

The 144 MHz EME NewsLetter

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EME from the Marshall Islands

Also in 2015 Kay JH3AZC devoted part of his annual holiday entitlement to Amateur Radio. Whilst he was QRV as V60EME in October 2014 from Micronesia this year in September he travelled with some friends to Majuro Island (RJ57QC), IOTA OC-029 and part of the Marshall Islands (V7).



Kay V73EME/JH3AZC with the antennas close to the lagoon.

Together with JP3AYQ, JJ3CIG and JH3QFL he had planned for fishing trips and – while the others wanted to become QRV on the HF-bands – for 2 m EME. His equipment consisted of: YAESU FT817, ITALAB Phoenix1000A, Create Design 2x211A Antenna and homemade LNA.

Due to the days of operation (Sep 25th to 28th) and the location of the island the window to Central Europe was rather small. In Germany for instance the best window these four days was just one hour only. Another problem was the location of the hotel they had booked. The three story

building was between the planned antenna location and the moon which meant that some minimum elevation was needed.



Kay in his outdoor shack at the North side of the hotel. (photos JH3AZC)

Arrival at Majuro Marshall was on Sep 23rd. The following morning Kay started setting everything up. He found the best place for the antenna to be on a pedestrian bridge at the beach. Here it was far enough from the hotel so that the blockage could be minimized. However, there were still minimum elevations of 20° at moonrise and 5° at moon-set needed.

Sep 24th came with bad weather (heavy rain and thunderstorms). After completion of building up, Kay could not track the moon visually. However, he made some first QSOs though with JR3REX, VK5FA, JE1TNL and VK5APN. Luckily Sep 25th came with much better weather, many more hours could be spent on EME. The pile-up started. Also 26th, 27th and 28th many QSOs were completed. After Kay had fixed an issue with the yagis on the 27th the QSO rate even got much better on 28th, the final day, Kay had to stop early at 18.00 UTC but still another 29 stations made it into the log.

There are rumours Kay is already planning his next trip 2016, also to some place in the Pacific ocean...

Father and Son On DXpedition... DL1RPL & DL3RKS in Mayotte and Reunion

After successfully working EME from Reunion in 2014 Peter DL1RPL and his son Soeren DL3RKS travelled again to the Southern part of the Indian ocean last November. This time they were QRV from Mayotte (FH), a DXCC which has not yet been activated at all on 2 m EME. While Soeren focussed on HF activity, mainly 20 m, Peter took care of moon bouncing. His ran a "Big Tajfun 1000" by italab.sk into 2 x 8 elements cross yagi.



The kitchen served as shack: Peter FH/DL1RPL

On November 16th they started their long journey to the Southern hemisphere. First they took a bus from their home to Berlin airport from where they flew to Paris CDG. After arrival they had to collect their baggage – and did not find the antennas! Luckily Soeren speaks French well so after one hour and with assistance from airport staff they finally got hold of the antenna box. Then they continued with their 120 kg luggage by bus from CDG to Orly, the other airport of Paris. The evening traffic jam in Paris was no fun but they arrived on time to catch their connecting flight to Reunion.

Luckily part of the ten hours flight time was during the night so Peter and Soeren could at least catch some sleep. In Reunion they had a 36 hours stop-over in a hotel where they could relax a little. However, when they arrived at the airport for their flight to Mayotte the blood pressure got high once again: They were told that the transport of their excess baggage was not possible. It did not matter that they had informed about the amount of baggage before, it was refused. Again Soeren made the difference: He could convince the young lady that they could not fly leaving any

part of the baggage behind. Only, the “diving equipment trick” for saving transport costs did not work out: The team had to pay the usual high excess baggage prices, kg by kg.



Antennas in the jungle; the hill in the background was the reason for the minimum elevation at moon-set.

Upon arrival in Mayotte, they collected the luggage (yes, it was complete) and rented a car. Then they travelled by ferry to the main island. This was also some kind of adventure: Not only was the car rather old and did not look trustworthy, also the way to the ferry was very steep so that Peter was concerned about the car getting stuck with the underfloor. It did not –two hours later the horrible trip ended and they finally arrived at the QTH in LH27NA.

It was not best-suited for EME but still ok. At moon-set there was some blockage by a hill and trees which hopefully would not harm too much. And it did not as the West Coast of North America could still be worked. The only room with a/c was not located well to the antennas so they decided to make the kitchen the shack. This meant that they had temperatures of around 35°C while sitting at the radio. At least it did not show an effect on the Tajfun amp. Peter had switched all amp blowers to permanent so he could work all moon passes with maximum power.

