

SHORTWAVE BULLETIN

Issue no. 1673 Aug 9 2009.

Deadline e-mail next issue: 0900 SNT, Aug 23, 2009.

Efter en lång och behaglig semester pockar arbetet på igen. De flesta försöker väl nu inordna sig i leden igen och komma igång på riktigt. Semestern i år har inneburit en del farande som jag nämnt tidigare. När man sen kommer hem är det väldigt lätt att dröja sig kvar på altanen med grillning, vin och annat mys och njuta av solnedgången över Höja backe.

Till detta nummer har det kommit hela två bidrag, vilket innebär att Internet som vanligt får bidra med en del intressant information.

Kolla bl a Anker Petersens inlaga om KV:ns framtid här bredvid och en annan artikel längre fram om den exotiska ön Pitcairn Islands, signerad Adrian Peterson.

I övrigt verkar det som MV börjar komma igång så smått igen efter att signalerna under sommaren knappt nått fram. En del tror att även detta år kommer att bjuda på fina loggningar.

Keep on

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SWB-info

SWB online på HCDX: <http://www.hard-core-dx.com/swb>

Dateline Bogotá: <http://www.hard-core-dx.com/swb/Dateline.htm>

SWB hot stuff: <http://hem.ektv.nu/~ekt035221/password.htm> (länk till senaste SWB).

SWB member information: <http://www.hard-core-dx.com/swb/member.htm>

Jubileumstidskriften: <http://www.hard-core-dx.com/swb> (html- + pdf-version).

QSL, kommentarer, mm.

Christer Brunström: Jobbar för närvarande mycket hårt med "mina" länder i WRTH - arbetet skall vara klart till slutet av månaden. **Radio Bulgarien 11600 kHz** med kort, brev och frimärken.

10 YEARS LEFT FOR DOMESTIC BROADCASTING ON THE TROPICAL BANDS !

The number of Domestic broadcasting stations on the Tropical Bands (120, 90 and 60 mb) continues to go steady downwards. According to the Domestic Broadcasting Survey-11 (DBS-11), published in May 2009 by the DSWCI, 235 frequencies were heard in the frequency range of 2200 to 5800 kHz by DX-ers around the world during the past year. Countries like Brazil, Peru, China, India, Papua New Guinea and Bolivia are still dominating the Tropical Bands.

That are 23 frequencies less than the year before. Most of these stations have disappeared in South America and the Pacific. Simple calculations indicate that there will not be many left in year 2020. In March this year, I travelled through western Senegal. This flat African country dropped shortwave 15 years ago and is nowadays exclusively using FM. I heard 186 FM-transmitters in use! In addition Senegal has at least 32 stations broadcasting live audio on the internet. In this decade I have seen the same trend in Thailand, Peru and Bolivia. But because of the terrain, Peru and Bolivia still needs to use shortwave to reach some of its remote valleys and jungle areas.

The more poor countries, like the much smaller The Gambia in West Africa, can only afford a few FM-stations. I heard 12 FM-stations in addition to mediumwave. They are not yet broadcasting on the internet. Other poor countries still broadcast on shortwave, but most transmitters are in a bad maintenance state.

As editor of the DBS my task is, throughout the year until the next publication, to check the bands myself and follow the loggings from our members and other DX-ers around the world. For each frequency on the list, a note is taken of the months when it has been heard. If a station has not been heard by any DX-er during the past 12 months, it is deleted. By this measure, the DBS contains only the active domestic broadcasting stations.

With this systematic registration of broadcasting stations on the Tropical Bands each year, it is possible to make some statistics on how many frequencies were active in each region of the world and compare these numbers.

I have selected our annual Tropical Band Surveys published with 12 years intervals in 1973, 1985, 1997 and 2009, the latter is now called a part of the DBS. I have then counted the number of active Domestic Broadcasting stations between 2.200 and 5.800 kHz. International broadcasters, Clandestine and Pirate stations are not included in these statistics. I must stress that particularly International broadcasting on the Tropical Bands does not seem threatened by the trend mentioned above. But the future for International broadcasting on 75 and 49-11 mb is outside the scope of this analysis.

