

Dan Tours Near-Fest 17

By Dan W1DAN

After being stuck at home recovering from my late winter wrist fracture, I was looking forward to the spring Near-Fest ham flea at the Deerfield New Hampshire Fair Grounds. However with my limited capability, I was hoping to get a ride to the flea.



Fellow Wellesley Amateur Radio Society member Gary N1ZCE offered to drive me as we traveled before a number of times. I took advantage of being a passenger by enjoying good conversation and exercising my fingers, hand and wrist to regain movement from my accident.



WARS Club members Ellen KB1NIP, Lowell KB1FHJ and harmonic, Victor K1VEA (not shown, Gary N1ZCE, Tom N1CE, Don KB1OTQ and YL Odette. Others?)

I took the day off Friday May 1, and under chilly weather we arrived at the flea by 2PM. Having a leisurely walk through the fairgrounds, I enjoyed seeing electronic components, vintage radios, modern rigs, antennas, computers and most anything else you may be interested in. Oh yes, there were many eyeball QSOs with radio friends and acquaintances-including a number of WARS members. It

was interesting to discover that most of my radio friends knew about my broken wrist even though I have not been on



A military truck with tube gear inside!

the radio much these days.

I learned that at 2PM, a phone patch to the fair grounds PA system was performed with Peter W1ZZZ who was at his QTH in Wellesley. Folks missed him and enjoyed hearing from the net control of the "Lonely Guys Net". There were a number of hams sporting new Lonely Guys hats walking around.

Friday I did not buy anything other than a couple of well-priced quarts of maple syrup that a ham harvested from his up-state New York farm. I was reserved as carrying items to the car could prove to be difficult.

Saturday the weather was perfectly sunny and warm, and we arrived at around 9:30AM. There were a number of new sellers and I again enjoyed a leisurely walk, punctuated by visits with friends. Gary bought a couple of VHF radios, and I bought a 1971 Allied Radio Shack



A tube radio lamp!

AX190 shortwave receiver. Carrying that to the car was a challenge, as I could not use my right hand fully, so I used my left hand and right arm!



Allied Radio Shack AX-190 ham receiver

Another fun purchase was a "mystery box", as Gary had told me on the way up that a friend once said not to buy something you do not know what it is. Well, this homebrew box had knobs for gain, phase and balance. On the rear were a sense antenna and receive antenna ports. My guess was it could be an HF antenna noise canceller. For \$1 I had to find out. I also purchased an MFJ audio filter that has a noise limiter and coring for CW. In all, about \$100 later and we were driving away happy. Like Hosstraders before it, Near-Fest is held each spring and fall. <http://www.near-fest.com:8084/nearfest>

Gary suggested we then visit Electronic Surplus Sales in Manchester, NH (<http://www.essurplus.com>), as I had not had the experience.



Gary and Al W1VTP



Bins of goodies!

A 15-minute drive there and we were walking the aisles of interesting items. Resistors, motors, connectors, heat-shrink, etc. Gary bought some tools and parts, and I bought some tools and a connector. As we were cashing out a group of hams I talk with on 75m AM walked in-including WA1SSJ, KC2FXE and others. After having a good chat with Al W1VTP, Gary and I headed to “The Candy Store”.



The latest “candy” at Ham Radio Outlet

When I arrived home, I learned that I had won the grand prize-an Elecraft KX3 transceiver. Assembling this puppy will be a challenge with my wrist-but a fun one!



Ham Radio Outlet in Salem, NH

Ham Radio Outlet (aka “the candy store”) is located in a strip mall next to a smoking store and a nail salon. Neither of these two establishments boasts multiband beam antennas on a tower as HRO, so it was easy to differentiate these stores. Gary ordered a radio vest to make his public service events a little easier. I looked around at the many radios and accessories for sale. We headed home in the mid-afternoon, tired, but happy.



Calling W1DAN!



Elecraft KX3 QRP Transceiver

Wonder if we’ll do as well at the Fall Near-Fest?

73,
Dan
W1DAN