

MEETINGS, NETS and SERVICES**Club Station:** VK4WIS**Club Repeaters:**

Maleny: VK4RSC on 146.850 MHz & 438.075 MHz.

Peregian Beach: VK4RMB on 146.825 MHz & 438.175 MHz.

Gympie: VK4RGY on 146.625 MHz & 438.825 MHz.

Bli Bli: VK4RSN on 53.700 MHz

General Meeting: Monthly on the first Tuesday at 7:30 pm in the Club House, old Toll Plaza building, 85 Godfreys Road, Bli Bli.

Visitors are welcome to attend.

Weekday Meeting: Weekly at 10:00 am on Wednesday.**Good Morning Net:** Daily at 8.15 am at VK4RSC on 146.850 MHz.
Conducted by various club members.**Tech Net:** Weekly at 8:30 pm Sunday at VK4RSC on 146.850 MHz.
Check in, raise topics and ask your technical questions.**80 m Net:** Weekly at 7:30 pm Thursday on 3660 kHz.**10 m Net:** Weekly at 8:15 pm Wednesday on 28.470 MHz.**6 m Net:** Weekly at 7.30 pm Friday at VK4RSN on 53.700 MHz.**2 m Net:** Weekly at 7:30 pm Sunday on 144.300 MHz SSB.
Conducted by club station VK4WIS.**QNEWS:** Relayed Sunday at 9:00 am at VK4RSC on 146.850 MHz.
After the broadcast a callback is conducted by VK4WIS.**Internet:** www.vk4wis.org

This website provides previous issues of Pelican Droppings in full colour in pdf format which can be downloaded.

The current issue can be had by subscribing to the email edition in pdf format. Apply to SCARC.

EchoLink: Available on VK4RSC 146.850 MHz.

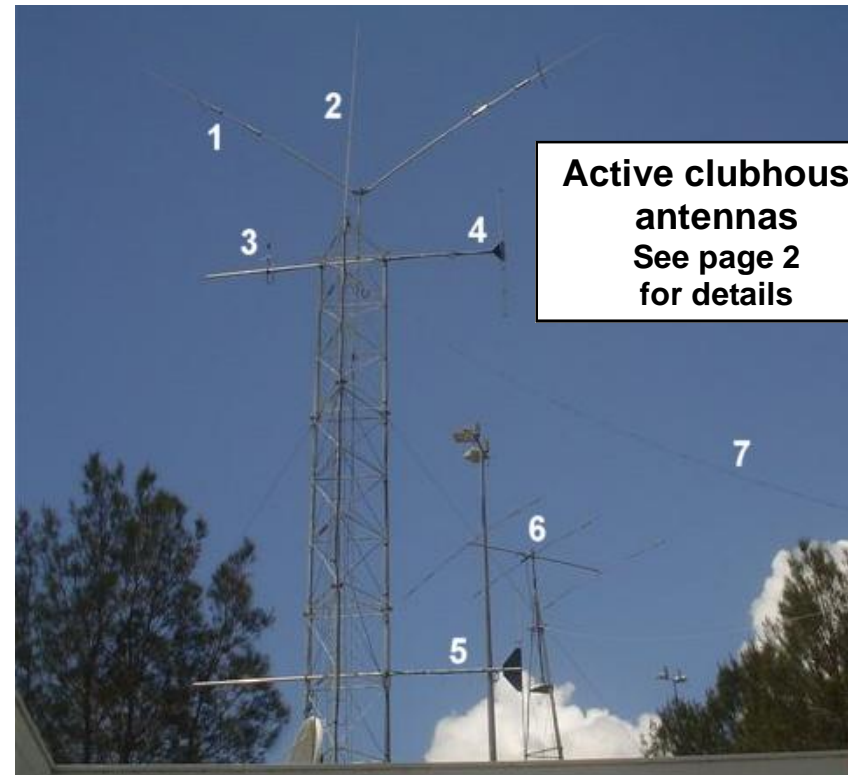
The Internet station is VK4AKA-R and the node is #195107.

Pelican Droppings

Newsletter of the Sunshine Coast Amateur Radio Club Inc.

Issue No.82

February-March 2006



**Active clubhouse
antennas
See page 2
for details**

The final episode of June Sim's China Odyssey will appear. It describes her visit to modern Shanghia.