Active domestic transmitters on 2200 - 5800 kHz

Region	1973	1985	1997	2009
Central Africa	102	76	40	18
Southern Africa	57	39	33	8
Middle East	9	4	1	0
Indian Subcontinent	62	45	45	29
South East Asia	40	29	21	4
Indonesia	171	105	65	13
China, Taiwan, Mongolia	119	110	75	32
CIS (former USSR)	61	59	47	7
Far East	38	28	28	9
Papua New Guinea	17	20	20	15
Australia and other Pacific	10	4	13	8
Central America, Mexico	21	23	24	5
Caribbean	29	3	3	2
Northwestern South America	98	41	19	3
Ecuador	47	33	22	5
Peru	78	69	78	28
Bolivia	35	42	25	14
Brazil	107	87	67	35
Southern South America	5	2	1	0
Total	1106	819	627	235

Stations on the Tropical Bands which have closed down in 2007-2008, including International stations and Clandestines:

kHz	kW	Station	Country	Last log
2368,5	1	R Symban, Peats Ridge, Gosford	Australia	JUN08
2460	-	Super R Alvorada, R. Branco, AC	Brazil	SEP07
3235	0,5	R Guaruja Paulista, Marilia, SP	Brazil	JUN08
3266,4	10	RRI Gorontalo, CG	Indonesia	DEC07
3270	100	WWRB, Manchester, Tennessee	USA [just QSY --- gh]	OCT08
3291,1	10	Voice of Guyana, Sparendam	Guyana	JUL07
3355	10	R Simbu, Kundiawa	Papua N. Guinea	OCT07
3375	5	R Educadora, Guajara Mirim, RO	Brazil	NOV08
3375	5	R Clube, Dourados, MS	Brazil	MAY07
3375,1	1	R San Antonio, Padua de Callalli	Peru	FEB08
3380	-	Centro Radiofonico de Imbabura	Ecuador	NOV07
3880	-	Voice of Iranian Revolution,	No. Iraq Clandestine	OCT08
3880	-	Voice of the Communist Party of Iran	Clandestine	OCT08
3935	1	ZLXA, R Reading Sce., Levin	New Zealand	NOV08
3960	100	R Racja, via Sitkunai, Lithuania	Clandestine	DEC08
3965	100	R Free Europe, via Biblis	Germany	FEB08
3975	250	Magyar R, Jaszbereny	Hungary	OCT08
4366	-	Voice of Iranian Revolution,	No. Iraq Clandestine	OCT08
4366	-	Voice of the Communist Party of Iran	Clandestine	OCT08
4523	-	R Superior, Bambamarca, Cajamarca	Peru	JAN08
4556,9	0,2	R Paititi, Guayaramerin, Beni	Bolivia	JUL07
4600,8	0,2	Perla del Acre, Cobija, Pando	Bolivia	NOV07
4655,2	-	R Centinela del Norte, Cortegana	Peru	OCT07
4675	-	Voice of Free Kurdistan	Clandestine	DEC07
4755,2	1	Pacific Missionary Aviation, Pohnpei	Micronesia	NOV07
4762,8	-	R Chicha, Tocla, Nor-Chichas, Potosi	Bolivia	OCT07
4781,6	3	R Oriental, Tena, Napo	Ecuador	DEC07
4785,1	10	R Caiari, Porto Velho, RO	Brazil	OCT07
4805	-	R San Juan, Huamanga, Ayacucho	Peru	MAY08
4830	50	R Kashmir, Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir I	ndia	SEP07
4835,6	100	R Mali, Kati, Bamako	Mali	OCT07
4874,6	10	RRI Sorong, PP	Indonesia	MAR07
4886,6	1	R Virgen del Carmen, Yananaco	Peru	JAN08
4890	40	NBC, Port Moresby Papua	N. Guinea	JUL07
4895	5	R Globo, Manaus, AM	Brazil	DEC07
4955	2,5	R Clube, Rondonopolis, MT	Brazil	AUG07

