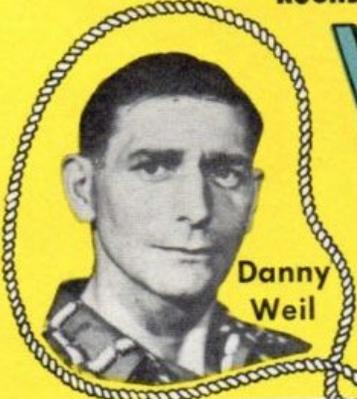


ROUND THE WORLD DX'PEDITION OF THE YASME FOUNDATION

VP2VB/MM



Danny Weil

TO RADIO **K5BGB**
GLAD TO QSO FROM

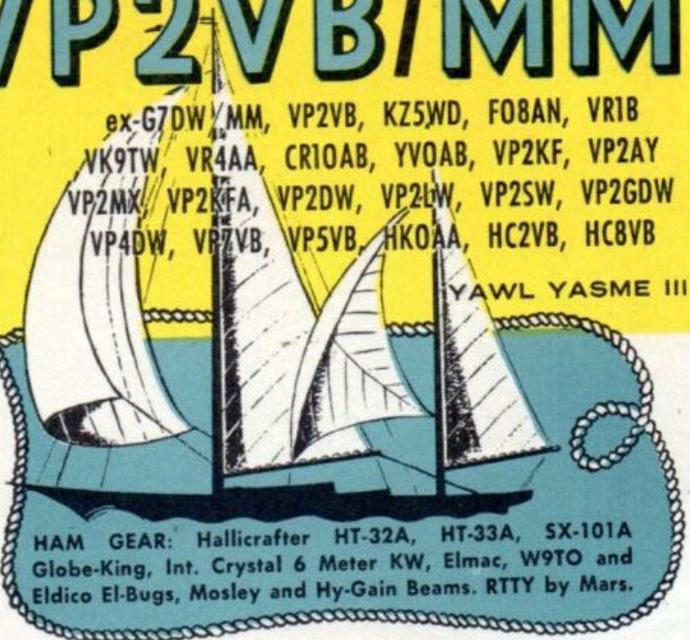
FO8AN

YASME DX'PEDITION ASHORE ON
CLIPPERTON ISLAND

LAT. 10.17 N. LONG. 109.12 W.

ex-G7DW/MM, VP2VB, KZ5WD, FO8AN, VR1B
VK9TW VR4AA, CR1OAB, YVOAB, VP2KF, VP2AY
VP2MX, VP2KFA, VP2DW, VP2LW, VP2SW, VP2GDW
VP4DW, VP7VB, VP5VB, HKOAA, HC2VB, HC8VB

YAWL YASME III



HAM GEAR: Hallicrafter HT-32A, HT-33A, SX-101A
Globe-King, Int. Crystal 6 Meter KW, Elmac, W9TO and
Eldico El-Bugs, Mosley and Hy-Gain Beams. RTTY by Mars.

Danny Weil

A Dreamer of Distant Lands Who Took Amateur Radio on the Trip of a Lifetime

By Martti Laine, OH2BH, AH3D, VP2VB (re-issued)

References to "Yasme book/K1TN" are to **Yasme – The Danny Weil and Colvin Radio Expeditions**, written by James D. Cain, K1TN, and published in 2003 by the American Radio Relay League, now out of print.

Danny Weil (*14.01.1918, London – †03.10.2003, San Antonio, TX) was born in a London suburb, a descendant of many generations of watchmakers, so he apprenticed in the trade of watchmaking. Later he earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering and Navigation. His father, Jack Weil, was killed during World War II in the London Blitz. Danny joined the Royal Air Force at the age of 17 and in the 10 years he served, was stationed in Ceylon, India, Norway and Stalingrad. After returning to London, Danny took over the family shop, but found little satisfaction in selling and repairing watches and clocks.

In 1947, by mere chance, Danny came across the book *Kon-Tiki*, written by the Norwegian Thor Heyerdahl who had traveled across the Pacific Ocean from South America to the Tuamotu Islands of Tahiti with his balsa wood raft named "Kon-Tiki". Danny was truly inspired by the book, but lacked the money to buy a boat of his own. Still following his forebears into the trade of watchmaking, he could not help nurturing a dream of solo-circumnavigating the globe. Luck struck again: Danny found the wreck of a sunken yacht. He recovered the 40-foot sailboat and spent many hours, weeks and months making it seaworthy again.

When the work was finished in August, 1954, Danny left England on his sailboat "Yasme" (the name is derived from the Japanese word *yasume*, meaning freedom), in order to travel the world alone. Needing a means of communication, he taught himself Morse code and radio theory before sailing out and "helped himself" to the call sign G7DW without obtaining a radio license. He carried on board an old British WWII tank transmitter and a war-surplus BC-348 receiver. His signal was well heard along the way, but only a few got an answer from G7DW/MM. In just 3 weeks, he successfully crossed the Atlantic and arrived in Antigua, British West Indies (BWI). In nearby St. Thomas of the US Virgin Islands, he looked up some hams for help with his problematic radio equipment and was fortunate to befriend Dick Spenceley, KV4AA. Dick was to become an integral part of the Yasme Foundation story as both Dick and Danny were dreamers in their own interests.

As described in the following collection of histories, the Yasme Foundation was established in 1959 in Tampa, Florida around the further activities of Danny Weil. By then the Foundation's purpose was already set wider, but only in more recent years was it modernized to represent the world of today. The founding officers were; President, Richard Spenceley, KV4AA, Vice President & Treasurer: Edward Stanley, W4QDZ, Directors; Charles Biddle, W6GN, Golden Fuller, W8EWS, William Halligan, W9AC, J.E Joyner, W4TO, James Symington, K4KCV and Danny Weil, VP2VB, all Silent Keys today. The foundation's charter was approved in the Circuit Court of Hillsborough County, Florida on July 31, 1959.



Danny and Yasme I ready to sail (Yasme book/K1TN page 31)

The original purpose of the Yasme Foundation was: "Yasme contributes to the advancement of amateur radio and as a scientific and educational medium, to assist those handicapped hams in need of the therapy and pleasure which ham radio can give as else can't, to create international good will, to conduct scientific explorations in the fields of oceanography and hydrography, and to share its findings with every one regardless of race, creed or color."

