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# OLD RADIO

## Collecting Vintage QSLs

An enjoyable part of ham radio has always been the exchange of QSL cards. It started in the early days of the hobby when operators wanted confirmation of their contacts. Over the years many of these earliest confirmations have been discarded or lost. Now it has become popular to collect them.

I collect vintage QSLs. I like them all, but I specialize in cards from southern New Jersey because I'm writing a history of Amateur Radio in my area. QSL cards are rich with history and information, and form the corner stone of my book. When the book is completed, I will have a page dedicated to each ham showing his or her QSL card, photo and any personal information I can find. Additionally, by researching *Callbooks*, I will add information on other calls held by that operator. With luck it will grow to be several pages on each ham. This history will be copied and donated to local historical societies and radio museums. It is my hope that someone in the future will continue to gather information and add to what I have done.

### Your Own Collection

You can begin your QSL collection economically. An easy way to start is to ask some of your friends if they would consider selling you a few of their old cards. You may find more sources by placing an ad in your local club newsletter. You can also ask flea market vendors at hamfests.

Estate sales can be productive. Many times the cards and other important papers are considered trash. If you're lucky, they may just give them to you. Occasionally, you can find QSLs in antique shops, although they tend to be more expensive.

There are several collecting *themes* you might like to try. Local cards are a great way to generate interest at your club meetings. The old timers will remember some of the calls and start telling stories about them. Another idea would be to get a card from every state for each decade. How about YL QSLs, photo cards, or original art cards? Use your imagination to make your collection unique.

### An Interesting Story That Started In 1925

On a trip to New England last year I attended a radio meet. A seller showed up with a pile of radios from a local auction house. Among the pile was a shoe box full

29 DEXTER STREET  
Radio: 1ACI Ur CW Sigs Wkd Hr 11/20/25 at M. E.S.T.  
Aud. R. 6 QSB R.S. QSS 260 QRH 40  
From 50 NH  
U-1ACI  
29270000 Hz  
Rem. Gold  
Pse QSL: eed

Radio: 4KW 224 N. Moreland Ave., Atlanta, Ga.  
Ur CW Sigs Wkd Hr 11/20/25 R-Z QSB P.S. QSS —  
TRANS. 5 Watter 250 Volts of RAC In Coup. Hartley  
RECUR. 9MC Tuner es One Step A.F.  
Remarks My old to QSO. Hr ur sigs was constant than local.  
U owe one nw. PSE QSL. W. E. RAVELL. (Ex 3 EJJ)

Confirming a contact between my Elmer (4KW at the time) and 1ACI almost 75 years ago, these QSLs hold a place of honor in my collection.

of QSL cards. Someone told him they were worth a fortune and he wanted a lot of money for them. I asked if I could look through the box.

The cards were from the 1920s and 1930s. About half the way through the box, I spotted a 4KW card from one of my Elmers who had been operating as a young boy at the time in Atlanta. The card was dated November 20, 1925. He had sent it to 1ACI in Attleboro, Massachusetts. I became excited and tried to buy the card. The fellow let me have it for a buck after I told him why I wanted it so badly.

After returning home I visited my Elmer at the first opportunity. He had just celebrated 75 years in ham radio, so there was a lot to talk about. Later, I said I had something to return. I gave him the card and told the story of how I had acquired it. We talked about 1ACI and the QSO. Atlanta to Massachusetts was a great contact for a 5-W station in those days.

As I was getting ready to leave, he asked me to wait. Reaching under his desk, he pulled out an old shoebox. Inside, organized in perfect order, were his 1920s QSL cards. In a few seconds he located the matching

QSL card from that QSO so long ago. He told me to place both QSLs in my museum, which I was honored to do.

Experiences like these make collecting so much fun. You never know when you will find something special.

Please check my Web site for additional QSL card information, including some interesting and rare cards on display at: <http://www.eht.com/oldradio/arri/index.html>. I also have a schedule there for the Old Radio Museum.

### K2TQN'S OLD RADIO MUSEUM SCHEDULE FOR MAY 2000

I was invited to bring the Old Radio Museum to the Trenton Computer Festival, in Edison, New Jersey on May 6 and 7. This is their 25th anniversary and they are planning, as part of this year's show, a large display of vintage computer equipment, my Old Radio Museum, and a display from the New Jersey Antique Radio Club. There are many Amateur Radio activities scheduled, including VE testing. For more information, check their Web site at: <http://www.tcf-nj.org/>. This is a big show with 500 inside exhibitor spaces and 1000 tailgating spaces. Look for my call letters on my hat and say hello. **QST**