The CHM

Muse

STAFF & VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

The Difference Engine update
Milpitas warehouse Volunteer Saturday photos
Spotlight on Special Interest Groups

Babbage Engine Exhibit Extended!

We are delighted to announce that the Babbage Difference Engine No. 2 will be staying on as a major exhibit at the museum through December 2009. Originally slated to be on loan from April 2008 to April 2009, an extension of the loan was granted by owner Nathan Myhrvold upon a request by **Len Shustek**, **John Hollar**, and **Gary Malone** on a February trip to the Nathan's offices in Seattle. Our CHM team highlighted for Nathan the outstanding success and impact of the engine exhibit, including:

➢ Visitor traffic up 45%
➢ Web traffic up 100%
➢ Store sales up 97%
➢ A richer CHM visitor experience
➢ A platform for VIP and fundraising events
➢ Iconic images for special CHM publications
➢ More than 200 news articles to date

Special recognition and appreciation is due to the dedicated volunteers who comprise the Babbage team of presenters, engine crankers, and maintenance crew.   Without them, these extremely popular demonstrations would not be possible. They are:

Mike Albaugh, Normand Berube, John Bohner, Trevor Bommersbach, Greg Dumas, Dick Guertin, Judith Haemmerle, Herb Kanner, Jeff Katz, Jim Manley, Julie Neff, Randy Neff, Ray Peck, Eric Petrich, Kat Powell, Tim Robinson, Allen Rosenzweig, Steve Russell, Wolf Schaechter, David Varn, Marcin Wichary, and Bill Worthington.

And we would like to recognize Museum Services Manager **Jim Somers**, who has recruited the volunteer teams, coordinated the numerous training sessions, and superbly managed the often complex event and daily tour scheduling since the engine arrived.

Tim Robinson demonstrates his excellent engine cranking technique. Tim's role with the Babbage exhibit has been invaluable to CHM. He has served as our chief engineer, technical support wizard, trainer and maintenance manager for the Difference Engine. Along with Doron Swade, Tim was designated by Nathan Myhrvold as the key CHM decision-makers for the maintenance care and problem-solving during its Mountain View loan period.

The Mystery Photo

from the ArchiVes
By Sara Lott, Software Archivist

We know it's the Johnniac this team is unloading, but can anyone help out the Collections group with any more particulars on this photo? (Who, what, where, etc.!)

Send your info to Sara Lott at slott@computerhistory.org

Volunteer Steering Committee February meeting notes

by Peter Samson

We had updates of the following topics:

- **Volunteer recruitment.** We have found the coordinator for the HP retiree newsletters. Ideas were also shared on working with DEC retiree groups as well. It has been approved to get a button maker to make promotional buttons.
- **Volunteer website.** Efforts continue. Meetings were held with IT and Marketing staff. Discussions continue regarding detail design of the website, and responsibility for development and maintenance.
- **Remote volunteer work.** Some volunteers are looking for remote opportunities.
- **Babbage Engine extension.** An extension of the exhibit has been negotiated. Should continue through December 2009. Some staff members are learning to operate it.
- **CHM Kiva team.** Has grown. $675 in loans have been made.
- **1401 room access.** 1401 team has requested that access to the restoration floor be limited. Stanchions have been placed at the top of the ramp.
- **New exhibits set-up map.** Is being developed to show volunteers and staff how to open exhibits for visitors.