4958,1	3	R Difusora Tropico, Trinidad, Beni	Bolivia	SEP07
4960	-	50 AIR Ranchi, Jharkhand	India	MAR07
4960	1	Catholic R Network/R Maria, Vanimo	Papua N.Guinea	JAN08
4990,9	5	R Ancash, Huaraz, Ancash	Peru	NOV07
5005,8	1	Radio LTC, Juliaca, San Roman, Puno	Peru	DEC07
5010	1	HRMI, La Voz de Misiones Int.	Honduras	APR07
5019,8	5	R Horizonte, Chachapoyas, AM	Peru	JAN08
5026	10	R Uganda, Kampala	Uganda	MAR07
5030	20	University Network, Cahuita	Costa Rica	OCT07
5040	10	R Difusora Catolica Cultural, Macas	Ecuador	AUG07
5040	-	Hrvatski R, Deanovec, Spurious	Croatia	JUL07
5040,6	50	Myanma R, Yangon, Yegu	Myanmar	APR08
5050	0,4	Yolnu R/ARDS, Humpty Doo	Australia	DEC07
5470	10	R Veritas, Monrovia	Liberia	OCT07
5544,6	-	R San Andres, Cutervo, Cajamarca	Peru	JUL07
5602,6	-	R La Voz de los Andes, El Higueron	Peru	OCT07

(Anker Petersen-DEN, dswci DXW July 21 via BC-DX via DXLD) sic without accents, with commas instead of decimals (gh)

Loggen

(UTC)

July 1 to July 29 - Band Scan-

2310	VL8A Alice Springs NT [Wilkner]
2325	VL8T Tennant Creek NT [Wilkner]
2379.9	Radio Educadora de Limeira. [Wilkner]
2485	VL8K Katherine NT [Wilkner]
3200	TWR Swaziland 0000 [Wilkner]
3204.5	Radio West Sepik, Vanimo [Wilkner]
3220	HCJB Pifo [Wilkner]
3250	Radio Luz y Vida, San Luis [Wilkner]
3240	TWR Swaziland 0000 [Wilkner]
3255	Radio Educadora 6 de Agosto, Xapuri
3260	Radio Madang, Madang [Wilkner]
3275	Radio Southern Highlands [Wilkner]
3279.6	La Voz del Napo Tena [Wilkner]
3290	Radio Central, Boroko [Wilkner]
3309.98	R Mosoj Chaski, Cochabamba [Wilkner]
3315	Radio Manus, Lorengau [Wilkner]
3325	Radio Buka, Kuba Papua New Guinea [Wilkner]
3335	Radio East Sepik, Wewak
3329.53	Ondas del Huallaga, Huánuco [Wilkner]
3340	Radio Misiones Internacionales Comayagüela [Wilkner]
3344.9	Radio Northern [Wilkner]
3375.32	R Municipal São Gabriel da Cachoeira /drifted up in fqy [Wilkner]
3385	Radio East New Britain Rabaul
3396	ZBC, Guinea fowl, Gweru, 0000 - 4828 seem off recently [Wilkner]
4451.2	Radio Santa Ana, Santa Ana de Yacuma 2330 fade in to 2345 +, as signal improves station signs off often 2350v.. Mx with om dj, good CP program, /Aug 6 Bolivian Independence Day/, 24, 25, 26 July [Wilkner]
4699.32	Radio San Miguel, Riberalta
4750	t. Radio Peace South Sudan 0330 to 0400* with audio fading in an out. Thanks Scott Barbour! 183 Saarland strong same time, 198 BBC . 27 July [Wilkner]
4790.10	Radio Visión Chiclayo has been back for two days, same transmitter hum as before.
4828	VOZ Zimbabwe seems on, while 3396 seems off.
4894.91t.	Radio Novo Tempo, Campo Grande PR, 1000 to 1025 Portuguese om very weak noted 28 July and other days [Wilkner]
4905.01	Radio Anhanguera, Araguaína 1000 but first Brasil to fadeout 24, 27 and 28 July [Wilkner]
4976	Radio Uganda, Kampala, with om 0320 but high band noise. 27 July [Wilkner]
5035	Radio Aparecida, Aparecida 0320 to 0330 with Portuguese om and string music and vocal, better this time than at 1000. 27 July [Wilkner]

ECUADOR. HCJB GLOBAL VOICE MOVES UP END DATE OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTS FROM ECUADOR

The end date for international broadcasts from Radio Station HCJB in Ecuador has been moved up as the missionary radio ministry defines new strategies for future outreach.

