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# Club News and Views

## Editorial and Questionnaire

Martyn Phillips, G3RFX

By the time you read this Christmas will be but a distant memory and we'll be well into 2010. Meanwhile here's wishing you all a very happy, healthy and rewarding New Year.

Before we go any further I'd like to welcome Roger, G3LDI, to our team of regular contributors. You'll find his 'RTTY' column on page 39.

And this time round you'll see that I have headed this column 'Editorial and Questionnaire'. Yes, member feedback is important to us, so it's about time I asked you for your comments on the *Digest*. After all, as my wife, Jane (I dare not call her 'XYL'...), says: how can we improve if we're not told what we can do better? Jane also has a lot to do with customer satisfaction surveys and the like in her professional capacity with the Highways Agency.

Here are ten questions. Please e-mail your comments to Jane, who kindly agreed to compile and evaluate this questionnaire (the results will be published in a later *Digest*). Alternatively, you can send your comments anonymously to the address at the end of this questionnaire.

1. What do you turn to first in the *Digest*?
2. Is there anything you would like *less* of?
3. What would you like *more* of?
4. What topics etc. would you like to be covered which are not currently included

5. Generally speaking, is the length of the articles about right, too long or too short?
6. What did you like *best* in this month's *Digest* and why?
7. And what did you like *least* and why?
8. There are a number of regular columns in the *Digest*. Which of these do you like best – and least?
9. If you were the *Digest* Editor, what would you do differently?
10. Any other thoughts?

Needless to say, you don't have to answer all these questions. We have included them simply to give you some ideas.

Meanwhile we look forward to hearing from you.

Send your comments to

jane1706@btinternet.com

or

Jane Phillips, 17 Richmond Hill, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1BA

Having said which, I very rarely read the *Digest* myself when it pops through the door. This is basically because I always get this rather strange feeling that I've seen it all somewhere before.

73 Martyn, G3RFX

# Chairman's Chat

Chris Duckling, G3SVL

So that's Christmas and the New Year celebrations over with – now we can start to look forward to the longer days and maybe some increase in those elusive sunspots!

I'd like to start by asking all members to read the article in this *Digest* [See page 8. *Ed.*] on our proposed new membership system. This is a big step forward for the Club and will offer benefits for both members and your volunteer Committee. There will be a careful and cautious roll-out which will bring with it a new website and a new Reflector. As I say in the article, we are most grateful to our sponsors for making this possible without draining our financial resources. I am also grateful to the members of the Committee who have put in a lot of hours evaluating different systems, building a vibrant new website and migrating the data across from our existing systems.

We must congratulate CDXC members Don, G3BJ, and John, G3WKL, on their recent election to the RSGB Board and Peter Lowrie, MI5JYK, on his election to the post of Region 8 Regional Manager.

At the RSGB Convention in October I had the privilege, with Bob/K4UEE, of saying a few words when our President Neville, G3NUG, received his CQ WW DX Hall of Fame Plaque (see photo pages). I thought it would be worth saying a few words about how prestigious this award is. The DX Hall of Fame was started by CQ Magazine in 1967 and in the 41 years to 2008 only 52 people have been inducted. All of the great DXers are in there from Gus Browning, W4BPD, to Martti Laine, OH2BH, Wayne Mills, N7NG, Stew Perry, W1BB, Bob Allphin, K4UEE, two very active CDXC members Roger Western, G3SXW, and Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF... and so the list

goes on to cover most of my DX heroes. What makes induction into any of the three CQ Halls of Fame even more significant is that the process of election is by recommendation from peer groups and subsequent consideration by a panel at CQ. The citations for Neville covered not only his own DXCC and IOTA achievements, but his role as founder, organiser, mentor and operator on the Five Star DXers Association DXpeditions. In all over 90 amateurs from 14 countries have been on FSDXA DXpeditions. Well done, Neville, and well deserved.

Two dates for your diary: our Annual Dinner will be on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at Wyboston and full details appear elsewhere in this *Digest* - and our AGM and Summer Social will be on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2010 and again be hosted by Neville and Trish in Herefordshire.

Four of our members are off DXing in the near future: From 21<sup>st</sup> January Michael, G7VJR, and Martin, G3ZAY, will be on the Falklands and promise some 160m operation, and from 20<sup>th</sup> February Phil, G3SWH, and Jim, G3RTE, will be on Christmas Island (VK9[X]). CDXC is sponsoring both these DXpeditions.

Finally, don't forget our annual LF Challenge in March. It was hotly contested last year and there are two trophies to be won plus salvers for the band leaders. Details are on the website. So all that remains is for me to wish all members a prosperous New Year and may all the DX appear at your antenna before they are spotted on the cluster, come back to your first call and get your callsign correct in their log!

73 and good DX Chris, G3SVL

# President's Patter

Neville Cheadle, G3NUG

I hope all our members had a great Christmas and I wish everyone a happy and healthy 2010. Christmas was a bit of a disaster here at LWB; on Boxing Day we lost our electricity for 36 hours (a cable fault) and after that we lost our telephone and broadband for two days. In this case some Charlie had cut another cable further down the lane. Everything is OK now – that's life in the country!

You will read elsewhere about CMIS [See page 8. Ed]. This is an important development and will make CDXC much easier to run as we continue to grow. In thinking about CMIS I was reminded of a note that Don, G3XTT, wrote about our FSDXA DXpeditions. He commented that they appear to be like a swan crossing a large lake – they all seem very effortless. But, underneath the water, the swan is paddling very hard. FSDXA operations are like this; there are always problems to solve with inter-station interference, antenna problems etc.

Running CDXC is much the same. Generally to members CDXC hopefully runs smoothly, but it takes a lot of hard work for the Committee to achieve this, particularly as we add new facilities. CMIS should make life much easier for your Committee of volunteers but no doubt it will take time to settle in.

I was interested to read comments on the statistics about direct and Bureau QSLing that were written by Nigel, G3TXF, and Tom, GM4FDM, in recent *Digests*. Nigel reported that that his direct QSLing return had dropped from 16% to 12% over recent years, but Tom suggested that his return was very much higher. These are the figures for the 3B7C Saint Brandon and 3B9C Rodrigues DXpeditions.

	3B7C ('07)	3B9C ('04)
QSOs	137,511	153,106
Uniques	33,764	37,439
Confirmed to date	78,762	97,868
% confirmed to date	57.3%	63.9%
Bureau	40.1%	44%
Direct	59.9%	56%

One can see that the above figures for directs are very high indeed. This reflects the objective of FSDXA to put on very large DXpeditions not only to generate large QSO totals of 100,000+ but also to generate some 30,000 to 40,000 uniques. Because we take many stations and operate for 3 to 4 weeks we are able to get a very significant proportion of all those active on HF, probably 40-50%, into our log. A large number of those worked want direct cards for a new country or a new band-slot, hence the very high direct percentage.

Requests for cards are still arriving. Only last week I received direct requests for five 3B9C from 2004. And all this despite the fact that we upload our huge logs to LOTW six months after we get home, by which time we have cleared many of the busted calls from the log. Our issue with LOTW is that once you have uploaded a busted call you cannot delete it.

Spring will soon be with us and that brings our Annual Dinner in March. It should be an excellent evening. Do get those bookings in asap. We are limited to 60 and were overbooked last year.

73

### **G3NUG's Antenna Set-up - Part 3: Rocks, a Septic Tank and a Stream**

The next stage was to dig the trench across our field and well into the second field. I was recommended to use Barney the Dig – a small local family business who lay sewers and drains. We agreed a daily rate to include the digger and dumper. But before starting we needed to trace the route of the mains water supply to our neighbour's home. "Easy," says Barney, "I am a water diviner".

He then produced two bent pieces of wire and as he passed over the water supply the wires turn towards each other. I could not believe it, so I tried it myself and I was able to trace the entire length of the pipe. It was mystical! I had decided to run the LDF-550, four lengths of heavy duty 7-core cable and a rope through sewer pipe. One advantage of sewer pipe is that of course it does not leak and has excellent seals.

We needed to dig a narrow trench one metre deep in case the farmer ever wanted to plough the field. Everything went well until we hit solid rock in the middle of the field. This was much too solid for the digger to shift, so we hired a powerful pneumatic drill and that did the trick. We built manholes in the middle of the field and at each end so that we could check the cables in the future and run more cables if needed. I also incentivised the team – "an extra couple of pints tonight if you reach a particular point".

With the trench roughly half way, we filled the bottom with sand and then threaded the cable through the sewer pipe (see pictures). I did not want to damage the LDF-550 by pulling it through the pipe. This process was a little tedious but eventually the sewer pipe with the cable inside lay alongside the trench. The pipe was then carefully laid in the trench. It was covered with sand and an electrical warning tape was laid on top of the sand before it was back filled. As the trench ran uphill we built a small soakaway

at the lower end so that water would not build up. The work in the first field was now complete and digging was going well across the second field when we hit a soakaway some 30 metres from our neighbour's septic tank. What a stench! Barney the Dig fixed this quickly. We piped the soakaway down the field, dug a large hole that was filled with stone and the problem was solved. Our neighbour now has a much better soakaway (and his septic tank no longer smells!).

Next, we had to cross the stream. There is a gentle flow in the summer but quite a torrent in the winter. The secret here was to get below the bed of the stream. To do this, the stream had to be dammed and the water piped down-stream. Barney and Co. dug very deeply and buried the sewer pipe in solid concrete complete with cables with man-holes at each side to check for future problems. This proved to be a much easier task than I had expected and we soon had the trench up to the place where the first mast was to be sited.

Next time: we hit solid rock again at the base of one of the masts, 10 cubic metres of Readimix are poured and we erect the two Versatowers.

**CDXC**  
CHILTERN DX CLUB  
The UK DX Foundation

# CDXC Annual Dinner 2010

**Saturday, 20 March 2010 at 7:30pm, Wyboston Lakes, Bedfordshire**

**After-dinner speaker: Ken Cheetham, G4RWD**  
***'The Ofcom Baldock Monitoring Station'***

The CDXC 2010 Annual Dinner will be held at Wyboston Lakes, the venue that hosted us very successfully in 2008 and again last year. We will have the same private room and this year we'll be entertained after dinner by Ken, G4RWD, who is going to talk about the Ofcom Baldock Monitoring Station. With the recent debate and controversy about DQRM and the need for HF DF facilities, it will be interesting to hear Ken's views on what technology can offer!

The Dinner is again 7pm for 7:30. However, as the afternoon event was so successful last year, we are running it again this year with another informal presentation. This will be provided by Michael, G7VJR, who will demonstrate CMIS, the new CDXC Membership Information System. So why not come along any time from 3pm to get a flavour of the new system and do some pre-socialising before the main event? Tea and coffee will be available all day and the bar will be open from noon until midnight. The Annual Dinner is one of the two social events in the CDXC calendar and certainly not to be missed. So book early to avoid disappointment!

Please book electronically if at all possible. E-mail Gordon at [sec@cdxc.org.uk](mailto:sec@cdxc.org.uk) with your booking details and pay £35 per person by online bank transfer to CDXC, sort code 60-60-02, account 44532385. Please quote your personal callsign as your reference. Alternatively: complete the booking details in this *Digest* and send by ordinary mail to Gordon, G3USR, QTHR on QRZ.com, with your cheque for £35 per person made payable to 'CDXC'. Please note that we have a strict limit on numbers. To ensure a

fair allocation of places, it will be first come, first served. On receipt of your booking and payment details, Gordon will send you a unique booking reference. Please note that however your booking is made, it is not confirmed until you have received your unique booking reference from Gordon.

The Dinner will be held at The Waterfront Centre, Wyboston Lakes, Great North Road, Wyboston, Bedfordshire, MK44 3AL (as last year and for the RSGB Convention). Wyboston Lakes are located at the junction of the A1 and the A428.

Overnight accommodation is available at the **Wyboston Lakes**. Book direct on (0845) 230 0666 and quote 'CDXC'. The room rate is £60 (up to two people) with breakfast an extra £11 per head.

Alternative accommodation is available at the **Premier Inn** across the road from the Wyboston Centre main entrance. The current rate is £50 per room (up to two people) with breakfast £7.50 extra per head. Book direct on (0870) 990 6314 or online at [www.premierinn.com](http://www.premierinn.com) and select 'St Neots (A1/Wyboston)'. Or at the **Travelodge** two miles south on the A1. Currently on offer at £29 per room, breakfast extra (Little Chef). Book direct on (0871) 984 6010 or online at: [www.travelodge.co.uk](http://www.travelodge.co.uk) and select 'Bedford Wyboston'.

If you have any other questions please contact Gordon, G3USR, at [sec@CDXC.org.uk](mailto:sec@CDXC.org.uk) or by telephone on (01572) 737774.

# New CDXC Membership System (CMIS)

Chris Duckling, G3SVL [chair@cdxc.org.uk](mailto:chair@cdxc.org.uk)

## Introduction

The CDXC Committee is made up entirely of volunteers and yet they carry the responsibility of maintaining accurate, efficient and secure records of all of the Club's documents and processes. As the Club has grown and we have added more membership features, such as the Reflector and the Members Only area on the website, so the complexity and workload of the Committee has increased.

Early in 2009, the Committee started researching ways to improve the management of the membership data that CDXC holds. The primary motivations being to reduce duplication of membership information and thereby reduce the workload, improve our responsiveness, provide new membership facilities and generally tighten up the running of the Club as we continue to grow.

This project has become known as the 'CDXC Membership Information System', or CMIS (we call it Seamus!).

The Committee currently deals with many individual sources of data which easily and quickly fall out of synchronisation, especially when new members join or a Committee member hands over their role to someone else.

Examples of separate 'islands' of membership records currently include:

- *Digest* mailing database (Secretary)
- Membership renewals (Treasurer)
- Web site logins (Webmaster)
- Reflector logins (Reflector Moderator)
- Events and dinners (Secretary)
- Members DX Cluster (Webmaster)
- Marketing campaigns (President, Treasurer and others)

## What did the research conclude?

We are extremely fortunate to have Michael, G7VJR, on the Committee. Many of you will have sampled Michael's IT and web skills through ClubLog and the CDXC Cluster. The Committee is indebted to Michael for putting in a significant amount of time and effort to survey the market for available systems.

Michael evaluated more than a dozen systems, some ostensibly free and some paid for, before we decided upon the final product. The solution we have opted for is from a company called Wild Apricot (or 'WA') which is a paid-for product.

## Could we have done it for free?

One of the areas that we explored keenly was whether any open source (and therefore 'free') alternatives exist. None were available that provided the level of functionality and quality that the chosen product offers.

It is also important to know that the cost of using open source software is not zero. If an open source solution existed, using it would place a requirement on the Committee to keep an IT manager engaged at all times to maintain and care for the underlying hosting, the code, and the security updates that keep the site working. We already have experience of this as our existing website is powered by Joomla, which is an open source web content management system. It requires constant patching to keep it secure and look after any bug fixes that arise, which is time consuming and requires special skills. This task is not easily shared or transferred between Committee members.

Contrasting this with Wild Apricot, in future there will be no hosting or IT

responsibilities, since the hosting and updates will be looked after by Wild Apricot on our behalf. This will be a great benefit to CDXC as it means the Committee can concentrate on the club's own affairs instead of being drawn into computer management problems.

Additionally, WA are adding new features all the time and we get that additional functionality by way of upgrades as we are paying for a license.

### **What is Wild Apricot?**

Wild Apricot is a web-based product designed for clubs to manage membership information, webpages, events and forums in one place. By centralising our information, Wild Apricot solves almost all of the time-consuming problems which have been occupying the Committee, and gives us a chance to rejuvenate quite a few member facilities as we continue to look towards having more members in future.

A good way to think of this new system is as a database to which features (like the Reflector) are attached. Instead of fragments of membership information existing in many places, and with different Committee members, the data only needs to be managed in one place. Wild Apricot then uses this information where necessary to provide members with services, which are numerous, and has an administration interface to help the Committee use and maintain the club's webpages and membership records.

### **What will the benefits be to CDXC members?**

Up to now the consideration has been on improving the position for the Committee members, but WA goes much further and we would not be going down this route if we couldn't see benefits for our members.

