EUROPEAN DX FOUNDATION E.V.

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Newsletter • July • 2017

DX

CQ

Dear EUDXF Members,
today, we are happy to present the July newsletter to you which again contains lots of interesting information. The various DXpedition reports published in this newsletter are a confirmation that we as European DX Foundation were part of these success stories. It is thanks to the sponsors that DXpeditions as presented in the current edition became reality. How much time was spent on DXpedition planning, how many hurdles had to be taken to get the necessary permits, how often did Murphy change plans in the very last moment and how much excitement but also disappointments did the DXpedition team members experience on their way to activate a rare DXCC entity for us. Their efforts deserve that you dedicate time to read the reports carefully and with full attention, leaning back on the sofa, have a drink, imagining the DXpeditioners how they travelled to these remote places fighting with mother nature, getting on the air and finally listening your call sign out of thousands of calling stations. We hope that the current newsletter will take you on a long virtual journey, inspiring you to make plans for your own next DXpedition!

As in the previous years, EUDXF was present with a desk during the Ham Radio 2017 ham fest, which is the annual event in Europe to meet DXers and DXpeditioners from all over the world. A big thanks to Jan, PA1TT, for his successful stand organization and to the board members who were always available for a chat at the well visited EUDXF stand. As a result 10 new members joined EUDXF who are cordially welcomed in our organization!

The next opportunity to meet EUDXF members will be during the upcoming DNAT convention (Deutsch Niederländische Amateurfunker Tage) held from 24th to 27th of August in Bad Bentheim, Germany.

Annual General Meeting

On behalf of the European DX Foundation I would like to invite you to attend our Annual General Meeting to be held in Bad Bentheim during the

Deutsch-Niederländische Amateurfunker Tage (DNAT).

The meeting will take place on Saturday

26th August 2017

and will start at **14:00** local time as usual in Gaststätte Berkemeyer Gildehauser Straße 18, 48455 Bad Bentheim, Germany

Silent Keys
It is my sad duty to report the loss of the following EUDXF members:

Silent Key

#8	Dr. Hugo Jakobljevich; DJØLC
#71	Karl-Heinz Hille; DL1VU (Life Member #21)
#142	Dieter Greve; DJ3CP
#751	Ivan Pastre; F3AT (102 years old)

May they rest in peace.

New Members
Since July 2016 we welcomed the following DX-enthusiasts as new EUDXF members:

New Members

#898 Herbert Staiger; DJ2BC
#899 Richard Smeets; PAØRRS
#900 Gottfried Dutiné; DK3DG
#901 Robert Bouwens; PD7RB
#902 Martin Silvrants; PE1NCP
#903 Richard van Duffelen; PD4RD
#904 Lars Roksund; LB2TB
#905 Morten Kvernmoen; LB8DC
#906 Kenneth Opskar; LA7GIA
#907 Tom de Graaf; PA3TG
#908 Roberto Madella; PB5X
#909 Frans de Bles; PC2F
#910 Karsten Beyer; DL1QC
#911 Jan Jansen; PD5B
#912 Cor van Soelen; PG9HF
#913 Maarten Bos; PA3EYC
#914 Rolf Torvik; LA2XPA
#915 Gaute Stuksrud; LB6KC
#916 Tor Pettersen; LA3WAA
#917 Halvard Eriksen; LA7XK
#918 Martin Jonink; PA4WM
#919 James Gallo; KB2FMH
#920 Harald Hofbauer; OE1HHB
#921 Ingrid S. Geissler; W7ISG
#922 Michael Chatzimichalakis; SV1MO
#923 Laszlo Viczian; HA5MA
#924 Daniel N. Dankert; N6PEQ
#925 Thierry Mazel; F6CUK
#926 Matthias Peter; LAØFA
#927 Bernard Zuidema; PB7Z
#928 Frank Wiering; PC2D
#929 Francesco Valsecchi; IKØFVC
#930 Peter Egberink; PA1PE
#931 Gerrit Veneberg; PAØGJV
#932 Hiromi Matsuura; JA4DND
#933 Shigeru Ueda; JA4LKB

Imprint

EUropean DX Founation e.V. – President: Dominik Weiel (DL5EBE), Kirchweg 13, 49356 Diepholz, Germany, e-mail: president@eudxf.eu, **Boardmember:** Ronald Stuy (PA3EWP), Hans P. Blondeel Timmerman (PB2T), Prof. Dr. Achim Rogmann (DF3EC), Jan B. C. Harders (DJ8NK), **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** or pay in cash at our Annual General Meeting 26th August 2017 (Bad Bentheim).

New Members

#934 Harumi Kukita; JR4OZR
#935 Thomas Andersen; OZ1AA
#936 Jun Tanaka; JH4RHF/ OE1ZKC
#937 Mathias Kolpe; DL4MM

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

EUDXF Life Members

The following EUDXF Members are registered as Life Members:

For those members who want to join the above 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.

Life Members

Prof. Dr. Achim Rogmann, DF3EC
Klaus Schlich, DF3GL
Jürgen Carow, DF3OL
Gerhard Richter, DJ5IW
Jan B.C. Harders, DJ8NK
Dr. Dieter Messer, DJ9ON
Dr. Andreas Söchting, DK6AS
Dieter Löffler, DK9KD
Timm Wangerin, DL1BKT
Kurt Schips, DL1DA
Robert F. Lörcks, DL1EBV
Karl H. Hille, DL1VU **SK**
Frank Rosenkranz, DL4KQ
Leo Wirth, DL4NBE
Dominik Weiel, DL5EBE
Felix Riess, DL5XL
Johannes Langner, DL7BQ
Olaf Brunner, DL7CX
Robin U. Go, DU9RG
Iñaki Echeveria, EA2AAZ
Fred C. Handscombe, G4BWP
Dr. H. R. Laubler, HB9RG
Andrea Panati, IK1PMR
Yoshi (Hiko) Hirano, JA2MNB
Tsutomu (Tom) Kitahara, JAØDBQ
Kazuo Katsuyama, JAØEQO
Noriko Nakamata, JFØJIL
Martti Laine, OH2BH
Jukka Heikinheimo, OH2BR
Jari Jussila, OH2BU
Dan Dankert, N6PEQ
Rob van de Kamer, PA1X
Maarten Bos, PA3EYC
Ronald Stuy, PA3EWP
Dick Grolleman, PA3FQA
Henk Hofman, PA3GCV
Hans Blondeel Timmerman, PB2T
Seregey Kislov, RN3AHL
Tomek Barbachowski, SP5UAF
Thorvaldur Stefansson, TF4M

Sponsored activities

H4ØGC (Temotu) – by LZ1GC, Stanislav (Stan) Vatev
H44GC (Solomons Island) – by LZ1GC, Stanislav (Stan) Vatev
T2AQ (Tuvalu) - by SP5EAQ, Jacek Marczewski
T2QR (Tuvalu) - by SP7DQR, Marek Niedzielski
TL8AO (Central African Republic) - by LA7GIA, Kenneth (Ken) Opskar
VK9NZ (Norfolk Island) - by Quake Contesters Team
VP6EU (Pitcarin Island) - by DK2AMM, Ernoe Ogonovszky
WRTC 2018 - by DL6MHW, Michael Hoeding
XX9D (Macau) - by DL2RNS, Norbert Strauch

Best 73s, good DX, see you in Bad Bentheim or hear you on the air!

Dominik DL5EBE
EUDXF President

Serving DX Community since 1986
EUDXF
European DX Foundation

EUROPEAN DX FOUNDATION E. V.

EUropean DX Foundation E. V.
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To all

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Date: 05.08.2017

Generalversammlung 2017 / General Meeting 2017

Hiermit möchte ich Sie zur Jahreshauptversammlung der EUropean DX Foundation in Verbindung mit den Deutsch-Niederländischen Amateurfunker Tagen (DNAT) recht herzlich einladen für Samstag den 26. August 2017, 14 Uhr in der Gaststätte Berkemeyer, Gildehauser Straße 18, 48455 Bad Bentheim.

On behalf of the European DX Foundation I would like to invite you to attend our Annual General Meeting to be held in Bad Bentheim during the Deutsch-Niederländische Amateurfunker Tage (DNAT). The meeting will take place on Saturday 26th August 2017 and will start at 14:00 local time as usual in Gaststätte Berkemeyer, Gildehauser Straße 18, 48455 Bad Bentheim, Germany.

Tagesordnung:	Agenda:
1. Begrüßung durch den Vorsitzenden	Opening by the chairperson
2. Anwesenheitsfestellung	Roll call
3. Wahl des Protokollführers	Appointment of the minute taker
4. Verabschiedung des Protokolls 2016	Adoption of the AGM 2016 minutes
5. Bericht des Vorsitzenden	President's report
6. Kassenbericht	Financial report
7. Bericht der Kassenprüfer	Auditor's report
8. Anträge der Kassenprüfer	Motions of the Auditors
a. Genehmigung der Jahresrechnung	Approval of the annual financial statement
b. Entlastung des Vorstandes	Discharge of the board of directors
9. Verschiedenes	Miscellaneous

EUropean DX Foundation e. V.

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President

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EUDXF at the Ham Radio 2017 in Friedrichshafen
– a Review by Jan, PA1TT –

Also this year, EUDXF was present on the Ham Radio exhibition territory with a nice stand 862 in hall A1. The temperatures were mild compared to the previous years, so climatic conditions were ideal.

Jan, DJ5AN/PA1TT, made sure that there were enough cookies, coffee, tea, beer and soft drinks to serve the guests and welcome EUDXF members at the stand. The stand was well arranged, targeting at attracting potential new EUDXF members. Although the cashier prefers paying via the bank account (in the EU-zone this should not cause extra cost for the members), some members used the possibility to pay their annual membership fee at the EUDXF Ham Radio desk. Also this year, many interested people visited the EUDXF stand to get informed about our organisation, relax and enjoy some refreshing drinks and have a talk with the team and well known DXers. We are happy to announce that during this year Ham Radio hamfest 10 new members joined EUDXF! The new members coming from western Europe and Asia (Japan) will be especially introduced to you in the upcoming EUDXF newsletters and on our webpage, soon.

Special thanks go to the team members who helped me with the stand: Nicoletta (XYL PAØR), Hans (PB2T), Margreet (K2XYL), Jan (DJ8NK), Ron (PA3EWP), Achim (DF3EC) and Alex (PA1AW). Also we thank Peter (PA1PE) who drove the long way to Friedrichshafen together with me and assisted in building up and breaking down the stand.

