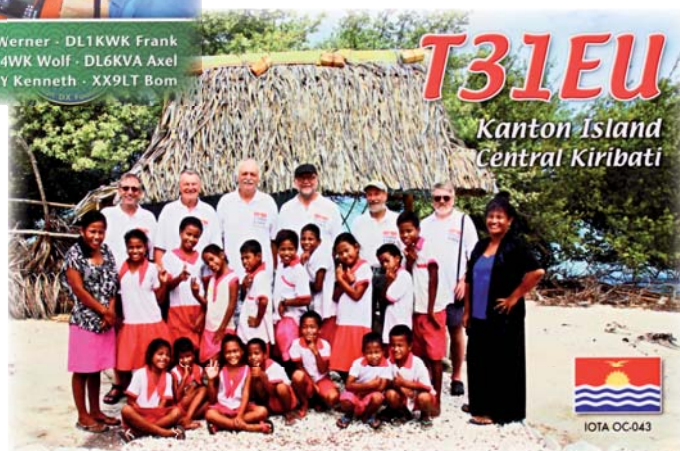




CQ



DX



# EUDXF NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2019

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## EUDXF newsletter JANUARY 2020

### Imprint

**EUropean DX Founation e.V.** – **President:** Dominik Weiel (DL5EBE), Kirchweg 13, 49356 Diepholz, Germany, e-mail: [president@eudxf.eu](mailto:president@eudxf.eu). **Boardmember:** Ronald Stuy (PA3EWP), Hans P. Blondeel Timmerman (PB2T), Jan B. C. Harders (DJ8NK), Kenneth Opskar LA7GIA. **Advisor:** Prof. Dr. Achim Rogmann (DF3EC).

**Officemanager:** Alex van Hengel (PA1AW). **Standmanager:** Jan Stadman (PA1TT/DJ5AN). **Cashier, Office DL and Printing Support:** Robert F. Lörcks (DL1EBV). **Webmaster:** Alex van Hengel (PA1AW).

As always a new year means that the **membership fees** are due. Please transfer your **25 Euro** or more as soon as possible, preferably to **our Bank Account:** Volksbank Kleverland: IBAN: DE65 3246 0422 0205 1830 19 BIC: GENO DE D1KL L.

I trust that members living in the Euro zone will use this account only, because this implies the least costs for our foundation. Those who do not live in the Euro zone may also use PayPal to [cashier@eudxf.eu](mailto:cashier@eudxf.eu).

## Welcoming Words of the President

**Dear EUDXF Members,**

better late than never - welcome to the October edition of the EUDXF Newsletter! This edition should have been published already in July, but we simply didn't manage to complete it earlier. I hope you forgive us! However, we are happy to bring at least several excellent DXpedition reports into your shack which shall remind you of the great moments when the bands were open and you could spend sleepless nights behind your radios, hunting for the last needed bandpoints. Enjoy reading!

For us as organisation, the summer highlight was definitely the Ham Radio hamfest in Friedrichshafen where EUDXF was again present with its own stand. This year, the major european DX organisations came together in hall A1 and formed the so-called "DX Plaza", a place arranged similar to a mediterranean market place, where wellknown DXpeditioners and DXers from all parts of the world came together for listening to DXpedition presentations, getting their desired DX QSL out of first hand, discussing new where-do-we-go-next plans or just making friends with other DXers enjoying the Plaza atmosphere. The DX Plaza was crowded from the beginning until the last moment of the hamfest. What had started as an experiment turned out to be a full success which for sure will be repeated again in a similar or even better configuration next year. Also the EUDXF DX dinner was again well visited. At this point I would like to express my sincere thanks to Jan, DJ5AN/PA1TT, for event organisation as well as to all EUDXF members who supported the desk team!

Another highlight was the 2019 annual general meeting (AGM) of the EUDXF which took place on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> of August in Bad Bentheim, Germany. This year's AGM was combined with the board elections which by constitution have to be organised every 3 years. As a result, Dom, DL5EBE/R4BE, was confirmed as EUDXF President for the next 3 years. The new Board of Directors is now composed of Hans, PB2T (reelected), Ron, PA3EWP (reelected), Jan, DJ8NK (reelected) and Ken, LA7GIA (new board member). I would like to thank all candidates for their participation in the elections. To the new Board I wish good luck to guide EUDXF the right way into the future!

November is again the activity month of the EUDXF. As in the previous years, several special event station will be active on all bands and modes. This year DL33EUDXF, HG33EUDXF, LA33EUDXF, PA-PI33EUDXF (9 stations), TM33EUDXF and ZS33EUDXF will participate in the activity month. All stations will count for the 33EUDXF Award which will be managed by Alex, PA1AW. For the award conditions please visit the EUDXF website. I wish all participants lots of fun and many QSOs!

On December 1<sup>st</sup> the new Board and Officers team will come together for the 2019 EUDXF workshop which this time will be hosted by Jan, DJ5AN/PA1TT. Workshops like this are regularly organised to make sure that all internal processes run smoothly to make our foundation fit for the future. New ideas are being collected, plans made and things that went wrong in the past shall be addressed and corrected. If you should have good ideas to make EUDXF more efficient, please send us a message to [office@eudxf.eu](mailto:office@eudxf.eu).

We wish all DXpeditioners a safe and successful journey to their dream destinations and a happy return. Be the good propagation always with you! And to the DXers at home – keep an eye on the split button of your radio, that prevents big trouble ... ☺



## New Members

Since July 2018 we welcomed the following DX-enthusiasts as new EUDXF members:

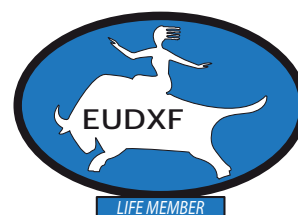
### New Members

#287 Pekka Holstila; OH2TA  
#449 Warwick Hall; G4WHM  
#580 Prof. Dr. Hans Schwarz; DK5JI  
#961 Bert Matthies; DM1BM  
#962 Roelof J.C. Bolhuis; PE5TS  
#963 Franz Berndt; DL9GFB  
#964 Patrick de Jong; PD2PC  
#965 Jan Buitenhuis; PA4JJ  
#966 Fred Bontenbal; PA3GDG  
#967 Enno J. Korma; PF5X  
#968 Enrico Stumpf-Siering; DL2VFR  
#969 Timon Kruijer; PA1T  
#970 Martin Bak; PAØMBD  
#971 Bouke Zwerver; PAØZH  
#972 Andre Haan; PD3OES

## New Members

#973 Dirk de Boer; PA1BD  
#974 Mats Strandberg; RM2D  
#975 Augusto Baldoni; IK4RQJ  
#976 Ronny Mang; DM2RM  
#977 Thomas (Tom) Hubert; DL7BO  
#978 Kutasi Gabor; HA3JB  
#979 Jacques Debouche; ON5OO  
#980 Jens Knöpchen; DDØVU  
#981 Dr. Heinz-Josef Pick; DK5WL  
#982 Guillaume Sauvage; F4FET  
#983 Joel Erpelding; LX1ER  
#984 Robert E. Fanfant; N7QT  
#985 Evert Bakker; PA2KW  
#986 Mashita Maohiko; JA1HGY  
#987 Michael Funke; DL4EAX  
#988 Carmen Weber; DM4EAX  
#989 Thomas (Tom) Stiehl; PA2TMS  
#990 Peter Schollema; PA4O  
#991 Kolja Kollorz; DK5KK

We thank you all for your support and we hope you will enjoy your membership.



## EUDXF Life Members

For those members who want to join the list of distinguished members, please contact the EUDXF Board. The price for Life Membership is still Euro 400 and is tax deductible in several countries. For this purpose you will be sent a receipt on request.

