



Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society

Established 1936

Affiliated to the RSGB
President: Harry Heap G5HF
Secretary: Martyn M3VAM

Club Call Sign: G0MWT
Chairman John Bowen G8DET
Treasurer: Brian Thwaites G3CVI

Newsletter No 479(e) Web Address: www.g0mwt.org.uk January 2006

This Month's Meeting Life on Board Radio Caroline Tuesday January 3rd. 7-30pm at the MASC

This month we have a long awaited and much advertised talk by Carl G3PEM. We will be hearing from Carl about the day to day activities, living conditions, engineering problems and solutions. We will hear the whole history of how he became involved with off-shore Broadcasting and the pitfalls and complications he overcame during his many years as the Chief Radio Engineer on some of the best known radio ships of that era.

Dates for Your Diary

03 January 06	CARS Mtg. MASC 7-30pm. Life Aboard Caroline by Carl G3PEM
03 January 06	144 MHz UK Activity Contest & Club Championship
08 January 06	Affiliated Societies Team Contest 1400-1800
10 January 06	432 MHz UK Activity Contest 2000-2230
18 January 06	CARS Committee Mtg. DVH 7-30pm. All Members welcome.
21 January 06	Telephone Club Chairman to offer services as Newsletter Editor

WE ARE 40 YEARS OLD THIS MONTH

DID YOU KNOW ISSUE No 1 OF THIS CARS NEWSLETTER WAS PUBLISHED IN JANUARY 1966 AND AS FAR AS WE KNOW IT HAS BEEN PRODUCED MONTHLY WITHOUT FAIL EVER SINCE

As you are all well aware or should be, Geoff G7KLV has carried out the Editors post for the past seven years. Now that he has retired we urgently need a new Editor. Could you fill the post?? Then please call our Chairman John G8DET now. You will get all the support needed from Geoff, his deputy and Chairman John.

Did you get your posted Newsletter on time last month, that was because Denis M0FHA and his wife, with some help from Geoff, have taken on the job of printing, labelling and posting. Our very grateful thanks to Denis and Joy for taking on this part of the operation. This leaves just one more part to fill!!! Guess which part

Has Geoff packed up his pens and pencils? Not a bit of it: just turn the page and find a potted history of the CARS Newsletter written by Geoff especially for this issue, 40 years from its beginnings. Do you believe it should survive for another 40 years? Then we need say no more.

Have you heard of a Club Member who has not had a N/L this month? Maybe he has not paid his subs.

CARS meets at 7-30 pm on the first Tuesday of the month at the MASC, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford.

For details contact our Secretary: Martyn M3VAM on 01245-469008

Club Nets: Tuesdays 8-30pm: (2nd) 145.375 : (3rd) 1.947 : (4th) 1.947 : (5th) 145.375. All +/- QRM.

Newsletter Editor Position vacant

Deputy Editor: Colin G0TRM 01245-223835 or email: colinpage@ukgateway.net Please keep our Membership Secretary, Brian G3CVI, informed of any changes to your call sign or various addresses etc.

The CARS Newsletter: The First Forty Years by Geoff G7KLV

Believe it or not but January 1966 was something of a red letter day in CARS history! January 2006 is the fortieth anniversary of the first CARS Newsletter. Quite an achievement! Since then the CARS Newsletter has been published every month without fail. What does the future hold? The omens so far are not too good!

Prior to 1966 Members were notified of the forthcoming meeting by memos circulated to Members using the efficient internal post at Marconi's where the majority of Members worked. Presumably the GPO did the rest, or perhaps it was word of mouth. Can anyone remember?

At that time Tony Dix G5IX was a very active Club Member and Vice President and it was he who published the first newsletter. In all fairness it was really only an expanded version of the notice of meeting but nevertheless it was the first CARS newsletter and it was Tony who took that innovative step!

Newsletter No.1 was published in January 1966 and we are now up to No. 479.