Anticipating the opening of the new Quito airport near the station's international transmitter site in Pifo, staff members have already dismantled all but 14 antennas and towers. Present shortwave broadcasts in Portuguese, Spanish, German and indigenous languages, including Quichua, had earlier been announced to end no later than April 1, 2010. These international broadcasts will cease between September and November 2009.

Announcing the earlier closure date of Pifo, Graham Bulmer, HCJB Global's director for the Latin America Region, said, "These times stretch us, causing us both to doubt and to grow in faith and hopefully drive us to confess our dependence on God. We believe He is guiding us. We hold all things with open hands and pursue understanding of what God expects of us as stewards of the resources of His kingdom."

The Pifo closure will impact Radio Station HCJB's Quichua Language Service with some programming moving from the shortwave frequencies to local AM and FM channels. Investigations are also being made regarding the possibility of transferring HCJB-2, the ministry's 37-year-old FM station in Guayaquil (Ecuador's largest city), into the hands of local partners.

The mission's newer strategy, begun in the 1990s, has been to reduce its emphasis on shortwave in Latin America while focusing on "radio planting" or assisting local ministries realize their dream of beginning a Christian radio ministry. More than 300 local stations have been helped in these endeavors worldwide, including about 60 in Latin America. HCJB Global also continues to expand its training ministries across the region.

"The way people consume media has changed," said HCJB Global President Wayne Pederson. "So we have the opportunity to change to delivery systems such as satellite, FM Internet and podcasting. The closing of shortwave in Latin America is strategic because of the planting of local FM radio stations across the region and around the world. These stations are staffed and programmed by local believers who can speak to the culture in their own communities."

Pederson recently told the staff that a high priority for the mission is its initiative for Latin America called Corrientes that launches in October. The coalition of more than 10 Christian organizations involves training Latin Americans for bi-vocational mission work around the world. (HCJB Global Weekly News Update Aug 3-7, via John Wesley Smith, Aug 7, DXLD)

?? Previous reports were that HCJB would *not really* totally end SW from Ecuador, but instead keep going with Quichua (on 49 and 90m?) from the AM 690 site which is not being removed --- but contradicted in the above item. Is this just like the fact that HCJB did *not really* end SW in English, but kept broadcasting `Spotlight` within the Spanish service? And DX Partyline did *not really* end as originally planned, but kept going via Australia, WWCR, WRMI, etc.? (Glenn Hauser, DX LISTENING DIGEST) DRM with VOA: DIGITAL BROADCASTING

KENYA: Media Network, By Andy Sennitt, July 29 2009

The **Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC)** is to stop using short and medium wave frequencies so as to save on costs, writes Dennis Itumbi for journalism.co.za. Information Permanent Secretary Dr Bitange Ndemo said the frequencies were consuming too much power and were already overtaken by technological advances.

The national broadcaster has also committed to reduce its power bills by at least Shs. 25 million (\$330,000) as a way of dealing with its debts. After a meeting with the Parliamentary committee on Energy, Communication and Information, he said a review of spending at the KBC would be conducted so as to make it more competitive.

(Source: journalism.co.za) (Mike Terry via DXLD)

NEW ZEALAND. ZLM, Taupo Maritime Radio verified my S-mail report with 1 IRC after 277 days via E-mail by word format QSL. The verifier was Mr. Peter Baird, radio operator. Address: Maritime Operations Centre, Kordia Ltd., Avalon Office, 6th Floor, Avalon Business Centre, Percy Cameron Street, Lower Hutt 5011, New Zealand --- E-mail: maritime @ kordia.co.nz, FAX: +64 4 914 8334

URL: http://www.kordiamaritime.com/services_maritime_operations_centre_moc_42.aspx

They are using Redifon-SPT HF 1000 transmitter with 1kW, and Spiracone Antenna, located 38 52S 176 26E.