Moon conds were very good. The screen was often full of sync lines and sometimes 14 QSO's per hour could be made. Stations that were calling some 100 hertz off the center frequency had it much easier to get their QSO: around DF=0 often was just a broad white area of callers which interfered with one another. Spread out in the pile-up if you want to have a better chance.

Having the option to switch polarities paid off again. Moreover Peter's decision to bring spare cables was a wise one: One cable had a problem so it had to be swapped for a different one and return loss was good again. At the end of the activity on November 24th there were 271 QSOs on 2m in the log, not bad for five days of activity.



Antennas in LG79TB (All photos DL1RPL)

With 2 x yagi EF7017, SSPA 400W FH/DL1RPL was also QRV on 70 cm and completed with 39 stations during more or less one day only. Peter had tested a number of antennas at home and found out the EF7017 to work best, thanks go to Helmut DG7YBN for his optimised test setup. Though he worked 36 QSOs in just one moon pass he feels like many other smaller stations would have had a chance as well if they only had called. They had planned only one day for 70 cm but Al K2UYH had missed them and asked for a second chance – which was granted. So another three QSO on 70 cm were made. It was great “fun” swapping the antennas twice in the middle of a moon pass in very humid hot weather ...

As the priority was on EME Soeren always had to wait for the moon to set before he could start CW on HF: the p/s he used caused some RFI with the 2m rx so it was not possible to work parallel as planned. 340 CW QSOs on 20, 17 and 15 m were made though, with just 100 watts to a wire antenna.

On 25th they broke the station down and moved back to Reunion for another activity on that island. They felt like being in Europe again, Reunion is so much different from Mayotte. Peter and Soeren

had been QRV from FR in 2014 but this time they chose a different locator grid, LG79TB. The demand was higher than expected, apparently LG79 was new for many hams. On November 28th, 29th, 30th and December 2nd and 3rd they added a lot of QSOs to make it 513 contacts altogether from both places, 2 m and 70 cm combined. And Soeren had also had a lot of fun on HF – in the hours without moon.

The travel back home was a smooth one, no problems and always complete luggage could be collected. Peter is very happy with the results and of course a bit tired. So what is next on Peter's and Soeren's agenda? As Peter said definitely nothing for a year and not again Reunion ;-) but there are many other nice places for father and son trips, particularly when both are radio hams...

EME Conference 2016 in Venice, Italy

Giulio IW3HVB sent an update on the status of EME 2016: The website is also online now: www.eme2016.org. The conference, as announced, will be held at the BHR Hotel near Treviso <http://www.bhrtrevisohotel.com/it/bhr-treviso-hotel/home>. Conference dates are from August 19th to 21st 2016. The hotel is not far from Treviso airport, with free shuttles from it. This choice was made because the majority of the low cost airliners land at Treviso.

The Italian organisation team has reserved the whole hotel and conference center. Therefore it should be possible to accommodate the major part of the attendees. All others will be hosted at the same rates in different hotels nearby. Shuttle transfers to the BHR Hotel will be available.

The Italian team has a fair number of sponsors, from IOJXX and the fine CW paddles maker Mr. Begali (which has in store a mind-blowing EME limited edition paddle), along with Messi e Paoloni Cables, CSY & Son (Yaesu) and others. This will help to ensure an unforgettable stay.

The good thing is, if you don't want to bother with looking for air tickets, transfers and extensions for your trip, the organisation team will be able to deal with your requests directly. As Giulio owns a tour operator company chances are that the team will be able to shave the ordinary travel costs.

Currently the team is working very hard to host the opening of the conference in Venice, but logistics are a true nightmare. Politics add to the equation rendering this part of the organization a total mess to deal with, but they promise not to give up easily.

If you have any questions, or you want to make a leap of faith and book your flights well in advance, or you want to submit a paper for the conference, feel free to drop email to Giulio: iw3hvb@eme2016.org

How to Coordinate EME-DXpeditions?

Once you start planning for a DXpedition and chose a destination DXCC you start thinking: How likely is it that somebody else also has firm plans activating that DXCC? The worst case would be that two individuals or groups both activate the same DXCC. This is not only redundant, it can be also very costly. Frank DH7FB and Bernd DF2ZC for example only by accident got knowledge some years ago that some other experienced DXpeditioners also had planned for T7 San Marino, the place Frank and Bernd had chosen. Only by luck this info reached them early enough so that plans could be changed and the X-Team DH7FB&DF2ZC travelled to the Isle of Man (GD) instead. Only recently and again by pure luck a similar collision of plans could be avoided.

Some DXpeditioners had discussed a solution to this already some time ago. They agreed that a trustworthy “middleman” is needed. When asked, Jurg DK3WG volunteered for this job: he now runs a list of DXpedition plans.