Here is a selection of benefits provided by the new software:

- We will launch a new and improved website with more content and features;
- We will be able to move the Reflector off Yahoo Groups and bring the CDXC Reflector into our own homepage;
- Members of the Committee and co-opted members will all be able to participate in maintaining some or all of our website homepage and the news section, which means our website will be fresher and more current;
- We will be able to offer online bookings for CDXC events such as the Annual Dinner and Summer Social, and you will be able to see who else is attending and how many places remain;
- Our website will include a single login to give members access to their own data and a personal profile that other members can see if you wish.
- Existing members will receive e-mail reminders of subscription renewals and reminders of the ways of paying – including new online methods once they are set up;
- Membership renewals need not fall on the same date as they do at the moment - they could be at any point in the calendar. This would alleviate a very large batch of work which currently happens all at once for the Treasurer – and in the middle of the summer at that!;
- New members will be able to sign up to CDXC online and, once approved, pay online (eg via PayPal for overseas members) with their fee tied directly to their membership level;
- We will be able to support honorary members and the various levels of UK and overseas memberships currently used

Last but not least, it's worth mentioning again that the Committee's roles will

become much more clearly defined and far simpler to transfer when members join or leave the Committee. Volunteers are a precious resource and it is a great benefit to any club to keep the overheads on their jobs and handovers as low as possible, most particularly in the specialist areas such as the Treasurer or Webmaster roles. Wild Apricot is a developed, commercial solution to properly address this particular point. You can visit their website at [www.wildapricot.com/](http://www.wildapricot.com/).

### **What will it cost?**

For a club of our size the cost will be approximately £750 per year. To offset this we have obtained generous sponsorship from our friends at Yaesu UK and Martin Lynch & Sons. This gives us the best of both worlds in that members and the Committee get the benefits without depleting the funds in our DXpedition support fund. In exchange for their generous support, we will carry links to our sponsors on the CDXC website.

Many existing costs that CDXC incurs are covered by voluntary donations (for example, Michael/G7VJR provides the Club with its web hosting and e-mail facilities, while Yahoo advertises heavily on our Reflector in exchange for the free services they provide). It is sensible for CDXC in the long term to look after as many of its own affairs as possible without depending upon volunteered resources, and at the same time it is likely to be less intrusive to use the Reflector with no pop-up advertising.

### **When will the new system launch?**

We've been working on this project throughout 2009 and are currently in the process of combining and importing membership data into Wild Apricot. During this stage we are trying to ensure that we get our database fully populated, consistent and secure. Nigel/G3TXF and Michael/G7VJR

are working on this step and aim to be finished in December 2009.

Starting in January 2010 we will invite a handful of members to join in testing the new system and we will work through any remaining issues.

By March 2010 we are aiming to be ready for members to use the new site. At the CDXC 2010 Annual Dinner 'afternoon session', Michael/G7VJR will run sessions on all of the features of the new system. For those who can't make it we will publish another article in a future *Digest* to cover the most important points.

### **How can you help?**

Log-in details for the new system will be tied to e-mail addresses, so around the time of the launch we will want to make sure all e-mails are correct and current. We'll be doing everything we can to keep this process painless, but it may take us a little while to contact members by mail where records are sketchy. We'll be grateful for your help with this.

### **Conclusion**

The Wild Apricot product offers CDXC the potential of increasing membership benefits while reducing the chore of some of the Committee's tasks. It will allow members greater control over their membership profile and generally move us into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in terms of membership records and updates.

And because of the great relationship we have with our advertisers, we can implement this without impact on the membership fee.

I'd like to thank the entire Committee for their efforts in getting this far and Michael, G7VJR, for his help in drafting this article.

# DX an' all that

Don Field, G3XTT    *don@g3xtt.com*

Following on from my comments last time round, the excitement has continued, especially with TX3A (Chesterfield Islands). Prior to the DXpedition John, G3PQA, no stranger to 160m, had suggested to me that this was going to be a very tough one from the UK on 160, despite the obvious experience and focus of the two guys (who did such an awesome job from Mellish Reef earlier in the year). In the event they were blessed with some excellent LF propagation to Western Europe early in their trip, with big signals around our sunset on both 160 and 80m, and plenty of UK stations made it into the log on one or both bands.

Sadly it didn't really last and other parts of Europe did somewhat better later in the trip. But this was perhaps an interesting contrast between a regular local operator (Remi, FK8CP) and an expedition. Remi is a consistent player on the band, but from a home QTH which, I would guess, is probably in one of the few urban areas in New Caledonia. The TX3A guys, in contrast, had their antennas right over the sea (just look at the photos on their website) with all the advantages that brings. Which is not to belittle their achievement. To sail there, set up and keep up their station and antennas in some very variable weather conditions, while having to cook for themselves (and even to fish for their food supply), is an amazing achievement. They were also, at times, having to do running repairs to radios and to their generator, as they apparently had arrived at the island with a contaminated batch of fuel. Truly remarkable.

My own first two-man effort was with ZS6EZ when we activated ZS9Z and V51Z in 1994. Although we had taken two complete stations, in practice it was all we

could do to keep one station on the air 24 hours a day, between sleeping, preparing and eating food, and general domestics. I dare say that other two-man teams such as G3TXF/G3SXW over the years have similar experiences. But I can't even begin to imagine how much more difficult it must be if you are totally isolated from hotels, shops, mains power, local labour to help with antennas, etc.

I am sure that the efforts of our good friends G3KHZ, G3USR et al from Papua New Guinea will be chronicled elsewhere, but they too did a sterling job and, while those good LF conditions that I mentioned in respect of TX3A were under way, I worked them as P29NI for a new band slot on 80m, with big signals at this end.

Perhaps the most remarkable QSO, though, is one I have already mentioned in my RadCom column which is the one that Mike, G3SED, made on 160m with 3D2KJ. This really was a tough path and great credit to the operators at both ends of the QSO. Mike tells me he had been getting quite disillusioned of late with DX chasing, after all the deliberate QRM, nasty comments, etc. that have accompanied some of the recent expeditions, but this one QSO gave him such a buzz that the interest has returned, at least for the time being. Well done, Mike.

## **FT5GA Revisited**

(My thanks to Ian, G3KZR, for this FT5GA and K4M retrospective)

I was amused at your experience with FT5GA as I had exactly the same tally as you after the first few days. I then picked up RTTY, but sadly missed out on 30/40m. On 30m I spent a long time one evening and

eventually got a response only to learn that I had worked a pirate (a licensed VE2 apparently who was very convincing and amazing that he ran the mob for about three hours solid). The real one was on the next evening, but by the time I got there I had 15 minutes before they went QRT.

They thrashed the HF opportunities very well and no complaints in general about the ops. The scheduling did, however, leave a major gap on LF and they did no favours for us lot behind the Mediterranean wall. It was incredible to listen to the string of EA and I stations they were logging - on and on and on! They also tended to go 'NA only' just when NW EU was peaking.

On 10m SSB there was a big opening, but totally dominated by the S and E of EU and I had to smile when I checked the QSX and heard a row of local Gs all bellowing away without much success as far as I could tell. Anyway I blew it on that band.

As for K4M: I am having a miserable time, HF signals being unworkable for much of the time they are working EU. There was a good opening on 20m a couple of evenings back when they were up to S7 on SSB and CW, but I couldn't break either pile-up before fade-out. The only slots I did not need are 30 or 40 CW, which they are successfully thrashing (I worked them on 30m for the hell of it - easy).

Unless there is a big swing this evening I will have to wait for the next one to come along! Now what am I going to do about Crozet?

73 Ian

## **ClubLog**

One of the more fascinating developments to come our way in 2009 has been G7VJR's ClubLog. Yes, it's been around for a while now, but some of the recent innovations are making it a truly powerful tool and it is a real bonus when major DXpeditions start to upload their logs to ClubLog while the

DXpedition is underway. Thanks are obviously due to Michael, but also to Marios, GØWWW / 5B4WN for some of the expedition tabulations and propagation tools and, I would suggest, especially to Alan, 5B4AHJ / G3PMR, who does such a sterling job with the calls database. When I saw Alan in Cyprus in July he gave me some idea of the amount of time he was putting in to this job and from what I have seen in recent months, the task has become even greater as he attempts to recreate a DXCC database for calls going back 25 years or more.

Newcomers maybe don't appreciate the size of the challenge but, to give just a couple of examples, Russian (CIS) prefixes have undergone many transformations over the years, while some prefixes are ambiguous and it is necessary to identify DXCC entity from a specific callsign and, in some cases, specific dates. The GC prefix, for example, was used for the Channel Islands, and 30 years or so later it's often tough to know whether a particular GC station was on Jersey or Guernsey. VP8 stations may have been in any one of the VP8 DXCC entities and some operated from several (VP8ANT, for example, operated briefly from both South Georgia and South Shetland, en route to and from his 2-year stint in Antarctica). As for which GB prefix stations operated from which DXCC entity, it's probably anybody's guess for many of them unless someone has a QSL card in their files and this is where avid collectors like Nigel, G3TXF, are helping out.

At the end of the day, some of this is of academic interest only. A KH6 may have been in Hawaii some of the time and in mainland USA for some of the time, but you will probably have both entities worked anyway, so who cares. But it is a fascinating exercise and the database is an ideal way of preserving a particular aspect of amateur radio history. Where will ClubLog go in 2010? I am sure Michael and his team have some interesting ideas, but many may also come from you, the users, as he is proving

exceptionally responsive to user requests. Keep up the good work, guys!

## The DXer's Year

Quite apart from the DXpeditions coming up this year, have you thought about attending one or more of those great social occasions in the Dixer's calendar? It astonishes me, for example, that some members have never been to the RSGB Convention, with its opportunity to meet fellow DXers and contesters as well as seeing presentations on some of the major trips (K4UEE's Desecheo presentations last year were a classic example). Then there are the CDXC events, of course, both the Annual Dinner and Summer Social.

But what about Dayton, Visalia or Friedrichshafen? The latter is easy and relatively cheap these days, since Ryanair started flying direct to Friedrichshafen, and 'always a good 'do' although, as Neil/GØJHC pointed out, it does coincide with one of the best weekends for 6m Sporadic E propagation!

My own calendar is filling up as I have a trip this month to the Contest Club Finland bash which, this year, will be held in Riga, Latvia (another Ryanair destination!), followed, in February, by a trip to Vienna for the IARU Region 1 Interim Conference (maybe not a real Dixer's event, but there will be some well-known callsigns there). Then in July I will join GM4AFF, G4PIQ, G4BUO and G3SXW, and maybe others, at the World Radio Teamsport Championship in Russia, having been invited to be one of the referees.

And some CDXC members are already looking forward to expeditions of their own. In February, for example, Nigel, G3TXF, will be off to French Polynesia - while Phil, G3SWH, and Jim, G3RTE, will be heading for Christmas Island (the VK9 one). I dare say many more of you will be planning to be at the 'sharp end' of the pile-ups as the year goes on, whether from a rare DXCC, a

modest IOTA, a special event station or maybe a few summits for SOTA. Whatever it is, good luck and do enjoy!

Finally, I thought this item may be of interest: OH6BG, Jari, has two interesting web pages. One is for Sunrise and Sunset and another for Ionospheric Greyline. They are apparently updated daily and list each DXCC Entity. Bookmark them both. The URLs are:

<http://lipas.uwasa.fi/~jpe/sun.shtml>

and

<http://lipas.uwasa.fi/~jpe/tlite.shtml>

(Thanks to the Daily DX for that tip - if Santa didn't bring you a Daily DX subscription for Christmas, then dig into your pocket and take one out anyway. Most of the questions that people put on the Cluster and quite a few that appear on the CDXC Reflector can be answered by referring to Bernie's excellent newsletter.)

My thanks to all who have inputted to, commented on and generally put up with this column during 2009. A very Happy New Year to you and let's hope that the increase in solar flux at year-end signals a real upturn in the new solar cycle during the coming year.

73 Don, G3XTT

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## New Member

CDXC offers a warm welcome to the following new member:

<b>Call</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
GØIEE	Keith Harris	Romney Marsh

# Borneo Bulletin

Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

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A slightly abbreviated 'Borneo Bulletin' this time, as I have compiled a lengthy piece on last October's CQ World Wide DX phone contest CDXC Team entry, with the help of other team members GW4BLE, 5B/G3RXQ, G3UEG and MØGHQ.

Besides that, after my enthusiasm for the improved conditions in the November 'Borneo Bulletin', things seem to have returned to normal again after the autumn equinox peak and I have not worked too much worth reporting. Unfortunately, for 'normal' read 'pretty abysmal', because that seems to be normal these days.

There were a few highlights, though, including CDXC's Derek, G3KHZ, and Gordon, G3USR, among others, who operated from several of the P29 IOTA island groups and were an easy catch from here - and, it almost goes without saying, the superb TX3A operation from the Chesterfield Islands.

As an almost 100% SSB operator, I did not expect too much from TX3A, as the team made it clear before they started that it would be very much a low-bands CW operation. Indeed, I did not hear the same two operators on SSB at all during their previous DXpedition to Mellish Reef, also an easy shot from here. However, after the first few days when TX3A was exclusively on CW, one of the operators, Tomi, appeared regularly on SSB, highlighting a different band each day during their daylight hours. Towards the end of their stay on the island he also worked some low-bands SSB and in the end I was pleased to work the expedition on 80, 20, 17, 15 and, amazingly, even 10m SSB. Since I have no antennas for 12, 30 or 160m this would have been a 'clean sweep' for me but for the fact that I never did hear them on 40m SSB. I even made a single CW QSO with Tomi on 15m

during the CQ WW CW contest. Their signal on 20m in particular was just unbelievably strong at S9+30dB! I know that a lot of CDXC members worked them, especially on the low bands, so their signal was obviously good everywhere and not just in this region. Given that they were only two operators, I think this was a truly outstanding DXpedition.

Although a much lower-key effort, the German VK9XX DXpedition to Christmas Island at the end of November and beginning of December was also good fun to chase. Christmas Island is just the right distance from here - neither too far nor too close - to make QSOs on almost any band easy, and we had S9+ each way QSOs on 80, 40, 20, 17 and 15m (I did not hear them on 10m at all). From here there are a couple of DXCC entities - Brunei and Spratly - that are difficult to work on all bands from 20 to 10m as they are too close and so in the 'dead zone', although signals on 40 and 80m are usually S9+ (when there is any activity).

## **/P from Labuan, OC-133**

John, 9M6XRO, and I made another 'mini-DXpedition' IOTA trip to Labuan Island, OC-133, from 6 to 8 November. This is the fourth time we have visited the Manikar Beach Resort on the island. We keep on going back as it is superb for radio and even if I can't work much from home I always seem to get a pile-up from Labuan: a vertical inches from the ocean at high tide knocks spots off my 4-element tribander at home, 10km inland. Together John and I made some 2,500 QSOs in two and a half days of operating.

Although most of the time I was running the pile-up, one of the highlights for me was calling and working OX3KQ on 40m SSB,

who was a genuine S9. Having never even heard an OX station from 9M6 before, I was pleased with this QSO, but later while working a mixture of JAs, Asiatic Russians, West Coast North America and Northern Europeans on 80m, I was amazed to be called by another station in Greenland, OX3MC. To make it a hat-trick, an hour later he called me again, this time on 20m. All this on a Butternut HF6V on the beach.

If anyone is planning to do a 'holiday DXpedition' to 9M6, I can really recommend the Manikar Beach Resort. It is about £25 per night for B & B (ie £12.50 each for two sharing) for a very large en suite room with air conditioning. For radio

the location is excellent, being at the northern apex of the triangular-shaped island, with a perfect take-off from south-west through to north-east via north.

Unfortunately the very radio-friendly manager is talking about moving on in 2010, so we hope if he does so that his successor will be equally as amenable to us putting up aluminium on his beach!

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## The CDXC Team in the CQ World Wide DX Phone contest, October 2009

Compiled by Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

We will be well into the New Year of 2010 by the time you read this, and the CQ World Wide DX phone contest in October already seems a long time ago. However, since the deadline for the last issue of the *CDXC Digest* fell just a few days *before* the contest, this is the first opportunity there has been of reporting the CDXC Team entry that took place.

A 'Team' in CQ WW is any five single-operator entries whose scores are simply summed together. The callsigns of the five stations must be submitted to the CQ WW contest organising committee before the start of the contest (so you can't use hindsight to pick the 'best five' out of a larger number of entrants).

The team members were Steve, GW4BLE; Stuart, G3RXQ (operating as 5B/G3RXQ from Bob, 5B4AGN's, station); Max, MØGHQ; Dave, G3UEG, and myself,

operating as 9M8Z from across the border in Sarawak. As far as I am aware this is the first time in recent years that there has been a CDXC Team entry in the CQWW contest (although I remember back in the 1980s being asked by the late Al Slater, G3FXB, to join a team that he was organising).

