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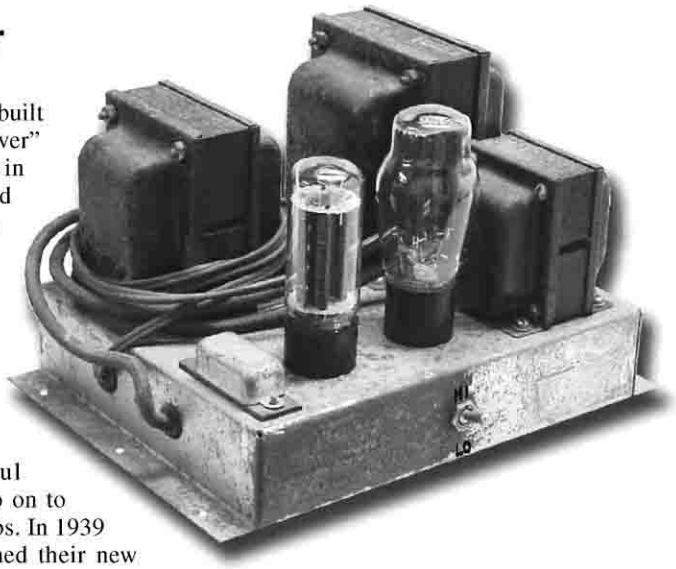
OLD RADIO

The Harvey-Wells Bandmaster

John Wells, W1ZD, and Clifford Harvey, W1RF, came together to start the Harvey-Wells Electronics Company in Southbridge, Massachusetts in 1939. During World War II they produced many items for the war effort, earning the prestigious "E" award. After the war they would go on to produce ham radio equipment, including the popular Bandmaster transmitter.

John Wells started in ham radio while in high school during 1919. His call then was 1BQJ. Wells went to Harvard and was active in their radio club. In 1926 he developed a crystal-controlled transmitter and wrote an article in the June 1926 *QST*. He was one of the first to use crystal control, grinding his own. During WW II his crystal expertise would come in handy, as the Harvey-Wells Company produced thousands for the Army and Navy. His call became 1ZD in 1926.

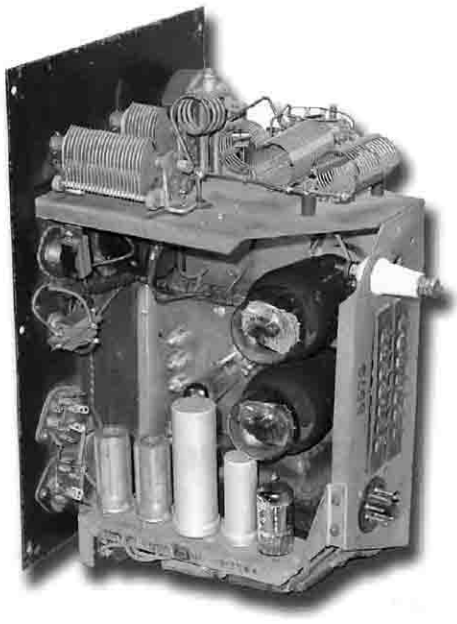
Also a pilot, in 1932 Wells flew his autogyro aircraft to an altitude of three thousand feet to experiment in the "56-mc Eclipse Expedition" (October 1932 *QST*). While there he met Paul Hendricks, W1AXV. Hendricks was at that time entering into a partnership with Clifford Harvey. Their company, Hendricks and Harvey, built the "Single Signal Receiver" that was advertised once in 1932 in *QST*. It is believed that this is where Wells met his future partner, Clifford Harvey.



Clifford Harvey was born in Philadelphia and went to college at MIT. He graduated in 1931 as a radio engineer. Shortly after his partnership with Paul Hendricks, he would go on to found Harvey Radio Labs. In 1939 Harvey and Wells formed their new company.

When war was winding down, they planned new radio products to sell. They produced radios for marine, aircraft and, of course, ham radio. The 1947 Bandmaster would become one of their most popular, with many being sold. The one shown here, model TBS-50D, serial number 5573, was produced after 1950.

There were three basic TBS-50 models. The "B" or Junior version was CW only at $87.50, the "C" or Senior was for mobile operation with a carbon microphone at $111.50, and the "D" or Deluxe model with additional audio preamps for crystal microphones was offered at $137.50. Optional power supplies for mobile or fixed station operation were offered, from $39.50 for the ac supply to $87.50 for the 6-V mobile supply. Shown is the ac supply.



As you might expect, it was physically well designed and used many parts that were on the "surplus market" to keep costs low. Shown in the interior view is the heavy-duty modulator with a pair of 6L6s in push-pull. They would modulate the single 807 final to a full 100%.

You can see the various final coils on the top. This transmitter had band switching and would cover from 80 to 2 meters. That was a lot of spectrum and as you might expect, with the increasing popularity of home television, they became less popular with hams. I had one back in the late 1950s and tried to use it on 6 meters. I was into every television in the neighborhood. In no time at all, my mother encouraged me to sell it and get another one "that wouldn't bother the neighbors."

The VFO shown at the bottom of the transmitter is a hard-to-find accessory today. The transmitter is still popular with the AM crowd and makes a decent "first" vintage restoration project, as parts can be easily found at hamfests. It looks good, too.

My thanks to Peter Laur, SM5HUA, for helping me find some of the historic information. For more history, schematics and photos of the Bandmaster and Harvey and Wells, visit my Web site **www.eht.com/oldradio/arrl/index.html**.

Look for my hat at the hamfests and say hello.—*K2TQN* QST

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