

ANDEX



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DXing HIGHLIGHTS



Larry Lundberg forty years later

The following interesting DXing experience took place forty years ago. This DX highlight was written by Larry Lundberg, ANDEX No. 251, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and sent to us by Donald D. Dickey, ANDEX No. 2847, also of Minneapolis.

"I wonder how many old-time DXers remember VR6AY which was located on Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific Ocean. The island was settled in 1789 by a small band of Englishmen after the mutiny which took place on H.M.S. Bounty. Headed by Fletcher Christian and assisted by Edward Young, the small colony grew and prospered. The island is about two miles long and one mile wide and, today, has a population of about 125, most of whom can trace their lineage back to the original nine settlers. VR6AY was operated by Andrew E. Young back in 1938 and 1939 and was heard during the evenings on the twenty-meter amateur band. Andrew was a relative of Dr. George W. Young, founder of station WDGY in Minneapolis.

"As I look at the verification card I received from VR6AY, a pleasant memory enters my mind, along with a very sorrowful one. The pleasant

event occurred on January 11, 1938, when I heard a three-way conversation carried on by VR6AY, VP3THE operated by two homesick explorers in the jungles of British Guiana, and OX2QY of the MacGregor Arctic Expedition in Etah, Greenland. These fellows had a great time that evening talking and kidding each other. The temperature in Etah was a minus 72 degrees while in the jungles it was 117 in the shade! Mr. Young was enjoying a nice south-sea breeze with the temperature at 72 degrees. The difference of 189 degrees at these three stations made me feel mighty comfortable in my DX den, even though it was below zero outside at the time.

"I sent reports to all three stations and received verifications from each one. England at that time sent a ship to Pitcairn Island only twice a year to drop off supplies. As a result it took nineteen months of waiting before I heard from VR6AY.

"The sorrowful event took place the latter part of 1939 when Mr. Young had to amputate his own leg. It was told that he died while talking over his beloved twenty-meter station, with his hand on the crank of his hand-cranked generator. Many hams heard his final broadcast. They all had the same terrible feeling that, as the power of his signals were gradually fading away, the same thing was happening to his life. Andrew Young was a very fine gentleman whom this old-time DXer shall never forget.

"If my memory is correct OX2QY operated with 400 watts of power and VP3THE with 100 watts. VR6AY varied in power between 25 and 75 watts depending on how fast Andrew was able to turn the hand-cranked generator. VP3THE was on the air for about two months at the base camp of the Terry-Holden Expedition for the American Museum of Natural History. During that time the NBC radio network carried several programs live from the jungle base in British Guiana."

ON TO THE TOP

By Don Jensen – Part 7

How can you identify those rare DX stations when you hear them? If you haven't progressed beyond the "if it isn't in English, I can't identify it" stage, you have some basic homework ahead of you before you are ready for serious DXing. Minimally, you should be able to distinguish the major languages, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, Arabic, etc. You should be able to recognize the tonal Asian languages, such as Chinese. All foreign languages should no longer sound alike to you. You need not be a linguist – very few experienced DXers are – but you should be able to pick out words. If you can't, spend some months on the whole business of learning how languages sound. There have been articles written on the subject in various journals, hobby publications, and books. Seek them out and study. One of the best ways to learn is to study the Voice of America foreign language broadcasts.

It should be obvious by now that a very experienced DXer, because of his accumulated knowledge, may well be able to positively identify a station that a less experienced DXer might not be able to identify at all. But even the best of the "pros" frequently come up short of a definite identification. As I suggested before, under certain circumstances, one can send a reception report on the strength of a tentative identification. A tentative, you will recall, is when positive identification isn't possible, but a whole series of factors surrounding the reception strongly lead the DXer to believe he is hearing a certain station.

A word of warning! Tentatives are tricky and dangerous. Most misidentified stations that crop up in club bulletins are there because the DXer lacks information and experience, is careless, or jumps to hasty conclusions due to wishful thinking. A DXer, anxious to log a rare station, is easily

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tempted to conclude, "Well, others are hearing it so this must be it." Leap to such conclusions at your own peril!

