

To be a “Robinson” is such a fun !

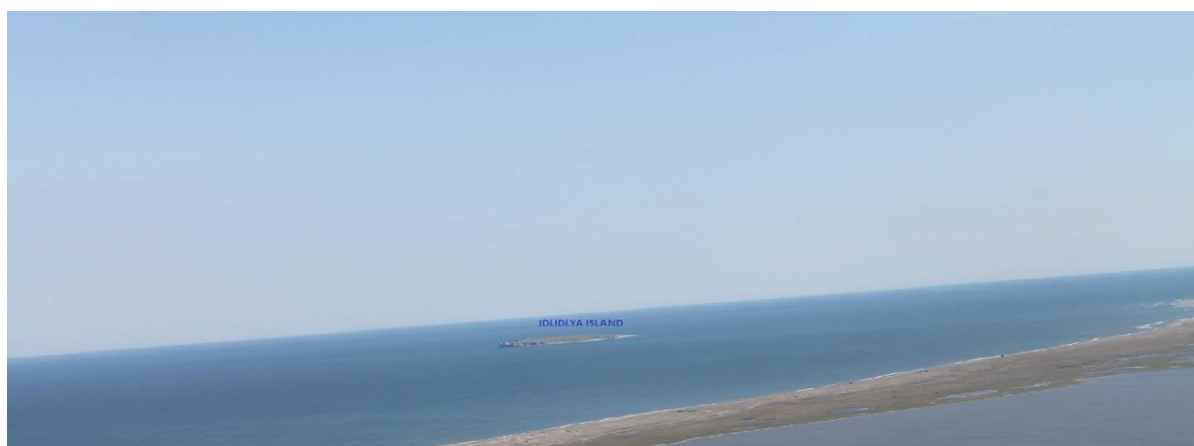


“Yura, meet six places of cargo from Moscow coming by the nearest flight.” - “I’ve got it, Vitya. Waiting for it.”

This telephone conversation between UA3AKO and UA0KBG took place in early 2018, when Viktor Slabodchikov had a real opportunity to visit one of Kolyuchinskaya Bay’s islands situated in The Chukchi Sea.

The idea to activate on the air either Kolyuchin Island or Idlidlya island rose up in 2016, immediately after expedition to Alyumka Island (AS-092).

However it could not be done in 2017 by objective reasons. As an alternative solution Arakamchechen Island (AS-071) had been chosen and activated successfully in April 2017.



Both Kolyuchin and Idlidlya islands have same IOTA Ref. number AS-065 and highly demanded by IOTA chasers around the world. So, the cargo from Moscow has been picked up and next radio expedition started countdown.

My task is to deliver 150 kg of cargo to our intermediate destination - Lavrentiya. Our volunteer Alexander Maximov gonna get it there and send further to Neshkan, Idlidlya Island is easily accessible from Neshkan by sea - just 30-40 minutes by a boat. This route had been finally chosen after long discussions, primarily because of a more

rational logistics. Time slot when the expedition can happen - end of August 2018. For a long time I wasn't able to organize delivery of the cargo to Lavrentiya — pilots and their leaders have their own plans and more important jobs. Our cargo remains in place and the situation slowly makes me and Viktor worrying a bit. Finally in July, just a month before the start of the expedition, the cargo was received by Alexander Maximov and promptly shipped by sea to Neshkan. There all stuff has been received and placed for temporary storage by the head of the village - Vorobyov Nikolai Alexandrovich. All expeditioners are able to breath bit easier from now on. On 10th of August I met Victor (UA3AKO) and Alexander (RA3AV). Andrew (R9XC) didn't have a chance to go with us again and it was sad. According to weather conditions in Lavrentiya, we were able to fly out there on August 15th instead of planned August 13th. Next part of the route included a helicopter flight to Neshkan. Tickets have been purchased for 16th of August (I bought tickets well in advance), but on that day the helicopter performs an urgent ambulance flight to Egvekinot. Our flight has been canceled; we are out of schedule for a day. Finally, on August 17th we got to Neshkan, where Nikolay Vorobiev met us, help to transport cargo and get an accommodation for overnight stay.



On August 18th we were spending time testing a generator Vorobiev offered to us temporarily. Alas, the generator makes very strong EMI and is completely unsuitable for our needs. We visit the diesel power station of the village and, under the guidance of Vorobyov, we pull out an old diesel generator, fairly marked with rust. We load it into a car and drive out to the village in order to test it for efficiency. Still, the Soviet industry was able to do something qualitatively! The engine starts almost immediately, EMI on HF doesn't exist – just what the doctor ordered!