NEXT ISSUE**Production Staff**

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85 Godfreys Road Bli Bli Qld 4560



Presidential Preamble

Welcome to this month's Pelican Droppings.

Remember to tell people about our hobby, and about the new Foundation Licence so that we can attract others to our ranks. Congratulations to our three new Foundation Licence holders, Carole VK4FUNN, Dennis VK4FDEC, and Tony VK4FAAA. We trust that you will enjoy the hobby and fellowship for many years to come. Thanks to Harvey VK4AHW and his band of helpers for their support given to the Foundation Licence candidates.

Ron VK4GZ has resigned from the SCARC examinations group as team leader. Gordon will take over the team leader. The other three invigilators are June VK4SJ, Noel VK4NL, and Ray VK4YRS. Thanks to VK4GZ Ron for his work in this regard. It is fair to say that Ron has held all positions in the club during his many years of membership.; he is, indeed, a great club supporter.

Thanks also to the members who made the transfer of the 146.625 two metre repeater from Mt. Boulder to the new Mt. Wolvi site and to those who worked on the six metre repeater.

Club history: Can any of our members supply details of Club office bearers for the early years of the club? Contact any committee member if you can assist.

Continued next page

Clubhouse Antennas

The front page photograph shows the active antennas currently sporting the clubhouse roof. Here is the key to their function:

1. HF Vee-dipole for 20/15/10 metres (fixed orientation).
2. VHF 2 m/UHF 70 cm high-gain vertical.
3. UHF antenna for marine and other non-amateur services and emergency communications links.
4. Six metre clubhouse repeater transmitting dipole.
5. Six metre repeater receiving dipole.
6. HF tri-band Yagi for 20/15/10 metres (with rotator).
7. HF G5RV wire dipole.

Now go to page 6 to discover the radio equipment used to feed these antennas.

Famous Personalities : Reginald Aubrey Fessenden

Fessenden (1866 - 1932) was born in Canada and emigrated to the USA at an early age. He started his career working for the United States Weather Bureau where he decided to invent a system by which weather forecasts could be broadcast to users on land or sea. A self-educated scientist, he was a contemporary of Marconi, who was concentrating on sending Morse code using interrupted RF waves. Fessenden, however, was more interested in transmitting information by voice and he decided to use continuous RF waves modulated with audio frequencies. Of course, in those days there were no vacuum tubes, so he asked GEC to build him a high speed alternator to generate the RF waves while he worked on receiver design himself. GEC took three years to come up with a suitable alternator, but in the mean time Fessenden persuaded financial backers to invest \$1 million to found the National Electric Signalling Company.

After a great deal of publicity, on Christmas Eve of 1906, using a telephone microphone and his special alternator, he gave his inaugural broadcast during which he spoke, sang, played his violin and even played a phonograph record. The transmission was a success, heard by thousands of amateur radio enthusiasts who had built their own "wireless" crystal sets which had been invented in 1901 by H. Dunwoody and Greenleaf W. Pickard.

Unfortunately Fessenden was not as good a businessman as he was a scientist, and he was not able to capitalise on his wonderful invention. Eventually RCA bought his patents and mass communication soon became a reality.

End

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smelly and we found it very hard to look at food again.

After lunch we returned to the bus again to drive up into the mountains to visit a Miao Village. The scenery was beautiful and photos were taken whenever possible. We arrived at the village and met first with a firecracker welcome. Then the villagers came down to meet us in their colorful traditional dress. The villagers then set up stations on every six or so steps to their village with welcome cups of rice wine of which we obliged to take a sip from each as we passed. To refuse to do so would be an insult. At the top of all these steps there were two women with buffalo horns full of rice wine. There was no escaping them as they forced the drink to our lips. The local men in their black tunics welcomed us by blowing long horn-like instruments. We then were led through the village to a large clearing with a pole about 30 ft high in the middle. Later we were to learn what this pole was for, but first came the singing and dancing with some doing individual performing acts. The little children were cute and some wore the colourful dress and head dress like the elders. After a while several men came into the centre of the clearing and one proceeded to hammer long, sharp, upturned knives into the pole to form a ladder. A young fellow came out, kicked off his sandals and proceeded to climb bare foot up this ladder of knives until he got to the top. He did a few one leg and one hand stands on the ladder and climbed down, No cuts were visible on his feet.

