

Radio message from U995

DMB 040618

The first full weekend in June is the amateur radio Museum Ships Weekend every year. Worldwide historic ships and boats have radio stations re-activated or temporarily installed for this activity. So, a total of 108 museum ships took up radio operation all over the world last weekend. The Museum Ships Weekend is organized by the battleship USS NEW JERSEY which is permanently moored on the Delaware River in Camden, New Jersey, to serve as a museum ship since 2001. Ship's representative this year was Roberto D'Imperio (N4XAT) who joined the "U995 Friendship Crew" at Laboe for amateur radio from the original wireless office of the submarine U995.

The "U995 Friendship Crew" participated in the Museum Ships Weekend for the 20th time. But for the first time a radio antenna fixed to the submarine was on trial. »It worked perfectly«, so Hans-Jürgen Kempe (DK9OS), member of the "U995 Friendship Crew". All the years before the antenna system had been mounted in front of the submarine. This could now be omitted. Of course, the U995's original radio installation has been out of service for a long time, all such equipment is taken there by the radio amateurs themselves.

This year the operator crew at Laboe comprised of eight persons from different naval associations (Marinekameradschaften = MK) and nationalities. MK Wesel was represented by Harald Joormann (DL5XI), MK Verden/Aller by Hans-Jürgen Kempe (DK9OS) and Maren Lorenz (DK9MOS), with Marinefuncker-Runde e.V. represented by Harry Jekel (DL6LV) and Jonny Worzeck (DL4HJ), whilst William Cross (G0ELZ) and Robert Bunker (M0BZZ) came from the Royal Naval Association, the Great Britain sister society of the Deutsche Marinebund (DMB), as well as Roberto D'Imperio (N4XAT) from USA.

More than 80 radio contacts were made during the weekend at Laboe, mainly within Europe including Denmark, the Netherlands, Poland, Italy, France, Belgium, Austria, and Switzerland. »Of course we'd like to catch the USS NEW JERSEY as well«, Kempe said. »But unfortunately there wasn't any chance as conditions of the ionosphere (propagation) didn't allow«.

It was not only due to the fine weather that the Technical Museum U995 saw many visitors last weekend. »A lot of people come to Laboe particularly for the Museum Ships Weekend to look over the shoulders of our crew in operation«, so Kempe. « Among the visitors this time was a group of the "Diplom-Sammler Waterkant" that spent their annual meeting at near-by Schwentinental». Later that weekend, the "U995 Friendship Crew" was met by that group on air too.

Apart from the 108 museum ships there are a great number of radio amateurs taking part in the Museum Ships Weekend. »Contrary to hobby operators (CB radio operators), radio amateurs (hams) have to pass an examination to prove their qualification«, Kempe explained. During the Museum Ships Weekend, radio amateurs try to get into contact with at least 15 ships of those participating in order to apply for a certificate.

Text: Deutscher Marinebund e.V.

Photos: Hans-Juergen Kempe



The busy members of the crew to operate from the U995's wireless room during the Museum Ships Weekend 2018.



All members of this year's radio crew at Laboe.



Last at Laboe in 2013, shipmate Roberto D'Imperio from the battleship USS NEW JERSEY was very glad to take part this year again.