

# Geoffrey Campbell Arnold

## I.Eng FIIE(elec), G3GSR

### 1934 – 2016

I was very sad to hear of the death of Geoff Arnold on Feb 13, 2016. Geoff was born in Kent, where his father was serving with the Royal Marines. When his father's service with the marines was over the family moved to Woolston on the outskirts of Southampton and his father became a staff photographer on the *RMS Queen Mary*. During the war, Geoff was evacuated to various places across southern England, including time in Berkshire where he encountered a more primitive lifestyle with no gas or electricity.

His interest in radio was first sparked when he received a copy of a book called *How It Works and How It's Done* for a Christmas present. From that moment on, he was engrossed in the book and it was difficult for anyone to get any sense out of him about anything else. His love of radio continued throughout his school years until he left school at the age of 15 and went to Radio College, graduating with a First Class Marine Radio Certificate after 12 months.

Geoff's first job at the age of 16 was on the Elders & Fyfe passenger-cargo liner *Bayano*, where he took up a posting as a Second Junior Radio Officer, learning his trade under the guidance of a senior RO. It was on his first trip, carrying bananas and a couple of hundred passengers, that they docked in Kingston, Jamaica where the senior RO developed appendicitis and was removed to hospital ashore. The captain had the choice of delaying his passage whilst they waited for a new senior RO to be flown out, but it was decided to continue with the trip back to the UK. So Geoff was thrown in at the deep end and survived, even

having to repair the radar equipment, on the way home to Avonmouth.

Over the years Geoff served on a number of different vessels, some just travelling around the coast of Britain, but others plying their trade across the world; until, eventually, he moved away from Marconi to work for P & O. During Geoff's second trip with P & O, on a visit to Singapore, the captain sent a telegram to the matron of the local military hospital inviting some of her nurses to a dance on board. This particular dance was attended by a very reluctant nurse who had to be

miles, according to the detailed log that he kept of his voyages. He then worked ashore, maintaining the radio equipment of ships docked in the UK, usually in Tilbury or Southampton.

In the mid-60s Geoff moved away from marine radio into a new sphere of technical journalism, working on *Television* and *Practical Wireless* magazines, moving to Dorset as Editor of *Practical Wireless* in 1976. He guided *PW* for more than 10 years, taking it over, together with various other members of staff, when it was sold by IPC, and the staff made redundant, in 1986.

It was Geoff's idea to start a new magazine on vintage radio and he designed and launched *Radio Bygones* in 1989, publishing it with Barbara until their retirement in 1999, although he continued to write for *RB* and provide information and advice to help the transfer of the magazine to Wimborne Publishing. Geoff also originally published the four volumes of *Wireless for the Warrior* (written by Louis Meulstee), plus his own biography in 2004 (now out of print).

A very genuine, quiet, unassuming, organised, thinking man, who would step up to the plate when needed. A loving husband and father who, unsurprisingly, struggled to cope when Barbara, the love of his life, was taken just a year before he died. He spent his last few weeks in a nursing home where he enjoyed being waited on like a hotel guest, although he still had to get the vacuum cleaner out from time to time to "help out".

*Mike Kenward, with thanks to Kevin Arnold*



persuaded by her friends to go along, and so it was that on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1955 Geoff first saw Barbara, he asked her to dance, in spite of the fact that, in his own words, he had very little idea of how to dance. By the time they next met, almost a year later, Barbara had moved via Kuala Lumpur to Hong Kong and it was in Hong Kong that Geoff finally proposed: and the rest, as they say, is history.

Geoff's time at sea finished in September 1960, after almost 10 years, having covered some 600,200 nautical