A brazier of hot coals was then carried out and several large sheets of iron were heated until they were red hot, The hot iron sheets were then lifted out with tongs and placed on planks that started to burn, more burning coals was placed on top and the young fellow who had climbed up the knives, walked barefooted through the coals; even doing a little jig-like dance on them. Then it was back to the girls and their dancing, while the men played the instruments. For the finale we were all dragged into the middle to dance with them. Then came the hard sell to sell us some of their handiwork; their needlecraft was beautiful and it was hard to resist buying-up big. We left this village and then went on to another village. This village could only be reached by crossing a very ornate colourful bridge.

We were told that many of the Miaos were Catholics. End

Clubroom happenings:

Harvey VK4AHW will be conducting classes for the new Foundation Licence and for Standard and Advanced Licences. Contact Harvey for details on phone 07 5476 5209.

Wednesday the 18th January had more than 30 people at the club rooms, including visitors. I was told Alan VK4HEG was scooting around the lawns on his ride-on-mower and did a good job. House-keeping is a necessary part of having our own clubrooms. Can you assist?

The workshop still needs some work to make it more user-friendly.

The library continues to expand, thanks to Max VK4VZ. He could use help, so please offer your assistance. If you need information check at the library office.

Joe VK4SY is always looking for new goodies for the South Yarra store. So keep Joe busy by donating components.

Bill VK4XZ, newly appointed as the radio officer, continues to improve the radio room (the Green Room). Go see for yourself.

Our February 2006 night meeting is on Tuesday 7th at 7:30pm at the clubrooms. And the next Sunday meeting will be held on the 19th of February 2006 starting at 9:00am. BYO BBQ

Club nets: The club nets listed on the back page need your attendance if they are to continue. So join the merry band that regularly attend.

That's enough from me I hope that all those not feeling well improve soon.
73 all, Ray

About this issue

Like most issues prepared over the festive season, this issue is reduced in content. That's what seems to happen. I have taken this opportunity to increase the font size from 10-point (newspaper print size) to 11-point. It should be easier to read. Editor

Somerset Dam Meet, Sunday 2nd April 2006

This is a repeat of last year's highly successful meet at the Kirkleigh Resort on the shores of Somerset Dam near Kilcoy. You may wish to arrive the day before as many do. A camping fee then applies. Kirkleigh is about 12 km from the Kilcoy road turnoff to Somerset.

Successful QSLing Or how to get that darn contact confirmed

by June Sim VK4SJ

OK, so you have worked a rare or not-so-rare station and you would like to have the contact confirmed either for your DXCC or just to pin up on the wall to impress the visitors. What to do next?

Well, there are two ways to go about this.

The first way - QSL direct

This means sending your card direct to the DX station by mail. This usually ensures a return card, but if you follow these guidelines you will get a better rate of return:

Always send a self-addressed envelope. The C6 envelope seems to be the best size for most cards.

Always include return postage either as US\$2 in notes or as an International Response Coupon (IRC). Why so much as US\$2, you ask? Well, airmail rates of most foreign countries are expensive, and if this is a rare contact, that contact may receive thousands of requests for QSL cards. US dollars can be purchased at some banks or travel agencies, and in most countries is the universal currency. There are a few exceptions. Read the DX news on the Internet by doing a Google search; for example, The 425 DX News and the Ohio/Penn DX News are posted on the Internet.

Always listen before and after making a contact, as good operators usually announce the QSL route from time to time.

Remember that most DXpeditions to rarer locations are activated by visiting amateurs, and are done at great expense to the Dxers. To put a rare country on air involves costly travel and accommodation and it is usually necessary to purchase additional equipment that is suitable for a remote location. For example, a couple of years ago one Dxpedition to a rare country cost in excess of \$100,000. In addition to travel costs there were extraordinary costs including freight of equipment, and boat and helicopter hire. The little extra you offer for a QSL helps to offset such high costs.

The QSLing by the Dxer is usually handled by another person - the QSL manager. This manager should not be expected to pay return postage out of his own pocket. To obtain the address of the Dxer or his QSL search the weekly DX news sheets on the Internet or consult QRZ.com or Buckmaster. As the SCARC QSL manager I will also do all I can to advise on , or provide, a QSL address; that



A Miao child adorned in silver finery, Kaili

had a pole threaded through the cage which he then balanced on his shoulder. Women also were seen with poles across their shoulders carrying large bags of rice or baskets of fruit or vegetables. Some were seen carrying flowers this way as they made their way through the various laneways.

