

EDXC Conference in Germany, 30. May– 04. June 2012

by Anker Petersen.

Photos by Bernhard Hein (Copyright) and Anker Petersen.

This EDXC Conference was organized by Dr. Harald Gabler (RMRC), Robert Kipp (RMRC/DSWCI) and Bernhard Hein (DSWCI). They had found an excellent venue at Hotel Landgut Ochsenkopf in the forest of Dübener Heide in Sachsen. 45 DX-ers and spouses from Japan, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, France, Italy, Austria and Germany participated in this international meeting.

The Conference was opened at 1000 on Thursday 31. May by Dr. Harald Gabler (right) with a glass of sparkling wine under the flag of the EDXC, as seen below.



Two photos by Bernhard Hein.

After that the group had an excursion to the beautiful Wörlitz Park (UNESCO site) in Anhalt, where we walked around and had a very enjoyable sailing in two rowing boats:



At 1600 the Secretary General Tibor Szilagyi officially opened the EDXC 2012 Conference.



He is resigning by the end of 2012 and pointed out, that he during the past six years has concentrated his efforts in organizing the EDXC Conferences in Lugano, Vaasa, Dublin, Ankara, Bulgaria and now in Germany.

Then Dr. Harald Gabler held a provocative opening speech: "EDXC yesterday - today - and tomorrow?" which pointed out, that the original purposes of the EDXC have been fulfilled and that EDXC as an organization is no longer needed! But the Clubs are invited to organize future international Conferences.



Two photos by Bernhard Hein.

Then Michael Schmitz (ADDX) gave a presentation about: "Perspectives and Challenges for SWL-Clubs in a new Age".



Michael said, that the good times from the 1970'ies and 1980'ies have been replaced by new media with a decreasing number of shortwave, mediumwave and satellite frequencies. The young people are just as curious, as we were, but they seek their news and entertainment via the internet.

At 1700 some participants had an excursion to the Amateur Radio Club in Dessau to see their 10 diameter parabolic antenna for Moon-Bounce.



After dinner, Mr. Bernd Reuter (photo above) presented the new receiver "RDR50" from the B. Reuter company. It has reduced the selfproduced noise and intermodulation practically to zero and concentrates listening to audio on a 7 Hz bandwidth. It is very advanced, but also very expensive.

At 2130 began a very unique presentation by German DX-er Manfred Rippich (photo below) about: "My Travels in the South Atlantic" with many visits to Saint Helena, Tristan da Cunha, the Falkland Islands and Ascension Island.



On Friday, 01. June at 1000-1230 we had a lively discussion about EDXC matters:



Tibor Szilagyi asked for a new Secretary General who is younger, IT-minded and has focus on MW and FM. A candidate was found during the Gala Dinner.

Most participants were in favour to continue the EDXC as an organization which e.g. can support the EDXC Conferences. The present membership fees are low.

Former Secretary General Jyrki Talvitie is at the moment trying to translate the Finnish Landlist to an updated EDXC Landlist.

There was general agreement, that the EDXC Conferences should continue to be held at different places around in Europe in order to invite local DX-ers and in their own languages. It is important to select the right time to keep the expenses low.

Finnish DX-er Mika Palo, who lives in Portugal, has indicated, that he can organize the EDXC Conference in 2013 at Figueira da Foz west of Coimbra in Central Portugal. Alexander Beryozkin said, that an EDXC Conference in 2014 near St. Petersburg was another possibility. Risto Vähäkainu, Finland, stated, that FDXA

intends to host the 50th Anniversary EDXC Conference in year 2017.

The Chairman of FDXA, Kari Kivekäs, stressed, that the EDXC is just a small coordination team which needs close cooperation between its member Clubs. It is important to attract younger people by having interesting webpages.

At 1400 an excursion to Lutherstadt-Wittenberg, where Martin Luther had his residence from year 1508 till his death in 1546 and initiated the ideas of Reformation. We visited the Schlosskirche, the Stadtkirche and the Lutherhaus (UNESCO-sites).



Back at the hotel, the DSWCI and the Finnish group had their traditional, informal dinners.

At 2100 Dennis Walter and Thomas Möller from the company Bonito gave a presentation of the new "RadioJet" receiver. It is much cheaper than the RDR50 from Reuter (503 Euro plus tax) and has fantastic audio possibilities, but is not widescreen.



