

Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society

Affiliated to the RSGB

President: Harry Heap G5HF

Secretary: David Bradley M0BQC

Club Call Sign: G0MWT

Chairman: John Bowen G8DET

Treasurer: Brian Thwaites G3CVI

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The January Meeting - The Annual Junk Sale.

Yes, it's time once again for the annual junk sale. After a little gentle arm twisting Colin G0TRM has agreed to do the honours as our actioneer! You can either donate items to be sold for Club funds or you can offer items for sale with a 10% donation to Club funds. The sale itself will start at 8pm. sharp so there is plenty of time for viewing before you buy. Please label items clearly with your Callsign and indicate if items are for Club Funds or for sale on commission. All unsold items should be removed at the end of the evening. Any remaining items will be disposed of at the Canvey rally in February.

Our **Chairman John G8DET** will be opening the meeting at **7-30pm. sharp on Tuesday 2nd. January** at the **MASC**.

Please support **Ela's** raffle and help to keep us solvent

The Season's Greetings.

We trust that all our readers enjoyed their Christmas and that they have recovered from any indulgent indiscretions!

We wish Members a happy and prosperous New Year with lots of good DX or whatever else turns you on!

Dates For Your Diary

Jan. 2 Club Mtg. Annual Junk Sale. 7-30pm. at the MASC.

Jan 10 CARS Comm. Mtg. David M0BQC's QTH 7-30pm.

Feb 4 Canvey Rally The Paddocks, Long Road, Canvey.

The Net Controller for January is Colin G0TRM.

The Constructors Competition.

The June meeting will be the Constructors Competition. Yes, June seems a long way off, but now is the time to start thinking about your entry.

An All Time First For Andrew G4KQE

We are very proud to announce that Andrew and Phil Cunningham have won the DF National Final Trophy. Andrew has written a piece to explain how they did it after trying so hard for so long! Unfortunately we have had to hold it over to next month! In the meantime visit his Website at www.geocities.com/andrewm2kk

A Request From Carl G3PEM.

Would the Member who requested a blank QSL card from Carl please contact him as he can't remember who it was!

Members News

We have pleasure in welcoming a new Member to the Club.
He is Steve Heard 2E1EQY.

Last Month's Meeting - Visit to CARS of Don Beattie G3OZF, RSGB President.

The address by Don Beattie G3OZF at our December meeting was well up to expectations and our attention was held throughout an outstanding presentation. After a brief introduction Don asked two questions, how many present were RSGB members and how many had access at home to e-mail? He was very happy with the excellent response to both questions.

Don gave a brief history of the Society and went on to list some of its many achievements such as beacons for the higher frequencies, combating the PLT and the VDSL threats, 400 watt operation on CW and 160metres, freeing kits from approval standards, reciprocal licensing, opening of the 50Mhz band.. The range of RSGB publications will be increased and there are forthcoming improvements to RADCOM.

Communication with members is essential and the Society is spending much effort in visiting Clubs around the country, hence Don's visit to CARS. But as visits reach perhaps only a third of the membership it is hoped that e-mail will help to spread the word and might be used for voting purposes in the future. The Society and Club Web pages, GB2RS and the appointment of regional and Club reps with email facilities will broaden this contact to a wider audience. Currently 22 full time members of staff and a few part-timers work at HQ, dealing with finance, publications, commercial matters, the Web site and GB2Rs, and very many other things. The staff are assisted by a large number of vital voluntary helpers working many hours a week. Currently 17 Council members serve a three year term meeting on average 6-8 times a year.

Changes are afoot and in future a new board of just six nationally elected members, two regional members and a President meeting regularly is planned for the future, with a larger National Council meeting less frequently. The six elected members would be allocated and take full responsibility for named portfolios, to cover specific areas, such as, business and commercial aspects, the frequency spectrum, 'sport radio' i.e. contests, DF, IOTA etc, technical aspects and publications, education and training and regulatory and international aspects. The respective sub-committees for these areas would meet regularly and report progress. Target for this change is the middle of next year.

The financial situation is stable at the moment with half the £1.7m income derived from subs and half from publications, advertising, rallies etc, without which subs would need to double, so the commercial side is most important. If Radcom is equated to other news-stand publications, and that cost is subtracted from the monthly sub it means each member has benefit of all other Society facilities for 21p a month. A bargain!! The Radio Today venture was curtailed recently due to distribution problems and the fact of major outlets only stocking the top 100 publications.

Membership levels need to be maintained or increased as predictions indicate that in a few years time the number of amateurs will have fallen by 25% as insufficient numbers are joining and staying. The Society is actively promoting amateur radio at every opportunity and will continue to do so with the accent on the young, by visiting schools, universities etc. But having attracted youngsters we must maintain their interest and keep them. Many teachers have attended Stelar courses enabling them to become licensed and to set up school based Clubs. Other groups targeted include the 30 plus, the early retired, related groups and some CBers. A CD-based presentation is proposed

that will contain all the picture and text information required, to enable a speaker to give a balanced address to any interested group. This will hopefully be available next year. The NZART has produced a floppy containing all the necessary information to select at random a suitable test, answer paper, and a pass form. Perhaps we could do the same.