We were then taken to visit a rice wine factory. This factory was up another grubby lane and we entered through a back gate going into a lean-to type shed. A large cooker was boiling rice; when the rice was cooked, it was thrown out on the floor to cool. From there, it went through the fermenting process to make the rice wine. From the rice wine factory, we walked back through the various lanes, passing by more meat lying out in the open. We also passed open-air dentists and hairdressers, and women with sewing machines making clothes to sell. Others people were selling dried snakes and deer antlers, and we saw a several bear paws for sale. The whole market was very

Venus is in line with Earth and at one side of the Sun. This is only 0.48 days more than the present-day calculations show it to be. It also showed that Saturn path was 377 days, only 1.09 days less than the present calculations. It went on to say that Saturn took 30 years to complete its full path around the sun, 0.54 years more than present calculations. These calculations are all the more remarkable because, at the time, most of the world thought that the earth was flat. In tomb 2, the coffins had rotted away and most of the funeral objects were damaged. The corpse was totally decomposed. This was thought to be because the white sealing clay was not so compact and that the tomb had been robbed. Tomb 3 was slightly smaller and it contained three coffins, one inside the other but only a skeleton remained. So it was that only tomb 1 contained the abundant objects with silk paintings, wall hangings and wooden objects. Weapons and arrow heads were found in the other tombs.

Day 19 Kaili

The morning's TV news showed the extensive flooding in the Hunan Province, the province through which we had just passed. The report said that there were 88 dead and 73 missing. This was later upgraded to several hundred killed in the flooding, and, moreover, that a landslide had buried a school causing further casualties. This later report also said that 10,000 homes had been lost as well. After breakfast, we walked to the local Sunday market. The main population in this area are one of the ethnic minority groups, the Miaos. These are basically hill people of small stature. The Miaos come to town on market days to sell their produce and handicrafts. Miao people wear beautifully embroidered clothing, with skirts made of many panels, and they wear a distinctive head covering. The head-dresses are very ornate and made of silver, and they wear many silver adornments all over their dress and around their necks. The men wear black tunics.

Returning to the market, we walked through laneways lined with stalls selling everything from parts of coffins, wooden baths, farm implements and beds and tables, then on to the food area where there were open trestle with slabs of pork laying out in the open next to woven trays of offal covered in flies. I turned vegetarian at that point. Men walked through the market with live pigs in cages carried on their shoulders. Another man was seen carrying a pig in a cage that



An example of a QSL received for a DX Expedition contact in 1991. The DXpeditioner was Dr. Miklos (Miki) Danko HA8XX located in the village of Tamakautoga on the remote Pacific island of Niue. There is no Bureau on Niue Island. The card requesting confirmation was sent by direct mail to Miki's QSL manager Klaus DJ1ND, enclosing return postage, and this reply was duly received.

is, if all else fails.

The second way - QSL via the Bureau

How often have you had a QSO that ends with the words, "Please QSL via the Bureau"? The final courtesy of a QSO is a QSL. If you say you will QSL, make sure that you do; it is an enjoyable way of concluding a contact and means a lot to many of your contacts.

The Bureau is there for your benefit and convenience. Use it but first make sure that one exists for the country of your contact. Not every country has a QSL Bureau. For instance, contacts made with the two amateurs living permanently on the Cook Island in the Pacific Ocean, Jim VK1JD and Vic ZK1CG, will never be reached with a QSL card sent to the Bureau. That's because there is no Bureau on the Cook Islands. Contacts with these two amateurs must be confirmed by direct mail.

Where possible listen, and, if the DX station is not too busy, ask for their QSL route.

When preparing your cards for sending to a Bureau, always put the Dixer's callsign in a prominent place. On a single-sided card print the DX callsign in the right hand corner of the back of the card. This makes it much easier for the Bureau managers to sort the cards.

Always put the date and time of the contact in UTC (GMT), the universal time and date used for world-wide communications. Some DX QSL managers will reject cards not written in this time format, as they have 100s or 1000s of cards to process and confirm. A card written for 9:30 am on 6th April here in Queensland (EST) equates to 23:30 on the 5th of April in the Dixer's log. It is much easier if you have a clock in the shack set to UTC. Small travel clock of the digital type that can read in 24 hour format can be purchased from most post offices or at a Dick Smith store. Often they display the date as well.

