



The DX HUNTER

FEBRUARY 17

MDXA CLUB INFO

**MEETINGS: 2nd SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH
7:30 AM @ GOLDEN CORRAL HWY 49
GULFPORT**

MDXA WEBSITE: MDXA.org

Net Frequency: 147.375 Tuesday @ 8:00 PM

Editor E-mail: KE4MBP@GMAIL.COM

"More than a Club – We are Friends"

CLUB NEWS

CLUB MEETING TIME & PLACE SURVEY

Have you contacted Bob with your recommendation for Club Meeting and time? If not, call or e-mail him and let him know. Thanks

This is going to be an exciting year with activities planned for everyone to participate in. Invite another Ham to come visit us and join in the fun.

The Station Notebook

By Wayne Greaves, W0ZW

Your station is one-of-a-kind. Do you have a record of how it's put together? Here's how to capture important details about your station for future reference.

There is a station accessory that no Amateur Radio shack should be without. It works with stations that operate HF, VHF, UHF, microwave and even moonbounce. It is useful to both "Big Gun" and QRP stations, casual operators, contesters, DXers and rag chewers alike. It doesn't matter if you operate phone, CW or data modes. Best of all, it is readily available and costs under five bucks. This amazing addition to your shack is the Station Notebook. Every ham should maintain one for his or her station. Here's what it is and how to use it.

Quite simply, the station notebook is a collection of technical or operational details specific to your station that you document in a journal. The Station Notebook is a living document that grows over time as your station evolves. What kind of information goes into the Station Notebook? Some examples include:

- Station block diagram
- List of equipment models and serial numbers
- Antenna descriptions and dimensions
- Record of measured SWR versus frequency for each antenna
- Document radio memory settings for stored frequencies and other variable settings
- Station RF exposure evaluation
- Results of tests and experiments
- Description of changes, additions, or modifications to equipment



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Your notes can be as simple or as detailed as you want, but the important thing is that they get written down!

My concept of the Station Notebook is based on the engineer's notebook. Amateurs may not be identical to those of the practicing engineer, there are format similarities between the two notebooks. My personal preferences for a Station Notebook are as follows:

- Use a bound composition notebook, 9¾ in. by 7½ inches or larger (80 to 100 sheets per notebook are typical).
- Select a notebook with a ¼ inch grid page format (also called "quadrille") instead of a ruled page. It's easier to sketch graphs, plot antenna layouts and draw block diagrams.
- Make entries in ink and date each entry.
- Write legibly, but don't be overly concerned about neatness. The information content is what's most important.
- Write your call sign and the title "Station Notebook" on the front cover.

While it might make sense to some to use a three-ring binder instead of a bound notebook, I believe the bound notebook is handier and therefore more likely to be written in and actually used. The bound notebook is easier to take out into the field for recording those antenna measurements. It also takes up less space on the bookshelf than most three-ring binders. The photos show the cover and an example page from my own Station Notebook.

Every station should have an up-to-date block diagram that describes the major system components and how they are interconnected. System components include transceivers, receivers, exciters, transverters, preamps, amplifiers, antennas, signal switching boxes, lightning arrestors, power supplies, as well as their interconnection. The Station Notebook is an idea place to document this. As your station architecture changes, simply modify the drawing or make a new one. Do you remember how long a length of coax is to your 40 meter dipole or when you last checked the connection at the feed point? Use the Station Notebook to capture a sketch of each run of transmission line you have, along with its length, type, and when you installed it or last inspected it. When you write it down, you can simply refer to your Station Notebook without having to rely on your memory. You already have enough on your mind!

Whenever I have a new idea for an antenna project, I sketch it out in my Station Notebook. I include rough plans for its design, where to locate it on the property, estimates of materials, and how to integrate it with existing antennas. When I install a new antenna, the design and installation details go in the Station Notebook, too. This includes a chart of the measured SWR across the band. This not only reminds me which sub-band I tuned an antenna for, but it is also useful to compare over time with current readings as an indicator that something has changed since the original installation.

Many hams open up their stations for operation to visiting hams. This is popular with contesters who may travel to exotic DX locations or who visit "Big Gun" multi-operator stations. What better way to acquaint the visiting ham with the particulars of a new station than by the Station Notebook.

These are just a few examples of the value of having a convenient, centralized notebook of station information. It is equally important to understand what the Station Notebook is not. The Station Notebook is not a logbook for documenting on-the-air contacts or your DXCC totals. The Station Notebook is not intended to be a general technical reference. Finally, don't store your user manuals, warranties and sales invoices in the Station Notebook. Create a separate file area to store these important documents.

