

Gordons Final Words

Starlite December 1999

Welcome to the last issue of the Millennium depending on your point of view as to whether or not the new one starts next year. And may I wish you all the season's greetings. No StARS Xmas cards this year.

Welcome to new member **Geoff G0HHH**, a pal of **Richard's EWH**, who has been coming along to the meetings for the past few months.

Congratulations to Old Swinford Hospital on attaining the highest pass rate in GSCE and "" level exams in the Borough and coming 5th. In the country. A true reflection of the quality of teaching and the hard work of the pupils. It is a privilege to be associated with such a fine School.

ANNUAL SURPLUS SALE. 15TH. NOVEMBER.

Well attended, plenty of bargains, bit pushed for space in Feoffee's Parlour. Reel to reel tape recorders went for a song. Bought a couple of portable radios myself. Most surprising sale of the evening was an ex WD ATU for which **Ben Nock G4BXD** outbid **Stuart TBI** fetching Megabucks! Ben had complained, in a letter to **Tony CZH**, about lack of publicity for the event. In answer to this I can only say that the calendar of events is sent to **ALL** the regular mags, the local rag **AND GB2RS**. Very generous donations of items for sale towards club funds. **Bill HMD**, **Malcolm BOP** and **Richard EWH** come to mind for which many thanks. No one wanted a 286 PC with colour monitor for a Fiver! Ben said that he might be willing to give a talk on Ex WD equipment sometime in the New Year. A very successful evening, adding a few more coppers to the coffers. Many thanks to **Richard EWH** and **James HEZ**

NRAE COURSE.

This was supposed to start in September. Six first year boys (11 years of age) attended at various times during the first few weeks but only two remain and they have only just returned their parent consent forms. Don't think we shall be able to get down to any serious study 'til the New Year. **Tom 2E1LHT** is due to take the RAE this month along with **Simon Palmer**. They seem pretty confident so we wish them every success. Taking exams to these lads seems to be as easy as shelling peas. Tom has also been initiating the NRAE boys in the mysteries of electricity and maths, as a precursor to the course proper. Will make an excellent instructor ... as long as he doesn't blind 'em with science ... hi. He says that he intends opening an NRAE page on the on the school website for the benefit of students.

MORSE CLASS

Only half an hour each Wednesday? Well, I can tell you that they have had enough by the end of the session and raring to get off to the pub. It's all very new to **Richard M1DBC** and **John Clarke M1EJG** but, for the rest of them, Wayne, **Eric JWJ**, and **James** it's simply a matter of brushing up on the characters, getting used to the abbreviations and the QSO format. and practice, practice and more practice - but only in small doses. 10 to 15 minutes **TWICE A DAY**. Practice on street names, car number plates, anything that catches your eye. Emulate the SOUND of the characters in your mind, i.e. .Di dah --(A) Dah diddi dit --(B) etc. and you can practice anywhere at any time. Speed? Don't worry about it but remember that the receiving test at 12 words per minute takes about 2½ minutes whereas the 5-wpm test takes **6 minutes?**

RULES

A copy of the rules of the Society will be included in Starlite as soon as I can put them into a reasonable format. This was suggested by **Doug FYQ**, as against having them printed in book form, to save on costs.

MEETING FOR DECEMBER 20TH. No "XMAS FESTIVITIES". Normal on air and natter nite". Too near to Xmas.

John M1EJG has been building a PSU at Frank RXO's construction class at Hillcrest. They tell me he needs a sack truck to shift it! Well, Frank never does things by half, does he?

Have a happy Xmas and see you all in the New Year.

73 de Gord.

WATCH OUT

These viruses are currently in circulation ...
NOT

Ronald Reagan virus: Saves your data, but forgets where it is stored.

Mike Tyson virus: Quits after one byte.

Titanic virus: Your whole computer goes down.

Arnold Schwarzenegger virus: Terminates some files, leaves, but it will be back.

Dr. Jack Kevorkian virus: Deletes all old files.

Disney virus: Everything in your computer goes Goofy.

Fox Hunters Virus: Deletes files and justifies that its for the good of your PC.

Problems?

