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Finally, on June 22, 1955 the big day arrived. My Novice license came in the mail. The first thing I looked for was what my ham call letters were. I was very pleased with WN7AAI. I had expected the FCC had gone though the alphabet, ending with W7ZZZ (supposedly), that I would get a K7 call. I was very pleased that the FCC started through the Ws again using the first calls that were available. I was one of the first to get a reissued W7 call. That was 61 years ago last June.

Ernie had loaned me a receiver and together we built a simple transmitter. I had my ham station already to go, so almost immediately after I received my license, I went to the bedroom where my station was and sent CQ on CW. "CQ" an invitation for any other amateur to reply. My Novice license only allowed me to work CW on specific frequencies, low power and crystal controlled. On June 22, 1955, according to my log-book, I received an answer to my CQ. It was a ham in Myrtle Point, W7TLQ 30 miles away. What an exciting moment that was.

I was a Novice for the next six months with over 300 contacts – building up my code speed. The next level required me being able to copy CW at 13 words per minute.

While Ernie was gone that summer, he loaned me his Collins receiver – the Cadillac of receivers. It impressed my contacts but when Ernie returned, I had to give it up. I bought a used receiver from W7HHQ.

DATE	STATION	CALLS	MY	MY	MY	MY	MY	MY	MY	OTHER DATA
TIME		BY	FREQ.	SIGNALS	SIGNALS	FREQ.	EMIT-	POWER	TIME	
				RECEIVED	SENT		TER TYPE	IN WATT	OF	
									END	
June 22	W7TLQ	WN7AAI	3719.599	599	599	3719.599	CW	50W	14:30	QRM - Myrtle Point, Oregon - Chuck
June 23	W7HEV	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:30	QRM - Oakland, California - Hal
June 24	W7IAT	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	16:30	QRM - Seattle, Washington - Frank
June 25	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	14:40	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 26	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 27	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 28	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 29	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 30	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 1	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 2	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 3	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 4	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 5	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 6	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 7	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 8	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 9	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 10	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 11	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 12	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 13	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 14	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 15	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 16	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 17	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 18	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 19	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 20	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 21	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 22	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 23	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
June 24	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred
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June 30	W7ZJW	WN7AAI	7196.599	599	599	7196.599	CW	50W	15:20	Cross Bay, Oregon - Fred

Hams are too often accused of interfering with television. And yes, I did, both because of my simple "home brew" station (something like a 6SK7 and an 807) and because of the early stages of television and the weak signals. Several times I went over to the neighbor that I was interfering with, and while on the phone, I had Alice press my key. Sometimes I would have to ask her to wait until the TV picture cleared up enough to be able to tell if it was my fault or just the terrible signal causing snow.

In the six months I was a Novice, I worked hundreds of stations just for fun, because it was interesting and to increase my code speed, which I had to have at 13 words per minute for the next higher license.

April 13, 1955

Dear Mom, .....

I had planned to write a letter last night, but we were invited to Ernie and Donna's home. We ate supper and then worked on my radio. I have a surplus Navy receiver. (A 40-meter ARC 5 and the ham band was maybe 1/4 of an inch across the dial.) I have listened to stations from England, Australia, Japan, etc. I have heard hams talking all over the west and Midwest. Ernie got it for me without any cost. (He snatched it from the Navy Reserves.)

In my basement today here in Salem "for old time's sake" are two ARC 5 receivers and an ARC 5 transmitter. The one on the left is the receiver that Ernie gave me. We had to add a volume control, a BFO switch and an outboard power supply. The larger one on the right was my first mobile transmitter – using a dynamotor for power. Those were new and exciting times. - Submitted by: Lew Holt, W7AAI



We will continue Lew's story in the April edition of the eJournal.