

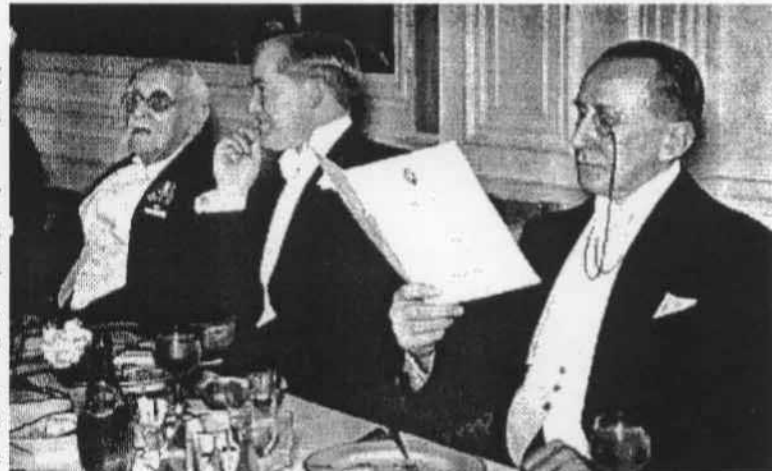


THE DECEMBER MEETING

One of the videos shown on our last Film Night concerned the local firm of Crompton-Parkinson and gave some idea of the wide range of their activities.

Although C-P were later absorbed into the Hawker-Siddeley Group and they no longer have a presence in Chelmsford, there must be few local people who did not know someone connected with the firm. John Jay, our speaker for the evening, spent all his working life at Cromptons and in retirement has two main interests.

One is the history of Writtle and the other is the founder of Cromptons, Colonel R.E.B. Crompton, the subject of our next meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday next. John will readily admit that there is more than a hint of hero worship in his study of the great man. He brought modern engineering to Chelmsford, he served in the Crimean and Boer Wars, he served on a Committee designing tanks in the First World War and was involved with the formation of the International Electrotechnical Commission. The picture, from John's collection, shows Colonel Crompton, Frank Parkinson and Marchese Marconi at a dinner in 1932 to commemorate the Faraday Centenary in honour of the Colonel as a Faraday Medalist. Beat that for topicality!



Traditionally as this is our pre-Christmas meeting, mince pies will be served during the tea break.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 3 Dec. CLUB MEETING - The R.E.B. Crompton Story.
- 7 Dec. RSGB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - London.
- 14 Dec. RSGB HEADQUARTERS SATURDAY OPENING.
- 14 Dec. C.A.R.S. CHRISTMAS SOCIAL.
- 15 Dec. VERULAM ARC RALLY - Watford Leisure Centre.
- 7 Jan. CLUB MEETING - Annual Video/Film Show.

HOSPITALITY EVENING

We have received a letter from Frank Howe, G3FIJ, Hon. Sec of the Colchester Radio Amateurs, inviting our members to attend their Club Hospitality Evening on December 12th. This is their opportunity to say thank you to members of local clubs for their support at the Colchester Rally. If you would like to attend, further information can be obtained from Frank on (01206)851189.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL


A reminder that the Christmas Social will be held on the 14th December, at the usual venue, 7.30pm for 8.00pm Dinner. At the time of preparing this newsletter 41 tickets have been sold.

COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 11th December, in Telford Lodge, you are welcome to join us.

LAST MONTH'S MEETING - Geoff, G7KLV

Chairman John DET opened the meeting by recalling a recent distressing incident with his car alarm. One can only hope that the Volvo designers have gone 'back to the drawing board' and are having sleepless nights trying to solve the irritating problems, inflicted on their customers, when they dabble with radio frequencies. Oh for the joys of modern, half understood, technology! Still, take heart there will probably be a revised EC directive!

Just as Chair was about to announce the main business of the evening, the proceeds of which go to the Equipment Fund, to our complete surprise a strange apparition appeared. On closer examination one could just about recognise Eric G8ADX dressed in a long toga like night shirt and skull cap, a cross between Peter Sellers, Frankie Howard and a stall holder from Petticoat Lane! He gave us a brief account of his recent Egyptian holiday. 

Whilst basking in the mid-day heat beneath a Mangifera Indica tree (a palm tree to you and me) he resolved to get to grips again with the dreaded Morse. Or least ways that is my understanding of his address!

The whole gathering was so stunned by this masterly and unexpected performance that there was a deathly hush when the first item was put up for auction. After a pregnant silence, the ever resourceful, Dick G3WHR made an opening bid. No one was more surprised than he when it was knocked down to him for 20p! Twenty pence for a working colour telly! My, how times have changed! However, it changed hands later on to the financial benefit of the Club.