The measure of a top DXer is his reputation, especially among other experienced DXers. A reported rare catch almost always prompts a frantic hunt by others. If you were wrong, it will be discovered quickly enough. Everyone makes mistakes now and again. It is embarrassing but not fatal to a reputation. Your error may not be challenged in print but be sure it will be noted by the more experienced DXers. If you later find you erred, a correction to the editor helps to mitigate the mistake. Pretending it didn't happen is a mark against you. To make a mistake occasionally is human. To be wrong regularly earns you the wrong kind of reputation. Before long you will be marked as unreliable.

Tentative identifications, to return to the subject, are the result of placing together a number of separate factors that, taken together, convince you of a station's probable identity. The number of pieces that fit can vary, but the more that do, the surer you can be. Too few pieces and all you have is a possible identification or perhaps even an unidentified station. The experienced DXer has the edge since he has accumulated more know-how and background information that may fit.

The important factors? Frequency, naturally. Time? Does your reception match the schedule? Propagation? Is reception possible, or likely, at the time you are listening? Does your reception match the language and programming known to be used? Can you, for one reason or another, eliminate from consideration other stations known to operate on the frequency at that same time?

Other clues? You heard no country reference but did hear a Spanish commercial for a certain product. In which country, or countries, of Latin America is that product sold? Can you identify the national anthem heard at sign-off? What does the music tell you? Can you distinguish between Mexican and Brazilian music? Between that of Peru and the Dominican Republic? What is high-life music? Gamelan? What is a sitar and how does it sound? There are dozens of clues or factors that can help you identify a station. There is no practical way they can be taught except by experience. If you are alert to the basic techniques, you can begin to file away in your mind these scraps of information that will help you in identifying the rare stations you hear.

Naturally, none of these clues is sufficient to justify even a tentative identification by itself. Enough of them, however, may make a strong enough case for a tentative identification. But, again, be careful!

To be continued

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DXer OF THE MONTH



Carol & David with their DX-160

During the past four-and-a-half years some fifty men have been chosen as the ANDEX DXer of the Month. We have also selected a few girls for this honor. This month, for the first time, we are happy to present a young couple, Carol and David Abbey. The Abbeys are in their early thirties and live in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. They were raised in eastern Ontario but moved to Saskatchewan in 1969 and have lived there ever since. Both are public servants and are employed by the Province of Saskatchewan.

Carol and David have been interested in shortwave radio for about two years. They started doing a little shortwave listening back in 1976 using a small portable Realistic Astronaut-4 receiver. They received a few stations then but with little accuracy and no serious DXing.

Last September they purchased a Realistic DX-160 receiver which is shown in the picture. At that time they began to take their DXing seriously. For an antenna they use ninety feet of copper wire strung along their home and fence. Since buying the DX-160 they have logged stations in twenty-four countries and have received verifications from fourteen of them. Countries verified are Canada, United States, Britain, Ecuador, Japan, People's Republic of China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, South Africa, Republic of China, Holland, Russia, Spain, and Israel. The Abbeys do most of their listening

during the evening hours, between 0100 and 0300 GMT. They spend a maximum of two hours a day as time permits.

Soon after purchasing their DX-160, Carol and David joined ANDEX together and received membership No. 2711. This was their first DX club but they are planning to also join the North American Short Wave Association. In addition to DXing they enjoy reading, wood-working, and various other handcrafts. One of the interesting things they find in DXing is receiving educational information about the countries they listen to. China has sent them magazines, calendars, and a lapel pin. HCJB sent them a calendar. Czechoslovakia and South Africa sent magazines telling about their lands. Carol and David are rapidly learning many of the interesting aspects of the DXing hobby and we are glad they are able to enjoy this occupation together.

Our congratulations to Carol and David Abbey, our first husband and wife team to be chosen as DXers of the Month. May you have many more happy years together in your shortwave DXing.

THE ENDLESS VINE

Discovered by an agronomist twenty years ago near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, crown vetch is the ground-cover planted by highway departments along thousands of miles of roadsides. It prefers ditches, shale, gravel, steep rock, and makes root patterns so thick that even grass can't thrust through after a year or two. It makes its own soil during the winter hibernation. Then, in summer, it greens the earth, battles erosion, and yearly festoons its waves of fern-like leafage with beautiful lavender crown blossoms.