My request on the CDXC Internet reflector for volunteers to form the team resulted in seven responses. Unfortunately Don, G3BJ, had a tower failure shortly before the contest, damaging his antenna, and Alan, 5B4AHJ, told me before the contest that he would, after all, be unable to make a serious entry this year. Including myself that still left six volunteers, the above four and Tony, G4LDL, who became the 'reserve'.

Both Max, MØGHQ, and Dave, G3UEG, could also only participate on a part-time basis. However, for a first-time Team entry,

I think we did quite well. Here are the scores:

Call	QSOs	Claimed score
9M8Z	3,847	5,131,376
GW4BLE	3,830	4,870,080
5B/G3RXQ	3,000	3,725,125
G3UEG	759	526,500
MØGHQ	540	273,780

CDXC Team Score: 14,526,861.

The following is a brief synopsis of the comments and anecdotes received from the team members:

### **From Steve, 9M8Z:**

The contest started really well on 15m, with 214 QSOs in the first clock hour, followed by 215 in the second hour, which included several quick QSYs to 20m to pick up multipliers from some of the rarer stations who called me. And thereafter it went downhill. Conditions were really weird this year. Most people seem to reckon that 15m was in great shape (see the comment from GW4BLE below), but for me 15m was nowhere near as good as it was last year. It was unworkable for hours at a time, especially on the Sunday, due to S9+ solar noise - a white noise that covered the whole band. It was worst when beaming towards the sun, but that's also where the propagation was, of course.

The noise was there on 20m too, but not as bad. Don, HSØZEE (ex-A92BE), said he could hear it on 10m as well, although 10m was clear with me. He worked a lot more Europeans than I did on 10m - 10 wasn't as good with me during the contest as it had been on the Thursday and Friday when I worked into Europe, including a QSO with Tim, MØURX. The other weird effect was that hours after 10m apparently died, it re-opened again with unbelievably strong signals from Brazil at close to midnight (and

that's like having ZL7 coming in at S9+ on 10m at 0000z in England!)

40m was also completely unusable on the Sunday from 7.040-7.110 due to the Chinese over-the-horizon radar which was S9+40 (really!) over that whole band from before my sunset until I gave up and went to sleep for a while at 0200 local. Unfortunately the 9M8Z beam is set for the lower part of the band and the SWR was such that it tripped the linear if I went above about 7.120. There are still lots of broadcast stations - North Korea, Vietnam etc. - in this part of the world between 7.100 and 7.200, so all in all 40m was a dead loss on the Sunday - so it was a good job I spent some time there on the Saturday. Some decent propagation then - lots of strong Brazilians, PJ2, YV, CX, LU etc. - all difficult from here. I also picked up a JW for a double mult on 40m.

20m was really poor to Europe this year - signals that should have been S9 were at ESP level. But the North American openings were good, although short in duration. I worked more Zone 5 on 20m this year than in any other contest from here.

Thanks to all CDXC members who called and gave us points. My thanks especially to Ken, HZ1GW, who QSYed from 20m to 15, 10 and 40m to give me the country and zone multiplier on four bands (a double multiplier on 10m), and John, 9M6XRO, who QSYed to 10 and 20m despite doing a 15m single-band entry himself, to fill in the missing slots for my own DXCC country.

Overall, my QSO total is well down on last year, but the score is not down too much, with more multipliers on 40m this year.

### **From Steve, GW4BLE:**

A selection of one-liners (literally - taken from my *Writelog* 'Alt N' notes file) and in no particular order.

2120z Saturday - heard CN2R wrk 9M8Z, 40m , FB sig

0621z Sunday - KV4FZ gud sig (160), but seemed to be using auto-CQ and no Qs

0631z Sunday - HC8A on 160, but not hearing me :-(

2307z Sunday - QSY 40, CQ & cld by 3 mults in a row = YB, ER & CU.

2102z Saturday - mouse knocked to floor, batts fallen out...arrghhh

1126z Sunday - wireless keybrd QRMD 10m, beam S/East.

0748z Saturday - all very messy - short skip & rain noise.

Something I hadn't mentioned before, but I hope many were reminded and respected in whatever way best suited them, was the very sad loss of the C6APR crew – Pete, W2GJ; Ed, K3IXD; Randy, K4QO, and Dallas, W3PP [*who were tragically killed in a plane crash on the way to the Bahamas for the contest – 9M6DXX*]. For me, I set up shop on 40m about ten minutes before the contest and come 2359 announced my personal remembrance would be to take out the first minute of the contest and not make any contest contacts before 0001. Pleased to report that everyone stood by come the hour - and adjacent QRM appeared to abate somewhat too, so I presume others were doing likewise.

160: Not the best of antennas (TX or RX) on this band, my tower is shunt-fed and although it appears to perform reasonably well on transmit, it picks up a hell of a lot of local noise on receive. 58 countries, 11 zones, 115 contacts: could be worse!

80: Ditto 80 as far as antenna performance is concerned, ie not brilliant, a dipole slung up in a nearby tree and 1/4 sloper (to the West) are just 'average' for the band. Reasonable amount of Caribbean DX in the

log; frustrated by a ZL4, who I managed to persuade to move from 40 for a double-mult but didn't complete the exchange fully - even though he was a good signal and seemed to copy me OK (Grrr...). 69 countries, 17 zones, 512 contacts.

40: I get out very well on this band, the 2-ele 402-CD works a treat and the sloping ground from the ridge on which we are perched enhances performance (not just on 40). The band in Europe is a zoo, of course, and evening time is best avoided. I missed a JA / Zone 25 mult, even though I looked specifically for them at JA sunrise time on both days. Good number of USA worked. 90 countries, 25 zones, 706 contacts.

20: Bread-and-butter band when the other HF bands are out (wasn't the case this year, though - see below), for some inexplicable reason I always seem to be short of mults on this band (missing Europeans mostly). Usual good number of USA, Caribbean DX and some Far East stuff. 83 countries, 31 zones, 1,269 contacts.

15: Well, what a hoot this band was on Saturday afternoon - just like the good old days with a couple of hours sustained rate to the USA (incl. West Coast). The only problem I had was the SWR had gone very high on my A3 (lower side mount fixed West), which means I wasn't able to use it to 'run' (I usually can) and S & P another band with the TH7. I think this was water ingress into one of the traps from some heavy rain we had early on Saturday - unfortunately it didn't dry out all weekend. 94 countries, 27 zones, 1028 contacts.

10: Surprise, surprise, not only Sporadic E type propagation to parts of Europe, but some F2 (or whatever) into the Far East too (worked VU2 and 9M2 but alas no 9M8! [*Sorry, Steve, couldn't hear you! 9M6DXX*]). Plus a sprinkling of Africans and later into South America and parts of Caribbean. Didn't get up to the US, though. 56 countries, 17 zones, 161 contacts.

## **From Stewart, 5B/G3RXQ:**

I decided that, rather than rush out to Cyprus and back, I would take time before the contest to prepare and after to recover. Unfortunately the SSB contest coincides with school half-term, which made the flights rather expensive, and meant that the planes were full of 'ankle biters'. Next time I'll take Valium before the flight.

This was the first time I had travelled with any of my amateur radio equipment, so I was somewhat apprehensive, but I need not have worried. I carried my K3/100 together with MicroHam II and cables as cabin baggage. Airport security was not an issue; in fact they showed no interest at all.

However, I nearly came unstuck at Gatwick as easyJet were using their measuring apparatus to ensure that all cabin baggage was exactly to their specification. After seeing a family of four paying £72 excess, and then having their cabin baggage put in the hold, I moved surreptitiously to the back of the queue. I would not have wanted to have my K3 thrown around by enthusiastic baggage handlers.

### **Set-up**

Bob and his wife, Karen, met me at the airport. During my stay they were so friendly and made me feel most welcome in their home. After a tour of his antenna farm Bob showed me the shack including his STAR transceiver which takes pride of place. An operating position had been cleared for me, leaving plenty of space for the K3, MKII, mouse and keyboard.

The first task was to assemble a band data cable to allow the K3 to control Bob's bandpass filters and antenna switching. With the benefit of hindsight it would have been better to use a screened cable, but a ferrite toroid cured a slight problem with RF pick-up. After the successful installation of the radio it was time for the MKII and logging software.

I had brought the MKII drivers and N1MM on CD, together with JPG screen dumps of my set-up at the home QTH. This saved a lot of time ensuring that the correct boxes in the software were ticked. However, there was still some tweaking to be done.

The configuration of N1MM I have at home is really optimised for S & P and it was very helpful to discuss with Bob how the logger should be set for what was going to be predominantly running.

Everything was in place and working well by the Thursday night, so it was time for a little socialising before the contest. A very pleasant evening was spent with Bob, Karen, 5B4 friends and their partners at a local taverna. It had been quite hot during the day, but was just right for me that evening. Everyone else was putting on jumpers.

On the Friday Bob and I made a trip to the northern shore of Cyprus. The sea looked very inviting, however, rather than take time out for a dip, we cold called P33W. The sight of so many antennas, many of which were on the beach right at the sea's edge, was very impressive. After a brief look in the shack, some photo taking and hand-shaking we departed. It was clear that with so much to do their time for chatting with visitors was limited.

### **The contest**

My previous contest experience, with the exception of operating with MD4K a couple of years ago, had been limited to S & P with wire and vertical antennas. This year was going to be very different, so some time was spent with Bob getting a handle on the how best to approach the contest. We decided that I should start by running on 40m, then move to the highest band supporting a good run rate to catch the EUs etc. as they migrated from the LF bands.

I had intended to use the K3 in 202V mode with a second bandmap in N1MM.

However, it was agreed to show 10m spots on the bandmap instead. With the unexpected sunspot activity opening up 10, this was a bit of a mistake.

From my career in sales I remember ‘the five Ps’: ‘Proper Preparation Prevents P\*\*s Poor Performance.’ This approach certainly worked for me in this contest. I found that running pile-ups, even though at times they were quite large, a lot less stressful than constant S & P. The sudden appearance of 10m as a major source of multipliers threw a bit of a spanner in the works, but was great fun.

Bob had warned me not to expect too much from 160m, and that was certainly the case. However, 80m was a big disappointment for me. Although in the UK it is my favourite band I was unable to make any real progress on it. Analysing my log after the contest showed that, despite spending more time on it than other bands, the Qs were not there. I suspect that it might be because I was not hearing stations as well as they were hearing me. From time to time I suffered from electrical noise, however, the K3 noise blanker was very effective in removing most of it.

In the end I managed 3,000 Qs in 36 hours for about 3.7M points. Nothing broke, and unlike last year’s effort from home I finished the contest feeling vaguely human.

## Conclusions

I had a great time in Cyprus, largely due to my hosts Karen and Bob. The chance to try my hand at SOAB (A) from such a well-equipped and -located station was fantastic. I want to do it again.

Of course, as with everything in life, there are lessons to be learned. Playing back the recorded audio of some exchanges shows clearly that I need to improve my partial call recognition skills. It would have been nice to use 202V, but even nicer to master 202R (dream on).

Probably the biggest lesson I learnt is not to sleep with ear plugs in and expect to hear an alarm clock ringing at 3.00am. However, everyone else in the house did!

## From Dave, G3UEG:

The original intention was to use the contest to evaluate the HF capability of the new station. As far as the contest was concerned I came in at the last minute when Don and Alan had to pull out. The operating time was only 25 hours, as I had to pack up on Sunday at midday.

Equipment was a FT-1000MP plus amp, and antennas a 62ft modified Titanex vertical for 80 / 40m, inverted-V dipole for 40m, Optibeam 11-3 at 60ft for HF, and a Wellbrook RX loop.

To make better use of the Cluster, I changed from using *SD* to *N1MM* for the first time. It worked very well after making the big investment to climb the learning curve.

80m: The Titanex seems to punch well above its weight, and I was able to work all the Qs and Mults that N1MM was telling me were available. I started the contest with a good run (helped by an early spot on the Cluster) for 20 minutes, only then to be completely zapped by two enormous East European stations, one either side. I gave up the struggle and went S & P.

40m: Vertical was OK on 40m, but not as effective as it was on 80m. Difficult to detect much difference in effectiveness between the vertical and the inverted-V dipole.

20m: One highlight was a comment from N2RJ on 20m “G3UEG - wow I'm gonna need new headphones!”

15m: I found operation on this band much more puzzling. Some stations I could work very easily and others I really struggled with, for example I could work Cyprus very easily, but Jordan was really difficult.

10m: Like 15m, but even more so! DX was being spotted from the UK and I could not detect a thing. I almost got to the stage of wondering whether there was something wrong, but the stations I could actually hear I could generally work without too much difficulty. So again probably my lack of experience on the HF bands. The Cluster was almost a disadvantage on this band.

This was the first time I have used a decent antenna for the HF bands and I have to say the Optibeam was a star performer. It is so directional - I had to turn the antenna much more than I expected. Also I am not that knowledgeable about HF propagation, which was another reason for staying on S & P.

Very enjoyable and a good learning experience. Worked a few new countries and a bunch of new band-slots.

### From Max, MØGHQ:

I had a great deal of fun but did mainly S & P due to some hideous noise levels (I notice since I got back from the RSGB Convention someone locally has installed some electronic QRM machine). Having said that, I still managed some pretty decent DX and added a couple of new ones to my DXCC this time. 9M8Z was about S9+20 and did break through the noise, 15m was a really nice band to use, but calling was fairly unsuccessful from this end.

On the Sunday I had to mix my radio fun with some household chores, but still managed to keep a fairly good hold on the contest.

Equipment: KWM-2, Drake L-4B linear, to a SteppIR 3-element Yagi, and a 40m doublet.

### Summary:

	160m	80m	40m	20m	15m	10m	Total
Valid QSOs	0	0	115	226	199	0	540
Points	0	0	157	439	418	0	1014
Zone Mults	0	0	9	29	29	0	67
Country Mults	0	0	37	75	91	0	203

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## Chiltern DX Club - Aims and Objectives

To promote HF operating, to encourage excellence, particularly in DXing and contest operating, through mutual assistance and by encouraging support of DXpeditions, the issue of achievement awards, or by whatever other means is deemed to be appropriate.

**Membership** Full details are available from the Secretary.

**Subscription** £18.00 for UK members, £24.00 for overseas members (US\$48 or 40 Euros). New members joining between 1 January and 30 June pay 50% of the annual subscription. Subscriptions are due on 1 July of each year, and should be sent to the Treasurer.

**Digest** Published six times per year. Articles for publication should be sent to the Editor by the published deadline. Please note that views expressed in the Digest are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Committee.

**Website** <http://www.cdxc.org.uk/>

## K4M – Midway Atoll 2009

**Joe Pater, W8GEX; Tom Harrell, N4XP, and Janet Pater, W8CAA**

Midway Atoll, a US possession in the mid-Pacific, is a National Wildlife Refuge administered by the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS). Amateur radio operations were plentiful while the US military occupied Midway from before World War II until the early 1990s. However, after 1993 when the island was transferred to the US Department of the Interior, requests by amateurs to activate the Atoll were not approved.

In January 2009, the US Fish and Wildlife Service announced radio operation would be allowed in October 2009. The USFWS announced the DXpedition operators would be W6OSP, N7CQQ, N6HC, N4XP, K9CT, I8NHJ, WB4JTT, DJ9ZB, W8GEX, N4PN, AA4NN, KH7U, 9V1YC, ND2T, K6TD, WA7NB, W6KK and N1DG. The DXpedition leaders would be N4XP and WB4JTT.

Planning continued for eight months. N4XP and WB4JTT established a management team for five specific areas. N1DG - IT, W6OSP - finance, KH7U and WB4JTT - transportation and logistics and W8GEX - radios/amps/antennas. Managers selected other team members to assist their duties. For six months SKYPE™ calls and e-mails were used for all details.

The USFWS set the DXpedition dates to be October 9 to 19, 2009. This is because of the bird migration which brings about 1.5 million birds to the island on or about October 19. Transportation was next, but boats were not accepted so an airplane charter was set. The only aircraft available was one that could carry only 17. With the team being 19 members, we decided two team members would fly on a USFWS charter flight on October 4<sup>th</sup>, the day before, and the rest of the team on our charter scheduled for October 5<sup>th</sup>. A weight

restriction meant all of our personal belongings, all equipment and supplies, including the radio equipment, would have to be shipped in a container on a USFWS supply barge to Midway in August.

