

Heathkit of the Month #39:
by Bob Eckweiler, AF6C

F-2587K/M
Candlesticks

Introduction:

After the April Fool's fiasco of two years ago, probably brought on by listening to too many Johnny Horton albums, I felt the April *Heathkit of the Month* should be based on a real, but unusual Heath product. Thus last year the GU-1810 Hydraulic Log Splitter was selected. At that time I challenged readers to name other Heathkits that were powered by gasoline instead of electricity. The reply was overwhelming - overwhelmingly lacking. Thus, this year I thought I'd change tack once again on this April cruise. Now, as I see it, this April's kit could tie in with last year's kit in a sense.

Hams are known throughout this great country as ready to jump in and provide communications in times of disaster. In recent years this skill, unfortunately, is being tested more often than we would all like. So this April's kit relates to supporting emergencies, whether it be a power blackout or hurricane. This month we'll discuss a mechanical support for emergency lighting available from Heathkit. As such, it could be essential for operating during the night hours.

In the early eighties, with the competition of inexpensive Asian electronics eating into Heathkit's profit margin, Heath decided to branch out into a new form of kit building. Instead of components, wire and solder, these kits utilized wood, stains and glue. Yes, Heathkit began Heath Craft Woodworks. The kits featured in their 1981 catalog 402B (Figure 2) includes great wooden items like an exquisite rolltop banker's desk kit (\$995 and 405 lbs. freight shipping), an octagonal dining table (\$495 and 131 lbs. freight shipping), matching chairs for the table (\$129.95 per side chair and



Fig. 1: Heath Craft Woodworks F2587M Mahogany Candlesticks

\$149.95 per arm chair); a classic mahogany Butler table (\$250) and many other items such as an oak hall mirror (\$129.95), a mahogany Queen Anne plant stand (\$69.95); an oak book rest (\$69.95) and...

The Heath Craft Woodworks Candlesticks: Heath offered in kit form a pair of candlesticks for \$24.95. This was the "practical introduc-



Fig. 2: 1981 Heath Craft Catalog #402B Showing the Rolltop Bankers Desk

tion” kit for the Heath Craft Woodworks. The kit came in two models, the F-2587K in oak, (Figure 1) and the F2587M in mahogany.

These candlesticks are patterned after a classic early American design, and you can almost see

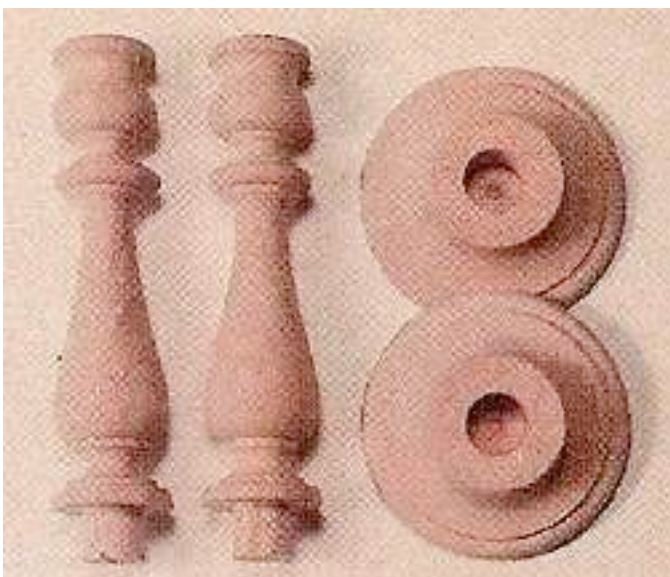


Fig. 3: Rough Sanded Candlestick Parts

one being used to murder Colonel Mustard in the conservatory! If this paragraph leaves you baffled, let’s face it, you haven’t a Clue.

The pair of candlesticks measure 8-1/8” tall with 4” diameter bases. They are designed to accept standard sized tapered candles, available at Ye Olde chandler shops everywhere. (Has the sizing of candles gone metric yet?)

Heath Mahogany F-2587M Candlesticks:

This pair of candlesticks came as four pieces of select solid mahogany - two pre-cut, rough sanded spindles and bases (Figure 3). The kit also included glue, sandpaper, specially formulated mahogany paste stain and paste varnish.

Heath Oak F-2587K Candlesticks:

These candlesticks are identical to the mahogany ones except they are made from solid oak. Two types of stain were included, golden oak and walnut. You could try both on the underside of the bases and see which you prefer.

Heath Craft Woodworks Kits:

The Heath Craft Woodworking catalogs were imbedded in the regular Heathkit catalogs in the early eighties. The one I’m referencing for this article is in the Christmas 1981 mail order catalog #855; it is 16 pages in length. Reading the catalog, with a lot of detail on the products and what is needed to assemble them, one gets the feeling that, like electronic Heathkits, the instruction book is going to be easy to follow with step-by-step clear instructions. Even the stains and varnish show a level of detail that makes finishing easy. These products are not liquid, but a paste that is rubbed on. Accidental spills or messes are all but eliminated.

With the exception of the introductory candlestick kits, the finishing kits (Figure 4) were sold separately. Four stains were offered: Natural, Golden Oak, Mahogany and Walnut as shown in figure 5. The Mahogany finishing kit came only in medium size; all other kits came in either medium or large size. Each kit came with instructions. The finishing kits cost \$10.95 for

medium and \$17.95 for large, except for the natural finish kits which were \$5.95 and \$9.95. The finish was applied using a soft cloth so no brushes were needed. With each kit Heath recommended which finishing kit size to purchase. Large items like the rolltop desk and the octagonal dining table take the large finishing kits; while smaller items like the chairs, mahogany butler table and book rest take the medium finishing kits.

A minimum of basic tools were needed to build these kits. All rough sanding was done, and assemblies requiring alignment jigs came pre-assembled. Special tools, like drill bits were supplied when needed.

Heath did offer five general tools to assist builders - three under \$5, and all under \$10. They were a one-inch nylon web clamp, an adjustable two-piece pipe clamp, a package of four rubber pipe clamp pads, a hard rubber sanding pad and safety goggles.

Heath Craft Glass and Brass Tables:

Besides the wooden kits Heath offered five models of tables with glass tops and brass under structure. These tables boast 3/4" plate glass tops with custom ground in a curvilinear ogee shape. The five tables, a 26" x 52" race-track oval table, a 38" square cocktail table, a 24" x 48" rectangular table, a 16" x 48" console table, and a 22" x 26" lamp table range in price from \$395 to \$595 in kit form. All but the lamp



Fig. 4: Heath Craft Finishing Kit



Fig. 5: Offered Finishes

table required shipping by motor freight. Heath was offering a \$100 discount on these tables in the 402B catalog.

Except for the candlesticks, these Heath Craft kits were also available fully built. The savings by building and finishing the kits varied from around 40% for the Brass and Glass tables to 67% for the larger wooden kits.

So if you ever find a Heath Craft candlestick on eBay, add some so elegance to your emergency supplies. Don't forget the 'strike anywhere' waterproof matches as well as some fancy tapered candles.

Next month we'll take a look at the mobile power supplies Heathkit made for their tube radios.

73, from AF6C



Remember, if you are getting rid of any old Heathkit Manuals or Catalogs, please pass them along to me for my research.

Thanks, Bob - AF6C

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