



# Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society

Established 1936

Affiliated to the RSGB Club Call Sign-G0MWT  
President-Carl Thomson, G3PEM Chairman-John Yates, G1UZD  
Treasurer-Roland Taylor, M0BDB Vice President-John Bowen, G8DET



Newsletter No 587

Web Address: [www.g0mwt.org.uk](http://www.g0mwt.org.uk)

February 2015

## Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February

OAKLANDS MUSEUM, MOULSHAM STREET, CHELMSFORD, CM2 9AQ

### Probing the Northern Lights by Dr. Brendan Goodbody



Ever worked aurora, but don't know what it really is/does? Our February talk will cover how observations and science of the aurora have developed over time. Brendan who now works at BAE Systems Great Baddow recently completed his PhD related to this, including some 'cool' on site visits. A colourfully illustrated talk will explore the processes that create and control the aurora, and how that affects us on earth.

So whilst HAARP may be no more, the subject is very much alive elsewhere, both on earth and even observing aurora on other planets.

CARS welcomes visitors, so by all means let your astronomer friends know as well. We will have our usual tea/coffee refreshments and our famous prize raffle!

#### Dates for your Diary

Tues 10 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup>	CARS - Evening Radio Nets @ 8:00 pm (Local). See Website for details.
Every Monday	Essex Ham 2m Net @ 2000h GB3DA
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> February	30 <sup>th</sup> Canvey Rally, doors open at 10:30. CARS in attendance
Monday, 16 <sup>th</sup> February	Cars Skills Night 7:00 pm Danbury Village Hall
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> February	Morse Class 7:00 pm Danbury Village Hall
Tuesday 3rd March	Meeting - "The GB3VHF Story" - Chris Whitmarsh, G0FDZ
Saturday 14th March	GX0MWT - Science & Engineering Week event at Sandford Mill

### CARS Membership – Final Reminder!

Membership fees for 2014/15 became due in October. The final deadline for renewal is 31<sup>st</sup> January, after which we will be removing details of those whose subscriptions have lapsed. For some, the January Newsletter was your last!

If you wish to be a Member of CARS and have not paid this year's subs, please send a cheque for £15, payable to "C.A.R.S.", to: James D Beatwell, CARS Membership Secretary, 36 Hunts Close, Writtle, Chelmsford CM1 3HJ. To receive your Membership Card, please enclose a Stamped Addressed Envelope or arrange to see James at a CARS Meeting.

Membership is FREE to those in full-time education, but you need to contact the Membership Secretary to confirm your details. If you know someone who has not renewed their subscription or is NOT already a Member but wishes to join, please draw this newsletter to their attention – thank you!

Please gain as much as possible from your Membership, which is very good value at £15, by supporting all the Amateur Radio events brought to you by CARS each year.

To all those who have already paid, thank you for your support!

John, G8DET

**Nets** Tuesdays 2000h (10<sup>th</sup>) GB3DA, (17<sup>th</sup>) GB3ER, (24<sup>th</sup>) 1.947MHz  
Also there is the Essex Ham net every Monday @ 2000h on GB3DA

**Net Controller for February is Carl, G3PEM Thanks to Colin, G0TRM for January.**

*ALL factual content presented is "as received" from the contributors of the articles; the editor accepts no responsibility for its accuracy, errors or omissions.*

# January Meeting "Radio Amateur Awards"

By Carl Thomson G3PEM



Our first meeting of the New Year was on Tuesday January 6th. Our president, Carl G3PEM gave a talk about radio amateur awards. The last time CARS had such a talk was about 10 years ago, so this was a long overdue for a reminder.

Carl brought along slides and a wide variety of background material and awards to illustrate another branch of this fascinating hobby of ours.