There was a lot of work to be done. KH7U had worked with many DXpeditions to the Pacific Islands and because he had worked with the USFWS before, he understood their procedures. Therefore he worked with the USFWS for the team. He had amassed a large inventory of equipment from earlier DXpeditions and we used some of that equipment. He would also provide the staging area in Hawaii, and coordinate all logistics.

N1DG, who had also worked on the BS7H Scarborough Reef operation with N4XP, coordinated the shipping of supplies to N6HC in California and shipped the equipment to Hawaii via boat. Once in Hawaii, KH7U picked up the equipment, added his items, tagged and inventoried everything and then loaded it on skids and arranged for shipment via container to Midway.

N1DG suggested that our equipment should be standardised and interchangeable. This was done for numerous reasons, such as set-up and ease of maintenance and familiarity by all concerned. He programmed all station controls and hardware at his QTH prior to arrival on Midway. Once on Midway, set-up was fast and efficient. All six positions were then set up identically, with each position capable of CW, SSB or RTTY. Equipment was Icom IC-7600s and Acom amps using Rig Experts interfaces. Computers were also standardised for ease of use.

W6OSP oversaw finances. A past treasurer of NCDXF and now their President, he had also been on several DXpeditions. W6OSP

was also assisted by Margaret Blackwell, XYL of AA4NN, who helped to track income and expenditures. DL9RCF assisted by DJ9ZB coordinated the European donations. W8CAA also assisted W6OSP in raising funds and contacted clubs and associations for financial assistance. She also managed all team personal records.

WB4JTT would be responsible for the power and physical parts of the operation. He also handled all legal responsibilities.

The management team also asked OK1KT to assist with the QSL requirement and to serve as the team liaison with ELLI Print, who as a sponsor would be supplying QSLs.

W8GEX was in charge of daily operations such as transmitting and receiving, ie radio position set-up and tear-down, cable requirements and needs dealing with positions, on-going maintenance, antennas, radio prep prior to shipment, etc. For the operating scheduling W8GEX and N1DG worked together to make sure the positions were manned as required.

It was decided that K4M would use two separate operating positions with each having its own antenna field. Planning included where each station would be set up, where the antennas would be placed including coax runs, connectors needed, plus electric service and other logistics.

W8AEF and N7CQQ provided a set of SVDA's (switchable vertical dipole arrays) for each antenna field. Arrangements were also made for the use of KH7U's two Titanex verticals and the loan of a Battle Creek Special from the Battle Creek Group. A vertical for 30m would complete the antenna requirements for 10 through 160m.

With October 9<sup>th</sup> set as the departure date for Midway, the team started to arrive in Hawaii with the arrival of WB4JTT, W6OSP and N4XP. At this time we learned our plans had started to fall apart, with news that the aircraft that was due to take us to

Midway was broken. Soon others arrived on the 6<sup>th</sup> and the remaining members had arrived by Wednesday evening. However, the airplane problem continued and we were put into a hold position. We continued to be told the aircraft would be fixed 'soon'! At least the equipment had arrived on Midway and was waiting for our arrival, and we were together as a team.

With the aircraft broken we did not leave as scheduled. As this went on until Sunday morning, we were all very frustrated. While they were trying to fix it, we started searching for another aircraft. One of our team members, WA7NB, suggested we go to the airport and look around for other possible aircraft that could take us. So WA7NB, N1DG and KH7U went to the airport and talked to airplane owners. They all said 'no' and we knew we had to wait for our aircraft to be repaired.

We had originally scheduled a team meeting at the hotel on Thursday for planning purposes. Even though we were delayed, we continued with the meeting and studied our plans for staging, unpacking and repacking of equipment, set-up, flagging of the antennas, lodging, scheduling, and most importantly, tear-down, and the clean-up.

On Wednesday the Midway Refuge Manager offered to add one more person to the team. The first person who could go was NF4A and even after being told he had 24 hours to get to Hawaii, he was very happy to be invited and eagerly accepted. He secured flights, packed some clothes, and was off. And 23 hours later NF4A was picked up at the Hawaii airport, a bit dishevelled, but still glad to be a part of the team. So we settled into a waiting game, with Friday and Saturday passing with no signs of the aircraft being repaired.

On Sunday morning we received a call from the pilot telling us they had fixed the problem and we would depart at 3pm. The team went to the airport with hopes we could all go on the initial flight, but as we

had been told previously, the plane was not big enough to accommodate us. W6OSP and NF4A would go on the USFWS charter flight on the Tuesday. The initial team departed on Sunday at 3:30pm.

During our flight, Art WA7NB, N1DG and K6TD operated K4M aeronautical mobile. This was our opportunity to let the DX community know we were airborne, and that the DXpedition was going to happen and that we would arrive at 8:30pm Midway time.

Upon arrival on Midway we were met by Matt Brown, the refuge manager. We attended a class about Midway Atoll given by USFWS personnel to familiarise us with the island and, most importantly, about the wildlife. We then went to the barracks for the night and slept.

At 0630 the next morning we were met at the barracks by USFWS Manager Matt Brown for breakfast. After we had eaten he took us to the warehouse where our equipment had been stored. It was then moved to the area at the beach where we would be operating. We also were given bicycles for our personal transportation, the only transportation on Midway!

As planned the operation was separated for the CW and SSB camps by about 500 ft. The SSB station was in a tent and the CW station was located inside the tavern used by the Midway staff.

Finally we were under way. While N1DG, K6TD and KH7U started station set-up, the remainder of the team - W8GEX, AA4NN, N6HC, WA7NB, W6KK, N4PN, K9CT, N7CQQ, I8NHJ, DJ9ZB, 9V1YCV and ND2T - started the big task of assembling both antenna fields. All boxes were unpacked and equipment placed where it needed to be. W8GEX and several others surveyed the beach area for exact placement of the antennas. WB4JTT started tent erection as well as checking to make sure the main electrical source was ready. This

all happened simultaneously and went smoothly and quickly. It was not perfect, but pretty close. Two-metre handhelds were used to communicate.

USFWS was worried about the birds and restricted the antennas to verticals only. The SVDA's proved to be sturdy, but had to have flapping ribbons added to alert the birds. All the other antennas also had flapping ribbons added. Because of the large number of antennas and the extreme heat, the antenna fields were not fully erected until late the next afternoon. We had planned for the antennas to be placed on the water line, but the USFWS would not permit this because of the Hawaiian Monk Seals. Most antennas were placed 100 to 200 ft from the water line.

Because there was no electric power service outside the buildings, KH7U had worked with USFWS for the installation of 110V and 220V junction boxes prior to our arrival. From those boxes we used large electric cords to run the power to our stations. Midway 2009 paid for the electrical source and it is being left for other DXpeditions.

Our plan was to have all stations QRV at the same time, but because of our 3-day delay, we decided to put each station on as it became operational. The first CW QSO was on 13 October at 0607 with ZL2IFB on 20m and the first SSB QSO was on 13 October at 0633 with JE1AON on 20m. Five stations were operational within the first 13 minutes. And once we were up and running everything went smoothly. Following an operating schedule made by N1DG, each operator worked three-hour shifts and then had six hours off.

Conditions were very good almost 24 hours a day, with Europe coming through on at least one band at any given time with good signals.

Even though the stations were about 500 ft apart and we had stubs and bandpass filters,

the stations still suffered intermodulation. We were able to eliminate much of this by lowering the output of the CW amplifiers.

In addition to CW, SSB and RTTY our operating plan called for 6m and EME, but we learned quickly that the antennas were not bird-friendly and we were not allowed to set them up.

Before the DXpedition AB6RM contacted W6OSP to set up a schedule with the Aircraft Carrier USS Midway, now a museum in San Diego. It was learned their station would be manned by amateur radio operators who are Midway Museum volunteers. The QSOs turned out good with W6OSP, a former US Navy Communications Technician, as our operator. At the time of the schedule we had to QRT the regular operation, the pile-ups moved to the assigned frequency and established contact with NI6IW on the USS Midway. All was successful and the special event went well.

The only motorised vehicles on Midway were a fire truck and an ambulance with all other persons using either a bicycle or golf cart. While we were there our team used bikes.

Our sleeping rooms were in a former US Navy barracks and were quite comfortable. All meals were served in Clipper House, the island cafeteria, which had good food. We would relieve the five operators on duty during 'dining time' in order for them to eat, and then they would go back and finish their shift.

Most buildings are gone, but some remain for USFWS use that included a bowling alley, a grocery store, an Internet café, a movie theatre and a tavern. These buildings are used during reduced hours. Many of the other buildings were in disrepair, with no plans to repair them. The runway was repaved earlier this year and was in good condition.

While there, some team members went on a tour of Easter Island, the original 'Midway Island'. They reported that virtually all the buildings had gone, but the runway was still there, in poor condition and overgrown.

The weather on Midway was pleasant, although hot at times. It was extremely hot the first two days while we were building antennas, but it cooled off with beautiful, sunny weather the remaining time. As luck would have it, the last day while we tore down the weather was windy, with blowing but warm rain. On Sunday morning before we started to tear down, the wind blew down one of the Titanex verticals.

Our operating plan called for removing one station at a time so we would be on the air for as long as possible. The last CW QSO was on 19 October at 1900 on 30m with NH7CU, with I8NHJ the operator. The last SSB QSO was on 19 October at 1910 on 17m with AA1V, and N1DG the operator. In the end 60,739 QSOS were made with over 18,465 uniques. QSOs by continent were Africa – 171 (.1%), Asia – 17,449 (29%), Europe – 12,677 (21%), North America – 28,251 (47%), Oceania – 1,348 (2%) and South America – 833 (4%).

We left Midway for Honolulu on schedule on the Monday, again with 17 team members. This time N7CQQ and WB4JTT remained behind for the USFWS flight on the Friday. While waiting they would close out the operation and package the equipment for return, either on an upcoming flight, or on the USFWS supply vessel.

The three-day delay in transportation to Midway reduced the on-air time to six and a half days, but still 61,000 QSO's were made. Propagation proved to exceed all expectations, with conditions open to many areas of the world 24 hours a day. Much emphasis was put on working Europe, and afterwards we were happy with the number of European contacts.

This operation came about like no other that has ever taken place. With no leader and no team in place prior to arrival, it developed into an effective operation with highly skilled operators using good, solid planning and proven operating practices and reliable equipment.

The backgrounds and DXpedition experience of these operators reads like the ARRL Country list with operations from 1AØ, 3A, 3B7, 3B9, 3CØ, 3DA, 3X, 4O, 4W, 4X, 5U, 6Y, 7P, 6O, 7O, 9A, 9M6, 9MØ, 9U, 9V, 9X, 9Y, A2, A5, A6, BQ7, BS7, BV, BY, C5, C6, C9, CY9, D6, DL, E2, E3, EL, ET, FG, FOØ, FO8, FT5, G, GD, GW, H40, HA, HBØ, HP, HR, HV, I, J2, J3, J5, J7, J8, JT, JY, KH2, KH4, KH5, KH5K, KH6, KH7K, KH8, KH9, KHØ, KL7, KP2, KP4, ON, P4, PJØ, PJ2, PJ4, PJ9, PYØ, PYØS, SM, SO, STØ, OD, OE, OK, T3Ø, T33, T7, T9, TA, TG, TI, T19, TN, TO5, TT, TX5, UA, UA9, V2, V4, V7, VK9Z, VP2E, VP2K, VP2M, VP4, VP8, VP8G, VP8S, VP9, VS6, VU4, VU7, VY, XE, XRØ, XU, XY, ZK1N, ZL7, ZL8C, ZF and ZS3. One cannot beat experience and this operation was fortunate to have available the skills to make it a success.

One of the goals of the Midway 2009 team was to ensure that those who are preserving Midway Atoll were left with a positive feeling towards ham radio. Our goal was to make more operations take place. This operation produced no problems for the local birds, and many positive comments were received while we were there. We are

confident ham radio will again soon be heard from Midway Atoll.

We would like to thank the DX community for their patience and their financial support. Without that help this trip would not have been possible. The team tried very hard to give you a very professional DXpedition. We are most grateful to you.

Of course our gratitude also goes to the US Fish and Wildlife Service and especially the Midway Refuge Manager, Matt Brown, and his staff for the support provided in making the operation happen, but most of all for allowing our DXpedition to take place.

We also wish to thank NCDXF, the Colvin Foundation, INDEXA, GDXF, SWODXA, SEDXC, the Swiss DX Foundation, EUDXF, the Lone Star DX Association, OZDXF, RSGB, the Carolina DX Association, the Clipperton DX Club, ACOM, Rig Expert, Heil Sound, WXØB, Davis RF, WriteLog, Vibroplex, Autek, the Battle Creek Group, ELLI print, W8AEF, and W6SZN, all of whom were principal sponsors of this DXpedition. We also want to thank those other clubs, associations, and the many DXers who provided additional financial support to help make this operation a success. The team also wishes to thank those who provided IT, electronic, financial, logistical and QSL support throughout the operation – AA1V, DL9RCF, W5DNT, W6XA, Margaret Blackwell, W8CAA, OK1KT, AH6NF, WH6GS and AH6OZ

## **VK9X/G6AY**

Phil, G3SWH, and Jim, G3RTE, will be active from Christmas Island (VK9X) between 20-27 February 2010. We will both use the single callsign VK9X/G6AY. Our activity will be on CW only on all bands 80-10m. There will be no 160m activity. Our main objective is to work as many European, North American and ROTW stations on as many bands as possible. QSL via G3SWH. There is more information at [www.g3swh.org.uk/christmas-island.html](http://www.g3swh.org.uk/christmas-island.html).

G3SWH

# The Austral Islands and Niue – September 2009

Don Beattie, G3BJ, with photographs by Hilary, G4JKS

Each year we try to visit my daughter in Melbourne and add a 'side trip' to somewhere else down South. For 2009 we decided to have a look at two of the more remote South Pacific Island groups, the Australs and Niue. We agreed to add a little extra interest by taking radio equipment and I acquired the calls FO/G3BJ (for French Polynesia, although technically CEPT, you still need to get a [free] licence) and ZK2BJ. However, this was not going to be a DXpedition – it was to be a holiday (and perhaps a check-out of the two locations for a possible FSDXA expedition in a year or two).

Our trip starts with stopovers in Hong Kong, Sydney and Auckland to ease the jet-lag, then by Air Tahiti Nui to Papeete. Perhaps the best feature of ATN is the baggage allowance in economy – 3 x 23kg bags each!

Two days in Tahiti (very ordinary) and two on the delightful island of Moorea complete our stay in central Polynesia. Having collected the FO/G3BJ licence we set off for the Australs.

The Butternut had to be checked in as express freight, which costs about £20, but the process is efficient. The aircraft is the familiar ATR72 66-seat turbo-prop. The trip from Tahiti to Rurutu is via Raivavae, Tubuai and then to Rurutu. Stories about the temperature in the Australs seemed confirmed when the stewardess on the plane puts on a cardigan before we land at Raivavae. And when the door opens, it is clearly much colder than up North. Raivavae seems delightful – a great mountainous peak, and a narrow coastal strip. The airstrip is on reclaimed land off the island. Population 900. 1% of the island board the plane, all garlanded to the eyeballs (a local tradition when someone is going

away). By Tubuai, the floor of the plane is covered with flower petals. We arrive at Rurutu after four hours and it is immediately clear that our assessment from the UK was correct. Very mountainous and again, a small coastal strip. The reef is very close in – about 50-100m from the shore – so the sound of the waves is always present, and loud.

We are met by Yves, our host, an ex-French Army (radio operator), who married a Rurutuan girl some 20 years ago, and has lived here ever since. He had visited Glorieuse, Juan de Nova, Europa, Tromelin, Kerguelen, Amsterdam and Crozet during his time in the Army! But alas he has no active interest in amateur radio. We arrive at the *pension* and get a *fale* at the rear of the property, with a big area of land behind it. Not exactly what I am hoping for, but there is no way we can get the Butternut closer to the sea.

Next day, up with the antenna. It has a clear view to Europe and US, but is totally screened to Japan by a huge inland cliff – probably 80m high, about 100m to the West. A quick listen on the bands shows a big problem – noise - a continuous crackle at S8 with very short breaks – power line noise. Power is distributed on 'Distripoles' along the road, carrying 11kV and 240V 60 Hz three-phase for the houses, with regular small pole transformers. The continuous surf spray onto the HV lines causes the insulators to spark – visible at night. Only after a good rainstorm does it improve. Saturday afternoon it rains and the first night is silent, allowing good contacts into Europe and the US on 40 and 30m. That pattern is repeated over the week we are there, and fortunately the noise is kept away by more or less continuous rain!

