# The CHM Muse

# Our Big Plans for 2009



## CHM Honors Its Staff "Pioneers"

On Thursday, December 18 at the CHM Staff Holiday lunch, six employees became the first recipients of commemorative service awards for 5-plus years at CHM. Gold CHM lapel pins (men) and necklace charms (women) were presented by CEO John Hollar to:

**Jennifer Alexander**, who started as Events Coordinator in 2002; **Marlen Cantrell**, hired as Exec Admin in 2002; **Kirsten Tashev**, hired as Building & Exhibits project manager in 2000; **Wendy-Ann Francis**, Office Manager in 1999; **Chris Garcia**, who started with the Computer Museum in Boston, 1999; and **Dag Spicer**, whose official hire date was 1998, but has been with the museum since 1996!

This initial class is truly a link to our Silicon Valley roots- having all been part of the quonset hut experience at Moffett Field, playing instrumental roles in the major move to Shoreline in 2003, and building the museum programs we have today. Congratulations to all on this well-deserved recognition.

By now, you may have seen our exciting new plans for the major exhibit "Computer History- the 1st 2000 Years." Unveiled at the Board of Trustees meeting on October 23, 2008, it encompasses almost 26,000 square feet of the first floor, contains 19 major content alcoves and 2 theaters. Already deeply engaged in the project are the exhibit design firm of **Van Sickle & Rolleri**, and the building architects **Mark Horton Architecture**. Fundraising for the Building Campaign is also well-underway, with the aggressive goal of raising the final $6M needed, targeted for completion by fall of this year. We'll keep you posted on all phases of project progress throughout the year here in The Muse.



**JANUARY'S MYSTERY PHOTO**

*We just listed our local CHM veterans above, and this month Sara Lott provides us with another intriguing mystery photo, related to museum staff history. Can you help identify / name the employees shown in this 1984 photo? (We can send you the image to make larger upon request)*

See page 6 for a fascinating story on how Gordon Bell solved November's photo question

## Inside This Issue

**Charles Babbage was born on December 26, 1791.** If he'd been around this year, he would have celebrated his 217th birthday – but even though he couldn't make it, the Babbage team feted him with a party. We started with a potluck and after singing Happy Birthday with a crowd of early visitors, shared birthday cake all around. Visitors were treated to docents, presenters and greeters in party hats, crepe paper garlands around the Engine, and "Happy Birthday" banners. We were careful not to invite any organ grinders! ✄

*View the rest of the photos at*
*www.tinyurl.com/babbage-217*
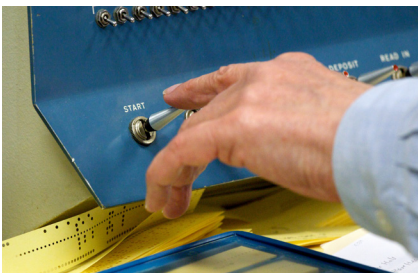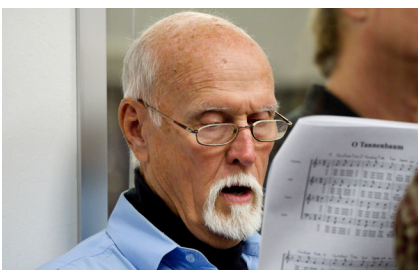
# Happy 217th, Charles

**Join us in extending thanks to Peter Samson and Ken Sumrall** for leading the 3rd Annual DEC the Halls Carol Sing-a-long with the PDP-1. Around 30 volunteers, staff and Museum visitors took time out from their busy work days and holiday shopping to gain a bit of holiday spirit. If you have never sung "Jingle Bells" or "O Tannebaum" while being accompanied by the PDP-1, you gotta try it. The carolling experience will never be the same. The added bonus? No need for a Christmas tree to get blinking lights. ✎

*View the rest of the photos at*
*www.tinyurl.com/pdp1-carols*







# Carolling with PDP-1

## Staff and Volunteers form a community to fight poverty worldwide; join us!

**Kiva's mission is to connect people through lending for the sake of alleviating poverty.** They do this by partnering with micro-lenders all over the world to facilitate funding their loans. These organizations charge much lower interest rates than local lenders, and the proceeds from the interest charged is used to support education, health and other community projects.

When we – Ton Luong, IT, and Judith Haemmerle, VSC – discovered that we were both enthusiastic Kiva supporters, we realized that creating a Computer History Museum Lending Team was a great way to demonstrate the generosity of all of us, staff and volunteers, associated with the museum. Ton had already involved several other staff members, so we knew people would be receptive to the idea.

