

NEWS

November/December, 1988



◀ Richard Fowler gives Museum staff a preview of his layout for exhibit enhancement.

Volunteer for All Seasons: Chris Morgan

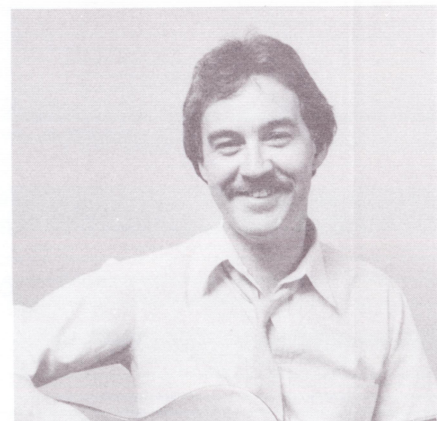
No matter the season, The Computer Museum has benefited from the varied skills and knowledge of Christopher Morgan.

Last winter, Morgan, the second editor of *BYTE Magazine*, volunteered to help produce our celebration of the 25th anniversary of computer games. He drew on his vast knowledge of computer game inventors to bring together a distinguished symposium of the leading game authors.

In the spring, Morgan, who sells rare computer books, joined the Collections Committee. He is hosting the fall meeting, giving the committee an opportunity to see his own collection.

Over the summer and during the fall, the founder of *Lotus Magazine* became the producer-editor of the Museum's Computer Bowl. Working with hundreds of questions provided by Bowl Co-Chair Steve Coit and his firm, Merrill, Pickard, Anderson and Eyre, Morgan molded the questions to fit the Bowl's lively game-show format.

As the new year rolls around, he has lots of new ideas for the Museum. He recommends that any of you with time to spare might like to find your own season to volunteer at the Museum!



▶ From rare books and knowledge to wit and wordsmanship, Chris Morgan has given generously to the Museum.

New Master Plan Created for Exhibits

After a year of setting priorities by the Board and Exhibits Committee, designer Richard Fowler translated the ideas into a three-dimensional plan for the second phase of Museum exhibits. This \$1.5 million project includes the redesign of four existing galleries and the addition of a new 2500 square foot gallery.

The Exhibits Committee and Board of Directors set the following priorities:

- redo the entry exhibit
- include a basic computer history exhibit
- develop a personal computer exhibit that includes both applications and an explanation of how computers work
- produce a new exhibit on the large scale "behind the scenes" computing systems that operate everything from airline reservations to power distribution

Richard Fowler, Head of Design, National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, Great Britain, translated these directives into a plan fitting the Museum's space. He used his experience in designing dramatic 3-dimensional exhibitions to suggest visually exciting and engaging educational exhibits.

Fowler created a radical new design for the Museum's entry gallery. It will

feature vignettes of four historical milestones of computing, beginning with Hollerith's 1890 tabulating machine and ending in the year 2000. The late fifties era allows the integration of the SAGE artifacts now on display. The SAGE computer, the Museum's largest machine, will be recreated using lighting, sound, and props to give a total environmental effect.

"The Personal Computer Exploration Center" includes a giant model of a micro where visitors will be able to follow data pathways and experience how instructions actually move inside a computer. A large area with more than three dozen personal computers will provide hands-on experiences with a wide variety of applications.

A new area of the building will be opened for "The Networked Society." This exhibition will showcase examples of large-scale computing in airline reservations, international finance, banking, utilities, and communications networks.

First Traveling Exhibit Debuts in Virginia

Jessica Watts, 11, found out how to use Napier's Bones, a 17th century counting tool, this August, when "Computers in Your Pocket: The History of Hand-Held Calculators" opened at the Science Museum, Richmond. Organized by The Computer Museum and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, the exhibit will travel the United States for two years. Upcoming bookings include:

Now through November 13, 1988: University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; December 10, 1988—January 8, 1989: Children's Museum of Oak Ridge, Oak Ridge, TN; January 21—February 19, 1989: Bergen Museum of Art and Science, Paramus, NJ; March 11—April 9: Discovery Center, Amarillo, TX; April 29—July 16: Science Place, Dallas, TX; September 23—October 22: Chemung County Historical Society, Elmira, NY; November 11, 1989—January 28, 1990: Detroit Science Center, Detroit, MI; February 17—March 18: Denver Museum of Natural History, Denver, CO; May 26—August 12: Cumberland Museum and Science Center, Nashville, TN.



