

# Sierra Signals

Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club  
Auburn, CA  
An ARRL Special Service Club

August 2008

P.O. Box 1005, Newcastle, CA 95658

## DXpeditions

(Submitted by Fred, K6DGW)

It seems like there is always some DXpedition underway to some remote place in the world. They seem to fall into two groups: In the first, someone is going to a rare country for awhile, maybe to work or possibly to vacation, and manages to put it on the air some in free time moments; and in the second, a group of hams ... make that fairly well off hams ... plan a trip to someplace none of us have ever heard of, usually in the middle of some ocean or sea, and put multiple stations on multiple bands 24/7 for 10 days or so, making tens of thousands of QSO's. The second is the classic DXpedition. The expeditions to these places put a new "DXCC Entity," or a very rare one, on the air. As an example, I guess it's been around 2 years now that a group, including our ARRL Pacific Division

At the Key of S.F.A.R.C.

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#### REPORTERS

**Satellites:** Greg, KO6TH

**History:** Gary, KQ6RT

**Misc Radio:** Fred, K6DGW

### RESOURCES

#### REPEATERS

145.430 (-0.6 MHz/PL 162.2)

440.575 (+5.0 MHz/PL 94.8)

223.860 (-1.6 MHz/PL 100.0)

#### CLUB NET

Thursdays, 7:30PM, K6ARR/R

145.430

#### CLUB MEETINGS

Second Friday of the month,

7:30PM at the Library, 350

Nevada St, Auburn CA

#### CLUB BREAKFAST

Last Sat of the month at Susie's

Café, Cirby at Riverside, Roseville

- 8:00 AM

#### NET CONTROL OPS

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Director, W6RGG as leader, activated BS7H on Scarborough Reef. [[www.scarboroughreef.com](http://www.scarboroughreef.com)]

For the geographically challenged [and that would most all of us in this case], Scarborough Reef is not exactly what you would think of as a coral "reef," and even less what you would think of as a "country." It's some coral "rocks" sticking up a meter or so in the South China Sea about 480 km or so west of the Philippine island of Luzon. The rest of the reef is under water with the usual lagoon in the center. I've actually been there ... not on them ... but over them at 10,000 feet in a C-130.

(continued on page 2)

### 2008 Calendar of Events

Aug 2	<b>VE Session – 8:00 – 10:00am</b>
	<b>Raley's - Douglas/Auburn Folsom</b>
Aug 8	<b>Regular Meeting</b>
Aug 23	<b>Annual Club Picnic</b>
Aug 30	<b>Club Breakfast – Susie's – Cirby/Riverside</b>
Sept 6	<b>VE Session</b>
Sept 12	<b>Regular Meeting</b>
Sept 27	<b>Club Breakfast</b>

*We encourage members to receive Sierra Signals via email to save the Club the cost of reproduction and mailing*

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**50 Years Ago At The SFARC**

*(Reported by Gary, KQ6RT)*

The meeting was brought to order at 8p.m July 30, 1958. Woody presiding as acting president. Introduction of persons attending followed.

Temporary nominations for offices were opened and. The following offices were filled by popular vote:

- President-T.M. Woods
- Vice-pres. Gerald Murch
- Secretary-Arlene Murch

The motion was made Secretary/Treasurer office be combined and. later move aside to allow for a separate office of treasurer. Bob Hicks was elected as Treasurer.

Jay Peat made motion to cancel temporary officers and have the above officers elected 5 months or until calendar year. Woody made the motion regular election be held on last meeting of the calendar year. These motions were carried.

Sample club rules of other clubs were read and general discussion held as to how our radio club would be regulated. The question was asked if we would be incorporated, or affiliated with ARRL. This was left pending.

Ideas of organized publicity to newspapers was brought forth with suggestions to go to Kay Woods, Jerry or Arlene Murch.

Sixteen names for the club were submitted and two names were selected as most adept for our club name and for public attention. These names were Sierra Foothill Amateur Radio Club and Mother Lode Amateur Radio Club The motion was made and carried. to postpone the name selectiin until August 13th meeting.

Group pictures were taken, thanks to Harry Grieb for the arrangements.

Discussion was held on determining the amount of dues, door prizes, etc. Suggestions were \$5.00 yearly or 50

cents per month and. \$3.00 yearly or 25 cents per month until bylaw change, These were put to vote and dues, majority vote, were \$5.00 yearly or 50 cents per month. Membership dues to be for one(1)complete year.

The members were asked to bring their QSL cards and list of gear they use to next meeting.

The next regular meeting will be held August, 13th, 8 P.M., and the officers meeting to formulate the constitution and by-laws to be held August 20, 8 p.m. This Officer meeting was later changed to August 12, and all members notified by mail. At this meeting the proposed constitution and by-laws were formulated. and will be submitted. to the club for acceptance, revision, or rejection by the members.

After an enjoyable evening of discussion the motion was made and seconded the meeting be adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

These minutes are respectfully submitted for approval.