Without a doubt the star turn of the Junk Sale evening is our good friend Gwyn G4FKH. He always puts in a truly professional performance on these jolly occasions but in spite of his best efforts that opening bid was to set the tone for the rest of the evening. Most of the stuff was from the shack of silent key Les G4CUT and on reflection, should have attracted much higher bids.

Your Committee has given this some thought and positive feedback from Members would be most welcome. Here are some thoughts which, I hope, will provoke discussion:-

1. Allow a half hour viewing time before the sale starts.
2. Raise the minimum bid to, say, 50 pence.
3. Remove the Junk Sale from the Club calendar.
4. Was the fact that the proceeds were for the Equipment Fund as opposed to Club funds significant?

My own personal view is that so few Members are into construction and hence very little demand for bits and pieces nowadays, thus giving low and un-competitive bids. No doubt the fault of the dreaded Black Box!

I always enjoy these evenings and would vote in favour of retaining the traditional Junk Sale. However, the Committee would welcome your views. Write to the Newsletter Editor or buttonhole Committee members but, **please above all, make your views known to us.**

One interesting suggestion, put forward by two Members, was to take a table at a local rally and dispose of surplus equipment and junk that way. It would also give the Club some useful publicity.

The profit on the sale, after expenses, was £95 which is about half last years proceeds. Our thanks to Brian G3CVI for his meticulous recording of the evenings takings and spotting a two shilling bit!

Finally, our thanks to Gwyn for his marathon performance, to Dick as runner and general expert on things technical and to Jan G7UVP for his untiring efforts in transporting and storing all of Les's stuff as well as acting as the other runner.

DF News - Ian Butson, G4HKC.

Sunday 22nd September dawned cold, damp and showery, the day of the RSGB DF National Final competition. This year Colchester and Chelmsford Amateur Radio Societies were responsible for organising the final event, following a series of qualifying events earlier in the year. At midday 17 teams assembled at Great Green, about 6 miles SE of Bury St. Edmunds, in preparation for the start. At 12.50 the weather was clear and good signals were heard from all three transmitters; the competitors took their bearings, made their decisions and at 13.00 departed in search of the hidden transmitters. All except one competitor, who, due to a mix-up in his identification of the stations and an uncertain bearing, needed the assistance of an "approximate bearing" on the 'A' station. He was detained at the start until 13.05 as required by the rules of the competition, and then allowed to depart. He subsequently went on to win the National Final!

Station 'A', GOKSJ/P operated by Peter Graves was located in undergrowth at Bradfield Woods, Felsham about 1.25 miles NE of the start. Peter was operating QRP, and considerable effort had been made in adjusting the output of the transmitter to suggest that it was not located close to the start. This had the desired effect on all competitors.

Station 'B', G4TEB/P operated by Peter Larbalestier was located in undergrowth beneath the bridge of the disused railway line, and the northbank of the river Stour at Ballingdon, Sudbury; at the point where the railtrack crossed the river; about 10 miles SSW from the start. Several problems occurred at this site during the course of the afternoon, with mischievous children pulling down part of the antenna; and also a failure of the transmitter for a short period. Fortunately, the organiser was on site at the time of the failure, and a replacement transmitter ensured that no transmissions were lost for the competitors.

Station 'C', G4FJC/P operated by Richard DeLaRue was hidden 16.7 miles from the start, in dense undergrowth in a small wooded area at the point where the disused Hadleigh Railway line would originally have branched off from the Main Colchester-Ipswich railway line at Bentley Park. At the end of the afternoon, a pathway likened to a motorway had been beaten into this transmitter by the competitors.

After the event, 60 persons enjoyed a splendid tea at Great Waldingfield Village Hall, prepared by Pat Hawkins with the assistance of wives of several participating club members. The organiser presented the "1950 Council Trophy" for DF to a worthy winner, Brian Bristow of the Mid-Thames club. Other prizes, including one for the "first lady" in a competing team were also presented. The Colchester/Chelmsford Qualifying Event Shield Trophy was also presented to Brian Bristow to be held until the next Colchester/Chelmsford Qualifying event.

The opportunity was also taken to present the Bert Simmonds "Memorial Rosebowl" Trophy to Philip Cunningham of the Colchester Club, for the best overall results obtained on the qualifying events throughout the year.

The winners were called upon to explain the secret of their success in the event; and also the transmitter operators for their observations of the afternoon's events.

Geoffrey Foster was called upon, as the RSGB representative for his comments. This he did, thanking the organisers for an excellent contest where everyone had enjoyed themselves, and looked forward to seeing everyone again next year.

A vote of thanks was also proposed, by Brian Bristow, for Chris Wells for his past work as the DF Contests Manager; but who would be standing down next year in this capacity.