So to avoid parallel planning the suggested process is as follows:

- 1) Before you start planning a DXpedition you should ask DK3WG dk3wg@darf.de if some others also plan to go there.
- 2) If no others plan for the same DXCC, fine. You can go ahead.
- 3) If others already “registered” that DXCC with DK3WG, there are two alternatives: (A) is you choose a different DXCC for your activity. (B) Jurg asks that group if they permit giving their contact details to you so that you can talk directly and decide who is going where.

Jurg DK3WG will keep all these early plans secret, so there will be no publication. It is up to the planners to decide when the time is ready for publication of their plans.

Upcoming DXpeditions

For more information on current and upcoming DXpeditions please have a look at www.mmmonvhf.de from where most of the information here was gathered.

FG4KH QRV again holiday-style

F6APE will be QRV from the FG4KH location (FK96HF) in Guadeloupe from January 14th to February 9th. Philippe F1DUZ himself will stay there from February 17th to March 31st. All EME activity will be holiday style only. Please keep an eye on the latest news at mmmonvhf.de as well as on the N0UK logger. FG4KH will be QRV with the “usual” setup: FT 857D, LNA, 600 W SSPA (home made) and 2 x 10 ele DK7ZB. Have a look at Philippe’s dedicated website for more information.

KH6/KB7Q (BK29)

Gene plans for a February stay in Hawaii where he has already rented house on the Big Island (BK29OL), at a suitable location for 2 m EME. Equipment is K3 w/internal xverter, single long yagi and 800 watt SSPA LDMOS amp. The main EME effort will be February 11 to 15 on his rising moon so he can use the Pacific Ocean for ground gain and favour the European window. Since he also brings 70 cm he will alternate from day to day between 2 m and 70 cm. Latest news are on <http://kb7qgrid.blogspot.de/>

Surprise DXpedition?

Stay monitoring 144 MHz during the month of February, there are rumours another interesting DXCC could become QRV. No further information is known yet.

Time Table

1 Feb 2016		February issue of the 144 MHz EME NewsLetter ready for download at http://www.df2zc.de
28 Feb 2016	1330-1630Z 2200-0100Z	CW Activity Time Period CW Activity Time Period