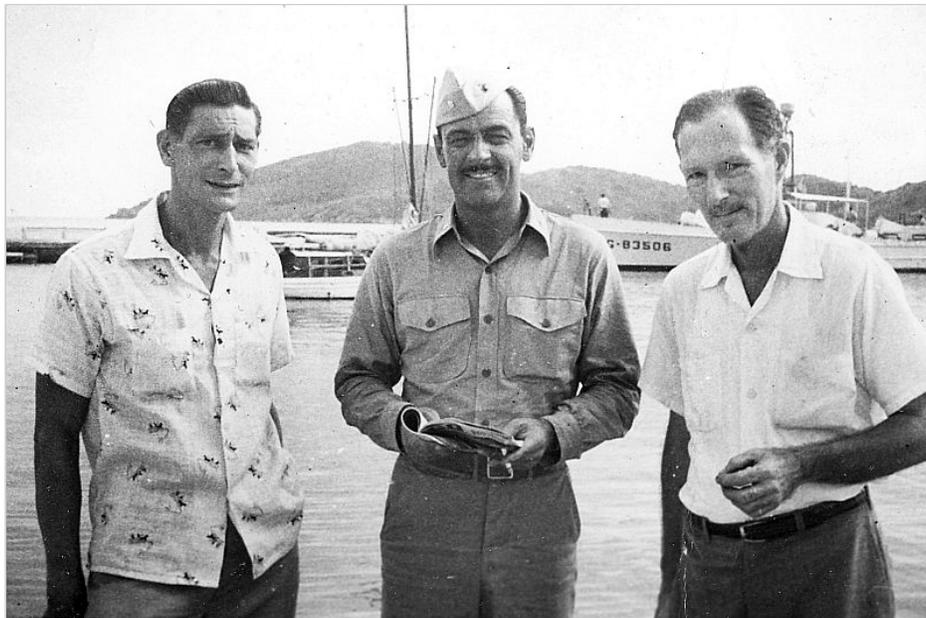
The wording may sound odd for some, but one should realize that, for example, that first jet airplanes were only starting to be commercialized at that time.

Learning amateur radio and becoming a country-hopping DXpeditioner

After Danny docked in Antigua he looked for help to get his radio equipment working. Someone had told him to seek out Dick Spenceley, KV4AA in St. Thomas for help. In late April 1955, Danny sailed to Charlotte Amalie, the main harbor of St. Thomas. About a decade older than Danny (then 37) they became friends and created the beginnings of the Yasme story over the next eight years.

When Dick suggested that Danny incorporate amateur radio into his voyage and described the inner workings of DX, Danny was at the feet of a real master. Danny spent the next several months in St. Thomas, learning radio theory and Morse code. He then took a trip to Tortola, in the British Virgin Islands (BVI), where he passed the amateur radio examination and was issued the BVI call sign VP2VB.

Soon, Dick had obtained the needed equipment from US hams to be installed on-board Yasme: two Multi-Elmac AF-67 portable transmitters, an Elmac PMR-6A receiver, and a Hammarlund HQ-129X. Even though Danny was practicing Morse code daily, Dick stated in *CQ Magazine* that he was not the best CW operator in the world but would soon have lots of practice. Dick was right – as he was not an amateur radio DXpeditioner, but rather attempting to circumnavigate the globe, alone, which had been thought to have been his original driving force since leaving England.



Danny Weil, VP2VB, left and Dick Spenceley, KV4AA, right with actor William Holden in the middle (from Yasme book/K1TN page 29)

Who is this demanding Dick Spenceley, KV4AA? The first Yasme Foundation president, he was born in the Boston suburb of West Newton, Massachusetts in 1905 and lived there until 1924 when he joined the US Navy. In 1925 he transferred to the Navy's radio station NBB in the US Virgin Islands. He was originally licensed as K4AAN and caught the severe "DX Bug" in 1932.

KV4AA was on top of the DXCC Honor Roll by 1962. He was the DX editor of *CQ Magazine* from 1952 to 1958. He was a beacon on 14.080 KHz CW every day and was inducted into the CQ DX Hall of Fame in March, 1969. Dick Spenceley, KV4AA, died in 1982.

After three months in St. Thomas, Danny left on August 1st, 1955, headed for the Panama Canal and points further west. Danny maintained daily radio contact with KV4AA. The Yasme was fitted for a longer journey and Dick's instructions were banging in his head – "The longer I hold a QSO, the less chance I have to natter others, so make 'em short and sweet and don't think me rude if I suddenly go off the air." The learning on the job was well under way.

In Canal Zone, KZ5, the home of 14 US military bases was an intermediate stop for Danny for further fitting out Yasme for the Pacific. Danny was the guest of Dick, KZ5MN and was granted the call sign KZ5WD. A number of DXers worked Danny from the Canal Zone, yet another DXCC counter and Danny was on his way to becoming potentially the first of the country-hopping DXpeditioners.

Yasme sailed out from Canal Zone on October 8, 1955, setting course for the Galapagos Islands and then Tahiti, FO8. Tahiti was to be his furthest destination. He burned 175 gallons of gas while also continuously keeping in contact with KV4AA and Roland, FO8AD.

Yasme sighted Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas Islands in late November 1955, eight weeks after he had left the Panama Canal. He continued to Pape'ete, Tahiti where he landed on December 8, 1955. On that long journey the world had caught "Danny fever" and the QST "How's DX" column featured Danny as the main protagonist.

The FO8AN operation really brought Danny into the spotlight of the DX world. He spent several hours a day operating, on both CW and AM, while exploring Pape'ete's paradise – like life in many of its facets. Danny loved Tahiti and leaving it was very difficult for him. This included his girlfriend Marie and other YLs "with a cooperative and broad-minded attitude regarding the propagation of the species," as he stated!

It should be mentioned right here how much Danny had hoped the mast would snap or something would happen to necessitate his return to Tahiti. Little did he know that all these things would happen



Danny and Marie in Tahiti, a friend very hard to leave (Yasme book/K1TN page 36)

along his journey but that he may not return to Tahiti, as he was set to make many more DX hops.

His fame was building and Art Collins, WØCXX, greeted Danny with a brand-new Collins 75A4 receiver on his arrival at Canton Island in the Phoenix Islands, now Kiribati, where rare VR1B was to hit the air. In those days many of the Pacific Islands were occupied by the military and Canton Island was well attended, manned by the US

and the British with unique multiple DXCC status: KB6 and VR1. Danny operated his Elmac and 75A4 from the shack of Howie, KB6BA.

Danny found himself overwhelmed by the radio demand and he became the Marathon Man on the radio. His whole life was devoted to key thumping and occasionally spouting on phone. Danny stayed on Canton Island for a month, longer than he initially planned. This was indeed his first “major” operation as VR1B was definitely needed by many DXers.

Fame took its toll and keeping a radio schedule was increasingly difficult. Danny decided to write a message to Dick with the following wording: “I was able to get on the air for less than 24 hours and soon cleared over 100 QSO’s, about one a minute. I should with more practice get a little faster, I realize this is slow, maybe we shall be able to speed it up a bit.” With this message the true mind of a DXpeditioner was born once and forever!

Next up: Nauru, Solomon and Papua New Guinea – and the biggest hit of them all

Danny wasted no time upon his arrival on Nauru Island reporting to the Island Manager, Mr. Cameron. Nauru was then administrated jointly by Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

The logistics were amazingly effective as Danny’s support team managed to ship a three-element tri-bander to Nauru. A local group helped Danny to hoist the 40-foot 2-in diameter pole at the base, while Danny worked above, at the top of the pole, being the brave type. All this took place under the supervision of Nauru’s commercial radio operator, Les Wright, VK9LW.

Nauru being a completely new country, Danny was overwhelmed by the pileup but stuck with it for a solid 14 hours using the callsign VK9TW, handing QSOs out as fast as he could. “When I tell you blokes I spent 14 hours a day on the rig it’s no lie,” he reported.

The journey to the Solomon Islands (VR4AA) was another 7-day trip at sea, covering about 700 miles. There was a clear indication of frustration upon his arrival. There were no people... no fanfares. DXpeditioning had shown Danny its less attractive face. “I had expected to have a few visitors but not a soul came to greet me, and really, I felt far lonelier than I had in all the past thousands of miles at sea,” he reported back to KV4AA. After 12 days of operating and 1650 QSOs it was time to set sail again.

