

Silent Key Planning

By Mel Ming N7GCO



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**We all will become
a Silent Key
at some point.**



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What happens to your Ham Equipment?

- Usually your family will not want it and want it gone.
- Your family probably does not know what equipment you have or its real sale value.
- Your family probably does not know how to sell it.
- Having a plan of who will handle it will help your family.



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Allow Families Time to Grieve

Families grieve differently. When a family member dies there are so many things that must be addresses ASAP: Funeral arrangements, insurance, facing the loss, etc.

Ham equipment is usually not near the top of their priority list.

Some will be ready to deal with it in a few weeks, others takes months or even year.

Let the family set the timing.



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What are your options for disposing of your equipment?

1. Donate it to a club, school or individual(s)
(Many clubs like the SDXA can give a tax deductible charitable donation letter)
2. Sell it:
 - By the family
 - Find someone who will buy it all (usually at a fraction of the value)
 - Get a friend or club to sell it for you



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Lessons Learned – Part I

1. What families want and need from your equipment differs greatly.
 - Some need all the money they can get
 - Some just want it gone
 - Some are overwhelmed and need someone to handle it for them
 - Some would like to see the money go to something



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Lessons Learned – Part II

2. Hams and their families often think the value is much higher than reality (It is only worth what someone will pay for it, not what you paid for it or think it is worth)
3. Older equipment and homemade equipment is very difficult to sell



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Lessons learned – Part III

4. Most people selling want to move it quickly
5. Shipping used ham equipment is expensive and risky
6. Used coax is not worth much



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Lessons learned – Part IV

7. It is very difficult to sell used wire antennas
8. Selling guyed towers is a problem. If you have to pay for someone to take it down, it rarely will be break even.



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Lessons learned – Part V

9. Triband antennas are difficult to sell and not worth much money.
10. Selling someone's equipment takes a lot of time and energy (On the last SK I sold I spent over 35 hours a week for 6 weeks on it)



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My Rules Of Thumb For Selling Used Ham Equipment:

- If in pristine shape -- 75% of new value.
(This means all the boxes, parts, no scratches)
- If not longer made -- 60% of new value.
- If you want to sell it quickly -- 50% of new value.



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Hints if you have someone (or a club) selling your equipment

1. Have a clear understanding what the arrangement is with the family and seller.
2. When I recently sold a SK's equipment here was the agreement:
 - Everything would be sold locally
 - Everything would be priced to move fast
 - The income would be divided between the family and the club (make sure the split arrangement is clearly understood).



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Hints Part II

3. When you have your equipment sold by a club or individual the split varies greatly.

50/50, 60/40, 66/33, 70/30, 80/20, 90/10, 95/5

Factors to consider:

- Amount of equipment
- Age of equipment
- Wishes of the SK
- Relationship to SK



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Hints Part III

4. Remember you won't be here to explain

- What each item is
- Does it work
- What goes with it
- Where things are located
- Any modifications made



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What YOU need to do NOW!

Have a complete inventory (and I mean complete) of all your equipment over \$50.00:

- What it is? (Make, Model, Serial#)
- What goes with it and where to find it? (power cables, mike, other cables, manual, boxes)
- Working condition
- When and where purchased. Purchased price.
- Any Modifications



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Randy K7AGE Inventory form

Randy Hall K7AGE Equipment	
Equipment Manufacturer - Model #	
Purchase Date	Document Date
Manual available and location	Powered to anyone?
Factory box available and location	
Serial Number	Weight
Notes	



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Mel N7GCO Inventory form

HAM GEAR INVENTORY

NOTES:

1. All manuals are in the file cabinet in ham shack
2. Most boxes are on shelves above operating table. Exceptions are noted in info column
3. All equipment is in good operating condition unless notes
4. There is additional Ham stuff in the shed on the west side
5. If there is an additional binder for the equipment it will be on the shelf on the wall facing the garage

ITEM	Serial #	Cost	Estimated Value as of Dec 1 2022	Acquired From	Acquired Date	Info
HF RADIOS & ACCESSORIES						
Icom 7600 (HF)		\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	HRO-Portland	11/19/2011	Radio on right side Working Desk, Box on top shelf behind
Kenwood TM-D710G (VHF/UHF) + TNC		\$ 499.95	\$ 300.00	HRO-Portland	11/24/2018	Radio on left side working desk
Icom 2300 (VHF) In Mel's Office		\$149.99	\$ 100.00	MTC	6/3/2020	Mounted on shelf next to recliner in Mel's office
Samlex 35 Amp Switching Power Supply In Mel's Office		\$ 144.95	\$ 100.00	HRO-Portland	11/30/2018	Sitting on bottom shelf next to recliner
WaveNode W SWR/Power meter		\$ 450.00	\$ 225.00	Wavenode	2021	On shelf behind ham desk on right side. Has (2) spare. Extra stuff in box on shelf above



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For the family

1. How to notify the FCC about the SK.
(Make sure they have your number)
2. How to notify the ARRL about the SK
(Your form should be filled out except for the date of your death)
3. Who you have arranged to sell you ham stuff



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Make sure your family and seller know

1. Where your inventory list is kept
2. If you have promised any equipment as a gift to someone. Be sure the family & seller know it
3. Where they will find all the items (equipment, manuals, cables, etc)



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QST Articles: (These can be downloaded from the ARRL website)

