

**Adam Farson, VA7OJ/AB4OJ, SK, 1940–2024**

Daniel Rosenne, 4X1SK

I first met Adam in a café in Givatayim in 2017, and we immediately became fond of each other – two veteran radio enthusiasts with many common interests. Adam convinced me to renew my HF transceiver and replace it with modern SDR equipment – and I didn't regret it...

Adam, who was born in a Jewish family in Britain that moved to South Africa as a child, had relatives in Givatayim, and he used to visit them for Passover (most recently – in 2022). We took advantage of these visits for interesting meetings, and I remember his lecture in the spring of 2019 at the Association for the Commemoration of the Fallen Soldiers of the Signal Corps in Yehud-Monosson, in front of a room full of amateurs, a fascinating lecture on German communications equipment and German signals intelligence during World War II, a scholarly and fascinating lecture that went into detail about components, typical packaging methods, technologies and products.



**Adam Farson, Dayton Amateur Radio Conference, USA, 2016**

We corresponded regularly on technological topics and the history of the development of radio equipment. Adam was an inexhaustible source of knowledge that combined historical proficiency and thorough in-depth technological knowledge, up-to-date with current developments.

Adam has been an amateur radio enthusiast since childhood. In 1948, as a gift for his eighth birthday, his father bought him a crystal radio receiver for self-assembly, helped assemble it, connect it to an antenna – and it was possible to receive the local radio stations. From this moment Adam became interested in electrical and radio issues. His parents bought him books and encouraged him to learn and develop. At the age of 10 he built a tube

tester (and wound the transformers himself), and later built receivers (direct receivers with tubes – transistors did not appear until the 1960s), which made it possible to receive local medium wave stations). Adam passed exams and received an amateur radio license in November 1962, with the call sign ZS1ZG (after learning morse, at 12 words per minute), and his first station was an army surplus radio, the WS62 (an 'advanced' version, developed in 1945, of the 19 Set, known in Israel as the MQ-19), purchased from a scrap dealer in Pretoria. The low-power device was not very successful, and Adam purchased a surplus ARC-5 airborne military radio, converted it into a crystal-controlled amateur transmitter in the 20 meter band – and began to maintain morse contacts!

Adam was deeply involved in the local amateur radio association, choosing a career as an electronics engineer. He then designed and built his own 20-meter single-band amateur transmitter. After graduating from engineering in 1964, he began working at Racal in Pretoria, where he spent three fascinating years developing portable military HF communications equipment, with 100 watts output power, based on solid-state components. He finally became convinced that the vacuum tubes were out—though it took him many years to convince other radio amateurs that it was... This is the background to a person's interest and knowledge in the history of military communications equipment and the history of electronic measuring equipment.

In 1967 he moved to the CERN European Research Center in Geneva, Switzerland, as an RF engineer, where he designed unique RF equipment for a particle accelerator, and received a Master's degree in engineering from the University of Capetown. After completing his tenure at CERN, he went on vacation in Israel and was recruited by GTE, which then built the satellite station of the post office in Emek HaElah; From 1970 to 1972 he worked on the construction of the satellite station, a unique venture at the time, specializing in combining the specializations of RF and communications.

In late 1972 he moved to an engineering company in Washington, D.C., which dealt with telephony switching systems, and after a few years he moved to Nortel in Toronto, Canada, where he developed telephony switching systems for five years. In 1976, he returned to amateur radio, with the Canadian callsign VE3DGY, which years later was converted to VE3OJ.

After five years in Canada, he returned to GTE in Chicago, and then moved to Siemens in Florida, where he worked for twenty years, including a year in Japan and a year in Germany, on switching and transmission communications equipment. Adam retired in 1999, with valuable knowledge and experience.

For more than 30 years Adam has set up a radio frequency testing laboratory in his home, which would not shame a respected scientific research body, and provided technical support for amateur radio, focusing on ICOM equipment. His website, <https://www.ab4oj.com/>, has become an important source of information for amateur radio operators. Adam focused on advanced software radio technology (SDR) and power amplifiers for amateur radio, and the development of unique measurement methods for advanced HF receivers. The most important development was the NPR (Noise Power Ratio) method Measures SDR receiver performance.<sup>1</sup> The technical reports Adam wrote on amateur equipment were groundbreaking. Adam helped every radio amateur who approached him, willingly and patiently, brightly, and many amateur radio enthusiasts – myself included – are grateful to Adam.

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<sup>1</sup> For Adam's lecture on the subject, from October 2023: [https://youtu.be/hlDb6uJSR\\_g](https://youtu.be/hlDb6uJSR_g)

Adam was awarded a special Technical Achievement Award by the American Amateur Radio Association, ARRL, in March 2022.

A man, a model and an example for radio amateurs, an amateur radio operator in all his limbs, until his last day.

Adam was injured in a car accident, discharged from hospital after a short hospitalization, but died within days, on March 13, 2024, due to complications. A dear friend who will be missed. May his memory be blessed.

*"It is a pity for those who are gone and no longer to be found!" (Talmud, Sanhedrin, 111a)*



**Adam Farson on his last visit to Israel, October 2022**  
Photograph: Hanan Zabar, 4Z1DZ