Making 1650 QSOs in twelve days is less than many would expect but we have to realize that the entire DX industry was in its infancy, ahead of its own time, and it was just Danny with his multi-hopping travels that developed the first stages to the multi-station and multi-operator DXpeditions of later years.

The trip to Port Moresby on Papua was planned to be a short one. It ended up being the longest one of all, with a heartbreaking nightmare and the end of the Yasme sailboat. SOS signals were dominating the airwaves, telling a story of the sad end to Danny’s dream of being the first Englishman to sail around the world alone.

Danny Weil deals with Mother Nature twice – in a big way

The typhoon struck when Yasme was literally within sight of Port Moresby, maybe a dozen or so miles away. Danny was thrown first horizontally, then vertically, only to find himself standing on the inner side of the cockpit coaming. The wind had swung suddenly 180 degrees, and it was quickly becoming a full blast hurricane. Yasme was thrown absolutely flat on its side, and the cross-trees of the mast were actually on the water and the engine suddenly roared as the prop was brought clear of the water. Water poured into the cockpit and flooded the cabin, finally pouring in through the forward hatch which was wide open.

Panic stricken, Danny ran along the side of the cabin to free the jib halyard and sheet. The wind screamed through the rigging and towering seas broke right over the Yasme trying hard to sink her as fast as possible. Danny used the last of its generator's life to contact Frank, VK9FN in Port Moresby and seek help. In spite of being in radio contact with VK9FN as well as with another Australian amateur he was unable to get his bearings in the storm even though he was within 10 miles of Port Moresby. Finally an Air Sea Rescue Craft was sent out which towed him 30 miles through 40 knot winds, in total darkness. The rescue journey took 12 hours!

An old warehouse next to Yasme in Port Moresby became the location of VK9TW from September 24th through October 16th while Yasme underwent maintenance and clearing of the mess below its deck. The place was only 100 yards from the moorings of Yasme. Power was made available and the rig was set up – instant ham shack for some 600 QSOs!

It was time to leave immediately after a new mainsail had arrived from New York. After clearing the infamous Gulf of Papua, Danny entered again the open seas and what he thought was calmer waters and easy sailing. But instead, it was the time for the big and final hit: Yasme had veered off course and struck an uncharted reef. Danny expected to be able to get off the reef when the tide would rise, and he scrambled over the sloping deck to cast out the anchor! He had hoped for magic, but his prayers had fallen on deaf ears and gradually Yasme settled firmly on the reef.

Late that day his SOS was answered by VK2AUR in Australia. Also, VK9FN came to his frequency and Danny reported his position as best he knew it. A rescue plane was promised the next day.

By morning the Yasme had sunk further below the waterline and Danny knew it would be hard to be spotted from the air. But after 8 AM the rescue plane found the wreck, signaling to Danny that help was on the way. It was an RAAF, 4-engine Lincoln bomber. Something dropped from its bomb bay and hit the water. It was a life raft which gradually took its form as the tiny cylinder of CO2 inflated the raft to its full size. Exhausted Danny swam to the dingy and passed out.

The next thing he saw was a Seaplane from Quantas Airways landing nearby in heavy seas, and soon Danny was onboard. Danny arrived in Port Moresby with nothing and received help from the Red Cross and others. Yasme was not insured and not worth salvaging. Danny Weil soon flew to Australia and then back to the United States with the dream of a new boat and a swift return to the seven seas and many new DXCC encounters!

Sometimes the pieces just don't fall into place – not on any front. These are the back-stage events that each DXpedition and DXpeditioner must face alone. Rarely do we lend a hand to them and show how much we appreciate the pain and suffering that is always present, particularly when the most critical element of them all – those famous (or infamous) seven seas – are selected to serve as the medium for our most sincere adventures and voyages.

But at the same time this is the very point where men are separated from boys. For some it is the point for re-evaluating the matter and deciding whether this is worth doing and worth experiencing. Is there enough pay-back in becoming a world-wide radio showman and doing something that no one has never done before – single handedly?
(note by author)

Danny had many lonely nights to think about this all. He had lost just about everything and he had no pillow to rest his head on. He had no means to build what was lost. But he soon realized that he still had himself and the original dream to proceed with. And so he did and soon life took another turn!

We are back on the American soil with an American dream

Dick, KV4AA, gave Danny only a little time to rest as DXers were already hungry and looking forward to many rare DXCC countries that were waiting to be discovered. Danny, a bachelor, was broke and jobless and was literally forced to beg. Dick had an idea to make this DX hero travel across the USA and raise the necessary funds to purchase another 40 footer sailing boat, to allow Danny to re-start his journey and sail to places like the Kermadec Islands and Tonga, which were missed on the previous trip.

Danny indicated that "I am a bit tired of this – would be an understatement." But the bug had bitten Danny and he was ready to sail fifty times to the Pacific if he would get going again.

As there was no internet or cell-phones during those times, all of Danny's lectures had to be scheduled by mail by KV4AA. Dick aimed at potential "oil barrel" DXers – those above average – from coast to coast. The idea was to gather the hams at their local clubs and have them pay for Danny's travel and accommodation. And then after the talk to raise some donations. Should all efforts fail to provide the necessary funds, Danny would continue back home to England.

Dick was very persuasive in all his efforts and Danny's QSL cards were clear and straight about the matter. He also agreed with the owners of *CQ Magazine* and its editor Wayne Green, W2NSD that *CQ* would have extensive and exclusive coverage on Danny and pay "top-dollar" for it as this was something that had never been seen or done before. Danny had just started a new phase in DX.

The QSL text read, "THE YASME II EXPEDITION IS YOUR EXPEDITION. DANNY IS DEDICATED TO THE HARD AND, MANY TIMES, HAZARDOUS TASK OF PUTTING AS MANY RARE SPOTS ON THE AIR AS HE POSSIBLY CAN. CONTRIBUTIONS ARE NOT MANDATORY FOR RETURN QSL CARD, BUT A SMALL CONTRIBUTION WILL HELP HIM MEET THE CONSIDERABLE EXPENSES WHICH ARE ALWAYS CROPPING UP AND WILL ENABLE HIM TO "CARRY ON." IT WILL ALSO ASSURE YOU OF A RAPID RETURN QSL VIA AIRMAIL. PLEASE HELP IF YOU CAN!"

It took the whole year of 1956 for Danny to lecture at more than 100 clubs and gatherings and find positive and negative surprises in the DX community. The buck was tight and many events did not produce much. Many reports from Danny to Dick indicated minor success, such as in Albuquerque, where a sum of USD \$76 was collected, and at the dinner another USD \$5! Also, press and TV appearances were done as Danny was a very entertaining speaker. Some places were more productive and also a new slate of requests started to come along from hams who wanted to be a part of his next journey.

Life was not luxurious and in one report Danny indicated that he must give up smoking. "USD \$32 for 3 months is too much... and I have to stop eating when I am out... it is a bad habit."

Danny wrote: "I have been here in USA for over three months and all I have to show is just over USD \$1000. How the heck I can do better? I have been invited to a dinner this Saturday with a few Big Knobs and they may offer some suggestions." Big Knobs – interesting expression!