When I inherited the Editorship from Roy G3PMX he gave me a complete set of originals from No.1. A few years back Trevor M5AKA, ever mindful of Club history, took on the huge task of scanning each one and saving them all in PDF format, thus easing storage and making them much more readily accessible to everyone. They are all on the CARS CD that Trevor produces which is free to Members.

Anyone who has used a scanner will know that scanning old faded documents produces faded copies! Murray G6JYB rose to the challenge and has produced a clear, clean reproduction of No.1 which can be seen on the Club website together with the original.

So, let's have a look at No.1 and see what it was all about. It was a rather formal document written in third person style, but that was forty years ago! There were spelling mistakes but even today we still make them with the benefit of spell checkers! It was an experiment and it was made clear that it would fold if support was not forthcoming. No change there!

As one might expect the newsletter reflected the interests of Members, many of whom were experimenting and constructing accessories, receivers and transmitters. There were numerous constructional tips, offers and requests for parts. The days of £1K equipments for everyone were still a long way off, and Members were experimenting with transistors such as OC170's and OC28's.

Things do not change however, and the Committee had arranged a contest to stimulate interest in operating, with both transmitting and receiving sections! There were prizes for each section: £1 vouchers to spend in a local shop "Soundvision". There was some topical news and notice of the January meeting, a film show. This was a tradition which lasted for another thirty five years. Club meetings were held at Marconi College, Arbour Lane and Committee meetings were held at The Wheatsheaf Public House.

Fox-hunting was a very popular branch of amateur radio at that time and Members were reminded that they "must comply with all the traffic regulations with particular reference to speed limits and also the Laws of Trespass". A £1 token was offered as a prize for the winner.

For those who haven't heard of fox hunting it entails a hidden top band transmitter sending out short signals at intervals and the idea was to find it using direction finding receivers with ferrite rod aerials, in the shortest possible time. The area of search would be defined by a particular OS sheet. Each participant would carry a sealed envelope giving details of the TX'ing location, in case they didn't locate him, and where all would meet up at the prescribed time, often going on to tea at a Member's QTH.

The publication varied in length, sometimes only one page but mostly two. Accounts and notices of forthcoming fox hunting events and occupied much space during the summer months. National Field Day was a major event and the Club participated. In May 1968 it was reported that

there were sixteen stations active on 2m and a common calling frequency was proposed. It seemed a wonderful idea at the time!

In October Jim Naunton G3PDK had taken over from Tony Dix and at the recent AGM the Hon. Treasurer, Ken Dews G3PMW was pleased to report that the Club's coffers were bulging with £32! In 1970 John Greenwood G3KRZ, still a Member, took on the Editorship and he was organising sales of surplus components as well. Jim Evans G3VDB replaced John for a year and was succeeded by Les Turner in 1973. By 1976 Bill Pechey G4CUE, still a Member, carried on until 1979 when Andrew Mead G4KQE, another current Member, took over. By 1980 Tony Dix, the innovator of the Club newsletter had left the Chelmsford area.

Although the results of fox hunts and NFD's were reported in the Newsletters other past events or meetings were rarely mentioned. Things were about to change! A somewhat younger John G8DET, had obviously pulled a few strings and organised a Club visit to the Chelmsford telephone exchange in St. Mary's Place. Andrew KQE did a write-up on that visit and John did a few lines on a visit to Woburn Abbey he had also organised jointly with the Writtle Art Group. Both events were written-up in the September 1979 issue.

In April 1980 Bill Pechey announced his move to Berkshire, having been lured away by Racal, and Andrew took over the Newsletter in addition to his secretarial duties. An object lesson to us all! Andrew appealed for material but even so he was turning out three or four pages but the ground breaking event appeared in the June issue when Andrew's first 'Last Month's Meeting' report appeared. With one or two possible exceptions the LMM feature has formed the main feature each month ever since 1980.

As I see it, its purpose is twofold. One, as a permanent record of our meetings and second, equally important, for the benefit of Members unable to attend meetings. The Committee Members have always borne the brunt of this task and often with a degree of arm-twisting by the Chairman. Many of the write-ups require a considerable understanding of the subject and concentration although in later years our talks are often recorded, mainly for the benefit of the writer-upper. Probably one of the most difficult write-ups ever was undertaken by Dick G3WHR on the subject of Digital Radio Mondiale for the June 2004 edition.