After each flight, pilots are invited to log any technical problems for maintenance services to resolve. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by RAF pilots and replies from other maintenance crews.

Problem: Test flight OK, except auto land very rough.

Solution: Auto land not installed on this aircraft.

Problem: Left inside near tyre needs replacement.

Solution: Almost replaced left inside main tyre

Problem: Something loose in cockpit.

Solution: Something tightened in cockpit.

Problem: Evidence of hydraulic leak on the right main landing gear.

Solution: Evidence removed.

Problem: Dead bugs on windshield.

Solution: Live bugs on order.

Problem: Autopilot in altitude hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute decent.

Solution: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

Problem: Number 3 engine missing

Solution: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

Problem: Whining noise in cockpit after engine shutdown

Solution: Pilot removed from cockpit.

The Final Report

Well this is the final report of the century and Christmas time once again and events to look forward to in the new millennium. But before I look too far ahead, its time to look back at 1999. Its most certainly been a mixed year, what with trying to pursue other interests that have not been connected with amateur radio, that have proved to be a very costly exercise. However I thought at the time I was doing the right thing! One exercise I have had some success in with help from club members and the West Midlands Amateur Computer Club is building my Windows 95 computer. As you all know computers is an ever learning project. Also I have finally concreted the supports for my mast. So looking forward I hope to combine my two main interests of computers and amateur radio.

Going back to the first week of November Len and myself were at the Sound Broadcasting exhibition at the NEC. On looking around at the various stand I came across RAYCOMM of which the MD is Ray Withers. Ray used to have the shop in Quinton selling amateur radio equipment, this later moved along to the Birmingham New Rd and was later taken over by ICOM and has since closed.

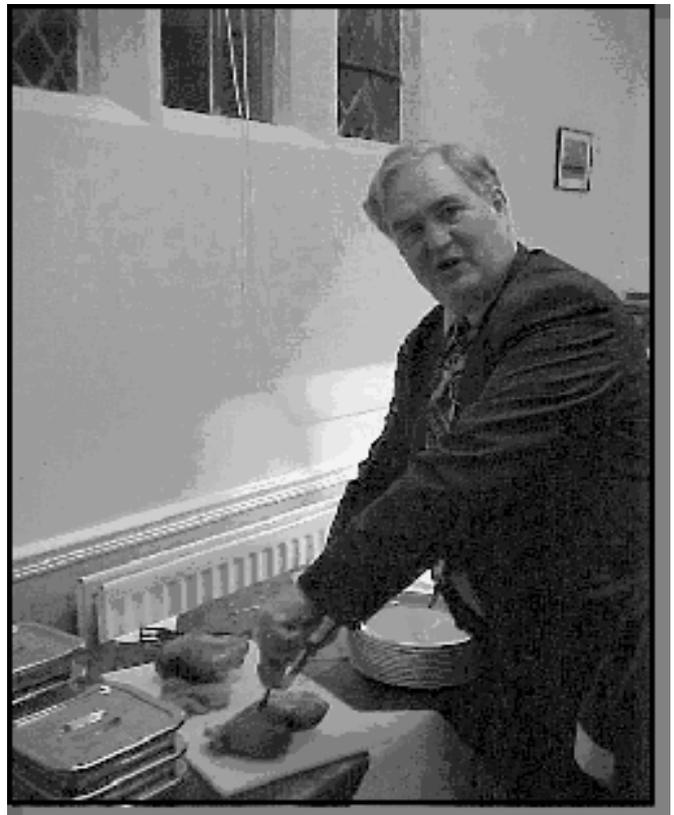
On the Thursday evening I was at the Wolverhampton Radio Club surplus sale. Apart from items I was trying to sell on behalf of the father of the late David Sayers who was tragically killed in a Provest jet plane in the Forest of Dean in the summer. There were also items of sale belonging to Bob Tomkins who has taught the RAE at Wombourne for many years, unfortunately due to health problems he will be moving into sheltered accommodation shortly.

On Saturday 6th I along with 400 Cradley

Heath speedway fans and supporters were at the Crystal Leisure Centre for a 50th reunion. Included was a fellow ex StARS member Phil Johnson G0PPJ plus some riders from over the years, and I recalled when I used to be at the stadium some fifty years ago!

