The Computer Museum

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THE COMPUTER MUSEUM OPENS - A SYMBOLIC FIRST

BOSTON, MA -- November 14, 1984 -- Heralding the world's first computer museum, John William Poduska, Apollo Computers, Inc., said today that "to open the first museum for computers symbolizes their significance - not only for the industry but for society as a whole." Poduska, also chairman of the Museum's Board of Directors and Museum Director Dr. Gwen Bell participated in the tape cutting ceremony at today's grand opening of The Computer Museum, 300 Congress Street, Boston.

The Museum's truly international audience and membership were made apparent by the attendance of Masateru Takagi, president of NEC, Japan; Eugene Fairchild, Director of Public Affairs of IBM, New York; John Lacey, executive vice-president of Control Data Corp., Minnesota; and Erwin Tomash, chairman of Data Products in California.

The Museum's opening today marked the end of nearly one year of preparation - from the very earliest planning and packing days at its former site in Marlboro, MA to the design and implementation of new and exciting, interactive computer firsts.

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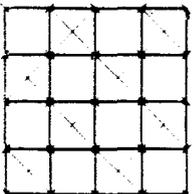
"The people's reactions were just wonderful - more than I had dreamed of - everybody was playing and interacting and having a good time, just as we had envisioned," said Dr. Bell.

Just as the world of high technology has compressed the efforts needed to compute, store and retrieve information, so has the non-profit Computer Museum compressed the evolution of information processing through state-of-the-art, interactive displays and exhibits.

Appropriately enough, The Computer Museum is computerized throughout, with fiber optics, personal computers, minicomputers, mainframes and connection to a supercomputer. Creations seen and made in The Computer and the Image Gallery, are the three dimensional and real-time equivalent of many printed high technology articles. From the largest display, the SAGE air defense system, to the tiniest microchip of today's personal computers, The Computer Museum has something for everyone, from the dedicated 'hacker' to the casual visitor.

The Computer Musuem is open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm, Thursday and Friday, 11 am until 9 pm and is closed Christmas, New Year's Day and Thanksgiving. General Admission is $4 for adults and $2 for students and senior citizens. Group tours are available by reservation, as are function facilities. A lecture series featuring speakers in the high technology field is also being offered. The Computer Museum Store, located just off the first floor lobby, is open and features books, state-of-the-art jewelry as well as novelty gift ideas.

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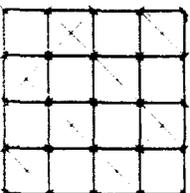
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THE COMPUTER MUSEUM
FACT SHEET

OPENING: Museum Wharf, November 14, 1984
                   300 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210
                   (617) 426-2800

BACKGROUND: Independent, non-profit institution founded 6/82.

FACILITIES: 55,000 square feet.

COLLECTION: 624 Artifacts
                   500 Photographs
                   154 Videotapes & Films
                   195 Companies Represented

INFORMATION: 80 Public Inquiries per month

ANNUAL
MEMBERS: Current: 1400
                   Projected: 5000

DISTRIBUTION
OF MEMBERS: 45 States; 35% Massachusetts
                   17 Countries

STAFF: 19

OPERATING
BUDGET: Current: $400,000
                   Projected: $900,000

MEDIA
IMPRESSIONS: Current: 75 Million
                   Projected: 150 Million

MAGAZINES: 15 Million Media Impressions/19 Articles

                   TWA Ambassador
                   Technology Illustrated
                   Nikkei Computer

NEWSPAPERS: 35 Million Media Impressions/159 Articles

                   UPI National Feature
   Toronto Globe and Mail
                   The Dallas Morning News

BROADCASTS: 25 Million Media Impressions/24 Broadcasts

                   "Computer Chronicles", San Francisco, 1/2 Hr.
                   "Nightly Business Report", Syndicated
   KTOK Radio, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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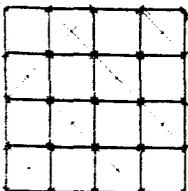
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THE COMPUTER MUSEUM EXHIBITS

GALLERY 1:   THE VACUUM TUBE ERA   This gallery introduces the first computer generation through original artifacts and visual presentations from 1950 to 1959.

The Whirlwind: This is a small recreation of The Whirlwind, a 3,100 square foot computer used as an early aircraft flight simulator/trainer. The Whirlwind was developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge for the U.S. Navy and built in 1945 at a cost of $5,000,000. It was the first vacuum tube, real-time computer with an operational core memory.