Once you get in the habit of updating your Station Notebook, over time you will have created a documented history of your station. The notebook will have captured your shack's initial configuration, equipment changes and additions, results of experiments, your thoughts and ideas for future improvements, and antenna projects past and present. After only a few years of entries, not only does it make for very interesting reading, but it provides you with a real sense of



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accomplishment to remember all those projects you have implemented and had long since taken for granted. Not bad for a \$5 investment!

So visit your local stationery or office supply store and purchase your latest station accessory - the Station Notebook. Use it to keep a written record of your detailed station technical information. Store the Station Notebook in a convenient, accessible place in your shack (it doesn't take up much space). Keep it handy so you can find it when you need it. You will be glad you did!

While electronic documentation is not the focus of this article, it exists in various forms and capabilities. They include general purpose drawing applications, computer aided design (CAD) packages, schematic capture software, digital images, document scanning tools, text editors, word processors and portable document format (PDF) conversion tools.

Next month I will include my Station Notebook from my DX/Contest Station in Chattanooga. This will show you how good an idea this is and how detailed you can make it.



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ANNOUNCED DX OPERATIONS

February					
2017 Feb01	2017 Feb14	Central African Rep	TL8TT	LotW	By I1HJT I2YSB IK2CIO IK2CKR IK2DIA IK2HKT JA3USA; 160-6m; CW SSB, RTTY on 1 band; 3 stations; 24hr/day; QSL also OK via OQRS (no card required)
2017 Feb01	2017 Mar03	Senegal	6W2SC	LotW	By HA3AUI; 20-10m, other bands on request; CW; 500/100w; Spiderbeam; QSL also OK via HA3AUI direct; start date uncertain
2017 Feb02	2017 Feb08	Guadeloupe	FG	KB1TCD	By KB1TCD as FG/KB1TCD; 40 17 15m; low power
2017 Feb03	2017 Mar11	Rwanda	9X2AW	DF2WO Direct	By DF2WO fm Kigali; mainly PSK31 JT65 RTTY + QRS CW; QSL also OK via M0OXO
2017 Feb06	2017 Feb18	Namibia	V5	Home Call	By DD8ZX as V5/DD8ZX and DJ9KM as V5/DJ9KM fm Omaruru; 160-10m; SSB RTTY PSK; perhaps as V55V for CQWW WPX RTTY Contest (QSL via DJ8VC); QSL OK via DARC Buro or direct
2017 Feb08	2017 Feb18	South Cook Is	E51AMF	LotW	By K7ADD fm Rarotonga I (IOTA OC-013); 80-10m, perhaps 160m; SSB + digital; 1.5kw; verticals and wires near salt water; QSL also OK via K7ADD direct, Club Log, eQSL
2017 Feb09	2017 Feb14	Belize	V31VP	WB0TEV	By WB0TEV; 80-10m; mainly SSB RTTY; QRV for CQ WW WPX RTTY contest; QSL OK via Buro or direct, also Club Log
2017 Feb10	2017 Feb17	Easter I	CE0Y	DF8AN	By DF8AN as CE0Y/DF8AN; mainly CW, RTTY, PSK, MFSK; 100w; longwires; QSL OK via DARC Buro or direct
2017 Feb10	2017 Feb22	Panama	HP	LotW	By W1USN as HP/W1USN and AA1M as HP/AA1M; HF; SSB CW + digital; QSL also OK via home_call (Buro or direct)
2017 Feb10	2017 Feb24	Guantanamo	KG4	LotW	By W4WV as KG4WV, KG9LB as KG4AW, KE4KDY as KG4DY, W4ZYT as KG4ZK; QSL also OK via home_call and Club Log
2017 Feb12	2017 Feb15	Panama	HP	SQ3RX	By SQ3RX as HP/SQ3RX fm Volcan; HF; mainly CW; QSL also OK via Club Log
2017 Feb13	2017 Feb26	Macao	XX9D	LotW	By XX9LT DJ9KH DL2AWG DL2HWA DL2RNS DL3HRH DL4SVA DL5CW DM2AUJ DM2AYO DL7VEE; 80-10m; CW SSB RTTY; 3 stations 24/7; focus on NA; QSL also OK via DL4SVA (DARC Buro or direct)