And finally, 19th of August we start a hard task to transport all cargo to the island by 2 motor boats. Amount and weight of the cargo is quiet significant, so we do several trips.



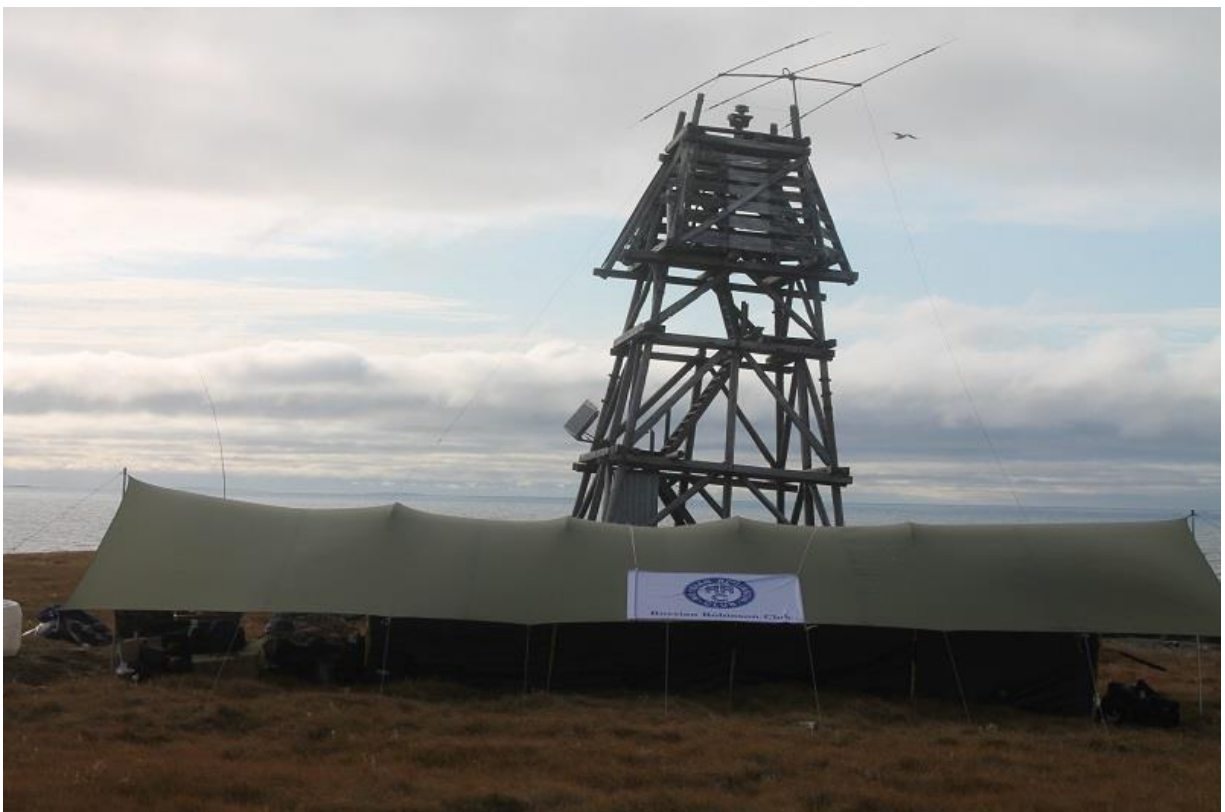


Boats left us to get back to Neshkan and we start to put up a tent, prepare a lot of equipment immediately – number of tasks is long and time is precise. We put up 20 m GP and after carefully check by antenna analyzer everything looks good – we can start. Who will make the first CQ? Without saying a word, Alexander and I give the right to start the operation to Victor. The priority direction to Europe is over North Pole, only salt water is between us and a horizon - ideal conditions !



Victor spent just a little longer than an hour to put 170 QSO in a log. Then Alexander takes a place in front of the transceiver, having brewed his “branded” tea with lemon

and ginger for me and Victor first. We leave Alexander at the transceiver and continue improvement works on the camp and preparation to install antennas for other bands. However on the next day a strong wind rises and there is no chances to continue installing antennas. We continue to use 20 m GP. On August 22nd, the wind subsides and we start setting up the tribander on a non-working lighthouse. Finally, everything is ready; we set up a long desk in the tent and deploy a second work station.



