

## Quicksilver and G3SIG (F005)

How it all started

*by Dave B. Humphries - G4ETG - RSARS 963*



I arrived in Maidstone in 1979 fresh from an 'Ace High' Course in Latina Italy, the home of the NATO Communications School, on a standard Royal Signals 3-year posting. I had been licensed since 1974 and with the callsign G4ETG since 1976. After settling in on the station and in my quarter in West Malling I discovered a convenient oak tree which was brought into service as a support for a trapped dipole, and with an FT200 plus home-brewed linear enabled me to become very active on 80 metres including acting as Net Controller on Tuesdays and Thursdays for RSARS. There is an old saying "*Never volunteer*" modified to the extent that "*if the person looking for the volunteer is a Quartermaster, then Beware!*" I should have had more sense, I'd been in Royal Signals for 11 years, but when a certain Major (QM) R.A. Webb (maybe better famed as Ray - G3EKL) suggested I might like this job that was going, based in Catterick, I (on left of picture) said "Yes"

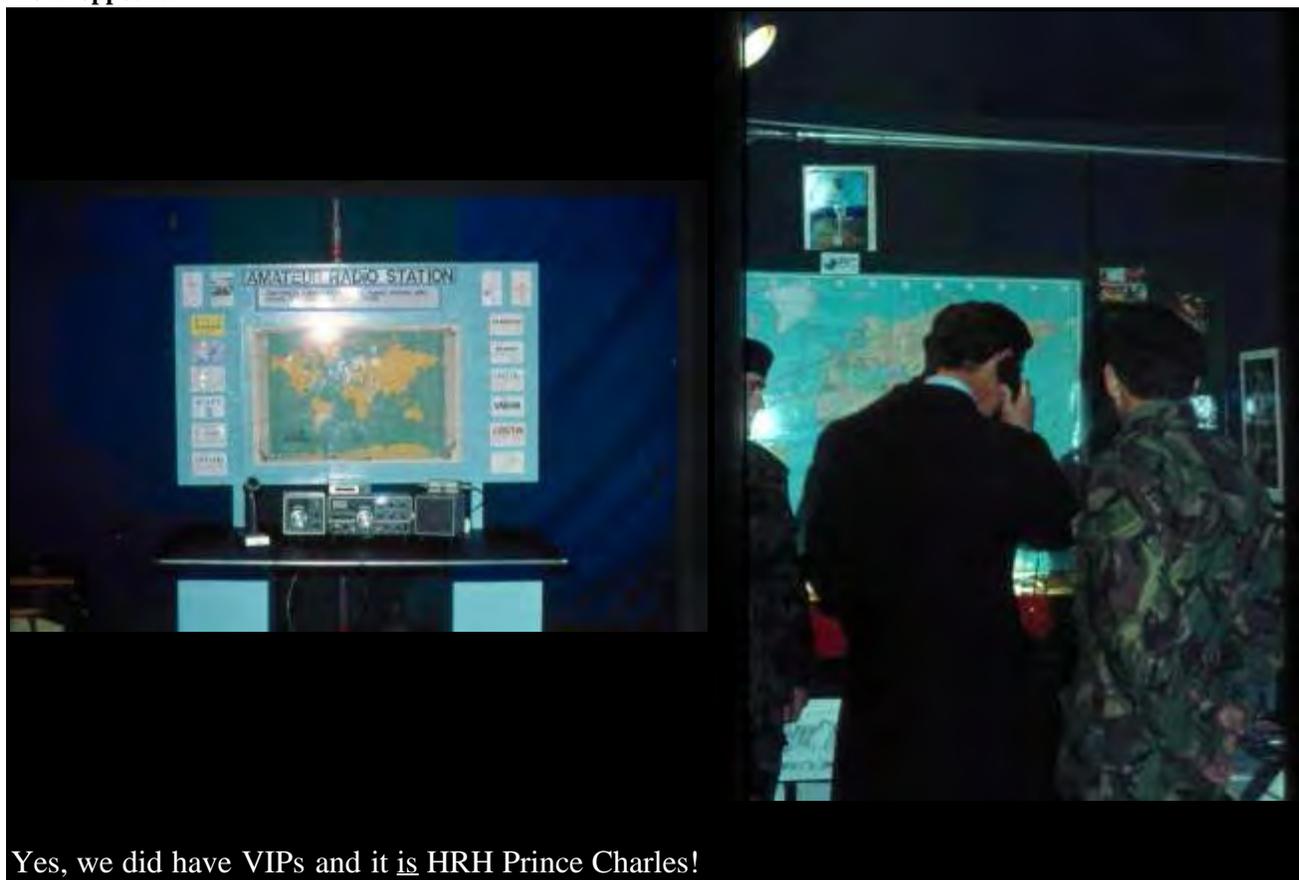


"This job" was to be part of **QUICKSILVER** which was part of the Royal Signals Recruiting Team. The other part being the White Helmets Motor Cycle Display Team. The idea was to revamp the travelling display with hands-on equipment and live radio communications. My task, as a Technician, would be to maintain these displays and to operate an Amateur Radio station during at our stop-overs - it sounded a most attractive proposition.



I arrived in Catterick Garrison, with my family, in April 1980 and the first duty was to get everything ready for the pre-season set-up and inspection before leaving to travel the country from May to September.

The station consisted of a Kenwood TS520SE with external VFO and PSU/Speaker. This was used with a trapped dipole in Inverted-V configuration using a Clarke 8metre telescopic mast as the centre support. The whole display was housed in a large frame tent approximately 8 metres by 3 metres, the canvas being in Corps' colours. The Summer tour consisted of visits mainly to County Shows with two other 'specials' during the height of Summer; these were a visit to Bassingbourne in Cambridgeshire for the annual school display where around 6,000 16-to-18 year old students were bussed in to the airfield and the other visit we always called our own summer holiday as we set up on the grassed area next to the pier at Scarborough for a week and stayed in the hotel opposite!



Yes, we did have VIPs and it is HRH Prince Charles!

I spent 4 summers with QUICKSILVER and had the privilege of meeting many RSARS members who came out to visit the display as well as all those I worked from the station, many of who would try to work G3SIG from all the Show locations. If I remember correctly my replacement was GMØALS - but no doubt either he or Ray have better memories. I still have all the log books plus a few spare QSL cards - so if you have lost yours or never received it I can immediately oblige on request.



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