▲ Lisa Romerein, Richmond Times-Dispatch



▲ As these headlines show, the Museum attracts media attention around the world.



Museum's Impact Spans Globe

As I write, a BBC film crew from London is in the next gallery shooting a science show called "Electric Avenue." Last week, Great Britain's national newspaper, the *Guardian*, interviewed Curator Oliver Strimpel. This August, Belgium's *Sabina Airlines* magazine also featured the Museum.

Major stories have appeared everywhere from France, Denmark, and Germany to China, Japan, and the Soviet Union. This is not surprising. Over the last few years, the Museum has attained international prominence. The interest has been spurred by our exhibitions and the growing popular fascination with computers.

As a result, more than 10 percent of our total visitors come from beyond the United States, and we have members in 14 countries.

Being the world's only Computer Museum, we have become a model of the use of computers in informal educational settings. Delegations from new institutions around the world signify that the future will see many special places for informal learning with computers. Groups from Australia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Jamaica, and the Soviet Union have recently visited to learn how to adapt some of our exhibitions and programs to their settings.



The collection has some of the most significant materials on computing from around the world, benefiting from the activities of Board Members. Dr. Koji Kobayashi sent over the NEC's NEAC 2203. Built in 1958, it is the oldest surviving Japanese transistorized computer.

Sir Arthur Humphries arranged to reproduce a film of the Leo 1, the first English commercial computer. This classic film shows the initial computer program doing the first fully automatic accounting.

Professor Brian Randell, who chaired the original Collections Committee, organized the collecting of parts of such prototype English computers as the EDSAC, Colossus, and Manchester Mark I. He is now tracking down the BESSM-6, the classic Russian computer.

The international efforts require long-term cultivation and sensitive treatment. I want to keep all the present efforts going and add to them by producing brochures in multiple languages to better serve the Japanese, French, German, and Spanish speaking visitors who increasingly visit and inquire about the Museum.

I want to thank you for your ideas and support. Both are essential to the ongoing process of improving the Museum for everyone.

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GALLERY

"Imagine: Art With the Macintosh"

Until November 20, The Computer Museum hosts an exhibition of art created with the Macintosh computer. "We wanted our visitors to see it," said Museum Curator Oliver Strimpel. Macintosh art is a "fertile area, opening up a whole new genre to artists previously scared of computers."

Produced by Verbum, the International Journal of Personal Computer Aesthetics, the "imagine" exhibit consists of 58 works — everything from a video of Mac-generated animation to a giant computer-generated Oriental screen.

Thirty artists from across the country used everything from paint, photography, and silkscreen to Mac II color bitmaps in blending both old and new. "Personal computer art tools have stimulated real vision in artists," said Michael Gosney, "imagine" producer.



▲ **JB 13d**
by Joseph Bellacera
Created with
Macvision and
Full Paint on a Mac
Plus computer.

▶ **Frontispiece**
by Ed Roxburgh
From a series of
digital paintings
using Full Paint on
the Macintosh.



Museum Goers See the Writing on the Wall

"They will be probably as smart as we are and maybe smarter!"

They are robots, and this is just one of the opinions on robots of the future offered by Museum visitors. A "What's Next" bulletin board in the Smart Machines Gallery asks people to glimpse ahead and then write or draw what they see.

Robots seem to worry some people:

"If they have too much info and don't like the way things are going, they will take over the world and people's places in the world."

"I think they will be very intelligent and maybe replace teachers but that would be too bad, for my teacher is awesome!" People also made positive comparisons to R2-D2 and C3PO, Lt. Data of the new Star Trek, HAL, and Robocop. Some people think smart machines will look like us, think like us, act like us. Others foresee computers tiny enough to fit inside watches but limitless in power.

On your next visit, tell us what you think on the "What's Next" board!