We spend the week exploring the island, and playing radio. Propagation to Europe is tough at this stage of the solar cycle with such a simple antenna sub-optimally located - 40m proved to be a 'banker' band, although I know the signal in the UK was close to ESP. It is quite noticeable that most of the time there is nothing on any band. Whereas when in Europe, one can follow propagation from band to band, and as one closes another opens; here it is short isolated openings, with nothing in between. Of course the position in the solar cycle does not help, but it is really hard work to find any opening. Even the HF broadcast bands are dead – the only station I can hear is Radio New Zealand's Pacific service

The road round the island is surfaced only between the North-West corner (just past the airport) to just South of where we are, on the Eastern side. Beyond that, it's 4WD country. 'Town' consists of a ribbon development of basic houses, three 'shops', two churches, a school, a medical clinic, and a community centre. There is a port and a monthly supply ship. The whole town extends over about 1km. There is virtually no traffic. As we walk into town the occasional 4WD stops to offer us a lift.

The following day we go round the island, accompanied by a journalist from 'Terre Sauvage' writing an article on Rurutu and taking photos. On the way back we meet the local fire brigade tackling a big forest fire, which delays our return to after dusk. Some of the 'roads' we follow are 1m high in light vegetation and it is sometimes hard to see the road itself. Elsewhere there are big ruts and potholes.

The island interior is inaccessible unless there is a track (no road as such). The whole island is dense jungle, or so it appears. In fact it is a combination of long-since planted crop trees (coffee, orange, lemon, grapefruit, lychee, banana, plantain, sweet potato, avocado, papaya, pineapple, taro, coconut, vanilla, chilli etc.) intermingled with natural growth. It is a true garden of

plenty and to survive here one just needs to walk a few metres into the jungle for fruit, and a few metres onto the reef for fish. The only breaks in the jungle are where some small handkerchief of land has been cultivated and irrigated. These are marked by an animal tethered to a tree (this marks property claims). Each landowner also has a pig, which functions as a tractor and eats the low-lying vegetation and clears the land. The land is then planted and the pig moved on to the next plot. So pig = tractor. At the end of the process the tractor gets eaten.

All around Rurutu there are huge cliffs, dotted with large caves, giving the island a sombre feeling – for the caves rise way above sea level. In the middle of the island is a depression which was the old lagoon. It, too, is surrounded by cliffs which face both into the central valley and out to sea. Outside the cliffs is the narrow coastal plain.

Rurutu is the 'nursery for whales', as Humpback whales come here to breed and this is the breeding season. So there are boat trips out to just off the reef (about ¼ mile offshore) to watch the whales and swim with them. The show is good whilst we are there – earlier in the week the sea had been too rough for the whales to come inshore. We see the classic 'flip' of the giant tail as one of the whales takes a dive.

Towards the end of our week in Rurutu, the rains return, with strong winds, high humidity and low temperatures. A combination I am not used to. It is very damp, to say the least.

The 'boat' also arrives. She looks pretty tatty. As the quay is out of action, she is anchored in the middle of the harbour and is being unloaded by several whale boats. The port has sprung to life, and most of Rurutu is there, collecting deliveries.

We then fly to Tubuai, a wholly different island. Much less rugged, and almost cultivated in places.

We make contact with Yolande, our host, who is the image of Bloody Mary in the original movie of South Pacific. It's about two miles to the *pension*, which is right on the road. However, there is a plot of land at the side, which is about 4 acres and which is also owned by the *pension*, and that's where the Butternut goes. Bloody Mary explains that the shower in our (first floor) room is solar, and "à cause de pluie" the water will be cold (great!). Dinner is at 1830 (peak time for Europe on 40m). Whilst we put up the Butternut, there is a lot of serious cooking going on so we live in hope.

We eat at one table with other guests – all from Tahiti, and working for a few days in Tubuai. Some wonderful stories of the Australs and the tribal traditions that still exist. The stories also brought out one thing – Tubuai is seen as 'normal', whereas Rurutu, Rimatara and Raivavae are seen as 'sauvage' – wild. There is much talking in hushed tones about the old rites and customs on these islands. One of the diners (originally from France) says that he now takes great care to observe the local customs.

The evening sessions on the bands are good to Japan and the US, although rather poor to Europe. No noise at all. When the bands began to go flat for Europe (and even Japan) at 0730z I generally stop. During the first night we discover that the bedroom is not bug-proof – there are two large grills without mesh, and we were sung to sleep by the sounds of mosquitos in our ears.

On Saturday we walk into 'town'. Pretty standard island kit: two banks, three stores, two churches, a huge town hall, a port and a petrol station. The notable thing in French Polynesia is the state buildings and infrastructure. The French paid through the nose for the acquiescence of the local population to nuclear tests on Mururoa and Fangataufa, and are still paying a huge annual sum to the Tahitian government. There is widespread corruption, and in the view of the local (ex-French) population,

Polynesia is now a rip-off for tourists. Strikes are an everyday occurrence. Tourists come once but rarely again. The value for money is just not there. Air Tahiti is feeling the pinch of the recession and has sold and leased out some of its planes. Air Tahiti Nui has pulled some routes. In Bora Bora several hotels have closed, with much unemployment. All in all, the tourist volume is way down, and in the view of the locals it is not just the recession, but the very poor value in this part of the world. Bora Bora and Tahiti/Moorea were quoted as the worst examples.

Town is about 2 km from here – the road (as in Rurutu) is set back about 10m from the coast with a dense strip of vegetation between the two. There is some excitement that there are tourists on the island. People are asking what on earth we are going to do!

We are offered a tour of the island, provided by the daughter-in-law of the *pension* owner. She looks of South American Indian extraction, and it was then that we make the connection (we should have done so before) that the population originally came from South America. The weather is, for once, fine, and we have an excellent view of the island and a well-informed guide. A complete coastal plain of some depth, more or less developed along its full length. Two groups of hills in the middle, with a pass between them, which bisects the island. Some beautiful parts, with a mix of cultivation, and some very impressive houses being built.

We hear the stories about cannibalism, murders, the Bloody Bay battle with Fletcher Christian and all the stories handed down from generation to generation. We see the Catholic and Protestant churches, and hear some magnificent Polynesian singing during the services. Quite thrilling sounds in perfect harmony.

We visit a 'sounding stone', of which there are three on the island. It is a long low stone (about 6ft long) which is struck with a

smaller stone, and sounds like a very loud xylophone. It seems that the stone has been studied by experts who cannot understand how it makes this sound. The islanders used to use it to alert the whole island to the approach of hostile ships. It makes a hell of a noise.

As far as bugs are concerned there are quite a few. Some very angry-looking large orange wasps, which always seem to be hanging around outside (and sometimes inside) the room, mosquitoes, and the odd cockroach. Other than that it's pretty benign. But there are warnings up in the post office about Dengue fever, which has returned to the islands (both Rurutu and Tubuai). No snakes, and no rabies.

We go to the bank, and change travellers' cheques (no ATMs here). Then to the hardware store, which is a real Tardis run by a Chinese. "No problem – I have everything". And it seems he does. Then back to the post office to check the wi-fi. Seems to be reasonable for Tahiti – about £5 per hour. We walk slowly back to the pension, passing roadside vegetable stalls selling a small selection of fresh veg. Yummy.

On our last evening radio operations are curtailed at about 1730 local (0330z) by a huge noise level. I decide to take the Butternut down whilst it is still light, rather than to leave it up and not use it because of noise. In half an hour it is down and boxed.

We speak to another guest at the pension about the difference between the Gendarmes and the Police Municipale, both of which are on the island. He explains in hushed tones that the Gendarmes represent the occupying power, whereas the PM are the representatives of the Mayor, and have recently been granted power of arrest. Under all this veneer, there are some powerful tensions between the Polynesians and the French, and I suspect that if only the funding issue could be solved, there would be a very strong push to throw the French

out. They are disliked by the locals, and even by the French who have made French Polynesia their home.

On our last day, we arrive at the airport to find little activity, and try to check the Butternut in for the flight back to Tahiti. "Freight?" says the check-in girl with a puzzled look. I say, I thought so, but perhaps just checked baggage. She shrugs her shoulders and says "*comme baggage*". All the cases go as baggage – 56 Kg – with no charge. I ask if the aircraft is full – she says yes. How will they do that, I wonder? No X-ray, no security check, all very laid back. But then if you hijacked the plane, where would you ask it to go?

We take pictures – Hilary and Bloody Mary, Hilary and Robert (the bank manager). Hilary, Sylvie and the other girl from the pension garlanded with lais. A young child wanders out on to the tarmac and is recovered by Hilary. No-one seems concerned. The fire engine goes out to the runway, then comes back. Problem? Yes – the fireman has forgotten his sandwich. This is quickly rectified by the snack bar and the engine goes back out to meet the plane. The plane lands from Raivavae about 10 minutes early. No refuelling, and we are on board and away 15 minutes ahead of schedule, with an 80-minute flight time. We are asked to sit at the front of the plane "pour balancer". A vast amount of freight was taken on board, but there are only about 25 passengers (capacity 66).

We arrive at Papeete and find the temperature dramatically different from the Australs. It is hot, and very humid. After a night's stopover, we are ready for an early flight to Auckland, and the second part of our trip to the South Pacific, of which more later.

# Papua New Guinea DXpedition 2009

**Gordon Rolland, G3USR, relates some of his experiences taking part in a recent four-week DXpedition to three very rare IOTA groups in Papua New Guinea, P29**

We knew we were in trouble when our Australian boat skipper said, "I can feel an itch in my left testicle, there's a storm coming".

## Introduction

Derek, G3KHZ, and I had met at the Annual CDXC Dinner in March last year when he asked if I might be interested in joining his fifth DXpedition to P29. I accepted his invitation, being keen to support the activation of three very rare IOTAs in a unique part of the world which is also a reasonably sought-after DXCC.

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is around 8,500 miles from the UK and just 90 miles north of Cape York, the northern tip of Australia. PNG's P29 prefix is around number 105 in the World Most Wanted list and in the low 90s Most Wanted in Europe. There are few local PNG licensed amateurs. However, a search of P29 calls on the DX Summit reveals that they are not very active, perhaps because some are not locals and in PNG on work assignments. In addition some recent years' P29 Dxpediton activity has been predominantly CW-based. The DXpedition wanted to balance this by including SSB and RTTY activity.

PNG is an independent democracy which is rich in natural resources including oil and gold. It has no fewer than 286 IOTA-listed islands collected into 23 OC-Groups. Many are rarely activated and we planned to visit three - Tanga, Green and Woodlark. There are no scheduled flights to any of these islands, so our access was restricted to chartered boat. Being just 3° south of the equator brings uncertainty and is entirely consistent with PNG's reputation as 'the land of the unexpected'!

## Let's get started

We flew from London to Singapore and on to Port Moresby, the capital of PNG, and then to Kokopo in north-eastern New Britain. We then had a welcome overnight respite after nearly 40 hours of continuous travel from the UK. The next day we joined our boat, the 'Barbarian II', a 45ft motor vessel which was to be our home for the next three weeks.

After leaving Kokopo we encountered some rough weather near Cape St George on New Ireland and had to take refuge in the village of Putt Putt Harbour, some five hours south of Kokopo. This unanticipated stop allowed us to activate an unplanned IOTA, New Britain, OC-008. We made 372 SSB QSOs in four hours on 20m. 65% were with Europe, including 10 from the UK (including CDXC members G3NUG, G3RAU, G3SED, G3SVD, MØOXO, MØVKY and MDØCCE). The pile-up was unexpectedly massive, a welcome portent of things to come. We sailed again early next morning.

## Firstly, to Lif Island (Tanga Group, OC-102)

Tanga lies to the North East of New Ireland and comprises six islands. It is needed by 92% of IOTA claimants. We arrived around midday. However, as information on suitable landing sites was not readily available we spent much of the afternoon looking for somewhere to land and set up our stations. We later learnt that Tanga is well known as a problematic boat anchorage with many beaches approached by water over 80m deep to within less than 100m of the shoreline. Coral and other rocks then make an approach by small boat particularly difficult. Our accommodation and meals

were always to be on the 'Barbarian' so location criteria were dominated by antenna requirements – beachside!

We eventually anchored in 70m of water and located a suitable shore-side village site on Lif Island, which is one of the smaller isles. Party members went ashore, met Island Councillor Greg and negotiated two suitable sites, one for CW and the other for SSB / RTTY. In the event Greg was an excellent contact as he had a wider family of strong young men willing to help carry our equipment.

Our first days on Lif coincided with the CQ WW SSB Contest, which limited normal HF SSB DXpedition operations to 17m, although CW remained straightforward. Band conditions were reasonable, particularly to Europe. However, the close proximity of 400m-high Malendok Island to the north-east heavily impacted our short path to North America. Long path was similarly inhibited by our island hinterland which rose sharply to the south-west.

Despite these geographical features, we made 4,475 QSOs in four days on Tanga. This was a reduction of one day on planned timings due to the heavy weather encountered earlier. However, judging by unsolicited on-air comments and other feedback, we gave a new one in OC-102 to many worldwide stations.

Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> October, was take-down day and by early afternoon we were ready to depart. But first we met Councillor Greg and his fellow villagers to thank them for their support. It was an emotional experience when they unexpectedly gave us coconuts, oranges, a yam and a hen to take with us.

Living on such a remote island, the islanders practise subsistence-based agriculture and live in simple traditional buildings with few comforts and no modern facilities. Their accommodation of our DXpedition was heartening.

## **Next, to Nissan Island (Green Islands Group (OC-231))**

The Tanga group is made up of islands which are the mountainous remains of long extinct volcanoes. The Green Islands, however, are an atoll which is principally a coral reef formed over a very long period of time by the growth of living organisms on top of the remains of worn-down rocks. We were enthusiastic to compare the features of each of these very different radio locations.

But first we had to motor the 60-odd miles from Tanga to Green. Now the doldrums, ie the historically calm weather which characterises October and November in latitudes near the equator, were very late in 2009, which was one reason for the rough weather encountered en route to Tanga. It continued on our trip to Green - and 60 miles took 18.5 hours. At midday local time Pinipei, the first of the two principal Green Islands, came into view. However, our target, Nissan Island was further on as we favoured its large central lagoon as an anchorage. We arrived and settled in for the night.

At first light we motored to the eastern shore and contacted the local headman, who referred us to Paramount Chief Patrick, who was to be our contact on the western lagoon shore. Patrick agreed two locations with clear take-offs from north through south-east. This was better than it sounds, as they were on a beach with low-lying adjacent land. It was our best trip location for North America.

The Green Islands group is required by 91% of IOTA chasers and we operated from Nissan for three days, making 5,814 QSOs. Tear-down was on Sunday morning, 1<sup>st</sup> November. This stay was one day shorter than planned, but we wanted our final group, Woodlark, to have the maximum activation time possible as it had been activated only once before.

Before we left Nissan we met Patrick again. He involved his whole local village in our departure and organised garland presents for us and pre-departure entertainment. The village children sang traditional PNG songs and we must each have shaken at least 200 hands. What fun and a truly delightful send off!

### **Finally, to Madau Island (Woodlark Group, OC-205)**

We set off from Nissan at around 1100 hrs on Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> November. The weather appeared more settled and our skipper set a direct course south for Woodlark. The distance was an estimated 300 miles, which at about six knots should take 50 hours. In the event it took 53 and the latter stages were again very rough, perhaps the worst we had yet encountered. Even the usually unruffled crew were ‘uncomfortable’.

On arrival at Woodlark we explored Woodlark’s northern coast and in particular Madau Island, which lies to the north-west of Woodlark mainland. We identified two sites, negotiated access and set up our stations. However, during our first night the generator at our SSB / RTTY station failed irreparably, so we then combined our SSB and CW operations into one location for our final days with a rota to share band / mode slots.

Woodlark is required by 95% of IOTA chasers and was certainly popular. We had massive pile-ups, particularly to Europe and Japan. On SSB these were initially very unruly, with widespread ‘continuous calling’. The initial QSO rate was desperately low. Stations often ignored our calling requests and even the most experienced and deserving DXers struggled to make a QSO. However, as SSB operations progressed a special split technique was developed which favoured those skilled callers who did listen and the QSO rate improved. That night’s total SSB QSOs was just over 400 before the 20m band closed at 2330 local time.