Jan DJ5AN / PA1TT
Stand Manager EUDXF

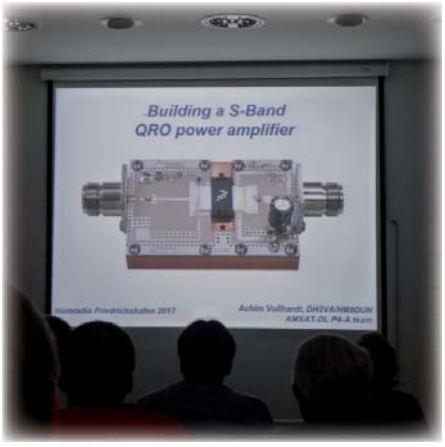
PHOTOS by DK3DG

* HAM *

* RADIO *

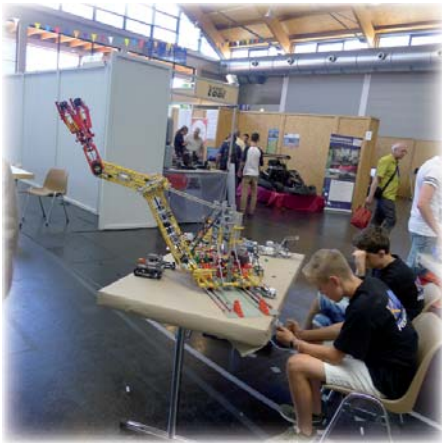
* 2017 * MOMENTS *

HAM * RADIO * 2017 * MOMENTS



PHOTOS by DK3DG

* HAM * RADIO * 2017 * MOMENTS *



EUDXF DX Dinner during the 2017 Ham Radio Hamfest in Friedrichshafen

Also in this year Jan, DJ5AN/PA1TT, organised a DX dinner for those EUDXF members who visited the Ham Radio hamfest in Friedrichshafen. Due to the limited space in “Gasthof Traube” a timely registration was required. The dinner was at own cost and there was one menu served for all. This was a great opportunity for the members to exchange their experiences and have some small talk about the differences between the continents or to meet DXers who you normally hear only in the pile ups. With members who work or live in all parts of the world we had a real international DX event. Our president guessed that one third of the members would come from PA, one third from DL and one third from the rest of the world. Today we can say that at this DX dinner the rest of the world was very well represented. In total there were 41 EUDXF members participating. Since 2 members were not sure to come, the tables were prepared to cover up to 44 persons which explains why some places were left at one table. After the DX dinner we had a quiz about how many DXCC countries were activated by the EUDXF members present. Jan, DJ5AN, prepared 8 tables with all the 339 current entities listed. The lists were then distributed on the tables. As usual with hams, everybody wanted to be the first in the pile up and fill out his activations on the forms. The result was that a total of 253 DXCC countries has been activated by the present EUDXF members!

We thank all members for attending this very nice event, Mr. and Mrs. Funke for their hospitality and Dominika for serving us so well in “Gasthof Traube” in Tettnang. We hope to see you all again next year!

Jan DJ5AN / PA1TT
Stand Manager EUDXF

“Gasthof Traube” in Tettnang

Clockwise: Dov 4Z4DX; Achim DF3EC; Reinhard K7RGG; Ingrid W7ISG; Miika OH2BAD and Magnus DN3EC

left to right: Dick PA4VHF; Ron PA3EWP and Ernoe DK2AMM

Clockwise: Jan DJ8NK, Jun JA7HRF, Shige JA4LKB, Hiro JA4DND, Haru JA4OZR and Kan JA1BK

Clockwise: Wolf DL4WK; Leszek SP3DOI; Jacek SP5EAQ; Mek SP7VC and Hennie xyl PA3FQA

Food pile up

Jan PA1TT/DJ5AN opens the EUDXF DX dinner

Ron PA3EWP during his VP6EU presentation

Jan PA1TT/DJ5AN in action

Jan PA1TT/DJ5AN very happy about the succes

in front: Hiro JA4DND; Shige JA4LKB; Kan JA1BK; Paul F6EXV; Gerard F2VX; Roger G3LQP; Thierry F6CUK and half on picture Dieter DJ9ON

Hennie Xyl PA3FQA, Dick PA3FQA and Alex PA1AW

FT4JA DXpedition – Juan de Nova 2016

BY SEBASTIAN POULENARD, F5UFX & FLO MOUDAR, F5CWU • PHOTOS BY FT4JA

From April 29th to May 10th 2016, a team made up of Seb, F5UFX, Flo, F5CWU, Vincent, F4BKV, Gil, F4FET, Yann, F1NGP, Pat, F2DX, Jack, F6BEE, Pascal, F5PTM, Diégo, F4HAU and Chris, EA3NT, went to Juan de Nova, an island located between Madagascar and Mozambique. The island is flat and covers an area of 4.4 km^2. It is surrounded by a coral reef which harbours a vast lagoon. Forests, mainly of Casuarinaceae (Le Filao), cover about half of the island. It is named after a Portuguese captain Joao da Nova who discovered it in 1501. In the absence of foreign presence, the island is attached to the colonial empire of France in 1896 and passed under French flag the following year. Since 2007, it is attached like the other scattered islands to the administration of the TAAF (Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises).

The thud of the chain pulling up the anchor of the «Antsiva» puts an end to the last moments of calm prior to our departure for Mayotte (FH). All operators stand on the deck quietly looking at the last view of the Island, before setting off for the ocean journey ahead. On the shore, the static sky blue colour contrasts with the deep green of the luxuriant végétation stretching along the beach. We salute the solitary gendarme standing on the beach, craning his neck and wishing us bon voyage. He watched us until we were just a speck in the distance.

It was only then that we thought about our last two weeks on Juan de Nova and the energy spent overcoming the various technical and physical challenges required of such an expedition, the culmination of a year of hard work of preparation, planning and sacrifice. We felt extremely fortunate in getting the opportunity to visit again one of the scattered islands. Our time on Juan de Nova passed by very quickly. We were all now in a good and light hearted mood, convinced that we had done everything possible to make our endeavour a success.

After two days of sailing, we arrived at Juan de Nova late in the afternoon, earlier than expected, due to the marine currents in the Mozambique channel between there and Mayotte. We could see the shoreline of Juan de Nova almost one kilometer away. What struck us was the contrast between the immaculate white sand which seemed to spout out from the water and the filaos (trees) which form a thick and dark layer. The last moments of daylight provided a red colour to the landscape before the darkness quickly settled. We could see the red lantern of the lighthouse close to the western point of the Island. It warns passing ships of the stretch of land between Madagascar and Mozambique.

Tuesday, March 29th 2016 - before the first lights of dawn, the excitement among the participants began to peak aboard the «Antsiva», a 28 m long yacht specialised in adventure cruising and trips such as the one we had set out upon. Although we had spent the night in a calm mooring, the growing excitement did not bring an easy sleep. It was hard to accept that the fifth rarest country in the world was just a short distance away. No alarm clocks were necessary as each team member was anxious to make ready for the day ahead. Beds were abandoned and even breakfast was short lived as we began to assemble equipment on the deck in preparation for transport to the shore. Before dawn, we worked in the light from our head torches. In total we had brought one and a half tons of equipment to Juan de Nova. During the voyage the equipment had to be stowed in many different parts of the boat. All this had to be carried to the disembarkation point of the boat in the specific order it had to be transported ashore. The number of rotations ashore depended upon the state of the tide, so there was considerable meticulous planning to get as much equipment to the island in the time available. Every item was numbered to make this task easier. All ten operators were assisted by the crew who worked effectively to get as much ashore as possible. At 06:00 a.m. the crew launched the tender of the «Antsiva». Two tents, tools and the first of the antennas were loaded. The first trip to the shore included three operators. They were met on the beach by the local gendarme accompanied by a couple of soldiers complete with tractor and trailer.

Even on Juan de Nova we had to show our passports and our paperwork to the authorities before we could start our business. As the leading group made their way to the radio

area, the tender made its way back to the yacht. We crossed through the military camp and along the edge of the runway before reaching our spot at the edge of the forest. As we drove along surrounded by our large transportation bags and water containers, excitement continued to grow as we drove passing places which we had studied in photographs during many months of preparation. Our dream was slowly changing into reality. Suddenly the convoy stopped. Barring our way was a spider as big as your hand. It was very slowly and

carefully assisted into the long grass which bordered the track. Eventually, we reached the place we had chosen for our operating positions. The place was much different than we had imagined from the satellite photographs. Admittedly, we did not expect to find the lush grass of a golf course freshly mown, but the area left us speechless. It was not possible to establish a site in the long and coarse grass never mind the logistical transport problems. It was also dangerous for team members to cross the field day and night. We discussed the problem with the gendarme, who suggested a tour of the area to allow us to select a better location. Eventually we found a

location with no trees which satisfied the environmental constraints of our permit, our proximity to the water, to certain types of vegetation and bird laying areas. We obtained the agreement of the gendarme and also of TAAF.

Whilst all this was taking place, the tender had been going back and forth to the yacht bringing more personnel and equipment to the shore to ensure that as much as possible had been brought ashore before low tide. All the equipment was taken to the new campsite and we began to assemble our tents. In a cloudless sky, the temperature gradually rose to 40 degrees. Between the sand and in the lack of wind it was like working in hell. The difficult conditions meant that we had to continually stop to take on board water to keep us hydrated. We worked hard all day and by the time the sun began to set in the sky, the camp was almost complete. We battled against the clock to make the place livable before darkness and the voracious hoardes of mosquitoes which attacked us constantly despite of covering ourselves and our clothes in repellant.

After two days of sailing and one exhausting day working under the hot sun, everybody was exhausted. We made our way to the TAAF buildings, where we enjoyed our first proper meal before returning to our camp beds to enjoy a few hours of well deserved rest. We woke up before sunrise at 05:00 h a.m. Still exhausted from our previous day's efforts, but fortified by a cup of strong coffee we set out again to complete all that was necessary for the expedition.

Already it was hot, soon it would again be insufferable. We worked out a plan to complete our work. We had to install three generators, which, to

avoid contaminating the earth, had to be set on large sheets of plastic. This was an important consideration in our plan to safeguard the environment and in our operating plan agreed with TAAF. All machines started without any problem, having been tested in France prior to our departure. We expected them to work for the duration of our expedition without interruption. We laid out 1,500 m of

coaxial cable and 2,500 m of radials. Electrical connection to the operating positions were also set out. Tent n°1 hosted 3 HF stations whilst tent n°2 had 3 HF stations and 6 m.

The formation of the operating team is a very important consideration on these adventures. The composition of the team is a crucial point, it is the cornerstone. In addition to operators skills, we made a serious point of forming a cohesive group, with strong human qualities. This proved itself in the fact that for the duration of the trip, the motivation and hard work of the party never failed. The core members of the group had previously been to Tromelin and so the same group went to Juan de Nova joined by some new members whom we felt met all our criteria. During our mid-day break, we had one final opportunity to gather the complete team to remind ourselves of our plan and goals and to discuss matters of operating and general site safety. The world was waiting for us.

Our first contact was with our chief pilot station, Cedric, F5UKW, at exactly 12:37 UTC. We were able to get the latest news from France before hitting the airwaves with several stations, soon to be seven in number in late afternoon. Operating soon took on a momentum of its own with many stations having waited for decades to make a contact with Juan de Nova. Pile ups were huge and soon a very fast rhythm was established. Those who were not operating, worked outside the operating tent, to make adjustments and tidy up the installation so that the operators could concentrate on making QSOs.

Our band plan was designed to co-habit with VKØEK, the Heard Island expedition which was taking place at the same time. We designed an easy to read, easy to follow table to try to avoid conflict or at least keep it to a minimum. We tried to pay extra attention to those zones which we though would be the most difficult to contact. Our operating plan was designed so that all regions of the world would have a chance for a QSO with Juan de Nova. It seemed that the amateur radio community collaborated well with our plan without complaining.

After the initial rush, the team was split so that 24 hour operation was possible. It seemed that after the first day of operation there were already 10,000 QSOs in the log. Already we had established a rhythm which we hoped would continue for the entire duration. Propagation conditions were better than we had hoped for, making it possible to make QSOs on the higher bands.

Each station was similarly equipped with an Elecraft K3, an SPE Expert 1.3 KFA amplifier and a Microham Microkeyer II. Each station had the necessary band pass filters, home-made splitters, RX limiters loaned by DX Engineering and pre-amplifiers by KD9SV. In addition, SDR transceivers (SunSDR Pro 2) completed the setup and had been used to make some experiments, especially on CW (use of panoramical RX + CW skimmer). These tests have been successful and were very interesting under such difficult working conditions in overcrowded bands. All seven stations were networked with WinTest logging software. The antennas of choice were 2 element Vertical Dipole Arrays from 10 to 20 m. In addition to their compactness, their performance was undeniable, particulatly so when placed at the ocean. On 30 m and 40 m we utilised a four square with verticals on 80 m and 160 m using the well known Spiderbeam Poles. A multiband yagi came in support, in particular to make in-band traffic. This configuration enabled us to have, at certain hours, two stations on the same band. The 6 m antenna was a 6 element yagi made by DX-Beam. All antennas were connected with low loss and extremely light weight coaxial cable manufactured by our italian partner, Messi and Paolini (Airborne 10). To improve our reception on 160 m and 80 m, two 200 m long beverage antennas and phased pennant antennas were in use. Cases lent by DX Engineering and KD9SV enabled us to adapt to the configuration.

