



Intro to QSLing p7

September 2007

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Don't Miss Our Next Meeting!
September 20th at
Holder's Country Inn
998 South De Anza Blvd., San Jose, Ca.

Featuring a presentation on
The 2007 BS7H Scarborough Reef
DXpedition from Bob Vallio, W6RGG



Also a very special prize raffle – See page 5 for details

Don't forget we will have QSL Card checking at the Sept. meeting. ★

Be sure to take advantage of this great service to our members!

Be sure to stop by our NCDXC information table at this year's Pacificon Oct. 19th-21st in San Ramon. Contact Carolyn, WB6ABC for more details. For advanced tickets and general event info visit the Pacificon website at <http://www.pacificon.org>.



Got something to sell? Looking to add a tuner to your shack? ... Check our Swap Shop p. 4

Northern California DX Club

Club Officers:

President: John Eisenberg, K6YP
Vice Pres: Risto Kotalampi, W6RK
Secretary: Craig Bradley, AE6RR
Treasurer: Steve Jones, N6SJ
Director: Curt Kolovson, W6RQ
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California Award: Robert Bickel, K6FX
Records Manager: Ron Panton, W6VG
Publications Mgr: Ron Panton, W6VG

Club Repeater W6TI/R
Frequency/offset: 147.360 Mhz +, pl 110.9
Trustee: Bob Vallio, W6RGG
Control Operator: Robert Smithwick, W6CS
Maintenance: Peter Grabosky, W6OOL
Club simplex: 147.54 MHz (suggested)
Thurs. Net OTR: 8 pm local time.
Net Manager: Kristen McIntyre, K6WX
DX News: Net Control Operator
Swap Shop: Jim Abraham, W6EB

W6TI DX Bulletins:

W6TI Station Trustee Bob Vallio, W6RGG, transmits DX information at 0200 UT every Monday (Sunday evening local time) on both 7.016 and 14.002 MHz.

Club address: NCDXC
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President's Message

Dear NCDXC member,

Thank goodness it's September and the summer doldrums will be ending soon. As noted elsewhere in this issue, there is a plethora of upcoming opportunities to work some new ones or fill in needed band modes. I am looking forward to the 3C7Y operation in October as Equatorial Guinea is an all time new one for me. I plan to do a little antenna work and be at the radio when Elmo EA5BYP and his team are on the air from 3 Charlie.

Don't forget that our September meeting will be held at Holder's Country Inn on Sunnyvale Saratoga Road just across the street from the big Home Depot store. It promises to be a great meeting. Bob Vallio W6RGG organizer and co-leader of the recent BS7H expedition to Scarborough Reef will reveal the details of how he and his team pulled off this difficult and dangerous operation. I'm sure that you have seen pictures from BS7H. Now you can find out what was involved in getting the license, finding transportation, building the required scaffolds on which to operate, fending off Filipino pirates and making over 45000 Q's under difficult circumstances. The raffle at this meeting will also be a special one. Please plan to attend.

If you have not paid your dues now is the time. Your club is working hard to increase the number of useful services provided to members and to attract new Dxcers. Dues are \$24 for individuals, \$39 for families and \$16 for absentee members. If you have suggestions for new member services, please get in touch with me, or any other club officer or director. The goal is to fold in new services like QSL checking and the outgoing QSL BURRO and phase out some things that have generated little recent interest. Your guidance and support is needed to help make the club a fun vibrant organization that helps you achieve your DX goals. We will be having a booth at Pacificon in October. Please stop by and say hello.

Best 73 and DX,

John K6YP



Sable Island DXpedition

Duane, WV2B, has announced that a group is in the early stages of planning a **DXpedition** to **Sable Island** during 2009. Currently, there are four operators mentioned: Duane WV2B (CW/SSB), Rich AI5P (CW/SSB), Dick VE1AI (CW/SSB) and Scott KA3QLF (RTTY/SSB).