A highlight at Madau was a visit to the local island school. The headmaster, Shibaba, and four teachers welcomed us to their two-classroom school - for over 200 pupils. We talked about radio to the children and distributed P29 QSL cards from previous PNG DXpeditions. We were gathered outdoors and much to our surprise, the children then sang impromptu songs in the distinctive melodic tradition of the PNG islands – haunting and fantastic.

Our final Saturday night on Madau was difficult. From early afternoon there were repeated heavy rain storms which culminated in a noisy downpour just after we started operating at 1700 local. Operators became very cold and wet – and our damp equipment buzzed with voltages. In the event the SSB / RTTY operators were forced to return early to ‘Barbarian’ after just 124 QSOs on 20m.

We made 8,853 QSOs from Madau Island in five days. All too soon it was Sunday morning and time to tear down. We dismantled our stations for the last time and packed away. We had planned to leave mid-morning, but tropical storm warnings caused our skipper to defer our departure until 0030 local on Monday morning, when we began our trip back to the PNG mainland. After sheltering for several hours en route in the dark we arrived at the eastern mainland town of Alotau mid-morning on Tuesday. From here we then began our return air journey to the UK, arriving early on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Summary & Conclusion**

### **DXpedition Equipment**

Our main antennas were largely homebrew. For CW we had Spiderbeam poles supporting single-band wire verticals for 30, 20 and 17m and a ground plane for 40m supplemented by a Butternut HF6 with a 160m coil. The SSB station utilised a single 17m vertical dipole and a second HF6. One unanticipated aspect of erecting the

Butternuts by the sea at this time of year was that the tides varied considerably and we were caught out with flooded antennas and 'wave-tangled' radials on more than one occasion.

Our transceivers were an Elecraft K3, an Icom 706 Mk 2, a Kenwood TS-2000 and a Yaesu FT-450 kindly loaned by CDXC. Although we had amplifiers, these were not always used due to inter-station interference. Indeed in the event it was surprising how well 100W of SSB was received in Europe with an average real report of 5 and 5 and occasionally much more.

### Summary of the Experience

Overall the 2009 P2 DXpedition made 19,817 QSOs with 8,266 unique calls in 119 DXCCs. 8,266 included 102 current members of CDXC out of a total of 163 UK calls.

This was a challenging trip, not least because of the seas encountered. In addition the proportion of days away from home which were spent operating was 50% due to the travel involved visiting three locations and the time taken to set up / tear down. This was physically draining in the tropical

heat. Nevertheless with 19,817 QSOs made, world-wide demand for P2 and the three IOTAs visited should have been reduced. We certainly hope so!

### Appreciations

We would like to thank our sponsors for donations towards DXpedition logistics costs and in particular CDXC. In addition, we could not have made any contacts without the cooperation of the island people of the Tanga, Green and Woodlark groups to whom we extend our heartfelt thanks. Without exception they made us very welcome.

Thank you also to all who participated in the enormous pile-ups. I hope that you made a QSO with at least one of our P29 activations. If you were unsuccessful I hope that you enjoyed the fun of the chase!

73 and 88 de DXpedition calls

P29NI, P2VCX, P29VLR and P29VSR

P29 web reference:

[www.425dxn.org/dxped/p29\\_2009/](http://www.425dxn.org/dxped/p29_2009/)

for more information.

## GB2CW

In the March 2009 CDXC *Digest* I appealed for volunteers for the GB2CW project. Perhaps I did not make it clear that this does not require you to send donations of cash. What we urgently need are volunteers for the GB2CW Morse transmissions.

I know that a lot of you CW experts are busy with DXpeditions etc., but perhaps there might be a volunteer in your local club who would be willing to do some 2m Morse transmissions - in the hope that we might encourage some of the newly licensed to use this mode.

It would only take an hour a week and this would help the new M3s and M6s to become good CW ops. If you know of somebody who might be willing to help out here, then please tell them to contact [roger@g3ldi.co.uk](mailto:roger@g3ldi.co.uk).

Vy 73 Roger, G3LDI

# AT9RS – IOTA Goa State Group Activation

**Frank Rosenkranz, DL4KQ**

The former Portuguese colony of Goa is located on the east coast of India and contains three qualifying coastal islands for IOTA (AS-177) near Panjim, the Goan capital. All three islands are conveniently situated just five kilometres from Dabolim International Airport. They are occasionally visited by tourists and day trippers.

We were aware that recent activation plans by local hams had failed due mainly to licensing difficulties, so I decided to try an operation as part of a family holiday in late March or early April. Once again my friend Sara, VU3RSB, had the task of visiting the islands in late February and planning the DXpedition. Buffalo Rock, aka Kambariam, turned out to be problematic for landing reasons and Bat Islands, aka Piquene Island, had only a very small landing site and beach, a small rocky stretch of only 12 metres. Furthermore, the steep rising island would have blocked our signals to Europe, North America and even Japan.

Uninhabited Grandi Island, aka St. George Island, was a much better choice. It consists of two interconnected islands. On the western island there is a lighthouse, some concrete paths and some damaged and empty buildings. The eastern island has a small beach and an adjacent hill at its south eastern tip whilst the remaining island is a heavily wooded mountain range.

For a long time parts of the island have been used by the Indian Navy and Air Force for nocturnal target practice. Unfortunately Sara could not assess the dangers, but we assumed it would be safe if we avoided the western island, administered by the Indian Navy, and operated from the eastern island. Another point of interest was the All India

Radio station located on the mainland only 3 kilometres from Grandi. The station transmitted with 50 KW on 7.130 MHz and

local hams reported difficulties on the 40m band. Fortunately we found out that Radio India would be moving up to 7.230 MHz on March 29 so that we hoped for less QRM.

Sara applied for a ‘temporary change of location’ to Grandi. Normally portable operations are not permitted in India but we received the permit and a special call sign in only ten days, just four days prior to my departure on March 26. Just before my departure I asked Mr S. Suri, VU2MY, President of the National Institute of Amateur Radio, if Jos, VU2JOS, Additional Director of NIAR’s HQ at Hyderabad, could join the DXpedition. As a result of the good relations between NIAR and the German DX Foundation (I am GDXF director and was involved with the VU4/7 operations) we received a positive reply. I was then already in southern Goa, so a combined NIAR/GDXF IOTA operation could take place.

At the earliest opportunity I met with Manu, VU2SMS, a local Goan ham, and we visited Grandi to undertake a survey. The only suitable operating site was on top of a steep sandstone hillock, but we would need good sun shelters and it would be a tough job to carry up all the equipment. On site I could not find any clear evidence of ongoing target practice, but Manu still felt uncomfortable with the idea of operating overnight. We decided it would be advisable to inform the authorities accordingly. When I was back at my resort I was told that YL Yamini, VU2YAM, wished to join the team; this did not make me overly excited having visited our operating site.

Whilst the final details of the operation were worked out by daily e-mails, a licence

problem emerged. Because of the wording of the special permit and one unfortunate term, we could not use the special call AT9RS. Two more requests were made, but these did not solve the problem and, as a consequence, we would all have to use our own calls. This would have created problems not only when operating but also for the subsequent QSL management. The operation had just been cancelled when Yamini achieved the impossible and Delhi issued a new good permit just 1½ hours after cancellation!

By the evening of April 3 Yamini, Jos and Sara arrived at my hotel by overloaded car after a 16-hour trip. Early the next morning my wife and I squashed into the car too and we proceeded to Panjim to meet with Manu and Rony, VU2ROE. By 11am the car was unloaded and I went on a shopping trip helped by Manu and Rony. Wire, tarps and much more had to be purchased and we also picked up two 2.5 KW generators, having made some test runs and voltage checks. Then we returned to our hotel and Jos made another shopping trip since we still needed tables, chairs, poly gas cans, kerosene and bamboo poles. They could not find any bamboo, but Manu wheedled some poles out of a local police station where they are normally used for barriers. By 6am on April 5 we had loaded our boat but, this being India, there was a typical delay and we eventually departed for Grandi.

This is a 45-minute trip, but we negotiated a special tariff so that the same boat could be used for four days. The boatman saved kerosene and only used one of the two engines, so this doubled up our travel time. By 8:30 am we had arrived at Grandi and our boat stopped as close to the landing site as possible. In the next 20 minutes we carried all our kit through deep water to the beach - where some of us constructed bearer frames for the generators, whilst the others started to carry the equipment uphill to the operation site at 250 metres. For two-thirds of the distance there was a gravel path, whilst for the last part we had to climb over

small rocks so that the actual distance was about 400 metres. It soon reached about 32 degrees Celsius / 92 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade; each trek was a struggle and we needed at least 15 minutes for each journey and two rests. By 11 am we had all the kit on top of the hillock. We were all exhausted, but we still had to set up the stations in the midday heat, now about 36 degrees Celsius / 97 degrees Fahrenheit and the sheer rocks reflecting the sun without mercy.

The SSB and CW sites were planned for maximum separation and the generator was placed between them. The SSB tent was erected on the main plateau of the hillock, but the CW site was no more than a crow's nest on an adjacent cliff connected to the main plateau by a small ridge with a 60 metre drop on both sides. Since the planned location of the CW tent and antennas was considered to be too dangerous by the Indians, we moved the antennas closer to the generator - but this caused problems later. With the help of the bamboo poles and plastic tarps we constructed basic sun shelters and set up extended double-zeppelin antennas. By 3:30 pm we had a first test run and it turned out that the CW station had an S7 noise level from the generator and the SSB station had an electrical and RF ground problem. Whatever we tried did not solve the problems and we replaced the SSB antenna with dipoles which had fewer problems. Because of the lack of time we could not improve the CW situation; we hoped that the noise blanker would help a little and planned to look for a solution the next day.

By 4:30 pm the main group left Grandi again and Jos and Yamini stayed overnight until the new shift arrived. After only three hours they informed us by cell phone that the main generator had failed and that the spare generator did not work. For the next two hours we and the generator renter tried to give technical advice by phone, but without success. This worst case scenario, after only 300 contacts, caused 16 hours of

downtime and the loss of around 1,000 QSOs whilst we waited for another generator the next morning. We checked both generators and found out that the spark plugs of the main generator had gone up in smoke - whereas the spare generator ran but had no output. Whilst Yamini and Jos returned to the mainland Sara and I replaced the CW horizontal doublet with a vertical doublet in the midday heat and from then on we had no more RF interference problems from the generator.

Some minor problems at the SSB station were resolved, but this was time and energy-sapping as we operated exhausted, sitting under the burning hot tarps. But the bands turned out to be in excellent condition. 20m, 17m and even 40m later on were wide open. There were some big pile-ups and no problems with the European zoo; the number of contacts increased gradually. While Sara's SSB tent was quite comfortable, the CW crew's nest was extremely uncomfortable. Only one chair position was possible due to the rocky underground and one could not operate comfortably. The tarp always touched the operator's head and the sea breeze struck the tarp towards the head every two or three seconds. From time to time I stopped the CW operation and added some ropes here and there to reduce the noise and to fix the tent as the breeze freshened up. That night the SSB tent collapsed three times and I had to scramble to the ridge and help to erect it again.

Thanks to the patience of the pile-up and persistent operating I worked a good number of North American stations and had a good 2m long path opening. I found that my vertical doublet, normally used from beach locations, performed surprisingly well even on the hilltop. By 8 am when the bands closed we had about 1,000 SSB and 940 CW contacts in the log. We hoped that the boat and new shift would show up early so that we could return to the mainland for some sleep and return in late afternoon to support the other operators. But the boat

was delayed and we passed the time erecting an 80m vertical and another SSB dipole.

At midday, after a delay of about 3½ hours, the boat arrived but was filled with Goan hams and their families. They inspected our camp while their families enjoyed the beach, swimming and a copious picnic. Operating was difficult; we were dog-tired and we had to wait for our return to the mainland which we finally reached by 4 pm - too late for a quick sleep and return. Jos, Yamini, Manu and Rony had to operate on their own but because of our antenna improvements and experiences of the previous night we expected to make a good number of contacts before dismantling the stations next morning. This time no bad news arrived by cell phone and we were in a good mood when we left for Grandi next morning at 6 am, hoping for one or two more hours of operating time and especially for the 20m long path opening to North America.

On arrival we could not believe our eyes as some of the operators who were swimming in the sea and others snoozing in the camp. They reported that the CW station had antenna problems and that radio conditions had worsened. Sara had tried SSB without much success, while I searched for the CW antenna problem. This was the result of a relay that had failed. This was a great pity since they had started with reasonable QSO rates. We started to dismantle the stations and load the boat again. Once again a hard job and we were all very happy when we arrived at the mainland jetty by 1:30 pm, although another two hours were needed for unloading and returning all the loaned items.

We finished the AT9RS operation with a total of 2,800 contacts (1,400 SSB / 1,400 CW) and around 250 with North America (40 were in SSB). The generator failures and other imponderables had a serious impact on our results. But then things never turn out the way you expect - especially in India!

We are very thankful for all the support received - namely from GDXF, SDXF, MDXC and IREF. Of course we also thank our regular supporters - especially Alfio,

IT9EJW. Our special thanks go to NIAR HQ for their invaluable support - all the recent Indian IOTA activations would not have been possible without NIAR.

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## QSLing and LoTW: A collector's perspective

Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF

### Is LoTW becoming a threat to traditional QSLing?

LoTW provides many good things to many people. However, there is one thing that LoTW most definitely is not (from a QSL collector's perspective), and that is a replacement for the traditional paper 'QSL card'. The advent of LoTW has brought many positive benefits to DXing. However, there is also a slightly negative side-effect which, I fear, is becoming gradually more common. A small number of DX stations, minor DXpeds and various contest operations, are using LoTW as an excuse not to QSL in the traditional sense. The argument goes: "We up-load our logs to LoTW, hence we won't be bothering with paper QSLs any more".

That LoTW can save a huge amount of unnecessary QSLing is not in doubt. But I am sure that the creators of LoTW at the ARRL did not have in mind that their system might end up as a direct threat to the long-term existence of traditional QSL cards. Although so far the number is thankfully only relatively small, this is definitely a growing phenomenon. You don't have to look at many entries on QRZ.com before you come across one which says something like 'No QSLs pse, we're 100% LoTW'!

If both sides of a QSO are happy with a 'QSL' on LoTW, that's fine. But what seems unreasonable is the use of LoTW as

an excuse for deliberately cutting off access to paper QSLs for those who would still like

to receive a card. Although there is an obvious overlap, the 'collecting of QSL cards' and the 'collecting of DXCC and other ARRL award credits on LoTW' are not the same thing.

QSL cards have a long tradition within amateur radio. Rare indeed are those stations who have never had a QSL card printed for themselves at one time or another. Real QSL cards, printed on real paper are still a strong symbol of amateur radio. A tick in a box in a remote database, such as LoTW, useful and efficient though it is, does not have the same impact as a physically printed card.

LoTW offers an excellent opportunity for reducing the numbers of unwanted QSL cards being mailed around the world by the QSL bureaux network. That is a good thing, because the global QSL bureaux network has always been unnecessarily burdened and clogged up by the shipment of cards which are never collected, or are otherwise totally ignored, by the intended recipient.

### QSL Collecting

For DXers the collecting of QSL cards is just one of the many facets of the hobby of amateur radio. Even a relatively mundane QSL card can be an interesting collector's item in itself. This is in addition to it being a tangible life-long record of a possibly fleeting radio contact that may have taken

place many years ago. QSL cards provide a perspective on both the history of amateur radio and also of political changes in the wider world.

The design and print quality of QSL cards has improved by leaps and bounds over the past few decades. Former Eastern bloc countries, particularly the now defunct USSR, used to send out large quantities of low-quality QSL cards, while the USA, Japan and some Western European countries would send out the better-looking cards. These days the tables are reversed. Some of the best print-quality cards come from the former Eastern bloc countries, which have since turned to capitalism. Many Russian cards already outshine those from Japan, which previously used to lead the pack in terms of photo-print quality. In a small way major world developments are directly reflected through QSL cards.

Within amateur radio QSLs can be lasting souvenirs of adventurous DXpeditions to remote places many years ago, or of some recently activated lighthouse or even of just the local station down the road. Each and every QSL card has its own story to tell. But taken as a whole, a collection of QSLs can provide a fascinating and informative perspective of our hobby over a long period of time.

### **ClubLog improves G3TXF's old logs**

One major task which was finally completed at G3TXF during 2009 was the typing up of all the old home station logs right back to the beginning in February 1965. Access to all your logs in electronic format gives great satisfaction. However, the completion of the typing up of my logs was further enhanced by loading them up to Michael/G7VJR's ClubLog.

