

**Tuna Tin 2 Ancient Sacred Relic
2026 50th Anniversary World Tour
HAM-CON Vermont HAM Radio Convention
February 28, 2026 Colchester VT**



While HAM-CON is not strictly a QRP event, there are a lot of QRPers in the Vermont area. It was the first reachable amateur radio convention on the calendar after receiving the Ancient Sacred Relic from league headquarters. I have attended HAM-CON many times as it was always held in a hotel within sight of my progeny's dorm at the University of Vermont. So it was always a 2-for-1 deal: I got to see a bunch of QRP friends and my prog on the trip. I didn't have a ton of time to prepare as I was deep into getting the TT2+ 50th Anniversary kit design, knocking off chores on the farm I had to get done before leaving for several weeks AND getting as many QRPme back orders out the door as possible.

The vendor room was pretty small in the new hotel digs. I had brought my traveling toolbox to work away at hosing up a demonstration for my table. I had a box full of miscellaneous wires, parts, crystals and connectors to make it all happen. Unfortunately, I've also been fighting a periformus injury for several weeks and it wasn't getting much better. I arrived late in the evening and went immediately to bed. Got up extra early and took a 1 hour soak in the hottest water I could get from the faucet. I think it was the 1st time I ever used a tub In a hotel. I felt

mildly better after the soak, found a hotel trolley and lugged all my stuff to the vendor room. Unloaded all my stuff and preceded to build up some tuna tin interconnects. The ASR has RCAs for every connection so I had to fashion up the proper adapters for key, battery and antenna load. Got it done before the room opened at 8AM.

The Setup:

Of course the Ancient Sacred Relic was the centerpiece. It was being fed with a small gel cell battery. I had my Tuna Salad Sender paddles (homage to the Sardine Sender) and a BOLA Key for sending. I had the RF output of the ASR hooked into my CP Sighter (homage to the CB Slider) and then on to a nice little dummy load power meter. That gem was designed, built and off the personal bench of the Rev. George Dobbs, G3RJV.

The Main Event:

Amateurs strolled by..... Most hams couldn't recognize the ASR if their life depended on it. They walked by noticing my setup with an old rusty can with a bunch of parts sitting on top.....and kept on walking! Others in the know, QRPers, instantly knew what they were looking at and stopped to take it in. I was pretty busy explaining the setup and letting them try it out. I also kept disconnecting the ASR from the RCA spaghetti so they could hold it and take their picture with it. Unfortunately, I took the pictures with their camera not thinking about documenting the event with mine. Dennis, N1IMW, took a selfie and sent me a copy that I posted above. I had a very busy morning and broke everything down a little after noon as I was about the only 'vendor' in the room and there was no more traffic. As usual, everyone was crowded into the main forum room waiting to see if they won something in the prize raffle. As usual, I was too busy to even put my 'vendor' ticket into the drum.....

Respectfully submitted,
Rex W1REX