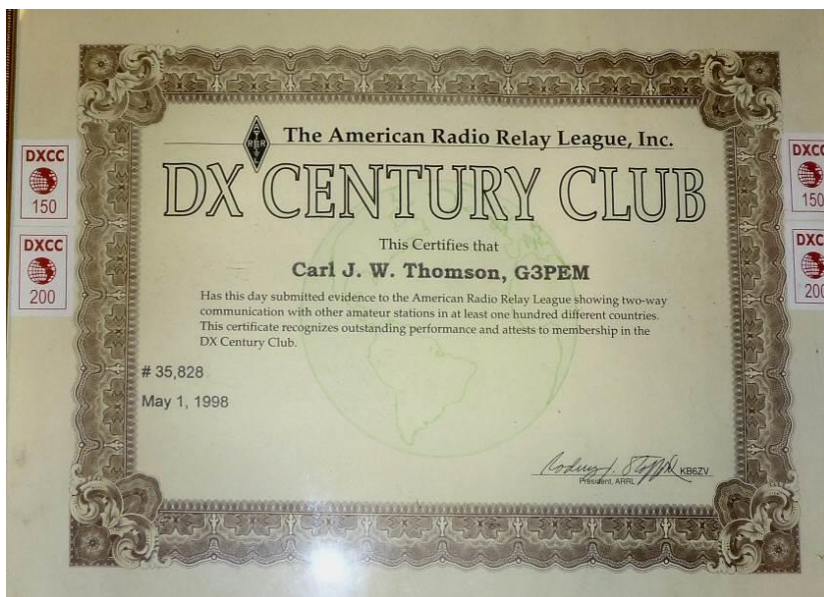


DARC 40m Award - unusually it is etched in copper!



An example of one of the regional awards.

Topics included: How to start collecting awards and where to find details of the award programmes. Organising QSL cards and electronic logging can help matters! You can get awards based on Regions or other geographic features



DXCC - one of the premier awards

All photos courtesy of Murray, G6JYB

More information on the [CARS website](#).

Despite the winter weather and cold bugs, a good evening was had by those who attended.

Many thanks to Carl.

## Useful Links:

- K1BV: [DX Awards directory](#)
- RSGB: [HF/VHF Awards](#)
- RSGB: [IOTA](#)
- ARRL: [DXCC](#)
- WAB: [Worked All-Britain](#)



## **CARS Training News / Changes**

After a landmark of over 30 Foundation (as well as Intermediate etc.) courses and 10+ years continuous effort by both of them, Chris, G0IPU and Clive, G1EUC have stepped down (the current 31<sup>st</sup> Foundation being their last). This makes it opportune for the other trainers to also take a break (and also let the licence changes settle down as well), although they won't be entirely idle! So below is a bigger training item than normal:-

### **Foundation**

The 31<sup>st</sup> CARS Foundation course started as scheduled on Thursday Jan 15<sup>th</sup> with nearly a full house (along with the CW classes). The usual 6-week format will lead to the exam on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February, so we wish the candidates all the best.

### **Intermediate**

One short-term effect is that the follow-on CARS March Intermediate course unfortunately has to be cancelled. However there are local alternatives if you are interested.

LEFARS has its assessment and exam day on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2015, whilst TARG have a full two-weekend course (April-11/12 and April-18/19)

### **Advanced**

Our congratulations to Peter Nathan, M0WKW and Steve Yearley, M0SJY who successfully passed a fairly tough Advanced exam at Danbury on 8<sup>th</sup> December. Peter lives near Eastbourne in Sussex, and had decided to drive a 100 miles from there on a cold winter's evening to take the exam at Danbury – quite extraordinary!

### **CW Classes**

These also restarted at Danbury on Thursday Jan 15<sup>th</sup>. They should be unaffected by the Intermediate change - details from Andrew Kersey G0IBN, g0ibn@g0mwt.org.uk and on the CARS website at <http://www.g0mwt.org.uk/training/>

### **Licence Conditions & Exams**

Did you read the full details of the forthcoming change to Licence conditions? Ofcom have been notifying licensees (though their letter has an unfortunate error that puts an extra 'E' in many callsigns). The new Ofcom conditions and guidance won't be in place for everyone until April. Meanwhile the RCF Exam committee has announced that at present the current syllabus and licence terms will continue to apply for now, if you are about to do a course/exam (though this may change eventually).

**Murray, G6JYB**

## **2015 RSGB Band Plan**

The February edition of RadCom and the RSGB website has the updates to the band plans. Extensive changes that have arisen from the new Ofcom licence, new 147MHz and 2302MHz NoVs, IARU Region-1 Conference and a reduction of old modes such as RTTY, Fax and Packet, are all incorporated.