Every day was different, but we managed to maintain our rhythm of almost 10,000 QSOs per day. We realised that with tiredness setting in, this would be difficult to replicate during the second week. The rest periods were difficult as it was hard to nap in 40 degrees and night time sleep was interrupted as we had to be back in front of the radio for the sunrise openings on the low bands.

As well as operating, there were also many other things to be taken into consideration. For example, the site and antennas had to be maintained, meals had to be prepared, press releases and articles for schools written, video reports filmed and so forth. Every team member was fully occupied and played his role in the success of the mission. It is the cohesion and integration of all team members that allows this to take place with good humour and hard work. We exchanged messages with our pilot station via our sat-phone. Information received allowed us to adjust our operating plan taking into account the differences in propagation. At the same time, we had to remain inside our published strategy. Once per day, the log was uploaded to Clublog. This placed considerable strain on our data consumption on the sat-phone but on-line logs is a must-have function for DXpeditions and it seemed it was no longer possible not to go down this route.

As the days passed our routines and habits were almost automated. Each day we received a visit from the gendarme who enquired about our contact total or if we had any problems for him to solve. He had good humour and his visits were always friendly and appreciated. He was always there to help out and on more than one occasions mobilised the soldiers to carry water and remove waste for re-cycling. We were happy for him to watch our activities and he was intrigued and amazed at how we could communicate with the world using only pieces of wire. One morning, we accompanied him on his daily tour around the Island. His route checked on pollution, traces of intrusion or

anything out of the ordinary which he would report to the prefect. He would also check on the island's turtles and count the number of tracks left by the turtles on the beach overnight. During this tour we discussed many things and it was an enjoyable way to spend the time.

The operating positions were approximately one and a half kilometers from the sleeping tent. Day and night to get from one to the other we had to pass one of the two cemeteries on the Island, and a lighthouse. Near the lighthouse on the beach there is the wreck of the «Kwang Myong», a 45 m Korean ship which foundered in the seventies. Its hull, posed on sand is beaten by the floods with each high tide while the branches of filaos seem

to swallow the prow of it. The last 500 m were done on the beach where it is necessary for us to climb over dead trees lying on the sand. We have been allowed to use a TAAF building near the airstrip. This one housed the weather station (La Goulette) and the gendarmerie. This building has toilets and two showers, fed by a tank on the roof. This allows us a little bit of comfort. Our camp beds are set out in the main part of the building, intended to lodge scientists during their missions. Rainwater is collected and stored in tanks. In awareness of saving this invaluable resource, we made our best to collect water from the showers to use it in the toilets or for the laundry.

Last night, the low band operators made contacts under epic conditions, disturbed by the thunderstorms which burst over the ocean each evening. The high bands, almost dead for a few nights were exploited almost until the morning. The stations of the west side of the USA had incredible signals on 20 m and 17 m. From the start of the expedition, 6 m was disappointing with only very short openings to southern Europe (EA, SV, I) and middle East countries making few QSOs possible. A 6 m beacon was running every day and we still hoped it might be possible to work some stations on EME.

In spite of the adrenalin brought by monstrous pile-ups, tiredness was never far and always wins in spite of the regular coffee breaks which push back the limits. In the last resort, we laid down on the ground about twenty minutes before going back to the pile-up. It was necessary to hold on! What a relief when the fresh operators showed up at the first gleams of the day. The instructions were exchanged and we gave up our seats in order to return to the sleeping area to have a rest. After the re-fueling the three generators and checking the fuel stock, we left the radio camp. The tide was low, water was withdrawn to the coral reef located at more than one kilometer, letting appear an immense sand field. There were enormous grey clouds in the sky. In western direction, a double rainbow showed-up and our cameras captured it. The light was splendid !

As we returned to the TAAF building, an enormous wind and rain fell down on the island, pouring thousands liters of water, mingled with violent gusts of wind. The roof poured water in torrents. Under the courtyard, we had breakfast, but we did

not hide our concern about these gusts of winds and its cloudburst. Was the radio camp flooded? Did the tents resist the gusts? What about the generators? We were imagining the worst! Maybe this episode meant the end of the DXpedition. In a lull, and in spite of the tiredness, we ran up to the radio camp. This one and a half kilometers felt like ten. We feared how the "battleground" would look like. However, at midway, we perceived the humming of a generator, then we saw the silhouette of some of our verticals. Once we had arrived at the camp, we discovered the team running the pile-up peacefully. They managed the crisis very well. There was no damage exept to the capacitive hat of the 160 m vertical. Reassured and happy to have escaped this incident without serious consequences, we returned to take a few hours of rest, benefitting from the freshness brought by the rain which continued to fall, filling the water reserves of the island.

As we got towards the end of the

second week we were looking to break the 100,000 QSO mark. This target was all consuming. We activated the whole seven stations whenever possible. The QSOs were fast and furious. There was at least one station on 15 m throughout the 24 hour period in order to maximise QSOs especially uniques.

6 m EME proved to be disappointing and did not lead to a complete 2-way contact. However, it was all the more infuriating, our signals were heard and we received several reports, without never having the time necessary to complete the contact. The density of the filaos and the obstacle formed by the lighthouse placed exactly on the azimuth of the moon did not certainly play in our favour. However, this was a challenge worth to take! Except for some small fixes, we did not have any problem with equipment. The equipment chosen showed an incredible reliability in spite of difficult conditions of operating (heat, salt air, operation around the clock, etc).

Three days before the end of our mission, it was necessary for us to complete the reports and interviews which would be used for the video of the DXpedition. With this intention, we left the camp at dawn in order to benefit from the exceptional light. At the end of the landing track there were several cottages housing the equipment of the weather station from which the data is transmitted automatically. The first permanent station went back to 1973, taking over the 20 year old auxiliary station called “La Goulette” in reference to the Captain Marcel Goulette who was constrained to land on Juan de Nova with his «Farman 190» in 1929. He left about two months later, having built a landing stripe. Nowadays, at 1,200 m, it is the essential link with the outside world and makes it possible for military planes to carry out the changing of staff every 45 days.

We went along the track bordered by tall filaos which are without any doubt the most represented species of trees on the island. The flora is relatively poor. Some coconuts, vestiges of an old copra plantation were drawn up close to the TAAF building. At the top of the beach, we noticed the presence of some “velvet trees”. The heart of the island is a patchwork of vast clearings covered with high grasses and more wooded parts. At mid- track, we turned and we entered

the forest. We kept our eyes open because these underwoods were hunting ground for the big spiders which weaved immense inclined webs while waiting for their prey. The way curved to a clearing where there was a large stone house. Although in ruins, the “Patureau house” appeard massive with its two levels, perched on a vast concrete base. Its imposing staircases and ironwork gave it an air of a mansion.

In 1952 Hector Patureau obtained from the French government a concession to extract guano in Juan de Nova as Phosphate is used as fertiliser. The exploitation thrived and employed many workers. The Patureau House was constructed during this period. When the phosphate prices collapsed, the work closed at the end of the Sixties. The last workers left the island in 1975. Today, only ruins of this short industrial adventure remain and are slowly being absorbed by the vegetation. The path which leads towards the East led us to the SEGA camp which hosts the military detachment, installed partly in the buildings which formerly lodged the workers. Then, we headed in direction of the beach, passing in front of the dechetery of the island where all rubbish was carefully sorted. All collected waste, including that collected from the beach, was gathered there. Regularly, this material was removed from the island and then recycled. On the ground, sections of rails which were used to convey the “Decauville railway carriage” full of phosphate still exist. We followed them to the bottom of the old pontoon which was partly collapsed and stretched out into the lagoon. In other times, the ore was loaded onto boats before transportation to Europe.

Time passed by too quickly. It was

time to go back to the radio camp to replace our comrades who ensured the morning radio operation. We went along the beach, escorted by several raven-magpies which followed us in silence, rather than their normal loud chatter. In a general way, we were surprised by the calmth of the island. The terns which had the chance to see and live alongside throughout our stay in Tromelin, had already left

the island after the period of nesting (2 million couples of sooty terns). Only some small red fody were seen during our stay, perched in height to perhaps secure attacks of wildcats. They were introduced to fight against the proliferation of rats, but it was mainly in the population of terns that suffered. An eradication campaign of the wildcats is in progress.

We did not have the chance to renew the magic meeting with the turtles leaving water to go to lay their eggs in the sand, not even a single opportunity of seeing the characteristic tracks in sand. Our authorisation only permitted us to erect our tents not to exceed the first line of vegetation so as not to disturb the turtles. We had to follow a similar instruction with our antennas and in addition had to attach coloured ribbons to all guy wires to make them visible to the birdlife.

In the same way as we had to plan our arrival, we had to carefully plan our departure from the Island. We had to take into account the state of the tide and the hight of the swell. One by one we removed the antennas and carefully loaded our tender one generator at a time. By the final afternoon, we had only one generator, 4 HF stations, 5x VDA and a vertical for 40 m and 30 m. Everything else was back on the yacht.

During the last evening, we each took a turn at the operating site to allow us all to experience the pile-up one last time. We had already surpassed our target of 100,000 contacts, but our enthusiasm did not waver. Our last QSO took place at 21:00 UTC on April 10th after twelve days and eight hours of operation. In total we had 105,600 QSOs in our log.

Next morning, it was a race against time to dismantle everything that remained and have it removed from the Island back to the yacht, before the turn of the tide. We were fortunate that there was no wind and the conditions were good. As the last load of equipment left on the tender, we examind our site very carefully to ensure we left everything as we found it. It was very difficult to tell that we had even been there. This had to be done to comply with our landing and operating permit. The tide had now turned and the team had to wait for the next tide to leave the Island. They made use of their last moments on the Island to make one final meal using all the left over food. It also gave us the opportunity to have a look at the logs and our statistics. Our initial look showed that we made 60 % of all QSOs with Europe, 21 % with North America and 16 % with Asia. We were happy to have achieved our objectives and allowed many amateur radio friends all over the World to make at least one contact with this very rare and remote Island. We were also very proud that it was an entirely French DXpedition with the exception of Christian, EA3NT, but after two weeks of being with the team, he became almost French, and that we were able to overcome some very complex and difficult problems. We were also able to demonstrate that it is possible for amateur radio and wildlife conservation to co-exist without detriment to the environment. We

would like to thank everybody who helped in one way or another to make this adventure possible, for their advice, for their benevolence in helping us around the various complicated issues of visiting such a remote wilderness.

We cannot finish this long story without warmly thanking all those who supported and helped us starting with companies Elecraft, SPE Expert, Spiderbeam, DX Engineering, KD9SV, Microham, Messi & Paolini, DX Avenue, GMØOBX Cables, SunSDR.eu, ExpertElectronics, Antlion Audio, F5JRC Print Shop.

On all the continents, the clubs and foundations have been reactive in spite of a complicated season for their finances because of many DXpeditions were in search of sponsors. An immense thank you to Northern California DX Foundation, as well as the International DX Association, German DX Foundation, Network of the French Transmitters, Clipperton DX Club, Colvin Award, Southeastern DX Club, Chiltern DX Club, Twin City DX Association, Eastern Iowa DX Association, NIDXA, Danish DX Group, European DX Foundation, Mediterraneo DX Club, OHDXF, Carolina DX Assocation, Willamette Valley DX Club, Swiss DX Foundation, Lone Star DX Assocation, Northern California DX Club, the U.K. Six Meter Group, ORCA, CQ Hamradio JA, Western Washington DX Club, F8ATS Stamp fund, ETDXA, the DX Group, GMDX Group, FEDXP, WVDXA, eQSL, Ehime DX, Utah DX, Tokyo 610, TDXS, SEMDXA, Lynx DX, GSDXA, Shizuoka DX, Delta DXA, RemoteHamradio.com, UFT, LIDXA, 599DX, NWIDXA, NOHDXA, ADXA, Nara DXA, Mile-Hi DXA, OKDXA, SEDCO, Passau DX, FWDXA, Mulan DX, GMDXA, KC5WXA, Spokane DXA, Madison DX, NADXC, SDXG, WNYDXA, GPDX, BARTG, DX Hogs, Most Wanted DX, Yokohama DXC, ARAN59, VADXCC, Six Italia.

