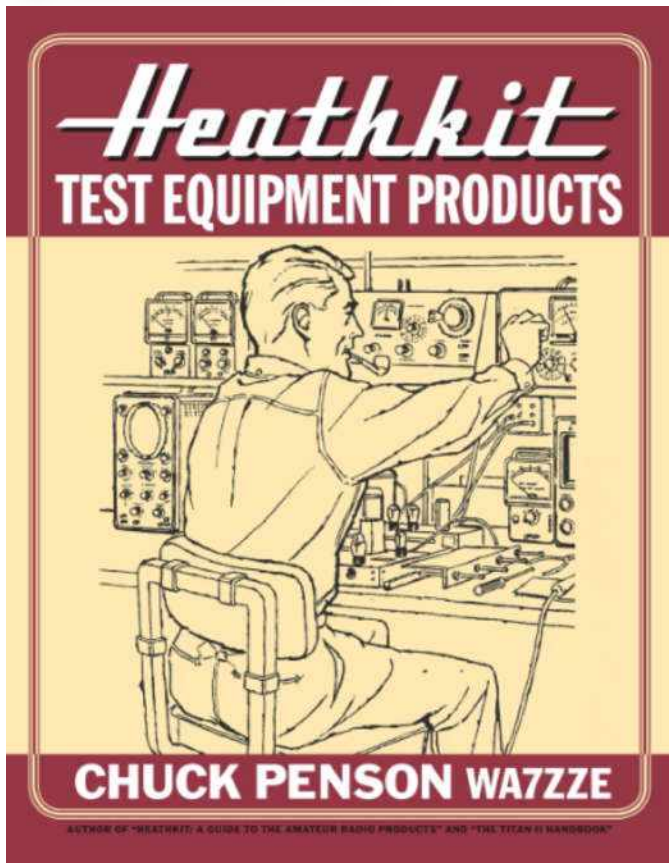


Book Review

by Bob Eckweiler, AF6C



Heathkit Test Equipment Products

by: **Chuck Penson - WA7ZZE**

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\$19.95

In 1995 Chuck Penson - WA7ZZE authored the book **HEATHKIT - A Guide to the Amateur Radio Products**. The book was popular among Heathkit aficionados and was reprinted in 2003 by CQ Communications Inc. Recently Chuck Penson released a second Heath book, **HEATHKIT Test Equipment Products**. He had contacted me about using some information from the Heathkit articles I have been writing, and in late May a package appeared at my door containing a signed copy of his newly released book!

Thumbing through the book I was immediately impressed. This volume contains photos and a

short paragraph on - possibly - every piece of Heathkit test equipment released in the US market in kit form since the first Heathkit Oscilloscope kit was sold in 1947. I could not find any test equipment that was missing. Each paragraph includes at least one photo of the equipment with the exception of the very short lived V-3 battery operated vacuum tube voltmeter. A picture from a Heathkit flyer was used because none of the numerous collectors could find a photo nor manual. If you have any information, a manual or an actual V-3 I'm sure Chuck would like to hear from you.

The book includes an introduction, twenty-two chapters and three indices. In the earlier Heathkit book the author presented a detailed history of the company; in this book the introduction focuses more on the industrial design of the Heathkit test equipment and less on the history. The author has broken down the different styling Heathkit offered for their test equipment over the years into six categories: Pre-classic, Late Pre-classic, Classic I, Classic II, New Look and Post New Look. He includes photographs showing the changes and how to determine the kit's style category. In my future Heathkit of the Month articles that cover test equipment I will follow the author's styling categories!

Often a kit would receive a styling change and a new model number without any significant changes to the kit's circuit itself. Occasionally a kit would change style without getting a new model number, not even an added suffix letter designation. Other times Heathkit updated a kit with some small circuit change or added feature, or even just a styling change, and added a letter suffix. In the book significant changes without a model number change are noted and, should the appearance change significantly, a photograph of each is shown.

The twenty-two chapters that follow the introduction breakdown the test equipment into categories of similar functions. Table I lists the chapters and the number of kits covered in each (by my count). Each kit covered includes a short

Ch.	Title	# of Items ^{1,2}
1.	Audio Equipment	27
2.	Capacitor Checkers	9
3.	DMMs and Frequency Counters	24
4.	EUW Malmsted/Enke Series	31
5.	FM Equipment	5
6.	Function and Pulse Generators	4
7.	Impedance Bridges and Q Meters	7
8.	Oscilloscopes and Scope Calibrators	62
9.	Power Supplies: Battery Eliminators	9
10.	Power Supplies: High Voltage	7
11.	Power Supplies: Isolation	4
12.	Power Supplies: Low Voltage	14
13.	RF Generators	12
14.	Signal Tracers	6
15.	Substitution Boxes	17
16.	Television Equipment	24
17.	Transistor Testers	14
18.	Tube Testers	7
19.	VOMs Voltmeters and Testers (Analog)	17
20.	VTVMs:	21
21.	Miscellaneous Products	19
22.	Analog Computers	9

Table I: Chapter Titles and Items Listed in Each

1. Occasionally items are listed under two categories.
2. Items updated with new letter designations in their suffix are counted as a single item.

paragraph and one or more photographs. Kits that have letter designations, such as the V-7 and V-7A are covered in the same paragraph but may have separate photos if they are differently styled.

The indices are sorted by model number, product type and by chronological order. They include the start and end year of production, product type and any pertinent comments, as well as the page on which the item is covered.

Chapter 4 covers the educational and scientific equipment that Heathkit offered and that was used in numerous schools, and labs. Many of these devices came factory wired but have been included for completeness. The author warns

that Heathkit changed the letter prefixes on some of the EUW units over the course of their production without changing the unit itself. He suggests using the numbers after the prefix to look for a specific device not otherwise listed.

Chapter 22 is kind of a bonus chapter. It covers the analog computer products Heathkit sold, starting in the 1950s. Heathkit produced two analog computers, the high-end ES series, (known as the Heathkit Analog Computer) and the smaller EC-1. The ES series could be customized with numerous additions with different functions, all but one of which fit in or on the main computer chassis. The one that was separate is the ES-600 Function Generator. This chapter includes a paragraph on each of the two analog computers and the ES-600. The remaining items are described using the actual Heath data sheets. The Analog Computer items are not included in the indexes.

For anyone with interest in or who owns more than a few items of Heathkit test equipment this book is worth having. If you are at all interested in the History of Heathkit and its equipment, the book is a must have. I find myself picking it up and browsing through it (and perhaps feeling nostalgia for those kits I built and dreaming about the kits I should have bought and didn't). I thoroughly am enjoying the book as I did the author's last book, and recommend it to anyone who is a Heathkit fan.

In a few months I plan to review Chuck Penson's earlier book on Heathkit amateur radio products.

73, from AF6C



This article originally appeared in the August 2014 issue of RF, the newsletter of the Orange County Amateur Radio Club - W6ZE.

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

Thanks - AF6C