

Colin Page G0TRM: Marconi, CARS and all that!

In 1992 I took the RAE passed with credits and as I had previously studied radio and electronic principles during schooling and my Marconi apprenticeship that was the easy part, the not so easy part was the 12 words a minute Morse test which I passed at the London Electronics show in early 1993. Later I became G0TRM one of my several requested call signs. By that time, I was a member of CARS having been introduced to the Society by fellow members at Marconi, I was asked to join the Committee and for some years helped Geoff Lovegrove KLV produce the Newsletter, later taking it over.

In 1994 I took on the assistant Secretary's post, later becoming Secretary in 2007, a position I still hold. Duties include taking, writing-up and distributing the Minutes of Committee meetings; Contacting potential speakers for Club nights and arranging dates for them to visit; Producing and distributing an Events Programme covering most of the Club's activities and composing the club profile for the Year Book.

I also produce the Award certificates for the Constructors Competition and for Amateur of the Year and other Specials as required. AS secretary, I answer or respond to various incoming emails to the Society. Another thing is that I generally organise the CARS annual tabletop sale and for some years have booked (and with others have manned) the tables at the Canvey rally, last year with Steve Webb G4GHO.

I had an interest in all things electrical and mechanical from an early age having been encouraged by my father, himself a SWL and constructor. I remember for an early birthday present on one occasion I was given a buzzer and a Morse key. It sparked an interest that has lasted all my life; I might still have that key somewhere along with some 50 others, a fact one or two people may know about. It may also be known they are not heard much on air, but aired in other ways, such as Sandford Mill Open Days, Hall Street and elsewhere. HF operation appeals to me and I enjoy special event station activity. I still appreciate and am happy to receive printed QSL cards. On occasions I host the CARS Tuesday evening Nets during which some good contacts have been made on the HF bands.

I attended a Technical College leaving at 16 to become an apprentice Instrument Maker at Marconi's which entailed a long journey from London to Chelmsford and an early start. At the end of my five year apprenticeship I was working on Government work, so my National Service was delayed for two years. When I eventually served, it was as a J/T Ground Wireless Fitter in the Royal Air Force. After training at Compton Bassett in Wiltshire, I was sent to Scampton in Lincolnshire, home at that time of 617 Dambusters Squadron then composed of heart stirring Vulcan bombers.

On my return to Marconi I passed through an assembly and other sections before joining the receiver test department, later moving for 10 years to Mobile Radio Division at Beehive Lane, eventually in charge of the test department there. It was then back to New Street main works to join HF Communications Division as a systems engineer, involved with long range HF communication links. I was lucky enough to travel for the Company on business visiting Algeria, Denmark and America. I also spent two occasions in Oman living under canvas in the desert maintaining a Triffid radio network during Omani military exercises. One advantage of the system meant amazingly we were able to dial home from our campsite on a standard telephone at the end of three hundred yards of D10 cable, emanating from the final link in the chain of Triffid stations leading back to Muscat the capital. I also travelled in the UK visiting Navy radio stations and shipyards repairing Marconi equipment as and when required. During the last two years or so of my life at Marconi, time was spent involved as part of a team working on two Frigates for the Malaysian Navy at the BAE shipyard in Scotland, setting to work all the radio and internal communication systems designed and built in Chelmsford,

My wife Joan and I have been married for 51 years and have lived in Danbury since 1967. We have two children Richard and Liz. They have given us five Grandchildren, three of whom at the moment reside in Singapore with Liz and her husband. We have visited them a couple of times and can speak highly of the country and its modern outlook.

Colin Page G0TRM, CARS Secretary