ClubLog has been described in detail elsewhere, but for this user the ClubLog service was indeed most helpful in cleaning up the typed-in version of my old logs. ClubLog helped to identify several typos in

the G3TXF log. It also helped to correctly identify countries which had been incorrectly identified by the original logging software. When your log spans more than four decades the same prefix can be used for several different countries several times over. For example, the prefixes UR and UW have totally different meanings today (Ukraine) from what they did forty years ago (Estonia and European Russia). These are relatively straightforward examples. There are many more complex examples of where prefixes have changed their meaning, many times over. Alan, 5B4AHJ, is now the DX Database Editor of ClubLog. Thanks to his own research as well as to the inputs from users, Alan is continually adding greatly to the accuracy of ClubLog.

Although it's a huge task for many (especially if your log covers several decades of active DXing), getting your old paper logs into electronic format can reap huge benefits, particularly if they are then uploaded to ClubLog by way of sanity check. In my case ClubLog has identified at least three all-time band-slots which I had missed from my old paper log and my early primitive DXCC records.

If you're still looking for a worthwhile New Year's resolution, then you could do a lot worse than resolving to get all your old logs into electronic format and then getting them uploaded to both to the ARRL's LoTW and to Michael/G7VJR's ClubLog!

**CDXC**  
CHILTERN DX CLUB  
The UK DX Foundation

# The RTTY Column

Roger Cooke, G3LDI

*roger@g3ldi.co.uk*

As you can see, there's a new op on the keyboard, so for those who don't know me, a quick potted history. Licenced in 1956, on RTTY in 1963 with the old Creed machinery, a 7B, 6S auto, reperforator, AR88D, home-brew transmitter, amplifier and ATU with a 66ft end-fed zepp. Things have changed now, so all the teleprinter gear has gone: just a computer, MMTTY, N1MM, FT-1000MP, linear and a 4-el SteppIr, a rhombic and other wire dipoles.

## Phil, GUØSUP

Phil asked me to take his place as he was very busy with work for BARTG. Phil deserves a vote of thanks for the sterling work he has done with the RTTY column. Phil issues all the awards for BARTG and with GB5ØATG active until the end of June 2010, there will be a lot of work to do, at least we are hoping that will be the case. By the time you read this it will be January 2010, which leaves you six months to try for the special awards that are being offered, wall plaques and special QSL cards included. Full rules are on the BARTG web site at [www.bartg.org.uk/gb50atg.asp](http://www.bartg.org.uk/gb50atg.asp). It would be nice to see some applications from CDXC members. While you are there, why not join BARTG? It's free, so you have nothing to lose and a lot to gain.

## BARTG

BARTG is free to join as I have said, but we are not averse to accepting the odd donation! I say 'we' because I just happen to be Chairman of BARTG! And the money is put to excellent use in sponsoring DX-peditions and encouraging the use of RTTY from rare countries. RTTY was, at one time, very difficult to use on a DXpedition. Just imagine taking a teleprinter, power supplies, terminal units etc. to some rare entity with difficult access. However, it was done 40

years ago, but those who did it are probably suffering from a bad back now! I well remember actually sending a model 19 teleprinter to VP2AA in Antigua in the 1960s. He was very keen and it was quite a rare country – on any mode in those days – and RTTY activity from there caused quite a stir. It was sent up to Liverpool and then by sea. These days a laptop, loaded with suitable programs, takes up very little room. Indeed RTTY is just another mode now, with no real electronic expertise needed.

## Feedback

I realise that asking for feedback from any column is like asking turkeys to vote for Christmas, but there could be a time when you have something that others might like to know, or indeed you might wish to find out something yourself. Please don't feel shy. I work on the principle that if you don't ask, you won't find out. I always emphasise this in my Morse class, because there is no excuse for ignorance. However simple it might be to others, to you it might be a real stumbling block. This column might be able to help out, so if you feel like writing, then do drop me an e-mail to the address at the top of this column. You might just be able to help somebody else with a similar problem.

Having said that, the help files at AA5AU are quite extensive and setting up MMTTY and N1MM can be a little tricky, but once it's done, it is a great combination to work with. See [www.aa5au.com/rtty.html](http://www.aa5au.com/rtty.html).

## RTTY Speed

We have been stuck with 45.45 Bauds now since RTTY first began with the old teleprinters, mainly because the British teleprinter, Creed 7B, 75 and 444 had the governors set to 50 Bauds. This was fine

when a G was talking to a G, but when a G wanted to talk to a W, there could be problems! The USA standard was 45.45 Bauds, so we had to obtain a stroboscope and adjust the governor each time we changed bands. Some people had two governors; some even resorted to designing and building an electronic speed control.

However, those days are history, so why are we now stuck on 45.45 Bauds? I did quite a few experiments with higher speeds, and with the selectivity set to a 250 Hz bandwidth I found that I could hold a QSO with very few misprints at 100 Bauds. Obviously the BER rate increases with speed, but I settled for 75 Bauds. I see no reason why we should not push for an international standard of 75 Bauds. Some will argue that typing speeds are below this - and this is true - but since most DX QSOs are two-key QSOs it would not matter much. Contests are catered for with macros and the throughput of QSOs would be that much greater, plus it would keep the operator on his toes a bit more.

There was a 75 Baud contest in the past, but that seems to have bitten the dust. Perhaps it is time to look at this again. I often call CQ on 80m at 75 Bauds, so why not give it a whirl? You will be surprised at how solid the copy is at that speed. After all, MMTTY is simple to change. It doesn't need a stroboscope or a new governor.

## Conversation

Where has the art and pleasure of conversation gone? All I seem to hear these days are QSOs that last all of 5 seconds and that's it. When I first got my licence we had QSOs that lasted anything up to an hour at a time. I include RTTY in this as well, although the power has to be watched, RTTY being a 100% duty cycle mode. This is the way we made friends, a lot of those friendships lasting the test of time. That would be improbable these days. I have even worked a common USA station and all I got was "G3LDI 599 tnx QSO 73". I

didn't even bother to go back to him. The proliferation of DX-style operation has infested even the common-or-garden station now. I haven't built a station in order to spend my life swapping three numbers with another. Contesting is one thing, but come on, let's be sociable for goodness sake! An old Chinese proverb says, "A single conversation with a wise person is worth a month's study of books".

My CQ macro now takes that into account. It reads, "If you don't want a chat then don't bother to reply". Has anybody else found this, or is it just this Luddite of a GOM with a G3 licence? If it does become the norm, I don't hold out much hope for the hobby because paint drying has an infinitely greater attraction.

## DX and Contests

By the time you read this in January Andrew, M5AEX will be operating with GB5ØATG. He will try to use both RTTY and PSK31, so please do look out for him. Then in February John, GW4SKA, will take over the operator's chair. See my first paragraph for the awards details.

I have been quite busy with other things and only made half a dozen QSOs with GB5ØATG in November, including my first RTTY QSO on Top Band. I worked OV1A on 1.840 MHz. The data window on Top Band is extremely narrow and there has not been much activity there in the past. However, I have often heard PSK31 up there and was surprised to hear RTTY.

Under my own call I managed DP1POL, XRØY, VK9XX and that's it. As I said, I was too busy to spend time contesting. However, Phil beat me to FT5GA, as did numerous other people. My beam being stuck doesn't help.

Phil also managed an entry in WAE and did quite well. This is a summary of how he got on in this one:

Band	QSOs	Points	QTCs	Mults
80	49	49	0	88
40	84	84	0	123
20	206	206	349	130
15	66	66	30	66
10	0	0	0	0
Total	405	405	379	407
Total score = 319.088				

There is a plethora of contests in the early part of the year. This list will hopefully whet your appetite:

UK DX contest January 17<sup>th</sup>

[www.ukdx.srars.org/](http://www.ukdx.srars.org/)

BARTG RTTY Sprint January 23<sup>rd</sup>

[www.bartg.org.uk/sprintcontest.asp](http://www.bartg.org.uk/sprintcontest.asp)

Mexico RTTY February 6<sup>th</sup>.

CQ WW WPX RTTY February 13<sup>th</sup>

[www.cqwpxrty.com/](http://www.cqwpxrty.com/)

Ukraine Open RTTY March 6<sup>th</sup>

BARTG HF RTTY March 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>

[www.bartg.org.uk/hfrttycontest.asp](http://www.bartg.org.uk/hfrttycontest.asp)

Then of course you have the RSGB CC Club Cumulatives. These are just 90 minutes long in an evening on 80m. The dates are: January 21<sup>st</sup>, February 10<sup>th</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup>. These are ideal for those with limited time and who enjoy PSK31 as well, because both modes are used.

That's it for now.

73 de Roger, G3LDI

## Contest

### Lee Volante, GØMTN

Welcome to the first Contest column for 2010. This year will see the long-awaited World Radiosport Team Championships in Russia, a much-expanded and diverse GB7HQ operation in the IARU HF Championships - and if we're lucky, some extra sunspot activity too. At the end of this *Digest* column I usually include a plea for reports of contest operating activities that could be of interest and inspiration to other members. Last year, for CQ WW CW, I was invited to be part of the K3LR Multi-Multi team, so it would be churlish of me not to give some details of the adventure.

#### K3LR – CQ WW CW 2009

Tim Duffy's K3LR callsign is very well known worldwide, and should be instantly

recognisable to any CDXC member who has taken at least a passing interest in the CQ WW DX SSB and CW contests, or the ARRL DX contests in recent years. Tim has assembled a world-class Multi-operator Multi-transmitter station in Western Pennsylvania. For success in the aforementioned contests, a 'pipeline' to Europe is one essential element. This is especially so since volumes of JA contesters, especially on CW, appear to be waning compared with Europe, making victory from the West Coast pretty much impossible these days. The most successful USA contest stations for DX contests are now located in North-East USA, with the New England area producing some top scores. Most keen contesters will be aware of the fun rivalry between KC1XX, W3LPL

and K3LR who compete for the #1 position in the USA Multi-Multi class in these contests. What a lot of people don't realise is that K3LR is located near Pittsburgh, quite a way west from the other stations, so it can be an uphill struggle to keep up. What keeps the contesting fun is that despite the massive amounts of investment put into each station, no single team has dominated, and the podium position is certainly within reach for any of them. For CQ WW CW 2009 Krassy, K1LZ, was also joining the multi-multi fray for the first time, and was expected to do well.

Mark, MØDXR, had been part of the CQ WW CW team at K3LR twice before and had recommended me to Tim to partner Mark on 20m for the 2009 contest. We couldn't quite believe that two English guys were going to get the chance to look after 20m. In the lead-up to the contest many e-mails were exchanged and analysis of previous logs completed. We needed to learn the expected rates each hour, where the common openings were, and also the more unexpected ones. For example, just as the main opening to Europe would be getting underway there's a long path opening to Asia to juggle with as well. Mark and myself even had a conference call with Tim via Skype in the week before the contest to run over strategy and how the station operated.

The initial plan was for Mark and I to travel together on the Thursday before the contest, so we would get a proper night's rest before the contest started. However, due to a family bereavement Mark was forced to change his plans and fly in just a few hours before the contest began at 0000z, which was 7pm local Eastern time. Although I've travelled similar distances for CQ WW in the past with my trips with the Voodoo Contest Group, the West Africa operations have been on the same or an adjacent time zone. So a 7pm local start time felt a little surreal. 15m operator Bob, N6TV, reminded me that from the West Coast it's a 4pm local start time, and we spared a few

thoughts for our JA, VK and ZL friends who also never have the contest conveniently fitting into a weekend. In an attempt to adjust to local time, I spent a relaxing 12 hours in bed on the Thursday evening. Physically I felt adjusted on the Friday, but the combination of operating 'unsociable' hours on 20m, and constantly being aware of the UTC clock in WinTest, meant that both Mark and myself felt we'd reverted to UK time by mid-contest. We'd feel like it should be early evening, but a glance at our watches and looking out of the small skylight in the basement shack revealed it was not even lunchtime.

As you will know already if you've looked at the K3LR website, there is a lot of antenna hardware available. The 20m run station had four independently rotatable 6-element yagis, and the second 20m station had two 6-element yagis. The top run station yagi is at 230 ft, just next to the aircraft warning beacon. Any combination of antennas can be chosen on the stations, which certainly gives the operator more to think about than at a 'single yagi' station. Both stations can receive all of the time, and an interlock means that only one can transmit at any one time, with the main station having priority.

The other bands have similarly impressive arrays. There was also a 20m receive 4-square available, which is located on the other side of Tim's property to the other 20m antennas. The polarisation change and the distance really helped to cut down on the interference. It became possible to interleave QSOs between the run and searching station, so even whilst running a high rate to Europe, the second station should be able to add even more QSOs. The last 10 QSO rate meter hit 300/hour for a while during the main European opening, which was very pleasing. Whilst a single-op station working a multi-multi may be receiving a big signal on a quiet frequency, at the multi-multi end there may be noise from the other stations to contend with, and perhaps even another active transmitter just

a few tens of kilohertz away on the same band. During CQ WW CW, of course, the bands are extremely crowded. Finding a relatively clear frequency to run on can be hard enough at the best of times, but also finding a slot that won't cause undue problems to your team mates as well can be a little trying!

On the Sunday evening Mark and I were working the JA opening. Some of the signals being received were very weak, and as the number of new stations on the band was low, both operators turned their attention to the JAs responding on the run frequency. Working together, we worked more stations without needing repeats. Sometimes Mark pulled out a call on the run station that was completely inaudible to me on the second station. I'd got 12 elements at my disposal, and one yagi was at 150 ft, so I knew my team mate was working some very marginal signals! Mark and I couldn't believe that we'd got 36 elements all focussed on JA – that's more elements than I usually operate with on 432 MHz, let alone 14 MHz. Of course, for most of the weekend we had yagis pointing in different directions so as not to miss out on some openings.

A significant part of success at multi-multi is all about teamwork, passing multipliers, and later even QSOs between bands. Whilst there was close competition in QSOs and multipliers between 7 MHz and 14 MHz for most of the contest, all of the operators gave a little cheer whenever a multiplier bell was dinged as the contest drew to a close. There was extra special praise for the 10m team, who patiently keyed their way to just shy of 200 QSOs in 50 countries. Conditions were evidently nowhere near as good as in the SSB contest a month previously. At the end of the 48 hours K3LR, W3LPL and KC1XX all swapped scores on 80m SSB as is the tradition, and the totals were all around the 18 million points mark, so the adjudication process will need to determine the winner. K1LZ was not too far behind either, with a very credible 17 million+ points.

Everything was very well organised, from transport and logistics to the more trivial matters of food and drink. It made a pleasant change to be able to 'turn up and operate'. Quite often an unavoidable part of contest preparation involves lots of antenna and tower work, or some work with a soldering iron or working out bugs in the computer system. Lots of physical labour or mental stress isn't the best preparation for a marathon 48 hour contest. So credit to Tim and his team for their preparation work which let the operators relax and focus on the job at hand during the contest itself. It was a real pleasure to operate with the K3LR team, after almost 20 years of putting them in my own log from home.

### **More Skimmer thoughts**

After a lot of furore about CW Skimmer a year or so ago, it hasn't appeared as a hot topic as much on the popular Internet discussion forums recently. Some contest groups had tried it and found that it wasn't all that it was cracked up to be. A skimmer solution was in use at K3LR, and I was surprised how much it 'changed the game' from what I was used to when only the traditional DX Cluster was used as an assistance aid.

Stations can implement a local, perhaps private, skimmer, with wideband receivers and the skimmer software used on site. Anything that this skimmer picks up should definitely be workable by the operators. The alternative solution is to collect DX spots from the growing number of public skimmer stations on the Internet. Getting more ambitious, the local and public skimmer feeds could be consolidated, and added to the traditional DX Cluster spot feed generated by human beings (remember them?)

Several users of Skimmers for contests have complained that too many of the callsigns harvested contained errors and were not providing much value. A solution offered now in the CW Skimmer software is to

verify the callsigns against a SuperCheckPartial database. There are several callsign validation settings ranging from Minimal to Paranoid.

When beginning a worldwide 48-hour contest it would make sense to limit callsigns passed to the DX spot announce window to be new multipliers to prevent overload of both logging software and the operators. But certainly in the later stages of the contest, relaxing the filters to allow new QSOs to be found would be worthwhile. This isn't specific to K3LR, but has been standard practice at many multi-something stations I've operated with, and the same logic applies to the DXCluster as it does skimmer.