We wish to underline the exceptional help of the amateur radio community through all the people who took part in this project. Thanks to F6AGM, K1QX, F4ERS, F6BKI, F5VHJ, K6TU, N5FG, JA4DND, F5JRC, our pilots F5UKW, JJ3PRT, WØMM and ON9CFG.

In conclusion, we wish to thank cordially the staff of the French Southern Lands and Antarctic (TAAF) and its Prefect, the administrator of the TAAF, Mrs Cécile Pozzo di Borgo who authorised us to carry out this mission and provided constant support during all the preparation.

While we are writing these last lines, Juan de Nova is nothing any more but a dot on the horizon. We left with a head full of memories, the SD cards of our camera boards crowded with photographs and videos and 100,000+ contacts in the log. There is no doubt that the actions of conservation done by the TAAF will make it possible to protect this marvellous island, and that one day perhaps, we may have the opportunity to visit it again.

FT4JA,

Seb F5UFX & Flo F5CWU (adaptation Tom, GM4FDM)

TL8AO – Central Afrika DXpedition

BY KENNETH OPSKAR, LA7GIA • PHOTOS BY TL8AO

TL - Central African Republic is a landlocked country in Africa with a population of about 4.6 million and got its independence from France in 1960. Currently there is an ongoing civil war in the country between the Muslim Seleka rebel's coalition and government forces which began in December 2012. Because of this there are still 13,000 UN troops in the country. The country was plunged into turmoil in 2013 when Seleka rebels seized power and overrun the Capital Bangui forcing the President to flee to Congo. In 2014 Seleka handed power to a transitional government, which further was followed by a peaceful election in March 2016. As many as 1 million people still being displaced because of the conflict either internally or abroad.

Obtaining an amateur radio license in TL was easy as soon as I had established contact with the Telecommunications Regulatory Agency in C.A.R. I was quite surprised how easy it was bearing in mind my previous experience in 3C and D6. This time, there was really no dossier to fill in. I just needed to tell them I wanted an amateur radio license and my output power. I did try to negotiate a callsign suffix, but they let me know they decided this – so I really did not put any effort into that. They also assured me passing through customs should be easy, and offered to pick me up at the airport as well! I got the IBAN and SWIFT details and even before they received the 220 Euro license fee, they sent me an electronic copy of the license by email. Very convenient!

In addition, the authorities offered assistance towards the hotel manager and making sure I could stay there with my antennas. They assured everything would sort out and that I would have access to the roof where I planned to do the antenna installation. I managed to book a room with easy access to the roof, and this room was also towards NA/EU. This hotel is considered an institution, it is the best hotel in Bangui in use by UN workers and other western people, behind concrete walls and with a decent security in place. I also chose this because they have an emergency generator 24/7 to supply my radio, my antennas would be installed at 20 - 25 meter with great take off to NA/EU, and would be out of reach for people.

TL8AO take off EU

In conjunction with this trip I set up a humanitarian fundraiser where all donations will be given to Doctors Without Borders in C.A.R. Before I decided to go to TL I did a study of the country, the history, and current situation with respect to the ongoing civil war. This country is known to have been unstable since its independence from France. It is rich in diamonds, gold, oil and uranium but still has one of the world's poorest populations and is currently ranked on bottom two on the UN development index. During 2016 I was reading daily news about this country. I followed their election in March 2016 and thought it would be a good opportunity to go there just after. During the period March – September the situation was quite relaxed, before tension started to rise again. In October and November clashes broke out and we saw militia fighters hunt down and massacre civilians during violence that killed 85 persons. In same period, the Head of the Armed Forces in C.A.R was assassinated in the streets of Bangui close to my QTH. We also saw the city being barricaded and closed during gunfire between the UN forces and civilians in Bangui leaving several people killed in the streets. These spells of violence, and attacks on humanitarian agencies outside Bangui, have restricted the delivery of assistance to those most in need. Nearly half of the population in war-torn Central African Republic - more than 2,3 million people - need immediate humanitarian aid despite progress in stabilizing the country. Same day I left the country another attack occurred further north, causing 10,000 people to flee their homes per UN sources. Humanitarian efforts are critical to save lives of people, with this is in mind I know that the humanitarian fundraiser which was set up in conjunction with this trip is being well received. Currently the total donation of money and equipment is in the order of USD 10,000. One donor could deliver HF equipment to Doctors Without Borders, tailor made to their need, as well as upgrading their current software. DWOB use a truck to bring material and medications to their hospitals throughout the country. With the new equipment

TL8AO 10 min sightseeing on my way to airport

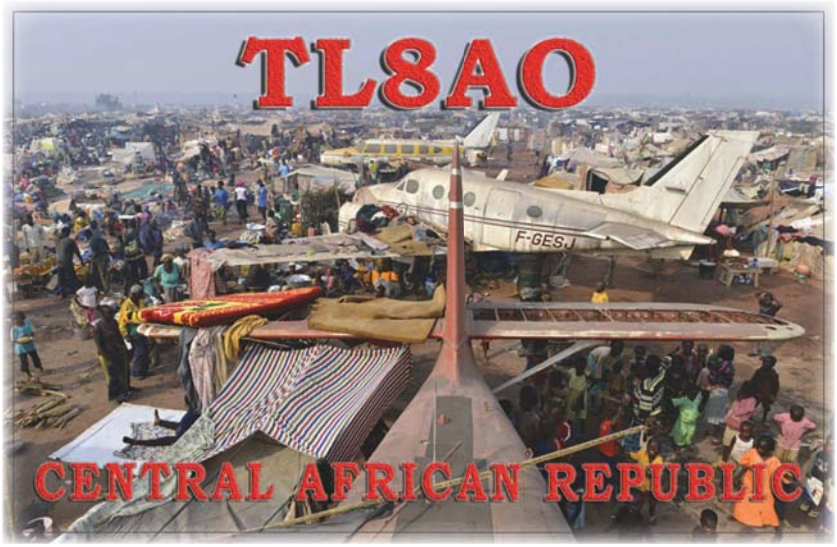
TL8AO LA7GIA beam and wires

TL8AO broken beam

provided by one donor they can now track their trucks position by using HF technology instead of expensive satellite technology saving them some costs, as well as making it more secure for their workers. One of their convoys with staff and patients were attacked in May 2016, with one of their staff being shot dead.

I chose going from Oslo to Bangui by Air France. The first thing I noticed when landing at the runway was the large refugee camp hosting 20,000 internally displaced people. Just 50 m from the runway there is this huge refugee camp which arised during the early start of the civil war when people would seek shelter at the airport which was protected by international forces. The QSL photo is taken from the refugee camp at the airport some years ago, today it is much more organized. Still a lot of people live there because they are afraid of returning to their homes.

Arriving in Bangui, all the luggage arrived safely. I passed through customs without any problems, showing them the license and I could leave. As soon as I entered the hotel I began installation of the fan dipole for 40-30-15-12 m (3 wires). The dipole was up about 25 meter with a clear take off to NA/EU. The 2 element tribander beam was set up the following day same height and perfect take-off to NA/EU/VK. In addition to the beam I had wires as backup for those frequencies. One 20-17 m fan dipole was installed as backup and to cover NA/EU as well as VK, and one 80 m dipole to EU. Installation was surprisingly easy. I could use the roof as I wanted and this measured 60 x 20 meters. Of course, the 2 ele. beam has a very broad bandwidth, so it only needed to be adjusted to AS/VK in the morning, and further to central EU during daytime and NA/SA in the evening. The first weekend was quite busy. Still completing the installation of the antennas I could do 1600 - 1700 QSOs a day. With TL being ranked 19 on CW, the pile-up was great and I really enjoyed it. A typically run would be 15/17/20 m in the morning to Asia, then switching to 20/15/12/10 m to EU during daytime before I later worked NA on 15/17/20 m. Working NA in the evening also meant I could not work EU on 40 m and 30 m, so I had to prioritize NA rather than working EU in the evening. Well, that is the drawback as a single op – you can't cover all openings and all bands/modes. Late around 22:00 - 23:00 UTC I would switch to 80 m and 40 m. Every day I also tried 12 m and 10 m but as expected the propagation was not that good on high bands, even though the most memorable QSO was a single QSO with VK on 12 m.



I was in good shape until day 5 of 10 when a thunderstorm hit the city. It was quite intense for 1,5 hours and left my 2 ele. beam broken on top of the roof as well as the 80 m dipole. Luckily the beam didn't hit the ground 25 m below – thanks guy wires! The previous evening there had been a similar but less intense storm. I had backup wires already installed for all frequencies, so It didn't spoil the operation in that sense. The difference between a dipole and a 2 ele. beam is not that great either so it was no option to spend much time fixing the beam. But next day, I managed to temporarily fix the driven element, I knew it would not survive another storm of same size. The following days another two less intense storms occurred but my beam still survived. These thunderstorms left especially the 40 m with a lot of QRN, making this band quite difficult to operate. I knew there was a pileup, but really had problems copying the signals. Typically, the noise level would be somewhere between S5 - 7. However, some evenings the 40 m band noise was down to S2 - 3 making this a very enjoyable band late night. On 40 m I would find myself working 4 continents at the same time NA, SA, EU and AS. At JA sunrise, they would just take over the pile up on 30 m and 40 m, I knew that when the first JA appeared at the QSO party, soon the pile up would be

covered by JAs.

When 40 m was useless my priority would be working NA/SA on 15-17-20 m until late evening. The 20 – 10 m band was completely noise free and I really enjoyed the Elecraft K3 RX performance. With my antennas up 25 m I worked many weak stations, that was really satisfying. Also during pile up I would tune around searching for weaker stations, and avoid the big guns. But as you know, with the out of turn callers and constant calling technique to some ops - that can be a real challenge.

After the thunderstorms appeared, I also had problems with the QSO rate. Each day there were 3 - 5 short power outages. The propagations were not that good, but my rate dropped from 1600 - 1700 to 1200 -1300 per day. The last weekend I had more problems with the QSO rate even though I spent the equal amount of time in the shack! I found myself calling CQ a lot and with almost no pile. The band seemed empty. The conds were poor, but to me it seemed like there were too few callers. I also did some SSB throughout the week, but I had got reports my audio was not that good, which I tracked down to a setting in the K3. For sure the need for a SSB contact seemed more than CW. I ended up with 14,200 QSOs in 10 days, a little short of my 15 k target which left me a bit disappointed.

As many as 20 DX clubs/organizations and 60 individuals contributed upfront to this fundraiser. With the current donation of money and equipment of aproximately 11,088 USD, I am very happy with this. All money will be wire transferred to Doctors Without Borders in January 2017. I wish to thank EUropean DX Foundation for their support, I know this donation will help the people of C.A.R. Thank you!

VK9NZ – Norfolk Island DXpedition

BY THE QUAKE CONTESTERS • PHOTOS BY VK9NZ

After the successful DXpedition to Vanuatu as YJØX in 2014 it didn't take long for the Quake Contesters to start talking about where they wanted to go next.