These new topics were brought up:

- John Hollar, CEO, described events taking place as part fo the "Salute to the Semiconductor" program. There have been two lectures by the Museum's Resident Scholar, Prof. Richard Tedlow. A new temporary display about semiconductors is planned for the first floor area. A Moore Foundation grant will help fund this along with educational media and a web presence. A symposium on the integrated circuit will be held May 6, 7, and 8 with activities at CHM and Stanford.
- Discussion commenced on updating the guidelines under which the VSC operates.
- VSC elections are coming in April. Four members' terms are expiring. Nominations for new members are welcome. ✎

VSC meetings take place every third Wednesday of a month. Next regular meeting: March 24th, 4:30 pm. The full minutes are online at *www.tinyurl.com/vsc-feb2009*

Milpitas warehouse Volunteer Saturday photos

February 21st, 2009
www.tinyurl.com/ milpitas-saturday

Upcoming volunteer opportunities

CHM Presents: Virtual Worlds, the Origins and Evolution of a Medium
Monday, March 30th, member reception starts 6 pm, program starts 7 pm :
Note- Postponed- to be rescheduled

Volunteer orientation
Saturday, April 4th, 10 am–11 am

April Volunteer Day (Yosemite)
Saturday, April 18th, 9 am–3 pm

50th Anniversary of the IC: Prefiguring the IC
Wednesday, May 6th
The Planar IC
Friday, May 8th

Statistics

February 2009

Total open hours visitors:	1,733
Babbage demo attendance:	947
Tour attendance:	761
PDP-1 attendance:	92
Total visitor donations:	$1483
Total store sales (gross w/tax):	$3167

January 2009

Total volunteer hours:	1,511
Active volunteers:	104

Special Interest Groups updates

Semiconductor SIG
by Rosemary Remacle

The Semiconductor SIG is comprised of academic and industry executive volunteers who augment the work of the Computer History Museum staff in identifying, collecting, documenting, and exhibiting the impact of semiconductor technology on the history of computing. SIG members also support the development staff in fundraising efforts.

Dave House, CHM Trustee, chairs the Semiconductor SIG Steering Committee and Rosemary Remacle is serving as the current Staff Director. The 10 members of the SIG Steering Committee are: Duane Wadsworth, Jeff Katz, Paul Sakamoto, Harry Sello, Michael Riordan, Jack Busch, Doug Fairbarn, Stephen Smith, Craig Addison and David Laws. In addition to this core group, there are working groups and the Executive Advisory Committee, supporting specific activities of the SIG.

Past and current semiconductor SIG projects include recording oral histories of industry pioneers products and companies, as well as collecting semiconductor devices and related documents and media. To date, the group has helped complete more than 50 oral histories for the museum's archives. Another important project, completed last year, is the compilation of semiconductor industry milestones timeline—the Silicon Engine—under the leadership of David Laws. Another key activity of the SIG members is working alongside CHM staff on marketing activities such as the 2009 "Salute to the Semiconductor" events.

Further browsing:
- The Silicon Engine: A Timeline of Semiconductors in Computers: *www.tinyurl.com/semi-sig-1*
- Oral History transcripts: *www.tinyurl.com/semi-sig-2* (search for "semiconductor," "microprocessor," etc.)
- Corporate Histories Collection: Fairchild Semiconductor: *www.tinyurl.com/semi-sig-3*
- Corporate Histories Collection: Semiconductor History Documents: *www.tinyurl.com/semi-sig-4*

Software Industry SIG plans three pioneer meetings for Spring 2009
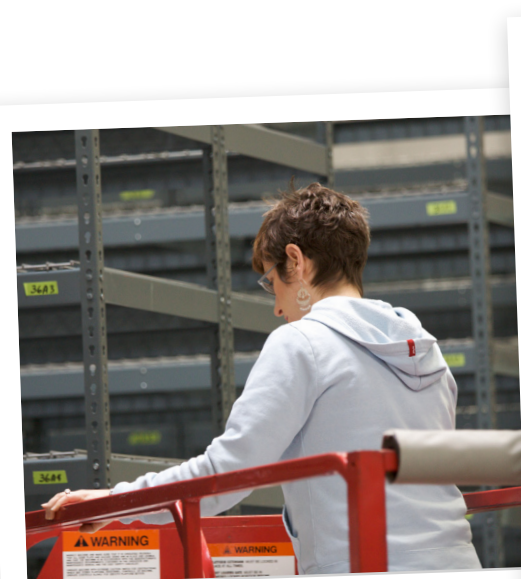*by Burt Grad and Luanne Johnson, SI SIG Co-Chairs*

The Software Industry Special Interest Group is planning to hold three day-long meetings of industry pioneers in the spring of 2009.

