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CDXC Reflector: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CDXC/>

Club News and Views

Editorial

Martyn Phillips, G3RFX

Very reluctantly I had to give the HF Convention a miss this year. Sorry if this sounds rather like 80m SSB on a Sunday morning, but a small problem ‘down under’ saw me soliciting the advice of the medical profession, as a result of which I was treated to a couple of days in our local Bupa hotel, from where I emerged the day before the start of the HFC. Yes, with all my important bits still very much intact – so far from willy-nilly (as it were...) if that’s what you’re thinking. There again I’d also been advised that three hours each way, cooped up in the car to Wyboston and back with a seatbelt cutting inexorably into the northern outskirts of ‘down under’, might not be a good idea. Which brings us full circle.

I gather I missed a really good one too, with this year’s HF Convention described by almost everybody as a resounding success. Although I gather there was a bit of a beef about the beef at the DX Dinner on the Saturday evening. Feedback here from some to the effect that the beef was a little on the tough side. In fact I was privileged to receive a preview of the possible menu for that particular evening... according to which it surely should have been the pâté and not the beef which was a little on the ‘ard or tough side. Yes, ‘Ardness Pate’, it said (I think they meant Ardennes Pate, as in Belgium...). Also, to me ‘Ardness’ sounds like somewhere in Scotland.

I was also interested to read some of the comments on this year’s post-HFC feedback form as regards facilities for the disabled. Far be it from me to comment further on these, except to say that – if I’m honest - up to now I’ve rarely given disability issues

any serious thought. However, my recent experiences on the medical front, no matter how trivial, completely changed my awareness of these. For a week or so I had to wear a catheter – and at one point had to briefly resort to a wheelchair. OK, so no big deal: there are people who have to put up with things which are far, far worse - some of them permanently. But even a catheter and its associated ‘reservoirs’ can seriously cramp yer style. Either way, I now have a much better idea of what it can be like to negotiate airports and hotels etc. which have little or nothing in the way of adequate facilities for the disabled. A lot more ought to be done.

Anyway, here we are: the November 2008 CDXC *Digest*, all 40 pages of it. So a fair bit shorter than most of late. But then I can only print what I get. This applies not only to articles as such, but also to any website URLs which an author decides to include. I seem to remember there was a posting about this recently on the CDXC Reflector in connection with an incorrect URL in a *Digest* article. In other words it didn’t work. These things happen. Can I simply suggest that in such cases you simply contact the respective author direct? Unfortunately I don’t have the time to go round checking up on all these URLs myself.

Which is more than enough from me. As always, here’s wishing you all a very Merry Christmas – and go easy on the seemingly inevitable Christmas pud and turkey leftovers. I also wish you a very healthy and prosperous New Year

Martyn, G3RFX

Chairman's Chat

John Butcher, G3LAS

In case anyone is worried about the minor problem with my SteppIR which I mentioned in the last issue I've discovered that it's quite normal to have a slightly high SWR on 30m. It seems that the linear loading caused by folding the driven element causes the impedance, when transformed by the balun, to be somewhat lower than 50 Ohms. For some reason this doesn't happen on 40m. Anyway, it's going well and I'm very pleased with the new beam.

The Desecheo expedition still seems to be a live possibility. Sadly I may well miss it as I will be away from mid-January to the beginning of March. Oh well, maybe it will be such a success that others will go before long. Propagation-wise it shouldn't be a problem, so good luck to all CDXC members

VK9DWX on Willis Island has been a great success. Up to the time of writing, I've managed ten band-slots, which is good. Their signals have been very strong at times, even on 80 and 160m. As I write they are pounding in on 12m. It all goes to show that a determined and capable group of operators can beat the solar miseries, given a good beach location, the right aerials and excellent operating skills. It is good to know that they have also been innovatory in taking with them a couple of inexperienced operators to learn the ropes. That must be a great experience for them and good for the future of the hobby.

Speaking of successes, another recent event was the HF Convention at Wyboston. By all accounts it was considered even better than last year. Certainly from the CDXC perspective it was very pleasing. No less than 101 members 'signed in' on the stand and there were more who didn't get round to it. Crucially we enrolled 14 new members –

welcome to them. The Convention was flooded with the conspicuous new CDXC badges – altogether very satisfying.

In chatting to people at Wyboston, a frequently aired topic was that of the plethora of software aids to operating, particularly CW Skimmer and the like. As you know such programs and sometimes even the Cluster are either banned from use in contests or made the definition of a separate 'assisted' category. All this is, of course, part of the quest for the mythical 'level playing field'.

It seems a bit strange to me that so much fuss should be made about aids which are within the reach of almost all contestants. If they are such a threat, shouldn't we ban operation from Southern Europe, small islands and 12-storey apartment blocks? Perhaps operators should declare their annual income (including pensions) so that the less well-off can benefit from some kind of handicapping system.

I suspect that many of the objections to CW Skimmer and the like are based on the belief that CW operating is one of the few 'pure' skills left in amateur radio and contest entrants need to display their 'unassisted' mastery of the art of copying such signals.

There are of course, many exclusive groups of CW practitioners (FOC, FISTS etc.) but I don't think I've heard of one dedicated to excellence in the (equally esoteric) modes of SSB or RTTY. Let's at least admit that the level playing field is a myth, with the possible exception of the WRTC, where strenuous efforts are made to see that all competitors start from the same baseline with respect to location, aerials etc.

It seems a bit early to be wishing anyone a Happy Christmas, but this is the last *Digest*

before December, so let's hope the New Year brings prosperity and happiness to us all.

73 es gud DX

John, G3LAS

President's Patter

Neville Cheadle, G3NUG

I thoroughly enjoyed the RSGB HF Convention earlier this month. The programme was excellent and everyone I spoke to seemed to have a good time. However, the Saturday dinner with around 220 present was disappointing. The steak was tough – not the best choice for mass production. The Wyboston Centre is nonetheless an ideal location with plenty of space for socialising. The lecture rooms were overcrowded at times, but it's easy enough to run repeats for the most popular presentations. It was good to see Jim, VK9NS, at Wyboston celebrating his 80th birthday.

From the CDXC point of view this year's HFC was very successful. We signed up 14 new members – welcome to them all - and we sold 39 badges – these are proving to be very popular. 101 members signed in at the CDXC stand representing nine DXCC countries; I am sure that there were at least another 20 CDXC members there. If that's the case, then well over half those present were CDXC members, but that means there's still quite a few HFers who have yet to sign up.

Trish and I are off to SEANET in Sabah, East Malaysia, in mid-November. This seems like a fun gathering with plenty of tours. SEANET is more of a social event than many conventions and is very well attended by wives and partners. At the last count there will be five CDXC members present: Steve, 9M6DXX; Kazu, JA1RJU; Taizo, JA3AER; Bob, MDØCCE - and Yours Truly. Various IOTA DXpeditions are being arranged after the Convention.

After SEANET we are holidaying in both East and West Malaysia so that we can escape the dreadful weather in the UK.

We are continuing with our recruitment drive. We wrote to 707 potential members recently; 64 members have since joined (excluding the Wyboston recruits.) We are following up with a further mailing to 654 potential members very shortly. I am told by some marketing experts that the response rate to our mailshots is pretty good.

I was delighted to learn recently that I have been made an Honorary Member of the Southern California DX Club. SCDXC took the lead role in organising the Visalia Convention this year and did an outstanding job. A letter from Sharon Spring, K6IRD, the President of SCDXC, is published elsewhere in this *Digest*. It is a very thoughtful letter. I was delighted that Arnie, N6HC, proposed me to the SCDXC Board. Arnie is a CDXC member and a member of the 3B7C team. On my way to Visalia I stayed with Wes, W3WL - another CDXC member - in Roswell, GA. I gave a presentation to the Southeastern DX Club and was given Honorary Membership of the SEDXC. Again I was delighted to receive this and thank Wes for his support. Although these are personal awards, the real credit must go to the members of the FSDXA teams who DXpedition with us. Virtually all are CDXC members.

My antenna project at Lower Withers Barns goes well. The masts are both up – restringing each of them was a particular challenge since they each have five sections.

All the cabling is in – drilling the 14 inch wall of one of our stone barns was another challenge. The C31XR is built (all the U bolts had corroded and have been replaced with high-grade stainless steel bolts) and I am now awaiting the end of the harvest when my local farmer friend will be moving the antenna to the site of the masts. I've decided to guy the masts, even though they will only be only at 20m. Phillystran guys will be used with wire pullers at the guy stakes, so facilitating easy release of the guys should the mast need to be lowered quickly. Six two-metre stakes are being made at the moment and will be hammered in using a fence pole driver on the back of a tractor. It's great to have such good neighbours.

Our next *Digest* will be published in early January 2009, so I would like to wish all members Season's Greetings. Have a great time over the Christmas holiday.

That's it for the moment – our next get-together is the CDXC Annual Dinner at Wyboston on Saturday, 21 March. See you there.

73

New Members

CDXC offers a warm welcome to the following new members:

Call	Name	Location
2EØTJU	Evan Duffield	London
AA7A	Ned Stearns	Scottsdale
E14GXB	Ger McNamara	Clonlara
E15IQ	Dermot Wall	Dublin
GØFWX	Gary Clarke	Saffron Walden
G3UGF	Richard Constantine	Halifax
G4DJJ	Chris Callicott	Skipton
G7NBU	Keith Bassett	Exeter
G8FMJ	John Slater	Lancing
G8OSN	Brian Reay	Gillingham
HA5IA	Sándor Donáth	Surbiton
K9AJ	Mike McGirr	Crete
MØSFG	Stephe Glew	Littlehampton
MØVAA	Gerry McGowan	Stockport
M1KTA	Dom Baines	Cambridge
M3ENF	Tammie Evans	Eastbourne
MIØKPA	Stephen Frazer	Armagh
N9BX	Bruce Osterburg	Spring Grove
OH3RM	Markus Ilvonen	Kangasala

In Committee

Chris Duckling, G3SVL

Those of you who were at the AGM, or who read the AGM minutes (you all have, haven't you?), will recall that I proposed a short piece after each CDXC Committee meeting to share discussions and decisions from that meeting. I realise *Digest* space is at a premium, but let's try it for a while and then see if it is worthy of regular inclusion.

The CDXC Committee usually meets four times a year plus at the AGM. We have standing agenda items that cover finance, membership, DXpedition sponsorship, marketing, website and reflector and, of course, a review of actions from previous meetings. We meet at a weekend in each others' houses. Meetings generally last from two to three hours and are followed by lunch provided by the host.

The most recent meeting was held on 31 August 2008 at the QTH of our Editor, Martyn, G3RFX. This being the first meeting of the new subscription year, the finance and membership items concentrated on renewals - or more specifically, non-renewals; we always want to know why a member hasn't renewed. DXpedition funding is usually dealt with outside of meetings by telephone and e-mail, which allows us to be more responsive to applicants, but we formally confirm the donations in Committee. You will note that we are improving the webpage that shows our sponsorship activities and we agreed a process of ensuring that those who do receive CDXC sponsorship abide by our conditions - one of which is to submit an article to the *Digest*.

