



South African Radio League

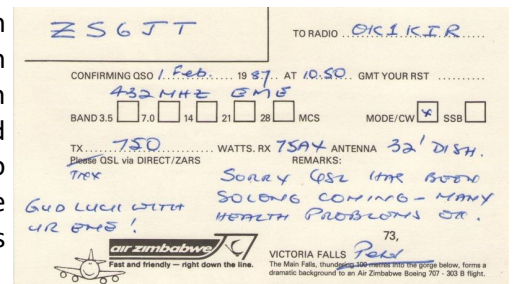
Amateur Radio Hall of Fame

Peter Carey ZS6JT (ex ZE5JJ)

Inducted in 2017



Peter was born around 1925. He held a BSc in Electrical Engineering from the University of the Witwatersrand. His interest in space communication took him to Iowa and Johns Hopkins universities in the USA to work on space programmes. He also worked a Hartbeesthoek tracking station and at Rice University, Houston, Texas as a space scientist. On his return to Rhodesia he worked at the Salisbury (now Harare) Municipality and the Electricity Supply Commission. In 1984 he relocated to Centurion as ZS6JT. He passed away there in 2008 at the age of 83.



Peter was active from the then Southern Rhodesia as ZE5JJ as early as 1955. He was fascinated by the prospects of bouncing signals off the moon and started building his own equipment in 1966. After eight years of frustration, it was in 1974 that he received his own echos. In his own words at the time: "I was on cloud 9!"

Peter made the first EME contact from Africa with the USA on 28 April 1974. Peter's long road to frustration started when he decided to build a parametric amplifier for 430 MHz. It eventually worked but was unstable and generated a lot of hum, making it unsuitable for EME. Hearing about his lack of success, Joe Reisert W1JR sent him several low noise bi-polar transistors from the USA, with which he constructed a pre-amp. He also received unsolicited support from an NEC engineer in Japan, who sent him two GasFET transistors worth around \$ 500 at the time.

In the early days, ZE5JJ provided the only hope of contacting Africa on 432 MHz. His QSL formed part of most of the early Worked All Continents awards issued on this band. His 10 m dish was featured in the ARRL Handbook in the early Eighties, and formed the subject of an application note published by Eimac, the prime supplier of high-power RF tubes.

When he relocated to Centurion as ZS6JT, Peter restarted his EME activities from scratch and designed and built an antenna array. Lecturing about EME in Gauteng, he told the audience of over a hundred radio amateurs that special Morse code skills were required to extract the weak signals from the noise. "If you are not prepared to do this, then rather stick to the two metre FM band".



At Peter's death in 2008, VHF stalwart Al Katz K2UYH wrote in *432 and Above EME News*: "He put Africa on the EME map on both 432 and 1296 MHz. Peter in many respects was an inspiration to many radio amateurs and introduced the passion for bouncing signals off the moon to many. He showed that perseverance will achieve what at first seemed impossible."