

Tube of the Month

SN-146

While at a Tube Collectors Association meeting in Lansing, Michigan a few years ago, I had the chance to buy a very large Japanese tube. The tube was 17.5 inches tall and is almost as large as the largest all glass construction tubes ever made. The SN-146 is a triode that was designed in Japan in the 1930's for the Japanese Army. The Handbook on Japanese Military Forces, 1944, shows that this tube was used in two high power shortwave transmitters. They were the 500 watt Model 92 and the 1000 watt Model 95. The Model 92 was used for communication between islands and the 95 was for long haul work.

The unusual feature of this tube is that the elements are made in two parallel sections. This construction wasn't needed to produce the required power, but if you look at the construction, it seems to be for ruggedness. I can imagine that electronics equipment in WWII was subjected to very rough treatment in transit. I have problems with the USPS and UPS shipping tubes and conditions in the Pacific must have been very bad. I have no idea how many of these tubes survived the War, but I know of only one other example in the U.S. Not trusting the mail, I put the tube in my carry-on luggage to bring it home from Michigan.

Visit the museum at N6JV.com
Norm N6JV