The callsign to be used is **CY0ZZ**. Activity will be on 160-6 meters and they plan to have a minimum of 3 stations on the air. A dedicated 6 meter station is a possibility. QSL routes are: AI5P/CY0 via AI5P, CY0ZZ via KA3QLF or VK4AAR for VK, JA, etc. stations.

The team is looking for sponsors to help them cover the large cost of chartering the Britain Norman Islander aircraft which must be used to land on the beach at Sable Island. The cost of this charter alone will be nearly \$10,000.

Further information is available on their Web site at: <http://www.sabledx.com>.

A Real Blast From The Past ...

Here is an advertisement that ran in a 1953 issue of CQ magazine announcing the 5th Joint Northern and Southern California DX Club's Conference. It promised a real old-fashioned DX round-up! The Fresno hotel where the conference was held was built in 1923 and is still standing today, although no longer used as a commercial hotel. It would have offered attendees the finest rooms available in the city at that time. Do we have any members who were present at this conference? If so, drop me a note with your recollections of the event. We can share these in an upcoming issue.

JOINT DX CONFERENCE

The 5th (AND GREATEST) Joint DX conference of the Northern and Southern California DX Clubs, sponsored by the Southern California DX Club, will be held on January 16th and 17th, 1954 at the Hotel Californian, Fresno, California.

DX men from everywhere are cordially invited and urged to attend this real, old fashioned DX round up. Things will start happening at 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon: the banquet should start about 8:30 PM; several prominent, selected speakers will bring a few thousand words, and the Polynesian Room, well . . . it closes late. Sunday breakfast, if you want any, will be informal.

Drop a line to W6ENV, 4539 Beck Ave., North Hollywood, Calif., telling of your intention to join the gang. Hotel accommodations may be requested at the same time, or handled directly with the hotel in Fresno.



Hotel Californian, Fresno, Ca.

A special thanks to Dick Letrick, W6KM for the article.

SWAP SHOP



FOR SALE - Icom IC-781 in excellent condition. Factory replaced CRT display with LCD display. Instruction manual, service manual and schematics. Original shipping box. Asking \$1,500. Available for pick-up only. No shipping. Contact: David Pugatch, KI6WF (510) 527-1043 ki6wf@comcast.net

FOR SALE – Icom IC-718 in perfect condition. Only 1 yr old in original box with hand mic. \$475 Contact: Phil Steffora, K6PTS (650) 793-4970 phil@k6pts.com

FREE - AEA Isopole 2 Meter Antenna & 5 Element 2 Meter Yagi Antenna free for pickup. Contact Dick Letrick, W6KM (408) 267-2624. Take advantage of this great deal.

New DXer Mail List

Are you new to DXing? Have questions? Need an Elmer? Post your questions to the new dxer email list. newdxer@ncdxc.org

Club Calendar

September 20th – Club Meeting
October 18th – Club Meeting
November 15th – Club Meeting
December – Stay tuned for Christmas Party Details

Secretary's Report:

This is my first Secretary's report since taking office at the picnic.

First of all, I would like to thank the members of the NCDXC for electing me to the office. I consider this a great honor. I will do my best to maintain the NCDXC as one of the premiere DX Clubs in the country. I will also work with the other officers to continue to make improvements and attract new members.

I have enjoyed meeting many of you at the meetings over the last couple of years and recently at the picnic which was very enjoyable. It was great to have Dr. Jon, W6FEL available to check cards (including my 150 endorsement for Mixed). Dr. Jon also rejoined the club at the picnic. Please welcome him back. I am looking forward to another great year for the NCDXC and to seeing everyone at the September meeting.

You should have all received the President's annual letter in the mail recently. If you did not, please send me an email. The letter was mailed to the current online roster.

That's all for this month, back to DXing (3B7C would be nice), I only have 187 to go...

73,
Craig, AE6RR

OUTGOING QSL SERVICE

The NCDXC will be helping members submit their outgoing Bureau QSL cards. Simply bring your cards to a meeting. There is no charge for postage or submission to the buro. All expenses are covered by the club. Be sure to bring a piece of paper with your name, address, call and ARRL member number along with your cards. We take care of the rest!





