



Looking Back

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Looking Back is a nostalgic reflection on the shortwave scene of yesteryears, written from the personal experience of the author, who has been DXing the shortwave bands for over seven decades.

The DX Programmes

I suppose that the idea for special "test" programmes originated in the early days of medium wave DXing, when special broadcasts, outside regular broadcasting times, were often arranged for listeners by cooperative stations.

In the U.S. these were sometimes termed "equipment tests" or "proof-of-performance" tests for evaluation of broadcast quality and frequency accuracy and stability. No doubt the regulatory body of the F.C.C. was an important factor behind some of these ideas.

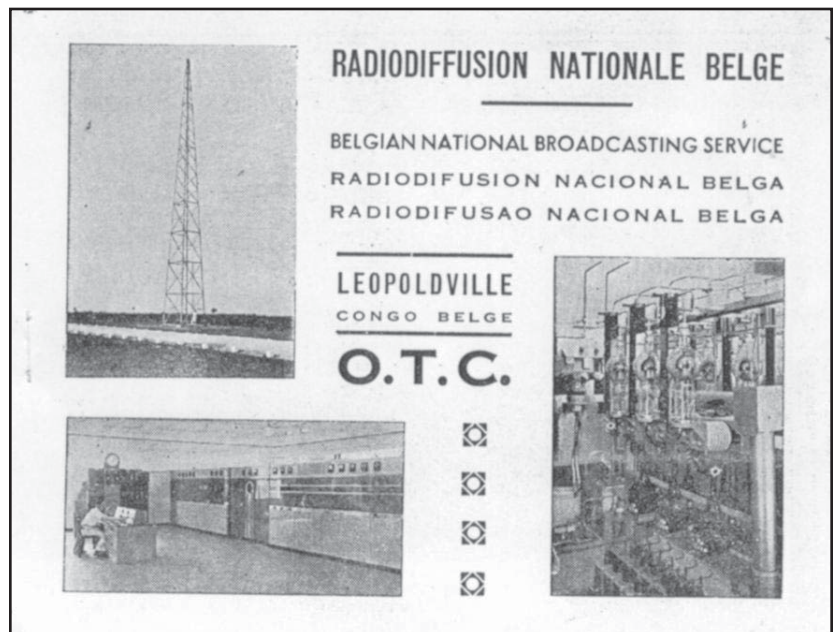
Such "tests", however, were not common on shortwave broadcasters, for various reasons. What did become popular - for a time - were the presentation of DX programmes for the keen listeners. The more well-known of these were well scheduled at regular intervals, on set days and times.

In my memory, first and most significant was Sweden Calling DXers, which had a signature tune and welcomed cassette tapes of the most important catches by listeners. Yours truly had tapes aired on Radio Sweden of my Indonesian catches, made while living in England. I also had the great pleasure of meeting the legendary Swedish DXer and programme presenter, Arne Skoog, who visited London back in those days.

The next best-known programme came from the old Belgian Congo; station OTC in Leopoldville, then the capital. Easily recognisable by its drumming and announcement, "OTC calling DXers - everywhere", it had - like Radio Sweden - a regular, powerful signal around the world.

These two stations dominated the airwaves as far as DX programmes were concerned. A faint shadow of such broadcasts can be found today in the regular page in this journal, edited by Ernest Riley, under the title "Media Programs". These programmes vary a lot in style and content, but will give you some idea of the past.

Very rarely, these days, there may be a special arranged SW broadcast for DX fans. Such an example



was last November's well-publicized Radio St. Helena broadcast. These used to be yearly events a few years ago. An extra bonus of this broadcast is that it is the only choice of logging the country - important if you are a country "collector".

Until next time. Tom



Elijah being taken up to heaven. A painted ceiling by Winter Carl Hansson, 1777-1805, in an old farmhouse near Rättvik.

Among the strangest blossoms of Swedish popular art are the paintings made a hundred years ago by peasant painters in the province of Dalecarlia, in the heart of Sweden. Their motifs were mostly taken from the Old Testament, whose dramatic tales they pictured as happening in their own everyday surroundings. The naive art of the Dalecarlian painters flourished in a geographical isolation which has long since been broken down. Yet in the midst of the busy present the past lives on in Sweden - the country which sends you this greeting from Scandinavia through **RADIO SWEDEN**.