Meanwhile thinking men like Malcolm Muggeridge in England and William Irwin Thompson at Lindisfarne on Long Island, claim that western civilization has reached its peak and is now on a rapid downward course. "Futurists" warn Americans, in particular, to reverse the tides of monopoly, depersonalized education, military-industrial combinations, secular immorality, senseless violence, overloaded psyches, and lapsed relationships. We suffer acutely from erosion, various sorts of speed, energy waste, and arterial thruways leading nowhere. The crucial demand on all sides seems to be for some new irresistible ground-cover of values, with deep roots, raising its crown across the world.

INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTERS YEAR- 1978

At the suggestion of Arne Skoog, host of the radio program, Sweden Calling DXers, 1978 has been proclaimed the International Broadcasters Year. This proclamation is receiving the full backing of both the Association of North American Radio Clubs and the European DX Council. This means that all possible efforts will be made to support international broadcasting stations. Many of these stations are facing serious problems, mainly of an economic nature.

There are certainly more than enough transmitters on the crowded shortwave bands, and from the point of view of band-crowding, less stations would be an improvement. You probably enjoy certain stations and programs, however, and would hate to see them disappear. Several times during the last few years actions by DXers and DX organizations have resulted in the saving of popular broadcasts. The aim of the IBCY-78 is to find ways to promote stations and programs. "It is high time that DX clubs should stick together in order to find ways and means to support our favorite stations and programs," writes Dave Browne, Executive Secretary of ANARC.

Here are a few points that should be considered:

LISTENER'S MAIL. All international broadcasters are very interested in mail from listeners abroad. It is regarded as the only means of two-way communication. In many cases the statistics from incoming mail are the only evidence that the broadcasts are reaching their listeners. No one wants a decrease in the number of letters and reception reports. But handling the flood of mail

It was at a similar critical time that the Apostle Paul, in the Bible, told a handful of people in Colossae that, "all things are held together in Christ." What? This was as unbelievable then as it is now! In days of over-education and under-wisdom, how many of us are willing to hazard the manifesto that one story, one particular claim about God and man, one rooted historical experience of the race can knit together, save, and gather into one, the entire threatened human terrain?

To say that "God is love," or "Christ is Lord," sounds too easy and unsophisticated. The "old, old story" in our fast obsoleting day seems to

always mean extra expense and labor. We have to find ways to lighten this burden without breaking the flow of incoming letters. One way is for listeners to make their reports and letters easier to handle. Be careful to give your name and address clearly. Most international shortwave stations prefer reception reports on printed forms such as those available from many clubs. Stations seldom prefer tape or cassette recordings unless they are specifically requested.

PUBLICITY. Most people know little or nothing about international broadcasters. It is therefore of the greatest importance that DXers and DX organizations spread information about the rich possibilities offered on the shortwave bands. This can be done through person-to-person contacts, by making information available to school classes, by publicity in magazines and newspapers, etc.

COLLABORATION. A friendly and fruitful collaboration between DX organizations and international broadcasters has developed during the past few years. This needs to be further developed during 1978. Hopefully more station representatives will be attending DX conventions and DX meetings. Organizers of gatherings with broadcasters present should see to it that a place on the agenda is reserved for serious discussions about how to promote and help stations. Topics could include the simplification of reception reports and how to organize publicity and meetings.

Let's all get behind International Broadcasters Year - 1978, and see that it becomes a great success!

show its age, its every detail too familiar. Yet it is wonderful to realize that for millions of people the incarnation of Jesus does stand. It protects against the erosion of mankind. It is like an endless vine, deep rooted. It lifts up its crown season after season. It is the revelation of God. In Christ indeed, uniquely, "all things are held together," from our frail selves, to the DNA cell, and inter-stellar space.

Christ has a perfect plan for your life. He wants to help you hold your life together and prevent the erosion that will take place otherwise. Commit yourself to him today, by faith, and see how he can change your life, for now and for eternity.