

AccessionIndex: TCD-SCSS-T.20121208.061

Accession Date: 8-Dec-2012

Accession By: Prof.J.G.Byrne

Object name: IBM Portable PC 5155

Vintage: c.1984

Synopsis: Prof.J.G.Byrne's first-generation suitcase sized IBM 'luggable' PC, Part No.: 6450302, ID No.: 515X-55-032S.

Description:

This item was Prof.J.G.Byrne's personal IBM 'luggable'/'portable' PC. These machines weighed nearly 14kg and measured 508 x 432 x 203mm, so were only portable in the sense that everything needed was included within the one case with a strong handle. It was introduced in Feb-1984 to compete with the Compaq Portable, which it strongly resembled.

The PC 5155 had a PC/XT motherboard with a 4.77MHz Intel i8088 CPU, 256kB or 512kB DRAM, three long (1 free) and five short (3 free) 8-bit ISA I/O slots, up to two half-height 5.25" 360kB floppy disk drives, a parallel and a serial port, and a 114W PSU. A third-party hard disk could be retrofitted instead of a floppy disk drive. The 9" amber monochrome display was included within the case, driven by an MC6845-based graphics card that provided 640 x 200 CGA graphics and 80 x 25 ASCII text. Its very nice and solid-feeling keyboard hinged down over the monitor for transport. They were shipped with IBM PC-DOS Version 2.10, see elsewhere in this catalog. Although portable in principle they were only mains AC (not battery) powered. See the technical reference manual in the associate folder in this catalog.

There were a number of curiosities specific to these machines. There was no CMOS setup, all motherboard configuration was done via switches/jumpers. There was no real-time clock (RTC) on the motherboard or on IBM-supplied expansion cards. After power OFF, the PSU would not turn ON for another 5 seconds. The power-on self test (POST) only included standard (not extended) memory, and also only generated a few POST codes, and (very unusually) did that to port 60h. I/O slot 8 was different to the other slots, so most I/O cards could not work in slot 8. The keyboard was via discrete components, not the subsequently ubiquitous keyboard controller chip.

These were quite expensive rugged machines. They and the slightly more expensive Compaq Portables gave rise to quite a number of inexpensive clones, especially from Asia, made with a simple and much less robust steel chassis.

The homepage for this catalog is at: <https://www.scss.tcd.ie/SCSSTreasuresCatalog/>
Click '*Accession Index*' (1st column listed) for related folder, or '*About*' for further guidance.
Some of the items below may be more properly part of the other categories of this catalog, but listed here for convenience.

Accession Index	Object with Identification
TCD-SCSS-T.20121208.061	IBM Portable PC 5155, Prof.J.G.Byrne's first-generation suitcase sized IBM 'luggable' PC. Part No.: 6450302, ID No.: 515X-55-032S.

References:

1. Wikipedia, *IBM Portable Personal Computer*, see:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IBM_Portable_Personal_Computer
Last browsed to on 27-Nov-2017.



