



Radio Society of Great Britain



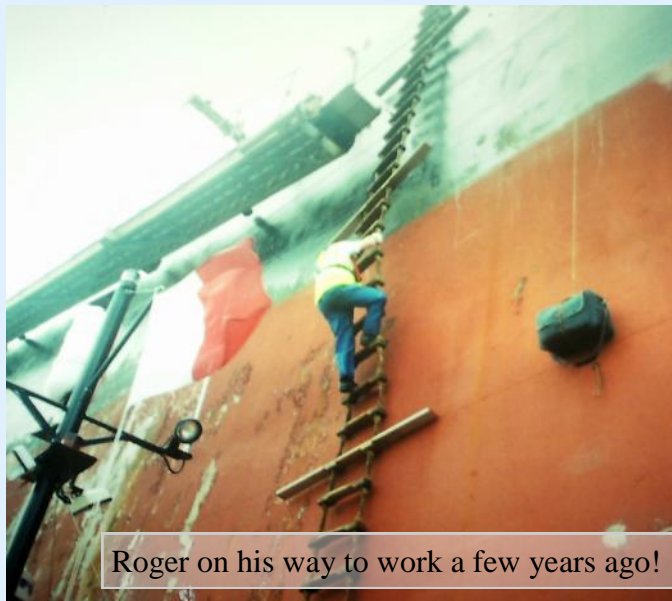
City of Bristol RSGB Group - G6YB

[At the Bristol Lawn Tennis & Squash Club, Redland Green, Redland, Bristol BS6 7HF](#)

Monday Feb 25th 1930hrs

Captain Roger Francis -Trinity House Deep Sea pilot

Captain Roger Francis M.N.I. has recently retired as a Trinity House Deep Sea Pilot. Roger served as a pilot for 21 years, during which time, with a trip averaging around eight days, he piloted 511 vessels totalling over 34 million dead-weight tonnes. The largest ship piloted by Roger was about 420,000 tonnes and the smallest has to be a load of rigid inflatable boats plus Richard Branson, driving his Aquada car across the Dover Straits, to beat the record for crossing the Straits in a car!



Roger on his way to work a few years ago!



Roger is now a marine consultant to Shadowtec who deal with Wingsails. The technology has been applied to many vessels including tankers and Trimarans.

“How I started in radio”

How it all Began: The G3MGS Story

I built my first crystal set while staying with my grandfather in Ealing. I must have been 9 years old. I remember badgering him and we sent off to Post Radio Supplies (address found in FJ Camms' Radio Engineers Pocket book) for an early silicon diode and a pair of BA5's. These were the best high impedance phones I ever came across. The set having been built and tested it was duly installed in my bedroom at home. This meant climbing (when my parents were out) on the roof of the shed to fix the far end of the aerial and using the metal frame of the bunk bed as an earth. That led to hearing amateur stations on 160 metres and my saving up for the bits to go with the HL2 my grandfather had given me. Then I got an 0-V-0 kit to which I quickly added an audio and rf stage. The 120 volt HT battery was a great drain on pocket money, so I saved up and got the battery eliminator kit later. It is odd that my parents were never keen on my activities "fiddling with wireless"

The early RX circa 1950—The RF stage is sitting on the 120V battery



Help came from the North Kent Radio Club and later the Cray Valley Club. I took the RAE at 14 years. Then a short period as a pirate before passing the morse test at St Martin Le Grand in the Christmas holiday of 1958. What joy, the only problem was that having paid my £12 licence fee I could not afford to renew my RSGB membership. Initially I was AM crystal controlled on 160 - one 6V6 and carbon mike only - it must have sounded dreadful but local hams were very kind, G2WI, G2BCX, G3BFP, G3JIT, G3JJC, G3JKT G3LWL and many more provid-

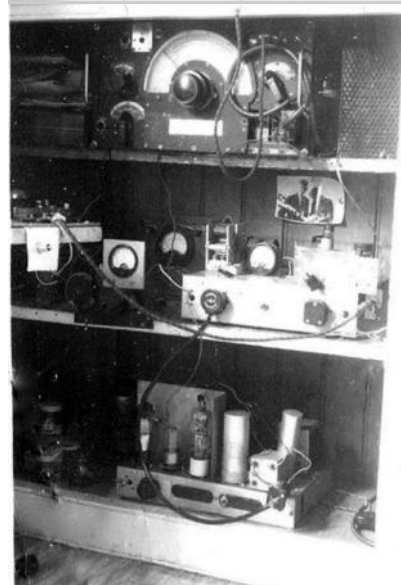
ing encouragement. Over the next 2 years I gradually acquired bits, made VFOs and eventually worked W1BB on the key on 160 before venturing HF. I did slow morse transmissions for a bit and once came 10th in the 160 metre CW contest – I would have done better but my log-keeper G3NPA kept falling asleep. There were holiday visits to Tottenham Court Road, Lisle Street - the usual stuff. I wanted to buy a 19 set then having saved the £1 10s , but it was too heavy to carry back to Charing Cross and put on the train.