AN/FSQ-7 and SAGE: Weighing 175 tons, the AN/FSQ-7 is the largest computer ever built and was used by the U.S. Air Force as an air defense system from 1958 to 1983. The computer received information on the positions of all aircraft flying through U.S. airspace, processed the data and compiled visual displays on large TV like screens. On exhibit is a large scale recreation of the AN/FSQ-7 computer and the SAGE(Semi-Automatic Ground Environment) Blue Room. The museum's SAGE Blue Room, complete with the interceptor and command consoles, is similar to any of the 24 air defense direction centers that were in operation across the North American continent until 1983. (A gift to the permanent collection from the National Museum of

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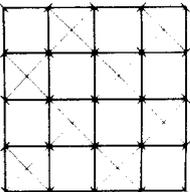
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Science and Technology, Ottowa, Canada and from the USAF,

Hancock Field, New York).

The UNIVAC 1:   The UNIVAC (Universal Automatic Computer)

was the first commercial computer in the U.S. and was

first installed in the Census Bureau in 1951. UNIVAC was

introduced into homes across America as "that marvelous

electronic brain" by CBS anchor man Walter Cronkite during

the 1952 Presidential Election. Dramatic moments from the

Cronkite videotape are also on view. (Made possible from

a loan from The Smithsonian Institute, The National Museum

of American History, CBS News and The Sperry Corporation).

The Bendix G-15: The Bendix G-15,built in the mid-

fifties, represents the small scale vacuum tube

computers. (A gift from the Science Museum of Minnesota).

GALLERY 2: THE TRANSISTOR ERA   The second generation or

era of computer history is known as the transistor era and

lasted until the development of the microchip in the

1960's.

An IBM 1401 Room at the Travelers: Transistorized

computers from this era are exemplified by a life-like

reconstruction of a 1965 office computer, the IBM 1401,

complete with key punch machines which allow visitors to
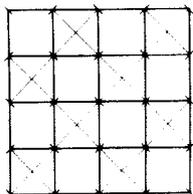
punch their own cards. (Made possible by donations from the Travelers, American Computer Group, Inc., and IBM).

CW Communications "See It Then Theatre": Vintage films from 1920 to 1981 show how programming and operations of machines have changed.

A Man and His Machines: Seymour Cray's Contributions to Computing: Seymour Cray is recognized as the undisputed leader in the design of the most powerful and fastest computers, commonly called supercomputers. Highlights of the exhibit include: The NTDS computer built in 1957; "The Little Character", the prototype for the Control Data Corporation's first computer, the 1604; and the Control Data Corporation 6600, the first mass produced super-computer.
(Gift of Lawrence Livermore Laboratories and Cray Research, Inc.).

The first "Minicomputer": Digital Equipment Corporation's PDP-8, introduced in late 1964, is considered to be the first minicomputer. It cost less than $10,000 and could be plugged into an ordinary power outlet.
(Gift of MITRE Corporation).

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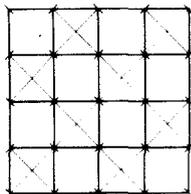
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## GALLERY 3: THE INTEGRATED CIRCUIT ERA

<u>The Apollo Guidance Computer:</u> The actual computer which helped the astronauts navigate both the space craft and lunar lander is displayed. On a working simulator, the visitor can perform the same steps that the astronauts did. (Made possible by Charles Stark Draper Laboratories and the Hewlett-Packard Corporation).

<u>The Integrated Circuit Classics:</u> This exhibit displays the early chip printing process and various classic chips.

<u>The Manufacture of a Computer: From Integrated Circuits to a Complete Data General Eclipse Computer:</u> This is a step by step chronicle of how a computer is manufactured from its initial concept to final assembly.(Made possible by Data General Corporation and the International Data Group).

<u>The ILLIAC IV:</u> During its short lifetime from 1975 to 1982, the ILLIAC IV was one of the largest computers in existence. The ILLIAC, used by NASA for scientific purposes, cost over $100 million to build and required over 500,000 watts of power to operate. (On loan from NASA Ames Laboratory).

<u>The Evolution of Personal Computers:</u> This exhibit includes a variety of personal computers and highlights

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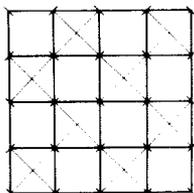
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the LINC, a $40,000 computer built in 1962. Also featured

are working exhibits that will change as additional

computers are donated.(Made possible by Apple Computer,

Commodore, Compaq, Data General Corp., Digital Equipment

Corp., Franklin Computer Corp., Hewlett-Packard Corp., IBM

Corp., Pencept Corp., Xerox Corp. and numerous hackers

and individuals who have provided creative time, energy

and machines).

GALLERY 4: THE COMPUTER AND THE IMAGE   This gallery is

devoted to image processing and computer graphics. The

computers ability to enhance and create images is

demonstrated through working stations, artifacts, film,

video and slide shows.

