

"Joe's Friends"

Jim Walden, W6ESJ, Joe's Elmer

"In 1956 I moved from Florida to an apartment in the Fresh Meadows apartment community in New York after I took a job offer in Brooklyn," recalled Jim Walden, now W6ESJ. "My callsign back then was W2IEY. Just after Christmas 1958 I acquired a Collins KWM-1 [3-band HF transceiver] on the recommendation of my Elmer, John, W4KRV (SK), in Miami. I went up to the roof, put up a 10 foot mast, an AR-22 rotor, and a Mosley TA-33 Jr. beam and started working the world with no problem at all.

"Joe moved into the building around that time, and that's when he saw the beam on the roof of the apartment. He followed the coax down to my window and wound up knocking on my door. It was on a weekend, and my wife answered the door. She said there was a young man at the door interested in radio. I wasn't that old myself—26 or 27. I brought him in and showed him the KWM-1. I got on the air and we made some contacts, and he started coming down every weekend. I got a little oscillator to practice code, and I ended up giving him the Novice test that fall. He got his license in late 1959—WV2KAC. I got out my old logbooks and found he made his first contact from my station on January 30, 1960; he signed my log. It was just before the start of some contest.

"As time went on, we left Fresh Meadows and moved to Texas, and I think Joe moved to Ohio. The last time I saw him was in 1960. Then in 2000 I got an e-mail from him. 'Ham radio's such a big part of my life today, and has been responsible for so many other good things [for me]. I don't even want to think how different my life would be if you hadn't lived downstairs,' he wrote in April of 2000. The following October his band was playing at the Knocti Harbor Resort near Middletown, California. I e-mailed



Joe Walsh visits with Jim Walden, W6ESJ, between tour dates in California. (Photo by Marilyn Walden)

back to him and asked if he could maybe join us for my grandson's birthday party, and he said he would. Between shows he came down and spent the afternoon with us and we took pictures. That was the first time I'd seen Joe since the spring of 1960."

Jim currently resides in Santa Rosa, California, and is on the air with his current callsign, W6ESJ.

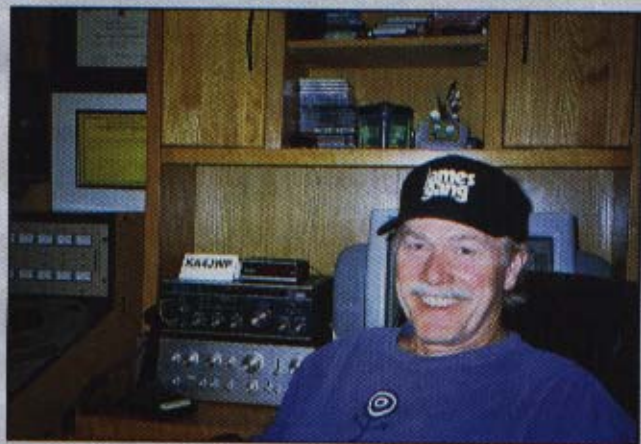
Buddy Thornton, KA4JWP

Buddy Thornton, KA4JWP, is a long-time aerospace and electrical engineer, working over the years on high-profile projects such as the original Skylab, as well as for Douglas Aircraft on the Saturn-Apollo rocket program during the glory days of the space race. In the early 1970s, however, he left the high-tech dynamics of space travel to work in the world of rock and roll. After moving to Macon, Georgia, he went to work for Capricorn Records. As a staff engineer he worked on albums for some of the biggest names in southern rock: Charlie Daniels, Marshall Tucker, and The Allman Brothers, among many others. After touring with the Allmans for several years as their sound engineer, Buddy moved to Coconut Grove, Florida, where he worked for legendary record producer Bill Szymczyk at Bayshore Studios. One of the big acts to come along was a Joe Walsh solo project.

"I met Joe Walsh through Bill Szymczyk," Buddy told CQ. "One of the first things Joe recorded at Bayshore was his *But Seriously Folks* album, and I became friends with him while working on that project. Joe and I used to play around with all the equipment down in my maintenance shop. He would bring in some Heathkits, power supplies, some very unusual electronic music experiments, and I would help him put them together. We'd play around with them all hours of the night. I had always had an interest in radio, and I'd been into electronics for some time, but I never really took the time to sit down and learn the code.

"Joe brought in some radios and we put an antenna on the roof. We played around with CW, and he really got me interested in ham radio again. He ended up giving me a code practice oscillator and key, and told me to practice the code, and next time he was in town we'd work on it some more.

"While they were recording, they would work for a while then take a break and go back home to California. One trip when he



Buddy Thornton, KA4JWP, in his Melbourne, Florida shack.

came back, I had been practicing my code, so Joe gave me the written test and the five words-per-minute code test, and I was able to get my Novice. That's pretty much how I met Joe. He's a great guy."

Buddy left the recording industry in 1982, after Bayshore Studio closed its doors and Bill Szymczyk retired. After going back to college to finish his electrical engineering degree, Buddy went to work for the Air Force and is currently employed as a radar test engineer working with Air Force airborne radar systems, and is still very active in music and amateur radio.