The following EUDXF Members are registered as Life Members:

### Life Members

Prof. Dr. Achim Rogmann; DF3EC  
Klaus Schlich; DF3GL  
Jürgen Carow; DF3OL  
Jan G. Stadman; DJ5AN  
Gerd Richter; DJ5IW  
Christian (JAN) Harders; DJ8NK  
Dr. Dieter Messer; DJ9ON  
Gottfried Dutinié; DK3DG  
Dr. Andreas Söchting; DK6AS  
Karl-Dieter Löffler; DK9KD  
Timm Wangerin; DL1BKT  
Kurt C. Schips; DL1DA



## Life Members

Robert F. Lörcks; DL1EBV  
 Frank Rosenkranz; DL4KQ  
 Leo Wirth; DL4NBE  
 Dominik Weiel; DL5EBE  
 Klaus Huber; DL5EC  
 Felix J. Riess; DL5XL  
 Johannes Langner; DL7BQ  
 Olaf Bunner; DL7CX  
 Robin U. Go; DU9RG  
 Iñaki Echeveria; EA2AAZ  
 Fred C. Handscombe; G4BWP  
 Andrea Panati; IK1PMR  
 Yoshihiko Hirano; JA2MNB  
 Tsutomu Kitahara; JAØDBQ  
 Katsuyama Katsuo; JAØEQO  
 Noriko Nakamoto; JFØJIL  
 Daniel Dankert; N6PEQ  
 Pertti Turunen; OG2M  
 Martti Laine; OH2BH  
 Jukka Heikinheimo; OH2BR  
 Jari Jussila; OH2BU  
 Veijo Kontas; OH6KN  
 Rob van de Kamer; PA1X  
 Gert van Loo; PA2LO  
 Ronald Stuy; PA3EWP  
 Maarten Bos; PA3EYC  
 Dick Grolleman; PA3FQA  
 Henk Hofman; PA3GCV  
 Hans Blondeel Timmerman; PB2T  
 Sergey V. Kislov; RN3AHL  
 Tomasz Barbachowski; SP5UAF  
 Thor Stefansson; TF4M  
 Ingrid S. Geissler; W7ISG

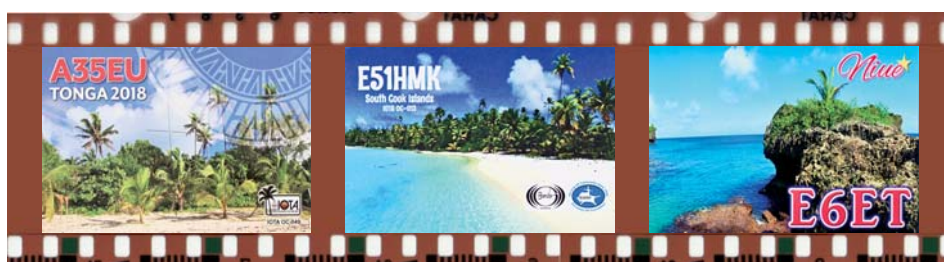
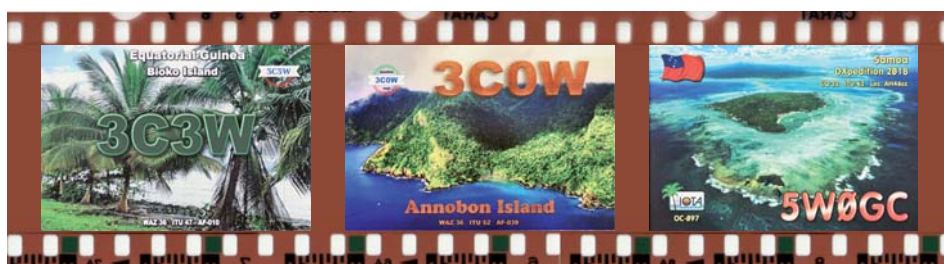
## pending sponsored

5KØK – San Andres  
 6070 – Somalia  
 A35JT – Tonga  
 C21WW & T3ØL – Nauru & W. Kiribati  
 D68CCC – Comoros  
 T3ØET – Western Kiribati  
 T3ØGC – Western Kiribati  
 TO8ØSP – Saint Pierre & Miquelon  
 TX7T – Marquesas  
 VK9N – Norfolk  
 VP6R – Pitcairn  
 VP8/VP8DXU – South Orkneys  
 VU7RI – Lakshadweep  
 XRØZRC – Juan Fernandez  
 ZK3A – Tokelau



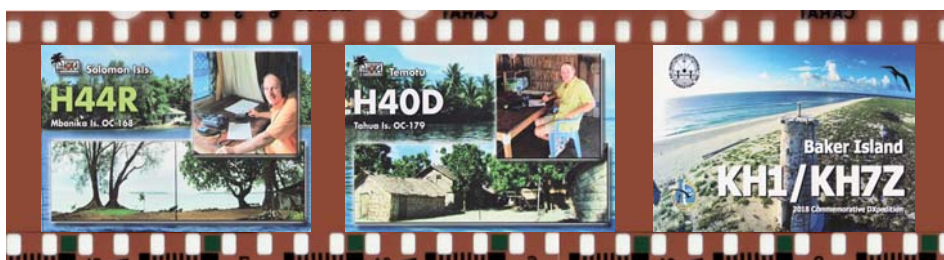
Best 73s from Wolgograd & good DX!

Dominik R4BE - DL5EBE (EUDXF #598)  
 - EUDXF President -



## Sponsored activities 2018 / 2019

3C3W Bioko Island – by Yuris, YL2GM, Kas, YL1ZF and Girts, YL2KL  
 3CØW Annobon Island – by Yuris, YL2GM, Kas, YL1ZF and Girts, YL2KL  
 5WØGC Samoa – by Stanislav (Stan) Vatev, LZ1GC  
 A35EU Tonga – by Ronald Stuy, PA3EWP  
 E51HMK South Cook Islands – by Hans-Martin Kurka, DK2HM  
 E6ET Niue – by Alex Gromme, 5B4ALX  
 H44R Solomon Island – by Cezar Trifu, VE3LYC  
 H4ØD Temotu – by Cezar Trifu, VE3LYC  
 KH1/KH7Z Baker Island – by Don Greenbaum, N1DG  
 T31EU Kanton Island, Central Kiribati – by Ronald Stuy, PA3EWP  
 TXØA French Polynesia, Maria Est Atoll – by Cezar Trifu, VE3LYC  
 TXØM French Polynesia, Morane Atoll – by Cezar Trifu, VE3LYC  
 XX9D Macao – by Werner Hasemann, DJ9KH  
 YJØGC – by Stanislav (Stan) Vatev, LZ1GC



## EUDXF at this Year's Ham Radio

We can call it already a tradition that EUDXF is represented with its own stand and team at the HAM RADIO hamfest in Friedrichshafen. HAM RADIO has been traditionally a meeting point for many interested in DXing from all over the world. This is true for those activating rare entities or islands as well as for the DXers chasing them. Many of these DXers are members of national or international clubs and foundations, whose main goal is to financially support DXpeditions. Quite a few of these clubs and foundations have attended HAM RADIO for years.

*Amateur Radio on Tour* – the motto of this year's HAM RADIO 2019 – appeals directly to the DXers. Some groups coincidentally decided to set up their stands in one large area instead of being scattered all over the exhibition hall. This is how DX-Plaza was born.

### DX Plaza and its genesis

What a great idea to have (almost) all DX-groups in one big area called DX Plaza in hall A1 at the HAM RADIO in Friedrichshafen. The idea behind *DX Plaza* was to facilitate discussions among all those interested in DXing, and also have a dialogue between the groups. We believe that this initiative was successful, and in this case we intend to keep *DX Plaza* in place for the next years to come, perhaps with more groups joining. There was no need to go looking for your DX buddies. They were all there! Also, there was no need for remembering which DX society served snacks, coffee and drinks at which time. There was a permanent supply of it.

The *DX Plaza* was an experiment and it took some efforts to make it happen. In 2018, Jan, DJ8NK, and Jan, DJ5AN, got in touch with Stephan, HB9DDO (President of the Swiss DX Foundation), and in a nice talk the idea of cooperating as DX organizations was born.

When we started to work out the idea, the feedback was not too enthusiastic. But once the idea had grown we got more positive response. Jan, DJ5AN, had the idea of arranging it like a small village as you can find it in southern Europe. So his idea of the *DX Plaza* was born. It took a while until the invited organisations were convinced to participate. Some could not imagine how the *DX Plaza* should be realized.

But the preparations for HAM RADIO 2019 proceeded and we got extraordinary support from the DARC by Steffie, DO7PR, and Sina Kirsch – thanks a lot for the assistance. Also the cooperation with the Messe Friedrichshafen administration was more than superb. A big thanks to Alessandra Weigl and her team.

Jan, DJ5AN, created some plans how the DX Plaza could look like. When we published a preliminary plan, more organizations realized the opportunity and joined us. This was a very good signal for the *DX Plaza*. However, we had to start all over again with the design. Jan did not tell us how burdensome the situation has been for him but he redesigned the plaza configuration successfully. Alessandra accepted the drafted layout and integrated it into her Messe plan. This opened 5 nice stands for the 7 DX interested groups and the plan also offered sufficient presentation space for the mini presentations.

The DX Plaza on the Hamradio @ Friedrichshafen  
Contact persons for the DX clubs are:

Jan DJ5AN / PA1TT  
Stephan HB9DDO



### Participating clubs at DX Plaza have been:

- Swiss DX Foundation – SDXF
- European DX Foundation – EUDXF
- Mediterraneo DX Club – MDXC
- Clipperton DX Club – CDXC
- Union Française des Télégraphistes – UFT
- Islands on the Air Ltd – IOTA
- El DX Group.