One of the Big Knobs was obviously Bill Halligan, W9AC, of Hallicrafters, who was willing to give Danny USD \$2000 worth of gear with the stipulation that he would not use anyone else's. They also had Globe King offer him a NC-300. So, on the equipment front, Danny was doing well.

Danny was also asking Dick for a better quality of life at times. "Don't ever stick me in one place for a whole week again, I can find much better things to do with my time than wandering around ham shacks and sleeping in a different bed each night. Packing my bag and moving to a different bed each day is no fun."



Danny facing the troubles with Mother Nature in PNG (from Yasme book/K1TN page 53)

Take note of how Danny responded to an offer from a non-ham wanting to join him and pay him a considerable amount to do so: "Yasme is 40 ft. overall, and still I found it difficult to stow all the gear needed for the job. Even though your offer is the first of its kind since I left England three years ago, I hate to throw a damp rag on your enthusiasm, but here is my last word of advice: I have found with sailing for two and a half years that to be alone is usually the best way. I have seen many yachts of all sizes where crews have fallen out through being alone together for long periods. It takes two special sorts of people to maintain a good relationship on a small boat, and they are hard to find."

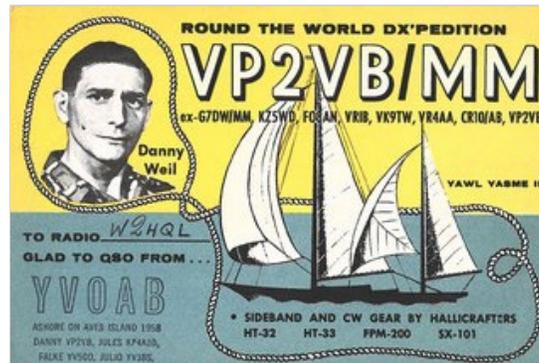
New beginning, new Yasme, new countries and new hope

On late August 1957, exactly three-years after his original departure, Danny flew back to England with new enthusiasm and lots of experience on each and every front. At this point one can ask the question which interest was his driving force – sailing around the world solo or taking up a new fame that he had definitely discovered through amateur radio while in the United States.

Danny wrote to his mother: "I have been published in every top paper in Chicago, been in two top TV programs and there are many more lined up. I am surrounded by cameras, Hallicrafters have allocated their publicity man who stay with me all the time, all except to sleep with me." The first serious DXpeditioner's name was indeed on everyone's lips.

The local UK newspaper reported, "Danny Weil, who narrowly escaped death when his boat was wrecked on a coral reef in the Pacific, may soon be embarking again on the second chapter of his saga. And his new boat, successor to the ill-fated Yasme, will again come from Christchurch, England."

Only a week or so later there was another news bit, stating: "An Around-the-World yachtsman was catapulted high in the air when his 40-foot sloop blew up from underneath into the sea, about 5 feet from his yacht, the Yasme II, lying now in Holyhead harbor." It was reported that the accident happened while refueling the new boat in a Scottish port. The boat was a total loss, but was covered by insurance.



VP2VB/MM YVØAB QSL (YASME)

Only two months later Danny was delighted with the purchase of another 50-foot boat, this one a yawl, made entirely of teakwood and built in 1912; it had two new masts, a lead keel of seven tons and the latest hydraulic deck winch. Studying the original documentation we can see that the 1kW diesel generator cost USD \$105 in those days – calculated to today's value that would be about USD \$1000 and would estimate the boat purchase to be around USD \$12,000 which equals to USD \$120,000 as of today's value. There is no specific notice on how this was specifically financed as Yasme Foundation was not yet formally operational.

At this point Gus Browning, W4BPD, entered the scene and much of the press turned to him because of Danny's absence from the scene.

Instead of going to complicated destinations such as Navassa, Galapagos, and the Clipperton Islands, Dick, KV4AA, was zooming into Aves Island, YVØ which became a DXCC entity on November 1, 1956 and since then it had only been activated for a handful of contacts.

Conditions at the time, just like today, are that only with involvement



Joe, W1JR, ex W2HQL and Danny at Tortola, BVI (from Yasme book/K1TN page 91)

of Venezuelans can one obtain an YVØ license. And that was the approach taken. The YVØAA/YVØAB team was soon on its way with Danny; Jules, KP4AIO; Falke, YV5GO; and Julio, YV3BS.

Danny spent little time in St. Thomas, stowing the Hallicrafters radio gear aboard and sailing off, bound to Aves Island, a deserted sandbar destination with no people. KV4AA had spent several days constructing a completely self-contained cabinet that would house the HT-32, HT-33 and SX-101, could be bolted to a prepared spot on Yasme, and then taken ashore.

Reading the December 1958 issue of *QST* magazine, this looked like another successful and well-documented adventure. With four men on board and a lot to carry ashore, Danny worried about the group and their comfort at sea. Take the drinking water for example: "My tank only holds 30 gallons, so a general roundup was made here for spare bottles to augment the supply. My main tank also is a little rusty inside and every cup of water is flavored with ¼ cup of rust. I didn't mind it, but the other guys complained – some people are never satisfied." Danny had to stay on the boat most of the time because of the rough and ever changing sea conditions. They were anchored in 20 feet of water and for the sake of safety he had let out 60 feet of anchor chain. Danny was in charge of it all from landing, the boat itself, and transferring the bulky gear and the generator back and forth. Were the landlubbers satisfied of 2346 QSOs made for the stay of two weekends?

Not at all. There were attempts to disqualify the entire operation by the Venezuelan operators for reasons that had nothing to do with making radio contacts. The accusations were too many to list but indeed, an early statement made by Danny became more valid than ever: being alone on a sailing trip brings you conflict with no one but yourself. In public, the *QST* article by Danny indicated none!

Salvation for Danny came in the form of a new DXCC rule. Nearly a dozen Caribbean Islands had initially been considered as just two DXCC entities: the Windward Islands and the Leeward Islands. As England loosened its grip on most of the British colonies, the DXCC rules required a reconsideration.

On June 1, 1958, only five days after Danny had just arrived from the Aves Island DXpedition, the Caribbean DXpedition of Yasme II was announced as a warm-up for the ambitious Pacific trip to follow thereafter.

The first new one was VP2V itself. This is the only time Danny used his own call sign, VP2VB, now from privately owned Buck Island, a mile away from the main town of Tortola. Dick had invited four talented hams and close Yasme associates to accompany Danny at his home port: Joe, W2HQL (now W1JR); Rudy, W3CXX; his son Fred, W3BSF; and Doc, W5PQA.

Asking Joe, W1JR today (January 2021) about Danny, he remembers him with many fond memories:



Majestic YASME II somewhere in the Caribbean (from Yasme book/K1TN page 86)

"Danny allowed the rest of the gang to operate most of the time while he remained alone at aboard Yasme. He was seemingly preferring the loneliness while on the other end, he was a shameless woman chaser.

"For our meals we had to shuttle to Yasme using a dingy. He introduced me to tongue (ugh!). Even though I was thrilled about the prospect of accompanying Danny to the Seven Seas, the more I thought about it, and all things

considered, I have decided that I would be better off at home, a decision which later proved to be right.”