Off to University and no time for ham radio but shortly afterwards married and with a flat on Sydenham Hill I had the best VHF QTH ever: an 80ft block of flats just below the Phoenix Tower. Fortunately the flats were old enough to have chimneys to put the coax down. Eventually I moved to Bristol in 1971 – does anyone remember the Bristol RSGB VHF Activity Group (*No - Ed !*) – is it in the minutes? Good efforts on VHF field days for a year or two. Then life got busy so QRT and wait 30 years for retirement and – bingo!

Chris G3MGS

(Many thanks Chris, another story next month - please send me yours !)

Improvements to the 1960 home station : a local gave me an R1155 !



The RSGB is about to start producing a newsletter .

**You can sign up for your free copy of "Getting Started" at
<http://www.rsgb.org/gettingstarted>**

**To make life complicated you will need to Log in with your callsign and
your membership number (found on the Rad. Com. wrapper)**

You will then get an email confirming that you are on the list .

For Sale:

**40ft Tennamast (Heavy duty) , G1000 rotator and cage plus lots of cable,
A3s + 30 /40m extensions, all in excellent condition :**

A bargain @ £1000 the lot . Contact: [Bob Jones G3YIQ](#)

TL922 linear amp £850 ono - one of the best HF linears around .

Contact : [Roger Fry G4WBV](#)

Coming soon to the Bristol Group :

March 25th: Chris Bartram GW4DGU - Microwave Projects

April 29th: Nick Gleed GW8YXM - Electron Microscopes

Have you applied for an NOV for the NEW bands?

472 – 479Khz and 5Mhz

Apply on line here

<http://www.rsgb.org/operating/novapp/nov-472-479-khz.php>

Caption Competition

Can you think of a suitable amusing caption for this picture?



The “winner” gets a free raffle ticket at the next meeting.

Entries for last month (lower picture) :

Dad: What’s that terrible noise ? Daughter: Oh come on Dad it’s the Russian Contest - they all send “enn” instead of 599 *Steve G3ZVW*

Boy : “The picture is so small - roll on the day when we get plasma screens” *Mike SWL*

Ken Bruce’s “Pop Master” question had them all stumped ... *G0XYL*

But this month’s winner

“Everyone gathered for the news but mum looked glum. ‘GB2RS is just not the same without that nice young man from Clifton reading it,’ she sighed.” *Steve G0FUW*

Steve will get a raffle ticket at the next meeting



Send me your captions ! robin@g3tkf.co.uk

IMPORTANT CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT

You can now pay your **RSGB Bristol group £10.00 membership** online.

BUT do remember to include details of Callsign and name.

Our account No.02520489 Sort Code 30-94-80 Lloyds Bank plc

Alternatively bring cash or a cheque along to a meeting and see Ron G4GTD

At the local clubs next month

Do try to get along to a meeting (and let me know if you have any suggestions/recommendations for future talks)

NBARC 1st March: Our New RSGB ? Dick G0XAY RSGB DRM Reg 11

Mid SARC 26th Feb: Social evening at “The Dustbowl”

Shirehampton: Every Friday night

Thornbury 20th March: GPS investigations Paul 2E0PSM

Trowbridge 6th March: “Pirate Radio” DVD by John Penny

Full details and more on the websites below

Local Clubs

Chippenham & DARC <http://www.g3vre.org.uk/archive.asp>

MidSARC www.midsarc.org.uk/

North Bristol ARC <http://www.nbarc.org.uk/>

Shirehampton <http://www.shirehampton-arc.org.uk>

South Bristol ARC <http://www.sbarc.co.uk/calendar/>

Thornbury and South Gloucs ARC <http://www.tsgarc.ham-radio-op.net>

Trowbridge and District ARC <http://www.radioclubs.net/trowbridgedarc/events.php>

That's all for now !

73

Robin

G3TKF (01225 420442)