Many foreign stations write the date in month-day-year format and this can be confusing. My cards use the day-month-year format and many amateurs seem to be converting to this method.

Follow these guidelines and you should be successful at QSLing. If you need further assistance, please contact me, as I have various means at my fingertips that will help you get a return QSL card. End

Radio Room Equipment

The radio room at the clubhouse has been through a stage-by-stage outfitting with furniture and radio equipment. It has now reached a fairly advanced state where it operational on many bands. Bill VK4XZ has provided everything you need including an operating manual for all equipment. Here we tell you exactly what's there, so that next time you walk through the room you might be inclined to read the manual, tune a band, pick up a microphone and use a frequency. You should resolve this year to use one of the radios, even if only listening, every time you come to the clubhouse.

On the opposite page is a photo taken recently and below it is the numbered diagram based on that photo. Here is the key to that diagram:

1. HF antenna rotator for tri-band Yagi for 20/15/10 metres
2. HF antenna tuner, mainly for G5RV HF dipole
3. Co-ax switch for HF tri-band Yagi, Vee-dipole and G5RV dipole
4. 50 ohm dummy load
5. Broadcast band AM/FM radio receivers
6. Marine band transceiver for ca. 156 MHz
7. UHF 70 cm FM transceiver

ways and four steps. It was 20.5 metres deep from top to bottom. The pit mouth was 19.5 m long from North to South and 17.8 m wide from East to West.

In the bottom of the pit lay a set of four coffins, one inside the other. The innermost coffin was adorned with loop-weave brocade and silk fabric with feather decorations were glued on. The third coffin had most impressive designs on it. The second coffin was decorated with cloud patterns and more than a 100 pictures of rare birds and animals. It was in the innermost coffin that one of the most exciting finds was made. The corpse was of a woman thought to be Xinzhui, Li Cang's wife; she had been preserved for over 2,100 years when found. The body was 154 cm tall and weighed 34.3kg. The external appearance was intact and the whole body was moist. The skin covering was intact and most of her hair remained attached to the scalp. Some of her joints were movable to a certain extent and the soft tissue still maintained elasticity. An autopsy was undertaken on the corpse in 1972, and it was found all her internal organs were complete and preserved.

Intact cell membranes could still be observed. Her blood was type A. Inside the esophagus, stomach and intestines were 138 and a half Musk Melon seeds. It appeared that she had suffered a heart attack just after completing a meal of Musk Melon. The reason for her preservation was thought to be because she had been bathed after death then wrapped tightly in 20 layers of shrouds and cloth and sealed in an airtight coffin immediately.

This environment: being sealed within four coffins and then buried deeply at 20.5 metres helped to retard decay. The wooden chamber was surrounded on all sides by a thick layer of white clay so the corpse was isolated from a source of oxygen. The temperature would have remained relatively constant. Other objects recovered from this tomb included painted lacquer vases and plates, toilet boxes, embroidery, a zither, a woven bamboo case, inscribed wooded tablets and a bamboo fan. Other wonderful discoveries were 162 wooden figurines, thought to be her attendants for the after-life. Also discovered was 'The Motion of Five Stars and the Divination'. This is a chart on silk, recording the motion of Jupiter, Saturn and Venus in their orbits in a period of 70 years from the 1st year of Qin Shi Huang's reign 246 BC to the 3rd year of the reign of the Han emperor 177 BC. The text said that Venus took 584.4 days to complete the periodic motion of which

Day 13 Yangtze River Voyage

We woke to even heavier rain and after breakfast transferred to a smaller tourist boat to sail through some of the narrower gorges. The beauty of this area has to be seen first hand but, unfortunately when the Yangtze is flooded many of these beautiful areas will be lost forever. We passed under a high bridge that will also go under water, and sailed under another bridge under construction that will be above the water level when the dam is completed. We went as far as we could go on this craft then again transferred to motorized sampans to sail into the last shallow gorge. Again, this was a really beautiful area with a lovely waterfall. Our sampan skipper serenaded us while sitting in the rain as we motored along. High up on the cliffs there are many caves, in some of which were hanging coffins. We only glimpsed them as we went by. The trip through these smaller gorges took four hours, after which it was back to the cruise ship to continue on along the Yangtze. After lunch, our group assembled in one of the rear lounges to review what we had seen on the tour so far. After this review, it was time to dress for the farewell dinner and cabaret; again with members of the crew and catering staff being the performers and stars. Around 9 pm, we entered the first of five locks on this part of the Yangtze. I spent some time out on my balcony and also on deck as we dropped over 90 metres to the next level of the river. The lock accommodated four ships at a time, the others being another cruise ship around the same size as the Victoria Empress and two very large coal barges. The lock wall was well within arm's reach as we dropped down metre by metre. During the night, we passed through another four of these locks as we sailed toward Sandouping and our final destination, Yichang. Because of the work on the 3 Gorge Dam, this is as far as these vessels can sail presently.

