

The Bendix E-Beam

*News from the Bendix Radio Foundation
working for the Preservation and Presentation of the History of
the Bendix Radio Division and Bendix/AlliedSignal Communications Division.*

© BRF 2006

Issue Number 15 – October 1, 2006

The distribution of this issue of the Bendix E-Beam is being made only to those persons who are members of the BRF/BMI or those who have made special monetary donations to the BRF funds. We, the BRF volunteers, would like to express our deepest thanks for your continuing support of the BRF's efforts to document the history of the Bendix Radio Division and Bendix/AlliedSignal Communications Division.

Bendix Radio New Bismarck Exhibit at BMI.....by Jerry Woodall & Bill Stotz

Sixty Five years ago from last May, war was raging in Europe with the Nazi's having conquered the continent leaving only England fighting on alone and barely holding out. While the US remained neutral, **Bendix Radio was in the fight** supplying England with high-performance and reliable avionics equipment. Then the Nazi battleship "Bismarck" sailed out into the Atlantic intent on destroying the convoys of ships that were keeping England supplied with food and war materials. This historic event is the subject of the new BRF exhibit at the BMI. It includes a TA-10 transmitter of the type used to signal the location of the Bismarck to the British Navy who were then able to "Sink the Bismarck." The new exhibit consists of a reproduction of the cablegram from the British Government thanking Bendix Radio for producing the radio equipment on the PBY "Catalina" that did the sighting along with other documents, models and explanatory information on Bendix and the Bismarck saga. This is the first of BRF's new 'rotating' exhibit format at the BMI.

COME SEE IT AT THE BMI !!! (SEE PHOTOS ON PAGE 4)

Bendix Radio Exhibit at Raytheon.....by Bill Mackey

Bill Perich of the Raytheon Electronic Combat Systems plant on E Joppa Rd working with BRF volunteers selected 13 of the original 20 BRF Exhibit panels for display in Raytheon's cafeteria. Our BRF volunteers spent a month refurbishing the panels for its second showing, the first outside BMI. The exhibit at Raytheon was on display from July 27th through September 6th. We were told it was well received by Raytheon employees and visitors. **(SEE PHOTO ON PAGE 4)**

Bendix Radio Exhibit at Historical Electronics Museum.....by Bill Stotz & Jerry Woodall

The Bendix Radio Foundation exhibit from the BMI is traveling again! Coordination is now underway with the **Historical Electronics Museum** to keep the Bendix Exhibit "on-the-road" by placing some of the BRF panels on exhibit there. Beginning in late October, seven of the panels, dealing primarily with military electronics, will be on display in a twelve-by-twelve-foot area at the **Historical Electronics Museum** in Linthicum, associated with Northrup-Grumman. There will be display cases with artifacts from our collection as well as some from HEM's holdings. We were pleased to learn that the HEM also has some Bendix Radio artifacts. They will be providing a listing of these and we will get photos to document them in our Collection database. Check our Website at <http://home.comcast.net/~bendixradio> for the posting of the exhibit opening date.

Cramer Bacque Interview.....by Guil Vogt

Last July, three members of the BRF traveled to York, PA to interview Cramer Bacque in our continuing efforts to document the history of Bendix. Over breakfast at a local Denny's, Joe McCormick, Ken Kidd and myself, armed with tape recorders, had the pleasure of learning about the early history of the

company. Cramer was in excellent form and our talks filled almost 4 hours of tape. These recordings are being typed and edited into a word document by Bill Stotz. Through Bill's efforts we have about fifty typed pages. The final word document will be made available in a form which is yet to be determined.

Cramer had access to the material for the book "*Call Me Pat*" about Pat Hyland as a result of participating in the editing process. He also researched company contract files long stored in various files and the vault. Listening to Cramer, I was struck with the realization that early company efforts were really the efforts of a few very intelligent men, but also that it was a very fragile organization subject to government spending availability in depression times.

The Joppa Road Plant per Newspaper Articles.....by Ken Kidd

Several months ago, I visited the main branch of the Enoch Pratt library to look at a Bendix Corporation item listed on the Ephemera index posted on their website. The librarian who retrieved the item I requested asked if I would also like to look at the Bendix Radio Division folder in their vertical files, and I readily accepted her offer. The contents of the folder were primarily a collection of newspaper clippings starting in 1939 and continuing into the 1960s.

The earliest article, in *The Sun* of January 15, 1939, announced the forthcoming construction of a facility on Joppa Road east of Towson, but the surprising fact is that the plans were for "new and larger laboratories and weather observatory for Julien P. Friez & Sons, division of the Bendix Aviation Corporation." (At that time, the company location was called Belfort Observatory situated at Baltimore Street and Central Avenue.) The article noted that the approximately eighteen-acre site had been purchased from Walter C. Mylander and was "chosen because it was considered one of the highest available points in Baltimore County." (A later clipping indicates that another 10½ acres was acquired in 1940.) A March 12, 1939 article includes an architect's sketch of the new laboratory planned for the Friez Division and is described as a brick and steel structure having a length of 380 feet with a width from 200 to 100 feet. Construction was expected to start in April with a completion in about four months.