We agreed that presentations shown at the official DX Forum, should not be doubled at our small presentation space. For next year we already have some groups who are interested in joining us at the *DX Plaza*.



## The EUDXF Stand

This year we found Jan, DJ5AN, in a completely different role. With a knee operation as valid excuse and a big plaster to prove this, he commanded his troops sitting in a comfortable lounge chair with pillow. Achim, DF3EC, finished decorating the stand in almost no time.

This year our stand crew consisted of Jan, DJ5AN/PA1TT, and XYL Sabine, Achim, DF3EC, Jan DJ8NK, Ron, PA3EWP, Martin, PA4WM, Hans, PB2T, and his XYL Margreet, K2XYL. Because of the *DX Plaza* concept they did not want to leave the centre of activities. Following the stand manning schedule was no problem at all. Thanks to all members of the stand team!

As usual we had our recruiting campaign, resulting in 12 new EUDXF Members, one Life Member and numerous outstanding membership fees were collected. Jan wants to point out that it is not necessary to wait until the Ham Radio to pay your membership fee since it is already due in January. Everyone is very welcome at the stand if you have payed your fee. In the EU zone we kindly ask you to pay by bank transfer.

## Presentations

Mini presentations on recent DX activities were shown on DX Plaza (see the program table).

## QSL Card - The Final Courtesy!

*DX Plaza* was an excellent opportunity to collect QSL-cards. Alex, 5B4ALX, used the chance and distributed the cards for his recent E6ET activity from Niue Island.



Alex 5B4ALX and Martin PA4WM

## EUDXF Dinner

The annual EUDXF dinner took place on Saturday evening in Gasthof Traube in Tettwang. Around 40 top DXers gathered to enjoy Swabian specialties and local products from breweries and wineries. The participants discussed DX related topics or just enjoyed meeting long learned friends. The EUDXF dinner was regarded as one of the highlights of this year's Ham Radio.

## View back and into the future

If we consider the high number of hams who visited the *DX Plaza* during the three days and the feedback we heard: the only words to describe the outcome of our experiment is that it has been an extraordinary success. We owe a big thanks to all who were involved and especially

to our stand manager Jan, DJ5AN, who made it possible. And also a big thanks for organizing the EUDXF dinner which contributed to the great success of EUDXF's activities at Lake Constance.

Next year we would like to welcome even more DX clubs like the GDXX and CDXX at the DX Plaza. Jan, DJ5AN, already started planning ahead to make the 2020 *DX Plaza* a big success again. See you at the HAM RADIO 2020 in Friedrichshafen from 26 to 28 June 2020!



Two Life Members: Achim DF3EC and Klaus DL5EC



From left to right: Sabine (XYL DJ5AN), Michael PA5M, Paul F6EXV, Hans-Martin DK2HM, Achim DF3EC, Dick PA3FQA, and Tom GM4FDM







Entrance to the Ham Radio Exhibition



From left to right: Sabine (XYL DJ5AN), Jan DJ5AN & Bram PBØAOK



Alex 5B4ALX and Laurent F8ATM



EUDXF-Stand on DX-Plaza



Gasthof Traube – Tett nang



From left to right: Gerry F2VX, Stan LZ1GC, Dick PA3FQA, Paul F6EXV, Jun JH4RHF, Nao JA1HGY, Ueda JA4LKB, Hiro JA4DND, Thierry F6CUC



Alex 5B4ALX and Stan LZ1GC



From left to right: Hans DL6JGN, Hiro JA4DND, Carine ON7LX, Claude ON7TK, Achim DF3EC, Rein PAØR, Ron PA3EWP, Norbert DJ7JC





From left to right: Jan DJAN with XYL Sabine and others



From left to right: DK?, Baldur DJ6SI, Frank DL7UFR, Sigi DL7DF, Tom DL7BO, Wolf DL4WK, Sabine (XYL DJ5AN)



From left to right: Jacek SP5EAQ, Jan DJ8NK, Hans-Martin DK2HM, Ronny DM2RM, Bert DK3BK



From left to right: Martin PA4FM, Michael PA5M, Dick PA3FQA, Tom GM4FDM, Alex 5B4ALX



DXers Group in front of "Gasthof Traube"



Hans-Martin DK2HM, Ronny DM2RM, Bert DK3BK



DXers Group in front of "Gasthof Traube"



DXers Group in front of "Gasthof Traube"





EUROPEAN  
**DX Foundation e.V.**

(EUDXF e.V.)

**LIFE-MEMBER**

**PA1TT / DJ5AN**

**Jan G. Stadman**

**in acknowledgement for his outstanding  
achievements in the annual organisation of  
the EUDXF stand & DX dinner at the  
Ham Radio Hamfest in Friedrichshafen**

*Dominik Weiel*

**BAD BENTHEIM**  
August 24, 2019

No: 51

**PRESIDENT**  
Dominik Weiel, DL5EBE



In recognition of his longterm engagement as EUDXF officer, organiser of the EUDXF stand and DX Dinner during the annual Ham Radio Hamfest in Friedrichshafen and successful recruitment of new members for our foundation, Jan, DJ5AN/PA1TT, has been awarded EUDXF Life-Membership (#51).



# XX9D – Macau 2019 DXpedition

BY WERNER HASEMANN, DJ9KH

## XX9D - Macau 2019 – we did it again!

Why revisit Macau so soon after 2017? Demand is still quite high, number 88 in the EU, and even number 36 in North America's most-wanted list. We therefore resolved to focus more on North America, in particular on SSB. Additionally, we wanted to provide the new FT8 digital mode, which was not really available at the time of our last Macau DXpedition.

Getting to Macau was quite comfortable with Air China via Beijing resp. Hong Kong. Customs procedures and licensing formalities were easy going with the help of the absolutely friendly staff of the Macau authorities. Thanks to Bom, XX9LT. Under the leadership of Rolf, DL7VEE, we were able to build a team of 15 experienced DXpeditioners: DJ6TF, DJ7TO, DJ9HX, DJ9KH, DL1KWK, DL1RTL, DL2RNS, DL4SVA, DL4WK, DL6KVA, DL7JOM, DL7VEE, DL9GFB, OZ1IKY and XX9LT.

As previously announced we wanted to intensify our activities on the low bands, because we were asked to do so and of course as a reaction on the forecasted bad conditions on the higher bands. So we built up separate antennas for 160, 80 and 40 meters which were verticals on 15 m to 18 m masts. On 30 m we had a loop antenna. On the high bands we were happy enough to use the brand new 2 element wire beam from LZ Antennas in Bulgaria together with a LBS-Pentaplexer. This beam antenna was specially modified for us as a very solid and light weight DXpedition version. This configuration of antennas offered to us the chance to operate on the low and higher bands the same time. Filtering was most time good enough to do so. As in 2017 all antennas had to be erected on a surface 30 m long and 1 m wide, which really was a challenge but we managed. The later reports from all over the world showed us, that they performed very well. We were using 5 stations with almost identical configurations: laptop with UCX software, Microkeyer, K3, filter cascades, amplifier (4 x Expert 1.3k, KPA500) and antenna. Our team had ambitious plans for this DXpedition, but we were negatively surprised by the discovery of extreme interference on HF, regularly reaching levels above S9 on the low bands.

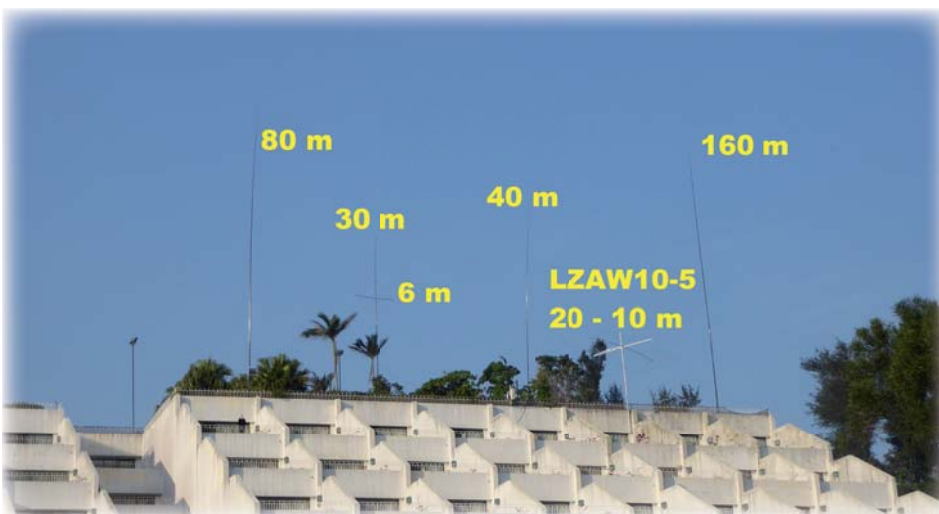
The hotel had up-scaled significantly since 2017. Possibly some inexpensive switch mode power supplies installed



XX9D – Antenna setup



XX9D – LZAW 10-5 Antenna for 20 and 10 m Band



XX9D – All Antennas 160 m to 6 m





The XX9D Broadcast room

for the lighting accompanying the Chinese New Year were to blame, or a PLC-QRM. We never managed to localise the source of the interference. Particularly remarkable was the noise at night on 30 m significantly beyond S9, which abated promptly at 07:00 h. The conditions on

the higher bands were also worse than expected and predicted. Apart from a high noise level we often encountered very strong QSB. Only rarely we managed SSB and in CW the calls had to be assembled bit by bit like a puzzle from the QRN signals. RTTY was also ineffective.

