

Lloyd Bumpus, N6EL – SK

TWIN BROTHERS, TWIN CALL SIGNS



Floyd Bumpus is N5EL. His identical twin, Lloyd Bumpus, is N6EL. How'd they do that?! Well, it was just good timing. In 1977, when the FCC allowed Extra Class licensees to apply for special call signs, Floyd was K50KQ, and Lloyd was W6PXB (ex-K5ELY). They wrote a joint letter to the FCC and each sent a Form 610. On the same day, April 2, they received N5EL and N6EL. "Keeping up with current affairs concerning Amateur Radio through QST and other publications allowed us to be at the right place at the right time," said Floyd.

The twins got interested in ham radio near the end of World War II, when their oldest brother was captured by the German Army in the Battle of the Bulge. The War Department sent a "missing-in-action" telegram to the family. A few months later, they received a postcard from a ham radio operator in New York City saying he'd intercepted a message from a German station giving a list of names of prisoners of war being sent to a certain prison camp. The brother's name was on the list. "We had not received any information until this time about the welfare of our brother," Floyd recalled. "Within a few weeks we received a form card from him saying he was at the prison camp as had been noted on the postcard from the ham operator."

Eventually their brother was liberated, and Lloyd and Floyd joined the US Navy, serving together. Lloyd became a radio op and stayed 22 years, while Floyd got out after 4. In 1956, Lloyd—stationed in Asmara, Eritrea, at the time—made a phone patch to Floyd via Dick Freeling, W5TIZ, an A-1 Operator from Little Rock, Arkansas, who was completely blind. That's when the twins really got interested in the hobby and have since

enjoyed QSOs with each other from all over the world.

“Amateur Radio has a special place in our lives, and I sincerely hope all operators can enjoy our hobby as much as we have. We are both very active in promoting Amateur Radio,” Floyd said. –Rosalie White, WA1ST0

The ARRL Letter

March 8, 1996 (Volume 15, Number 3)

From QRZ.com:

The callsign K50KQ now is issued to Floyd's son and K5ELY to a nephew in AR. Floyd, and Lloyd could be heard making cw contacts on 15 and 20 meters several times a week for 45 years. Sadly Lloyd had a severe heart attack in 2002 and had to quit radio completley. He still has one son who is licensed but not active. Floyd is still active, they made their last cw on air contact in August 2002. A picture appears with the article in May 1996 QST. Updated May 2nd 2004

I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of our friend Lloyd. I was able to find the above information in an old ARRL Letter and on QRZ.com. I remember Lloyd telling me the story of how he and his brother Floyd got those calls.

Lloyd was truly an Elmer to me. He invited me to his home and passed along pieces of ham equipment that he knew I could make use of.

I remember the straight key night he invited me to operate his station. I had just passed my 5 WPM code test and became a tech+. I was able to spend many happy hours with Lloyd at his well-equipped station. I think he let me operate the whole time. It must have been painful for him to sit there and listen to me struggling along at 5 WPM when he could easily work 35 WPM while reading the daily paper!

Lloyd thought everyone should learn to love CW and was very encouraging along those lines. I remember more than once observing him copying incredibly fast code when I could hardly

distinguish dits from dahs.

I also remember many happy hours simply passing the time with Lloyd and his lovely wife Irene.

Hearing "dih-DAH-dih-dit" to this day brings his name to mind.

I asked Lloyd once about flying the American flag from an antenna tower. I wanted to check the protocol and didn't want to show disrespect for our flag. He gave me a great rule of thumb:

"Just make sure it flies free."

I'll miss you, my friend.

NV6V

The last time I spoke with Lloyd was a couple of years ago while vacationing in Blue Lake Springs. He was always available to lend assistance to anyone who was in need. He will be missed. 73 de ab6xs (Kevin Ashford)