Getting back to the main story, January 1984 was another milestone and a New Look emerged!

Enter the computer!

Roy G3PMX and Ela G6HKM had acquired a BBC Model B complete with Wordwise and an Epson MX80F/T printer. Presumably the Editor would send his copy to Roy who then did the clever stuff and then did the photo copying.

Andrew continued with his dual duties until 1984 when, presumably, the demands of a young family became more pressing and Daphne Mead G8WQZ also relinquished her position as Membership Secretary. Ela took up the reins in that capacity, as well as doing her regular column in the Newsletter, 'Here and There', a delightful gossipy feature giving Members news and doings. After a year's sabbatical Andrew did three more years as Secretary finally handing over to Gwyn Williams G4FKH in 1988. Ian Maslen G4BYR was Secretary in Andrew's absence and he also took on the Newsletter until April 1986 when he returned to his homeland, New Zealand.. Incidentally the Membership at that time was 68 including Sir G. Worthington, no less!

Roy and Ela took over as editors from April 1986 until Roy was forced to give up in April 1998, due to his developing tragic terminal illness. During those twelve years the presentation subtly changed as Roy became more proficient computer-wise. Inevitably as computers developed, the latest state of the art equipment was added to the Editorial Office at High Houses and the appearance of the Newsletter altered accordingly.

Columns were introduced as well as shading and text boxes. Pagemaker was the favoured program running on Windows 3.1. Ultimately with Ela's assistance they were doing all the necessary copies using a laser printer. At Christmas we were treated to colour as well – green holly and red berries! The colour was added using an initial print run with an ink jet printer!

As Roy's health declined it was time for him to relinquish his successful Editorship and I took over with Colin TRM's assistance in April 1998. We used MS Publisher for a while and were grateful for Ela's initial assistance and advice. We resisted the new broom syndrome, unlike many new editors, but inevitably we have made changes but I hope that Roy would have approved, had he seen them.

Our major innovation occurred in November 1999 when we started distribution by email. Our first few attempts using .bmp and .jpg files were a total disaster but with the help of computer-savvy Members we eventually got it right and Murray G6JYB suggested that we should use MS Word and send it in .PDF form. We avoid arty-crafty to keep file size down. Emailing has reduced costs and labour.

Browsing back over the years the Newsletters have accurately reflected the changing interests of Members from an essentially constructional and experimental hobby to a more passive 'operating' hobby. I may be mistaken but I am beginning to think that in many ways the hobby would have been much better off without the Yaesus, the Kenwoods and the Icoms, or am I just a silly old fool?

As I'm sure many of you will be aware we have reached an impasse and, a new Editor is urgently needed if the Newsletter is to continue publication. In the June edition I gave notice that I would be retiring from the Committee and editorship at the AGM. I had reached my 80th birthday and although I had enjoyed producing it for the last seven years it was quite hard work, time consuming and required commitment to meet the monthly deadline. Colin has always been of great and willing assistance with constructive suggestions and incessant, but invaluable, nit-picking and he is also looking to reduce his commitments! However we would both offer our assistance to anyone taking up the editorial challenge.

At John G8DET's suggestion the printing and distribution of the postal copies has been separated from strictly editorial functions and is presently undertaken by Denis M0FHA and we also have a back-up in this department, should it be necessary. There have been no offers to take on the Editorial side. I begin to wonder how many Members actually read it and how many would miss it if it was discontinued. It does seem to be a pity to end this little celebration of forty years of the CARS Newsletter on this sombre note!

So, it's up to you, the Membership, do you want a Newsletter or don't you? If you do, then do something about it, that's always assuming you have read this!