Membership has risen, as is reported elsewhere, and the CDXC brand will continue to be marketed by mail-outs and via the Club stand at both the HF Convention and the Castle Donington Rally (Friday only). Following input from Bren,

G4DYO, we reviewed putting members' information on the members-only pages of the website. We had some excellent input from Gary, ZL2IFB, on data protection issues and after discussion it was agreed that we would put name and callsign (only) on our website. We also agreed to put up a page describing the origins of the Club and listing the founder members of CDXC.

Michael, G7VJR, reported back on 'reflector' versus 'forums' and we concluded that we would stay with the existing reflector. Chris, G3SVL, had reviewed the Constitution as regards AGM voting (see AGM minutes) and it was agreed that no changes were needed. Chris also reported that the membership packs have been completely reworked and were now being issued to all new members.

So there it is - not as exciting as a DXpedition report, but Committee work was ever thus!

73 Chris, G3SVL Secretary CDXC



CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

DX an' all that

Don Field, G3XTT *don@g3xtt.com*

I usually collect stuff between issues so that by the time I come to write a new column I have some material available. To my astonishment, this time my file is empty. Maybe there haven't been any controversies of late.

It was, of course, a great pleasure to meet many CDXC members at the HF Convention. In my view this year's was one of the best ever and hopefully will continue to go from strength to strength. The organisers strive to get away from the 'elite' image that tends to surround it – I hope those newer members who, maybe, were there for the first time enjoyed the presentations, the camaraderie and the general ambience.

As I write this, VK9DWX (Willis Island) is still in full flow with about 40K QSOs in the log. This seems a relatively low number, given that they appear to have been all over the bands, but maybe their efforts on the 'edge' openings have kept the rates down. It has to be said that the efforts of the jammers have kept the rates down from what they could have been, too – this expedition seems to have attracted more than its fair share and I'm not entirely sure why. The good news is that, at times, their signal has been so strong that the jammers have been irrelevant. As I write this, UK stations are in the log on 160 through 15m.

The ARRL, among others, has now endorsed the excellent set of operating guidelines produced originally by ON4WW and ON4UN and translated into English with help from our own G3PJT. As I understand it, this operating advice is part of the syllabus of the Belgian licence and might well be picked up elsewhere for the same purpose. There is certainly a problem that there is a dearth of good operating

advice that goes beyond what is in the basic licence material, although I have a feeling that many of the offenders during DX pile-ups are old hands rather than new licensees. As I have probably commented before, the urgency to work a DXpedition increases by the reciprocal of the number of sunspot cycles you think you have left (think about it!).

As for whether the next sunspot cycle will even be worth having, I think the jury is still out, though there are recent signs that we may be getting a run of sunspots rather than the occasional one that has appeared, only to disappear again without trace, over the last 18 months or so.

My comments in the last issue about whether a new all-singing, all-dancing radio will actually contribute to an increased DXCC score have brought several responses, all in agreement that there are more important considerations in the shack than the transceiver. That said, I have recently been comparing an FT-950 alongside my FT-1000 MkV and I realise that the actual features of the radio do have some bearing on ease of operation. The FT-950 is an awful lot of radio for the money but, chasing VK9DWX, I found that I much preferred the FT-1000, simply for the ability to listen simultaneously to the DX station and to the pile-up, making it far easier to follow the listening pattern and find the best spot to call. Those who have rigs with a spectrum display probably find this handy too in spotting activity on the higher bands. So there are clearly some features that have particular value to the Dixer, although I find that personally I have yet to investigate about 99% of the menu options on my FT-1000 and, on our FSDXA expeditions, we have discouraged team members from adjusting any of them, as it can be very

confusing to whoever sits down next at that particular radio. It would be interesting to hear from readers as to which features they value most in the DX chase.

Where is everyone?

I recently received an e-mail from one of my *RadCom* readers, a VK3 (*RadCom* certainly travels). He was commenting that, while trying to work VK9DWX on 12m RTTY (yes, really), he could hear a wall of JA stations calling the VK9. So he went down the band and called CQ JA for a full 15 minutes with not a single taker. His point is obviously that DX paths are often open, but no-one bothers to be QRV unless there is a DX station to be worked (or maybe a contest in full swing). A pity. HF operation isn't all about DX chasing. Or is it? Maybe nowadays folk don't have time for a 'regular' QSO. Groups like FOC try to encourage what might be described as 'old-fashioned ragchewing', but the majority seem intent on watching the Cluster while they type out e-mails. I sympathise, as I tend to be one of them, but maybe we should make the effort from time to time.

Desecheo

K4UEE and others are busy planning a Desecheo operation, now that the green light has been given by the relevant US authorities. Hopefully this one will take place in January. I was amused that the first reaction of some members on the CDXC reflector was "Does this mean we will see Navassa activated soon?" You have to love DXers – they are never satisfied!

DXCC

It was interesting to chat with Bill Moore, NC1L, of the DXCC at the HF Convention - and the following day when Roger, G3KMA, and I met him for lunch. Bill's presentation at HFC, if you didn't see it, covered a number of aspects of DXCC and LoTW. One of the major changes to the software will be to link the two systems

(DXCC and LoTW) which are currently separate. Putting them on to a common database will make it much easier to keep track of the progress of your DXCC applications and updates and will simplify the handling of 'mixed' applications (ie ones which include both LoTW credits and paper QSLs).

In conversation, Bill confirmed that ARRL do investigate suspicious DXCC claims and scores and have, where appropriate, taken action to reduce scores or disqualify participants from the DXCC programme for a period of time. We also talked about matters such as the criteria for requesting documentation from expeditions (licence, landing permits etc.) with a view to trying to bring DXCC and IOTA more closely into line.

Mind you, the best thing about having lunch with Bill was that after I dropped him back at his hotel near Heathrow he entered my DXCC update (cards checked at HFC) on to the DXCC database and e-mailed me the PDF files with my new totals etc. Now that's what I call service!

Finally, to while away the time until the next DXpedition comes along, here are a few prefix questions, given that (see my November *RadCom* column) some DXers seem to have a very limited knowledge of prefix allocations. No prizes, answers on page 37. The old hands should find it trivial, newer members may well struggle a little.

1. What country had used the prefix PX prior to Brazil?
2. Nigel, G3TXF, operated earlier this year as VQ5XF. In the past, rather than Turks and Caicos, what would his location have been, to be using that prefix?
3. What are the current prefixes that replace VS6 and VR6?

4. What prefix was used by Tokelau prior to ZK3?
5. If a station signs /LH, what does this signify?
6. What two prefixes (for two DXCC counters!) were previously valid from Canton Island?
7. The unofficial prefix 1S is commonly associated with Spratly. But where has the, equally unofficial, prefix S1 been used from?
8. ZS3 and ZS9 are now used for regions of South Africa. Where were they used from previously (and, as a bonus, which CDXC member was one of the two operators to conduct the very last operation from the now-deleted ZS9)?
9. What was the pre-independence prefix for Fiji (3D2) and where is that prefix now used?
10. 4W is currently used from East Timor. Which country previously used this prefix?

Questions 3, 6, 8 and 9 have multi-part answers, so you could have up to 15 points in total. Actually, take a look on the ARRL web page - or at your DXCC print-out from ARRL - at the list of deleted entities and you will find some fascinating prefixes of yore!

Apropos of which, one of the most fascinating books I have ever come across was N6AW's biography of the late Don Wallace, W6AM ('Don C. Wallace, W6AM, Amateur Radio's Pioneer'). It is beautifully produced, with lots of colour photographs, and evokes a vivid picture of those early days of the hobby and the DX chase. What I hadn't realised, until someone pointed it out recently on the CDXC reflector, is that the book is still available via the ARRL website at a very reasonable

price. I had passed on my original (signed) copy to a friend in South Africa, so have taken advantage and bought a replacement one.

As a final, final, I see this is column number 30 which, at six issues a year, means I have been writing it for 5 years. As a general rule I try to duck out of voluntary activities after this time (usually taking on something else instead!) to avoid staleness creeping in. So if there are any willing volunteers out there, ready to take over this spot in the *Digest*, please do feel free to step forward by way of a phone call or e-mail to Martyn or myself. By the time you read this, CQ WW Phone will have come and gone and maybe you will have caught a few nice ones. Then CQ WW CW beckons and I will be off to 3X with the Voodoo contest group. Hopefully I will see many of you in the pile-ups (and, with a bit of luck, even manage to put you in the log).

73 Don G3XTT

YL-only operation to VP8

A YL-only operation on 80m through to 10m will take place from the Falkland Islands between 17-31 January 2009. The YLs will have individual call signs in the series VP8YLA, VP8YLB etc. VP8YLC is reserved for the Young Ladies Club in the Falklands and will be activated by local YLs.

We originally had 14 operators, but a few have pulled out for various reasons, so there are a couple of spaces, if any other YLs would like to take part. We must stress that travel in January gets booked up very quickly, so anyone else intending to come must contact us and make arrangements as soon as possible. There is a website at

www.radioclubs.net/aa_vp8yl/

and information will be updated on there from time to time.

Nicky, M5YLO

Borneo Bulletin

Steve Telenius-Lowe, 9M6DXX

teleniuslowe@gmail.com

I am writing this a couple of days before taking the short flight from Kota Kinabalu to Miri in Sarawak for the CQ World Wide DX phone contest on 25-26 October. I will be active again as 9M8Z, Single-Operator All-Band. Yagi, 9M8YY, will also be active in the contest, but probably doing single-band 20m from another QTH just a couple of kilometres away. I look forward to working as many CDXC members as possible - please give me a call if you hear me on. Tim, MØURX, is the QSL manager and we have some nice double-sided colour cards to send out.

Although competition is a lot fiercer in Europe or North America, I was nevertheless pleased recently to receive the certificate for Number 1 station in Oceania for my SOAB (Assisted) entry in CQ WW last year. Then I operated as V8FEO from Brunei, and put in what I thought was a fairly modest entry. (I suspect there may well have been some *non-Assisted* entries with much higher scores!)

Meanwhile, at my home QTH near Kota Kinabalu, I continue to be plagued with a local power-line noise problem which affects 20m worst of all. It drops occasionally, sometimes after heavy rain, but is generally S9+10dB, making it almost impossible to work anything except the strongest of signals. As a result the 9L1X DXpedition, for example, has remained completely unheard here.

VK9DWX on Willis Island, however, has had exceptionally strong signals on most bands and is in my log on 15, 17, 20, 40 and 80m, all without too much difficulty. So far I have only heard them at S1 or below on 10m, so that now remains my target. There was one occasion on 15m when the cries of the sea birds behind the operator were S9+20. It was almost like being there in the

tent and brought back memories of operations from similar places.

I must also compliment both T33ZZ and T22ZL for the strength of their signals, especially on the low bands. Both have been S9+ on 80m, much stronger here than VK9DWX despite the greater distances involved (6,000 and 7,000 km respectively compared with under 5,000 km for VK9).

Certainly these four DXpeditions, plus AH8/DL2AH (on rare OC-077) and ZK3AH, have livened up the bands quite a bit after a very fallow period during the northern hemisphere summer months.

World Licensing and Operating Directory

From November last year until September this year a lot of my time has been spent researching, compiling, writing and producing the *World Licensing and Operating Directory*. I am pleased to say that it was published by the RSGB in October and went on sale for the first time at the HF Convention. I wish I could have been there to sign copies, but it was a little too far to travel for the weekend! I am told that the book sold out on the Saturday, so an RSGB staff member fetched a small extra quantity from RSGB HQ, only for that to sell out too. Since I suspect most of the initial purchasers, or certainly those at the HF Convention, are probably also CDXC members I would like to thank you here for buying the book.