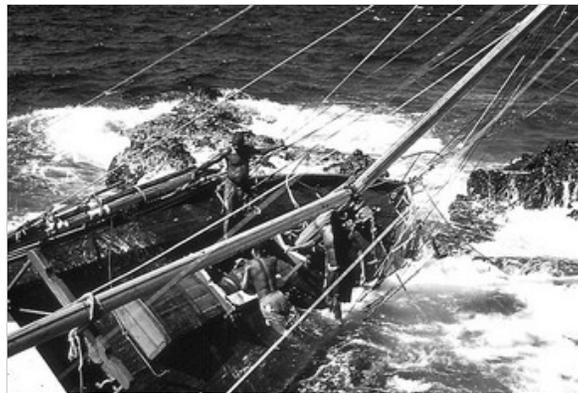
VP2VB was probably the finest and best conducted Danny Weil DXpedition of all times, resulting in more than 5000 QSOs. This was obviously a multi-man show from a comfortable environment, ending in style with a reception given at the British Governors mansion in the town of Tortola.

But the show must go on as those new Caribbean VP2-DXCC counters were only barely active by local operators. Danny continued on a roll, handing out those to the Deserving.

First, St. Kitts with 2300 QSOs, next Antigua, VP2AY with 3400 QSOs, followed by Monserrat, VP2MX with another 1950 QSOs. Then Anguilla as VP2KFA and celebrating Christmas 1958 in Dominica, VP2DW with 2400 QSOs, then St. Lucia with 2750 QSOs. Finally, VP2SW, St. Vincent with 2800 QSOs. Danny was on a roll and it looked like there was a need for 2500 to 3000 QSOs from each entity, to satisfy the demand.

Things went fine for the most part. During those early days the Aves Island type of DX jealousy was noted on Anguilla Island where the local US expatriate resident VPØRT tried to protect what he thought was his and his only.

In April 1959, *QST* magazine reported that Danny's round-the-world DX marathon struck a snag on Union Island, part of St Vincent, and became rockbound en route to Grenada. Unfortunately it was much worse than that as *Yasme II* was destroyed and Danny sustained painful lacerations.



Stormy seas when leaving Grenades (from *Yasme* book/K1TN page 94)

Danny reported: “The whole truth of the matter is, I went to sleep instead of being on watch. It is unnecessary for me to tell you I was tired. I have been over-tired for some time, and should have stayed over in St. Vincent for a few days of relaxation. I chose to move on. Call it what you wish – over enthusiasm – or just bloody stupidity – the fact still remains that I had no right to be sailing *Yasme* with so much at stake!”

Yasme was on the rocks and the hole in its hull of about 10 ft. by 3 ft. was enlarging and Danny's foot injury was preventing any further salvage efforts: “I only wish I had a salvage expert available here as speed is essential and if I cannot get something done soon *Yasme* will be lost.” The same fate was awaiting the radio gear, some other necessities and the typewriter all piled up together with injured Danny laying on the narrow beach, in Grenadines, which was about the most primitive of the entire West Indies Islands.

But Danny was a brilliant reporter and writer and indeed his Remington typewriter was very productive along the way. Note his wording on a somewhat non-relevant issue: “Just can't figure why my Remington won't do the same after all, it's only been in the sea for a couple of weeks. It surely needed a new ribbon! Stuck it in a barrel of fresh water to wash the salt out then stuck it in the sand to dry out. After this, a pint of lube oil worked wonders except the carriage wouldn't move. The darn spring had broken!”

Danny's survival on this episode is well written out and would easily make a book out of itself... “The left leg gave out and I fell down with a thump. Needless to say my language at that time would not be found in any dictionary, but it helped my feeling but not my confounded leg.”



Washing the sunken Collins 75A4 by fresh water (from Yasme book/K1TN page 97)

He was found by the natives and the story goes: "There were several natives standing in there and I did finally managed to convey to this guy that it would be a bright idea if he shone his flashlight in any place other than in my eyes!"

Yasme II was history but Danny carried on his travels with other available transport: Another 1300 QSOs from Grenada, VP2GDW followed by 400 QSOs from VP4TW, Trinidad.

Here the Yasme Foundation comes with a strong hand to rescue a DX world in need

Amateur radio operators all over the world shared the shock and sorrow of the dismal end suffered by Danny and Yasme II. This spirit of "never say die" by Danny, who in spite of personal injury and the discouragement brought about by an unfortunate turn of affairs, was still willing and anxious to carry on.

The decision was made for "no lecture tours" or "hat passing" but instead the Yasme Foundation would operate as a non-profit organization, governed by a board of directors, to get the Yasme III DXpedition underway again with a fourth Yasme boat. A huge effort was made by the newly registered Yasme Foundation and the first *Yasme News* was mailed out in September 1959 to some 2600 supporters while some of the Foundation directors offered to loan money upfront to the Yasme Foundation. All this was boosted by a single loan of USD \$5000 by one Foundation officer as well as USD \$1500 and USD \$1000 from others. The main corporate sponsor, Mr. Bill Halligan, W9AC and owner of Hallicrafters, had spent USD \$15,000 earlier and was already almost out of steam.

Soon negotiations were underway to buy the "Sun Regret" from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, a similar boat to Yasme II, for approximately USD \$14,600. The Yasme Foundation was well on its way to make miracles happen in the world of DX.

The idea was for a three-man team, including Dave, ZL1AV, to secure licenses to cover the Kermadec and Tokelau Islands operations and any other spots under New Zealand jurisdiction. Added to the team was also a 22-year-old Joe Reisert, W2HQL, now W1JR, from Buck Island VP2VB fame, to make the Pacific operation more efficient and less risky.

The great assets of this third phase were Danny Weil's writing talent and endless hope for activating a stream of new entities for the hams in need of new counters, along with his personal around-the-world dream. Indeed DXers are true believers when it comes to the news they want to hear.

Listen to this: "I shall try to inject just a little of the adventure and excitement of the voyage into your lives... as hors d'oeuvres we begin with Galapagos (HC8)... then really serious work to Pitcairn or Easter Islands... Kermadec might be useful and perhaps Wallis Islands... then we call for volunteers at Ceylon to replace the crew and continue to Seychelles, Aldabra, Zanzibar and finally Ascension and St. Helena Islands."

And indeed the package was full of cream and sugar and it was no problem for DXers to envision Danny reaching all of these

destinations. The final touch was, "Our group shall justify your faith and helping hand. When I bring Yasme III to Tampa, my love for all of you will ride the helm with me! – Danny, VP2VB."

At this point, many may have already lost count of how many Yasme boats there may have been up to this new Yasme III. Furthermore those who can visualize the one-man ocean sailing with the instruments available in those days can determine whether Danny with his degree in Navigation was just an unlucky soul. Maybe he was just pushed by Dick Spenceley, KV4AA to reach demanding destinations with an unreasonable schedule, resulting in constant disasters looming on the horizons (note by author)

- ▶ **YASME I** Struck and lost on uncharted reef nearby Papua New Guinea
- ▶ **YASME X** Explosion during refueling in Scotland before sailing
- ▶ **YASME II** Wrecked toward Union Island, Grenadines when captain fell asleep
- ▶ **YASME III** "Sun Regret" – can this one go around the world with no leak or float?