At the end, the new slightly contentious but increasingly popular FT8 digital mode saved the day, because this almost always managed to yield results. This accounts for the high proportion of almost 50 % of FT8 QSOs in the log. By the way, being the only CW operator out of 4 FT8



The XX9D Team



operators in the same shack is a very special situation. Imagine you are puzzling call signs together with a relatively low QSO rate, fighting with QRM and QRN whilst your comrades are enjoying their FT8 QSOs in a very relaxed position, sometimes on two bands simultaneously. Nevertheless, I felt a little bit more heroic.

The hotel gave us a fast and stable access to the internet, so updating our homepage and transferring log data to ClubLog was no problem. We also had a stable AC power supply in our room, even with the power consumption of 5 high power stations. Apart from the generally supportive messages we received regarding our problems especially at the receiving end, we also encountered inept comments in the DX cluster spread by fake calls. This was both disappointing and not at all helpful. We remained being QRV around the clock with 5 stations in order to provide as many QSOs as possible. Sometimes, especially at night, it was frustrating not to be able to bring more than 10 QSOs per hour into the log. It should be noted that having 5 stations in a single room creates its own issues, because in particular the Expert amplifiers don't react kindly to straying RF – despite optimal choking ranges these repeatedly ended up in "protection mode". Here a special separation would have been beneficial, possibly even allowing more than one mode on the same band. Deployment of a special low band receiving antenna would also be desirable for this location, but unfortunately this could not

be implemented due to the specific set-up in and around the hotel. A remote receiving antenna for the low bands would have been my preferred solution. Any suggestions?

Given the circumstances, the achieved 36,000 contacts, 8.7 % of which with North America are quite a satisfactory result. When not on shift, the operators and their accompanying wives had ample opportunity to get to know Macau with its eclectic, at once historic, futuristic and glamorous setting. One particular highlight was a trip across the brand new bridge connecting Macau to Hong Kong, with its 55 km span the longest in the world. Hong Kong was fascinating and the cable car trips to the Big Buddha and Hong Kong peak unforgettable.

## Summary

We brought Macau "on air" again. Given the circumstances described, the team is quite happy with the achieved 36,000 connections, of which 8.7 % were with North America. The team harmonised well, enabling us to overcome the frustration at the adverse conditions. The comradeship during operations and in our spare time was exemplary. Looking back I believe it was a good experience for us all. Heartfelt gratitude goes out to all the sponsors, the foundations as well as to the individuals. Thanks again to the staff and management of the Grand Coloane Resort for their outstanding service and cooperation.

Werner Hasemann, DJ9KH

## Band/Mode breakdown

Band	CW	FT8	SSB	RTTY	Total	Total %
160	875	184	0	0	1,059	2.9 %
80	2,504	2,198	209	16	4,927	13.6 %
40	3,725	3,166	491	145	7,527	20.8 %
30	930	2,772	0	0	3,702	10.2 %
20	2,540	2,705	772	215	6,232	17.2 %
17	3,451	2,750	515	59	6,775	18.7 %
15	1,813	1,859	536	150	4,358	12.0 %
12	593	518	33	77	1,221	3.4 %
10	21	363	0	0	384	1.1 %
6	1	9	0	0	10	0.0 %
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16,453</b>	<b>16,524</b>	<b>2,556</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>36,195</b>	<b>100.0 %</b>

PS: for additional information visit [xx9d.mydx.de](http://xx9d.mydx.de)





# T31EU – Kanton Island – Central Kiribati

BY RONALD STUY, PA3EWP

## Kanton Island – Central Kiribati or “QRV from a Scrap Heap”

While enjoying a nice beer at the Hamfest in Friedrichshafen 2018 we exchanged many ideas about our next possible destinations. Apart from the fact that we wanted to go to Tonga with a limited team, the first destinations for the beginning of 2019 in the Pacific have also passed the review.

At the end of August, I was asked to join a German team planning to go to Kanton Island, Central Kiribati. At first, I said no, because the boat takes you almost 1 week from Tarawa to Kanton. 2 weeks on the island and 2 weeks sailing including a trip to the Pacific became a little bit too much in terms of my holidays. But less than a week later they came up with the idea to fly to Kanton. Günter, DL2AWG, had found a company that regularly flies from Tarawa to Kanton. My decision was then quickly made. I became a participant of the 6 man team. We had chartered the plane to fly us to Kanton and pick us up after 17 days. In total I had to fly 30 hours before I was at our destination, Kanton Island, 6 different flights in 6 days' time. Our limiting factor was

the total weight that we could bring with us during our last part of the trip (+/- 860 Kg including people) in a super Kingair 200 airplane. Our team consisted of Günter, DL2AWG (team leader), Hans, DL6JGN (co-team leader), Joe, DK5WL, Norbert, DF6FK, Heye, DJ9RR, and Ronald, PA3EWP. Norbert joined our team 1 week before our departure as a new operator after Wolfgang, DM2AUJ, had to cancel his participation due health problems.

Our goal was to hand out as many amateurs as possible an All Time New One (ATNO), but also focus on Europe. Within

Europe it is high on the “most wanted” list, for Western Europe it is even on the 6<sup>th</sup> place in digital mode. When the conditions would cooperate, we wanted to try to have at least 2 stations active for 24 hours with the focus on the low bands. Of course we also wanted to learn more about the Kiribati culture and explore the island.

Canton is an atoll which belongs to the Phoenix archipelago (Central Kiribati). It is located 1,750 km from the main island of Tarawa and a separate DXCC country for radio amateurs. The protected area around the Phoenix Islands covers 408,250 square kilometers of sea and land in the South Pacific. The Phoenix Island Group is one of three island groups of Kiribati, the others are Gilbert and the

tance as a nature reservoir.

### Kiribati consists of 4 DXCC countries:

T3Ø – Gilbert islands (Tarawa main island), T31 – Phoenix islands (Canton main island), T32 – Line islands (Christmas main island), T33 – Banaba (belongs to Gilbert Islands but lies 450 km west of Tarawa and for us radio amateurs a separate DXCC country).

About 36 people live in Canton, including 20 children. Most adults work for PIPA (Government) and are stationed with their families on the island for 3 years or more. Tourists rarely come to the island, certainly no longer than 3 days, after which they leave again. These tourists are mostly anglers. The Catholic community on the island has facilitated a kind of hotel for the tourists. There are 2 impor-

tant items that they have taken action on, a bed to sleep and a normal toilet and shower. The rest is less important. They have created 7 bedrooms and 2 toilets with showers for the tourists.

Chuck, our contact person on Tarawa, has organized a lot of things for us. Without him it would have been al-

most impossible to organize this DXpedition to Kanton. He has bought many materials for us including a new generator. I also sent him at the end of November a ski bag from Tonga (A35EU) with several (Spiderbeam) fiber masts and 250 m coaxial cables. This was much cheaper than bringing it back to the Netherlands from Tonga and then taking it back to Kiribati. Chuck had been busy for at least 2 months trying to send these materials (food, drinks, generator, table, chairs, fuel and ski bag) from Tarawa to Kanton by boat. However, he did not find a boat at all that sailed from Tarawa to Canton. But



Line Islands. The area around the Phoenix Islands is the largest designated marine protected area in the world. Phoenix Island Protected Area (PIPA) has preserved one of the world's largest pristine oceanic ecosystems from the coral archipelago, along with 14 known underwater sea mountains (presumably extinct volcanoes) and other deep-sea dwellers. The area contains around 800 known species of fauna, including around 200 coral species, 500 fish species, 18 marine mammals and 44 bird species. The structure and functioning of the PIPA ecosystems illustrates its pristine nature and impor-



he was able to arrange additional food and drinks from Christmas Island by boat to Canton.