At HF the changes are minimal but do include a change to 10m all-modes, which is helpful for AM users and a firm note regarding eSSB usage. There are though far more extensive changes in the VHF and Microwave bands including a new satellite band at the bottom of 144 MHz. If you can't tell from the small print in RadCom, the master copies on the website have detailed notes and changes tables - make sure you take a look and throw away your old copy!

On the web, RSGB band plans are at

<http://rsgb.org/main/operating/band-plans/>

**Murray, G6JYB**

## **Skills Night**

The Skills Night at the Danbury Village Hall returned after a Christmas break on Monday the 19<sup>th</sup> of January, attracting a record-breaking 72 people.



As usual, the evening was a mix of hands-on demonstrations, and this time around included a selection of test equipment for beginners laid on by Chris, M6EDF; a live 4 metre station from Selim, M0XTA; a tutorial on tuning whips and antennas from Peter, G0DZB (*photo above left*);



Charlie, M0PZT was programming radios (*above*) & demonstrating arduinos; plus antenna advice from Carl, G3PEM.



*Chris M6EDF's beginners guide to test kit*

Jim 2E0JTW was also on-site making callsign badges on-demand. Pete M0PSX brought along the cheap Windows tablet discussed on Essex Ham's net in recent weeks and Clive presented the occasionally controversial quiz. Tea and coffee served, as ever, by our Amateurs of the Year, Myra, M0MYR and David, G3SVI.

It's great to see so many people keen to demonstrate their passion, and so many new faces. The evening attracted 9 Foundation, 8 Intermediate and 10 SWLs, some of whom are looking to take Foundation in the near future, and visitors travelled from Suffolk and London, plus a delegation of 6 people from the MARTS club in Kent.

The evening was rounded off by an impressive drone flight, as Aydin, M6WYZ guided his Phantom 2 quadcopter on a circuit of Danbury.

For more photos from the January Skills night, go to [www.sxham.uk/skills-jan15](http://www.sxham.uk/skills-jan15)

Thanks to everyone who attended the January Skills Night. If you have any suggestions for future topics, please contact Pete M0PSX direct, or via [www.hamskills.co.uk/cars](http://www.hamskills.co.uk/cars)

The next event is on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> of February.

**Pete M0PSX**

### **Geoff Mills G3EDM**

Geoff Mills was involved with saving a person at sea from drowning.

Sometime in the late 1970s Geoff was tuning his receiver and heard a SOS – Mayday call. He answered it thinking it was a hoax but the person at the other end said that they were off South Africa in a sailing yacht and had been struck by something and were sinking and could not raise anyone on the Maritime Distress frequency. They gave Geoff their Latitude and

Longitude and Geoff swung his beam and confirmed that they may well be where they said they were.

He rung the Coast Guard at Great Yarmouth who contacted the Port Elizabeth Coast Guard and eventually they were rescued. Geoff said he was never contacted by the people involved.

I know Geoff was involved with Amateur Radio and the Falklands in 1982 but the 30 Year Rule prevented him talking about what he did. This 30 Year Rule ran out in 2012 so we can now talk about it!

What I do know is the British Government made a big play about not being in contact with the Falklands after it was invaded. We now know differently. What I do not know is what he actually did with the MOD and the Falklands and Amateur Radio. Bob McLeod, VP8LP lived at Goose Green and contacted Laurie Margolis, G3UML who in those days was a BBC Reporter – he got the first BBC report from VP8LP that the Falklands had been invaded. Geoff Mills knew of this as well.

As part of his technical career, Geoff was also in charge of the part of the Chelmsford Technical College in which CARS Member Arthur Butcher, G3KPJ was a Laboratory Technician. It was Arthur with Geoff who put together an Amateur



Radio 2 metre portable (Yaesu FT202), 1 watt FM transceiver and connected it to the public telephone network. Geoff Mills is second from the left. To his left is Roy Martyr, G3PMX, then Harry Heap, G5HF, then his boss during WWII but not known until 1975, Louis Varney, G5RV inventor of the famous G5RV Aerial and lastly Harry Lowe, G2HPF. To the right of Geoff is Geoff Cockerill, G2AMQ. The photo was taken outside the Marconi Training College in Arbour Lane – now a housing estate.

*All are now Silent Keys but in their time were famous.*

This was broadcast by the BBC on a Tomorrow's World programme in September 1979 and featured Michael Rodd. [Link for viewing here.](#)

Geoff was a prolific DX chaser and had a logbook detailing every Australian Radio Amateur he had contacted. The last one mentioned was 2,764. He used to contact Australia almost every day.