But now the question is, if you have local skimmers and many other worldwide skimmers finding stations, is it even worthwhile for a non-running station to try tuning for QSOs? There is still CW skill required, just as packet spots are often busted, Skimmer can still make mistakes. If the broken callsign is still valid in the SCP database, it will still be passed as a valid potential QSO. Standard practice should be to always verify the call, and be suspicious if similar calls appear in any N+1 check callsign window.

Nasty pile-ups often develop in the seconds after a DXCluster spot is made for a rare station. This is plain to see wherever I operate from. However, during CQ WW CW it seemed that the pile-ups from public skimmer spots for similarly rare stations were less common. It seems that the 'Assisted' community are not yet using the skimmer feeds as much as the DXCluster feeds. It's not quite a trivial matter yet to integrate all of the different sources, but this is sure to change soon. Another quirk found is that skimmer would sometimes decode the callsign of the station calling someone, so overwriting the call of the station calling CQ on the frequency in the bandmap. There's a definite learning curve.

So I'd conclude that now having experienced CW Skimmer, with local and the worldwide feeds being combined and sanitised, it does help a Multi-something station work more stations. It does turn operating activity into a duck shooting competition, though, probably de-skilling the activity of making QSOs when not calling CQ. Skimmer resolves the callsign when it's first transmitted, the op verifies it as being valid on the second call, and seconds later it should be in the log. With that in mind, I hope that the most popular Single Operator 'unassisted' categories are not lost and merged with 'assisted' categories. With more callsigns just being 'double checked' by the human operator, rather than being initially received by ear unaided, it will be interesting if the number of errors reduces for stations making use of Skimmer in the future.

73 Lee, GØMTN

### **CDXC QSL card**

The CDXC QSL card is available to all members by direct order from Hertfordshire Display PLC, 51 High Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9BA. Tel: (01920) 461191, Fax: (01920) 463212 or [www.hdprint.co.uk](http://www.hdprint.co.uk).

HD Print have asked if we can update our order form to add a daytime telephone number as this is needed for verification of credit card details. We have updated the form on our website, but if you use an old form, please add your daytime contact number to avoid unnecessary processing delays.

## **Swiss radio amateurs receive official license, start detailed planning for DXpedition to Côn C  Island**

LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND, 15 September 2009 – Scheduling their activities for April 2010, an international group of amateur radio operators plans to conduct a DXpedition to a remote island off the coast of Vietnam. During their 2-week stay, they will make radio contacts with as many ham radio operators as possible around the globe. Running four stations 24 hours a day, they hope to reach 60,000 hams in that period.

In addition, the Vietnam telecom authorities have issued an official amateur radio license as required for any such activity; in this case, the call sign under which all radio communications will take place is 3W6C.

The multinational project, being coordinated by Swiss ham radio operators, consists of roughly 20 individuals including one woman with members not only from Switzerland but also from Vietnam, Germany, USA and Japan.

The team members are starting to make the extensive preparations necessary for such a DXpedition. Côn C  Island, with a land surface of just 2 square kilometers, is 32 km off the central coast of Vietnam in the Gulf of Tonkin. The island has a population of approximately 400 people. For many years it was a restricted military zone, but today the Vietnamese government is working to turn this idyllic location into a tourist and vacation destination.

What is of special interest to ham operators is that this island has rarely seen any radio activity. Because it belongs to the popular Islands of the Air program (designation: AS-185), and the fact that Vietnam itself is high in the list of most-wanted countries for radio contacts, the DXpedition expects very high interest from the amateur radio community around the world.

The goal is to make contacts on as many different frequencies as possible, even in the 80 meter and 160 meter bands, which makes this DXpedition very special. But this goal also means that the group must transfer considerable amounts of equipment – including radios, antennas, power generators, computers, and various ancillary supplies – with them to the island.

### **The need for sponsors**

In order to conduct such an extensive operation requires considerable financial resources. And while the team members are all making personal financial sacrifices to make this DXpedition possible, they are also dependent upon donations from many sources, whether individuals, ham radio clubs or commercial sponsors. They would be most grateful for any financial support, in any amount; information for making donations is available on the DXpedition website at [www.3w6c.qrv.ch](http://www.3w6c.qrv.ch).

## Not the GB2RS News

- All new callsigns issued in Canada to be special
- Magic new QRM Quasher Powder now available
- Does RF always go in straight lines?

At a recent meeting between the Canadian licensing authority, Industry Canada, and the national society, Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC), it was agreed that all new callsigns issued in that country will be special. In future there will be no such thing as a 'normal' callsign.

Other countries, including many in Europe, are almost certain to follow suit after expert advice from members of the medical profession, who confirm that these days the psychological damage inflicted on the average radio amateur by expecting him or her to make do with an old-fashioned 'normal' callsign is considerable.

Magically endowed radio amateurs and Harry Potter fans will be delighted to hear that Zonko's Joke Shop in Hogsmeade now stocks Queasley's QRM Quasher Powder. This comes complete with a magical map of the world. Simply sprinkle a few pinches on the country whose callers you wish to temporarily eliminate from the pile-up and Queasley's will do the rest.

Normal strength QRM Quasher is effective for up to five countries of your choice, with Italy already included as standard. Special de luxe Queasley's is also available which temporarily eliminates all callers worldwide except for yourself and, of course, the DX station you wish to contact.

On a particularly windy day last November we received the following query from a well-known radio amateur and clearly rather worried CDXC Committee member in Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex: "I am sitting here watching my vertical bend further than

it was designed to do. I wonder if I put some RF up it whether, as RF goes in straight lines, it will straighten it out?" Any expert advice much appreciated.

We have received confirmation from HM Revenue & Customs that a P29 is a form used by them when they require payment in New Guineas.

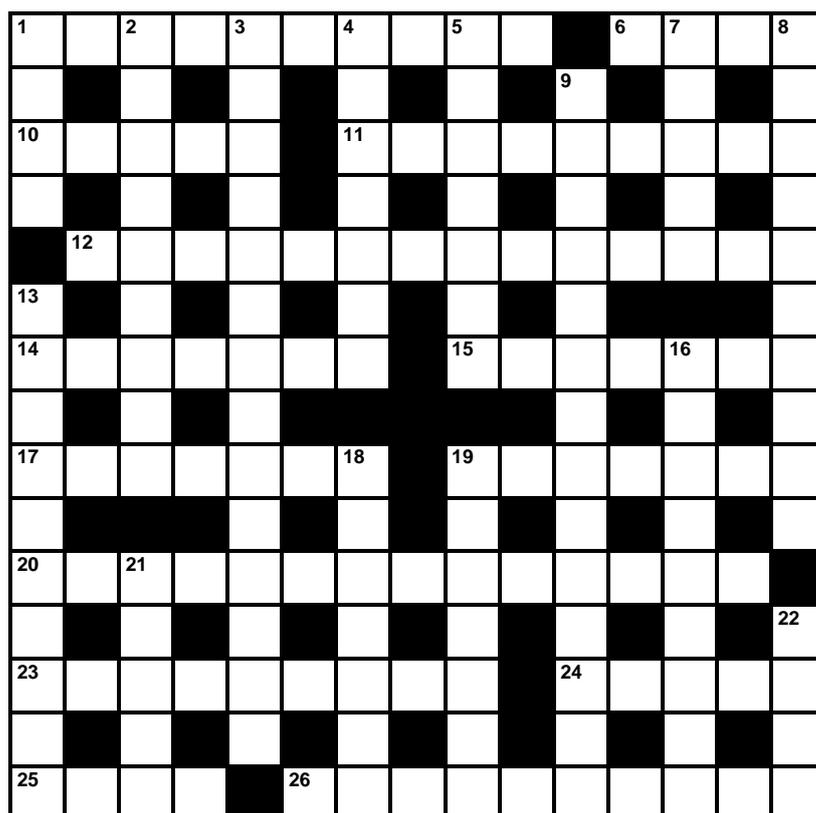
An exciting new amateur radio awards programme has been announced, Supermarkets and Catering Retailers on the Air (SCROTA). And it's so easy to start from scratch. Points are awarded according to the retail outlet contacted, for example Aldi or Lidl: 1 point; Asda or Morrisons: 2 points; Tesco: 3 points; Sainsbury's: 4 points; Waitrose: 5 points; Fortnum & Mason's: 20 points. Not for the faint-hearted, that last one in particular. As one keen activist commented, "You have to have balls to take part in SCROTA."

G3SXW would like it to be known that he has nothing at all to do with the company which provides mainline train services out of London Paddington, First Great Western.

### Solution to Prize Crossword 37

F	A	M	O	U	S		T	H	I	N	K	I	N	G	
L		U		P		D		A		O		R		U	
O	B	S	E	S	S	I	O	N		S	T	O	U	T	
R		E				C		D		E		N		T	
E	S	S	E	N	T	I	A	L	L	L		H	O	E	
N				I		E		E		P		O		R	
C	L	A	N	G	E	R		S	T	A	I	R	S		
E		N		H						R		S		F	
	S	C	O	T	T	Y		I	N	K	W	E	L	L	
H		E		I		A		N		E				E	
A	S	S		N	O	N	S	T	A	R	T	E	R	S	
G		T		G		G		R				X		H	
G	A	R	D	A		T	O	O	D	L	E	P	I	P	
I		A		L		Z		S		O		E		O	
S	O	L	D	E	R	E	D			T	O	I	L	E	T

## Digest Prize Crossword 38 *by RFX*



The winner of Prize Crossword 37, November 2009: Roger Parsons, VE3ZI, Sudbury, Ontario (via e-mail).

### ACROSS

- 1 Crazy reason to produce an engine (10)
- 6 Fine mineral seen in metal cases (4)
- 10 Course providing connections to other websites (5)
- 11 Ghana ruin distressed European (9)
- 12 Actor producing reportedly odourless, Swampy-style paintings? (8,6)
- 14 Weapon provided by silent film star finishes off blotto Thespian (7)
- 15 Most enthusiastic Kent see in need of reform (7)
- 17 Lose confidence again in temporary defence work (7)
- 19 Somehow it's felt to be socialist (7)
- 20 Punters may entertain in grand style (4,3,4,3)
- 23 Intermediate numbers of watercraft? (9)
- 24 Perfect clue seen at rear of chapel (5)
- 25 Sport which doesn't amount to anything (4)
- 26 Likely to get shot? (10)

### DOWN

- 1 Opera ladies heard twice? (4)
- 2 Acted like William and played with chestnuts, we hear (9)
- 3 Music making on a very large scale? (4,10)
- 4 Capital in which male artist visits PM's house (7)
- 5 Artist making strange candy in Australia (3,4)
- 7 Group no longer drinking welcomes Russian fighter's Spanish girlfriend (5)
- 8 Set up unusual ITU contest (10)
- 9 Type of mount preferred by the Light Brigade? (7,7)
- 13 Those who treat the criminals? (10)
- 16 A nice, pure stew for an expert on food (9)
- 18 Estuary featured in Matthew as holy (3,4)
- 19 Regards from John on climbing mission! (5,2)
- 21 Extremely savage tramp producing fatty secretion (5)
- 22 Endlessly obstruct the political alliance (4)

Deadline for entries: 20 February
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# DX and Events Calendar

Compiled by G3XTT

(thanks to the 425 DX News for most of this)

till 28/01/10	ST26ASC: special callsign
till 31/01/10	IY2M: special event callsign
till 31/01/10	OR4TN: Antarctic base "Princess Elisabeth"
till 31/01/10	VG7W: special callsign
till 10/02/10	EA8/ON5JV and EA8/ON6AK: Tenerife Island (AF-004)
till 20/02/10	KC4USV: McMurdo Station, Ross Island (AN-011)
till March 2010	FG/F6AUS and TO4D: Guadeloupe (NA-102)
till March 2010	VP6AL: Pitcairn Island (OC-044)
till April 2010	T6AG: Afghanistan
till May 2010	VK9WBM: Willis Island (OC-007)
till 30/06/10	GB50ATG: special event callsign
till 12/07/10	ZS10WCS: special callsign
till 31/01/11	DT8A: King Sejong Base, South Shetlands (AN-010)
till March 2011	AT10BP: Maitri Base, Antarctica
05/01-26/01/10	P40C or P40CG: Aruba (SA-036)
08/01-12/02/10	J8/K2CM: Bequia Island (NA-025)
10/01-25/01/10	XR9JA: South Shetlands (AN-010)
19/01-02/02/10	CE0Z/JA8BMK: Juan Fernandez (SA-005)
20/01-15/02/10	JD1BMM: Minami Torishima (OC-073)
21/01-28/01/10	YJ0MM: Vanuatu (OC-035)
21/01-29/01/10	VP8DMN: Falkland Islands (SA-002)
26/01-09/02/10	6W/GM4FDM and 6W/PA3EWP: Senegal
01/02-31/03/10	VG7G: special callsign
05/02-07/02/10	VI2BI: Broughton Island (OC-212)
06/02-19/02/10	H40FN: Reef Islands (OC-065), Temotu
10/02-21/02/10	5Z0H: Kenya (AF-067 and AF-040)
17/02-10/03/10	ZK3 by N7OU and W7YAQ
20/02-27/02/10	VK9X/G6AY: Christmas Island (OC-002)
21/02-25/02/10	S21DX: St Martin's Island (AS-127)
22/02-03/03/10	V88/DL7JAN
28/02-13/03/10	VP2MPR: Montserrat (NA-103)
02/03-11/03/10	J68JA: St. Lucia (NA-108)
05/03-24/03/10	C56KR: The Gambia
06/03-11/03/10	VP2MPL: Montserrat (NA-103)
11/03-25/03/10	J38CW and J38SW by G3VCQ & M3VCQ
12/03-23/03/10	ZL4TY and ZL4M: Stewart Island (OC-203)
16/03-23/03/10	CE0 (Juan Fernandez) by LA9SN

26/03-31/02/10 VY0V: East Pen Island (NA-231)  
03/04-11/04/10 YI9PSE: Iraq  
  
10/04-18/04/10 3W6C: Con Co Island (AS-185)  
18/06-21/06/10 MS0INT: Flannan Isles (EU-118)  
30/09-03/10/10 ZK3: Tokelau (OC-048)  
05/10-10/10/10 T31: Central Kiribati (OC-043)  
12/10-14/10/10 FW: Wallis Island (OC-054)

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## CDXC Clothing

We are able to offer a range of high quality CDXC clothing through suppliers Aquarian. All items are available in a choice of colours containing an embroidered CDXC logo and your callsign, also embroidered, with a red 'CDXC' and the remainder of the logo text in gold. Your callsign will be in red.

Please order direct from AQUARIAN. Prices include your callsign (except ties, which do not carry a callsign). Additional lines of text may be added at extra cost. Please note that postage charges listed are to UK addresses. Please contact Aquarian direct for postage charges to other countries.

ITEM		SIZE	PRICE
<b>Sweatshirt</b>	Polycotton raglan sleeve	S, M, L, XL	£21.00
		XXL, 3XL, 4XL	£22.00
<b>Children's sweatshirts</b>	Polycotton raglan sleeve	3, 5, 7, 9, 11 years	£16.00
<b>Rugby shirts FR1</b>	100% cotton	S, M, L	£25.00
		XL, XXL	£26.00
		3XL	£28.00
<b>Rugby shirts FR2</b>	Quartered 100% cotton	S, M, L	£29.00
		XL, XXL	£31.00
<b>Polo shirts</b>	100% cotton	S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL	£19.00
<b>Polo shirts</b>	Polycotton	S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL, 4XL, 5XL	£18.50
<b>Children's polo shirt</b>		3, 5, 7, 9, 11 years	£15.00
<b>T-shirts</b>	Heavyweight 100% cotton	S, M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL, 4XL	£16.00
<b>V-neck pullover</b>	Lambswool	36" to 50"	£31.00
<b>V-neck pullover</b>	50% wool / 50% acrylic	36" to 48"	£28.50
<b>Crew neck pullover</b>	Lambswool	36" to 50"	£31.00
<b>Fleece jacket</b>		XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL	£28.00
<b>Children's fleece jacket</b>		3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 years	£23.00
<b>Tie</b>			£14.25

Colours available: navy, black, royal, bottle green. Rugby shirts FR2 in navy/sky or navy/grey.

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ITEM(S)	QUANTITY	SIZE	COLOUR	PRICE
<b>Additional text @ £3.00 per line</b>				
<b>Sub-Total</b>				
<b>P &amp; P: £1.75 for first<sup>t</sup> item, £1.50 additional items to a maximum of £10, £1 children's items, £3.00 fleece jackets</b>				
<b>Callsign</b>				<b>Total</b>
<b>Name/Address</b>				

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