For those who do not yet know about the book, it is a guide to getting on the air from over 200 countries and territories around the globe. Researched over a period of nearly one year, and with input from almost 100 contributors, it provides inside information on how to obtain an amateur radio licence in

almost every country in the world. A major section of the book provides full details of renting more than 75 amateur radio stations around the globe - from Europe to the Pacific and from the Arctic to the Equator.

The *World Licensing and Operating Directory* is illustrated with over 230 photographs and maps. It includes a 32-page full-colour section with spectacular photographs of Rental Stations' antennas, including some of the most impressive set-ups in the world.

I'm hoping that this book will appeal equally to hardened contesters or DXers looking for a competitive station to rent and to those who simply want to complement their family holiday with some amateur radio operation from an unusual location.

I am very grateful to those who have bought the book and who have already sent me comments – almost exclusively positive (so far), I am happy to say. I would be pleased to receive updates – particularly from those who have 'inside information' on licensing in obscure countries - which I will keep in a file and use if there is to be a second edition.

Although I compiled and produced the book, it is published, marketed and sold by the RSGB. The cover price is £12.99, but RSGB members get their usual 15% discount, making it £11.04. Much as I would like to, I regret I am unable to persuade the RSGB to offer a further discount to CDXC members!

The easiest way to order it is to go to the RSGB website at www.rsgb.org, click on 'RSGB Shop' and the *World Licensing and Operating Directory* can be found under 'Operating and DX' as well as 'What's New' (for the moment).

I understand that the book has been offered to the ARRL and perhaps other national societies, so I hope it will also be easily available in other countries.

Icom IC-706 MkII DSP

Finally, I have an Icom IC-706 MkII DSP transceiver for sale in the UK. It was advertised in two issues of *RadCom* and although there was some interest shown, the potential purchasers pulled out at the last minute. This rig needs no introduction really, but a few brief words may be of use. The MkII version was a much improved version of the original IC-706 and included higher power on 2m.

My particular model also has the receive DSP board fitted: this was standard on the later IC-706 MkIIG, but not in the original IC-706 or IC-706 MkII. The rig covers 160 – 6m with 100W output plus 2m at 20W out and covers all modes: CW, SSB, FM, AM etc – it even has a wide FM filter on receive, so you can listen to VHF Band II broadcast stations when all the amateur bands are dead!

Due to its small size and weight this rig is absolutely ideal for DXpeditioning. Its receiver may not be *quite* as good as the Elecraft K3s, but then it is a fraction of the price!

It was checked out by Icom (UK) in May this year and given a clean bill of health. It is complete with mic, original DC filtered power cable, mobile mounting bracket (never used), spare fuses (never required) and operator's manual, and is packed in the original box. It was offered at £395 in *RadCom* but I would be prepared to accept £350 from any current CDXC member, plus postage at cost (or collect from central England at your own expense). If you are interested, please contact me via

teleniuslowe@gmail.com

CDXC
CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

VO2A, NA-194 and NA-205

Ken Frankom, G3OCA g3oca1@ntlworld.com

Following our unsuccessful attempt on NA-231, Cezar/VE3LYC and myself/G3OCA began the search for another possible IOTA expedition. We decided on SA-071 and with the help of a friend of Cezar's we gained the permission of the Brazilian Navy to land and operate.

As we were about to publicise our intentions the news of PW2M appeared. We suspect that word had got around of our intentions. Fortunately we had not booked our flights so nothing was lost, although we were rather frustrated.

Another long look around led us to again try to the north, this time the coast of Northern Labrador. After our previous problems in the north we were determined to find a 100% reliable source of help. After many fruitless inquiries Cezar finally located Paul Fenton, a resident of Nain, the most northerly settlement on the coast of Labrador. Paul runs a small exploratory company providing opportunities for travelling north from Nain by land, sea or air to explore the northern wilderness of Labrador.

Many telephone calls and e-mails followed before we finally arrived at a timetable and a cost which seemed reasonable. This area is very expensive to travel in and we had to try very hard to keep costs within reason, which led to reductions in the time which could be spent on each island.

Finally, after months of planning the great day arrived and I left home to fly to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where I would meet Cezar before flying the next day to Goose Bay, Labrador. We were due to stay there one night before continuing to Nain. At least that was the plan. We actually spent the next six days in Goose Bay waiting for the fog to

clear in Nain. The airstrip there has no lights or radar, so unless a visible landing approach is available there can be no flights in or out. This delay dramatically reduced our available time, but we had no alternative but to wait, wait and wait.

At last there was clearance to take off for Nain. The Twin Otter aircraft calls at all the settlements up the coast, some five stops before reaching Nain. Upon landing we had our first face-to-face meeting with Paul, who we had spent so much time talking to and corresponding with. Our first impression was of a heavily bearded, competent man who certainly looked the part and, as it turned out, one who provided all that we could have hoped for from an organisational point of view. His attention to detail gave us a great deal of confidence.

Our first objective was NA-194, the most difficult of the islands, involving as it did a one-hour flight by helicopter. Weight became all important as there would be four adults including the pilot, two guard dogs, tents, generator, fuel, radio gear, four 12V batteries, food and a minimum of personal items like clothes!

We got off the ground safely with this load and flew north over a bare rocky landscape sprinkled with a multitude of lakes large and small. After a few minutes the last of the trees and bushes disappeared, leaving a land bare of vegetation except for ground cover plants clinging to the sparse areas of soil left in cracks between the rocks. There was even a small iceberg in the sea left over from the previous winter when the sea ice had been up to 12 ft thick. Finger Hill Island has a very easily identifiable outline: the island is dominated by a vertical cliff face some 400 ft high facing south. We landed on a large plateau, the uppermost of a series of such

areas lying between the sheer cliff face and the sea. There were no smooth areas as such, just places where there were fewer rocks and boulders. Under a clear blue sky we rapidly unloaded the helicopter and planned the locations of the operating tents and the main stores area. Paul soon had the tents up and the assembly of the antennas commenced.

We had two specially built DJ7RJ verticals, one for 20m to 6m and the other 40m to 10m. These consisted of a 30ft fibre glass telescope pole to which was taped the vertical radiator of a ground plane antenna. This had links which could be opened for each band; a similar arrangement was on each of the three radials which also acted as support guys. The antenna was therefore correctly matched for each band without the need for an ATU or traps. To change bands it was simple to drop the pole and open or close the appropriate links. The pole is quite light, so this is an easy one-man job.

The transceivers were unpacked and 12V car batteries attached ready for operation. We intended to use two separate stations spaced some 30 yds apart, so that each station would have its own sleeping area in addition to the operating position. A quick cup of coffee and an energy bar and we were set to go. My old reliable TS-50 came to life and a first CQ put out from VO2A on 20m. Meanwhile Cezar had his new IC-7000 ready to go. As we live some 300 miles apart, we had not had the chance to test the two rigs in close proximity. The TS-50 could not be heard by Cezar on his IC-7000, but the moment the IC-7000 transmitted on 40 or 30m I could hear him at S9+10db the whole way across 20m.

We had a serious problem which could not have been checked prior to the expedition. The only solution was to just run one station at a time and alternate the operating as propagation changed. This was not an ideal solution as our QSO count would be reduced, particularly as we had limited time on the islands due to our delayed journey.

I was very surprised to encounter this transceiver problem, as on previous expeditions there have been a variety of transceivers – FT-100, FT-900 and IC-706 - none of which have caused any problems when operated in close proximity. Whether this is a problem with just this particular rig or a more general problem needs to be investigated..

Now we were under way on 20m SSB and were soon filling the pages. It was now quite warm and the sweat kept dropping onto the log sheets. This is supposed to be the far north! Conditions seemed quite good and a wide range of both Stateside and European calls got into the log. After a few hours with darkness coming on we changed over to 40/30m CW and Cezar managed to operate almost right through the night.

I was woken in the small hours to help change the antenna to 30m and to see something I had always wanted to see, the Northern Lights. It was not a particularly spectacular display, but there was a clear view of white light to the north.

Surrounding the camp was a trip wire some 2 ft off the ground. This was alarmed at night as a precaution against bears. The two bear alert dogs were stationed overlooking the camp during the day and remained on guard throughout the night. Cezar had a shock when he suddenly came face to face with an elk. Not sure who was more surprised, Cezar or the elk! We had to carry aerosols at all times to ward off any close encounters with a bear. Paul had his shot gun slung on his back wherever he was, as you might not get a second chance, even though the gun might only be feet away.

The QSO score mounted steadily and we were doing the best we could with one station and variable propagation. The sky was cloudless and so quiet - it was like another world away from all the bustle of modern living. We did, however, bring our own noise with a never-ending supply of callers.

After the first full day of operation we continued with 20m. There seemed little propagation on the higher bands and we had a steady supply of contacts, again the US and EU. We kept the logs busy. The weather was excellent, clear blue sky, warm sunshine and the opportunity to survey our amazing location. Behind us towered the vast rock wall, in front of us the rocks fell away in a series of ledges down to the sea shore. There was a small lake between us and the cliff and we got our water supply from there.

Food was boiled in a bag - breakfast and dinner with an assortment of energy bars and hot drinks added. It keeps you going, even if not quite up to gourmet standard. We played with the dogs, who were very friendly, and chatted to Paul. We each have some down time with only one station running.

There was another night of operation by Cezar, who continued till the small hours again on 30/40m. Daybreak found Cezar asleep and a change in the weather. There were what are often called Mare's Tails clouds streaming across the sky from the east. Paul said this was a sign of bad weather moving in from the Atlantic and he contacted the weather bureau with his satellite phone, the only means of communication which works in the area. He was told that a strong front was coming in from the east. He contacted the helicopter pilot and asked him to come to collect us later that day as there were doubts that he could make the flight if the weather closed down over the mountains.

We started clearing one station while Cezar continued to operate. We were partly clear when we heard the unmistakable sound of the helicopter approaching. As quickly as we could we finish packing and loaded the helicopter with everything so that we left no trace of our visit. We took off having spent just two nights on the island instead of our planned four and sadly ended our operation on NA-194.

An uneventful flight back to Nain was followed by a pleasant night's stay at a B & B located next to Paul's home.

The next morning we transported all our gear, no weight limit this time, down to the harbour and loaded it into a small 15ft open boat piloted by a great bear of a man who looks as if he could cope with anything, bears included. The trip to Paul Island lasted some twenty minutes and we managed to land dry-shod on the stony beach. There was more to unload this time, and we were faced with a totally different situation. The island was heavily wooded. There was a clear area some 30 yards wide between the trees and the sea shore.

We would be able to operate very close to the sea. However, this area had many large boulders between which deep gullies ran, hidden in thick vegetation, making it very dangerous to cross. We were immediately assailed by thousands of mosquitoes and even worse the small black biting fly. They appeared as a thin black mist in front of our eyes. Even though we had our bug suits on, (mesh jacket with hood) they soon found ways in and made life a continual battle which would eventually result in only one winner, not us! The liberal use of Dettol did offer some protection.