Bob Crisler, W8HWC, Danny Weil, VP2VB, Dave Tremayne, ZL1AV and Ed Stanley, W4QDZ (from YASME News, September 1959, volume 1.)

New boat with Yasme Foundation, new start and new everything and more

While in the process of finishing the Yasme III purchase, it was reasonable to show up on the air from Bahamas as VP7VB, just to keep the DX community fully alert. With those 850 VP7VB QSOs, Danny reported that the operation was a great ragchew undertaking with the DX community.



Yasme III, M/S Sun Regret ready to sail out to the horizon (from YASME News, September 1959, volume 1)

Upon his return, as always, some voices in the DX community along with a bitter W6 ham operator of the Anguilla fame, were sensitive to some issues and some critical comments were noticed. Some of these issues were about the “business-like” approach of the Yasme QSL policy. There was also an attempt to cancel the Colonial call sign VP2VB on the basis of “flagrant abuse of amateur privileges!” KV4AA finally met with the troublesome W6 ham operator and these issues were sorted out satisfactorily.

On May 1, 1960 Yasme III with Danny and Dave, ZL1AV, on board left Tampa for their first operation together, bound for Kingston, Jamaica, licensed as VP5VB. It was not a rare spot but a good “shakedown” cruise to test all the details for the upcoming Pacific odyssey. Some 3200 QSOS were made during the operation.

In the meantime KV4AA was working hard to come up with a totally new one: Bajo Nuevo Island, part of the Colombian territory. The local HK-hams were all for it and the callsign HKØAA was issued.

Not many details were available on Bajo Nuevo Island itself other than some sporadic data from fisherman. With a low sandbar profile Bajo Nuevo was not easy to find and so the search took two days. But finally Danny was able to make a landing on the island after few “dunkings” in the 10-foot surf. First they got the beam and the tent up and only the next day they moved the radio gear ashore.

Finding the island and getting ashore was not easy and Danny had doubts if there will ever be another expedition to this place. The main island or the “sandspit” as he called it was only 1600 feet by 60 feet and the average height was no more than two to three feet. In the early DX days it was expected that these “sandbar” DXCC counters, such as Aves and Bajo Nuevo, would soon wear out and disappear as they often did in stormy seas. But to everyone’s surprise Mother Nature always “builds them up again” and as of today they still exist!

The duo operated for six days until the weather worsened and the operation was cut short with only 2600 QSOs made. Unfortunately Colombia did not give permission to activate Malpelo Island as their own HKØTU operation was already being planned for 1961.

So from Bajo Nuevo waters, Danny and Dave set sail to return to Rodman Naval base, Balboa, Canal Zone and get Yasme III well fit for the upcoming long Pacific voyages ahead. A troublesome leak had been found and patched, and new radio gear located and installed. Originally, only the Hallicrafters HT-32 transmitter was on board.

There were several events that happened at Balboa and they certainly affected the DXpedition in many ways. The first was when the Hallicrafters representative walked to the vessel in Tampa, terminated their support, and took away the HT-37 and the SX-111. It was a major loss for Danny, as Bill Halligan, W9AC was part of the Yasme Board and had a major stake in all Yasme operations up to this point. Gladly Hal, K5JLQ came to rescue and loaned Yasme an HT-32 and a SX-101 as well as another Globe King radio.



Danny Weil, VP2VB and Bill Halligan, W9AC, president of Hallicrafters (from Yasme book/K1TN page 110)

The next bomb was when Danny Weil made a complaint to the Canal Zone Police, who then arrested the 22-year-old New Zealander, ZL1AV, for the attempted theft of clothing and equipment from the vessel. Dave was charged with attempting to steal a sport shirt and trousers worth USD \$8.50 from Weil and radio tubes and relays worth USD \$71.75.

This is one of the saddest parts of the Yasme’s early history and remains a total mystery because ZL1AV was indeed planning to continue with Yasme III and make it his home for the voyage. One would rarely steal from one’s bunk and end up being arrested because of his trusted partner. Was it because, as stated before, Danny preferred solo sailing and the first outing together with

ZL1AV was not at all to his liking? We'll never know.

But there was one more bomb yet to come that will make Yasme III into another love boat of those days...

Could love and ladies boost the Iron Man to higher performance?

It was suddenly announced that Danny was engaged to Miss Naomi Kay of Tampa. They got married and had a civil ceremony in the Canal Zone on July 21, 1960, planning a church ceremony during their intermediate stop in Ecuador. Danny claimed that Naomi's assets were: "a good cook, boating experience, and considerable nursing experience." It was obvious that while in Tampa, refitting YASME III, Danny pursued other interests as well, with a true seaman's efficiency. Goodbye Dave, ZL1AV, and welcome Miss Naomi!

The plan was to arrive in Guayaquil, Ecuador on August 18, 1960 for the wedding party and then continue to Galapagos and operate as HC8VB. The wedding party was as glamorous as they are in those parts of the world and the hams, particularly Joe, HC2OM and his lovely XYL Elsi, were heading the ceremonies. A whole book can be written about that party with more pictures than on any other occasion and one surely senses that the young love affair was totally overtaking the scene. Such are new marriages.

But we digress. Let's jump back to the original reason for Yasme – an around-the-world expedition, which at that point was still in its infancy and heading toward its first South Pacific stop.

As leaving Ecuador toward the deep Pacific, via Galapagos and Clipperton, was to be the longest leg, a prior arrangement had been made to ship petrol to Galapagos.

Danny noted on their road trip to Quito: "The middle of the World at the monument of Latitude 0.00 and we straddle the northern and southern hemispheres. It was all a great moment for Naomi and me!" "And now – aren't you ready for a trip yet darling?"

And off they went and with fair winds and favorable seas, San Cristobel Island was sighted on October 15, 1960. The commander of the island provided Danny a shack to operate from, one mile from the anchorage, and HC8VB was on the air! In eleven days of operation some 3200 QSOs were logged.

Next stop was Clipperton Island after nineteen days and 1200 miles at sea!

Arriving in Clipperton Island was no Picnic

Please remember once again that Aves Island and Clipperton Islands were uninhabited islands and so they represented the ultimate rareness. It is reasonable to look into the entire episode as Danny reported from Acapulco, Mexico. This also re-confirms the difficulties involved in a rare country DXpedition when only one man is trying to do everything. If nothing else, it may only produce 775 QSOs under extreme hardship.

Danny's report: "Arrival at Clipperton Island brought no hearty cheers from the crew of YASME III – in fact, the sight of the breakers which surrounded the entire island and the long run of reefs tended to create great despondency to all aboard!" They were able to find the only place near the island where the water was shallow enough to drop an anchor.

"The ship's log remains very blank as our experiences could never be put into words which could ever be believed by any normal person not accustomed to the sea!"

Danny made three attempts to land but the breakers were far too big to succeed. The first attempt became almost a disaster as the dinghy twisted with the surf broadside on, and water rushed over the side, almost capsizing it. "But I knew I had to get ashore and do something, even if I made only one QSO! I knew I have to succeed with the equipment and material on the first time as I would not have the strength to fight that sea for more times."



Ms. Naomi who broke the heart of a true blue DXpeditioner in a big way (from Yasme book/K1TN page 135)

To go ashore, Danny loaded his dingy with lots of items: a specially built watertight bag for HT-32 (100 pounds alone), an SX-101, an Onan generator, tent, a gallon of coffee, and 200 cigarettes.