**COMPUTER HISTORY MUSEUM**
*staff & volunteers*

With a lovely logo designed by Marcin Wichary especially for us, we've created a CHM Kiva team and invite you, staff and volunteers, to join us in sharing our good fortune across the globe. We'll publish monthly reports on this venture. Visit our Computer History Museum Community site, lend someone some money to a farmer, a taxi driver, a tailor, or...? Make a small difference in the world – and a big difference in someone's life.

About Kiva:
  *www.kiva.org/about*

Our team summary:
  *www.tinyurl.com/chm-kiva*

## More than just a (smiling) face!
*by Judith Haemmerle and Jim Somers*

Who knows…
  · where the wheelchairs, additional store merchandise and visitor brochures are hidden?
  · how to accept a rare and valuable artifact on behalf of collections… on a Sunday?
  · which cab company to call on a weekend?
  · how to give directions to Google, The Tech, NASA, the Intel Museum, and several noteworthy garages?
  · what to do when the heat's not on and the door's locked and we're open to the public, even though the whole staff is off?
  · how to do a store return (because Junior grew a lot since last year)?
  · where all the light switches for **all** the exhibits are?
  · the names of all the local restaurants and can give recommendations (with editorial comments) to visitors?
  · how many patio and balcony doors are there upstairs that need to be locked?
  · where to find ice when a visitor smashes her hand in her car door?

Who is …
  · the first person to know how many exhibits visitors we have had in a day?
  · certified in first aid and CPR so that we can deal with visitor emergencies?
  · the one who tries to keep docents to their assigned tour length?

Who can…
  · tell visitors how to find the plaque celebrating Shockley Labs – and the grocery store that's in the original building?
  · point the way to the restrooms 53 times a day and never stop smiling?
  · describe the Museum's four exhibit areas in less than 30 seconds?
  · rattle off the tour times and topics and still get in a plug for leaving a donation?

**The answer is Senior Greeters.** The questions above indicate just a few of the things that these valuable volunteers can be relied on to handle, especially on weekends and holidays when there is limited or no staff presence in the building. As purveyors of information (outside of our organized tours) they handle questions ranging from "Where is the nearest Fry's?" to "Are those the only bones of Napier's that you have?"

The Greeters are one of the most significant portions of the Museum's public face. They help set the stage for the visitor's experience while at the same time working to ensure that the Museum is running smoothly during our open hours. Thanks, Greeters!

# Volunteer Steering Committee December meeting notes

*by Peter Samson*

We had updates of the following topics:

- Deliveries outside business hours – a schedule will be provided at the Front Desk designating Staff coverage for deliveries, event setup, etc. expected outside normal business hours; in particular, deliveries on weekends must wait until noon unless Staff is present.
- The volunteer Web site development is currently on hold; the VSC was shown copies of the proposed Museum Web page regarding volunteering, and discussion ensued; there will be further discussion at the next meeting.
- Refresher classes for front-of-house volunteers are being scheduled starting in January. All greeters, docents, and demonstrators should attend one, since there have been many changes since the last orientation sessions.
- A new Safety Binder, in red, is now at the Front Desk. Volunteers are asked to familiarize themselves with its contents.
- Participation in the Kiva microlending program will start in January. See *www.kiva.org* for a full description. Please let Jim Somers or the VSC know if you are interested in taking part.
- A major effort for volunteer recruitment is planned for January. Numerous ideas were suggested: volunteer buddies, to pair experienced volunteers with new prospects and recruits; profiles of current volunteers in the Muse; a personal campaign, to recruit our friends and colleagues. Shelley Bergin, the receptionist, has a brief poll for volunteers regarding effectiveness of the Muse newsletter. Please fill it out.
- A revised Mission Statement was proposed, voted on, and accepted unanimously by the VSC. It states: **"The mission of the Volunteer Steering Committee is to support the programs and activities of the Computer History Museum through the recruitment, training, education, and support of volunteers and to promote good working relationships between volunteers and the museum staff."**

These new topics were brought up:

- Jim Porter handed out a list of technology companies headquartered in Silicon Valley. This may form the basis of a map or written tour.
- Marcin Wichary and Jim Somers raised the possibility of putting each day's scheduled visitor events (such as tours and demonstrations) on the plasma display above the Front Desk. ✎

Next regular meeting: January 20, 2009, 4:30 pm. Want to know more? The full minutes are online at *www.tinyurl.com/vsc-dec2008*

## Upcoming volunteer opportunities

**Macintosh anniversary, January 24th**
Join us for Special Tours and cake to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Apple Macintosh.

**Volunteer Saturday, February 21st**
February's Volunteer Saturday will be taking place at the Museum's Yosemite Warehouse in Milpitas on Saturday, February 21st. (Please note that this is the third Saturday of the month.)

