

MINUTES OF THE LONG ISLAND DX ASSOCIATION

MARCH 21, 2023

The meeting was held via ZOOM which the members continue to prefer. Our meetings in this format are informal and conversational.

All those who share our interest in the Amateur Radio specialty of DXing are invited. New members should contact a member if they would like to have the ZOOM link.

Present at the meeting were: John, W2GW, President of the LIDXA; Louise, K2MAU; Karen, W2ABK; Jack, NU2Q; Adrian, KO8SCA; Lou, N2OC; Salli, K2RYD; Bob, W2OSR; Walt, W2TE; Rick, K2RB; Gerry, K1NY; Richie, K2KNB, President of LIMARC; Art, N2KA; Tom, KA2D; Jerry, WB2ZEX; Steve, N2AJ; Richie, KB2ZPB; Peter, AA2VG; Lee, VK3GK/NE3M; K2ND, Bob Fisher, special guest for tonight.

The meeting began at 8 PM. Lou, NO2C, was describing POTA at the Fire Island Lighthouse. He made many contacts using Walt, W2TE's, famous antenna. Salli, K2RYD, got some children touring the lighthouse to participate in the QSOs.

John, W2GW, then introduced Bob Fisher, K2ND as someone who was interested in tonight's presentation on the DXpedition to Bouvet, 3Y0J. Bob has been licensed since 1962.

John, W2GW, then introduced the speaker for this evening – Adrian, KO8SCA. Adrian was a member of the 3Y0J team which recently completed the DXpedition to the Island of Bouvet, often described as the 'most remote part of the globe.'

Adrian began his talk with a description of where the DX team met. This was in London. Here the group would be passengers on a British military transport airplane which flew to the Falkland Islands. The flight was 19 hours with a re-fueling stop in Cape Verde.

At the Falklands, the team met with local amateurs who had been assisting the team with inspecting the contents of a container which was sent on beforehand.

The 3Y0J team sailed to Bouvet on a two masted sailboat called the Marama. The boat has navigated both northern and southern polar waters. It was totally capable of making the trip to Bouvet, especially when being manned by a very experienced crew.

As the sea voyage progressed, most of the team became seasick. Some more than others. Adrian experienced his share of this. To help lessen the effect of seasickness, the crew assigned tasks for the team to perform. Mostly, this consisted of periods where members would take turns standing watch and then steering the boat. Since the boat was constantly moving, the team had to wear life jackets and had to be tied down to the boat in some way. Without this precaution, there was the danger of going overboard. During the voyage, the team saw many whales, porpoises, etc. DX Engineering and ICOM donated Sat phones and DX Engineering paid for the charges in connection with phone usage.

After three weeks, the team saw their first view of Bouvet. This lasted about thirty minutes when the weather changed suddenly, and the island was not in view.

The first Zodiac scouting trip landed on the island a few days later. Four members went ashore. However, the weather changed, and a zodiac trip to retrieve them became impossible. These four members spent the next four days living on what they carried with them when they began their scouting mission.

There were few suitable landing sites on the island. Finally, the team landed at Cape Fear. This had been a previously recommended site. The area was somewhat shielded from the westerly winds.

The delivery of men and equipment to the island was managed through a series of buoys, rope and bolts. Men and equipment floated ashore using this system. Eight members of the team went ashore, four members stayed on board the ship to help unload equipment and supplies.

Three pole antennas were originally used. The wind and rain were constant. Conditions were not good. It was decided that the use of FT8 would provide the greatest opportunity for QSOs. There was an initial confusion with timing. However, once discovered, a satellite phone was used to restore the correct timing.

The group worked, operated, lived, ate and slept in one tent. Radios were placed on barrels or on laps. Sleeping was done on the floor in sleeping bags.

After ten days of bad weather, there was a clearing and the team had to make a choice: bring more supplies onshore to continue the operation or abandon the project and return to the ship. After a discussion, a vote was taken, and it was the decision of the team to return and cease operations.

Adrian gave a very good and clear understanding in his answer to the question of whether he ever felt that he was in danger. His response was that the perception of danger is a relative one in view of a person's prior experiences. Adrian has had many prior DXpeditions which included different types of onshore landings. He stressed that the team relied on the services of a consultant who was very well acquainted with the dangers inherent in this type of expedition. The consultant was with them continually and was the person who devised the buoy system. Experience along with expertise can greatly reduce danger.

Adrian also stressed the importance of safety. This was not only true for 3Y0J but is also true for future amateur radio requests to activate remote areas. If governmental authorities believe that DXpeditions are unsafe, permissions will not easily be granted.

John, W2GW, thanked Adrian for his presentation as did all the members.

Tom, KA2D, then announced congratulations to Jack, NU2Q, on reaching his 80th birthday. Jack then thanked Tom and all the members for their well wishes. Jack had been asked just before the meeting began if he had any special words to mark this occasion. Jack answered at that time, "If I thought I would live this long, I would have taken better care of myself!"

The meeting ended at 9:36 PM. The next meeting will be on April 18, 2023, at 8 PM on ZOOM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Phelan, NU2Q

Secretary