On Saturday, 02. June, there was an excursion to the famous Bauhaus buildings from 1925 in Dessau which architecture became an icon for modern architecture (UNESCO site).

At 1500 The Danish Shortwave Club International held its first Annual General Meeting outside Denmark with 20 participating members from nine countries.

At 1700 Anker Petersen gave a presentation: "DXing along the Pan American highway from Canada to Argentina". A journey through 14 countries with photos, DX-ing, meeting DX-ers and visiting radiostations.



From this presentation: The 6th Mexican DX-Meeting in Oaxaca in year 2000 with Anker no. 2 from left in top row.

At 2000 the traditional Banquet Dinner took place. The Hotel served an excellent dinner, after which gifts were presented to the organizers and to the resigning Secretary General. Then Risto Vähäkainu revealed, that candidates to the posts as Secretary General would be Finnish Kari Kivekäs, and Assisting Secretary General Jan Nurmela. Risto noted, that their ages together were less than the age of present Secretary General ! After that a funny drawing Tombola with many gifts took place. Later Alan Pennington and Dave Kenny, UK, accepted to be candidates as EDXC Auditors from 2013.

On Sunday , 03. June at 1000 Robert Kipp gave a very thorough talk about: "The Media Situation on Saint Helena".



The shortwave antenna of Radio St. Helena fall down during a storm in summer 2010, but has not been repaired since, as there is no technical expertise on the island. The RSH website was closed on 09. March 2012. The local media only supports FM broadcasting. It looks like, the British Government has reduced its support to Saint Helena !

At 1500, Italian Dario Monferini gave a humorous report from his: "Travel to Argentina and Peru 2011" with Roberto Pavanello,

where they met local DX-ers and visited several radiostations with varying success.

Below is a photo of Dario taken by Bernhard Hein.



After that followed interviews for the RMRC shortwave radio broadcasts from Sitkunai the following weekend.

At 1700 Michael Schmitz told about the Bild Archive of the ADDX in Cologne. So far about 40,000 QSL's have been scanned. Dr. Harald Gabler pointed out, that this unique collection is used for the annual RMRC QSL Calendar on sale.

Michael Schmitz also mentioned the Archive of DX-magazines, where all editions of some publications have been scanned, while others like Shortwave News and DX-Window are in the process.

After dinner we heard greetings from Wolf Harranth, Dokufunk, and from Chris van Gelder (son of the late Harry van Gelder), Radio Netherlands Worldwide, which now has left shortwaves. Via a Skype connection we then got a video connection to the former station manager of Radio St. Helena, Gary Walters, who now lives in Southhampton. He said that Radio St. Helena may close down later this year. There are no prospects on shortwave in the future from the island.

Finally we had a lively discussion about: "The Future of Shortwave Broadcasting – There is Hope". According to the trend predictions by Anker Petersen, domestic shortwave broadcasting as well as international shortwave broadcasting will be more or less totally replaced by other media by year 2022 !

Manfred Böhm, journalist at Deutsche Welle, said, that during the Cold War international broadcasts with political messages via shortwaves were very important to the nations, but after 1989 they lost their legitimacy and new digital media appeared. In most countries the taxpayers have to pay the costs and they prefer other media than shortwaves. Deutsche Welle was leading in the DRM-project from the start, but from 2002 it was realized, that this project would not be a success. By this, it became also the deathblow to international shortwave broadcasting! The new hope for the stations is the internet. By Google you can get all the information, you want, and it is no longer necessary to have live broadcasts ! The drawbacks are, that the internet can be disrupted or collapse and that it is not available to everybody.

Toshi Ohtake, Japan, and Dario Monferini pointed out, that young people do not know, how to use a radio receiver, but they are familiar with smartphones.

Risto Vähäkainu said, that mediumwave DX-ing is getting better possibilities with the close down of powerhouse transmitters. FM DX also have improved possibilities.

On Monday, 04. June, we left the hotel. Some participants then visited the Funktechnik-Museum in Königswusterhausen. This place began everything from the very beginning based on Marconi and Popov innovations. The first sound transmission was made from here in December 1920, where the public could hear a Christmas Concert. From 1923 they had from here regular transmissions in Germany. Interesting information was: 1933 the whole transmitter was taken over by the Ministry of Propaganda, Goebbels. When Goebbels' men arrived in Königswusterhausen, they began to fire all the highly qualified German engineers working there, and the Ministry sent their own people. But... these people knew nothing about the fine technique.