The schedules are as follows; all on LSB/USB

1333 Coastal Navigational Warnings, Synopsis, Forecasts and Warnings for the New Zealand Coast and 1200 Coastal Reports 2207, 4146, 6224
1503* Oceanic, Navigational and Meteorological Warnings in force for Navarea XIV; Synopsis and Forecast for high seas area Southern 6224, 12356
1533* Repeat of 1503 broadcast 8297, 16531
1733 Coastal Navigational Warnings, Synopsis, Forecasts and Warnings for the New Zealand Coast and 1500 Coastal Reports 2207, 4146, 6224
2003 1800 Coastal reports for Shipping 2207, 4146, 6224
2103* Oceanic, Navigational and Meteorological Warnings in force for Navarea XIV, Synopses and Forecasts for high seas areas Subtropic, Forties and Pacific 6224, 12356
2133* Repeat of 2103 broadcast 8297, 16531
0003 2100 Coastal reports for Shipping 2207, 4146, 6224
0133 Coastal Navigational Warnings, Synopsis, Forecasts and Warnings for the New Zealand Coast and 0000 Coastal Reports 2207, 4146, 6224
0303* Oceanic, Navigational and Meteorological Warnings in force for Navarea XIV; Synopsis and Forecast for high seas area Southern 6224, 12356
0333* Repeat of 0303 broadcast 8297, 16531
0433 Coastal Navigational Warnings, Synopsis, Forecasts and Warnings for the New Zealand Coast and 0300 Coastal Reports 2207, 4146, 6224
0803 0600 Coastal reports for Shipping 2207, 4146, 6224
0903* Oceanic, Navigational and Meteorological Warnings in force for Navarea XIV, Synopses and Forecasts for high seas areas Subtropic, Forties and Pacific 6224, 12356
0933* Repeat of 0903 broadcast 8297, 16531
* Oceanic Warnings and Forecasts broadcast one hour later when daylight saving [sic] time is in force (last Sunday in September to first Sunday in April). (Takahito Akabayashi, Japan, July 23, DX LISTENING DIGEST) Times UT or local?

Övriga radionyheter

Re DXLD 9-055, it so happens that Adrian Peterson recently rebroadcast his Pitcairn radio history. It does not get into the more recent developments of sexual abuse involving many of the islanders as in DXLD 4-169 and <http://articles.latimes.com/2004/nov/07/world/fg-pitcairn7>

The Pitcairn Story - 01:03

Pitcairn Island, down there somewhere in the South Pacific, is one of the most isolated islands in the world, and it would vie with Easter Island as the loneliest island on our planet. A map of the world would show us that Pitcairn is situated five thousand miles from Australia and four thousand miles from South America.

This lonely, remote island is a rocky out-crop jutting up from the floor of the deep Pacific Ocean. It has an area of just two square miles, and its highest hill, Lookout Point, is just eleven hundred feet above sea level.

Pitcairn is never visited by plane, and seldom by ship. Its main source of income is from the sale of their beautifully colored postage stamps, and also from locally made curios and handicrafts. In more recent time, they have made some income from the sale of foodstuffs, including bottles of Pitcairn Honey.

The saga of Pitcairn Island, and the drama regarding the mutiny of the Bounty, have often been chronicled in books and magazines, and portrayed on stage and theater screen as well as on TV. In fact, Marlon Brando portrayed the now notorious Fletcher Christian in the 1962 Hollywood movie, "Mutiny on the Bounty".

Archaeological research indicates that the first inhabitants on Pitcairn Island were Polynesian peoples who came in, probably from Mangareva Island, some three hundred miles to the northwest. The available evidence would suggest that the Polynesians brought in bread fruit trees, and bananas, and other fruit trees and they must have stayed on Pitcairn for a lengthy period of time, even several centuries. Early Polynesian legends tell of visits to Pitcairn, but apparently they all migrated elsewhere before the arrival of the first European explorers.