A meeting in the Washington, DC area on Tuesday, March 31 will bring together pioneers from many of the early companies which provided professional computer programming, analysis and consulting services to the Federal Government. This meeting will be held at the offices of Computer Sciences Corporation in Falls Church, VA. The industry pioneers will be joined by a number of computer historians.

In June, the SIG will host two back-to-back meetings at the Computer History Museum. Pioneers from early time-sharing companies will assemble on Tuesday, June 2 and those from early processing services companies (known in the 1960s and 1970s as computer service bureaus and remote processing services companies) will meet on Wednesday, June 3.

These will be the tenth, eleventh and twelfth pioneer meetings focusing on various sectors of the computer software and services industry sponsored by the Software Industry SIG since 2000. The objective of each meeting is

to bring together people who were active in the industry during a particular period of time and ask them to share their recollections about their experiences. Engaging these pioneers in a discussion as a group provides an opportunity to collect historical information about the industry from the different perspectives of various companies, often those who were fierce competitors at the time. The group interaction is also very effective for eliciting in-depth information as each personal recollection stimulates remembrances from the other participants and many long-lost memories are retrieved in the process.

Each day-long meeting consists of a beginning and ending plenary session when all attendees participate. During the day, the attendees will be divided into smaller groups which will discuss in detail specific business or technical topics pertinent to the industry and era being covered. All the sessions are videotaped, then transcribed and edited to become part of the Museum's oral history collection. One-on-one oral histories of people who were particularly significant to the industry will be conducted on the days immediately before or after the meetings. You can read transcripts of many of the workshops and oral histories from these pioneer meetings on the Computer History Museum's Oral History website. ✎

Storage SIG
by Jim Porter

The mission of the Storage SIG is to make the Computer History Museum the preeminent repository and teaching institution for the history of data storage. It provides leadership in identifying the key role data storage developments have had in making possible the dynamic expa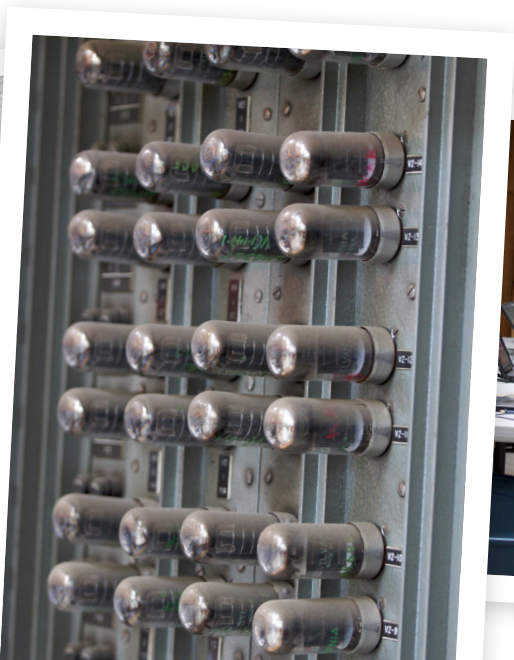nsion of the computer into so many aspects of modern life. The SIG also works to preserve the significant records of the people, companies and organizations which have contributed to important advances in data storage.

The Storage SIG is a valuable resource for the Museum staff in understanding the role of data storage in the computer industry and in assisting the museum in collection of appropriate data storage industry artifacts. It's responsible for conducting funding programs as needed to provide adequate financial support for the Storage SIG's activities and applicable museum programs.

The origins of the CHM's Storage SIG date back to 2003, when the Museum's Storage Committee was formed by members who were veterans of the disk drive, tape drive and storage systems companies. After several years of pioneering the Museum's activities in videotaped oral history sessions with data storage industry pioneers and compiling detailed information on significant events in data storage development, the Storage Committee was reorganized into the museum's Storage SIG in 2007.