Image Processing: At image-processing stations, the

visitor can manipulate images of his/her own face, the

panorama of downtown Boston from the gallery window and

the view of Boston from the satellite, Landsat.

Computer Graphics: State-of-the-art graphics display

processors offer visitors the chance to play spacewar,

simulate lighting on an artificial stage set, roam around

a computer model of a house, fly an airplane and create

paintings with a paint program.

Computer Animation Theatre: A mini film theatre shows

computer animation from its beginnings to the latest

developments.
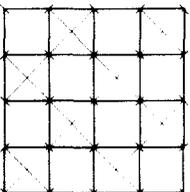
THE COMPUTER MUSEUM BACKGROUND

Robert Everett, president of the MITRE Corporation, Bedford, MA
and Kenneth Olsen, president of Digital Equipment Corporation,
Marlboro, MA, had both worked on the Whirlwind, the world's
first, real-time, parallel, vacuum-tube computer with a core
memory. When it was on the verge of being scrapped, they
intervened and rescued the 3,000 square-foot computer, which took
more than five years to build and encompassed an entire building
at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. It
then found a home at the Marlboro headquarters of Digital, and
marked the beginning of The Computer Museum. Officially opened
in 1979 by Digital, the Museum became an independent, non-profit
institution, with its own board of directors in June, 1982.

The Computer Museum recently moved from Marlboro to Museum Wharf
at 300 Congress Street in downtown Boston. The Museum opened its
doors to the public on November 14, 1984. Museum Wharf is a
renovated waterfront warehouse, designed to house two museums,
both The Children's Museum and The Computer Museum.

"Museum Wharf was available at an opportune time for us," says
Museum Director Dr. Gwen Bell. "We outgrew the 10,000
square-foot space in Marlboro, more than half of our collection
was in storage. Our new location gives us room to expand up to
55,000 square feet. It is within walking distance of mass
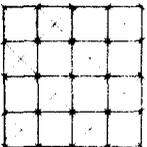
transportation and only minutes from Logan International Airport and Boston's financial district," she adds. "We've designed new exhibits, one quarter of the Museum is devoted to a museum store and an auditorium with seating for 275 persons.

The Computer Museum is the only museum of its kind in the world. It dramatically illustrates the impact of the Information Revolution through interactive exhibits of state-of-the-art computers, films and creations of vintage computer installations. The exhibits cover the history of computing from 1950 to 1979. Showcased in four major galleries are "The Vacuum Tube Era (Gallery 1), "The Transistor Era (Gallery 2), "The Integrated Circuit Era" (Gallery 3), and "The Computer and the Image" (Gallery 4).

The unique archives include videotapes, films, printed materials and photographs on the history of computing. The Museum also sponsors research work done by advanced students and scholars.

Museum publications include catalogs, brochures and The Computer Museum Report, published quarterly. Contributing editors have included Maurice Wilkes, inventor of the EDSAC computer.

Museum programs and lectures focus on benchmarks in computing history and current technology. Past speakers have included such computing luminaries as Grace Hopper, inventor of the first program compiler and Dr. Robert N. Noyce, designer of a computer system enabling paraplegics to walk.
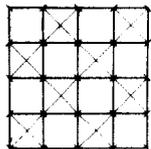
The Computer Museum is completely computerized. Visitors can

actually experiment with the computers and enjoy hands-on experience. Thirty different personal computers, minis and timeshared superminis are linked with a remote supercomputer, providing thirty different interactive experiences throughout the Museum.

The visitor can punch his own card on a vintage keypunch machine, experiment with computer graphics, try a personal computer or walk through the SAGE, the largest vacuum tube computer ever built.

And that's not all. As the visitor enters the Museum he sees the VAX supermini, the "mainframe" of The Computer Museum and Museum Wharf. A glass-enclosed elevator on the front-face of the building provides a delightful view of Fort Point Channel and the surrounding financial district.

The Computer Museum is supported by corporate and individual members and contributors. Members receive a free subscription to The Computer Museum Report, invitations to Museum events, free admission to the Museum and a ten percent discount on purchases from The Computer Museum Store. For a full-color Museum Store Catalog, please write to The Computer Museum, 300 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210 or call (617)426-2800.

The Museum is open to the public Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Thursday and Friday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. The Museum is closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years Day. Admission is $4.00 for adults and $2.00 for students and seniors.
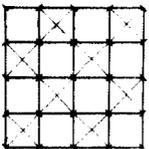
Associate Director and Curator of The Computer Museum, Dr. Oliver B. R. Strimpel, and Harvard University professor, Dr. Benoit B. Mandelbrot, also an IBM Fellow at the Thomas J. Watson Research Center, are shown standing with "Fractal Planetrise" an artificial computer generated landscape in "The Computer and the Image," a major gallery at The Computer Museum. Fractals are mathematical objects developed by Dr. Mandelbrot and have been used as models of natural phenomenan such as turbulent fluid flow and the shapes of rivers and coastlines. Fractals have recently played a role in the synthesis of articficial landscapes for the film industry.