On the weekend of the 13th and 14th Len and myself attended the computer rally at Bingley Hall. I managed to purchase a few items that I required for my computer projects. I also attended the MARS rally and came across a few present and ex StARS members at both.

All the best for the New Year, Malcolm



Chris Potter cutting the joint at the Old Swinford 30th Anniversary meal

G3NOW

Since writing my December report I read in the Express and Star on Saturday 20th that Bob Tomkins G3NOW became silent key on the 19th at the age of 77. Bob throughout his life had always been interested and connected with electronics and was employed at Reproducers and Amplifiers, Wolverhampton. Older members will recall that they manufactured top quality Amplifiers and Speakers, of which I have two in my collection. One of my work colleagues used to work at R&A and she used to tell me about Bob and his experiments, with sound and speaker testing. In the test room he would line it with egg boxes, sadly R&A along with so many names no longer exist. Bob enjoyed constructing and experimenting, as I noted at the formentioned surplus sale at the Wolverhampton Club. Bob's knowledge of

radio was passed on to others in the 26 years at Ousdale school Wombourne where he taught the RAE. He had a set back ten years ago when his devoted wife passed away. He had a stroke some time ago from which he never really recovered and lived in sheltered accommodation in his later years.

During the years of teaching the RAE he created a large number of licensed radio operators in the surrounding area that perhaps other wise may not have been licensed. Our condolences at StARS are sent to his family. The funeral is arranged for 26th Novemeber which I hope to attend

Malcolm



Guests about to enjoy the meal

Year 2000 from the Start

DEAR CASSIUS,

Are you still working on the Y zero K problem?

This change from Bc to AD is giving us a lot of headaches and we haven't much time left. I don't know how people will cope with working the wrong way round. Having been working happily downwards forever, now we have to start thinking upwards. You would think that someone would have thought of it earlier and not left it to us to sort it all out at the last minute.

I spoke to Caesar the other evening. He was livid that Julius hadn't done something about it when he was sorting out the calendar.

He said he could see why Brutus turned nasty. We called in Consultus, but he simply said that continuing downwards using minus BC won't work and as usual charged a fortune for doing nothing useful. Surely we will not have to throw out all our hardware and start again? Macrohard will make another fortune out of this |I suppose.

The money lenders are paranoid of course! They have been told that all usury rates will invert and they will have to pay their clients to take out loans. It's an ill wind ... as for myself, I just can't see the sand in an hourglass flowing upwards.

We have heard that there are three wise men in the east who have been working on the problem, but unfortunately they won't arrive until it's all over. I have heard that there are plans to stable all horses at midnight at the turn of the year as there are fears that they will stop and try to run backwards, causing immense damage to chariots and possible loss of life. Some say that the world will cease at the moment of transition. Anyway,

we are still continuing to work on this blasted Y zero K problem. I will send a parchment to you if anything further develops.

If you have any ideas please let me know.

PLUTONIUS

As extracted from a ICL Millennium Alert Publication



James receiving his Novice certificate
from Chris Potter

You can Quote me if you like..

A magazine recently ran a "Dilbert Quotes" contest. They were looking for people to submit quotes from their real life Dilbert-type managers.

1.As of tomorrow, employees will only be able to access the building using individual security badges. Picture will be taken next Wednesday and employees will receive their cards in two weeks.

(This was the winning quote from Fred Dales at Microsoft Corp in Redmond, WA.)

2.What I need is a list of specific unknown problems we will encounter.

(Lykes Line Shipping)

3.E-mail is not to be used to pass on information or data. It should only be used for company business.

(Accounting manager, Electric Boat Company)

4.This project is so important, we can't let things that are more important interfere with it.

(Advertising/Marketing manager, United Parcel Service)

5.Doing it right is no excuse for not meeting the schedule. No one will believe you solved this problem in one day! We've been working on it for months. Now go act busy for a weeks and I'll let you know when it's time to tell them.

(R&D supervisor, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing/3M Corp.)



President checking everyone is behaving!

Wednesday evening 5 wpm Morse Classes
at Old Swinford from 8:30 to 9:00
for the new M5 callsigns