Interestingly, a small stone statue, with its back to the sea, was found on Pitcairn by the first European settlers more than two hundred years ago. This stone statue reminds us of the similar, though much larger, stone statues, found on distant Easter Island.

Pitcairn Island was discovered by the English navigator Philip Carteret in 1767 and it was named in honor of Midshipman Pitcairn who was the first to sight the island. The island lay dormant on the navigation charts of the Pacific for a third of a century.

In the year 1790, nine mutineers from HMS "Bounty" together with eighteen Tahitian men and women, landed ashore at Bounty Bay on the north-eastern edge of Pitcairn Island. They removed everything possible from the ship and then burned the hull; and in this way they turned their backs on the rest of the world.

Forty years later, when a drought threatened the Pitcairners, they were all removed to Tahiti, but during the following year, they all returned. Then, a quarter century later again, when the population grew too large, the entire colony was transferred to Norfolk Island. However, two or three years after that, several families began to return to Pitcairn Island. It was in the year 1890 that the islanders established the Seventh-day Adventist church building in the main square area of Adamstown, Pitcairn Island.

Beginning in 1926, postage stamps from New Zealand were in use on Pitcairn Island. The first Pitcairn postage stamps were issued in 1940, and the first post office was constructed during the following year. Just three years ago, new coins were minted for Pitcairn Island but these are more for the interest of coin collectors than for circulation on the island.

The population on Pitcairn Island reached a peak of 223 in 1937; and today, the total population is less than fifty. A large number of the Pitcairners are licensed amateur radio operators; and telephone contact with the outside world is nowadays maintained by satellite.

Radio Stations on Lonely Pitcairn Island - 07:44

The story of radio broadcasting on Pitcairn Island is also a very interesting saga and it dates from the very earliest times. We go back to the very beginning and this is what happened.

During a voyage across the Pacific in the year 1921, the New Zealand ship "Rimutaka" stopped at Pitcairn Island and the captain handed a Morse Code message on a card to the island Magistrate, Mr Fred Christian. Several islanders showed an interest in this card, including the young man, Andrew Young. He determined that he would learn how to signal passing ships at night by flashing them in Morse Code, using a flashlight.

After a lot of practice at learning Morse Code, Andrew was successful one night in flashing a message to a passing ship and the ship's radio operator replied in a similar manner. This ship was thus the first to stop at Pitcairn Island through the usage of Morse Code.

The Marconi Company in England heard about this event and during the following year they sent out two crystal set receivers and a small spark transmitter. However, the islanders were unsuccessful in operating the equipment; and some time later the captain of another ship from New Zealand sent his radio operator ashore to fix the problem. Soon afterwards, another passing ship, the "Corinthic", was contacted by wireless for the very first time, using the re-vitalized Marconi equipment.

During the year 1926, Robert Hare, an Adventist pastor from New Zealand, took a small 12 volt spark coil transmitter to Pitcairn Island and this was in use for a short while in making contact with passing ships. This equipment was rated at ¼ kW and it was powered by an engine from a motor vehicle. However, petrol was in short supply on Pitcairn and the equipment was in use for only a short period of time.

In January 1937, the radio operator on board the schooner "Yankee", Allan Eurich, spent a week on Pitcairn Island during the ship's second world tour. He investigated the radio equipment on the island, and subsequently wrote an article that was published in "QST Magazine". This article created a great interest in the United States and two men, Granville Lindley and Lewis Bellem, assembled a quantity of radio equipment that was donated by eighteen different radio companies. It was carried to Pitcairn Island by another New Zealand ship, this time the "Rangitata".

This ship arrived off the coast of Pitcairn Island at 8:20 pm during a thunderstorm. However, on March 1, 1938, the two men, Lindley and Bellem, went ashore at Bounty Bay and they brought ashore four and a half tons of radio equipment, as well as a package of QSL cards, and a batch of radio envelopes. The radio equipment was set up and the station went on the air four days later, and it was officially inaugurated on March 18, 1938.