Figure 1: IBM Portable PC 5155 top view, keyboard / front-cover closed



Figure 2: IBM Portable PC 5155 rear view, rear I/O cover closed, showing handle



Figure 3 IBM Portable PC 5155 front view, keyboard / front-cover open



Figure 4: IBM Portable PC 5155 rear view, rear I/O cover open



Figure 5: IBM Portable PC 5155 manufacturing labels

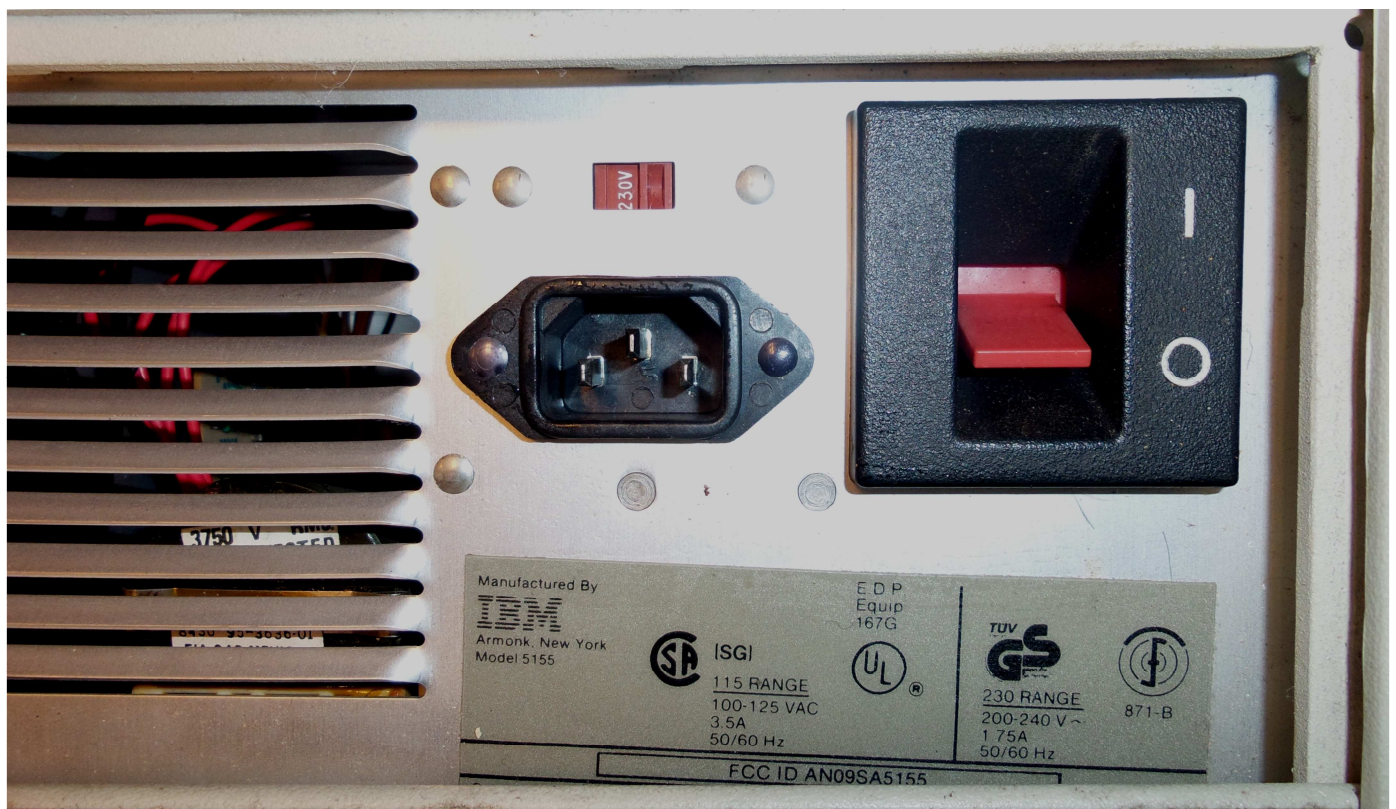


Figure 6: IBM Portable PC 5155 power supply manufacturing label

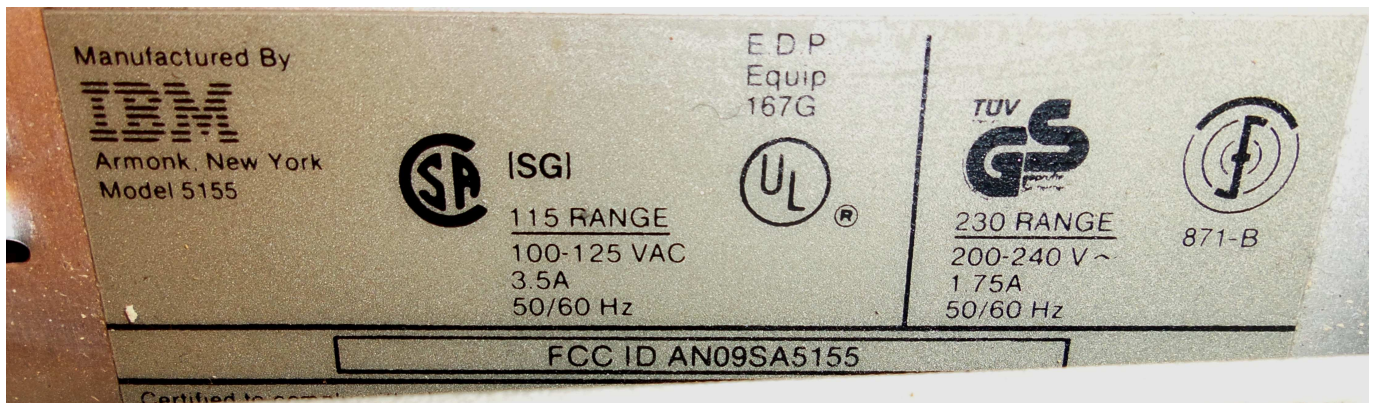


Figure 7: IBM Portable PC 5155 rear manufacturing label
 Model: 5155

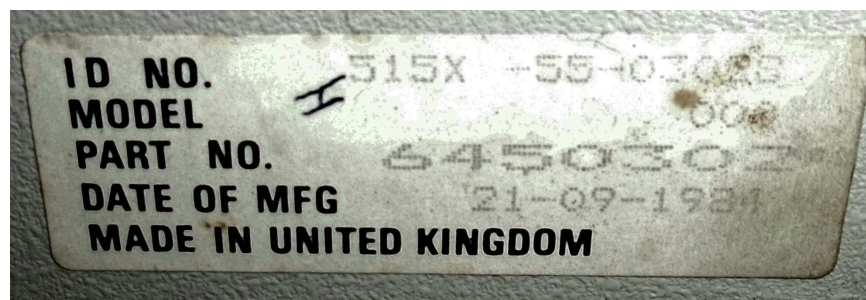


Figure 8: IBM Portable PC 5155 bottom manufacturing label
 ID No.: 515X-55-032S
 Model: 000
 Part No.: 6450302
 Date of Mfg: 21-09-1984
 Made in United Kingdom