## The worth of volunteer hours

According to Independent Sector, the value of each volunteer hour in California is $21.97. So the value of volunteer hours July to October is $150,072.67 for 6,830 hours. The value of October's hours alone is $45,914 (2,089.85 hours).

## December stats

| | |
|---|---|
| Total open hours visitors: | 1,668 |
| Babbage demo attendance: | 901 |
| Tour attendance: | 793 |
| PDP-1 attendance: | 98 |
| | |
| Total visitor donations: | $1,429.56 |
| Total store sales (gross): | $5,387.69 |
| | |
| Visitors July–Dec 2007: | 8,229 |
| Visitors July–Dec 2008: | 11,881 |
| | |
| YTD store sales (gross) 2007: | $16,111.08 |
| YTD store sales (gross) 2008: | $29,339.54 |

**We're moving! Update your bookmarks!** The volunteer website and calendar are now at:

# https://volunteer.computerhistory.org

SSL certificate issues are temporary; ignore or add exception. Learn more at *www.tinyurl.com/volunteer-website-url-change*

# The Mystery Photo
**by Sara Lott, Software Archivist**



November's Mystery photo, shown here, was identified by Gordon Bell. The gentleman in the photo is John Brainerd. The photo was taken at the Computer History Museum in the Digital Equipment building in Marlboro, Mass. Brainerd was a professor at the U of Penn Moore School of Engineering, and this photo was taken on the occasion of his Pioneer Computer lecture at the museum. The woman at the far left side is his wife, and the woman in the middle is Chase Duffy, an editor of Digital Press. *Ed. Note: So, the photo mystery has been solved, but the real interesting story on how is in Gordon's reply to Sara ….*

*Bear with me…while I "play with" MyLifeBits and my Wetware and test them on >25 year recall problem. Don't ask me how I would ever have enough time to do this… but anyway, was thumbing through your on line museum piece and "got the call" to respond because I thought I had seen these people before and had no idea what their names were, unless presented with them so that I could confirm. This is in line with the recent research piece on image recall. Also, after I did it, I thought it might make a good storyette, for the book we are writing.*

*Anyway, I was sure it was one of the guys at the Moore School who had given a lecture at the Computer Museum when it was starting up in Marlboro Mass. We had 20 of the then still living pioneers, and this was one of the few remaining standing that came from the Moore School. It wasn't Eckert or Mauchly, but a lesser known and it was Burks who was also there.*

*Searching "Moore school" got me to 65 bits, adding "lecture" reduced it to 25. Scanning the documents, I found this MUSEUM--CONFIRMATION OF LECTURE - BRAINERD 810330.doc that is attached.*

*In truth, I wasn't so sure about MyLifeBits, so I looked for Moore School faculty in 40s, where I found an article by Goldstine that is relevant to "who invented the computer" and sent that to Len. Once I identified the name I had forgotten, Brainerd, or it could have been Pender, the dean, MyLifeBits found him as giving the lecture from my files. The other thing that it illustrates is how great Mary Jane was as my assistant. Note the file name… who, what, where, when.*

*Moral, file metadata wins, and need to trust MyLifeBits more to get it quicker… and then go global if it fails.*

# Collections Corner

### Preservation, Conservation, Restoration: What's the Difference?

The terms are often interchanged and misused. In next month's edition of the Muse, we will feature a detailed explanation by Karen Kroslowitz, the CHM Registrar, so we'll all understand this industry terminology.

# THANKS FOR YOUR GIFTS



This year CHM was one of the 1,024 Family Giving Tree's host companies. Our contributions (25 gifts) help ensure that every low income child on FGT's wish list received a special gift this year. In all 62,073 gifts were collected and distributed this holiday season. Let's shoot for 50 gifts next year!

# New Hires



**Heather Yager** joined the CHM staff on Jan 5 as our new Audiovisual Archivist
**Jenny Daly** returns to CHM in a new role as Museum Registration Intern, after previously being a Collections Move Assistant last summer.

## This Month in History
January 12, 1997
**The Fictional HAL 9000 Computer Becomes Operational** according to Arthur C. Clarke's 2001: A Space Odyssey. In the 1968 movie adaptation, the computer's statement – I am a HAL 9000 computer, Production Number 3, I became operational at the HAL Plant in Urbana, Illinois on January 12, 1997 – put his birthdate in 1992. Both dates have passed with no super-intelligent, human-like HAL computer insight.

## Trivia Question
The first computer designed for use in business, the LEO, was built in England and was commercially used before the UNIVAC I. Maurice Wilkes built it for what company?

December Trivia Question
In 1975 what common everyday object did Martin Newell use as part of his research at the University of Utah?
Answer: Newell used a Melitta Teapot as the subject of his early experiments in 3D graphics. The original Teapot is now on exhibit in Visible Storage.