We chose just a single operating site near the sea and erected the antenna. Changing bands in the dark would be too dangerous, as a fall could easily result in a broken leg. We connected the TS-50, but after two QSOs the rig failed completely.

On our return I sent the rig for repair: the fault was in the tiny back-up battery for the CPU, which has died of old age. Changing over to the IC-7000, we were soon operational on NA-205. We spent several hours on 20m and the QSOs soon piled up in the log.

Due to our late arrival in Nain and the ongoing weather problem in the area, we were anxious to ensure that we could

connect with out homeward flights to Goose Bay and Halifax. We had already arranged for my wife to change my flight date by two days at a cost of £170, so we had arranged for the boat man to check each day if there would be a flight from Goose Bay to Nain and that it had actually taken off.

Again we did some more operating on 30/40m during the night - and the following morning we learned that the flight was on its way and I decided to leave the island after only one day, in order to make sure of catching my homeward flight. Cezar, who had more flexibility in his travel arrangements, decided to stay on for one extra day, so the planned three-day operation from NA-205 ended after only two days .

The whole expedition was beset by weather problems, which is one of the main factors making operation difficult and uncertain in the far north.

It is also a very expensive area to travel in and it is all too easy to find that having

spent a considerable amount of time and money you can end up with a result which is far from what you had hoped for.

We made a total of some 3500 QSOs from both islands and gave many IOTA chasers a new one - not as many as we would have liked, but in the difficult circumstances we did our best.

I would like to thank all our sponsors for their generous support and also the individual operators who were kind enough to send a donation.

Sponsors: IREF, Icom Canada, CDXC, GMDX, GDXF, Clipperton DX Club, Mediterranean DX club

Many thanks to all those operators who worked the expedition. Maybe contact you during the next one.

73 Ken, G3OCA

3X5A

The VooDoo Contest Group will enter the CQ World Wide CW contest on 29-30 November from Conakry, Guinea, as 3X5A in the multi-multi category. This will be the group's 15th straight year in multi-multi from West Africa and our 20th straight year participating in CQ WW CW.

In the 2007 contest 3X5A won this category, first place world, our 6th outright win. This will be our second visit to 3X5A. We will have our usual 8-9 British and American operators, 7 1KW stations and a dozen antennas. We will also be active as 3X5A (no personal callsigns) before the contest, including the WARC bands and maybe some RTTY.

QSL manager: G3SXW, direct (qrz.com) or e-mail to g3sxw@btinternet.com for a bureau reply, or paper QSL via bureau; also LoTW. No QSLing rules: just normal practice.

More information at: <http://voodoocontestgroup.com>.

Stroke Emm across Europe

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August 2008, QRV in six countries within 24 hours. What a hoot! Goodness me: Olof, GØCKV, is such a good guy. Read here why I say that.

It really started on the trip to OJØ, Market Reefm in July. Olof gave me a lift from SM/Stockholm to OHØ/Åland Island and I operated his Stroke Emm station in both those countries. This mobile set-up works so well and is so comfortable. A real pleasure.

Anyway, so then I learned that Olof would be driving back from Sweden to UK and I – bold as brass – asked if I could just tag along. He graciously agreed. So we set up the trip. It turned into a memorable experience. When the plan was solid enough I bought a one-way ticket with British Airways from LHR to Copenhagen-Kastrup/CPH, which is very close to the route that Olof would take, so he would pick me up from the airport. He had already driven a whole day to get from Stockholm to Gothenburg and a ferry across to OZ/Denmark.

QRV Stroke Emm

Now, I have to admit right from the outset that there was a range of motivations for going along on this trip. Doing crazy quick trips is such a lot of fun; I knew that I would enjoy Olof's company enormously; we would see new places; err, but to be thoroughly honest this would be an easy way to score some new points for the DXFC ladder. I had visited all these countries before, but had not operated from them. I am third on the DXFC+QRV table and this would promote me to second, and put me within range of getting to the top. Wow, too good a chance to miss:

1	K4YT	79
2	K5VT	69

3	G3SXW	68
4	G3TXF	64

This trip would add four points, putting me on 72 DXFC+QRV points.

So we hit the road on the late afternoon of 25 August to drive down through OZ/Denmark and into DL/Germany. We would overnight near Bremen, then drive the next day through a small part of PA/Holland, into ON/Belgium, across the border to F/France, then the Calais/Dover ferry to our homes in Surrey.

Olof is a very clever chap and he has installed a state-of-the-art mobile station in his BMW. An IC-706 plus rigs for 2m and 70cms. The rigs are hidden in the boot with just the front panels sitting on a console sticking out of the dashboard. Installed on the back bumper is a Screwdriver HF vertical whip and on the roof-mount are antennas for the two VHF bands.

After chatting for a while and catching up with the news, I took the Bencher paddle and called CQ on 14.023 MHz. The first QSO was with Pat, MØAAC.

APRS and the Clubs

But before we describe the fantastic fun which followed, let us first fill in some more background. Both Olof and I are members of two local clubs, the Echelford ARS (Staines) and the Wey Valley ARG (Guildford). Both clubs are vibrant and fun to share good times with. They take an active interest in the somewhat bizarre travels that both Olof and I (usually separately) take in the name of amateur radio, so we are all closely in touch with each other.

The other major input to this story is APRS. We've probably all heard about this, but might not really understand its function. Those who are familiar, please forgive this brief description. There is a network of repeaters dedicated to APRS all on the same 2m frequency. They accept inputs and then propagate the details on websites. The inputs consist of telemetry such as callsign, precise GPS location, date, time etc. and in the case of moving vehicles they also report the heading and speed. This is all displayed on Google Maps. There are several websites, but see:

www.db0anf.de/hamweb/aprsdb/showdata.php?cfrom=g0ckv-9

for the latest report of Olof's vehicle. He includes a brief text message to indicate 'QRX' or 'QRT' or 'Lunch Break'. When QRV on the HF bands he also indicates the TX frequency. All of this is automatic, no operating needed. Anyone can connect to this website and stay closely in touch with his movements by refreshing the page. As I write this (28 August) I see that Olof is parked up, having lunch beside the River Thames, just across from Shepperton, and tuned to 3.525 MHz. Big Brother is watching you!

OZ >DL

As so often these days, when operating a strange transceiver with a built-in keyer I have to re-learn single-lever keying. I usually squeeze key (iambic) and withOUT dot-dash memory. To operate a keyer which does not permit switching off the dot-dash memory I have to pretend that it is single-lever. In practice this means that a letter C takes four movements instead of two (to insert the dots into the string of dashes). To make this adjustment always takes time and a lot of concentration. It also involves flawed CW, especially in the first few minutes. So, this was the first challenge to overcome. I slowed the keyer to about 18wpm and concentrated hard. When tired or deflected by some event, the CW was full

of errors and I was not proud! Apologies to those who had to tolerate this malfunctioning.

We headed South through Denmark and I operated on 20m for an hour. After Pat, MØAAC, was Geoff, G3JUL, also of the Echelford club. They were lying in wait for us. Then the same with Mike, G3IAF, and Mike, GØEFO, of the Wey Valley club. Pat was also watching APRS and spreading the word on the Echelford calling frequency, 145.350 MHz, so other members would know what was happening. During the next hour I made 13 QSOs signing OZ/G3SXW/M. Great fun!

In the meantime Olof did all the hard work driving the vehicle. He was aided by a little lady's voice from his dashboard telling him where to go (SatNav), but he knew the route well anyway. I also worked Bob, G4HZV, and Mick, G3LIK, as well as some East Europeans. In almost all cases the incoming RST report was better than the outgoing: this mobile set-up really gets out well.

We crossed into Germany and switched to 40m. Again G3JUL, MØAAC and GØEFO were first in the log. They knew our exact location the whole time! We were also tracked by Paul, OZ4UN, with whom Olof had paid a pleasant visit in Northern Denmark before picking me up at CPH. That evening I made 13 more CW QSOs including with such stalwarts as G4IRN, G3RTE, G4BUE and EI6FR. It made a pleasant change from normal 5NN DXpeditioning to actually 'say' something to these pals.

The Second Day

After a pleasant overnight stay at a hotel just off the motorway near Bremen, and a good breakfast, we headed for the Dutch border. There were a further 13 QSOs on 40m, making 26 in total from DL/G3SXW/M, this time including GØKDL, G3IAF, G3GJX and some of the full-time APRS trackers from yesterday.

Negotiating the Ruhr area (Essen, Duisburg etc.) is a bit of a spider's web of roads, but Olof had trodden this track many times before and the SatNav was there as back-up. By late morning we were crossing into the Netherlands at Venlo and heading for Eindhoven. This was a quick traverse across the southern part of the country, taking less than an hour. I made six QSOs as PA/G3SXW/M, still sticking to 40m. These were with the usual suspects: OZ4UN, G3JUL, G3IAF, MØAAC, GØEFO - and the signals were getting weaker, as we approached the midday doldrums.

Then by noon local time we were crossing into Belgium. We skirted south of Antwerp and then south to Brussels. Olof had some brief business to take care of at his apartment there, then straight back on the road again, up past Gent and Bruges. Ten QSOs went into the log as ON/G3SXW/M, still on 40m.

France and England

We crossed into France just before Dunkirk and pulled into a lay-by right on the border. I was in contact with OZ4UN at the time and thoroughly enjoyed starting one transmission with ON/G3SXW/M and finishing it signing F/G3SXW/M. What a giggle! This was another new experience.

Even more remarkable was Olof's practical demonstration of what he had been telling me about: that his Screwdriver mobile whip is directional. No – you're kidding, it's a vertical! We were listening to OZ4UN, who was directly behind us at the time. Olof turned the car to face North-East and Paul's signal markedly increased by about one S unit, I'd say. Without prompting Paul that we had turned to face him, he told us right away that our signal had increased. Wow, how odd! Olof explained that the car body acts as a ground-plane. The whip is at the back, so this GP is in the direction that the car is facing. He has confirmed this with antenna modelling software, seeing a signal

improvement of several db. Yet another new thing learned. You never stop learning in this hobby.

We drove on to Calais, making three more QSOs on 40m as F stroke, then parked up at the ferry terminal, allowing Olof time to re-tune the antenna to 80m. By now it was early evening but still light and DL4CF was CQing with a very loud signal. Joe gave us a 599 report!

The crossing takes 1½ hours and then we were on the M20 heading north from Dover. This allowed me to QRV in my sixth country within 24 hours, making a dozen QSOs as G3SXW/M on 80m. Olof dropped me off at home late evening, some 36 hours after leaving.

SXW/M made 72 CW QSOs on three bands in six different countries in just over 24 hours. Those who contacted us throughout the journey are:

Call	Countries
G3JUL	6
G3IAF	4
MØAAC	4
OZ4UN	4
GØEFO	3
G3LIK	2

Thank You!

To all these fine chaps who kept us company along the way, tracking us on APRS and making QSOs. The whole car journey, some 30 hours, just flew by. It was great fun.

But especially to Olof, GØCKV, for letting me borrow his marvellous /M station. He is a very clever fellow and we never ever seem to run out of things to discuss. I much appreciate your hospitality, old chap.

Using Trees to support Low Band Antennas

Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA

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Foreword by G3SXW

We have learned over the years that close-in foliage seriously attenuates HF signals.