NCDXC September Meeting

Thursday, September 20th

**6pm – 7:30pm Dinner/Social - 7:30pm Club Meeting
Featured Presentation – Bob Vallio - BS7H Scarborough Reef**



***** NEW LOCATION *****

**Holder's Country Inn
998 South De Anza Blvd.,
San Jose, CA 95129 - (408) 244 2798**

We will be having a special raffle for a Kenwood TS-930S Transceiver which has 250W output with a built in Power Supply and built in Automatic Antenna Tuner (with the Instruction Manual and Service Manual).

Also included with this unit is a second TS-930 that needs work or for parts, as it has Receive function only. There will be other small prizes as well.



Suggestions for DX Pile-ups - by Uncle DX

1. The DX station operators are in charge of any pile-up.
2. The DX station should make and adhere to their operating rules quietly and respectfully.
3. The DX station should use, when appropriate, call areas and areas of the world for better accuracy, rate and order.
4. The DX station should use split operation and spread stations out, keeping in mind others not in the pile-ups. A must.
5. The DX station should give their call sign at least every 10 minutes and maintain a pattern especially when ending a QSO.
6. The DX station should create a rhythm or timing which maintains a good rate and allows the pile-up to call at the right time.
7. The operators in the pile-up, if not sure of a QSO, should dupe and the DX operator continue not wasting time commenting.
8. The DX station should work those who will create the fastest rate, at least at first, then make an effort to work the weaker stations.
9. No one should lecture on the air.
10. Everyone should always require and give full calls.
11. Know and practice the gray line.
12. Know the equipment being operated such as the split button, audio levels, keying wave form, etc.
13. NEVER be a "KC Cop"....never.
14. Operators giving spots on a DX Cluster should insure their accuracy!
15. Keep away from personal, political, and religious comment any time on the air and/or the DX Cluster. Keep all comments in the true spirit of ham radio whereby ALL ARE EQUAL.
16. Don't rush when giving your call when the DX station is standing by, especially on CW. Time will be lost trying to obtain ALL of the call sign.
17. Don't call the DX station constantly. Get in the rhythm.
18. Let the last station complete his QSO.
19. Use only the power it takes and figure out what that is!
20. Figure out the DX operator's operating practice for greater success.

These "suggestions" provided courtesy of QRZ DX and The DX Magazine,
<http://www.dxpub.com> - Used with Permission

Upcoming DXpeditions

St. Brandon Island - 3B7C - September 7th -24th, 2007
The Gambia - C56YK - September 14th - 27th, 2007
Burundi - 9U0A - September 27th - October 9th, 2007
Niue - ZK2 - September 29th -October 12th, 2007
Equatorial Guinea - 3C7Y - October 5th - 15th, 2007
Maldives - 8Q7AK - September 30th - October 12th, 2007
Chatham - ZL7 - October 17th - October 30th, 2007
Rotuma - 3D2R - November-December 2007
Ducie Island - VP6DX - February 10, 2008 (2 weeks)
Clipperton Island - FO/C - March 2008
Cocos Island - TI9 - Sometime in 2008



An Introduction and Guide to QSLing

By Craig Bradley, AE6RR

This article is intended to serve as a introduction and guide to QSLing specifically oriented to the new DXer. Hopefully, there will be some tidbits for the experienced DXers as well. This article has its roots in my talk "Zero to 100 in 18 Months" that I gave at the June meeting of the NCDXC. The slides for that talk are posted on the NCDXC web site. I plan to have additional installments of this article in future issues of the DXer.

Logging:

QSLing begins with accurate and proper logging. I highly recommend a DX oriented computer logging program such as XMLog to keep your log. A good logging program will automatically log your contacts with the correct time, date, frequency, mode, etc. It will keep track of your QSLs, DXCC (and other awards) status and print QSL labels for your cards and address labels mailing.