QST April 2018 **"The Inventory List"** by Noel Beardsley

QST September 2019 **"Silent Key Estate Planning – A Guide"** by Dino Papas KL0S



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YouTube Videos

"Silent Key: They What Happens?" by Randy Hall K7AGE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlQFipXP4No>

"How to plan your amateur radio estate before you become a silent key" by Dino Papas KL0S from qso today virtual ham expo 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ggmz8Ua5AY&t=559s>



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Resource Packet on SDXA Website (SDXA.ORG) Under the Articles Tab

- PDF of PowerPoint
- Copy of form from Randy's K7AGE inventory list
- Copy of form from Mel's N7GCO inventory list
- ARRL SK forms and information
- FCC Notification of a Silent Key guide



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**You owe it to your family
to have everything ready
and a plan in place.**





Randy Hall K7AGE Equipment

Equipment: Manufacturer - Model #

Purchase Date:

Document Date:

Manual available and location:

Promised to anyone?

Factory box available and location:

Serial Number:

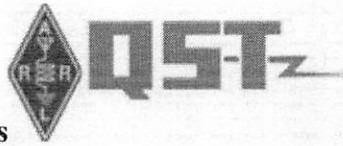
Worth:

Notes

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Astron 70 Amp Linear Power Supply		\$ 399.95	\$ 225.00	Universal Radio	3/22/2019	On shelf to right of ham desk,
DX Engineering CC-8A Antenna Switch controller		229.99	125	Used	Aug-22	Middle of top shelf on right side of operating desk
EA4TX Remote Box		\$ 209.99	\$ 125.00	EA4TX	11/1/2022	Top self left of operating position
Icom PW-1 Amp			\$ 2,000.00	HRO	7/27/06	
Henry 2K-2 Amp			\$ 750.00			Extensive upgrades

Silent Key Submission Guidelines

Reporting a Silent Key



QST Submission Guidelines

QST Magazine regularly features a listing of Silent Keys as a way to honor our departed Radio Amateurs. Silent Key notifications are accepted from family members, friends or other amateurs.

The ARRL would like to express our deepest condolences for your loss. We understand that this is a difficult time and hope to make reporting a Silent Key a simple process. Due to editorial guidelines and printing timelines, please allow 4-5 months for the listing to appear in the *QST* Silent Key column.

◁ If you choose to email, fax, or mail the information to us, please use the printer friendly **Report a Silent Key** PDF form.

Silent Key reports **must** be confirmed by *ONE* of the following means:

- a copy of an obituary notice (must include date of death)
- a copy of the death certificate
- a letter from the family lawyer or the executor

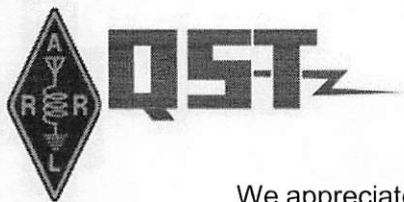
If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact the Silent Key Administrator: sk@arrl.org or 860-594-0286.

FCC Notification

◁ Report a silent key to FCC and cancel the license. **Learn More**

[News & Features](#) >> [QST](#) >> Silent Key Submission Guidelines

EXPLORE ARRL



Report a Silent Key

We appreciate you providing us with the most accurate information as possible,
as it will help us properly honor your Silent Key in QST.

Silent Key Information

Fields marked with an asterisk () are required*

SK Call Sign*

License Expiration Date

SK First Name*

SK Middle Name*

(If none, write "none")

SK Last Name*

Suffix

SK Address

City*

State*

SK Date of Birth

Was this person known to fellow hams as something other than their given name?*

(i.e. John K. Smith, better known as "Keith" Smith) ☐ YES ☐ NO

If so, please tell us how you would like their name to appear in QST

Is the SK's location (city & state) that you wish to have listed in QST, different from the one listed above?* ☐ YES ☐ NO

If so, please tell us which location (city & state) you would like to appear in QST

Informant Information

Your Call Sign (if applicable)

Your First Name*

Your Last Name*

Relationship to Decedent

Phone Number
and/or Email*

Thank You!

In order to publish a Silent Key, it is **required** that you provide us with documentation to verify the death:

- a copy of an obituary notice,
- a copy of the death certificate or
- a letter from the family lawyer or the executor

Mail, fax or email this form & the required documentation to:

ARRL: SK Administrator
225 Main Street
Newington, CT 06111

860-594-0339 (Attn: SK Administrator)

sk@arrl.org

FCC Silent Key Notification

The FCC will cancel the license of the deceased person if a letter is sent including the callsign and a request to cancel the license.

They also require one of the following:

- A copy (not an original) of the death certificate
- A newspaper obituary, preferably where his amateur call is mentioned.
- Social Security death benefits documentation.
- A printout of the Social Security Death Index. (This may be found on a number of different sites. Here is one
exe: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=3693>)

Faxed documents are not accepted. Any included documents will not be returned to you.

Mail the information to:

Federal Communications Commission
Attn: Amateur Radio
1270 Fairfield Rd
Gettysburg, PA 17325-7245

Allow the FCC one to two weeks for them to cancel the license.

You can verify that the FCC has canceled the license by looking up the FCC license call sign data at <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls>. If the license has been canceled, the FCC will show the license status as **CANCELED**.

A close relative may make a preferential request to the FCC that the callsign be assigned to them for their own callsign under the "Vanity Program," if they hold the required license. His local Club may also make a request for the call in honor of the deceased member, with the families permission and supporting letter to the FCC at the address above.