The criteria hadn't changed i.e. it had to be reasonably rare, in the Pacific and XYL friendly. After a long debate Norfolk Island, being 95 on the Clublog most wanted list, was settled on for two weeks from the end of September 2016. The team comprised of Vanuatu stalwarts Phil ZL3PAH, Geoff ZL3GA, Paul ZL4TT with Mark ZL3AB coming for the first week and Don ZL3DMC for the second, as well as Maggie and Francie, Phil and Geoff's XYLs respectively.

Flights are weekly from Auckland, so the focus soon became how much gear we could take while staying within baggage limits. Luckily, Francie and Maggie helped with being able to carry extra gear, so we ended up taking two Yaesu FT- 450Ds, two Elecraft K3s and three Elecraft KPA 500 amps. We also took four fibreglass poles to use with ground planes and two hex beams along with the associated coax, wire etc. We soon became experts in how much you can fit into a bag and stay within weight!

Norfolk Island is approximately 1,100 km north west of Auckland and 1,400 km east of Brisbane in the South Pacific Ocean. It has had an interesting and at times brutal history. There is evidence of Polynesian settlement in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries but the fate of that settlement is a mystery. The first European to discover Norfolk Island was James Cook in 1774 and he named the island after the Duchess of Norfolk, although unbeknownst to him she had died soon after he had left England. It was settled in 1778 and at one point had 1,500 people living there. The lack of a natural port hindered its development and the settlement was eventually abandoned in 1814 as it was considered too expensive to maintain. A second settlement occurred in 1825 for the worst of the worst prisoners from Australia although the scant records that remain suggest many prisoners were in fact first or minor offenders. Life was tough and punishment brutal for anyone who fell foul of the various governors. This settlement was gradually wound down and in 1855 finally abandoned.

When the Pitcairn Islanders faced starvation from over-crowding, Queen Victoria magnanimously offered them Norfolk Island as a replacement. They travelled there in 1856 and despite 17 returning to Pitcairn in 1858, and 27 a further five years later the rest stayed and the descendants still live on Norfolk today. An independent territory of Australia, recently Norfolk Islanders have been in

VK9NZ The Quake Contestters Team

Anson Bay Lodge

the news protesting Australia's move to take back administrative control which they did in July 2016. There was plenty of evidence of the protests to be seen while we were there.

We arrived on 25 September 2016 and were met by Wayne, the owner of the Anson Bay Lodge and our home for the next two weeks, with a small pickup truck and our rental car. No sooner than we arrived at the lodge we set about organising the shacks. We had the use of three units, so we set up the two K3s and amps in one unit for CW and RTTY and a Yaesu FT-450D and amp in the second unit for SSB with the other Yaesu FT-450D which we used as a 6 m beacon. The third unit was used for meals and a break away from the radios. By the end of the first afternoon we had set up ground planes for 30 m, 40 m and 17 m and one hex beam. The ground planes were basically verticals on fibreglass poles with two raised radials. The hexes were two element folded beams and covered 20 – 10 m.

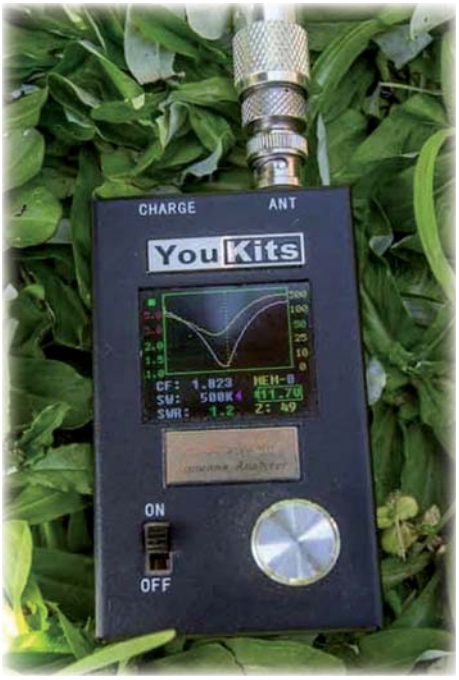
After an evening meal in the main settlement of Burnt Pine we hit the airwaves in earnest around 08:00 UTC. Our first QSO was with K6LL on RTTY. The first couple of days were great with good pile ups and plenty of band openings. However, geomagnetic disturbances meant the A index had started to rise rapidly and by Wednesday had hit 45. The impact on the bands was noticeable with signals a lot weaker. This slowed our rates down as we struggled to pick calls out of the noise. Signals from some parts of the world, notably Southern Africa, Scandinavia and Western Europe were largely non-existent.

The plan had been to concentrate on using SSB and RTTY and looking for Europe as that was where the demand was. However, because of the conditions it soon became apparent that CW was going to be the most effective mode (and which was good as we all love CW). This was illustrated clearly when Mark ZL3AB called CQ on 20 m SSB long path to Europe late one afternoon. Normally that is a very reliable path but after 15 minutes with no takers he switched to CW and generated an instant pile up. By the end of the first week we had 11,500 QSOs in the log of which around 8,000 were CW! The A index remained over 20 for most of the first week and only started to settle down during the last three days of the trip.

Despite the conditions we very quickly settled into a routine of operating and we were constantly checking for band openings to try and maximise QSOs. 10 m was a great case in point. In the first week it was quite unpredictable. Some days it hardly opened but on a couple of others we had good openings for several hours. 12 m constantly surprised and we had a fairly regular opening to JA and NA during our morning and sometimes past lunchtime.

80 m was a war of attrition. Thunderstorms combined with the poor conditions meant 80 m suffered from high QRN during the first few days of operating. Even strong signals were hard to pick out in amongst the static

40 m GP



160 m analyser

Double Hex

Phil ZL3PAH and Mark ZL3AB

Geoff ZL3GA

crashes. We activated 80 m at sunset each day for the first week and stayed on into the evening to pick up the grey line enhancement when the sun rose over North America. Paul ZL4TT would get up and do the (very) early shift through to sunrise. Paul was the team machine. How he managed to operate on the sleep he had was anyones guess. We simply put a bucket under his chair and away he would go. A CW robot, we must teach him not to yell when doing SSB.

We had many requests for 160 m. The plan was to modify the 80 m vertical with a top loading wire for 160 m and it performed very well. We worked 20 DXCC entities on 160 m and 237 QSOs in quite poor conditions. Our best DX was FR4NT on Reunion Island. In comparison 80 m provided 59 DXCC entities and around 750 QSOs. 40 m and 30 m while open regularly also suffered with weak signals but often there was a regular pile of callers to keep us busy. The team put a multi-two entry into the Oceania SSB Contest during the middle weekend. Conditions were frankly awful and we struggled to generate anything like a decent rate. It was so bad Mark ZL3AB left the country and was replaced by Don ZL3DMC for the second week.

Don was thrown in at the deep end. This was his first DXpedition. 40 m SSB in the evenings with huge pile ups from Japan could hurt anyones ears and so we sent Don off to the SSB shack and pretty much left him to it. He came out with ears ringing but lots of QSOs. We made an earnest effort with SSB particularly during the second week as Norfolk Island was needed by many on SSB and in the end we made over 4,700 SSB QSOs.

We also knew that Norfolk Island was needed by many on RTTY and we made over 4,200 QSOs using this mode. Phil spent much of his time on RTTY - we let him do this as otherwise he gets pretty boring reminiscing about the good old days of Creed 7Bs, the smell of the oil, the noise and the skill in keeping the machines going. Nowadays it is very different and with the Multi-RX facility on MMVARI we normally had 16 channels running in the audio passband which meant we could see a lot of signals at once. It was just like shooting fish in a barrel. Just don't tell him there is no skill involved…

Conditions gradually improved during the second week. It was a pity Mark had already left as we really had a ball. We were amazed by the way 10 m and 12 m stayed open for extended hours. The difference between our home QTHs in the South Island and being that much farther North and closer to the equator was striking. But the money bands were 40 m, 30 m and 20 m with 89, 84 and 88 DXCCs worked respectively.

No multi-station DXpedition runs well without an IT expert nowadays and Geoff ZL3GA filled that role for us. We used N1MM+ logger in DXpedition mode with Geoff making sure all the laptops were networked, so we could see what everyone was doing and who they were working. It was really fun trying to keep your rate above the other guys. Geoff also set up a link with Clublog <http//:www.clublog.org> to upload our log to their DXpedition page so people could see if they were in the log. Just prior to the trip Phil told Geoff about QSO Director <http//:www.qsodirector.com> which was a real time log website. Geoff set up a link and you could literally work us and then moments later see your QSO appear on the QSO director website to confirm you were in the log.

Shutdown was 11 am on Saturday 8 October 2016 to allow for pack up before flying out the following day. Our last QSO was with JAØDCQ and we finally stopped Paul 2 minutes after official QRT time. If we hadn't pulled the plug he could well still be

there. We had made over 20,000 QSOs which considering the terrible conditions we considered acceptable. In summary we had a wonderful time and despite the low ranking on the most wanted list we had plenty of callers over the whole of the two weeks. We all learnt something during the time we were there and we are sure we all came back better operators. The DXpedition just reinforced for us all how much more fun amateur radio is when you are part of a group.

We are most grateful to all our sponsors, Elecraft, Chiltern DX Club, German DX Foundation, GMDX Group, Souther German DX Group, European DX Foundation, the RSGB and the Clipperton DX Club for their support. And to Francie and Maggie for coming and cooking and keeping us company. They still don't know why we do what we do but they are very accepting and we are grateful. And to all those amateurs around the world for providing so much fun with some huge pile-ups, thank you. We hope you all had fun too.

Now we are home. The QSL card is being printed and the QSLs requests are flowing in. Hopefully by the time you read this the cards will have been dispatched. We have already posted the logs to Logbook of the World.

The Quake Contesters will be back with a new destination in a couple of years. We can't wait!

VP6EU – Pitcarin Island DXpedition

BY RONALD STUY, PA3EWP • PHOTOS BY VP6EU

Pitcairn, one of the most isolated islands of the world

In the summer of 2016 we started searching for a new destination for our next DXpedition for February/March 2017. Our target area was again the Pacific. We started working on 3 different destinations. Very soon we noticed that visiting Pitcairn was possible. Pitcairn can only be reached by boat. There is a scheduled supply vessel that goes to Pitcairn every three months. For me it is out of question to go for three months to Pitcairn, my boss won't like that, hi! But their schedule for begin 2017 was changed and the supply vessel would travel three times from Mangareva (French Polynesia) to Pitcairn in three weeks' time. So, we asked if it was possible to go there for the first trip and back again with the last trip. There was place left for four passengers, so we made a reservation without any doubt. The supply vessel Claymore II can handle only 12 passengers. We now could be active for 18 days on Pitcairn.

There are no hotels on Pitcairn, you must stay with the locals. We choose to stay at Andy's place. The VP6T team in 2012 also stayed at Andy's place and that was perfect. We got a lot of information from the VP6T team members. We requested the call VP6EU and within two weeks we received the confirmation. Our team consisted of Hans, DL6JGN (team leader), Uwe, DJ9HX, Ernö, DK2AMM (QSL-manager) and me, Ronald, PA3EWP.

Hans DL6JGN (Team leader)

Uwe DJ9HX

Ernö DK2AMM

Ronald PA3EWP

Claymore II Vessel

The vessel is from the same owner as the famous Braveheart. Some of the ship crew have participated in many DXpeditions. We had to fly from Tahiti to Mangareva (south-eastern Island of French-Polynesia), which is a four-hour flight and the schedule is only once a week. The schedule of the Claymore II is adjusted to the schedule of the airplane. It's a small plane for ca. 40 passengers. The luggage is restricted to 23 kg check-in and 5 kg hand luggage. They couldn't guarantee us that all our luggage fits into the plane. So, we decided to ship 2 boxes with a lot of equipment (ca. 120 kg) to New Zealand. There, the boxes were loaded on board of the Claymore II. The boxes had to be in New Zealand latest by the end of the month January.