No matter how you do your log, it is imperative that you log your QSOs in UTC. If you send a card to a ham in a foreign country with your local time, he or she may not be able to find your QSO in the log and they will probably not take the time to figure out the time difference from your local time to their local time or UTC. In addition they will probably not understand Daylight Savings Time. When logging the date remember that the day advances to the next day at 0000 UTC (5 PM PDT or 4 PM PST), so be sure you get the correct day. The DX station probably will not find your QSO in a paper log if you have the wrong day (assuming that they will look for it or consider it a valid QSO).

QSL Cards:

Your QSL card is personal. It can be very simple or fancy with full color glossy photos, double sided and even multiple pages (fold outs). Some examples are shown in Figure 1, 2 and 3. Individual DX operators may appreciate a nice colorful card and comment on it, but QSL managers and DXpeditions don't care and probably will not even save the card. I print my own cards using a program called QSL Maker. You can download it for free at <http://www.hfradio.org/wb8rcr/>. I have used it to create double sided cards. I print one side on 8.5x11 110 lb. stock and then use a second card layout to print the back side. My card with a label printed by XMLog is shown in Figure 4. If you use double sided cards, be sure that your call letters appear on the same side as the QSO information or on both sides. QSL managers hate having to flip the card back and forth to find all of the information. Your card should also include information that the receiving station may need for awards such as your state, county, grid locator, CQ zone or IOTA number (if you operate from an IOTA island).

The cards can be filled out manually or by sticking a label on that is printed by your logging program. In either case, be sure that the QSO information includes the DX stations call letters, date, time (again in UTC), frequency or band, mode, signal report and either QSL Pse or Tnx (depending if are expecting a card back or replying to a card received). When filling out the date be sure that you use an internationally understood format. The US standard of mm/dd/yy will be confused by hams in many countries. Europe usually uses dd/mm/yy. I prefer to use alpha characters for the month such as "08-Sep-07" to avoid any confusion.