Pictured is "the Blue Room," the control room for the SAGE, the U.S. air defense system from 1958-1983. Here, Computer Museum visitors will see the oversized video display terminals that served as the first computer graphics output devices.
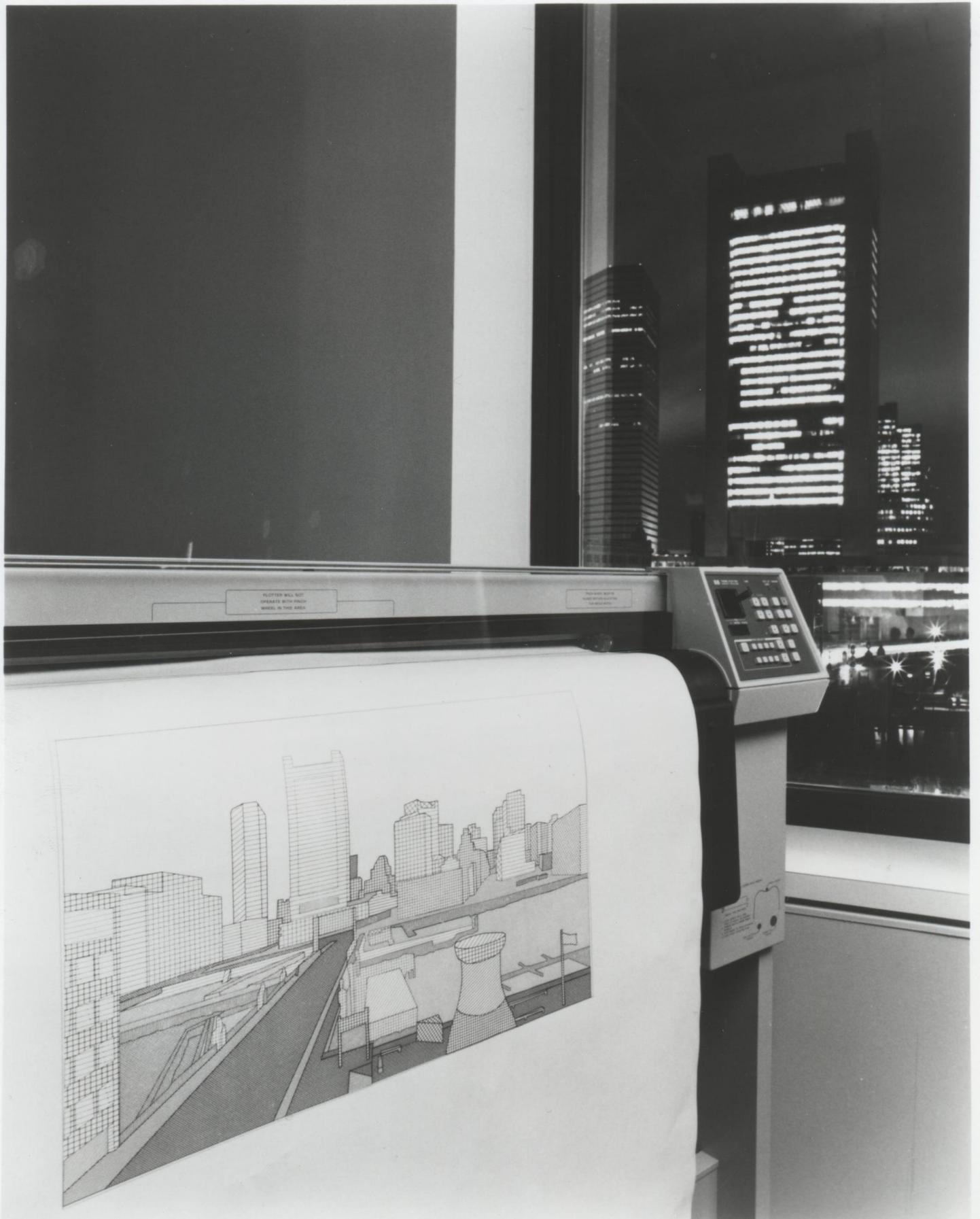
The Computer Museum's "Computer and the Image" Gallery will include this 1984 Hewlett-Packard color pen plotter that continuously plots the view of downtown Boston from the gallery window. The Museum opens its doors to the public on November 14, 1984.