

TNMOC Newsletter

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www.tnmoc.org

Join TNMOC – “a national treasure”

We're having a healthy response to the the TNMOC membership scheme launched last month to enable you and computer enthusiasts everywhere to get that bit closer to our work and of course to help raise much-needed funds for future developments.

Thank you very much if you have already joined. For those of you who haven't: join soon and you'll be able to take advantage of free entry to the Vintage Computer Festival in June. In fact, amongst the many benefits of TNMOC membership is a season ticket to Bletchley Park and therefore year-round free entry to TNMOC.

See <http://tiny.cc/tnmocmember> for details.

Comments by computer gurus who have joined are really encouraging:

“TNMOC is a national treasure.”

Prof Martin Campbell-Kelly, University of Warwick & computer historian.

“This is an important part of the world's heritage. I'm proud to help protect it.”

Jon Callas, computer security and internet guru based in San Francisco.

So, please join TNMOC if you haven't already. For £45 you'll receive tangible benefits and know that you are helping to develop a great resource. (And BTW, it complies with the Gift Aid scheme for UK tax payers.)

Kevin Murrell

TNMOC Trustee and Director

Vintage Computer Festival 19-20 June

With only a few weeks to go to Britain's first Vintage Computer Festival, things are going well and large numbers are expected. You can get free entry with TNMOC membership <http://www.tnmoc.org/supp-menu/membership.aspx> – otherwise advance tickets are

available online now through the Bletchley Park website <http://www.bletchleypark.org.uk/shop/index.rhtm/130872/cat.html>

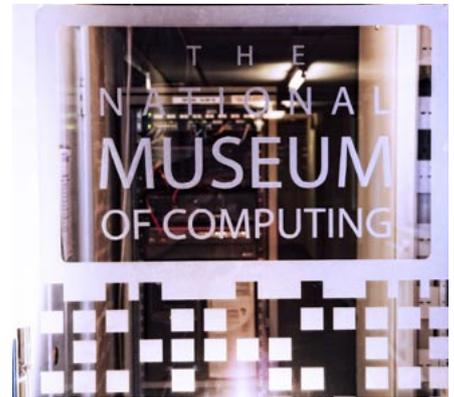
The OMD concert sold out within a few hours – apologies to all those who couldn't get tickets (but they have an upcoming tour this summer we hear). The OMD publicity also helped widen the appeal of the VCF beyond the geek community and many are now seeing it as a great family day out.

Tickets will soon be available for another musical VCF event: Matthew Applegate / Pixelh8 will be appearing both days with a re-showing of *Obsolete?*, his work featuring TNMOC machines, on the Saturday.

The latest addition to the line-up is David Ahl, author of the first million-selling computer book. Other main speakers

include Sophie Wilson of BBC B and Acorn fame, journalist and broadcaster Christine Finn, ZX Spectrum expert Chris Smith and Karl Pantling-James of the Retro Computer Museum. Not forgetting TNMOC's very own Tony Sale (Colossus) and Tony Frazer (Harwell/WITCH computer).

VCF updates: <http://tiny.cc/tnmocvcf>



Simon Hewitt, VCF lead organiser

When Simon Hewitt's granny started knitting for neighbours so that she could buy a state of the art micro – a 1983 ZX Spectrum – for her grandson, she could hardly have guessed where it would lead.

And 26 years later when Simon decided to take his girlfriend for a day out to Bletchley Park, he could hardly have imagined that just one year later he would be finalising arrangements for Britain's first Vintage Computer Festival. It's turning out to be quite a journey for a volunteer in his first year at TNMOC.

Simon has been interested in gadgets and computers for as long as he can remember. His family was the first in his neighbourhood to get a colour TV and a video recorder. When he got that ZX Spectrum, it wasn't the games that interested him -- it was the ability to program that fascinated him. And so he went on to do computer studies and now works in software implementation and development.

Most Saturday afternoons, you'll find Simon at "front of house" in the museum talking to visitors and doubtless singing the praises of the ZX Spectrum in the PC Gallery. But maybe not until after 19-20 June when he will be well and truly front of house at the Vintage Computer Festival. He has been astonished, delighted and even a little taken aback by the interest in the VCF and is amazed to see the worldwide interest in the event.



Simon Hewitt, VCF organiser.

Harwell-WITCH lecture in Wolverhampton

Users of the the Harwell-WITCH computer are expected to re-appear next week at a special lecture on the computer's restoration to be held at the University of Wolverhampton. <http://tiny.cc/tnmocwitchlecture>

Developed at Harwell and used in the design of Britain's first nuclear power stations, the Harwell computer was then made available via a competition to an educational establishment that could make best use of it. Wolverhampton and Staffordshire College of Technology won, renamed it the Wolverhampton Instrument for Teaching Computing at Harwell, and used it until 1973 in undergraduate teaching. It was then retired to the Birmingham Science Museum until its restoration at TNMOC which began last year.

The lecture will be at 7pm on Wednesday 26 May 2010 in MC228 at the University of Wolverhampton. All are welcome to attend.

Meanwhile the restoration continues and Tony Frazer reports the latest success: "The Creed Page Printer Motor runs very well, with just a hint of that smell that electric motors emit when they have not been run for 35 years!"



The warm glow of restored Dekatron valves on the Harwell-WITCH computer.

STOP PRESS

Insightsoftware.com, has become TNMOC's first Foundation Sponsor. the company designs solutions to optimize business processes for the ERP market

Computer Weekly has donated three decades of back copies of its publication as well as a large number of images to the TNMOC archive – which is of course open to researchers on request.

Follow the musings of TNMOC folk on **a blog on Computer Weekly**. Latest: the ICL hardware dragon slain by OS GEORGE. <http://tiny.cc/tnmoccwblog>