



Wartime in the Vale

Badsey 21st – 22nd June 2014

Once again, VMARS members came together to put on a great display of ex-military signals vehicles for the annual MVT show at Ashdown Farm, Badsey Nr Evesham, known to MVT as Ashdown Camp. This year saw several new attractions, notably an American Buffalo armoured personnel carrier for waterborne use powered by a five cylinder radial aircraft engine and scoops on its tracks, plus two 50-calibre machine guns for armament, as used by the Yanks in the Pacific. I gather its current value is around £300,000.

As was the situation last year VMARS had an area, to the east of the showground, that backed onto a very useful fence line which enabled several masts and hitching poles to be erected to take the long wires and dipole antennas that were on display and connected to radios such as the C11/R210 combination in Ron's K9 Truck c. 1954.

Joining Ron MOWSN was National Serviceman and fellow Royal Signals member Bob Riley G4NQZ, pictured on the left with Ron. Bob, who hails from Nuneaton, was based in the Middle East and at other classified locations and, believe it or not, signed on to be a regular! Ron did his stint of National Service mainly out in Famagusta, Cyprus in the late 1950s. He completed his last few months at Cobbetts Hill, a 10 kW transmitter station near Guildford.



Peter M0XPB and Pauline Bannon were displaying their splendid 1986 Defender, complete with all things Clansman including BID simulator units for the VRC 353's that were being used in the vehicle; a low level dipole for NVIS was also the order of the day. Alongside his Land Rover was a display of other Clansman manpacks and associated equipment. For most of the time, Peter had a steady stream of interested visitors.





Stephen M0MOG and his wife Madeline Williams, put on an impressive Cold War display comprising his Unimog 404-HF-RTTY re-broadcast station (Rohde & Schwarz/ Siemens equipped) and the VW181-VHF radio car (SEM25-equipped)

David Waters 2E0NBC brought along the other K9 Truck, this time a radio repair truck c. 1952. Dave has it fully kitted out with C11/R210 and Clansman RT 321 and 353, not to mention the 322 heavy-duty setup for HF.

Despite being preoccupied with Air Training Corps duties, Peter Coates M1FHI came to join us. They had an exercise that weekend on 60 m and elsewhere and Pete worked several cadet stations the length and breadth of the Country, some being control stations whose voices I recognised having worked them on regular 60 m nets. Pete drives a 1986 110 FFR, with two 353's and a 321 with SURF and TURF, and with a new addition of a 27 foot Clarke mast mounted in the centre of the wagon, through a custom made hole in the roof. I hope that rain seal is good.

It was very nice to see a steady stream of VMARS members visit our display and, after a very busy Saturday, ten of us sat to down

to a rather nice barbecue provided, by Anne M3TBI and Jannette, everyone agreeing that it was good to chat and enjoy the company.

The organisers of the Wartime in the Vale show go to extraordinary lengths to put together a well-run and balanced event for all concerned, MVT members and public alike and, as far as I am aware, everyone was well-satisfied. The organisers even went the 'extra mile' by spending MVT members money in organising the flying displays to which we were treated over the weekend; a Hurricane and Spitfire combination, a Gloster Meteor, and a Taylorcraft Auster and, on Sunday, an unexpected 8 minute display by a Vampire (did the pilot come to the wrong venue I wonder?). All told a really enjoyable weekend, well worth it as you can imagine.

Like many others, I am looking forward to the next WITV show and would encourage those with ex-military signals vehicles to come join us. We share technical knowledge, operating skills, impress the public and have a thoroughly good time. See you there.