Originally, the callsign in use for amateur transmissions was VR6A, though shortly afterwards, the callsign was amended to VR6AY, with the letters AY indicating the operator, Andrew Young. Officially, the callsign for use with the relay of broadcast programming was PITC, but there is very little evidence that this callsign was ever in use on air.

The first transmissions from Pitcairn were amateur in nature and the fortunate first QSO contact was with amateur station W8CNA in the United States. Other amateur QSO contacts followed quite quickly.

The first commercial tests on 15320 kHz were made a few days later in contact with the RCA communication station located at Bolinas in California. These original tests were made with KKW on 13780 kHz and KKR on 15460 kHz. The antenna on Pitcairn was a rhombic beamed on San Francisco.

During the month of April, three radio broadcasts, quite short in duration, were made from Pitcairn Island to NBC in the United States. Interestingly on a subsequent occasion, everybody on the island was ready to make a choir broadcast when suddenly a ship was sighted off the coast. This event interrupted the choir broadcast, which was never again re-staged.

When the American engineers left the island on May 5, the radio station was left under the complete control of Andrew Young. At this stage, the major usage of the radio equipment was for amateur QSOs, and for communication with nearby shipping.

Six months later, the first subsequent delivery of mail came in by steamer, including a total of five hundred reception reports addressed to the radio station VR6AY.

Early in the next year, 1939, the radio equipment began to develop faults; first the battery charger and then the transmitter itself. Some of these problems were corrected by radio officers on passing ships, but ultimately in the spring, the faulty equipment was loaded onto a ship and taken to amateur station NY2AE in the Panama Canal Zone for repair. Towards the end of this same year, the radio equipment was loaded back onto another ship bound for the Pacific, and for Pitcairn.

At this stage, Admiral Richard Byrd, who was now on his third expedition to Antarctica, stopped at Pitcairn Island for two days and dropped off some much needed food for the islanders. His radio officers also repaired the receivers still in use on Pitcairn.

After an absence of nine months, the radio station was re-installed on Pitcairn, and re-activated, still under the same callsign VR6AY. However, by this time hostilities had broken out in Europe at the beginning of World War 2, and events in the Pacific took another turn. We will present the second episode of "Radio Broadcasting on Pitcairn Island" on another occasion.

In the meantime, we should say that these days, the QSL cards verifying radio station PITC-VR6AY, as well as the associated radio envelopes, are valuable collector's items. There were two printings of the original QSL card, one as VR6A, and one as VR6AY; and both versions are highly prized.

The Unfinished Story of Radio Broadcasting on Pitcairn Island - 01.03

In our program last week, you heard two aspects of information about Pitcairn Island; the introductory story of the island and its people, and the early wireless years on the island. In that program, you heard about the early usage of wireless for communication with nearby shipping, and also the story of the radio station with the double callsign, VR6AY-PITC, which was in use for amateur communication and also for occasional relay broadcasts to the United States. Today, we continue with additional information in this interesting saga as we present the story of radio broadcasting on Pitcairn Island.

We go back to the epic year 1939. There was trouble over there in Europe, the ambitious American National Geographic Expedition to Pitcairn Island was cancelled, and the low power 60 watt shortwave transmitter VR6AY was still on the air, though not heard widely.

There was an amateur radio operator in New Zealand by the name of Nelson Dyett, with the callsign ZL2FR. He had married a Pitcairn girl and he volunteered to go out to isolated Pitcairn Island, to take his own amateur radio equipment, and install it on the island. This project was granted approval by the New Zealand navy.

Four men went to Pitcairn for this project, and they constructed a hut for use as the radio station and they installed all of the radio station equipment. This station was in use for communication with nearby shipping and with New Zealand, and it was known variously as a station operated by the British navy or the New Zealand navy. It was identified in radio magazines as VR6AY, the older licensed amateur callsign, and VR6AA, the amateur callsign that Dyett used on Pitcairn.