After that 30 m GP, 40 m GP and last but not least the 17 m GP have been installed eventually. The hard work on the air begins in full swing. Alexander's workability and energy is amazing – he almost doesn't sleep, amount of consumed food is almost invisible, he operates on air in non-stop mode.

Mist creeps from the ocean. It makes the tent very cold and humid inside, but we install a gas stove inside for the night - one cartridge with a minimum supply of gas was enough to get some warmth.





But all these domestic inconveniences have been overlapped by fantastic propagation. Positive emotions from working on the air overwhelming us, we heard almost everyone who called, and our signals were quite loud as it was confirmed later.

On August 25th in the morning we received a phone call from Nikolai Vorobiev (mobile coverage on the island was, however, rather unstable). He told us that the weather is deteriorating and it would be highly desirable for us to complete the work on August 26th and get back to mainland then. The main reason was that with the north wind the boats from the Neshkan are not able to get into the sea because of strong backwash.



On the evening of August 25th we thank everyone and finish the work on the air beginning to pack and move the cargo close to the shore. In the morning of August 26th we continued our work. The generator is next. It was serving us with faith. It's small but heavy. Victor and Alexander are pulling the generator for the improvised passages in front of me, I help them pushing the beast from behind. The generator is equipped with two wheels that are ineffective when moving over very uneven and grassy tundra. The whole picture bring back memories of visiting one of art museums. "Barge haulers are pulling the ship" painting in real life.

We are lowering the generator carefully from the cliff onto the sandy shore. Insignificant part of stuff still remains untouched — but the main cargo had been moved on August 25th.



We are waiting for the boats, and here they have appeared in our field of vision. We came back to Neshkan we no issues and got temporary place to stay — we have tickets for the helicopter on August 30th.

Victor was busy repacking the cargo , he preferred to do everything by himself with no help. RA3AV find an opportunity to work on the air and I am doing the rest. On August 30th we are waiting on the helipad, surrounded by boxes and bags. MI-8 helicopter is landing, loading, taking off and we are saying farewell to Neshkan (and maybe just “see you later” ?). Who knows, everything may happen .

In Lavrentiya we are getting back to civilization – shave, hot shower, etc.

I have a ticket to Anadyr on September 3rd, but Victor and Alexander do not have return tickets. I mobilize personal connections, trying to pull some strings – and voila,, we'll fly away all together.

I can't omit our unbelievable impressions after visit to natural hot water source. It's an indescribable feeling, I don't want to get out of the water for a long time, we frankly enjoy swimming.



And on September 3rd, we are at the airport, here it is our AN-24, we board the plane and in the second half of the day we are in Anadyr. Victor and Alexander have tickets to Moscow on the 5th of September and on the 6th I go to work. I accompany them to the plane, for them the expedition is finished but I have yet to meet the main cargo from Lavrentiya and organize delivery to Moscow.

After a while I receive the cargo (thanks to Sasha Maximov), and move it to commercial warehouse of the Anadyr airport. Well, the expedition is over for me as well.

Huge Thanks to everyone who helped us on the air-EU7A (Andrei), UA0CID (Oleg) and many others. Everyone who worried about us, we always felt your support. The title of the article was not chosen by chance — it's really great to be "Robinson", I personally deeply convinced that if you was a member of an expedition once – it will stay with you the entire life.

It's a disease guys, worse than chicken pox, but very pleasant

BAND/MODE QSO STATISTICS

BAND	CW	SSB	FT8	TOTAL
40 M	530	25	-	555
30 M	1083	-	1	1084
20 M	3414	2137	-	5551
17 M	483	33	1	517
				7707 QSO

CONTINENTAL QSO STATISTICS

EU – 4480 = 58,14 %
 AS – 2342 = 30,38 %
 NA – 763 = 8,89 %
 OC – 99 = 1,28 %
 SA – 19 = 0.25 %
 AF – 4 = 0.05 %

We express gratitude to sponsors of the expedition RA3NAN, RL3AA, R5AC, R6DR, to radio amateur funds GDXF and IREF, which provided financial support, as well as

individual sponsors from all the world.

On behalf of the team – our warmest 73! Looking forward for new meetings on air!

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Video movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5Oey98JBOU>