Pitcairn is one of the most remote inhabitant Islands of the world. Approximately 50 people are living on the island, 34 of them are original from Pitcairn. The residents are descendants from the mutineers of the HMAV "Bounty". In the year 1790, the crew of the Bounty mutinied the ship. Captain Bligh and some crew members were placed into a small boat and sent away. The Bounty went back to Tahiti, where they took some more crew members including women on board and sailed to Pitcairn. On Pitcairn, they would start a new live. The "Bounty" was set on fire at the bay of Pitcairn so that there was no evidence anymore.

You can still find a lot of history in museums from the Bounty and how the people lived on Pitcairn in the past. They are the seventh generation. Most of the current inhabitants can tell you nice stories about the past. It is one big family, everybody knows each other. Via YouTube and the internet, you can find a lot of information. There are no young people anymore on the Island. Nobody knows what will happen to the people on Pitcairn in the coming years.

Sunday February 11th, it was time for departure. We started our journey from Frankfurt via Los Angeles to French-Polynesia. Everything was fine until we arrived in Tahiti: one suitcase was missing. The suitcase was still in Los Angeles and maybe it would arrive with the next flight next morning at 05:00 h or in the evening at 22:00 h. Luckily, we had one additional day in Tahiti before our departure to Mangareva.

During that evening, we spoke about a lot of details what to do if the suitcase wouldn't arrive. That night, I slept very badly. I woke up around 03:00 h and started searching on the internet for some companies in Papeete to buy some equipment. But at one moment I fell in sleep again for a few hours. In the morning after breakfast, we went to the airport again. Walking to the office we saw our suitcase standing on a trolley in front of the entrance. You can imagine what a big relief that was for all of us. We learned a lot from this situation, next time we will divide the equipment to all suitcases. The rest of the day we enjoyed tourist life through Papeete center, visited the market and walked around the harbour. In the evening, we had a great dinner and a few beers at a nice restaurant at the harbour. It would be a short night, so we went to bed early.

On Tuesday at 06:00 h we had to be at the airport for our flight to Mangareva, but we still had to solve the issue of a few kilograms of overweight. After negotiating with the desk clerk we still had to pay some money, but it was half of the first price he mentioned. After a flight of 4 hours we arrived in Mangareva. From there we went by ferry to the main Island. The supply vessel Claymore II was already there waiting for us.

Ancor of the Bounty

Pitcairn Island

32 hours on sea

At high tide, around 17:00 h we left the harbour for a 32 hour voyage to Pitcairn. Luckily, it was a very calm sea. Thursday night at around 02:00 h we arrived at Pitcairn. The next morning at 08:00 h a longboat came and brought us to the island as there is no harbour for the Claymore II or other large ships to moor. The Claymore II was about 500 meters from the coast. Andy our host drove us to his house by quad. A quad is a common transport vehicle on the Island. Our 2 boxes where still on the vessel and had to be unloaded. They expected that we would receive the boxes late afternoon or early evening.

Longboat

Taxi Quad

When we arrived at Andy's house we first looked around and made an antenna layout. Then we started assembling the shack. Within an hour, we were ready and had to wait for the boxes. It was a little bit waste of time, but then I had a great idea to build a temporary dipole for 17 meters. So, half an hour later we were on the air on 17 meters and we were very surprised about the performance, 59+ signals from Stateside! We had 2 Elecraft K3/100 as main stations and one Elecraft K2/100 as spare station. Sometimes we had 3 stations running. One station had an Expert 1.3K amplifier and the secondary station a homemade amplifier of 600 W.

At the end of the afternoon, Andy's mother Brenda brought the 2 boxes. As we still had two hours of daylight, we focused on constructing two additional verticals for the first night. It would be a big challenge because there was a very strong wind of 70 km/h. We had big problems erecting the first multi-band vertical for 10/15/20 m. The top load was too heavy and the fibreglass mast broke at two places. Luckily, we could repair it, but we decided to place single band verticals for all band instead as we had enough fibreglass masts and coax cables. In the first night we had only a few antennas, but 2 stations were up and running.

15 m and 20 m vertical

80 m vertical

160 m vertical

Hexbeam and 30 m vertical

Hexbeam with 30 m and 17 cm Vertical

After breakfast, we started immediately with assembling the other antennas. We decided to wait one more day for installation of the 160 m antenna and the beverages. At the end of the day all the other antennas were ready, including the Hex-beam on a 6 m high mast. The 80 m vertical worked perfect, it had at least 20 radials of 20 m length. We received nice

Hexbeam with 30 m and 160 m vertical at background

reports from Europe with S9 or sometimes even stronger. I was more surprised that we were listening only on the vertical. The noise level was very low. That was one of the profits that there was no electricity on the Island after 22:00 h. We had power from a generator and there was no QRM on

First generator

any band. One of the first days our homemade amplifier broke down. We couldn't repair it, luckily, we had a spare one.

Saturday morning, we assembled the 160 m inverted-L, a 18 m vertical supported by a Spiderbeam fibreglass mast with 22 m horizontal extension. The vertical had about 30 radials of 10 to 40 m length. In total, 1 km of aluminium wires were used. The beverage of 100 m length only was directed towards Europe and North-America. There was no way to make the beverage longer into that direction as it was partly across the road, but we extended the bamboo sticks and dug the two coax cables into the ground. Quads could safely drive on the road.

Base of 160 meter inverted-L

Operators in action: Hans DL6JGN, Uwe DJ9HX and Ernö DK2AMM

Operators in action: Ronald PA3EWP and Ernö DK2AMM

Saturday evening would be our first night on 160 m. During this weekend, there was the ARRL DX CW contest and the chance to find a clear frequency was very little. That evening, we also got some problems with the generator. The hose from the water cooling system was too hot and bended. The generator was overheated and turned off automatically. After fixing the cooling system we started the generator again, but 1 hour later is stopped again, but this time forever! We had to wait many hours before the electricity on the Island was turned on again, so we went to bed until 06:00 h. On the next day Andy organised another generator.

Until Sunday we had a visitor, Mel W8MV. He was on the same boat as we were. He left the Island again on Sunday.

All transport on the Island is done by quad. We wanted to use also a quad but for this we had to pass the exam before we got our driver's license. First a written part with 12 questions, but we also got another paper with the answers, hi. After this "difficult" examination we were authorised to drive a quad on Pitcairn. The only policemen on the Island was taking this exam. One profit is, that this driver license is also valid for Ducie Island, you never know for the future!

This evening we were active on 160 m for the first time, but Murphy was watching. The new generator produced S6 QRM on 160 m and it was not possible to copy anything.

There was no problem on 80 m, so I went back to 80 m again. The beverage was not working on 80 and 160 m because it was too short. The verticals performed much better. We noticed that there were no problems on 30 and 40 m, the beverages worked extremely well on these bands. During that night, we had to stop by a failure of the generator. It was leaking oil badly. Within 2 hours the power was back on the Island, so we haven't been off the air too long this time.

Andy arranged generator number #3 (I was very happy that the generator broke because the QRM on 160 m was terrible). At daytime, we were active on all bands and modes. No matter on which band we were, we always got a message "strong signal". Our Hex-beam was pointing to EU/NA and we didn't turn it to another direction. Most of the time this beam was stronger than the verticals except on 10 and 12 m, here the verticals were stronger.

I was very hopeful for the next night with the other generator. During that shift, I was also connected to the ON4KST low band chat to hear how my signal was received on 160 m (especially in Europe). For me it was a new experiment, because over the last years I was never active on 160 m from the Pacific with our main goal Europe. The beverage wasn't performing on 160 m, but the vertical was reasonable quiet. And no QRM on top band from this generator, wow! Very soon I worked the first Europeans with good signals. At the end of the first night there were 93 QSOs in the log of which 27 were Europeans. Simultaneous connection via the ON4KST chat is very helpful. But my golden rule is: the QSO must be made by the radio and not by internet. If I don't receive a confirmation the QSO is not logged. The next day was the best evening/night with 172 QSOs on 160 m, of which more than 50 stations were Europeans.

This other generator was good and it worked for a few days until Andy replaced it by number #4. The reason for replacement was simple, it was not powerful enough to provide electricity to the whole house and it made a lot of noise. We were sure that the neighbours could hear the generator at night. But there was no QRM on 160 m and our beer was still cold!

During day time, we tried to work on the highest band that was open, but we were most of the time looking for Europe. Europe was number #38 on the most wanted list and we were Europeans, too. Almost 2,000 QSO's were made during our activity per day. During the evening and at night one station was permanently active on 30 m CW. If the other station was not on Top Band it was switching between 40 and 80 m. But at night, sometimes only one band was open for 2 hours.

If you are on a special Island with very interesting history I like to see also more than only my radio, laptop and antennas. The Island is only 4.2 km^2 in size, so there is not much to see. But we have seen all the places of interest and if you do it without rush, you can see it in less than 3 days, hi! Sometimes we were active with only one radio at daytime, the other three operators were visiting the Island for a few hours. It is still vacation for us, but some people think different about it and they ask for impossible things. They don't understand that it is a very hard job to operate 2 stations for 24 hours per day with four operators. We still must eat and sleep. We visited the old commercial radio station which is not active anymore. Also, the club station VP6PAC was active from this location. In the radio station there were 2 big boxes of unanswered QSLs of VP6PAC.

I assume nobody will answer these cards. If you are waiting for this QSL, I doubt you will ever get it confirmed. On the Island, there are still two amateurs: Meralda, VP6MW, and Dave, VP6DB. Both are not active anymore,

Radio station VP6PAC

Re-packing boxes for return trip

Meralda has no radio and Dave no antenna.

After one week, the other home-made amplifier broke down. Hans tried to combine the two broken amplifiers to get one working, bad luck! Dave heard this and offered to use his old Yaesu FL2100 linear amplifier. It was on his desk, but hadn't been used for many years. We accepted his offer and used this amplifier until the last QSO. It had only 400 - 500 W output, but better than running with 100 W only.

Andy told us that we had to pack the two boxes already on Tuesday before our departure on Sunday because it had to be checked and sealed in the container by customs. This was a big disappointment for us and we started discussing. At the end we could extend operating until Wednesday afternoon and not later. We decided to leave a lot of equipment on the Island instead of packing it into the boxes. Our main goal was to be active until Sunday morning on most of the bands. We took down the Hex-beam, 160 m vertical, two fibreglass masts of 12 m in length. After all we still had vertical or dipole antennas for 10 - 80 m. We tried to fill the boxes with all kind of unnecessary equipment like, tools, the Stockcorner RX Splitter and RX bandpass filters for 40, 80 and 160 m and KD9SV pre-amp, both broken home-made amplifiers and a lot of coax- cables.

For Dave, we left a complete vertical for 40 m, including a 12 m fibreglass mast with all guy wires, guy anchors and 50 m of coax. We offered him to install it at his place and test if it was working fine, but it was not necessary. We hope that he will be active again, soon. At the club station we also left the 18 m Spiderbeam mast (sponsored by EUDXF), 2 x 10 m and 1 x 12 m fibreglass masts, 1,600 m of aluminium wire for radials and/or beverages. Also, the aluminium wires left by VP6T in 2012 were also still available which we had used for our 160 m vertical. We told Dave that if he needed more antennas or masts that he can use it. Our host Andy has a complete overview of all the equipment left at the radio station.