However, give three more years, and the New Zealand navy sent out additional radio equipment on a ship that broke down in mid ocean and had to be towed back to Auckland in New Zealand. A few weeks later, in May 1944, the vital radio equipment was delivered to Pitcairn, and a contingent of men constructed buildings and installed equipment, which included 2 transmitters, 2 receivers, 2 diesel generators, and a rhombic antenna system. This station was now noted on air under the callsign ZKG.

Later in the same year, the station was upgraded with additional equipment which included meteorological equipment for weather forecasting. When Pitcairn Radio was heard on air with weather information, the callsign was noted as ZBF.

As circumstances would have it, additional shortwave equipment from New Zealand was installed in 1952, and the callsign of Pitcairn Radio was changed to ZBP. Soon afterwards, plans were implemented for the use of station ZBP as a radio broadcasting station for coverage of nearby islands throughout the Pacific areas. The prestigious World Radio TV Handbook listed the scheduling for the broadcast of this planned programming, though there are no known monitoring reports of any actual program broadcasts from ZBP.

However, in 1962, the radio station was again completely rebuilt, and plans were announced once again for the broadcast of radio programming for coverage of nearby Pacific islands; and once again, there are no known monitoring reports of any radio broadcasts from this station.

Well, in 1985, the station was once again upgraded, but this time no plans were announced for radio broadcasting. However, international radio monitors in New Zealand and the United States noted that they heard Pitcairn Radio, ZBP, with a musical identification signal and bird chirps, before moving into phone traffic to New Zealand.

In 1994, the station was closed in favor of satellite communication with New Zealand. An attempt was made to stage a final radio broadcast from the station, but the government authorities would not permit. So, Pitcairn Radio, with all of its varied forms of equipment and its usage of half a dozen callsigns over the years, quietly left the air, never to return.

However, there is yet more to this story. David Ricquish in New Zealand informs us that the New Zealand air Force installed a 50 watt mediumwave transmitter on the island in January 1978, and that it was on the air with general traffic for the South Pacific for just five days.

In addition, there was in reality, a series of test broadcasts radiated from Pitcairn Island as a preliminary to establishing a regular radio broadcasting service. At the end of the year 1961 and the early part of 1962, a series of test broadcasts was on the air from amateur station VR6AC, operated by Floyd McCoy. Programming consisted of re-broadcasts of the religious program, "Voice of Prophecy", taken from the large discs produced in Los Angeles, California. One listener in the United States was honored to receive a QSL letter from VR6AC verifying his reception of these broadcasts.

Then, four years later again, there was a repeat attempt at test broadcasts from VR6AC, and these were noted again in the United States. However, due to the difficult logistics that would be involved, no permanent radio broadcasting service was ever established on Pitcairn Island.

So, there really was radio broadcasting from Pitcairn Island, and it occurred on three separate occasions. Back in the year 1938, there was a short series of program broadcasts from station PITC as a relay to the NBC network in the United States via KKW at the RCA radio station located at Bolinas in California. Then, in 1961 and 1966, there were two additional attempts at radio broadcasting from the island with the launching of two series of test broadcasts from amateur station VR6AC.

It should be added, that QSLs do exist for these brief bursts of radio broadcasting from this lonely and isolated volcanic outcrop in the South Pacific, known to us all as Pitcairn Island. Many QSL cards have been issued by Floyd McCoy for amateur QSO contacts from his station VR6AC. In addition, there were two printings of the QSL card issued for station PITC. The first card, with a known print run of 1500 copies, shows the callsign VR6A. The second printing gives the callsign as VR6AY and it is probable that a total of 1500 cards were printed in this batch also.

The VR6A & VR6AY QSL cards show the radio equipment in use and also a map of the Pacific showing the location of Pitcairn Island. These unique QSL cards command a very good price when sold on eBay. Back in the middle of last century, some of these cards were sold as tourist items to passengers on visiting ship. The cards are stamped with New Zealand postage stamps and they were cancelled with the Pitcairn Island cancellation (Adrian Peterson, IN, AWR Wavescan scripts July 5 and 12, 2009 via DXLD)