We had to take the rest of the materials on the plane, which became a big challenge. Chuck himself would also like to fly to Canton with us. Chuck had arranged all the paperwork with PIPA for the authorization to land on the Island and our license from CCK (Telecom). We only had to pick them up when arriving to Tarawa. Because we had to bring the generator and ski bag with us on the plane, there was unfortunately no room for Chuck. The generator was still under discussion because on the island they had 2 generators including fuel for us. Upon my insistence to bring the generator instead of Chuck the team agreed. My decision was quite simple: "it is more important to bring a good working generator instead of trusting on 2 other generators of the Islanders. We would have had a much bigger problem when they are not working".

The day before our departure we were told by the pilot that the weather was too bad to fly and the flight had to be postponed for one day. After some negotiation, we also postponed our return trip by 1 day (we had 1 additional day on Tarawa on our way back, it was calculated as a buffer). This was not a problem, so we could still be active from Canton for 17 days. We spent the extra day on Tarawa as a tourist and went with 3 people by boat to the other island, Northern Tarawa. This was a paradise compared to the main island of Southern Tarawa. The inhabitants are also very friendly. We made a tour through a few villages and then had a good lunch in a local restaurant. This day trip was definitely worth it, finally a bit of rest. About 70,000 people live on the main island, 70 % are unemployed. The hygiene is minimal on the island. To indicate Chuck lives in a village of



Meeting at PIPA



Meeting with CCK about the license

about 300 people. There is only 1 toilet. Most residents sit on a wall at the lagoon for their need. That is why everyone ad-

vises not to go swimming in the lagoon because it is heavily polluted.

On the next day at 6:00 am we were at



Our radio shack at the airport



Ready for departure Kanton Island



the airport for our departure to Canton. It takes 4½ hours to fly before we were there. We arrived at our destination just before noon. After lunch we decided that our shack was going to be near the airport. There was a perfect building with a lot of space for antennas. We decided to install the 30 and 40 meter antennas for the first evening/night activities. One of the generators of the village was installed outside of the shack. After we started this, we noticed that there was no voltage present. We almost completely dismantled the generator but could not find the problem. After this struggle we got the second generator from the village. This was at least better as we had 220 V. However, as soon as we started and the power consumption fluctuated, the generator stopped working. Unfortunately, we could not use this generator either. After we had exchanged this gen-

erator for our own generator these problems were solved. From that moment on we only worked with our own generator. Fortunately, we decided to bring the generator instead of Chuck, otherwise we had to fly back to Tarawa after a few days without operating. After dinner we setup the shack and were ready for the first QSOs. The first night we made some short shifts so that everyone could be active for a few hours.

On the next day we installed the other antennas. Unfortunately, we had no time to place the receiving antenna for the low bands. This became a job for the following day. We were running 2 shifts of 3 operators from the 2<sup>nd</sup> day on. Unfortunately, we were unable to transmit simultaneously with 3 radios with +/- 1 kW output as our generator provided only 3.8 kW. All stations could make approx. 700 Watts.

The propagation was certainly not optimal, but we knew that beforehand (Who goes to the Pacific during sun spots minimum?). Western Europe was our biggest challenge. The signals from this part of the World were weak or totally not workable at all. The path directly over the north pole was extremely difficult. Often the signals from Eastern Europe were S9, but to the west from central Germany it was very difficult or not possible at all. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> week we adjusted our shifts to 2 operators per shift. We did this partly because of the poor propagation. During the late night and the morning only 2 bands were open at the same time. On daytime and in the evening another operator could use the 3<sup>rd</sup> station, but on low power only. This allowed the other 2 stations to make slightly more than 1 kW. The 3<sup>rd</sup> station was therefore regularly in FT8.

We focused on the low bands, the chance that the high bands were open was minimal. All the antennas were mostly into direction of Europe. During the day, we often turned the antenna to North America to be able to operate the weaker stations. The beverage was also pointing north, towards Western Europe. The chance that we would work a lot of Western Europe on 160 and 80 meters was also very little, but if you don't try it will certainly not work. During my own shifts in the evening and at night I was always active on 80 or 160 meters. Unfortunately, we could not combine it because

The antenna park looked like this:

Band	Antenna
10/12/15 m	Multiband vertical 10 m fiber mast
17 m	VDA 12 m fiber mast
20 m	VDA 12 m fiber mast
30 m	VDA 18 m Spiderbeam fiber mast
40 m	Phased verticale 2 x 10 m fiber mast
80/160 m	¼ verticale / inverted-L 18 m Spiderbeam fiber mast
RX beverage	180 m long Direction north



20 m VDA, 80-160 m vertical, multiband vertical 10 / 12 / 15 m



30 m VDA

we had to extend the 80 m vertically for 160 m as inverted-L. The antenna had to be taken down for the band change. We had to make a choice in the evening before it got dark. Normally it was 2 days on 80 m and then 2 days on 160 m. We had a lot of statics on the low bands, sometimes it was so extreme that it was only possible to make some QSOs in FT8.

In 1850, United Kingdom claimed Canton as their property. In 1937 there was a total solar eclipse on Canton island, many scientists from Australia and America were there. From that moment America claimed this island. After long negotiations, the United Kingdom and America have both ruled the island for 50 years. From 1979 Kanton belonged to Kiribati when it became independent from the United Kingdom. Both the English and the Americans had their own part on the island, separated by the harbor. Only the American part is still inhabited. The airport was built in 1939 and was used for refueling aircrafts when they flew from Hawaii to Australia or New Zealand.

Until the early 1970s, around 1,200 people lived on Canton Island. After it became independent in 1979, approx. 300 lived on the Island, all the others left a few years before the independency. Nowadays, population has reduced to less than 40 people. The entire infrastructure (roads, telephone, power and water distribution) has been left behind by the Americans and the English without cleaning up. All houses, buildings, factory halls, power station, satellite tracking station, telephone exchange etc. are still there, but in such a state that it is too dangerous to walk inside these buildings. Everywhere you look on the island you



Phased verticals 40 m



17 m VDA



Old satellite station





Old truck



Old truck



Old power plant



Old factory



Some of the old buildings



More garbage

see scrap. Along the roads, trucks, bulldozers, fire engines, etc. are still in the same place where they were left 50 years ago. You can see the same situation on the Island Banaba, one of the other islands of Kiribati.

Most people think that if you go to an island in the Pacific it is tropical, exotic and you will have a luxury vacation. I can tell you that Canton is 100 % the opposite, one big scrap heap, no luxury and very unsanitary. But the people are very friendly and welcoming! The families on the Island prepared in turns for us 3 times a meal per day. The afternoon and evening meals consisted of 95 % rice and fish or fish and rice, the next day they had made a variation, lunch and dinner had been changed. The first week there was sometimes meat which was brought by plane. After one week Frank, our contact person on the island, told us that they run out of food because the boat had not arrived since 2 months. This is quite normal in the Pacific, they don't have a firm sailing schedule and if they say a boat will sail next week, then it can also be next month. From that moment on we only had pancakes in the morning and no more toasted bread. The variation of rice and fish or fish and rice also decreased. Fortunately, these 2 products were abundant, but there was nothing else in terms of vegetables. Fortunately, there was a bottle of chili sauce to give the rice a little flavor. Around November Chuck had also sent food and drinks to Canton from Christmas Island. 40 kg of rice, 120 liter bottles of water, coffee, tea and some other small items. This had all arrived, so no problem. But after 1 week we also run out of water, the coffee became also scarce in the last few days, tea was still sufficiently available. The last week we also switched to drinking rain water, this was fully present because it rained exceptionally a lot. We had also only brought 11 bottles of red wine from Tarawa (we couldn't find any more), this matched exactly with the total weight that the plane could carry. We had lunch with the entire team simultaneously every day. The propagation was bad at the time. We agreed that a bottle of red wine would be opened for every 5,000 QSOs. Dinner was always eaten in 2 shifts, so that always 3 radios were active. This was the best time for Europe, so we had to be active!

We had 3 complete stations which could be used in all modes. Elecraft K3 with an HLA1200 amplifier, Elecraft K3 with an Expert 1.3K amplifier, Elecraft K2 with a THP 1.1 amplifier. We used band-

pass filters between the radio and the amplifier to eliminate any interference. Logging was done with Win-test in a network configuration, all laptops could see all the logged QSOs. We were also able to set the correct time on all PCs for FT8 with WSJT and/or MSHV. We had no internet in the shack, on 1 PC the time was synchronized with a GPS receiver and distributed by network to the other laptops. Internet was present on the island in the PIPA office, but we had to walk there almost 15 minutes from the shack. This was also available for the islanders. Every day we uploaded our log to Clublog, which allowed several amateurs to see that they were in the log and were not duping to be sure they were in the log. We also sent regular information and photos through various multimedia channels.



