at entrance mid-day. BBQ afterwards at Bob's QTH.

May 30 Portable in the Park (Telford)- come & see how easy portable can be.
Free parking at rear of Focus Do-It-All, Town Park -around 8pm.

June 6 HF On The Air / Open Evening / Committee

June 10 (Sunday) Elvaston Castle Radio Rally—the biggest in the Midlands.

June 13 Meeting Mid Cheshire ARS Over the Airwaves (provis.)

June 16-17 Museums on the Air weekend. GB4TT from Enginuity, Coalbrookdale.
Details Simon G0UFE

June 20 Bar-B-Q: Club HQ—outside, hopefully

June 27 VHF NFD Final Plans.

July 4 Usual First-in-the-Month—OTA, Open Evening & Committee.

July 7-8 (weekend) VHF NFD from the Long Mynd. IO82NN. Meet up 10 am > on site.

July 11 Purchases Night. What do we need for the Society ?

July 18 Spaceguard Centre Visit. Astronomical observatory nr Knighton, mid Wales. Watching for NEO (Near Earth Objects). 7.30pm. £6 admission. See details Pg.3

July 19-23 (Thu-Mon) Expedition to Isle of Arran, Scotland. Contact G3UKV for details.

July 25 Direction Finding. How to do it. Talk/demo by Dave G4EIX

August 1 HF OTA and Open House + Committee Meeting

August 8 Local Area Walking 2m. "FoxHunt" (direction finding 2 metres)

G3ZME

Telford & District Amateur Radio Society. Founded 1969
Dawley bank Community Centre, Bank Road, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire. TF4 2AZ

G6ZME

Editorial

Welcome to the new style TDARS Newsletter, and goodbye to the old one, which was created in April 1992. That design was created by Bob MORJS who has a way with good designs. Actually, I thought it was good for at least another 15 years, but I'm reliably informed that its style is a bit 'old hat' (like the expression...). I think Bob's latest creation on the front page is very clean and informative, and my only reservation is that it uses rather more pixels. In fact the new style, when compressed with my .pdf writer, takes just over 100 Kbytes before I type into it. If you didn't know, the Internet version of this NewsLetter version goes out each time on the TDARS reflector, and has done for more than a year now. However, Yahoo Groups who provide the service (free), have a limit per upload of 1MB. So, if the Newsletter gets too graphic, it will be necessary to send future editions in two separate files, which I don't think is ideal, certainly not on a regular basis.

The other improvement to the Newsletter takes the form of a new printer, an Oki duplex LED colour laser model 5600. It may have cost quite a few shillings, but it means that all future copies will be in full colour. Setting aside the purchase cost (didn't feel a thing...), the cost per copy, incl paper, is under 3p per side, whereas we have paid 5p per side for many years. Not only is it full colour, but it auto-reduces the A4 copy I prefer to use with Publisher, and churns out about 20 copies per minute, printed both sides. The quality is excellent. The only tricky bit is getting the pages in the right order, but that hasn't always been perfect even with the old method of photo-copying/reducing in mono. Furthermore, the printer is Club Property, and therefore is available for all TDARS Publicity purposes. For example, it can do long banners (if suitable paper is provided), or handouts at events like "Museums on the Air" (June 16-17 this year down at the Enginuity Centre, Coalbrookdale).

There is just one other thought that orbits my grey matter. We do not restrict access either to the TDARS Reflector, or the TDARS WebPages, so excellently presented by Don M0FHM, which archives the Newsletter each edition. We haven't, as yet, introduced 'Members Only' access to either—although obviously we could. I do wonder sometimes just how many "freeloaders" (or perhaps free 'downloaders') we carry, who have not paid their subs for a year or more. Probably a good moment to remind lapsed members that Subscriptions were due wef the AGM at the end of March. As ever, Jim's your man.

QTC? News & Information

After a meeting with Richard Bifield at Telford & Wrekin HQ, two **Special Event stations** have been booked by TDARS to commemorate the **250th year since the birth of Thomas Telford in 1757**. The first has been arranged to coincide with Museums on the Air over the June 16-17 weekend. This year permission has been obtained from the Ironbridge Gorge Trust to operate from the grounds of Enigunity in Coalbrookdale.

The second is due to take place at Montford Bridge near Shrewsbury, on August 9th. (Thursday), which is the precise date of Telford's birth, and the site of his first bridge project in Shropshire. The callsign at both events will be **GB4TT**, since OFCOM (which now issues Special Event callsigns) has turned down our request for GB250TT. A large number of leaflets about Thomas Telford have been ordered, as well as postcards suitable for QSL cards, plus mini-stickers which members can place on their own QSL cards: All free-of-charge. An interesting linked website is www.visitironbridge.co.uk. Simon G0UFE is co-ordinating the Museums event, and Martyn G3UKV the Montford Bridge occasion.