Yet when offering this view to others they often stare in disbelief. The logic, to us, seems inescapable: foliage is water! So I was interested to see the paper by K9LA in 'Pile-Up', the magazine of the Contest Club Finland. It is entitled: 'Using Trees to Support Low Band Antennas' and I'm very grateful for his agreement to re-print it.

He reports the effects of a vertical wire being in close proximity to a tree trunk. Increasing the separation at the bottom of the vertical wire had no effect on resonance. But moving the top away from 3 ft to 6 ft changed the resonance by 30 kHz. He then used a model to compute losses caused by foliage: height of antenna, height of trees, amount of forest, and he chose an angle of radiation of 20 degrees. (His vertical wire was below the tree line by several metres) He found that loss on 160m was 9 db and at all higher bands was 6 db. This increases by several db at lower angles of radiation and decreases by several db at higher angles (logical). He also reports that with deciduous trees in winter there is NO loss. Proof!

This is the first time that I have seen proper estimates of this effect. And, boy, those db losses are substantial!

Here we sit at solar minimum between Cycle 23 and Cycle 24, waiting for Cycle 24 to start ramping up to give us consistent worldwide F₂ region propagation on the higher HF bands. It's likely that nothing's going to happen for at least a year, so this is a great opportunity to make a major effort in (or to improve) your low-band contesting station.

Other than noise, the other major issue for a competitive low-band contest station is a good transmit antenna. But putting up a competitive low-band antenna can be tough for those without a suitable man-made support. One solution, taking the lead from K5AF's Contesting on a Budget column in the May/June 2005 issue of NCJ (the National Contest Journal, published by the ARRL), is to utilise a tree.

I use a tree to support my 80m/160m wire antenna system. The vertical wire starts at 7 ft above ground (to make sure the deer don't get tangled up in it) and goes up to about 60 ft to a pulley on a limb on one of our bigger trees. I have a homebrew 80m trap at the top of the vertical wire, and a wire from the top of the trap runs back toward the house to resonate the system on 160m. Thus it's a near-full-size quarter-wave vertical on 80m (it has a small inductor at the bottom for resonance and for switching from PH to CW), and an inverted-L on 160m. I use six elevated radials (again, to keep the deer from running into them) – three 60-footers and three 120-footers.

I've always wondered how the tree I use to support my 80m/160m antenna, and the surrounding trees, affect the performance. Thus the goal of this article is to discuss the two areas of concern with respect to trees affecting low-band antennas: the trunk portion of the tree and the leaves (foliage).

With respect to the trunk portion, the Technical Correspondence column in the November 1991 issue of QST had some interesting observations by KF4IX (call now unknown) and K4OQK (call now W3BZ). They had a single 75m quarter-wave monopole hanging in a tall pine tree with seven radials raised 15 ft off the ground. The distance from the trunk of the tree to the bottom portion of this antenna was about 1 ft. The distance from the trunk of the tree to the top portion of the antenna was about 3 ft. The resistance at resonance (3.74 MHz) was measured to be 50 Ohms. A model of this antenna indicated the resistance at resonance should have been about 32 Ohms.

To determine where the extra 18 Ohms of resistance came from, they first moved the

bottom portion of the antenna farther away from the trunk of the tree (from 1 ft to about 15 ft). Nothing changed. Then they moved the top portion of the antenna farther away from the trunk of the tree (from 3 ft to 6 ft). Resonance moved up to 3.77 MHz (30 KHz higher) and the resistance was now about 35 Ohms (decreased 15 Ohms). Their conclusion was that the tree trunk, being a lossy dielectric, introduced significant loss due to its close proximity to the high voltage portion (the top portion) of the antenna.

With respect to foliage, we'll use the work of Tamir [reference 1]. Tamir developed equations to calculate the additional loss on HF propagation by foliage in a forest. Figure 1 shows the basic model used by Tamir.

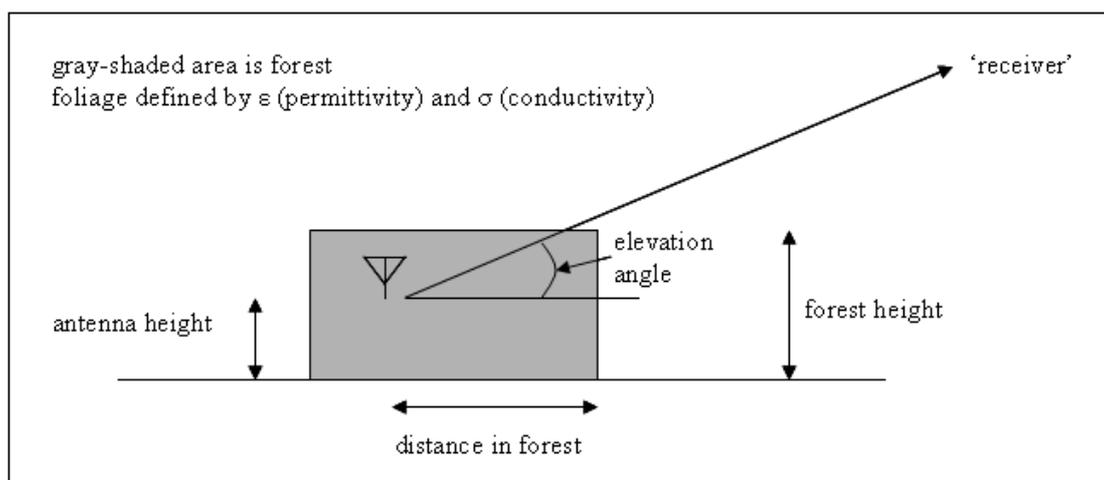


Figure 1 – Tamir’s model of an antenna in a forest

My specific situation has the forest extending north and east of our property for about one quarter mile – thus I set the ‘distance in forest’ parameter to 402 meters. The trees are about 75 ft high – thus I set the forest height to 23 meters. The major portion of the foliage is near the top of the trees, and is about 20 ft thick – thus I set the antenna height to 17 meters. Finally, I chose an elevation angle of 20 degrees.

For the relative permittivity and conductivity of the foliage, an earlier work

by Tamir [reference 2] gives insight into these values. The relative permittivity of foliage is typically between 1.1 and 1.2, so I used 1.15. The conductivity of foliage is on the order of 1×10^{-4} S/m (Siemens per meter).

As a side note, the value of the conductivity is the major player in the model – varying the relative permittivity resulted in minor change to loss. Plugging these values into Tamir’s equations gives the loss versus

frequency due to the foliage shown in Figure 2.

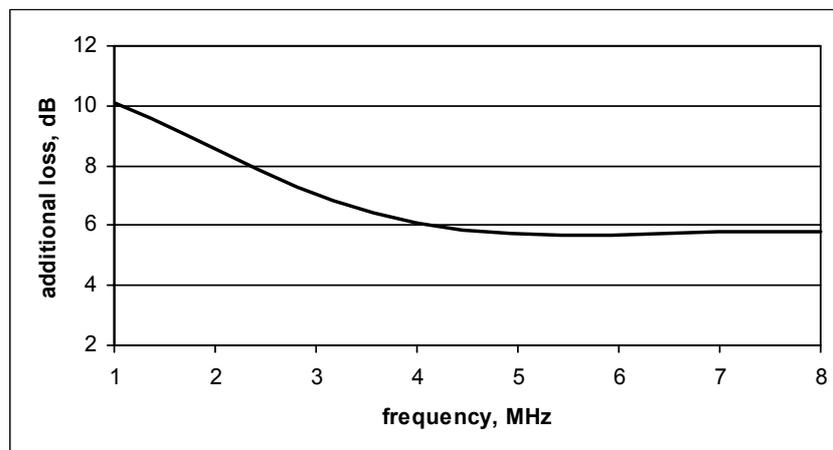


Figure 2 – Loss due to foliage

Tamir’s model says the additional loss due to foliage incurred by my 80m/160m antenna system at an elevation angle of 20 degrees is on the order of 9dB on 160m and 6dB on 80m. It increases by several dB at lower elevation angles and decreases by several dB at higher elevation angles. Is this amount of predicted loss reasonable? I don’t know, as I don’t spend too much time on 80m and 160m during the summer months (even if I did, I have nothing to compare it to in order to validate the model).

This brings up an important issue – my trees are deciduous. When I run the model with a relative permittivity of 1.0 and a low conductivity (1×10^{-5} S/m) to emulate winter conditions with no foliage, the model predicts no additional loss (as expected).

My experience during the winter months with my 80m/160 antenna system tends to confirm this result – I don’t think I’m losing much, if any, in the pile-ups in winter due to the fact that my low band antenna system is in trees.

In summary, if you have to implement your low-band antenna in a tree, try to get the top portion away from the trunk by at least 0.023 wavelengths (based on the 1991 Technical Correspondence article). And it would be nice, if possible, to pick a tree (and an area) with minimal foliage. If the latter recommendation can’t be achieved, at least be happy that we do most of our contesting in the winter months – when the foliage has usually disappeared.

References:

1. Tamir, Theodor; *Radio Wave Propagation Along Mixed Paths in Forest Environments*; IEEE Transactions on Antennas and Propagation; AP-25, No 4, July 1977; pp 471-477.
2. Tamir, Theodor; *On Radio-Wave Propagation in Forest Environments*; IEEE Transactions on Antennas and Propagation; AP-15, No 6, November 1967; pp 806-817.

An Impromptu DXer Lunch

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g3sxw@btinternet.com

Some guests were arriving for the RSGB HF Convention and being met at various locations and all heading to Wyboston on Friday, 10 October. So, we got the old e-mails flowing and within a day or two had arranged a lunch attended by ten DXers.

It started, so far as I was concerned, with meeting Ned, AA7A, and his wife, Jan, at Luton airport around noon. I thought it would be unnecessarily early to go straight to Wyboston, so how about a lunch in a quaint Olde English pub, methinks! It was their first ever visit to UK and first impressions are important. Now where to go? Looking at maps and the Good Pub Guide, it suddenly occurred to me that Shefford is halfway between Luton and Wyboston and I 'know a man who can': Victor, G3JNB. Brilliant! Victor immediately came back with the Black Horse at Ireland - no, not in EE-Eye, but a tiny village one mile from Shefford.

Almost immediately Fred, G4BWP, was on board, as he would pick up Markus, OH3RM, at Stansted airport, and Fred originates from the Shefford area so knows it well. We also heard at about the same time, just a couple of days before that weekend, that Olof, GØCKV, would transport Jim Smith, VK9NS, from Reading to Wyboston. So Victor booked a table for eight. Only hours later we were also able to arrange that Rob, GM3YTS, and Lionel, G5LP, could join in, as Rob could bring forward his timings to suit. So within just a day or two we had put together a jolly group of ten.

Arrivals

Unfortunately travels often entail delays. Ned and Jan's flight was 30 minutes late, so we didn't make it to the Black Horse until after 2pm. Olof and Jim were also delayed,

narrowly beating the time for the kitchen to close. But eventually we were all assembled.

This pub has a really quaint, pretty aspect, but unfortunately they have recently refurbished and the interior is now modern. Never mind, it was very comfortable, almost plush and the food was great, beautifully presented.

