

According to one fellow at Ceylon West the definition of OFF NET is, "Someone who should be on watch, but isn't". An extract from an RTT report Co-operation: Good most of the day, but afternoon operator claims, Quote, He is very catty to me today, Unquote.

BURNHAM RADIO

by L.R.O. R. C. Woods

Our last entry in this Magazine is apparently beyond the recollection of even the station cat, who has a long memory as well as long claws. The writer is drawing heavily upon his literary talents to put this particular radio station right back on the pages of THE COMMUNICATOR. I hope this article will provide some reminiscences for "old boys" and give anyone who is fortunate enough to be drafted here a little idea of what he may expect.

First of all, the notice on the entrance gate to the Station reads "Post Office Radio Station, Highbridge, Somerset", but we are better known as Burnham Radio to the Royal Navy, Portishead Radio to merchant ships, and GKL by the world over. The receiving station is situated at Highbridge, one mile from Burnham-on-Sea, twenty-five miles from Bristol and ten miles from Weston-Super-Mare. Other nearby towns are Bridgewater, Taunton, and Minehead.

The naval staff, twenty-three strong, reside in private lodgings and are employed solely on ship/shore duties, which they share with their colleagues from the General Post Office. Business is brisk and, as radio stations go, this is it! A very high standard of operating is essential from our operators, as public money is involved, by the handling of hundreds of radio telegrams daily. But if the modern communicator is a "natural" on ship/shore, a better place than GKL is yet to be found in the United Kingdom. Any below average operators who do arrive, somehow disappear rather quickly, with draft chits shrouded in mystery! At the time of writing, one can normally expect to remain at Burnham Radio for nine months on the average or twelve months if lucky. To stay over a year, one must be well in with "draftie".

For the city minded, perhaps our social life could be a bit more hectic, as we are handicapped with limited cinema facilities, but the thirsty are more than well catered for, and if you prefer the congenial small town life, this is the place for you. Dances are numerous and the partners are even more numerous as our statistics show. In fact I can safely add that out of our small staff, on an average, a quarter find themselves engaged or married by the time they conclude their tour here. There are a great deal of interesting things to do and see, particularly if you have your own transport, as most rich L.R.A.'s do. There are numerous places to visit, among them the famous Cheddar Gorge and caves, the glorious seaside resort of Weston-Super-Mare, Wells (a

beautiful cathedral city) and even Burnham-on-Sea itself, when the tide is coming in!

We boast a recently formed football team who look resplendent in their red and white rigout (thanks to a splendid grant from Devonport Port Fund) but unfortunately they have been having more of a battle with the elements than with their opponents. No comment on the games we have played, but we are very keen indeed and our first win is on the way.

If you are prepared to work hard, Burnham Radio is definitely one of the best drafts for 1961 and is several months away from the luxury of a sea-going ship; an extremely comfortable life with very friendly west country people amid the hills and vales of beautiful Somerset, where the best cider in the world is made. No one who comes here seems in any hurry to leave.

To conclude we say farewell to Lt. H. F. T. Brown (S.W.S.) and welcome our new Officer-in-Charge, Lt. E. W. McCullough. Wishing good luck to Communicators everywhere throughout the world and hoping that you all will enjoy yourselves in the coming season as much as we will along the golden sands beside the sea.



Gladioli.