Today's Storage SIG has a Steering Committee which overviews and coordinates the SIG's activities, plus a set of volunteer Working Groups which have the responsibility to conduct oral histories and develop timelines of significant historical events in each of their product areas.

Because the development of the hard disk drive originated in the Santa Clara Valley by IBM in the 1950's, followed by several other local start-up HDD manufacturers, there have been many veterans of the hard disk drive industry available for the Storage SIG's activities ever since the CHM moved to Mountain View. The HDD Working Group and the Storage Systems Working Group have been the SIG's most active groups, and activities have been undertaken to organize working groups for the tape drive and optical disk drive fields, plus a special group to concentrate on storage events in Japan. ✎

Collections Corner

By Karen Kroslowitz

Catalog Search
Documents, Photos, Hardware, Software

Editor: In last month's Muse, we highlighted this year's enormous increase in web visitors to the CHM site over 2008. Here are some nice stats for Catalog Search, which has moved to the No. 2 spot for overall visits for the period of 8/1/2008 to 2/1/2009.

- Our Catalog Search supports the **Dublin Core Metadata Initiative's Simple Element Set**. (http://dublincore.org/) It's a geeky feature.
- Most popular Object is the "You can program in BASIC Manual" (http://www.computerhistory.org/collections/accession/102646121)
- Second Most Popular Object is the "Apple temporary tattoo" (http://www.computerhistory.org/collections/accession/102674190)
- In terms of pageviews, Catalog Search ranked second surpassing the majority of our online exhibits. Pageview Rankings from **8/1/2008** to **2/1/2009:**

1. 1,680,540 Timeline Exhibit
2. **182,390 Catalog Search**
3.   171,796 Internet Exhibit
4.   155,073 Silicon Engine Exhibit
5.   140,972 Babbage Exhibit
6.   103,087 Visible Storage Exhibit
7.   95,945 Brochures Exhibit
8.   72,306 This Day in History

- Our full catalog is also searchable on all major search engines, Google, Yahoo, Live, Ask.com (exposing 60,000+ pages of content to the public)

- Our top 10 country accessing Catalog search is:
1. US
2. UK
3. Canada
4. Germany
5. India
6. Netherlands
7. Australia
8. Russia
9. France
10. Italy

Cataloging Grant Stats

With ENORMOUS thanks to our staff & volunteer catalogers, we have reached **111%** of goal for newly cataloged physical objects, and **203%** for newly photographed physical objects.

New Hires

David Barrow has joined the Technology team as our new Associate Producer

This Month in History
March 19, 1972
Atanasoff Judged Official "Inventor" of Computer

John Vincent Atanasoff emerges as victor from a protracted U.S. legal battle for the title of the inventor of the electronic digital computer. A judge determined his work had preceded and contributed to development of the ENIAC machine, whose inventors had previously been credited.

Trivia Question
Which of the following facts are true about Grace Hopper:

1. Served as part of the Mark I computer programming staff.
2. Was an employee of the Eckart-Mauchley Computer Company
3. Is famous for her *nanoseconds* visual aid
4. Has been attributed with first saying, "It is easier to ask forgiveness than it is to get permission."

February Trivia Questions
(In honor of the Academy Awards)

Option 1: What was the name of the shipboard computer system in 1979's Best Visual Effects Award winner "Alien"? **Mother**

Option 2: What was the computer password Mr. Takagi died protecting in 1988's Academy Award nominated "Die Hard"? **Red Castle**

The Editors Desk
Editors:
Jim Somers, Marcin Wichary, Gary Matsushita

This month's contributors: Burt Grad, Luanne Johnson, Karen Kroslowitz, Sara Lott, Gary Matsushita, Jim Porter, Rosemary Remacle, Peter Samson, Jim Somers and Marcin Wichary