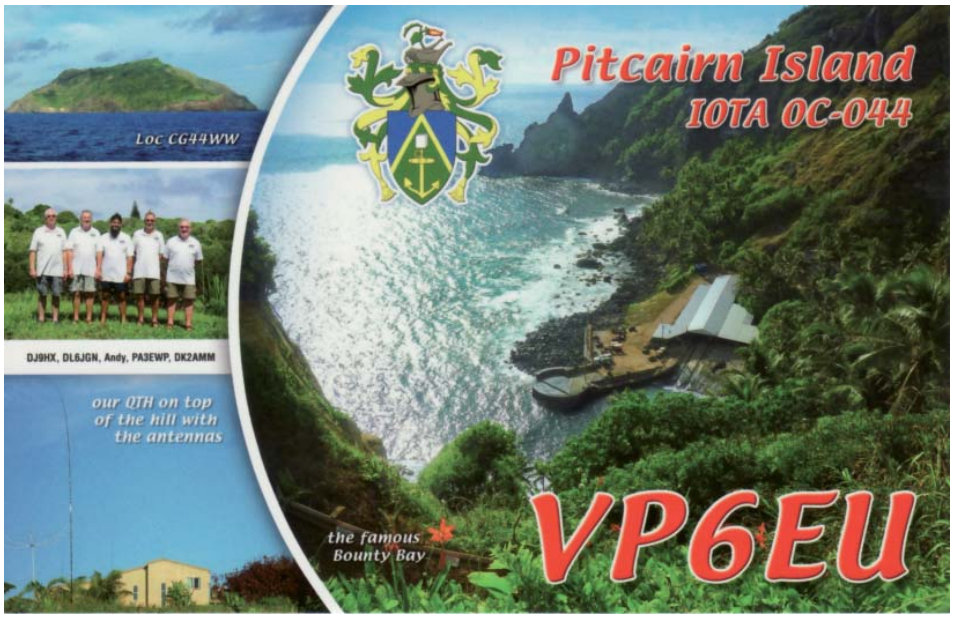
QSL that are not answered

I was active on 160 m for 6 nights, but during these nights I didn't make many QSO's. However, these QSO's we very appreciated as they were mostly new ones on Top Band. I noticed that there were not many Japanese stations in the log on Top Band, I had expected much more. In the last 2 days, I focused on JA. I had received also some requests from UA4's and from Nodir, EY8MM, during my sunrise. During the last sunrise I worked many JAs, two UA4's and EY8MM. On 160 m I called many stations for minutes, but I never heard them replying. And my golden rule continues: If I don't get a confirmation, you are not in the log.

In total I made 673 QSO's on Top Band of which 246 were with EU. I was very satisfied with this score. In total, we made 39,048 QSO's in 18 days with nearly 28 % Europe. The team consisted of five operators instead of four. Our host Andy was very valuable to the team. Without him we never could make this result.

Sunday 5th of March was time to leave. Until the afternoon one station was running. We participated also in the ARRL DX SSB Contest, but we worked everybody who was calling us, not only Americans and Canadians. At about 15:00 h we went to the 'landing point' and one hour later, after having said goodbye to the locals, we left the Island by long boat. Because of the strong wind, the Claymore II was on the other side of the Island, ca. 1 km away. Around 16:30 h we said goodbye to the crew of the long boat and sailed to the 'habited' world. We had more than 32 hours to go, the sea was not so calm but we survived. On the next day I slept for maybe 16 hours.

Tuesday morning around 02:00 h we were in Mangareva. After breakfast before the ferry boat left for the airport we had a nice walk on the Island. Everything went very smoothly and around 17:00 h we were in our hotel in Papeete. A quick shower, a great dinner, a few beers and a good night sleep without the noise of a generator or ship engine. The next two days we were like normal tourist on the island, making a tour through



the crater, an island tour and visiting some tourist attractions including a nice botanic garden. Thursday evening at 23:55 h it was time to fly back to Frankfurt via Los Angeles. After repacking in Frankfurt and saying goodbye to the rest of the team, I flew further to Amsterdam. Saturday afternoon at about 16:00 h I was at home after a four week holiday.

During our way back home we discussed possible new destinations for beginning 2018. In the coming months we will start working on it. No, we are not going to Ducie Island which is a few miles too far for us. Even if my driver's license is still valid for this island.

Pitcairn, one of the islands I will never forget!

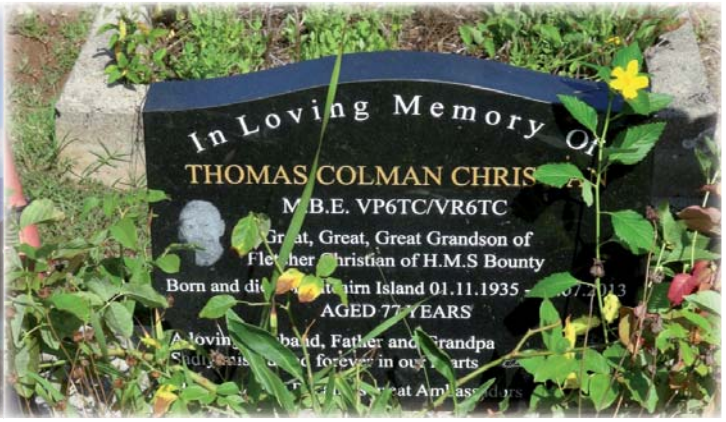
Ronald, PA3EWP

VP6EU • photo gallery

view from highest point towards Adamstown

St. Pauls pool

Coast



Grave of Tom Christian VP6TC

Guesthouse with all the antennas

Distances

160 meter vertical + view to JA

Langboat

Claymore at sunset

Ernö, Ronald, Hans and Uwe

XX9D – Macau DXpedition

BY WERNER HASEMANN, DJ9KH • PHOTOS BY XX9D

XX9D – 45,000 QSOs from Macau

As we were sitting together at the pool in Sri Lanka last year, we tried to find an answer to the most important question at the end of a successfully completed DXpedition: Where do we go next? Our team members had preferred Pacific destinations in the past, but they had to accept that propagation on short-wave would be poor for the next 5 to 7 years. A successful DXpedition with a moderate number of QSOs could then only be made from locations closer to the ham radio hot spots of Europe, Japan and North America. At last we found, that Macau could be an attractive spot as it was ranking relatively high on several Most Wanted Lists with good chance to have big pile-ups around the clock.

As Macau was accepted by the team as the next target, preparations began with collecting general information: what were the results of previous DXpeditions, who could be helpful for us in Macau and what did we learn from our last activities to the Marshall Islands and to Sri Lanka? We found

Grand Coloane Resort

DL8LE, PG5M, IK7YTT and XX8LT (Bom) as insiders with special experience about Macau. They supported us with general information and established contact with respect to our needs to the management of the Grand Coloane Resort Hotel, which responded in a very obliging manner. At an early stage the hotel management and we made provisions as far as possible for the specific circumstances and challenges facing us. For example special constructions to hold the bases of our 5 masts on the floor of the balconies could be prepared in advance or the extra booked operating room on the top floor could be equipped according to our wishes.

The hot phase of planning began after we got „green light“ from the telecommunication authorities in Macau to operate under the call sign XX9D. Our key considerations were 24/7 operation with 10 operators and 3 - 4 active stations, 4x K3 transceivers plus 500 Watt amplifiers, 5 antennas for 160 m to 10 m, 2 band filters for each band, a 1.5 kW Triplexer, common-mode and ac-filters, low-loss cables and all under the dictate of minimizing the weight of the luggage.

We had a very comfortable flight from Frankfurt via Beijing to Macau where we found ourselves at the customs gate having to decide: declare or nothing to declare. We asked the friendly staff for an import declaration for our transceivers. It took quite some time to assure them that we needed such a declaration. At last they confiscated the transceivers and asked us to pick them up on the next day with the necessary papers. Anyway, 2 hours later we arrived at the Grand Coloane Resort, a real 5-star hotel. Unpacking was done in a short time and antenna mounting began. Thanks to the detailed advance information about the hotel and surrounding area, setting up the 5 masts with the respective antennas including guying and matching took us only about 6 hours on the next day. In the meantime the transceivers and the licenses were picked up downtown and we were ready for the PTT- inspection team. 3 friendly officials were interested to see all the equipment and antennas we had put up. After a few questions we got the OK for our operation.

Our antenna farm on the 8th floor

The team around our `chief` Rolf, DL7VEE, consisted of 10 expedition-proven operators from Germany plus Bom, XX9LT, from Macau, who visited us almost every day and who was also integrated into the operatiions plan. He was by far the youngest member of the crew with an average age of 67 years.

The first shift began with RU4LM as the first logged QSO on 17 m CW. Day and night shifts of 4.5 hours were implemented with 3 to 4 active stations. 30/40/80/160 m were run during the night, the higher bands of course during day-time. Conditions on 40 and 80 m were much better than expected, 160 m with more than 1,000 QSOs gave us a lot of fun around sunrise, although we would have been able to have even more fun with a special receiving antenna on 160 m as well as on 80 m. We had vertical antennas for 30/40/80 and 160 m, delta-loop antennas for 12 m and 17 m and a hex-beam for 10 m to 20 m. All in all the antennas performed well. Thanks to the double-filter strategy we had no interaction between the active stations. Also we had no problems with noise from the hotel installations. Unfortunately, some of the high power filters failed, possibly leading to the failure of one of the K3s which happened at the same time. On the next day, one of our KPA 500 amplifiers

Highpower Filter and Triplexer

Our equipement checked by administration

One of our four K3 was damaged

Radio operation

gave up. Elecraft in California sent us the necessary spare parts and a few days later we were able to run full power with all 4 stations again. The daily QSO rates led us to our first goal of 30,000 QSOs which we easily exceeded at the end with around 45,000 QSOs of which 65 % were made in CW, 18 % in RTTY and 17 % in SSB.

The part of the world.wide amateur radio community hardest to reach from Macau is North America, nevertheless we were able to have more than 3,000 QSOs with North America, almost 1,000 on 160/80/40 m. Sadly that we had to read some comments in our guest-book with complaints about our working-style. I am very sure, that we did our best under the special circumstances with propagation far below to what we were used to have in the past 10 years. Thank heavens we were residing in a 5-star hotel which boasted a phantastic restaurant, a pool area and a very friendly and helpful staff. Best conditions for recreation after a strenuous shift or a sometimes frustrating night on the low bands.

All in all we left Macau in a good mood and satisfied that we performed quite well, especially on the low bands. As promised in our publications, the OQRS and LoTW uploads were done in the meantime and the paper QSLs have been printed. Have a look at our homepage www.xx9d.mydx.de. A big thank you to the EUDXF for financial support, all our sponsors worldwide, you really made this DXpedition affordable for the team members and we are sure that we didn´t disappoint you.

Werner Hasemann, DJ9KH

Grand Coloane Resort

Our Team

Skyline Macau

Grand Coloane Resort

T2AQ & T2QR– Tuvalu DXpedition

BY JACEK MARCZEWSKI, SP5EAQ & MAREK NIEDZIELSKI, SP7DQR

We started to plan this DXpedition in late spring 2016. After several inquiries we decided on Tuvalu T2. John Mitton, KK7L, who activated T2 several times, provided us a lot of tips and helped to get licenses and import permits concerning our rigs as requested by Fiji customs (even in transit). It was the most vital help, as Tuvalu has only one hotel and due to change of its owner it was hard to get any feedback. Since John has several good friends in T2 and 3D2 we got all paperwork done in time including hotel reservation and licenses - T2AQ for Jacek, SP5EAQ, and T2QR for Marek, SP7DQR (who kindly agreed to serve as a QSL manager). As it turned out, Funafuti Lagoon Hotel formerly known as Vaiaku Lagi Hotel (namely its room 108) hosted nearly all T2 DXpeditions over the last years. The atoll is densely inhabited and does not provide too many options for suitable accommodation.

Tuvalu is a small country, with a population of 10,000, spread across several atolls and islands, some 1,000 km north of Fiji. There is one reasonable way to get there - by a plane from Suva. Logistics turned out to be complicated due to significant amount of luggage. We had to take over 90 kg, including only 5 kg of personal belongings for each. Moreover, we had to include layovers in Suva in our plans, to accommodate eventual delay in baggage delivery. We took two transceivers, filters, some antenna materials including three masts, a homemade antenna tuner aimed for 80 m, and two transistor PAs. We planned to use a set of vertical antennas supported by three fiberglass poles and (eventually) hanging from trees.