Day 16 Changsha

After breakfast, we were off to the Hunan Provincial Museum. This museum houses relics from the Western Han dynasty 206 BC-24 AD. Another tomb is at Mawangdui in Changsha. The tombs belonged to Li Cang, a chancellor to the Prince of Changsha and Marquis of Dai in the Western Han dynasty. More than 3,000 relics were recovered when these tombs were excavated, including the well-preserved body of a female. The three Han tombs were immense; tomb 1 was a vertical rectangular earthen pit with sloping passage-



8. VHF 144 MHz FM transceiver
9. UHF SES and Qld Fire and Rescue transceiver
10. Coax cable feed line junction box
11. Voltage and current meters for 13.5 VDC radio power supply
12. HF 100 W transceiver
13. Fax machine, on separate line to telephone
14. Telephone
15. 13.5 VDC main power supply for all radios, floating on battery located in storeroom.
16. Standby 13.5 VDC power supply for all radios. End

China Odyssey—Part 3

By June Sim VK4SJ

Day 12 Yangtze River Voyage

We boarded the Victoria Empress for our three-day cruise on the Yangtze River. Boarding time was at 7 pm for a sailing time of 9 pm; I was in cabin 333, an outside cabin with a private balcony (the only way to travel). After settling in, I went up on deck in the misty rain to watch the passing river traffic. We finally got away around 10 pm, not bad for a captain not known for his punctuality (as we were later told) but experienced otherwise.

I woke this morning quite early and around 8 am, we docked at a little landing with a village half way up a hill and a beautiful Pagoda up towards the peak. This was the famous Shibaozhi Pagoda or The Yangtze Pearl Stone Treasure Pagoda. Several local villagers met our shore-going group with a lion dance and then we braved the steady rain to climb up from the landing and then negotiate our way through the dozens of stalls that had been set up to trap the unwary. I climbed up as far as the Pagoda gate, then called it a day as the rain was getting heavier and there were still 120 stairs to the top.

While heading back towards the cruise ship the steps became very slippery. I stopped to take some photos of a little child with a very large umbrella. Then I was lucky enough to photograph someone (unseen) being carried in a sedan chair along the muddy road down the side of the mountain in the pouring rain. I wondered how much the the coolies were paid and who the unseen person was. This beautiful area will soon be under water when the 3 Gorge Dam on the Yangtze is finished. The Pagoda should remain above the high water mark but the village and inhabitants will have to be relocated. An estimated 1.5. to 2 million people that will no longer be able to call the banks of the Yangtze 'home'.

Back at the landing, there were hopeful fishermen trying to sell meager catches as well as a badly disabled beggar and another old man trying to sell a terrapin dangling by its neck on a piece of string. We were to sail at 10 am but finally got away at 10.20.I attended a talk about the Yangtze River given by Campbell, the ship's river guide. After a rather nice buffet lunch, we socialized until it was time for the cruise ship to enter the first of the 3 Gorges. Rain and mist spoilt what would have been a spectacular passage through sheer

cliffs with lone dwellings perched high above us with no visible roads in or out. I could only speculate on how hard the resident's life would be. I guess they would have to rely on the river for their existence, food and transport.

At one place there was a large party of people down by the river bank. We were informed that they had hiked over and down 100s of metres to get to the river bank to wait for the water taxi to take them to the nearest village. Others appeared to be living on the river banks in very rough shelters and even bark shelters. All these people will have to be relocated as the water rises. The water already has risen by many metres and the final height was expected to rise 175 metres above the present level.

As we entered the dining room for our evening meal we were met and greeted by the captain and 1st Officer. After the evening dinner the crewmembers put on a fashion show of clothes from the various dynasties; they were talented and multi-skilled.



Three-gorge dam, Yangtze River