▲ Education
Coordinator Michael
Chertok demos a
robot arm.

Grant Awarded Museum for Low-income Area Students

The Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities recently awarded admissions to more than 9,000 students from low- and moderate-income communities in the Commonwealth.

The grant is generous, representing an increase from last year's funding, although the Council has suffered substantial cuts in its own budget.

The Reduced Admissions Program brings to the Museum students and teachers who might not otherwise experience such technological depth in their computer-literacy classes. Students from remote, rural, and economically restricted districts will learn about the history of computers, how they work, and what they can do.

Students will explore more than 50 hands-on exhibits — from computer graphics to artificial intelligence. They can watch robots at work and design their own programs on personal computers. The grant also funds two special presentations on robotics and telecommunications technology. The new group presentations feature a demonstration of the latest technology, with an introduction to the technical language people increasingly will need to live productive lives.

The presentations, and a special group admission rate, are also available to any school groups scheduling a visit. The Museum encourages teachers, who are admitted free at any time, to preview its exhibits. The Reduced Admission Program is another way the Museum carries out its mission of educating and inspiring people of all ages.

Collections Grant Awarded

The Institute of Museum Services recently awarded The Computer Museum a \$13,738 grant to survey its collections and prepare a long-range conservation plan. The Museum was one of 219 institutions that received a total of \$2,902,541 for the U.S. Government fiscal year starting October 1, 1988.

"After more than 10 years of collecting, it's time to take stock of the materials we have and how we conserve them, and to make an appropriate long-range plan," says Founding President Gwen Bell.

The project will engage the services of conservation specialists in hardware, documentation, and photographs. It also includes purchase of monitoring equipment and preservation materials for documents.



MEET THE BOARD



▲ The Museum's message is powerful," according to Irwin J. Sitkin, Vice President, Aetna Life & Casualty.

Irv Sitkin

Roving Ambassador Spreads Museum's Message

After flying to a Museum Board meeting in Aetna's helicopter, Irv Sitkin asked the pilots if they'd ever been to The Computer Museum. When they said no, he gave them tickets.

"They thought it was a neat place!" says Sitkin.

In addition to serving on the Museum's Board of Directors since 1986, Irwin J. Sitkin is a special roving ambassador. He speaks eloquently of the Museum to pilots, neighbors, captains of industry, and friends.

"As people find out about and visit the Museum, they are very impressed," he says. "Our mission is to educate people about computers and communications. Using exhibits is a great way to

Why are you involved with the Museum?

Our society needs the Museum. It is now a major educational force, helping people to understand computers and communications-based systems affecting their lives in so many ways.

Why is it so special?

It accumulates, preserves, and displays artifacts created during our lifetime — not merely for future generations but to educate the various publics who need to know more about these marvelous tools.

What are your ideas for the future?

I want the Museum to increase its educational role of dispelling the mystery of computing. Its message is powerful. Young people can be exposed to the history of computing and to hands-on opportunities. They can become computer-fluent, not just literate. And they can understand computers, not just use them.

How do you explain the museum's mission?

The Computer Museum with the accent on "The" has a responsibility to provide research opportunities in computing history, search for artifacts in other countries, and export traveling exhibits abroad. A "museum without walls" makes our educational process available to many more people. We can use parts of the collections that might otherwise not see the light of day.

What can Museum supporters do?

They can spread the word in corporate publications and other media, contribute money or in-kind gifts, and hunt for historic materials. I've done all three. Spreading the word provides wider recognition. Identifying artifacts gives gratification of preservation. Contributing money and in-kind support allows the Museum to run smoothly so all the goals for the future can be realized.

Editors Note: Sitkin has also generously shown his support by having Aetna print its new Functions and Education brochures and the Annual Report.



Photo Credit
Scott Chasteen
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Gifts Enhance Graphics Gallery

The National Computer Graphics Education Foundation and the ACM SIGGRAPH each gave \$20,000 to enhance the computer graphics gallery that opened in 1984. "With a fast-paced field such as computer graphics, the Museum must make almost continual changes to stay at the cutting edge," said Curator Oliver Strimpel.

