

Ham Radio Convention, Friedrichshafen

Most people have heard about the Dayton Hamvention, the largest radio convention in the world. Europe's largest convention, however, is hardly ever mentioned in Britain, despite the fact that it is a truly international event attracting visitors and exhibitors from all over Europe and even some visitors from other continents. It is much more accessible than faraway Dayton, and is almost as easy to get to as is the NEC, for those of us who live outside the West Midlands.

The convention, which takes place in Friedrichshafen is officially known as *Ham Radio*, though it is universally referred to simply as Friedrichshafen. (The picturesque town of Friedrichshafen is in Southern Germany not as stated in last month's Stop Press.) Ham Radio is organised by the German national society, DARC, and radio amateurs from all over Europe, and even further afield, attend



what is the highlight of the European amateur radio calendar. During the three days of the 1985 convention 34 different country prefixes were spotted on the callsign badges of the visitors, which is a good way towards 'eyeball' DXCC!

There were representatives of most of the IARU Region 1 Societies, including RSGB president Joan Heathershaw, G4CHH. Dr. John Allaway, G3FKM, IARU Region 1 Secretary, said that he had been to every Ham Radio since the first, ten years ago, and that he had every intention of continuing to go every year.

The convention itself is much more than a radio rally with a few lectures thrown in. It is a weekend packed with events and activities. There

are, of course, the normal trade stands, where prices of new gear are much lower than UK prices, and the dealers more than happy to talk about special export deals. There are also stands set up by special interest groups, such as DARC committees. This included a large YL stand, paid for by the DARC, where coffee was dispensed to all and sundry. The radio regulatory authorities (Post Offices) of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland also had stands where reciprocal licences were issued on the spot and free of charge. The Austrian official who issued mine remarked that he hoped that they wouldn't have to be attending next year, due to the introduction of the CEPT licence.

The stands take up one of

the three halls, plus the foyer of the lecture hall. The second hall is taken up by a giant flea-market where anyone may grab a table free of charge and sell unwanted equipment or junk. The other hall is converted to provide youth-hostel type accommodation for students and young people visiting the convention. Other facilities include a temporary camping and caravan site and free crèche for children under 7. There is a full programme of talks and lectures, plus all sorts of fun activities and entertainment, such as competitions, DF hunts, and a hamfeast or party on the Saturday night, which is open to all holders of 3 day tickets. It's not surprising, therefore, that the majority of visitors come for the entire weekend, and make a family holiday of it.

Next year's Friedrichshafen Convention takes place between July 4th and 6th, and if there is enough interest National Travel will be organising an all-in package specially for the convention. For further details write to PO Box 49, Colchester, CO4 3SF.

HF Enthusiasts Big Day!

The RSGB HF Convention will take place on Sunday 29th September at the Belfry Hotel on the A40 just outside of Oxford. The entry fee is £2 and the doors open at 10am.

There will be lectures on subjects as diverse as planning permission, QRP operation, propagation, the sunspot cycle, ATUs, contesting and DXpeditions. The organisers have also arranged for forums, displays, stands and a 'testing' booth plus a car boot sale. Morse tests can be taken at the convention by arrange-

ment with Gavin Williams at the BTI radio station, Worston Lane, Highbridge, TA9 3JY. A talk-in station run by Mid Thames RAYNET will operate on 160m, 10m FM, 4 and 2m and 70cm.

● Gavin Williams will also be going round several of the rallies and conventions providing morse test facilities at Telford on the 8th Sept. Blackwood – the Welsh National Convention – on the 6th Oct. and at the Leicester show on 25th and 26th Oct. Please apply to him at the above address beforehand and all enquiries should be directed to him.

No Pain in The Arras

Members of West of Scotland ARS have just finished converting a former curtain factory into new clubrooms. The curtain is due to be raised (groan) formally on the club rooms on Friday 20th September (8pm) by RSGB President Joan Heathershaw.

The new club rooms include a sizeable meeting hall, a shack equipped for HF and VHF, a room for morse classes and construction work, a lounge, kitchen and cloakrooms. All of this makes the new place at 154 Ingram Street far more congenial

than the old club rooms in Robertson Street.

West of Scotland ARS welcomes all new members and meets every Friday at 7.30pm and has a fortnightly lecture programme starting in September. Ian McGarvie, GM4JDU, can provide further information on 050 581 2708.

Did You Know...

● 6000 notices of variation have been issued so far for the Class 'B' morse code experiment.

● In the first quarter of 1985, 242 people were convicted of illicitly using wireless telegraphy apparatus. The total for last year (1984) was 1281 which was a reduction of 225 from the previous year.

R.S.G.B. MEMBER? Can You Answer These Questions?

Whilst visiting the recently held Scarborough rally, G1CKF met Geoff Smith, G4AJJ, who wrote the Opinion in last month's HRT. During an interesting conversation, she was provided with a leaflet part of which is shown above. Apparently,

this leaflet is being distributed around the country "in the best interests of amateur radio". The rally, itself, was a well attended affair in the delightful surroundings of the Spa and the Ass Ed was relieved to see that the bar closed at 2pm (hic).