Birthday

Word had slipped out that that very day was Jim's 80th birthday and we couldn't let that go unnoticed. Victor (again a sterling fellow) arranged with the Manager to parade in a special dessert with a lit candle and 'Happy Birthday' written in cream. All the waitresses sang the traditional song for him. Then, also a surprise, Rob/GM3YTS presented Jim with a Scottish quaich (a silver drinking cup) on behalf of the GM-DX Club. A really lovely gesture.

I think Jim was quite taken aback - and there was more to come that evening when at the IOTA Dinner he was presented with another birthday cake and there was another mammoth round of applause.

On to HFC

We only had a couple of hours and it flew by. We were then on the road again, heading for Wyboston. Fred knows those roads like the back of his hand, so I merely tucked in behind him for the 30-minute drive. It was a fun, impromptu lunch, all last-minute stuff. Funny how last-minute arrangements can work out so well!

As will be reported elsewhere the HF Convention was another big success, with much increased attendance and a magnificent programme of talks.

The RTTY Column

Phil Cooper, GUØSUP *pcooper@guernsey.net*

Firstly, if you have not yet heard, Paolo/I2UIY became a Silent Key in early October. He was just 48 years old. Paolo was inducted into the CQ Hall of Fame just this year, and was also the contest manager for CQ WW RTTY. He was a great competitor with a wonderful sense of humour and an encyclopaedic knowledge of amateur radio.

After previous CQ WVs he would often let everyone know just how many calls he had received as attachments named *.'yourcall.log'*, as this was what was written in the rules! It got up into the dozens of logs! Many worked him from his home call as well as from P4ØG, and I guess many of you will have met him at some point. He will be greatly missed. I gather a tribute will be written in a future CQ Magazine about his life and achievements.

I was very pleased to see so many CDXCers taking part in CQ WW RTTY. I could hear many of you on 20m, but I think the propagation was such that you didn't hear me. I did work a few on the lower bands, but not as many as I could hear. Conditions seemed to be OK, although 10m and 15m were as dead as the proverbial dodo, so 20m was the bread-winning band.

I started at around 0500 UTC on 80m on Saturday morning and was pleased to work a few Ws, plus P49X and HI3T. The pile-up for HC8N was just too big to bother with, so I thought I would leave that for Sunday morning. It is interesting to note that the likes of HC8N always have a huge pile up on the first morning, but later in the contest they are often begging for contacts. In a contest like this, you really have to judge whether the time spent in the pile-up is worth it. It can often pay to move away, work other stations and then try later on. However, I went to 40m and quickly found

HC8N there, worked them (thanks to Ramon, XE1KK), and they asked me to try 80m, so I did, and got through the pile easily, as they knew to look out for me. Sometimes the GU mult can have its benefits! 40m seemed to be quite lively, and there were Ws workable until about one hour after sunrise. Most of the rest of Saturday was spent chasing mults and building up the QSO tally.

Working without the Cluster, I did take time to manually fill in the band map, and also place some of the nice DX into the memories for later. It was pleasing to see so many W6/7s and VE7s so loud late afternoon, and this helped the mult score a great deal. Some time around 1930 UTC I had a quick check on 20m and was a little surprised to find it had again opened nicely to W7. I also bagged KH6ND for an extra double-mult bonus.

Sunday morning didn't quite go as planned, as I woke up on time at 0430 UTC, but fell asleep again until 0530 UTC. Again, some nice strong Ws around on 80m, although the stronger ones weren't always as easy to work as the weaker ones. This time there were Ws on 80m until way past sunrise here, and they were just as strong on 40m as well.

During the Sunday I did manage to get a few runs going, but they often didn't last too long. I think I must have been spotted a few times, as the rate increased a bit, but the main problem were callers that were just too weak to copy, and most persisted in calling over and over again.

At one point I had some serious bother from EM9F, who was about 4 kHz above me when I started calling, but he gradually moved down in frequency with each call. He went right over me and carried on down,

and about an hour later he was moving UP and again went right over me. Maybe he was using the waterfall to click on, or maybe he had AFC and NET switched on, but he was drifting quite badly.

Late on Sunday afternoon at around 1820 UTC, having been on 40m, I went to check 20m again, but I somehow hit the button for 10m and was very surprised to see a huge signal! It was EA8AH. He was the ONLY signal audible here, but it was a very welcome contact.

Just out of curiosity I tried 15m and was amazed to see loads of huge signals. I logged HC8N, LT1F, HI3T, CQ85F, P49X, YV5AAX and (most pleasingly) J88DR, which I thought may be a new band-slot, but isn't, to go with our 40m contact on Saturday morning. My only 5-bander was EA8AH, but I had a few 4-banders such as CT9L, CN3A and P49X. Out of 618 contacts I had 516 unique callsigns logged. States worked on 20m included CA, AZ, ID, OR, WA and SD.

Overall a good contest, and everything seemed to work as it should except the propagation. A few callers seemed to be a bit unsure as to how to conduct a contact, but I guess they will learn!

There were a few who didn't use callsigns, and after a contact just sent TU QRZ? I am always a little unsure when I call someone, and they come back with TU 599 16 16 16. Frequently, I sent XX1XX TU 599 14 14 GUØSUP, and usually just got back TU QRZ?

I managed to work two new band-slots in CQ WW, which was very pleasing. First was J88DR on 40m, and also HI3T on 80m. The latter has already been confirmed on LoTW, but I will have to wait for G3TBK to return home and reply to my QSL for the other.

In case you haven't yet seen, a new version of MMTTY is now available. Dave, AA6YQ, offered to make a few

amendments to MMTTY, and Mako/JE3HHT, the original author of the program, graciously allowed him access to the source code. There are a couple of obvious changes, and the first is that MMTTY now works under Windows Vista, although I wonder whether that is an advantage?

Secondly, Dave has re-worked the way in which soundcards are allocated if you have more than one card. Instead of trying to select -1, 0 or +1, and seeing which one works, MMTTY now lists the cards available, and you can therefore easily choose which you wish to use. Although I haven't yet tried, I gather you can also now make use of more COM ports, as the previous version only allowed COM 1 to COM 4. This new version of MMTTY (1.66G) is available from the MMTTY website: <http://mmhamsoft.amateur-radio.ca>

Well, that's it for another issue, so 73 all, and see you on the bands.

73 de Phil GUØSUP

CDXC
CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

Contest

Lee Volante, GØMTN

The nights are drawing in, the central heating is back on and my radials are hidden under a blanket of fallen leaves. Yes, the autumn contest season must be here. I'm writing this fresh from the RSGB HF Convention, where it was great to see so many people. There was not enough time to meet everyone – I'm sure there's an analogy about 'improving rate' I could make. There's lots of news this time, so let's get started.

Contest University UK

"Wow!" sums up my impression of Contest University (CTU) UK. Whilst there were high hopes for the linked series of presentations given during the Saturday of the RSGB HF Convention (HFC), none of the presenters or CTU organiser Mark, MØDXR, knew how many people would attend. As it turned out everyone was very pleasantly surprised. After each presentation throughout the day, more and more chairs were brought in to the lecture room and it seemed that there were always some people queuing outside to get in. There were experienced contesters giving up their seats to allow others to listen. Having a packed lecture room seemed to be a common trend for many other HFC lectures as well. If the overall attendance continues to rise, the HFC may outgrow the popular Wyboston venue in terms of lecture room size and on-site accommodation. I gather that positive feedback from last year's HFC led to a much bigger attendance this year.

As I mentioned last time, a CTU-UK participation certificate would be awarded for any delegate who attended at least four of the seven lectures. I'm pleased to report that over 50 people qualified for this. Many of the lectures had over 60-70 attendees and

according to the register taken there were 148 unique participants who attended at least one presentation. When checking the attendance for some of the other concurrent presentations, CTU was certainly holding its own. Some CTU attendees were experienced contesters, and it was great to have their support for the programme. Whilst the majority of the content was geared towards relative newcomers, I hope that there were some new tips and ideas for everyone. I was especially pleased to see so many faces I didn't recognise – some brand-new, or up-and-coming contesters. A few people admitted they weren't contesters at all, but the presentation topic was still useful to them for their own interests in amateur radio.

There had always been some doubt whether the HF Convention could support a 'contesting stream' and the roaring success of CTU has now disproved this. It's too early to say what might happen next year, but given the interest in the 2008 event there is enthusiasm amongst the CTU 'professors' for some sort of graduate programme next year, perhaps with more in-depth case studies, analysis of contest audio, or hands-on sessions with contest hardware and software tools. A good foundation was laid this year that can surely be built upon. I'd be happy to receive any feedback or suggestions for the future you may have to pass on to the organising team.

Thanks are due to Mark, his wife Gemma/2E0WPX, and Icom UK for their hard work in organising the programme, and to the presenters for a consistent message instructing, informing and inspiring what contesting is really about, beyond the '59 14' type repetitiveness that many opponents to contesting only see.

Skimmer update

Just after I'd sent the last Contest article to our esteemed CDXC *Digest* Editor Martyn, G3RFX, I received a note from CQ Contest Director Bob, K3EST, confirming the new CQ WW Skimmer rule. Skimmer and Skimmer-like technologies are now banned from Single Op Unassisted entries, but it wasn't immediately clear if the CW reader / decoder in your K3 or contest software qualified as being 'Skimmer-like.'

Bob clarified "Using a CW decoder on a signal you are actually listening to is no problem." So I see this as good news as it will not prevent anyone using CW readers to assist fledgling CW skills from entering as Unassisted, and ultimately carry on in the same category when they feel confident enough to leave the CW reader behind.

Also, whilst I painted a positive picture of Skimmer use from Scott, W4PA, in the last *Digest*, Roger/G3SXW informed me that the VooDoo Contest Group's investigations by John, G4IRN, have been so far less successful, with a high percentage of 'busted calls' being decoded. Still, the SDR or panadapter approach can still be useful to detect things like 10m band openings in the middle of the night, without worrying about correct decoding of callsigns. (The operators need to take some of the strain!) Another issue to consider for a multi-multi operation compared with single-op will be the effects of harmonics and interference from the multiple on-site transmitters.

Paolo I2UIY – Silent Key

I was saddened to hear of the tragic death of Paolo, I2UIY, at the young age of 48 years. Paolo was well known as the father of the EU Sprint contest, log checker for the CQ WW RTTY contest, as well as serving as the QSL manager for the ARI. He was inducted into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame just this year at Dayton.

I had the pleasure of meeting Paolo at the Worldwide Young Contesters meeting in Croatia in 2004, and enjoyed over 100 QSOs with him, the last being on RTTY just in August. He was a larger than life personality, and a great ambassador for contesting.

On the Air

SSB Field Day

This year I had a 'day pass' to visit the MØXXT/P team in the Cotswolds for SSB Field Day. The team on site had done most of the tent and antenna assembly on the Friday afternoon (in the pouring rain), but there were still plenty of jobs to be done on the Saturday morning when I arrived. The great thing about team contesting is that you get to meet different people, and see what ideas they have to put a contest station together. I'd not met several of the team there before. Additionally this was a chance to learn about some new antennas and support structures I'd not assembled or used before. I even learned a few new tricks with rope tying – where embarrassingly I continually struggle and fumble.

Also interesting was the challenge of a new operating site, especially where the available real estate for antennas is limited. Working out what to use as the best receive antenna – the original choice of a loop may not have been ideal, given that it faced the main HF transmit antenna when beaming towards Europe. Ideas were mulled over, such as rotating the loop to minimise the impact and/or using a vertical antenna several hundred feet away.