When Danny neared the reefs in the heavily loaded dinghy the approach seemed to take hours, yet it was probably seconds. "The wave collapsed and I felt that awful grinding sound on the bottom. We had hit the reef! Another sea swept in and threw us broadside on, but this time it dragged us onto the beach!"

The dingy capsized but strangely enough, as the dinghy upset, so the seas receded, giving him a few seconds to drag the generator to safety, which was the only piece of equipment not protected by watertight bags.

Danny was wondering how Naomi and Yasme were taking the sea, whether she had fallen over the side during the erratic motion of the boat? "I sat there on the beach and wondered why on earth I was doing this crazy thing." Even the DX chasers came into his mind; those that couldn't care less as long as they made the contact, and the hell with who had done what to make it possible and often just asking: Where Do You Go Next?

There was not much commuting to the boat because of the rough sea but after 775 QSOs, radios were left behind for Danny to go and inspect the boat. A king-sized wave swept in and Yasme picked up and tossed backwards and the whole boat shuddered as the anchor chain strained and snapped. There was not enough manpower to pull the anchor off the seabed and there was no alternative but to get the hydraulic winch working. Easy? It took thirty-six hours of working non-stop, from night to day and back to night working with the flashlight.

The story line is endless but we'll stop here. Danny collected the scattered gear from the island and headed away from this God-forsaken anchorage into the clear, open sea. Danny's excuse: "I thought it better to swallow my pride and get out while we still remained alive and had a boat." They rushed to Acapulco, Mexico, for a five-day rest and then headed to San Diego, California.

Good headway was made while a leak in the stern worsened and presented them with an emergency situation. Running the engine greatly aggravated the leak as the water just gushed in. A call for assistance was sent out to XE1CV and action was taken right away. The Mexican Navy Patrol Boat "California" was immediately dispatched from Socorro Island and at the speed of 16 knots it quickly arrived at Yasme and towed her to Acapulco for immediate repair.

End Is Near At Sea – Reaching out to California with Coast Guard Cutter CG-95318

With the new propeller installed and all leaks cleaned up, Yasme III sailed from Acapulco on January 05, 1961 bound for San Diego, some 1,250 miles to the northwest. KV4AA was asking "whether this trip will be free of hardships and near disasters, which had been haunting Yasme III over the past two months?"

Only after sixty miles out at sea the exhaust pipe of the Onan diesel generator decided to fail. After working on the problem under massive seas and surf, it was clear that there was no option but to turn back. Next the fate decided to cast its evil spell on the main engine. It had been ticking over nicely but now responded with retreating oil pressure, heat and various grunts and clanks. It was simply gone!

Another emergency call from Yasme and the US Coast Guard cutter was sent out from San Diego. After considerable effort they were unfortunately not able to locate Yasme. So another aircraft was dispatched and finally Danny was located and Yasme was ultimately towed to Shelter Island, San Diego on January 21, 1961. This is about three months after they had left Ecuador and the South American Coast.

Here is the statement made by KV4AA at the time: "Unless there is a substantial and unexpected change in our fortunes, before the deadline of February 25, 1961, we will have no alternative but to dissolve the Foundation, and repair and sell Yasme to cover our debts."

But there was another statement up in the air... "If Danny does resume his world cruise, his wife Naomi will not accompany him! In such an event, all efforts will be made to recruit one or two other operators to accompany Danny during the voyage."



Straight and simple! I am sure that while carrying hairy DXers over the seas, thoughts about homeless Naomi and her whereabouts would sprout in everyone's mind." (note from author)

As Yasme III indeed needed expensive repairs, the couple rented an apartment which was Danny's first home at the age of 42. Danny also signed up for a full time job at the Tool and Machine workshop. The company also provided valuable assistance during off hours to get Yasme III back on to the water. It needs to be stated clearly that Danny was a brilliant mechanic and was able to carry the entire re-fit with his own skills and with a minimum of funding.

Massive collection efforts were also re-established for which Yasme Foundation also got its non-profit, 501 (c)(3) status by the IRS on January 7, 1961. There were also substantial donations received from W2BIB and others.

The San Diego DX Club circulated a letter for further collection of funds and in the letter they listed at least forty (40) rare spots, with several potential new ones. And indeed the club received a few greenback notes even from those hams with a watery dipole! There were (and still are) some real DXers and believers in San Diego.

One strong element in Danny's support was his personality and willingness to produce. "At risk of life and limb he does put rare DX spots on the air. His operating procedures are rapid and efficient," was one supporting statement. How come this sailor can suddenly develop such incredible operating skills?

On January 2021 we asked Don Karvonen, K8MFO one of Danny's keen followers of those days. "This is what I recall with my aging memory cells," he said. "Danny always used a keyer and I recall him being very accurate, working at speeds between 25–30 WPM and identifying frequently but not for each QSO. He used his receiver dial a lot and would reward those who called a bit above or below the main pileup. His QSOs were snappy and short and I never had a doubt whether I was in the log or not. His confirming was straight and to the point: K8MFO dit dit!"

Naomi had hinted she had enough sailing and towing and so Doug, W6HVN, committed to join Danny. To put an end to this San Diego episode from January 21, 1961, to November 29, 1961, some 10 months later, the news broke out: "Danny sailed from San Pedro, California on November 29, 1961, and a few days later he was reported some 400 miles southwest of Los Angeles and scheduled to arrive at Nuku Hiva, Marquesas Islands around Christmas!" Danny had sailed with Naomi on board and W6HVN, together with other candidates, disappeared from the scene.

Need new countries to boost the excitement

The plan was to sail directly to Nuku Hiva in Marquesas group where Danny would operate once again as FO8AN. Dick, KV4AA had been pushing Marquesas for DXCC status since 1962, Danny's first passage to Marquesas, and did not give up. He had hoped that the DXCC Committee could be prevailed upon to re-examine this matter in view of what we might call a more liberal, and certainly more popular, approach to these matters which they had shown in recent years. Clearly something was needed to inspire DXers to join the Yasme Foundation and support Danny's next phase out in the Pacific. Dick was busy circulating batches of a petition to make the Marquesas a separate DXCC entity.

There were so many plans in place. Yasme's next stop after Tahiti was presumed to be either Flint or Vostok Island, 600 miles northwest of Tahiti under British administration, seemingly far enough removed from anywhere to qualify for a separate country status. From Flint, 300 miles away is Tongareva Island (sometimes called Penrhyn Atoll) in the Cook Islands. If we would list all known and unknown places that were in the plans it would extend the DXCC list overboard. Indeed DXers have dreams, big dreams, especially when they think about new DXCC counters.

Funny enough even in those early days a search for new counters had more excitement than activating the rare known countries. Dick had many of those on his drawing board but clearly only one, Bajo Nuevo, HKØAA made it to the history books while Marquesas did only many years later. (Effective date for Marquesas Islands: April 01, 1998).

Turning sailing and repair into actual QSOs – the Blue Pacific

After 36 days and some 2500 QSOs in the Marquesas this was indeed a turning point to Yasme's hugely expected grand tour of the Pacific. On the way from Nuku Hiva, Marquesas Islands to Pape-ete, French Polynesia, there was still one more of the endless stream of technical problems to report in Danny's own words: "...and so went the engine again. It sounded like a bag of bolts being rattled. Oil pressure dropped to zero and on every fourth stroke it gave a wheeze like a cranky old DXer. I shut it down!"