The next clipping, from *The Evening Sun* of December 13, 1940 reflects the significant changes brought about by the onset of World War II and the destruction of the British electronics industry in Coventry in November 1940. This article states that the new plant being "rapidly pushed toward completion on Joppa Road between Towson and Baynesville by the Bendix Radio Corporation a subsidiary of the Bendix Aviation Corporation" is for assembling aircraft radios and radio equipment for national defense. "The plant is being erected with government money and will be the property of the Defense Plant Corporation, one of the Federal Government defense agencies. Upon completion, the plant will be leased and occupied by Bendix Radio." A photograph shows the almost completed steel structure and masonry work underway. An article in the December 20, 1940 *Jeffersonian* states that construction began on October 25th and continued day, night, and Sunday to be completed as soon as possible. "The speed with which it has sprung up has amazed local residents and visitors alike." The approximate cost of the 565- by 220-foot building was \$600,000. A photograph in *The Evening Sun* of March 10, 1941 shows the nearly complete building with the notation that "machinery is being installed and operation will begin shortly." Later additions to the Joppa Road plant are described in other newspaper clippings.

After operating under the lease arrangement for more than four years, *The Evening Sun* of November 2, 1945 reported that general manager W. P. Hilliard announced the division intended to exercise an option in the lease to purchase the Towson plant from the Defense Plant Corporation for approximately \$1.7M. *The Evening Sun* of December 5, 1946 reported that final settlement of the purchase was completed "this week".

Other newspaper articles include various employment and financial statistics, information on other Bendix Radio facilities in Baltimore, reports of Army-Navy "E" awards, news of postwar product lines, etc. Copies are on file at the BRF office at the BMI.

Employee Names Database.....by Ken Kidd & Bill Stotz

We've begun to assemble a database of the names of employees of the Bendix Radio/Communications Division that will cover the period from the formation in 1937 to the sale of the division to Raytheon on September 10, 1998. To date, the following lists are included: the October 1942 phone book (655 names), the January 1944 *Engineering Department* book (412), the January 1945 Service Awards booklet (222), the World War II Honor Roll (1,618), the January 1960 phone book (2,400), the December 1968 Personnel List (5,858), the May 1980 phone book (512), the January 1990 phone book (1,053), names retrieved from various files in the Joppa Rd. vault (1,210), and a final list of employees at the time of the sale to Raytheon (383). At this time the database contains 14,449 entries. Various other lists and publications in our possession are being processed for entry into the database. Since many of the employee names appear in two or more of the input lists, a continuing task is to develop composite records for individuals, insofar as is possible.

Bendix Radio/TV Database.....by Bill Stotz

Based on extensive information provided by Aaron Mall, we have created a Bendix Radio/TV database. We have listings for 109 radio models, 57 with pictures, and 127 TV models with pictures for 21. The radio listings contain descriptive information about each model including type of radio (AM, AM/FM, Phono, etc.) bands covered, cabinet description, etc. The information about the TV's is similar but much less complete.

BRF and BMI Joint Membership.....by Bill Scott

The 2006 BRF and BMI Joint Membership totals 190 persons: 46 Family Memberships and 98 Individual Memberships plus an additional 24 persons who made monetary donations. Our mailing list consists of over 1500 names of former Bendix Radio, Communications, and AlliedSignal in Baltimore employees or friends.

BRF Foundation Board of Directors.....by Bill Scott

The 2006-2007 BRF Board of Directors, elected in June, are: Guil Vogt (2 years), Jerry Woodall (2 years), Joe McCormick (1 year), Len Bosse (1year), and Bill Stotz (1 year).

New Computer.....by Bill Mackey

The BRF replaced its 10 year old PC with a new computer including a LCD monitor, scanner/copier, and a wide format printer capable of producing high quality display panels. Our thanks to all past and current BRF/BMI members for making this upgrade possible.

Collection Additions.....by Bill Mackey

Several new additions to the archives were received at the Bendix Retirees Luncheon in June.

Programs Over the Years.....by Bill Mackey

A listing of known programs and products during the 60 years in Baltimore has recently been posted on our website: <http://home.comcast.net/~bendixradio> . BRF would appreciate receiving any additions and/or corrections to this list. Please email your information to wmackey@comcast.net .

=====
Bendix Radio Foundation Baltimore Museum of Industry
1415 Key Highway Baltimore, Maryland 21230 [410-727-4808]
=====



Exhibit at Raytheon July 27 to September 6, 2006



Exhibit at BMI June 2006