After the contest started I took an operating shift. Conditions to Japan seemed very reasonable on 20m, with the All Asian DX Contest in full swing providing many new stations to work. Later on 40m and 80m provided a seemingly never-ending amount of DLs and other West Europeans. With 10m propagation almost non-existent, moving some Europeans from 15m to 10m

for some very marginal QSOs might have been our only chance to get some multipliers on the band. Don't forget in circumstances like this where 'a local G' (or GM etc. depending on where you live) is a multiplier: find one on a lower band and move them to 15m and/or 10m. If there is no ionospheric propagation at all, a local ground wave QSO has been several times my only contact (and multiplier) on 10m in various contests in the last year or so.

Since SSB Field Day I've visited one of the team member's homes to further discuss antennas and operating procedures and strategy for the then-upcoming CQ WW RTTY. Multi-operator contesting has many unexpected benefits!

CQ WW RTTY

Due to some family commitments CQ WW RTTY will be the only one of the big three 'CQ WW' contests I'll be putting in a competitive entry for this autumn. I'll still be active in the Phone and CW events in some part-time capacity. Actually, with the pressure removed, it will be a good opportunity to try some different strategies, and not feel too guilty about stopping for a while and listening longer to other stations and trying to pick up a few new tricks and techniques.

For the RTTY contest, I've done reasonably well in previous years, whilst never reaching the giddy heights of the Top 10 box. I was keen to put in another competitive effort this year, but with continued growth in UK activity in RTTY contests there's no room for complacency if aiming for a certificate win. Looking at my earlier contest logs in preparation for 2008, there were no really high rates seen. For my low-power efforts and 30ft AGL antennas, most hours had a contact rate in the order of 30 per hour. The Sunday sees a lot fewer contacts made, of course. I'll aim to keep on air for as long as possible, as I'm almost certainly not louder than many of my counterparts. For an extra three hours off-

time (presumably sleep time!), it would be quite difficult to find an extra 100 QSOs (assuming 30 QSOs / hour) to try to keep up. So keeping awake and staying in the operating chair was the #1 priority.

If you have a reference log to work with to set targets, you can decide QSO and multiplier goals for each band, plus a target for overall on-air time. My targets were written on a PostIt note and stuck to the monitor, and so were constantly in my field of view when operating. As the 2008 contest progressed, I was also regularly checking last year's log to see how my QSO total compared with the year before. Of course, changes in activity or propagation might lull me into a false sense of security that I was doing better than in previous years, but any methods of self-motivation to keep yourself in the chair and making contacts is worthwhile.

With a small-ish signal, Search and Pounce can often lead to a higher rate than calling CQ, with the added bonus that more multipliers are likely to be acquired this way. Later in the contest I was finding most of the stations I tuned over were already in the log, which affected the rate (and morale), so remembering the overall goals, and hopping between all of the bands to check for unexpected openings are key.

The mechanics of contest operating should become automatic, especially for RTTY. What operators need to do at the same time is work out if they're getting the best contact rate, and points per contact possible, and if they're operating on the right band. It's akin to driving a car, where constant checks and changes are required to ensure you get from A to B safely. You wouldn't drive a car constantly for 48 hours without a break – but as contesters we strive to maintain the same level of alertness for many hours on end.

The contest was great fun – with good activity levels just about making up for difficult high-band propagation. There was a

remarkable lack of noise on 80m, especially during the first night, which was a blessed relief when wearing headphones for hours on end. RTTY signals were spread over 50 kHz at times, although there didn't seem to be many complaints from other band users. There's only this much simultaneous RTTY present on the bands once (or possibly twice) a year.

New antennas

Word has reached me of some exciting plans from the Radio Arcala team in northern Finland. The guys at the OH8X contest superstation are installing some new toys for the winter contest season. With a low sunspot count the OH8X team, like many other contesters around the world, are focussing on the low bands. However, unlike most other contesters, they are planning to install during October and November a 5-element yagi for 80m (at 100m AGL), and a 3-element yagi for 160 (at 80m AGL.) This is obviously a very impressive feat of station engineering. I'm really looking forward to hearing how these antennas work in practice.

Radio-sport.net has also given a preview of the changes made at several other superstations around Europe and the US ready for the CQ WW and other major DX contests coming up over the next few months. The moral that you need to continually refine and develop your station to stay at the top of your game is true. However, for the 99% of us living with antenna configurations that probably can't grow significantly, we can still take pleasure from seeing the work and dedication that others have put in. Also, these new antenna systems might be the main reason that we are able to make a QSO on 160m or 10m (for example) from a low-powered station. You get more points, maybe a new country or state on a new band, and yet it was the other station who may have spent months and thousands of pounds to give you that

possibility. This seems like a bargain for the casual contester!

And finally...

As a final note for this time, purely for fun I've now had an (admittedly quite awkward) QSO remote controlling my station from my new mobile phone's WiFi connection. Whilst I can't recommend this for any lengthy contest operating, it does illustrate future possibilities that newer technology can bring. I'm struggling to think of a practical application, perhaps apart from being able to continue to make a few QSOs whilst on a rest break or enforced dinner break. Whilst operating remotely just a few feet from my radios should not cause a problem, there is greater concern for remote operators in different countries, or where the station itself may have components (such as remote second receivers) in different parts of the world. Many contest rules now prohibit this – so remember to check the rules and consider what's in the spirit of the contest before trying some different aspects of remote operation.

Don't forget to send in any news or reports from the CQ WW contests. Different accounts from around the UK (and around the world) from stations large and small will be great to compare and contrast. Good luck!

73 Lee, GØMTN

**We regret to record the passing of
the following CDXC member:**

G3DEF John Gealer

September 17, 2008

Neville Cheadle, G3NUG
Lower Withers Barns
Middleton on the Hill
Leominster
Herefordshire HR6 0HY
UK

Dear Neville,

It is my honor, as President of the Southern California DX Club, to present you with this Honorary Member Plaque. This honorary membership is only presented to those whom our membership regard as high achievers and contributors to worldwide Dxers. Your Five-Star Dxpeditions have provided many ham operators an opportunity to work countries never before worked.

Your honorary membership entitles you all the benefits of membership, which include the monthly newsletter and notifications.

Arnie Shatz, N6HC, presented you to the SCDXC Board for this honor and it was unanimously voted to include you in our hall of fame. Congratulations and welcome.

On a personal note, it was a real delight for Wayne and me to sit with you and your Dxpedition members at the Visalia Convention..We all had such good fun. We both hope to take you up on your invitation to visit you and your wife someday.

Neville, I look forward to seeing you again. More than likely it won't be until after your next Dxpdition, which I hope will be soon. Take care and keep that wonderful smile.

Respectfully,

Sharon Spring, K6IRD
President, SCDXC

E-mails to the Editor

from G3SXW

Dear Editor,

In all my years writing for many magazines I almost never receive any feedback. Let alone honest opinions. Recently the Editor of this illustrious publication received four responses to my hard-hitting article about DXpedition funding. He commented that he had never previously had such a big reaction. This rather makes the point that you have to be extremely controversial to elicit any response at all. Another recent example was my e-mail to Phil, G3SWH. He was so surprised that anyone had bothered to respond that it led to a whole new article!

So, here is a plea. If you feel motivated to say something just SAY it! Good or bad. Critical or complimentary. Take it from me that the author will greatly appreciate hearing your opinion, any opinion. And you know what? E-mail makes it so easy these days. Just spend two to three minutes typing.

This plea especially applies to regular columnists (of which I am not one these

days). How those guys maintain the motivation to keep providing their excellent

material year after year is beyond me. They get no encouragement at all. Just to name one case in point: Lee, GØMTN, writes a really great column in every *Digest*. How much reaction does he ever hear? Zero, zippo, nada. Hello - is there anyone out there?

An occasional word of encouragement might not go amiss, eh? Better still some *opinion* about what has been printed. I realise that in this marvellous modern world of the Politically Correct you are not permitted to DISagree with ANYthing, but at least we might find something to AGREE about, no? Or maybe it is just a point of information. Fine. Let it flow.

Please do react. Let's have some debate, some to and fro. It can be private rather than published, if you prefer - that's fine!

Rant over. But (I hope) it's for the common good.

73, Roger, G3SXW.

Top 5 QSL Manager Survey [with thanks to G3RTE]

John, K1XN, from the GoList, has announced that the votes are in. The majority of the voters were from Europe with just a few DXers from the USA expressing their choices. Here are the Top 5 ranked by voter choice:

1. W3HNC, 2. G3SWH, 3. IT9DAA, 4. IZ8CCW, 5. NI5DX

There were over 200 managers entered by DXers around the world. All QSL Managers are winners and their services are very important to all of us that want to claim a card for a contact. Thank you to QSL Managers and card handlers around the world, we really do appreciate you.

Micro-DXpeditioning Uncovered

by Roger Western, G3SXW

A new book to entertain and thrill every DXer and traveller and armchair DXpeditioner.

Tales of derring-do to over 20 mostly European DXCC entities, all done on the cheap, mostly just day trips or overnights. Low-cost airlines have ushered in a new era, along with modern technology which provides us with high-calibre 100W transceivers for less than three kilos.

Read how we have made these amazing journeys, how we've got on the air from many countries, how we've met so many new friends. Day trips to T7 San Marino, C3 Andorra, SP Poland, ISØ Sardinia and many more. Anyone fancy lunch in Bratislava or Monte Carlo? Here is the 'How To' kit, all packaged ready to go, for the discerning reader. During the past 2-3 years SXW has visited (in this order) ZB2, EA9, ISØ, YL, 9H, OM, SP, T7, HV, LY, C3, YO, LZ, HA, OE, OM, 1A, TF, JW, CT3, 3A, 4U.

Just lob a tenner at G3SXW and your 100+ page tome will wing its way to you, providing hours of Micro-DXpeditioning entertainment.

Send a cheque to: Roger Western, G3SXW, 7 Field Close, Chessington KT9 2QD.

or transfer to: Barclays Bank 20-90-69, A/c 80953636, with a suitably explanatory reference.

Much mirth is guaranteed! Plus an introduction to the new game of 'DXFC'. Now what on earth does that 'F' stand for?

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/>

Micro-DXpeditioning

by Roger Western, G3SXW

A Book Review by Stewart Cooper, GM4AFF

Roger is well known for his exploits, travelling with radio to exotic spots all over the globe, and is an established author. Now, at the low point on the sunspot cycle and much reduced propagation, he has developed a whole new method of having fun on DXpeditions: quickie day-trips or overnight stays in unusual spots around Europe. This book recounts tales of his travels to over 20 countries during the past couple of years: 'Day-trip to Poland? Lunch in Andorra? QRV Sardinia for two hours?'

As he explains, the advent of low-cost airlines has opened up these opportunities. It is clear from his narrative that he and his pals have enormous fun on these trips and they usually manage to get on the air for a short while too. Every trip is unique and all of them offer fascination with seeing new places and meeting new friends

The 27-chapter book starts with helpful tips on how to uncover really great travel deals and how to pack an HF station + antenna

into a 10kg carry-on bag. It also tunes us into the new game of 'DXFC' (as in 'Feet', ie have stepped foot in DXCC entities). It goes on to describe 18 quickie trips which give much insight into some unusual corners of Europe: for example The Vatican City, San Marino, Andorra, Ceuta, Malta, Madeira, Svalbard. It finishes with a wide array of Travel Tips to help make such journeys all the more successful. Included is a list of DXCC entities which are covered by CEPT and an index of callsigns makes cross-referencing easy.