Results	1 st	Brian Bristow	6 th	Mike Hawkins
	2 nd	Chris Wells	7 th	Philip Cunningham
	3 rd	Andy Collett	9 th	Roy Emeny
	4 th	Paul Clark	10 th	Colin Merry

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF WIRELESS - Harry G5HF

In the 1930's we used simple circuits to receive and transmit signals without the need for telegraph wires, hence Wireless. After Wacky War II, people talked about Radio and said that you can't call it wireless because it was FULL of wires. And look at all the wires in the back garden! But all you Wireless Freaks take courage. Help is at hand.

On 15th November, the IEE held a colloquium on Wireless Technology to discuss the latest developments in wireless LANs and WANs, wireless sensors, wireless and batteryless tagging systems and standards for wireless systems.

So there! Wireless is alive and well. It's getting cold, so I will now turn on my gas fire - now that IS wireless.

GOTCHA! or OURS THIS TIME - Andrew, G4KQE

In the December 1994 newsletter I reported how, in the closing half-hour of the last DF qualifying event of the 1994 season, the coveted Silver Rosebowl slipped away from our grasp.

We had quite an enjoyable 1995 season, our best being a win at Stratford on Avon, and two third places at South Manchester and Ripon, and we ended the year with 24 points, coming fourth in the Rosebowl league.

The 1996 season started with a vengeance. We travelled down to Devon on the Saturday afternoon, staying overnight in Brixham, so we were fresh to do the D.F. event on Sunday afternoon. We came second, earning ourselves six points for the Rosebowl, and qualifying for the National Final.

South Manchester was next, where again we came second, finding our second hidden station perched like an eagle on a ledge on a rocky escarpment. That put us in the lead at that stage with twelve points.

Our next trip to Coventry was a bit of a disaster. As with the Torbay event in 1994, we found the aerial wire at about 3.30pm and then spent nearly the next hour paddling up and down a stream between two hedges trying to find the hidden station. We finally found him with just 5 minutes of the contest to go, a few feet away from the ditch, tucked down beside a small brick wall, hidden from view by some tall stinging nettles.

Confidence was restored at Mid-Thames, where we won the event, ahead of twenty other teams. Lady Luck shone on us that day, as our bearings on the first station crossed near the River Thames, but with nothing obvious to go to. I said to Phil "let's go down this little road to see what's down there", and there was the transmitter in an inflatable boat a few feet out in the river!

Determined to maintain our lead we headed north in July to Ripon in Yorkshire. From the top of the tree at the previous event, we fell all the way to the bottom at Ripon, coming last, finding only one station, much to the delight of the others in the running for the Rosebowl.

Salisbury was next, but instead of travelling from Essex, I travelled to Salisbury from Newquay in Cornwall, and Phil travelled from Lyme Regis in Dorset - we were both on holiday. We both had unusual stuff to take on holiday:- swimming costume, suntan lotion, buckets & spades....DF Set....! Fourth place gave us another 3 points that day, so the trips were worth it.

By this time, there were only two or three people who could win the Rosebowl, so the next two events were crucial to maintain our lead. A relatively new area of Echelford in Middlesex provided the venue for the penultimate event of the season. The map was the West of London, with Heathrow Airport right in the middle. Despite the built up area, two good sites were found for the transmitters, and we found them both before anyone else. We even had a dip in the river after finding the second station to cool down. Those 9 points had now clinched the Rosebowl for us, as we were now 11 points ahead of the rest of the field.

It felt good going to the last event of the season at Banbury. There were no pressures on us to qualify for the final, and we knew that whatever happened that day, no-one could take the Rosebowl away from us. We had a great afternoon, finding both stations on the side of canals, and we came fifth, another two points.

Our 1996 DF season has been most enjoyable. We have been after the Silver Rosebowl in earnest for four years now, and a couple of years prior to that we had done quite well without knowing it. Out of all eight events that we took part in, we had two firsts, two seconds, a fourth and a fifth, giving us 35 points in all, and finally THE ROSEBOWL IS OURS.

MEMBERS NEWS - Ela, G6HKM

Congratulations go to Charles Minchin with his new Callsign M0APJ. Charles thanks the many members of the Club for having given him a great amount of support and encouragement both to start and complete the various courses.

73 from Roy & Ela Martyr,
G3PMX & G6HKM

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1, High Houses,
Mashbury Road,
Great Waltham,
CHELMSFORD,
Essex, CM3 1EL.

FOR SALE.

Good homes wanted for Conifer trees, heights ranging from 9" to 36" (approx), Donations to Club Equipment Fund.

Roy and Ela, (01245)360545.

SOFTWARE FOR SALE

Let the XYL have a go on your computer, with cross stitch designing in full colour, "EASY CROSS" Version 4.0 (windows) supplied complete with manual, £10.

Ela, G6HKM