Please E-Mail your feelings to John using g8det@g0mwt.org.uk

The Christmas Social

Organised this year by Geoff G7KLV, Brian G3CVI and Ron M3CAM, our second Christmas Social went off without a hitch and the quality and quantity of food was excellent. The prizes in the fine raffle organised by Geoff and his wife Phyl were superb. Phyl also designed a Christmas anagram competition. Brian CVI kept visitors busy with a 'Guess the Baby' photo contest. Harry G5HF gave us another very amusing interlude with 2 fine monologues from Mr. Sidebotham. The evening finished in grand style with Tony

G4YTG leading us with his accordion in songs old and new.

Essex Repeater Group Win Inter-Club Quiz

The Essex Inter-Club Quiz was held at the Dengie Hundred Amateur Radio Society on Monday 28th November. It was a hotly contested event and all of the many teams entering were in with a chance of winning. At the end it was a dead heat between the teams from the Dengie Hundred ARS and the Essex Repeater Group led by Murray Niman G6JYB.

The Quiz Master, David M1DOZ produced a final tie-break question to produce the overall winner: the Essex Repeater Group Team members were: Murray G6JYB, Trevor M5AKA, Clive M0SIX, Carl G3PEM, Frances Thomson and John G8DET.

The Dengie Hundred Amateur Radio Society organised a magnificent event. Both the hospitality and the food were absolutely superb. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

73 Trevor M5AKA

New Radio Magazines from Trevor M5AKA It looks like despite the merger of SWM and Radio Active to form Radio User magazine, we will still have 3 Radio Mags available in Smiths. A new one is starting up.

If you are interested in listening to radio as a hobby, then Monitoring Monthly due out in Jan is the magazine to read, edited by Kevin Nice, who has been working editorially for radio listeners' magazines for almost twelve years now. MM the new monthly radio enthusiasts' magazine, aims to capitalise on the well-known authorities in the field that will be familiar to many. See <http://www.monitoringmonthly.co.uk/>

SWM To Continue!

The new publishers of Short Wave Magazine are pleased to announce that the well loved and long established radio listeners' favourite monthly publication is to continue. Contrary to industry rumours, the magazine, which was established in 1937, will continue to be available on the newsstands, by postal subscription and soon, on-line.

You can also visit the magazine's website at <http://www.shortwavemagazine.co.uk>

Training Courses

A new Foundation course starts on January 9th in Danbury Village Hall There are 6 places left. Do you know anyone who might want to join? The Advanced exam will be held on 31st January.

E-mail: training2006@g0mwt.org.uk

Chelmsford Amateur talks to Astronaut.

Hi everyone, Just thought I would let you know that I had a QSO with ISS Commander Bill McArthur at 4.20pm local today (28/11/05) from my vehicle (from the local post office car park) using an Icom h/t for receive and a 50w 2m radio for transmit. The angle of pass was only 17 degrees and I had to point the h/t at the horizon to get a good receive signal but Bill said it was a solid copy! To say I am as happy as a dog with two tails would be a serious understatement!

David M0ZLB/KG4ZLB

80 Metres Affiliated Societies Team Contests

Two Affiliated Societies Team Contests are being held this month. They are on Sunday 8th and Saturday 14th. Both run from 1400-1800

For more info contact CARS Contest Manager Steve G4ZUL email Steve at contests2005@g0mwt.org.uk

Auld Lang Syne..... Eh Not Quite

Should older Yaesus be forgot -
And never brought to mind?
Should older Yaesus be forgot
For the sake of modern times?

Chorus

For modern times, my dear
For modern times
These rigs will take some beating yet.
Even in modern times

And sure you'll miss those glowing valves
I know that I miss mine
I know you'll miss those glowing valves
That's the cost of modern times.

Chorus

Just take the FT-101
It was a fine old line
I'm yet to find a nicer rig
Even in modern times

Chorus

I paid the price with HT burns
The pain shot down my spine
You don't get that with modern rigs
In these very modern times.

For modern times, my dear
For modern times
These rigs will take some beating yet
Even in modern times

Darren GW7HOC MW5HOC of the Wythall Radio Club <http://www.wythallradioclub.co.uk/>
Look out for another poem next month.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS

Edited by Colin G0TRM