Pips office

FT8 was mainly used in Fox/Hound mode, but if there were only a few callers we used the normal mode. If there were too many stations calling we QSYed to another frequency for the Fox/Hound mode. We usually used the MSHV program for normal mode. You can work up to 3 stations at the same time. FT8 was definitely not the main mode for me.



Joe DK5WL operating CW



Norbert working some SSB





Operator position 1

I only made use of this mode when there was no activity on the other modes. I personally have no problems with FT8, but I'd rather make the QSOs myself than have the computer make them for me. I was surprised that it was possible to let the computer log 170 QSOs in one hour in this mode. The signals must be loud, it was only possible with Asia and NA. It was very frustrating that there were often no more activities in CW, SSB or RTTY, but only on FT8. The signals were loud enough for a QSO in normal modes. The advantage of FT8 is that many amateurs in the other modes in the past could not work DX, now their computer can work DX with the same setup. Hopefully these amateurs will quickly switch to SSB or CW and will make the QSOs themselves again, certainly if the propagation increases in the coming years. Because the propagation was poor, we had an extra challenge in SSB. Norbert had the disadvantage that he only does SSB, he was often calling for 4 hours for less than 20 QSOs. After a few days we changed the shifts in such a way that there was always one band open for the SSB operator. This made it also more fun for Norbert.



Ronald PA3EWP

We regularly visited the local school. From the 20 children, 16 were separated into 2 classes. We spoke a lot with Monita, the teacher. She explained us a lot about the island and the people who live there. She also gave us an explanation about teaching on Canton. Both Joe and I told the children about Europe, Germany and the Netherlands and everything they wanted to know. We all had a great time. As half a year ago Monita's house burned



Demo at Joe DK5WL



EUDXF flag at school Kanton



Local kids



Local kids Tarawa

down, she taught the children from home. They were given another shelter for the school, but there was still a lot of rebuilding to do within this shelter. A lot of school material had also been lost during the fire. Joe and I gave a personal

donation to the school among the other things we donated. We hope they can make the roof waterproof again. One of the last afternoons the whole school visited our shack for a radio demonstration. We all enjoyed it.





Monita the teacher at Kanton school



Nurse on Kanton

On the last day we dismantled all the antennas except the 160 m antenna. In the evening we were invited for an appreciation party by the locals. After the party we would be active for a final night including sunrise on 160 m. The party was beautiful. Especially Joe will never forget this evening, it was also his birthday and this had to be celebrated! All children have sung for him in English and in their local language. All residents were present during the party, they had all prepared some food. There were several tables completely covered with lots of rice and fish, but also 2 large lobsters and a small pig, which they had slaughtered that day. For them it was also a feast. There was a lot of singing and dancing by the children. At the end of the evening Frank took the guitar (which we donated to the people) and all the residents start-

ed singing. An evening to remember for a long time.

Then we started with 3 operators our last 160 m shift. The statics were so huge that it was impossible to make any QSOs on top band. Heye had started, then Joe. When I relieved Joe there were less than 40 QSOs in the log. I started my shift in CW and soon realized it was impossible to continue. Then I changed mode to FT8 and the computer logged about 30 QSOs including a few southern Europeans. Very unfortunate about the statics, I saw about 10 stations calling during the European greyline, but the computer could hardly decode anything. After the last QSO was logged, I started to dismantle the station. After breakfast we took down the inverted-L for 160 m and made everything ready for departure. Before we left the Island all of us had to plant a new coconut tree as a tradition. At 13:00 h local time we flew back to Tarawa.

We were satisfied with the result, just over 39,000 QSOs, 17 % of which were with Europe. The best bands were 30 and 40 m for Europe. For more statistics visit [www.clublog.org](http://www.clublog.org). The QSL cards will be printed in April and sent out as soon as possible. All amateurs who have donated have received the confirmation via LOTW. The QSL manager is Günter, DL2AWG. The fastest way to get a QSL card is via OQRS ([www.clublog.org](http://www.clublog.org)).

We had brought several materials for the islanders including the guitar. For the children also a lot of toys, clothing, pens, notepads, caps and especially for the girls: chains, hair bands, bracelets etc. We also left our generator and some other materials on the island. At the PIPA office and at the weather observer's house we have made and adjusted dipoles so that they can communicate with their base in Tarawa and Christmas Island.



Ronald planted a coconut tree on Kanton (tradition for all visitors)



Party time

Early in the evening we were back in our motel on Tarawa. After a varied meal (with rice) and a few cold beers and Kawa (yes, that's another story) we ended the evening. The next day we had to be at the airport around 7:30 am for the journey back home. The trip back home went without major stops. But it still took me just over 2 days before I was back home again.

There are too many individual sponsors and DX clubs to mention that have made us a financial contribution. I want to make one exception and that was our main sponsor: GD XF, the German DX Foundation. Thank you all! For more information see our website: <http://www.kanton2019.de>

This is one of the DXpeditions I will not soon forget. The propagation was minimal but the entire adventure was very impressive.

Ronald, PA3EWP



# E51HMK – South Cook Islands DXpedition

BY HANS-MARTIN KURKA, DK2HM

Since I do hamradio I usually take equipment with me abroad or I try to get in touch with local hams. Sometimes, there is even the possibility to use a local clubstation. Me, that's Hans-Martin, DK2HM, (38 years) from Ingolstadt in Southern Germany. Having operated from UT, 9H, OE, EA, HA, OK and CT, my farthest DX destination so far was OA, where I visited friends without bringing my equipment this time which ended up in a weekend activity during the south american lighthouse event as team member of OC4FZ from Lima, Peru. On the Iberradio 2017, the spanish ham fair organized by URE in Avila, I got inspired by Santos' EA4AK presentation about his trip to Guam, AH2P, where he provided very useful information about how to plan a low cost DXpedition.

From this moment onwards it was my dream to do something DX-like as well, not really knowing the big tale that would come up with that decision having especially the pacific region on my mind. A promotional ticket offer in June 2018 was the starting point as I had good luck to acquire a cheap ticket to Rarotonga, the main island of the Cook Islands. South Cooks were ranking on place 67 from Germany's perspective on Clublog's most wanted DXCC list and thus seemed to be the ideal destination for a holiday style DXpedition. When I asked the members of my local radio club nobody wanted to join me, so I had to go on my own. I wrote an email to the Rarotonga licence authority and asked for the call sign E51HMK which was confirmed quickly. The adventure could begin! I published the DXpedition details on qrz.com and immediately got several emails from DX pages asking for additional information. One of my ham friends Ron, DM2RM, suggested me to get in touch with Jan, DJ8NK, from Hamburg. A very good proposal and for me also my first contact with the EUDXF, where I soon after became also a new member. Jan gave me a lot of very useful infos including the contact to a local ham Jim, E51JD.

Time passed by quickly and in the meantime I was setting up a homepage

for my trip. On [www.southcook2019.com](http://www.southcook2019.com) I published all details about my visit to the pacific and my ham radio activity. I also created a twitter account. Regarding my equipment I decided to take my ICOM IC-706 MK2G and a HLA300+ mobile power amplifier with me. As power supply I planned to take a 60 A server power supply modified to 13.6 V. Concerning antennas, I had good experience with the endfed-halfwave antennas providing 80 (40) -10 m without the necessity of tuning. I had read several reports where this kind of antenna was successfully used for DXpeditions and so I decided to take the 80 - 10 and 40 - 10 m version with me, not knowing yet how much space would be available for putting up my antennas. I took one 10 m mini mast from DX-Wire which perfectly fitted into my big suitcase and two portable 7 m half wave-length masts as hand luggage. Laptop, interface and 1x 20 m and 2x 10 m H155 coax cables completed my setup. Jan, DJ8NK, suggested to use the KiiKii Inn for lodging which has been visited by several ham radio operators before. It is a very ham friendly place located at the northern shore of the island with good take off to Europe.

The Cook Islands are located in the centre of the Pacific Ocean between New Zealand and Hawaii. Being 12 hours behind the time zone of Germany you can really call it the other side of the world. The main Island Rarotonga has about 10,000 inhabitants and is the centre also for other smaller islands around such as Manihiki, Northern Cook islands. Of course activating Northern Cook would

have been even more interesting with respect to DXCC as it is more rare. But as there is only one flight every two weeks with no guarantee for getting on board even when you have a ticket, my time simply didn't allow to go there.