Secretary

Arlene Murch

Present at meeting: Carl Rolufs, Neil Abbott, Doug Wilson, Gus Gercke, Ed. Glass, Mrs. Glass, W.C. Bauman, Harry Grieb, Don Richter, Bob Hicks, Jay Peat, Charles E. Cooke, Frank L. Towne, Buzz LaBonte, James Carmen, Walter Dowdy, T. M. Woods, Kay Woods, Bob Gentry, Earl Wilson, Jerry Murch and Arlene Murch.

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The stated meeting of August 13th was brought to order at 8:00 p.m. The president read the constitution and By-laws and revisions were made and the revised constitution and. by-laws were then put to a vote and. accepted by the attending members.

Nominations were open for the office of activity manager Carl Roluff was

elected and Harry Grieb was appointed to assist.

The names for the Club were finally deduced to Two (2) The majority voted and adopted the name SIERRA FOOTHILL A.R.C.

It was suggested that we formulate a request slip to be signed individually so that the club will be relieved of any responsibility of any Injury or accident concerning any activities of our Club.

A motion was made made carried to set up a petty cash fund of \$10.00 for the use of the Secty. and Treasurer for the purpose of miscellaneous items as needed. for the club.

The meeting was adjourned. at 10:00 P.m.

These minutes re respectfully submitted for correction or approval  
Secretary

Arlene Murch

Present: Jay Peat, Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Glass, Mr. and Mrs. Theron Woods, Mike Bauman, Buzz LaBonte, James Carmen, Carl Roluff, Mr. Bivens, Bob Hicks, Earl Wilson, Seichi Otow, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Murch.

73,

Gary - KQ6RT

### ***DXpeditions...***

*(Continued from front page)*

Strangely, BS7H classifies as a DXCC entity. Don't mistake me, I got up early and worked them on 20 CW, and that QSO contributed to my 107 "countries" for my DXCC after 54 years in ham radio. But how'd this all get started? How did a few coral rocks very close to sea level, and claimed by both the Philippines and China, become a DXCC entity? Well, one clue lies in the word "entity."

The DX Century Club was originally conceived by Clinton DeSoto of ARRL fame, I think. The idea was you work 100 duly licensed stations in 100 "countries" and you got a prestigious certificate. And it was quite an

achievement back then. . These were the early days of ham radio, they didn't have FT1000's, IC7800's, K3's and other receivers we now take for granted, they used loose couplers, sometimes crystal detectors, and TRF [tuned radio frequency] receivers. 10 meters was VHF or "the ultra highs." Edwin Armstrong hadn't invented the superhetrodyne radio yet.

And the concept of "country" was a little vague also. The UN wouldn't be invented until I was old enough to remember it happening, in San Francisco if my memory serves me, and the League of Nations hadn't gone over real well on the planet before that. Obviously, the US is a country, so is Canada and Mexico. France is a country – in Europe. But Martinique is a French "Department," no different than whatever French "Department" Paris is in. If you go to Martinique, you are "IN" France, not in one of France's possessions. Does Martinique in the Caribbean count as France, or a different "country" since it's so far away from the real France?

Things get complicated in the world as the world gets more and more connected, and so does DXCC. Ducie Island is geographically and politically part of the Pitcairn Islands [of HMS Bounty fame], which is politically a "British Overseas Territory." Now don't mistake me, I also got up early a few years ago and worked VP6DI on 20 CW for yet another of my DXCC Entities. Since I had Ducie Island, I did not get up early to work the recent VP6DX expedition even though I know a couple of the expeditioners. When I listened, it seemed like the rest of the world wanted to work them and, since I didn't need Ducie, I backed out of the pile up and let them have at it.

How does one island in an island group that has a common political home become a separate "country" for DXCC? Well it happened by removing the word "country" from the rules and changing it to "entity," and adding some rules about who administers the location, and how far it is from "home." Ducie may be Pitcairn, but it qualifies as a separate DXCC entity because it's a long way away from the main [and only inhabited] island in the group.

I admire those adventurers who will go and sit on a scaffold perched on a coral rock in the So. China Sea named "Rock 1" throughout the night and hand out Q's, one to me – and ultimately QSL's– for a new DXCC entity. I guess it's another dimension to the ham radio business.

My DXpedition each year is to load my truck, hook up the tent trailer, and head over Donner Summit and down to Monitor Pass the first weekend in October as part of the crew that activates Alpine County for the Cal. QSO Party. It's a CW and Phone contest, and trust me, you will be DX for a lot of people, regardless of where you

live in California if you get on. And I find my truck and my tent trailer a lot more comfortable than some smelly boat heading for Kingman Reef. We've also got a "convenience."

Oh, and stay tuned. Scarborough Reef isn't the only "reef" out there ... the So. China Sea is dotted with atolls, reefs, and other land-like things for maybe 600-1,000 km west of the Philippines, I've watched them go by at 10,000 feet. There is likely to be another expedition, to another rock, that will count for your DXCC. Hopefully, we'll have some sunspots by then.

73,

Fred, K6DGW

### **July Meeting Minutes**

*(Reported by Wayne, W6DT)*

#### **Minutes of the Meeting of July 11, 2008**

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM by President Don Hay, WB6LPJ. The meeting was moved from the Library parking lot, someone forgot to get the key to the room, to Sierra Divers courtesy of Dave, NO6NO. Flag salute and introduction on officers, members and guests followed.