Figure 1 – Simple QSL card



Figure 2 – Fancy DXpedition card outside view

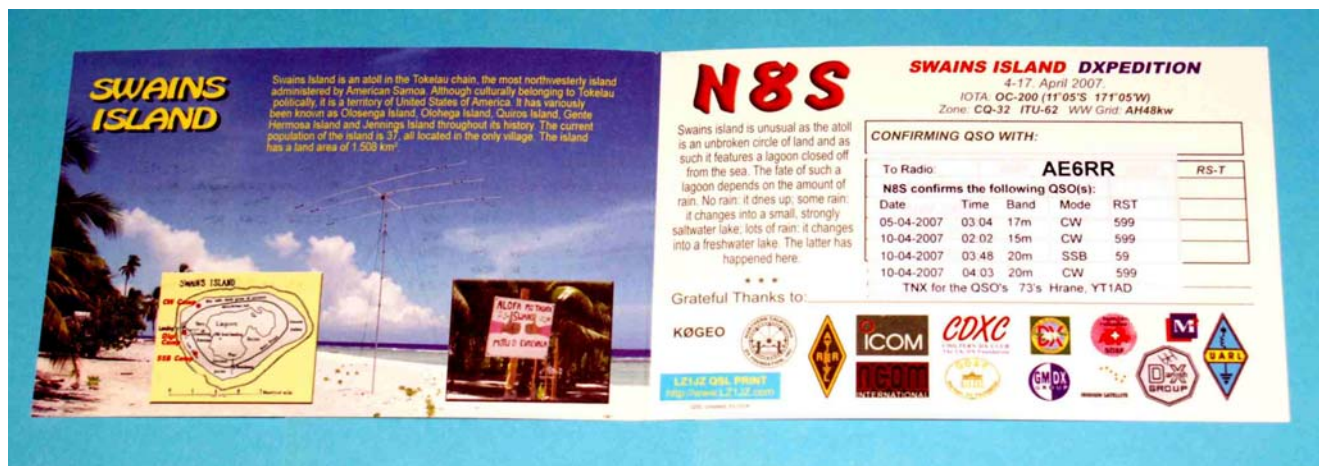


Figure 3 – Fancy DXpedition card inside view

If you are confirming multiple QSOs with the same station (assume that you worked 3B7C on 5 bands and 3 modes), you can use one card per QSO (that would be a big pack of cards with 15 QSOs!) or list multiple QSOs on one card. Many logging programs, including XMLog, will print multiple QSOs per label. XMLog will print 4 per label. See Figure 3 for an example of multiple QSOs on one label. If I have more than 4, I usually just stick several labels on one card to minimize the number of cards.

Be sure to personalize your cards by writing something on them by hand. Write your initials by the QSO info or use a stamp if you have one. I like to write a short note on the card by hand. Examples would be "Thanks for the QSO in the contest!", "Thanks for a new DXCC entity!", "Hope to see you on the bands again!", etc. You might be careful of statements like "Thanks for a new county". There is a story of one ham that received his card back with a note on it that said, "This is not a new country, my county has existed for hundreds of years!". When I first started QSLing, I received one of my cards back from a QSL manager with a yellow sticky note on it that said "John usually likes to keep cards, but your card was not personal, it did not even have initials on it". I had neglected to write anything on the card. He did include the QSL though. Ever since that day, I have always been sure to write something on the card.

Envelopes and Mailing:

Send your cards in an envelope not post card style. Number 10 security envelopes are best for mailing (Staples #511289). In many foreign countries, postal workers supplement their income by raiding the mail; they routinely hold them up to the light. They have learned that many envelopes may contain money or other valuables (such as IRCs). They have especially learned that ham radio operators in their country frequently get mail with green stamps (US \$) and IRCs (International Reply Coupons), so NEVER put the DX station's or your own call letters on the envelope. Some third world countries are so bad that all mail gets opened. In this case your only hope is that the DX operator has a QSL manager in a more disciplined country.

When addressing the card, be sure to go to <http://www.QRZ.com> (or the place where you found the address) and look for any special instruction for QSLing. Does the DX have a QSL manager? Do they prefer green stamps or IRCs? In some countries it is illegal to possess foreign currency. Do they need more than one IRC or are there any other special instructions?

When you have it all together, be sure to include a self addressed envelope with proper return postage (IRC or green stamps) if you want a card back. If the DX has an US QSL manager, you can just put a US first class stamp on the envelope. Write your call letters somewhere on the return envelope. Most QSL managers prefer it on the upper left corner in pencil. If you are worried about the postal people in that country, write your call inside the flap of the envelope. I once received one of my reply envelopes with someone else's card inside. I had forgotten to write my call on the envelope and the QSL manager had mixed up the envelopes. Be sure to put the return envelope in the outer one with the fold DOWN so the QSL manager does not cut the flap off when opening it with a letter opener (they get very irritated when they have to tape it back on). I like to use #9 peel off self seal return envelopes (Staples #570235). They fit in a #10 nicely and they will not glue themselves shut or to your card in the mail if they experience high humidity. Also, the QSL managers really like them. Imagine having to lick hundreds of envelopes!



When I stuff my envelopes, I turn the return envelope upside down and put the QSL card and IRC in the flap. Then I place this assembly in the outer envelope and seal it (see Figure 5). For US based mail I like to use one of the new “forever” first class stamps on the SASE. If the postal rates change before the QSL manager returns your card, he will not have to add additional postage.



Figure 4 – AE6RR’s QSL card



Figure 5 – Envelope stuffing

Stay tuned - Next month

I will talk about finding QSL information and chasing down the cards that haven’t appeared in your mail box.

If you have comments, additional information or issues that you would like to see addressed in the future, please drop me a note at AE6RR@arrl.net. I hope you all have a good month, work 3B7C and find lots of “new ones” confirmed in your mail box!



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- Advanced CW functions
- 101 alphanumeric memories

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- "S" meter
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Low Pricing!



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Low Pricing!