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2017 Feb13	2017 Feb27	San Andres & Providencia	5J0NA	LW9EOC	By LW9EOC; 160-6m, focus on low and WARC bands; CW SSB RTTY; QRV for ARRL DX CW
2017 Feb13	2017 Mar03	Austral Is	TX5T	M0URX OQRS	By VE7KW VA7DX W5RF fm Raivavae I (IOTA OC-114); 160-10m; CW SSB RTTY; hexbeams and spiderpoles
2017 Feb13	2017 Mar07	San Andres & Providencia	HK0	AA4NC	By AA4NC as HK0/AA4NC; QRV for ARRL DX CW and SSB using a 5K0 call sign
2017 Feb14	2017 Feb20	St Kitts & Nevis	V4	LotW	By N8WD as V4/N8WD fm Calypso Bay; 100w; Buddipole; QSL also OK via N8WD direct (w/ SASE or SAE + 2GS) + eQSL; also V4/K4ZGB (QSL direct)
2017 Feb15	2017 Feb21	Fernando de Noronha	PY0F	PY2QI Direct	By PY2QI as PY2QI/PY0F fm IOTA SA-003; 40-10m; CW
2017 Feb16	2017 Mar05	Pitcairn I	VP6EU	LotW	By DJ9HX DK2AMM DL6JGN PA3EWP fm IOTA OC-044; 160-10m; CW SSB RTTY; 2 stations, at least 1 QRV 24 hours/day; 600w; beam + verticals; QSL also OK via DK2AMM and Club Log
2017 Feb17	2017 Feb21	Palau	T88DT	JH1OLB	By JH1OLB fm Koror I (IOTA OC-009); 160-6m; SSB CW RTTY PSK31 SSTV JT65A
2017 Feb17	2017 Feb24	Micronesia	V63DX	JA7HMZ Direct	By JA7HMZ; 160-6m; will look for EU on 160m outside contest; QRV for ARRL DX CW using V6A
2017 Feb17	2017 Feb25	Sint Maarten	PJ7	LotW	By OH2IS as PJ7/OH2IS fm Philipsburg; 80-10m; mainly CW, perhaps some SSB RTTY; 1kw; vertical, dipoles
2017 Feb21	2017 Feb24	Juan Fernandez	CE0Z	DF8AN	By DF8AN as CE0Y/DF8AN fm Robinson Crusoe I; mainly CW, RTTY, PSK, MFSK; 100w; longwires; QSL OK via DARC Buro or direct
2017 Feb22	2017 Mar07	Barbados	8P9AL	LotW	By KG9N fm IOTA NA-021; HF; wire verticals, dipoles, longwires; QSL also OK via KG9N (for this operation only - reissued call sign)
2017 Jan25	2017 Feb01	Dominican Republic	HI1UD	LotW	By HI3MPC HI3TT HI3CC HI3RWP HI8RD HI8K HI8C HI3Y HI3MRV HI8EES fm Beata I (IOTA NA-122, FK47fn); all bands; CW SSB; QSL also OK via Club Log (preferred) or W2CCW direct (w/ \$US2 SAE)



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Happy Valentine's Day to all

CONTESTING NEWS

4- 5 Sat 0000 - Sun 2400
4 Sat 1400 - 2359

11-12 Sat 0000 - Sun 2359

13 Mon 0100 - 0259
13-17 Mon 1300 - Fri 2359

18-19 Sat 0000 - Sun 2359

24-26 Fri 2200 - Sun 2200

25-26 Sat 1500 - Sun 0159
25-26 Sat 1800 - Sun 0600
26-27 Sun 1500 - Mon 0059

Vermont QSO Party - CW/Digital/SSB
Minnesota QSO Party - CW/Phone

CQ World Wide WPX RTTY Contest - RTTY

CQC Winter QSO Party - CW
ARRL School Club Roundup - CW/Digital/Phone

ARRL International DX Contest - CW

CQ World Wide 160-Meter Contest - SSB

South Carolina QSO Party - CW/Digital/Phone
North American QSO Party - RTTY
North Carolina QSO Party - CW/Digital/Phone

If you have info or articles you would like in the Newsletter, e-mail them to me and I will get them published.

K1AR CONTESTING HINT

This may sound like common sense, but it's worth a try. When calling in a big CW pileup, don't be afraid to move your transmit frequency a little off the center of the chaos. If you put yourselves in the shoes of the DX station, it begins to make sense. Except from the biggest stations or rare propagation advantages, brute force calling almost never pays off! (NOTE: This also works for SSB KE4MBP)