This entertaining 104-page book contains many visuals to support the text and is self-published by Roger. Cost: £10 or \$20 or €13. I certainly recommend it as a great read AND as a useful information resource. More information from:

g3sxw@btinternet.com

73 de Stewart, GM4AFF.

CDXC Local Hero Award

The Committee is seeking nominations for this prestigious annual award. It is for a resident amateur in a DX location who has given long-term support to DXers in providing QSOs and QSLs without massive financial rewards. Full details and criteria may be found on the CDXC website.

Please send nominations with a brief citation to either

Chris, G3SVL (sec@cdxc.org.uk) or John, G3LAS (chair@cdxc.org.uk).

Not the GB2RS News

- Special Cyprus conference
- Special event station news
- Contest news

Amid growing concern that the number of special prefixes to be heard on the air could soon outnumber the boring old normal ones, all IARU member societies have been invited to attend a special conference on the matter to be held in Cyprus later this year. On the air from the Larnaca conference venue itself will be H2X and P3Z.

Special event station news:

TM5ØLOO will be on the air next weekend to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first fully flushing public convenience to be erected in Paris. This station will be using a paper log.

Contest News

The Worked All Insignificant Italian Villages Contest, organised by the Parma Ham Radio Club, takes place next weekend on 160 through to 10m, on both CW and SSB. The report format is the usual 59(9) plus the name of your favourite Italian salami or meat product. Vegetarians quote their favourite Italian pasta.

If you're a Harry Potter fan, you'll be interested in a considerable scoop for the *CDXC Digest*.

Not even J.K. Rowling knows about this, but in his third year at Hogwarts young Harry suddenly developed a keen interest in amateur radio and HF DXing, rather strange Muggle-type activity though it may be. So some of his friends started calling him 'Hammy' Potter instead. Dumbledore and Professor McGonagall were appalled. It was

good news for amateur radio, though. After all, we always say we're trying to encourage new blood into this hobby of ours.

Meanwhile watch out for the wizard DXer in *Hammy Potter and the Phantom of 15 SSB*, coming to your local cinema soon.

In the wake of the September [2003] power cut which affected nearly all of Italy, an American film company is planning to make a psycho-thriller based on *The Silence of the Lambs* and depicting the chilling psychological effect which this unprecedented power cut had on Italy's highly active amateur radio community.

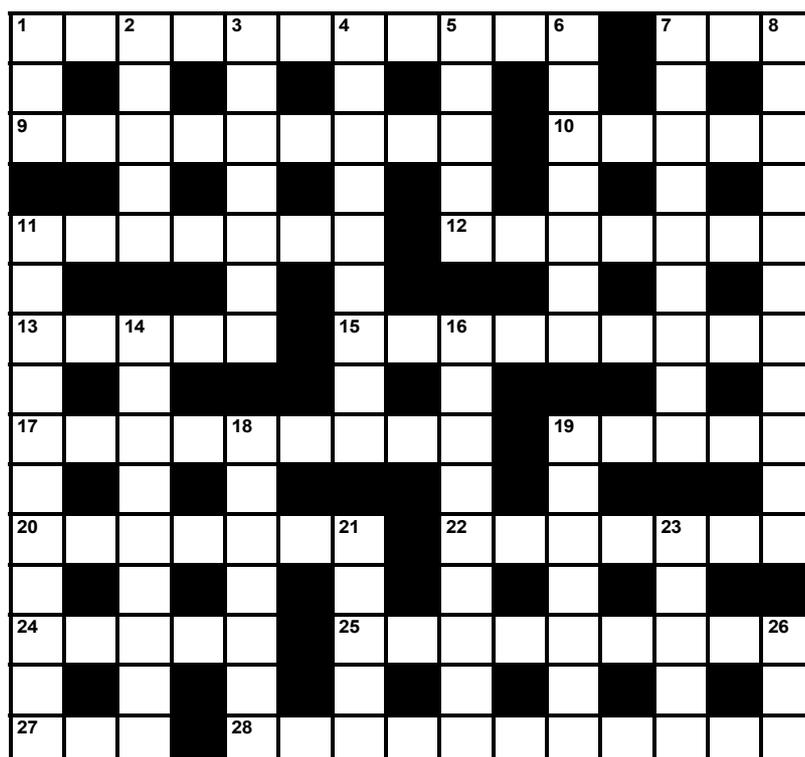
Negotiations are already in progress with Sir Anthony Hopkins to play the leading role, that of a keen Italian amateur radio enthusiast who also enjoys having friends for dinner. The proposed title for this new movie: *The Silence of the Hams*.

[Originally published in the November 2003 and January 2004 *CDXC Digest*. Ed.]

Solution to Prize Crossword 30

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

Digest Prize Crossword 31 *by RFX*



The winner of Prize Crossword 30, September 2008, and that £10 note: Eric Carling, GØCGL, Wool, Wareham, Dorset (via e-mail).

ACROSS

- 1 Boss responsible for the Bakerloo, say? (4,7)
- 7 Key government department first identifying the enemy (3)
- 9 Metal Nino re-worked into a hormone (9)
- 10 Have sex with prison officer? (5)
- 11 Drink King George I discovered in Asian capital (7)
- 12 Turner's the same from either direction (7)
- 13 It's hell when the man's entertaining these days (5)
- 15 Complicated Kazakh character seen in eastern US city at the end of June (9)
- 17 A key figure - a hairdresser? (9)
- 19 Austrian writer from Graz we ignore (5)
- 20 South American city diplomacy that's used to deal with unrest (4,3)
- 22 One who answers salesman, one economical with the truth (7)
- 24 Tried to find an Australian island (5)
- 25 Ten hotels renovated in well-known water sports area (3,6)
- 27 US writer and some of his work? Not half (3)
- 28 Part company with reality and forfeit one's bed? (4,3,4)

DOWN

- 1 Hit innocent child soundly (3)
- 2 Synthetic material that may be damaged by running (5)
- 3 Comes of age and is due to be paid (7)
- 4 Invade and damage Indian high-rise (5,4)
- 5 Approach not a person with no future (5)
- 6 Uproar about second Thai starter originally overshadowing dish (7)
- 7 Eve's second in command on board (5,4)
- 8 Gerd read law... turned out to be a composer (6,5)
- 11 Financial aid provided on board vessel full of academics? (11)
- 14 Medic to assess PhD (9)
- 16 It's disgusting when sailor initially has soldiers on a charge (9)
- 18 Gossip encountered in two southern states (7)
- 19 Aid to sorting leads to zoo in Paris calling off dolphin experiment (3,4)
- 21 Emperor partial to Chianti (Tuscany) (5)
- 23 Thought Labour leader's perfect (5)
- 26 Express disapproval of popular mummy (3)

Deadline for entries: 20 December

DX and Events Calendar

Compiled by G3XTT

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

till 26/11	EY8/F4EGS: Tajikistan
till 30/11	CK, CJ, CY, CZ: special prefixes (Canada)
till 30/11	LY7Ø: special prefix
till 31/12	9AØ8P: special event station
till 31/12	9A6ØA: special callsign
till 31/12	9M1Cxx: special callsigns
till 31/12	AYØDX: special callsign (Argentina)
till 31/12	C4EURO: special callsign (Cyprus)
till 31/12	DR8M: special event station
till 31/12	HG1848I: special call (Hungary)
till 31/12	HG55ØREX: special call (Hungary)
till 31/12	IN3IPY: special callsign
till 31/12	ON1ØØØNOTGER: special call
till 31/12	ON5ØWAASLAND: special call
till 31/12	ON17Ø8M: special event station
till 31/12	ON4ØBAF: special event call
till 31/12	ON7ØREDSTAR: special event station
till 31/12	PY1ØØJA: special call
till 31/12	SB1658OZ and SC1658OZ: special callsigns (Sweden)
till 31/12	SH1658DK and SH1658OZ: special callsigns (Sweden)
till 31/12	SK1658DK and SK1658OZ: special callsigns (Sweden)
till 31/12	VE2XB/VYØ: Southampton Island (NA-007)
till December	HFØPOL: Henryk Arctowski Station (South Shetlands)
till 28/02/09	FM/F5IRO: Martinique (NA-107)
till 31/08/09	VR2/F4BKV: Hong Kong Island (AS-006)
October-February	OD5/F5TLN: Lebanon
October-April	VK2LNX and VK2FSNJ: Maatsuyker Island (OC-233)
01/11-30/11	YL9Ø: special event prefix (Latvia)
07/11-25/11	A51ØØA: Bhutan
17/11-06/02/09	9M2MRS: Penang Island (AS-015)
20/11-30/11	T31DX: Central Kiribati (OC-043)
21/11-27/11	3D2YA: Mana Island (OC-121) 911
22/11-03/02/09	EA8/ON5JV and EA8/ON6AK: Canary Islands (AF-004)
25/11-10/12	8Q7SC: Maldives (AS-013)
25/11-30/11	HC2/SM6FKF and HC2/SM6LJU: Ecuador
25/11-30/11	HC2/SM7BUA and HC2/SM7NDX: Ecuador
26/11-01/12	J49I: Crete (EU-015)

26/11-01/12	V26K: Antigua (NA-100)
29/11-30/11	3X5A: Guinea 909
29/11-04/12	St. Martin's Isl. (AS-127) by S21RC, S21AM, S21DM, S21S
November	YW1TI: Toas Island (SA-066)
04/12-07/12	YB3MM/9: Timor Island (OC-148)
15/12-31/12	TR5ØR: Gabon
28/12-02/01/09	JD1BMH and JD1BLY: Chichijima (AS-031), Ogasawara
01/01-26/01/09	TR8CR: Gabon
12/01-27/01/09	ZD8N: Ascension Island (AF-003) by G3ZVW
17/01-31/01/09	VP8YLx: Falkland Islands (SA-002)

Answers to prefix quiz (from p. 9):

1. Andorra (now C3)
2. Uganda
3. VR2 (Hong Kong) and VP6 (Pitcairn)
4. ZM7
5. In the past a VK station signing /LH would have been on Lord Howe Island. Now the (unofficial) suffix is commonly used to designate a lighthouse operation. It is not an official part of the callsign, but something that gets tagged on, like /QRP. Presumably we might anticipate callsigns such as G3XTT/VP2V/LH/QRP?
6. T31 and KH1
7. Sealand, a fort in the Thames Estuary (S1AB, S1AD, S1AH, S1AS in 1984)
8. Namibia (now V5) and Walvis Bay (now also part of Namibia, V5). Bonus answer: G3XTT (who operated from there with ZS6EZ as ZS9Z for the few days up to the handover and, following the handover, from the same spot but as V51Z)
9. VR2 (now used for Hong Kong)
10. Yemen Arab Republic (now part of Yemen, using the prefix 7O)

How did you do? 12-15 probably suggests you have been around for too long! 8-11 or thereabouts and you're a recent, but keen DXer. Less than 8 and you need a prefix guide and to read some amateur radio history!

Don, G3XTT