Bob, M0RJS, urgently needs to know who is going on the **visit to Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope**, arranged for **Saturday 26 May**, starting at midday. It's open to families and friends, with a £1 admission charge. There is a sign-up list at the Club, but so long as Bob knows who's coming, that's fine, since he has generously offered to provide a B-B-Q at his home (Mow Cop) afterwards. Jackie obviously needs to know numbers—so please let Bob know if you're going to his QTH.

Another visit is booked for **July 18th** —to the **Spaceguard Centre near Knighton** in Powys. The tour of this fascinating place starts at 7:30pm, as it involves a longish journey for most TDARS Members. For SatNavvers, it's postcode is LD7 1LW. Head down the A49, R/H turn to Knighton (A4113) just before Ludlow, and it's L/H turn down Llanshay Lane, shortly before Knighton. Spaceguard sign by cattle grid at top of Llanshay Lane. Please sign-up on list on Club Noticeboard ASAP. Entry £6. The tour lasts nearly 2 hours, and features several telescopes (one is 13" apochromatic refractor), camera obscura, planetarium, orrery and a suite of sensors. The purpose of the centre is to monitor Near Earth Objects (NEOs), such as Asteroids. They work closely as an 'information node' to various organisations, including CAIN, NASA, ESA and BNSC. They also monitor real-time satellite images and seismographic data. WebSite <http://www.spaceguarduk.com>

Under-a-Fiver Construction Competition (9 entries) won by Richard G0VXG and his superb outboard BFO unit for receivers (Newsletter 221), 2nd was Dave G4EIX's GPS antenna, and third was Tony M0TAW's "Uni-Counter" device.

Main Construction Competition (just 4 entries) won by Tony's M0TAW Power Supply, second Dave G8VZT's GPS frequency lock unit, and third Martyn G3UKV's 5.7 GHz Transverter.

Mike's Piece

Yet another domestic radio came for fixing the other day with the same old problem. The volume control was scratchy; i.e. noisy when rotated. For those of you who are younger in the tooth, I pass on to you the details of the operation I call doing a 'volume-control-ectomy'.

But first you have to get the back off, which often easier said than done. Someone had to assemble the case so it should come apart again. In this case there were no screw-holes visible. Mmmm.

However, there were four small round impressions in the plastic back. Tapping a small screwdriver blade into these and turning them, revealed them to be a plugs bunging up holes and when removed, revealed the screw-heads. I was winning. But no, the back would not come off. Where else might a screw be hidden? Ah, remove the batteries. Is there a screw underneath? No! What then?

Many makers stick a nice label over the bottom of the battery compartment showing the correct way round the batteries should go. A prod with screwdriver reveals another screw lurking beneath. Super. No; the back was still stuck fast.

Ah, maybe the knobs all have to come off before anything will happen no go. Look underneath and there's some nice looking rubber feet screwed on. Take them all out, just in case.....still no go. Pull up the carrying handle and lo and behold another plastic plug in a hole concealing yet another screw. Now the back is beginning to show signs of separating from the front. This maker was cunning. The back had been sprung into the front of the case as well, because when I squeezed the top and bottom of the back, it came off! Phew!

Oh dear, the tiny volume control is mounted directly on and under the board so it must come out. Find all the fixing screws first This board has little arrows marked on it to show you which ones to remove. Nice. Oh, the telescopic aerial is connected to the board with a soldered lead. Out with the iron and off it comes. Out comes the board and we can now get to the nub of the matter: fixing the pot. Switch cleaning fluid comes in pressurised cans, with a nice plastic nozzle, so you can get the contents to go where you want it. But no; can't get in as the carbon resistance track and wiper arm are fully enclosed. This where the 'ectomy' comes in. Out with the hand drill with a tiny bit and *carefully* drill a small hole in the side of the case of the pot and then squirt away with a good dose, giving the spindle a turn or two to dislodge any loose, worn off, carbon particles. Put the batteries back and give it a whirl. Usually the scratchiness has gone and you can re-assemble the thing.

You did keep all the different screws in a suitable container didn't you? An egg box is a good thing to have around in the shack for such occasions. You did make a note of the different lengths of some of the screws and where they went? A diagram helps here. You did remember to solder the aerial lead back on to the board in the proper place? Make a note on the diagram that you made. Good ideas.

Contin>

Used Equipment Sale

The serious business of raising a few quid. Best quip of the night....??.... Jim flogging PC of unknown vintage...gives description of contents of PC tower Someone in audience remarked that the hard drive was down at the police station.