Treasurer Leslie, K7NYE, reported that PG&E had deducted over \$1500 from our bank account for two months for the electric bill for the repeater. Repeated efforts on Leslie's part got a refund of the amount and a new power meter was apparently installed. Refunds were made to people who paid the token fee for field day.

Greg, KO6TH, gave a satellite report.

Chuck, KG6FFR, gave an ARES report.

Leslie, K7NYE, made a motion that the club waive the prorated membership dues for Dave, NO6NO, in appreciation for him stepping up at the last minute and providing the use of Sierra Divers for the meeting. The motion was seconded by Don, WB6LPJ. The motion passed by voice vote.

The speaker for the evening was Jack, KF6T. Jack is the author of an article in the July QST about a portable beam. His outstanding presentation was about antennas in general and then to specifics, including photos of antenna construction. Jack started with some simple and specific theory that aided the understanding of antenna workings. He then used the popular EZNEC antenna modeling software to show how different changes affect theoretical antenna performance. Something was learned by all present.

The drawing was held and the meeting adjourned at 9:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne Stilwell, W6DT

Secretary,

Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club

### **Wireless Bluetooth for Ham Radio and Cellphone Mobile**

*(Reported by Carl, WF6J)*

Wireless Bluetooth for Ham Radio and cellphone mobile.

Thanks to Randy, K7AGE for his YouTube video on using bluetooth mobile for your rig. here is his link: <http://ca.youtube.com/watch?v=6ypVUoRVv3U>

Since this was published and I got to chat with Randy, I too ordered the Jabra A210 and the VXI blueparrott, Roadwarrior B150 wireless headset.

With July 1st approaching, and having an "old" cellphone, needed Bluetooth (handsfree) capability and an interface for the mobile rig. So I set about using Randy's information and made some interfaces for myself.

The jabra unit didn't explain that the small switch labeled: 1, 2, 3 wasn't for the specific phone as they said, but actually the volume control on the device. The A210 can be found used from \$20-\$50 on the internet.

Also VXI has come out with newer models of the B150, the B250. They claim it has longer battery life, range of 66 feet and better noise canceling. The go used from: \$30-\$90+.

Personally I like the over-the-head headset much better than a small irritating "bug" in my ear while using the cellphone. It is ideal for mobile, and if put on your head so the boom-mic is on your right ear, folks don't seem to stare as much as when on the left ear facing the driver's window.

The interface to your rig is straightforward and is explained in detail on Randy's video. Handy in the shack, on the go, or mobile in the car, join in on the fun. Go bluetooth!

## Hiram Percy Maxim's Telegraph Key Returns to ARRL HQ

(Reprinted from ARRL Letter, Vol 27, No 29)

At the ARRL Board of Director's meeting this past weekend, the telegraph key that once belonged to Hiram Percy Maxim, W1AW, was returned to ARRL Headquarters. According to ARRL First Vice President Kay Craigie, N3KN, the key had been in the collection of the Antique Wireless Association's Electronic Communication Museum near Rochester, New York for more than 20 years.

Craigie said that the AWA decided to return Maxim's key to the organization he co-founded almost 100 years ago. At the ARRL Atlantic Division Convention in May 2008, the museum's former curator, Ed Gable, K2MP, presented the key to Craigie and Atlantic Division Director Bill Edgar, N3LLR. Craigie and Edgar then presented the key to ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, and ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ, on Friday, July 18.

"The key will find a prominent place in the League's collection of historical artifacts," Craigie said. "The Old Man's key has come home".

## Solar Update

(Reprinted from ARRL Letter, Vol 27, No 29)

Tad "Turn thy wild wheel through sunshine, storm, and cloud" Cook, K7RA, this week reports:

For several days over the past week, we saw a couple of sunspots -- but just like other recent dying Solar Cycle 23 spots, they faded quickly. This group, lasting from July 18-20, was number 1000. No sign of Solar Cycle 24 in recent memory, just a couple of false starts. There are no predictions indicating more sunspots for the upcoming week. Predicted planetary A index for the near future is 5, with a slight increase to 8 on August 1 and a large increase to 20 on August 8. Geophysical Institute Prague predicts quiet geomagnetic conditions through the end of the month, except July 27, which is quiet to unsettled. Sunspot numbers for July 17-23 were 0, 11, 12, 11, 0, 0 and 0 with a mean of 4.9. The 10.7 cm flux was 65, 65.3, 66.4, 65.9, 66.2, 65.8 and 65.5 with a mean of 65.7. Estimated planetary A indices were 5, 5, 3, 3, 6, 11 and 16 with a mean of 7. Estimated mid-latitude A indices were 3, 5, 1, 2, 5, 9 and 12 with a mean of 5.3. For more information concerning radio propagation, visit the ARRL Technical Information Service Propagation page

<<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.html>>.

To read this week's Solar Report in its entirety, check out the W1AW Propagation Bulletin page

<<http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/prop/>>.

This week's "Tad Cookism" brought to you by Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "Idylls of the King."