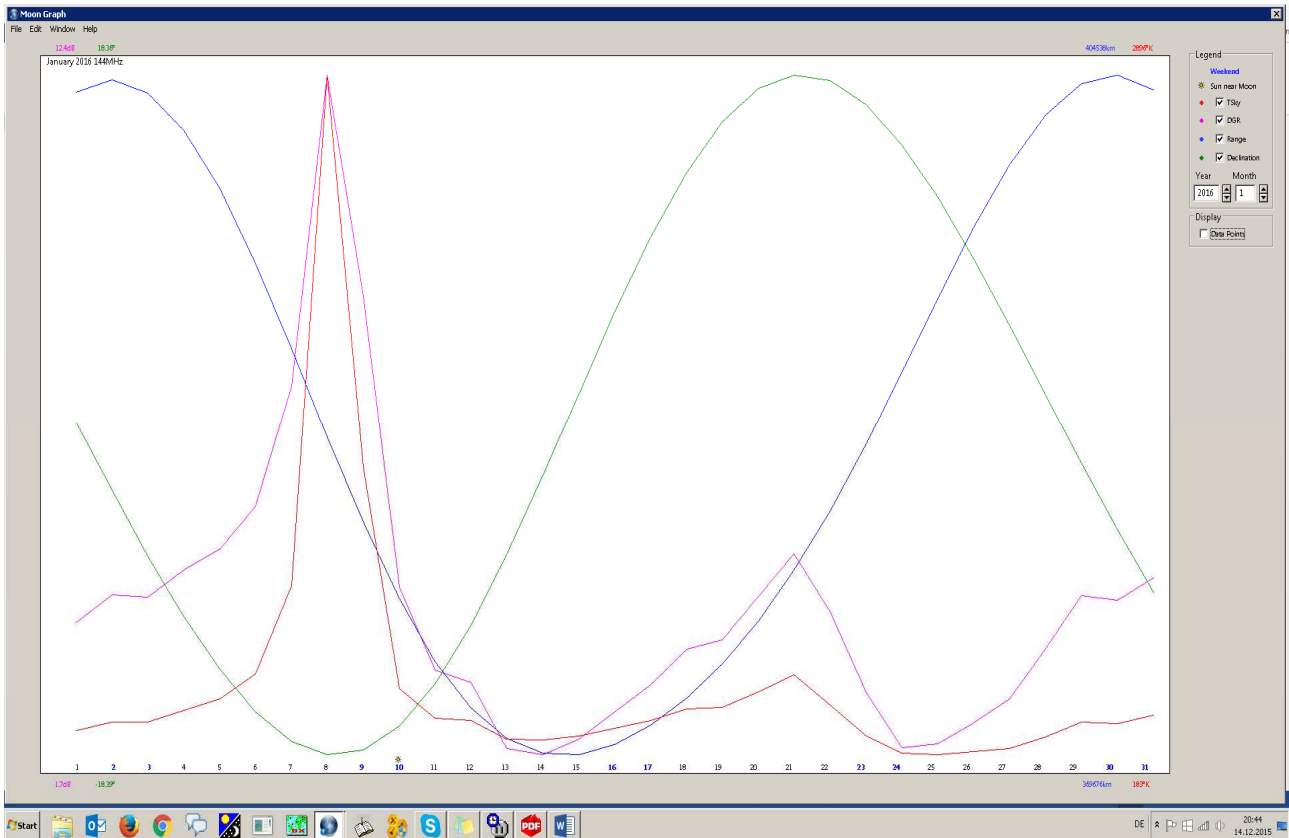
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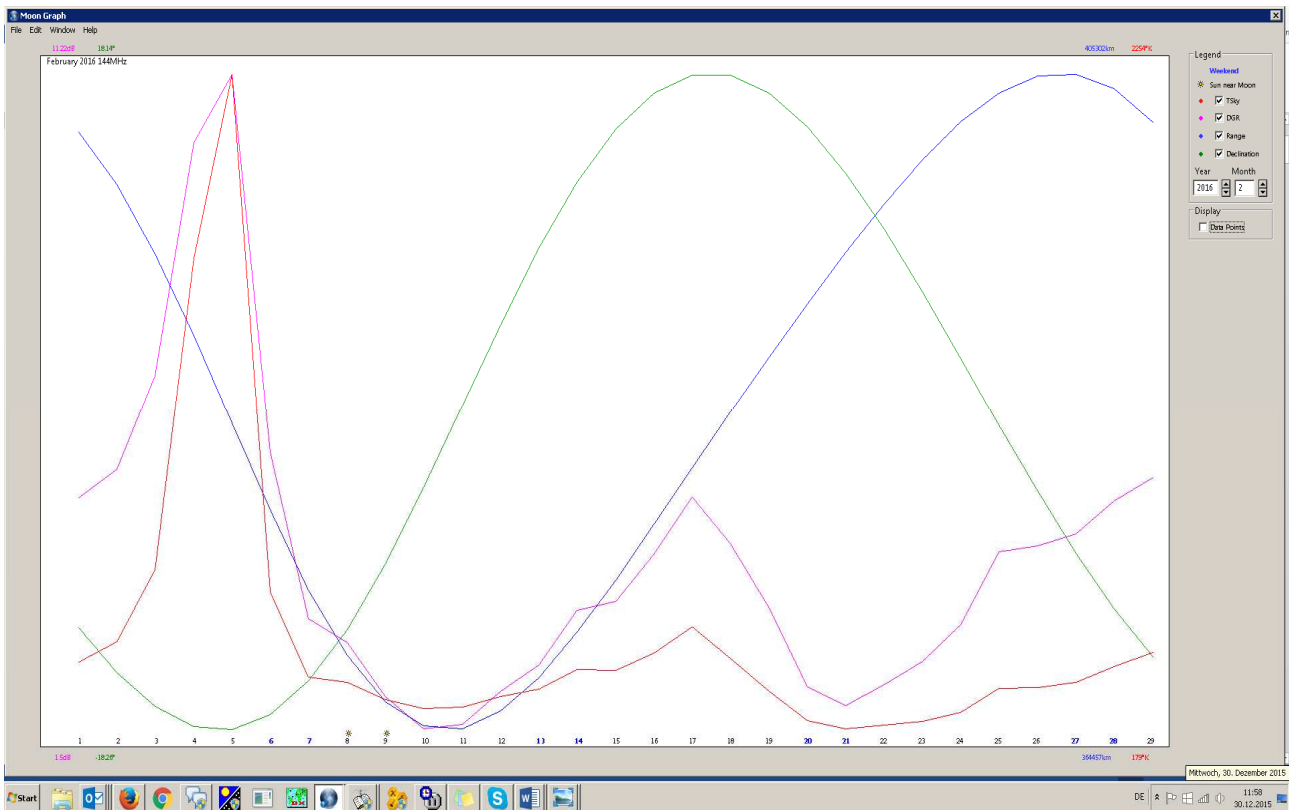
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Latest DXpedition Info:
www.mmmonvhf.de



Moon Graph January 2016



Moon Graph February 2016

(Courtesy of David GM4JJJ (www.gm4jjj.co.uk/MoonSked/moonsked.htm))