The RAE is under review in an attempt to make it more readily available and more representative of today. Discussions take place regularly with the RA, the resulting relationship is on a good footing and proving fruitful. Some of the ideas involve so called incentive licensing which is really combining some of the existing licences and the inclusion of more practical applications. A mandatory core and a number of add-on modules would give a progressive element, from foundation through to full level. Also, supervised operation would help to bring in new members, whereby a newcomer, under close supervision, could actually operate an existing amateurs station on air, and hopefully get the bug and be nurtured by a mentor to become fully licensed. Some ideas by the RA seem to suggest a very limited exam license as a starter on VHF, but this is being resisted. What the RSGB does NOT want to do, is turn to Amateur Radio into CB. The Society also believes that HF access should be part of a foundation licence, so as to sample the "essence" of amateur radio.

EMC problems are taken very seriously by the RSGB as is the threat to our frequencies. Use them or lose them. This is important because our frequencies above 144MHz could be worth approaching £1M per MHz which the amount the RA receives in licence fees from all amateurs in the UK. So there is no way amateurs could pay a commercial rate for all the bands in use.

Don argued that amateurs should try to become technology leaders again rather than followers. He hopes to set up a think tank, to visualise and shape the future of our hobby, which may well be more software than hardware based. Although the future here causes concern, in places like Korea, China, and particularly India the future for amateurs is very bright and the Indian government is putting very large sums of money into the hobby.

A number of proposals are being worked on for the WRC in 2003. These include the creation of new global bands around 7MHz; this band maybe extended up to 7.3MHz, or may go from 6.9MHz to 7.2MHz. There will be a review of the license requirements with respect to amateur qualifications. An IARU recommendation called RAM.QUAL, is proposed, which may lead to the removal of the Morse test for HF operation. Also at WRC 2003, a clarification of current callsign structure is requested by Finland and an antenna definition required in a station description, will be discussed.

Don stressed the need to speak with the same voice, to extol the virtues of amateur radio to both the authorities and the public at large to keep alive our chosen pastime and to increase the number of participants. He stated that if every member listening introduced just one other person to amateur radio in the next 5 or 6 years the problem of declining numbers would be solved. One final plea, if anyone has any spare time, any good ideas, please offer these to the RSGB, who will only be too glad take up any ideas.

Don answered a number of questions and then it was presentation time. Our President Harry G5HF presented him with a shield donated to the RSGB by CARS to commemorate the life and work of Louis Varney G5RV. The shield will be awarded by the RSGB, to the winner of a yet to be designated amateur contest. Don next received from Harry a wooden gavel made by Ralph G3NAA (contained in a bag made by Frances Thomson), and a certificate awarding him Honorary Membership of CARS. He expressed his thanks, said it had been an enjoyable evening and he said he enjoyed visiting Chelmsford again.

Many thanks to Don, for an excellent and stimulating address, and also to Ralph and Frances. Please come again Don!

Report by Colin G0TRM.

A Letter Received From Don G3OZF.

Dear Harry,

I am writing to say how very much I enjoyed last night with you and your colleagues at the Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society. It was a pleasure to see so many old friends again after so many years. Thank you for your welcome and your hospitality.

More importantly, I want to thank you and the Society for your generosity in providing such a splendid award in memory of Louis Varney, G5RV. The RSGB will take great pride in awarding the trophy in the years to come.

I would also like to thank the Society for the very kind gesture of the gift of the gavel and the Honorary Membership Certificate. These will be a happy reminder, not only of last night, but also of the nine years I was associated with the Chelmsford club. Last night was the last of the talks I am giving at clubs for this year, and from my point of view it could not have been a better choice of venue. It was a delight to be with you all. I hope the CARS continues to go from strength to strength.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,

Sincerely, Don Beattie G3OZF.

The CARS Christmas Party.

The weather forecast for Thursday the 7th. was not good, and it was a long, wet and windy drive out to our new venue at The White Horse, Pleshey. Any gloomy thoughts were quickly dispelled as we went in to a bright and cheerful welcome from Jan Smail, who we first met at the Beehive. With the impeccable organisation that we now take for granted, Jill and David ushered us to our seats with decorated reminder cards of our menu choices, the tables beautifully decorated with displays of Jill's handicrafts.

Chairman John DET was in tip top form and welcomed Members, their partners, friends and our guests of honour Helen and Geoff Bowles. Overburdened with free computer CD discs John had devised a competition to keep us alert and a prize was offered for the most ingenious use of these items. After many suggestions the prize was finally awarded to Carl PEM for his idea of using them to avoid insect attacks when growing brassica!

The traditional raffle, with over a dozen prizes, many of which were kindly contributed by Members, raised £39 for Club funds.

Our Members have many hitherto hidden talents and this year we were treated to some entertainment as well. A certain figure, called Mr. Sidebottom appeared, bearing a sneaking resemblance to our President G5HF, (or was I mistaken ?) and delivered a thoroughly professional deadpan monologue, Stanley Holloway style, about the most well known Silent Key of all time! Our President has set a Precedent!

John had also culled, from various sources, a number of predictions by the 'experts' most of which turned out to be way off the mark, which all goes to show that you don't want to believe all the 'experts' say!

But this 'expert' does say, without fear of correction, that it turned out to be a very entertaining evening with an abundance of excellent food served by 'Mine Hosts' and their charming young staff.

Finally a warm vote of thanks to Jill and David BQC for all the tireless work they had put in to make the whole evening such a great success. Thank you both!

Report by Geoff G7KLV

Joint Editors.

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Deadline for the next N/L is Wednesday 13th. January.