For more details about Geoff's life see <http://www.g0mwt.org.uk/society/g3edm-sk/g3edm.htm>

**John G8DET**

## CQWW DX CW

Anyone going on the HF bands on the weekend of 29/30th November would have been amazed at the tens of thousands of CW operators on the bands.

CQWW DX CW is an annual event, CW operators travel all over the world to operate from a special QTH to participate in a team events, or to UK contest groups.

Conditions were very good on all the bands, 10m especially. DX was in abundance, the Adaman and Nicobar Islands in the Indian Ocean; the Mariana Islands in the Phillipine Sea and the US Cook Islands to name just a few.

Even with my IC7700 on the narrowest of filters there was barely a space, if you could find a space there was a station very close causing heavy interference which had to be ignored. Personally, I did a single band entry, 20m only, 100W. There were no restrictions on how many of the 48 hours you could spend on the bands so I worked during the day, stopping as necessary for meals, exercise, etc. a total of 16 hours with 806 contacts.

I am sure there must be a few members who participate in this contest, either to chase DX or just give a few points away. If you do, why not send in your log, putting "Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society" in the club line. If 4 people do this then the club name will be listed in the results, helping to advertise the club. Even a few contacts will all help.

There are so many aspects of our great hobby, contesting being just one of them. It is not everyone's cup of tea. Skill, endurance and perseverance is required to read callsigns at speeds reaching 35 to 40wpm.

For the non-contester it is an ideal time to test your aerials, especially for the QRP operator, and perhaps help towards your DXCC.

All you have to do is log onto SM3CER's contest page and select the "rules" for the intended Contest. Read them carefully to find out the response/reply required.

Most rigs can now be pre-programmed to send your callsign and a small message.

Step 1 enter your callsign into radio *button 1*.

Step 2 enter your response into radio *button 2*.

### **Next:**

1. *listen carefully to the DX station's callsign.*
2. *Press button 1 to send your callsign at a convenient time.*
3. *When the DX station replies with your callsign, press the second button to send something like "5NN 14" or "5NN and a number."*
4. *The DX station will reply with something like, "TU(thank you) RK1XXX test"*  
*Job done, you have not even touched your key!!*

If you would like to give it a try on a friendly contest look out for the RSGB club contests. Have a go. If I can be of assistance please let me know.

**Andrew Kersey G0IBN**

***PS Danbury CW classes started again in January.***

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## Presidential Jottings

As this is my input to the first newsletter of 2015, the last input was written in December, may I wish all CARS members a very Happy New Year.

The Funeral of Geoff G3EDM was well attended by CARS members; unfortunately I succumbed to the winter's coughs and colds and could not attend. Geoff will be sadly missed by all his friends in CARS.

Our next meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February is on aurora and should be of interest to all radio amateurs whether you operate VHF and above or HF; the warbling signals from KL7 are a joy to listen to.

Finally, Charlie M0PZT together with help from Murray G6JYB, have put in a lot of hard work in producing a new web site for CARS. At the moment it is in a trial format and user comments are requested, so please follow the link from our current web site and comment on what has been done. It is very important that all members should have an input.

**Carl, G3PEM**

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## **And Finally:-**

**Remember, any articles you feel may be of interest to members are welcome as are details of items for sale or wanted. Send to [cars.editor1@gmail.com](mailto:cars.editor1@gmail.com).**

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## For Sale

**250W PA loud speaker** by IMG Stageline, type PAB-10P. Impedance 8 Ohm, 10" cone. Approx. dimensions, 22" x 14"x 10". Can be seen working. In very good condition. £55.

**Kantronics all Mode TNC** £25.

Complete with all manuals and some leads.

Colin G0TRM ☎ 01245 223835

[colinpage@ukgateway.net](mailto:colinpage@ukgateway.net)

**Watson W-25AM linear PSU**

0-15V DC; 25A (30A peak)

Dual meters, 240x150x230mm; 8.2kg

£40 with collection from Basildon

(possible delivery within 15miles)

Contact [alan.g0rth@gmail.com](mailto:alan.g0rth@gmail.com) for details.

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***Closing date for items in the next Newsletter – Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.***