He checked the oil filter and it was chock solid with about everything under the sun. At 6PM all was complete and she actually started up with "nary a burp!" The technical reports (problems) were so many that they would make a book by themselves. All the while there were absolutely no remarks on how were the pileups, nor the radio conditions at any of the spots.

After a major mix-up of needed parts that were supposed to be shipped from Houston to Papeete, which extended their stay to several months, in September 1962 they finally headed to Rarotonga, South Cooks, ZK1BY. Then on October 8, 1962, they sailed onwards to Suwarrow Islands, 600 miles away from the South Cooks and qualifying for the Manihiki Group, part of North Cook Islands. Danny and Naomi received an enthusiastic welcome from the island's lonely inhabitants. hey used same the ZK1BY callsign to make about 2800 QSOs after which the transformer in the HT-33 amplifier went up in smoke!

SSB was just breaking into the ham radio scene and Danny released a new operating procedure for SSB stations: listen between 14.200 kHz to 14.215 kHz. This was in principle only as the listening spread was firmly established already. Danny was ahead of his time!

Next on to Pago Pago, American Samoa where Hallicrafters had already shipped two HT-41 power amplifiers. Yasme Director Hal Sears, K5JLQ also visited Danny in Pago Pago in an attempt to improve Danny's state of mind.

Naomi was unable to carry on further owing to her health. She did a wonderful job under the rough conditions and it had to end somewhere along the line. Yet there were still some more destinations to cover and Danny pressed on! Additionally Gus, W4BPD, would soon have covered the entire Indian Ocean about the time Danny's Pacific adventures would be ended.

But here we go! The Republic of Western Samoa and ZM6AW started the operations with a relatively short distance to travel and 2450 DXers were happy! This was to be the farewell expedition of a married and loving couple: Naomi and Danny. The ultimate question is now placed in front of you:

Can man and woman be separated at the price of more DX for the Deserving?

You are the one to answer this question!

Upon their return to Western Samoa, Naomi flew home to Tampa, Florida via Hawaii early in January 1963. Danny left Western Samoa on January 20, 1963 and headed to Wallis Island, using the callsign FW8DW. Danny was sailing alone just as he had been eight years earlier. He sailed to the south side of the lagoon and set up shop ashore. In the next several weeks he made 3000 QSOs, one of his best efforts from anywhere.

Suva, Fiji, was then to be his swan song operation and the end of his original goal to be the first Englishman to circumnavigate the globe singlehandedly. We never know which way he would have preferred his life to be: accomplishing his goal with no amateur radio on board or the way it ultimately turned out. This way it did cost three vessels and produced DX operations in some 25 DXCC countries.

Danny activated VR2EO for some 1500 QSOs while preparing Yasme III for her longest leg of more than 100 days at sea, against the prevailing winds, to reach Corpus Christi, Texas. Prior to sailing out of Suva, OM Danny Weil released the following letter which was probably the hardest message he has ever written:

"I have decided to turn around and come home to the USA directly. All of you have been very generous in your thoughts and faith in me. I will not betray this faith by making the wrong decision at this time and I feel it is time to stop now. I know that you do not require my reasons for this decision but it makes me feel better to give my personal thoughts along this line.

"It is an impossible situation for me to carry on without Naomi. We have been a team in more ways than one, and to carry on with the job feeling as I do is pointless and will only cause much unhappiness to us both."

With Danny at the helm, Yasme III wandered her way through the blue Pacific Ocean and Panama Canal to dock at Freeport, Texas. Yasme III was finally sold in December 1963 for USD \$15,000. Danny Weil, VP2VB, was inducted to the CQ DX Hall of Fame in 1969 and his nomination referred him as "the pioneer of the worldwide DXpeditions." And that he was!

Jim Cain, K1TN, met Danny in Texas in October 2001 at the time of Jim's Yasme book was about completed and his re-collections were interesting; "I had driven to San Antonio in my Mazda Miata and when Danny saw the little compass on the dashboard, he pronounced me an 'honorary' sailor. We went out for breakfast one day and Danny mercilessly flirted with the waitress and she loved it. I had figured when you are 80 years old you can get away with such behavior. "This was Danny at his best..."

Finding and keeping a balance in life is not easy. It is easy to give up in the face of toughness and it is hard to get back into the saddle to keep on going, facing the adversities of life. Danny's story is proof of that fact. Everything looks impossible to the people who never tried anything.

But adventurous souls like Danny could inspire the rest of us to be invincible and to keep on going. That's why his story is still relevant today, after so many years. Generations of hams were inspired by his life at sea and in the pileups from exotic locations.

While not many of us have the courage or inclination to travel the Seven Seas in search of adventure and the thrill of activating a rare entity, we can all try to contribute something— even if insignificant – to ham radio, the greatest hobby in the world!

The Yasme Foundation flourished in the shadows of Danny Weil and through the great efforts of its first president, Dick Spenceley, KV4AA became one of the premier foundations in amateur radio. Yasme's efforts in amateur radio continue today on a wider scale.



Danny, VP2VB is back in Texas after his 100-day solo voyage from Fiji – his last radio location – ready to learn a new landlubber lifestyle! Here he is with Ken Montgomery, W5ABY at the party in Houston organized in his honor.

Acknowledgements and Special Thanks



(Right) The author, Martti Laine, OH2BH; (Middle) British Virgin Island, Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC), Spectrum Management Officer, Mr Darren Woodley, who re-issued Danny Weil's original VP2VB call sign for us; and (Left) my always smiling partner, Adrian Ciuperca, KO8SCA. Read more about the VP2VB Memorial Expedition at www.qrz.com/db/VP2VB

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I am equally grateful to Joseph H. Reisert, Jr., W1JR (ex-W2HQL), who provided first-hand accounts and many insights into Danny Weil's colorful character and his DX life, details that Joe learned while joining Danny in one of his DXpeditions and following Danny through radio to all his radio destinations.

I was also pleased to have the assistance of Donald A Karvonen, K8MFO, who provided details about Danny's radio operating practices, details that were a vital part of the DXpedition success but were only lightly covered in Danny's own travelogues.

Additionally we would like to thank Rod Hotz, K5BGB, for spending endless hours and digging into his QSL files to find the last few QSLs from the Danny's thirty operations. The one was treasured particularly; FO8AN, Clipperton, as only some 500 QSOs were ever made.

Special Thanks

When I had finished my manuscript it had a sad ending – too many things had gone wrong and the DXpedition was terminated. Danny sailed home for 100 days to leave behind his dream lands and oceans. After all, his home was on Yasme and his dreams

and heart were at sea.

My partner for the VP2VB Memorial DXpedition, Adrian, KO8SCA (see photo), was not happy about the sad ending. Every DX ending must be happy. If we fail we should try again. Or if we would not try, someone else will. "We have to always remember that whatever we want to do, we have to do it now. There are only so many tomorrows," he wrote in the VP2VB QSL card.

It was a very smart statement from a young man. So the last paragraph is Adrian's and it is delightful for us all. It also made a happy ending to the story of Danny Weil.

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