After packing and repacking to go only with one big suitcase and one piece of handluggage, my trip began on March 13<sup>th</sup> from Munich via London, Shanghai, Auckland to Rarotonga. I found out that although I had two flight tickets, it was possible to check through my whole luggage directly to Rarotonga. An ukulele player welcomed the new arriving passengers and I got immediately switched to the island mode. Having left Auckland on the 15<sup>th</sup>, the arrival to Rarotonga was one day earlier as we had passed the international date border line. Already on the first day I met with Jim, E51JD, and we continued to meet almost every day having very good talks. I am very thankful for his support during my stay. After having picked up my radio licence at the local authorities on the next day, I set up my equipment and did some first QSOs which was already very promising. Jim informed me



Ukulele welcome at Rarotonga airport

about the ANZANET every night at 05:00 UTC on 20 m being one of the oldest still existing nets on shortwave. I participated every night and it was a lot of fun to make contacts with islands which normally are a DXCC dream from home.

During my first night of activity I already had several contacts with Europe including Germany, which was a big surprise and a phantastic start. Many people had warned me before, that nothing would





Kia orana - Hello!



Kia orana - Hello!

Picking up the E51HMK licence



The antenna built up at the coastline



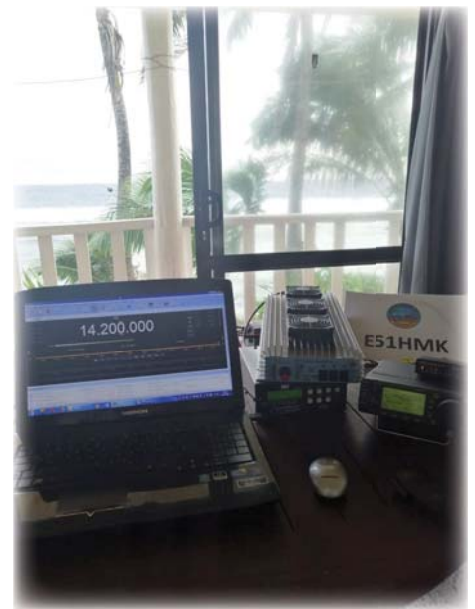
The EFHW Antenna doing a great job

work to Europe especially with my simple equipment and under such bad propagation conditions we were suffering from at the moment. Having set up my antenna

directly at the seaside in front of my apartment at Kiikli Inn, I could get a total of 549 QSOs with 49 DXCCs into my log. There have been good openings towards Europe from 06:00 – 08:00 UTC with a big pile up whenever I was spotted on the cluster. As I had a local QRM problem with the power supply of my laptop which had not been obvious at home, I did all my contacts on SSB. Having 50 noise was just a dream. On 5 of the 8 days of activity I had the luck of an opening to Europe on 20 m. With 34 QSOs, Germany was on place number 5 of my european contacts. During daytime I mainly worked on 40 and 15 m, having contacts with Japan, US, Mexico, Aruba and Columbia.

As I did my trip holiday style I also booked excursions and explored Rarotonga and the islands around. The daytrip to Aitutaki, a 45 minute flight to the north of Rarotonga was for sure one of the highlights. Exploring Rarotonga I often took the bus with choice of two bus lines, one going clockwise and the other anti-clockwise in 40 minutes around the island. The Kiikii Inn is a very nice and affordable place to stay. Of course there was no filtered water coming out like in 5 star luxury resorts for honey mooners, but having a water station in only 2 km distance it was no problem to refill my water bottles every day. I even had a „lodger“ in my apartment which was a small house gecko which you can find nearly everywhere on the island. Having tropical weather during the first days with sudden changes from sunshine to strong and heavy rainfall with storm, the last days were so humid that I never had dry hands anymore and my luggage at the airport on departure was heavier than on arrival due to my wet clothes. I even had problems to bring down my 10 m mast at the end of my activity, so I decided to leave it there.

After some very intense days on Rarotonga and the Cook Islands I had to take the plane back home on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March. With the help of Jim I could be on the air until 3 hours before departure. Via Los Angeles and London I arrived back home to Germany on the 24<sup>th</sup> with the flights having taken me once around the globe. Back home I immediately uploaded the full log to LOTW, clublog, qrz.com and eqsl.cc. I designed E51HMK card and uploaded it for printing so I could answer to the QSL requests which had already arrived. All card requests were sent out as fast as possible via direct and the bureau. I did a presentation about my trip in my local radio club and prepared also a bigger presentation for the Ham Radio ham



Shack with a view



Hans-Martin E51HMK in his shack



One of the local water filter stations



My little housefriend the gecko

fest in Friedrichshafen, which included some tips and tricks of my personal experiences with that trip to Rarotonga. A presentation at the Iberradio 2019 in Avi-



la in September 2019 will follow. In Friedrichshafen I even met Tex, VK1TX, with whom I had spoken every night on the ANZANET from Rarotonga. What a great hobby we have!



Together with Jim E51JD

I thank everyone who supported me on my trip. Especially I thank the EUDXF for their support and Dennis Walter (bonito.net) for providing the cables. I especially thank Jan, DJ8NK, for all his experience and Alex, 5B4ALX, with his help and support especially during the preparation of my trip. And of course I thank Jim, E51JD, for his support and friendship. I for sure will return to the pacific and hopefully also to Rarotonga!



Good Morning Rarotonga



E51HMK memories



The Cook islands paradise on earth



Backland Rarotonga





# E6ET – Niue Island, South Pacific

BY ALEX GROMME, 5B4ALX

Niue is an island country located in the South Pacific Ocean, about 2.400 kilometers northeast of New Zealand, east of Tonga, south of Samoa, and west of the Cook Islands. Niue's population is predominantly Polynesian. The island is commonly referred to as "The Rock", which comes from the traditional name "Rock of Polynesia". Niue is one of the world's largest coral islands. The terrain of the island has two noticeable levels. The higher level is made up of a limestone cliff running along the coast, with a plateau in the center of the island, reaching approximately 60 m (200 feet) high above sea level. The lower level is a coastal terrace approximately 0.5 km (0.3 miles) wide and about 25 – 27 m (80 – 90 feet) high, which slopes down and meets the sea in small cliffs. A coral reef surrounds the island, with the only major break in the reef being in the central western coast, close to the capital Alofi.

Niue is a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand and New Zealand conducts most diplomatic relations - though not all - on its own behalf. Niue is a bilingual country, with 30 % of the population speaking both Niuean and English. Niue is separated from New Zealand by the International Date Line. The time difference is 23 hours during the Southern Hemisphere winter and 24 hours when New Zealand uses Daylight Saving Time.

After my last experience in the Pacific from New Caledonia, I started checking the "Most Wanted" list looking for the next destination to be active from in the period March/April 2019. The choice for this time period for my activities from the Pacific falls for three simple reasons: it is the end of the rainy season and my

½ λ antennas work better if the ground is wet, my birthday at the end of March and the WPX SSB contest which I always find fascinating.

After a careful evaluation, the first choice had fallen on Vanuatu, but soon the announcement of Stan, LZ1GC, about his upcoming activities to Samoa and Vanuatu, forced me to look elsewhere. Niue is still a relatively reliable island on ClubLog's most wanted list (when I made the decision it was #72 general and #14 in EU), even though almost every year someone activates it more or less seriously. Just in October 2018, a New Zealand team was active from the island with a total of 17,000 QSOs. My analysis of the island therefore had to consider various factors among which were also the gaps left by the various teams or individual operators of past activities.

First one needs a license without which you cannot start planning. An endless and tiring exchange of emails with the Ministry of Telecommunications began.

for a suitable accommodation.

The first choice fell on a single house located just outside of Alofi, the capital of the island, facing to the sea towards Asia, Japan and Europe via the North Pole, but an incorrect move by the landlord kept me from confirming my reservation. So, I started to evaluate past activities and I happened to run into an artery written by Nob, JF2MBF, and Ken, JA2FJP, who I had contacted from New Caledonia several times. It was thanks to them that I chose their Niue 2016 DXpedition location: Lakepa village.

Lakepa is a village, which is also a municipality and electoral district. The village is located on the northeastern coast, in the historical tribal region of Motu. It has a population of 51 inhabitants. Evaluating the two possibilities the decision was clear: Alofi has an almost firm rocky ground while Lakepa is built on soil; Alofi has a good path to Asia and Europe but is completely locked to North America while Lakepa has an open path

into all three main regions. In Lakepa I would also have almost 3,000 square meters of lawn for antennas, although 1 km from the sea, but where I could easily roll out 110 m of beverage wire.

I contacted the family who owns the facility, they were extremely kind and helpful and the price they offered

was even half of the first house viewed. I then began to refine the setup by evaluating the option which would guarantee the highest amount of QSOs as a single operator. When it comes to contesting the most obvious solution is SO2R and so I thought I would configure my setup for SO2R use. My setup which always accompanies me on my DXpeditions to the South Pacific, consists of two IC-7300, two 30A power supplies (in addition to a



As often happens in remote places and far from the way we handle things, you write an email and wait for days and weeks not knowing if your email has been received. After 10/11 months finally the first answer arrived, the license application form had to be filled out and the equipment declared. Once reached to this point it was only a matter of time, but at least the application process was started and I could devote myself to look

spare 50A), two laptops, band pass filters and a linear amplifier. The two stations are complementary to each other, each piece can be interchanged and the radio/PC configurations are identical and assigned to backup on volatile memories.