The foundation grant "will help document the extraordinary advances in the computer graphics industry," said Joel Orr, Foundation President. The enhancements will include a new computer animation theater, a geographic infor-

mation system, and many other exciting, new hands-on components.

In addition, Prime Computer Corporation and Silicon Graphics have contributed new graphics workstations.

The ACM SIGGRAPH grant will integrate the popular "Interactive Image" into the graphics gallery. These six interactive exhibits were developed by the Electronic Visualization Lab at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

A Salute to our Supporters!

Individual and corporate membership income supports the Museum's continuing educational and exhibit programs.

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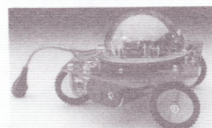
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UPCOMING EVENTS



30



1 EXHIBIT
 Extended Through November 13, 1988
"Imagine: Art With the Macintosh" A dazzling exhibition of full-color art created with the Macintosh computer. In the William C. Norris Gallery.

6 EXHIBIT
 Opening November 6, 1988
"The Interactive Image"
 Explore six new permanent displays on computer graphics of the future. For people of all ages. The new addition to the **"Computer and the Image Gallery"** includes six hands-on exhibits. Create your own special effects, cartoons, and kaleidoscopes. Play with four-dimensional space, create your own animation, and discover the beauty of fractals.
4-6 pm Members Opening Reception. The Store will be open until 6 pm.

6 LECTURE
 November 6, 1988
 3 pm **"Computer Graphics and Beyond: The Viewer as Participant"** A richly illustrated talk by Thomas A. DeFanti, Director of the Electronic Visualization Laboratory, University of Illinois, Chicago. DeFanti is responsible for the creation of the graphics gallery's new addition.

30 EXHIBIT
 Opening November 30, 1988 until March, 1989
"The Earth From Space: Detailed Images From the SPOT Satellite" Very high-resolution images of Earth, taken by the European satellite SPOT. Breathtaking images offer data for research and commercial applications. In the William C. Norris Gallery.
4-6 pm Members Opening Reception. The Store will be open until 6 pm.

30 HOLIDAY SHOPPING
 Also join us all day in the Store for a members holiday gathering. Enjoy punch and cookies and do some seasonal shopping. On all regularly priced merchandise, get an additional 10% off — on top of your member's discount!

PROGRAMS
 December 23, 1988- January 2, 1989
 Special Holiday Events & Activities
 Call our talking computer for details at (617)423-6758.

26 PROGRAM
 December 26, 1988
 10am-1 pm **"Build Your Own Robot Workshop"**
 Kids 10 and up — with a parent, grandparent

or adult friend — can assemble a mobile sensing robot. Buy a kit at the Museum Store before the workshop for \$36.00. For details on tools you need, stop by the Store first or call (617)426-2800, ext.307. Members get 50% off \$10.00 workshop fee.

26 PROGRAM
 December 26-31, 1988, & January 2, 1989
"The Computer as an Artist's Tool: Boston Artists Show Their Methods" Watch as each uses computer technologies to explore the age-old challenges of depicting the human form. Call for details.

WINTER HOURS:
 Visit The Computer Museum Tuesday-Sunday, 10am to 5pm (Fridays until 9pm). Closed Monday except Boston school holidays and vacations. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Public tours Saturday and Sunday at 1:30 and 3pm. Summer hours: daily.

ADMISSION:
 Adults \$4.50, students and elders \$3.50. Half price Friday evenings. Free to Museum members and children under five. For more information, call our talking computer at (617)423-6758.

To Join:

Members get free admission for one year; The Computer Museum NEWS, a bi-monthly newsletter of Museum activities; the Annual Report, a richly illustrated journal of computer history; invitations to exhibit previews and member-only events; advance notice of exhibitions and lectures; a 10% discount on purchases over \$5 in The Computer Museum Store; and the opportunity to buy admission pass booklets at significant savings.



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 (617) 426-2800

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Please contact me about volunteering at the Museum.
 Will your company match your gift? Yes No
 If yes, please send appropriate matching gift form.
 Membership contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. *Please enclose verification.