We left Warsaw on the 8th of March 2017. Upon arrival at Suva we learned that our stuff arrived intact and we had a few days to recover after three-day flights (Warsaw-Dubai-Bangkok-Sydney-Nadi-Suva). We paid a nice visit to Tony 3D2AG helping him in some preparations of his next activation of Rotuma. Finally, we departed from Suva early morning on 14th March. After a 2-hour flight we landed at Funafuti atoll. We were met at the airport by Tili, T2AT, the good friend of John. He provided us with some additional coax to be more flexible with our antenna installations and helped us a lot in several daily issues. The only drawback of our QTH was the very limited space, practically eliminating the Top Band activation. The same day, we installed our verticals (some with elevated radials, others in the form of vertical dipoles with suitable matching units) covering 40 to 17 m. However, due to mutual interferences, we were unable to use in the same moment some antenna combinations.

At the beginning, the SSB European pile-ups were significant on 20 m and 17 m but these good openings lasted only a few days. The relatively good QSO rate has been obtained also on 40 and 30 m. Jacek, T2AQ, was operating exclusively SSB and Marek, T2QR, digi modes (including slow but reliable JT-65) and CW. While in the first days Marek worked mostly RTTY, he realized soon that, as conditions dropped down, that CW became a fruitful (however tiresome) option. Unfortunately, the propagation into Europe on upper bands became after a few days like a desaster. The highly demanded 10 and 12 m bands turned out to be completely closed in any direction (except one short 12 m opening towards JA a few days before our QRT). At the same time JA stations enjoyed several hours of openings on 20 and 17 m. During the second week, we were happy to log several EU QSOs on 20 and 40 m including Jacek's entry into CQ WPX Contest on 20 meters. Most EU stations were barely readable at T2 though. During the third week for a few fays we stopped hearing EU stations at all. The 40 m vertical mounted on a Spiderbeam mast has been removed and replaced after two weeks by 80 m one with a top hat and two elevated radials mounted on a 15 m DX-wire mast. 80 m was used only on CW but the propagation at our gray line was sporadic and rarely reaching Europe. Just before our QRT conditions toward EU improved on 20 m but it was too late to change our overall impression that 2017 was not favorable for DXing.

We made almost ten thousand CW/digi/SSB QSOs during our stay in Tuvalu. We would like to thank all our sponsors and donors that helped us to cover some extra expenses. The help of KK7L and T2AT concerning local arrangements was priceless. This was 'a suitcase DXpedition' and we tried to activate T2 on as many HF bands as possible.

The New Member Story

BY DAN DANKERT, N6PEQ (EUDXF #924 • LIFE MEMBER #44)

Dan, N6PEQ, has been a licensed amateur radio operator since 1986 (Novice call - KB6MZM), and an avid SWL (KDX6T) since 1974 when he was only 3 years old. His grandfather, who was first licensed in 1932, introduced him to the world of radio. Dan is active in numerous radio organizations, including holding life-membership in the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), European DX Foundation (EUDXF), Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA), 10-10 International, INDEXA, OMIK and the Central States VHF Society. He is a charter member of the Piña Colada Contest Club (KP2AA). In addition, he is a member of the ARRL A-1 Operator Club, ARRL Diamond Club, Orange County DX (N6RJ), the Orange County Amateur Radio Club (W6ZE), Southern California DX Club (W6AM), the Southern California Contest Club, as well as numerous shortwave listening clubs.

Dan has been active in Amateur HF DXing and contesting. Always enjoying the challenge and excitement of making that rare DX contact, and needing only 1 more DXCC entity to have "worked them all" (3 more to have them all confirmed). He has dabbled in VHF/UHF weak-signal operating as well. Dan has had several elmers in ham radio including Jim Rafferty N6RJ (SK), Chip Margelli K7JA, Dale Piedfort KB7UB (SK), Roger Dankert N6EGC (Father) and Bill Dankert W6RII (Grandfather, SK).

Dan is a former employee of Ham Radio Outlet in Anaheim, California, and has also performed contract work for Icom America at select conventions, which have included the Dayton Hamvention, the International DX Convention in Visalia CA, Pacificon and the ARRL Southwest Division Convention

Previous DX-pedition activities include operations from the Cayman Islands (ZF2RE), Cuba (CO0US), the South Cook Islands (ZK-1PEQ), the U.S. Virgin Islands (KP2AA & KP2/N6PEQ), Puerto Rico, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Martinique, and Barbados as well as other DXCC entities.

In 2003, Dan plus five other members of the Piña Colada Contest Club (KP2AA), joined forces with the Federacion de Radioaficionados de Cuba (FRC) in the first-ever joint Cuba-U.S. Field Day operation as COØUS & T42FD. This operation marked the first occasion where a U.S. Treasury Department Specific License was granted for a public Amateur Radio demonstration involving U.S. Amateurs.

Awards achieved include: DXCC Honor Roll, 8BDXCC, DXCC CW, DXCC SSB, DXCC Digital, DXCC Mixed, DXCC Challenge, Diamond DXCC Challenge, VUCC-50 MHz, WAS Mixed, WAS CW, WAS SSB, 5BWAZ,

CQ DX SSB Honor Roll, CQ DX CW Honor Roll, CQ DX RTTY, WPX SSB Honor Roll,

WPX CW Honor Roll, WPX Mixed Honor Roll, WAZ CW/SSB, WAZ CW, WAZ SSB, WPX Mixed, WPX CW, WPX SSB, WPX Digital, 8BWAC, WAC CW, WAC Phone, WAC Digital, WAC Mixed & 10-10 WAC

Dan is currently active on all amateur bands from 1.8 MHz through 1300 MHz, including receiving capability up to 3.3 GHz. His ham shack currently includes the following equipment:

Icom Transceivers:
IC-7850LE, IC-7851,IC-9100, IC-375A & IC-7000, Alpha Amplifiers: 87A (2x), 77Sx (2x) & "Alpha 6"
Receiving Station: Icom IC-9500
HF Antenna System:
10 Meters: 7 Element Wide-Spaced Monoband Yagi
12 Meters: 2 Element Monoband Yagi
15 Meters: 4 Element Wide-Spaced Monoband Yagi
17 Meters: 2 Element Monoband Yagi
20 Meters: 3 Element Wide-Spaced Monoband Yagi
30 Meters: 2 Element Monoband Yagi
40 Meters: 2 Element Wide-Spaced Monoband Yagi
60 Meters: Sloper
80 Meters: Rotatable Dipole
160 Meters: Sloper

Dan has written articles on DXpeditions and product reviews that have appeared in publications including CQ Magazine, The DX Magazine, as well as several amateur radio club newsletters. He truly enjoys promoting Amateur Radio to others, and cares deeply about the hobby. Dan was featured on the cover of CQ Magazine (April 2011), in the CQ Amateur Radio Calendar (November 2011) and on the Ham Nation video/audio podcast (December 2011). Outside of amateur radio, Dan enjoys spending time with his girlfriend, traveling, gardening and exploring new restaurants & coffee houses.

The New Member Story

BY THOMAS ANDERSON, OZ1AA (EUDXF # 935)

My name is Thomas Andersen and I was born in 1983. I got my first license when I was 14 - back then I was OZ5DK but upgraded to OZ1AA in 1999. DXing and Contesting have always been my favourite activities within our hobby. From 2009-2010 I was working on the Faroe Islands and made some 30,000 QSOs as OY3AA. I also hold the callsigns K9DXX in the US and VK8WW in Australia.

After my stay on the Faroe Islands I decided I wanted to do something different and began a bike trip that would eventually take me all around the world. I ended up cycling 58,000 km through 58 countries meeting many hams along the way. From time to time I was able to get on the radio from stations I met on the road. I was active as:

TA3/OZ1AA
VK8/OZ1AA
LU/OZ1AA
CE3/OZ1AA
OA4/OZ1AA
VE9/OZ1AA
VO1/OZ1AA
EA8/OZ1AA
DL/OZ1AA.

You can read more about the bike trip on http://www.cyclingtheglobe.com

After finishing the bike adventure last year I haven't stopped travelling. In 2017 I have been active as HKØ/OZ1AA and 5Z4/OZ1AA, and I'm always planning the next trip.

Hope to hear you on the bands soon.

73,
Thomas OZ1AA

The New Member Story

BY JUN TANAKA, JH4RHF/OE1ZKC (EUDXF # 936)

Jun Tanaka JH4RHF / OE1ZKC

Perhaps Jun might not be currently a DXer, but loves to travel with radios.

Jun was first licensed in 1976 at age 12 as JH4RHF and started with a typical "Novice Set", TS520X (10W) + 40 m dipole. He got soon active on 15 m and DX bugs bit him.

He has been active in contesting when he was in university in 1982-1995, mostly at the radio club at the university, JA3YKC. He traveled for contesting, or "contest expedition", to Ogasawara, JD1, as his first effort in 1983, as a result of another bug bite which came from guys at JA3YKC, such as JA3ODC, JA2VUP, JR3KEG. His first "real" DXpedition was XF4L in 1989. Since then, his activities include "most wanted" ones such as, KP1, BV9P, VP8SGI/STI, ZL9, 3D2CT/CU, STØR. He was also chasing DXs as a casual DXer when he was in Japan. His final DXCC score in JA was around 300.

He moved to Vienna, Austria in 1999 for his work and has been a member of 4U1VIC. He is keeping the station active since then. Most of his activities since then are during trips. He joined various DXpeditions by large groups such as VP8SGI/STI, YI9PSE, STØR, 3B9C, TS7N etc. He is also active during his trips for works, including trips to India, South Africa and South Korea. He is also active in contests time to time, including 3V8SS (#1 M/S low power @ 2015 WPX CW) and IG9A (#1 M/M @ 2001WW SSB). He can be often seen at WRTC, as he has been there all of WRTC except 2002. He now has a small station at home in Vienna but not so active as he is busy for travelling.

Hope to see you guys from somewhere else, either next DXpedition or work trip.

Current DXFC (not DXCC !) score: 92 (visits) 72 (QRV)

Mega DXpedition by GDXF: 14

73

Jun

OE1ZKC JH4RHF KH2S 4U1VIC(op) MØRHF VP8RHF

One of STØR gang who started the history of a new born country

e-mail: jh4rhf@arrl.net
jh4rhf@gmail.com
http://www.qsl.net/jh4rhf

Next

EUDXF NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2018

- DXpedition; ...

EUDXF NEWSLETTER MAY 2018

- HamRadio on 1th to 3th June 2018
- DXpedition; ...

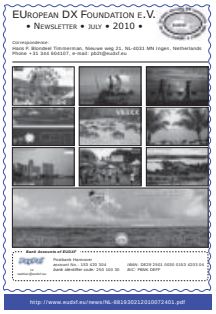
EUDXF NEWSLETTER JULY 2018

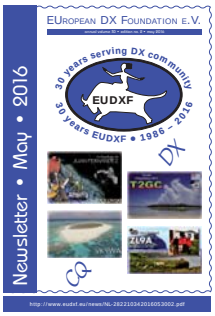
- Annual General Meeting on 25th August 2018
- New Members; Life Members; Silent Keys ...
- Sponsored activities and pending sponsoring
- DXpedition; ...

EUDXF NEWSLETTER ARCHIVES

Dear Member/New Member,
You can find all of our newsletters which have been published since 2011 for download here...
(For download please click on the blue bar at bottom of the issue requested)

Older editions of the EUDXF Newsletter (July 2009 and 2010) will be available for download, soon!





Older issues have only been produced on paper. Enjoy reading! — Enjoy your work.

change of address

I would like to remind you that members who change their address or e-mail address inform our treasurer at

eudxf@eudxf.eu

EUROPEAN DX FOUNDATION E.V.

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: _____

First name: _____

Call Sign: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____

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

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

€UDXF `01 2017

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