One station would be devoted to the digital modes only, whereas the second one would be used for mixed modes (SSB, CW, DIGI), while at night or in moments when I would need to relax, both radios would be switched to DIGI modes. As for the antennas, the less cumbersome and heavy solution that allows me to find the right band time combinations is as follows: a mast supports three single quads (6, 12, 15 m) with three single descents, a 10 m high vertical working  $\frac{1}{2} \lambda$  on 17/20 m (ideal solution with very wet ground, low radiation angle and yield like a monoband yagi), an 18 m high spider-beam mast with LC system at the base for 30, 40, 60 and 160 m (on Top Band it works as inverted L) and finally one or two 110 m beverages for JA/EU and NA whose feeding will exploit the coax which at daytime has been used for the quads.

But let's go back to the journey. The successful tests on antennas and setup lasted from August to 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2019. On the same day I closed the suitcases (kindly sponsored by GT Line - Explorercases) and performed a last checklist control. It was 18:00 h on March 16<sup>th</sup> when I arrived at Milan Airport where I spent a couple of days with my family before leaving. A few ritual photos, a brief stop at the Emirates check-in desk to load the extra 55 kg of material, in addition to the 10 kg of my backpack, and then the routine checks. Tim, NL8F, was already waiting for me in Auckland where I hoped he could inform New Zealand Airlines about our excess baggage; in total we had 110 kg in addition to our backpacks. The flight to Dubai passed by quickly and at the airport, I contacted Tim to let him know the status of my expected time of

arrival. Upon arrival in Auckland and after customs clearance, I met with Tim who was waiting for me at the arrivals terminal. We put the luggage into a temporary storage and headed to the hotel in the city center. A visit to the 280 m high Sky Tower in the Auckland Bay was a must to see the city from a panoramic terrace and take pictures.



Alex, 5B4ALX, and Tim, NL8F, Tim meet at Auckland Airport

At 03:30 h the alarm clock reminded us to be at the airport at 04:30 h and to immediately follow the check-in procedures for the 110 kg of luggage. A later arrival would incur the restrictions of an excessive load and thus not having the opportunity to move everything onto the island. So, it was better to eat something comfortably at the hotel restaurant and go to sleep for the remaining few hours. At 09:30 h the little A320 took off from Auckland to Niue Island and after a more than 3 hours flight we finally arrived. We were traveling for more than 3 days to reach this small island with conditions not really "holiday-style".

After our arrival on Niue Island at 13:00 h, we briefly stopped in Alofi to

sign a wi-fi contract and buy some food stuff on the market for the coming days and finally reached our destination. We immediately discovered some transport damage to the baggage: the CW key of Tim was completely destroyed and the variable tuner for the 17/20 m vertical antenna was almost disassembled from the vibrations. We decided to mount the 10/15 m quad immediately and put the first station on air.

The first QSO was with JH1HLC and the pileup started immediately. By the evening all antennas were installed and we were active with three stations, two main stations and one for support and backup. The days followed one after the other, same as the QSOs with a constant rate of about 1,000 QSOs/day. The central hours of the day from 11:00 h to 04:00 h were usually characterized by a total closure of all bands. I often tried to work CW or RTTY, but we never had such a feedback as in FT8. This was not because of a difference in interest or signal intensity. It seemed rather that our correspondents were too lazy that they preferred to let the computer do the work rather than themselves and this was very demoralizing for us. We adapted to this new way of communication which really has little of "human" and that takes away much from the spirit of a DXpedition. Only the Japanese operators always followed us in any way we operated. Worth a note for quality, duration and intensity were the openings on the higher bands, especially on 12 m while 160 m was more difficult than we expected. Even the faithful inverted-L did not make a difference. After a week, stupidly, I burned my PA: as soon as I woke up at 05:00 h for my shift with Tim who was closing the 160 m opening to Europe, I didn't do the usual double-check and sent full 100 W on RTTY into the amplifier. So the first linear got smoked and the second one left us a few days later. It was late afternoon when we woke up from a few hours of rest during the time



Low Band vertical base



E6ET DXpedition Shack on Niue Island





Last picture before departure from Niue



Almost 100kg ready to be shipped back

when the bands were closed. I found the computers rebooted and immediately suspected a problem related to the electricity network during our sleep (it is not rare to see the bulbs vary by intensity as the island's electricity grid is managed by a large oil-fired generator). So, Tim just by pressing the Standby/Op button literally let the KPA-500 explode and we were left with two burned PAs, being forced to continue with reduced power. Although we tried everything on 160 m to use the short openings, but 100 W was really not enough to be heard.

Good satisfaction was given on 80 m towards Europe in the evening and on 40 m in the morning. Approximately 5 days after the end of the activity we decided to remove the 110 m beverage which we had placed in north direction and which ended up in the dense vegetation of the forest. We discovered that someone had stolen the termination picket by tearing the wire. We suspected some children from the village were intrigued by the strange object.

The QSO counter stopped at 14,450 with AH6TC being

the last station logged on 40 m before turning off the radios. Many EU stations were logged and more than 140 different DXCC entities worked. Really incredible were some signals on 80 m from S5, EA8, UT, DL and SV which were like local stations. We closed all bags and returned home with our 110 kg of equipment, me

to Europe and Tim to Alaska. Tim would first stop by in Australia at his sister, taking the opportunity for another short activity from a VK island. Until next time and thanks again to all those who called us. We hope to have made you enjoy at least half of what we enjoyed ourselves.



5B4ALX's birthday dinner in the shack



EUDXF flag on Niue Island



# EUDXF NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

Dear Member/New Member,

You can find all of our newsletters published since 2009 for download here ...

(To download please click on the photo of the desired issue)

Older editions of the EUDXF newsletter (July 2008 and earlier  
will be available for download at a later date!





# EUROPEAN DX FOUNDATION E.V.

## Data Protection Declaration (Members)

### Section 1

By joining of a member, the association records the name, first name, date of birth (optional), home address and e-mail address of the member. This information is stored in the computer systems of the executive committee. Each club member is assigned a membership number. The personal data are protected by appropriate technical and organizational measures against the knowledge of third parties. Other information about the members and information about non-members are only processed or used by the association if they are useful for the promotion of the purpose of the association and there are no indications that the data subject has a legitimate interest, which precludes the processing or use.

### Section 2

The board announces special events of the association life, in particular the execution of events in the club magazine and/or on the club's own internet pages. Personal member data can be published at this juncture. The individual member may at any time object to the publication of such data by the board. In this case, there will be no further publication in relation to this member on the notice board and/or in the club magazine and/or the club's own websites.

### Section 3

Only board members and other members who perform a special function in the association, which requires the knowledge of certain member data, receive a list of members with the required membership data.

### Section 4

The association informs the amateur radio related media about special events. Such information is also published on the website of the association. The individual member may at any time object to the publication of his personal data or revoke his consent to publication on the Internet. In the case of an objection or revocation, further publications regarding his person are omitted. Personal data of the withdrawing member will be removed from the homepage of the association.

### Section 5

Upon resignation, the data of the member named under section 1 will be deleted from the member list. Personal data of the withdrawing member concerning the cash management will be kept for up to ten years from the written confirmation of departure by the Board in accordance with the tax regulations.





## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- ☐ I herewith request membership in the European DX Foundation e.V. (EUDXF). Membership fees are a minimum of **€ 25 per year** and payable at the beginning of the year. Membership will be **renewed automatically** unless written notice is given not later than 6 weeks before the end of the year.

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: (optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
First name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Call Sign: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Postal code: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ I am already a member of EUDXF, but I would like to become a life member:  
(The price of life membership is still EUR 400)

Method of payment:

- ☐ I will pay the contribution to the bank account of EUDXF:

**Bank:** Volksbank Kleverland  
**IBAN:** DE65 3246 0422 0205 1830 19  
**BIC:** GENO DE D1KL L

- ☐ I will transfer the contribution via PayPal to cashier@eudxf.eu

**I have read the privacy policy and herewith accept it.  
I can revoke my consent at any time for the future.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please mail this application to:*

EUDXF e.V.  
Robert F. Lörcks, DL1EBV  
Sommerlandstraße 23  
47551 BEDBURG-HAU  
GERMANY

*You can e-mail your application to:*

eudxf@eudxf.eu

Or get into contact with EUDXF via  
internet: <http://www.eudxf.eu>