



# Second Century

## The Power of Nostalgia

*Nostalgic moments can really bring home the value of amateur radio and the relationships we build together over the years. This month, I want to share two random events that I had the pleasure of enjoying recently, and encourage you to reach out to some of those people you met early on in your ham career — even if it was only a few years ago — to see what they have been up to and re-live those moments.*

The first occurred at February's ARRL National Convention, hosted by Orlando HamCation. A fellow ham, Mark Levenite, NM7L, walked up and asked if I was originally licensed as WB2MAE. It turns out he remembered working me when I was a Novice back in 1977. I was amazed. I asked if he had the QSL card from back then, and he committed to looking through his collection and sending me a scan if he did. Well, two big surprises! The first was that he did — and there I was, looking at the scans of my QSL card (below) as if I had just written it yesterday. What a thrill. The bigger surprise was my mention of a letter to QST (above right)!



As a 15-year-old ham, I was watching people get licensed and then drop out of the hobby due to a lack of local ham-fests and no equipment in the Want-Ad Press we used to scan. So, your now-ARRL CEO wrote to QST and asked for help! Maybe ARRL could do something whereby a used equipment list could be constructed and mailed so new hams could get their hands on equipment and get on the air! I had completely forgotten this letter! Again, it was amazing to travel back in time to re-experience my life through the eyes of a young, radio-active ham.

The other event occurred here at HQ. There was a very interesting connection between three hams — me being one of them — back in 1978. I was struggling to send code at higher speeds on a straight key, so my good friend Michael Conwill, N2MW, sold me a Heathkit HD-1410 for 25 cents. It was brand new!

But it didn't work. After my dad and I tried to fix it with no luck, we took it to Heathkit for repair. A week later we went back to retrieve it and I met Bob Naumann, W5OV (ex-WA2OVE), who was the tech who fixed the keyer! We became friends from then on.

As three everyday hams, we have wandered in and out of each other's lives over the years. In March, for the first time ever, all three of us were together in one place, at one time, having been connected by a simple Heathkit keyer.



From left to right: Michael Conwill, N2MW; David Minster, NA2AA, and Bob Naumann, W5OV.

What does this all mean? It demonstrates the power of amateur radio to connect us across distance and, indeed, time. Take the time to think back. Drag out those old logbooks. Remember the hams from the late net on 15 meters, who were on after *Saturday Night Live* ended every week? Remember the sked you used to have on 3745 in the afternoons with a local ham because you were rockbound, and he had a Drake TR-4Cw and was magically always right on frequency?

Go back and rediscover the early joy amateur radio brought you by reaching out to some of those early contacts. Be radio active! If those early hams are no longer active, be the connector to get them back on the air. And see you at another hamfest soon.

  
David A. Minster, NA2AA  
Chief Executive Officer

**NOVICE EQUIPMENT**  
I am 15 years old and hold my Novice class license. I am writing in reference to why a lot of people may be quitting amateur radio as a hobby. I have seen at least 10 hams drop out because of one big thing . . . POOR EQUIPMENT!! They couldn't afford this new type of gear today, and there were just no hamfests or used places in our area for them to go to. Then one night I was reading how the League did this for hams and the League did that for would-be hams in this field. So I thought of a way for the League to help.  
The League should start an equipment shop for Novices. Hams could send you a list of gear they want to sell with a price and condition. You could type up a list and sell this list for whatever printing and labor it takes. People would have to be in the League to use this service. If it becomes as popular as I think it will, more people would join the League. You could put little ads in QST to announce how to get this list and how to use used equipment on the list.  
Please consider this and see what you can do about it. I and probably a lot of other hams and would-be hams are grateful.  
David A. Minster, WB2MAE, Wyckoff, NJ  
[Editor's Note: The general reaction to the idea from League staff members has been positive. We could use comments from other hams — address comments to Basic Radio Editor, QST: — WB9VAV]