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The National Museum of Computing

Newsletter Issue 5 - Oct 2007
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Fundraising Progress
Our official fundraising launch is set for November 28th, so look out for press articles and features in the preceding weeks. You can already make donations using the museum web site - see the link that follows for more information. If you would like to **suggest any companies or individuals** we should definitely invite to the launch, and you have some up to date contact information for them, please do get in touch. Click here for donations

ICL 2966
At last the ICL 2966 has been moved to its proper place in the museum. This behemoth has been in storage for almost ten years and it's quite fantastic to see it all together again. There is a huge amount of work to get this machine functioning and at least part of that recommissioning is going to form the final year project for a computer engineering student. Click here for more pictures of the system

The Electronic Office
Many of our visitors, at least those of us old enough to remember Elvis, will recognise the displays in this new gallery. We have four office environments from the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s showing typical systems from those periods. Accounting systems move from punched card, through to visible record machines, to desktop computers. Word processing followed a similar route from electronic typewriters, through dedicated systems, again to desktop computers.

A Moving plea for help!

I mentioned in the last newsletter that we are hoping to move an IBM 1130 and other systems from Liverpool down to the museum. The 1130 is a particularly iconic machine from IBM's past. Sadly the big blue giant has declined to help, so we would welcome advice on a potential sponsor to help move this equipment down to Milton Keynes. The equipment is obviously delicate but already on pallets so will be easy to move for those suitably equipped!

New volunteers

The museum always welcomes new volunteers, and we are pleased to welcome Tony, Kevin, Adam & Mathieu who joined us recently. Over the past few months it has been more like the museum of painting and decorating, but curating and computer engineering has still gone on. Our PDP11/34 is up and running, one of our older ICT card punches is now working well, and the analogue computers are on display and doing whatever it is they do - sadly beyond your editor with his (very old) A-level maths!

The Cipher Challenge Event

On November 15th we plan to recreate the original transmission of encrypted messages from Germany to the UK for subsequent decryption by the Colossus computer. A set of specially created messages will be enciphered using an original Lorenz machine at the Heinz Nixdorf Museum in Paderborn, transmitted over radio to Bletchley, punched onto paper tape, decrypted using Colossus and returned to plain text using the Tunny machine.

Click here for more information about the Cipher Challenge