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 2,500 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 exploration 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.
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 EDAC, Colossus, and Manchester Mark I. He is now tracking down the BESM-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.

Joseph F. Cashen
Executive Director
Grant Awarded for 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 Admissions Program is another way the Museum carries out its mission of educating and inspiring people of all ages.

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 specialoving 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 show people how computers evolved and operate." The Museum is important to him because Sitkin was a user at the threshold of the computer revolution. In 1954, Aetna hired him as IBM supervisory clerk No. 2. His mission: To identify possible applications and write programs for an IBM 650. "We knew nothing about insurance or computing. There were no 800 numbers to call," he recalls.

Sitkin is now Vice President of Corporate Rate Administration in Aetna's Life & Casualty's multimillion-dollar computer operation. Some 4,500 people at Aetna, the 15th largest corporation in the US, earn a living from data processing, and 3,000 of them can write programs.

We spoke with Sitkin recently about the Museum.

Why are you involved with the Museum?

Our society needs the Museum. It is now a major educational resource. Helping people to understand computers and communications is essential to systems affecting our lives in so many ways.

Why is it so special?

It accumulates, preserves, and displays artifacts created during our lifetimes — 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. 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.

How do you explain the Museum's mission?

The Computer Museum has the acronym on "Thine has a responsibility to provide research opportunities in computing history, search for artifacts in other countries, and support traveling exhibits abroad. A museum without walls makes our educational process available to many more people.

What can Museum supporters do?

They can spread the word in word of mouth communications and other media to contribute money or in-kind gifts, and help fund acquisitions for the collection. It's a three-dimensional project.
A Salute to Our Supporters!

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

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.

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.

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. Breakthrough images offer data for research and commercial applications. In the William C. Norris Gallery.

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
"Building 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.

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 books at significant savings.

Individual Memberships
$30 One-year
$50 Two-year
$20 One-year student*

Family Memberships
$45 One-year
$80 Two-year

Contributing Memberships
$500 Donor
$250 Sponsor
$100 Friend

Yes, sign me up! My check, payable to The Computer Museum, is enclosed in the amount of $.

Or, charge my □ MasterCard, □ Visa, □ American Express.

Card# ___________ Expiration Date ___________ Signature ___________

Name ___________ Name for 2nd Family Card ___________
Street ___________
City/State/Zip ___________ Telephone (...)
Company Name ___________
Street ___________
City/State/Zip ___________ Telephone (...)

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.