

VCF East is produced by the VCF Mid-Atlantic chapter and is traditionally held at the Vintage Computer Federation museum, located in the Info-Age Science and History Museum Center in Wall Township, New Jersey. Originally planned for April of this year and produced by show runner Jeff Brace, VCF East 2020 took place virtually on October 10th and 11th. It included live and pre-recorded classes, exhibits, and presenters with Q&A sessions. Among them were Bill Mensch, codesigner of the 6502 microprocessor and founder of Western Design Center, and Stefany Allaire, electronics engineer and designer of the C256 Foenix, which is a reimagining of an evolution of the Commodore 128 computer. VCF also promotes visitor engagement with (socially distanced) monthly repair

workshops, where members work on their own projects, help others with their projects, and help repair and restore VCF artifacts. Additionally, VCF's first annual swap meet will be held on November 7. These events are open to all, and membership is as simple as joining a mailing list.

There are other Vintage Computer Festivals in the USA and Europe; however, these are produced independently of the Vintage Computer Federation.

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Notes From the Editor

MORE VIRTUAL EVENTS. This past summer I attended two conferences which switched from in-person meetings to virtual via the Internet because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I was impressed with how well they worked—missing informal communication but generally improved presentations and better attendance.

One conference was Vintage Computer Festival West (described above by Dean Notarnicola) on August 1, and I attended from my recliner chair in the living room of my home. You can watch it yourself at youtube.com/watch?v=7YoolSAHR5w&t=397s (skip the first 9.5 min). Watching the August 1 event, a notable member of the computing history world can be “sighted”—Len Shustek founder and now chairman emeritus of the Computer History Museum presenting his work on magnetic tape recovery, starting one hour and ten minutes into the video at the above URL.

A week earlier than VCF West was the TeX Users Group annual conference (August 24–26, tug.org/tug2020/). This was not primarily a

computing history conference, but it showed some ways any conference may go in the future; please read my conference report at tug.org/TUGboat/tb41-1/tb128walden-tug20.pdf. Amelia Hugill-Fontanel's presentation on the evolution of font specimen books is but one example from the conference of how much better presentations can be if videotaped in advance: youtube.com/watch?v=7Cm2AcQiUuk

Less formal than a conference, the “thirty veterans” reuniting on January 19, 2020, in Harry Lewis's article on the creation of Harvard's computer science department (harvardmagazine.com/2020/09/features-a-science-is-born),¹ met via Zoom.

With all the virtual meetings going on these days, it is interesting to take a look at one of the earliest demonstrations of Internet-based virtual meetings, a video provided to the Computer History Museum by Danny Cohen and posted elsewhere by Steve Casner: youtube.com/watch?v=MGat1jRQ_SM; a brief history by Robert Gray about those early developments is at researchgate.net/publication/3321615_The_1974_origins_of_VoIP

HOPL IV. In the prior issue of this department, we mentioned that HOPL IV conference (hopl4.sigplan.org) had been cancelled but the papers for

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the conference were published in ACM SIGPLAN (dl.acm.org/toc/pacmpl/2020/4/HOPL). The HOPL IV conference has now been rescheduled for June 20–22, 2021, virtual and co-located with ACM Programming Language and Implementation conference. Also published by conference co-chairs Guy Steele and Richard Gabriel is a discussion and reflection on the conference: blog.sigplan.org/2020/06/25/hopl-not-an-ordinary-conference. This report describes the conference participant invitation process as well as unusually thorough paper reviewing and author shepherding methods; they are worth reading—at hopl4.sigplan.org/getImage/orig/HOPLReviewing.pdf and hopl4.sigplan.org/getImage/orig/HOPLShepherding.pdf; also interesting, if somewhat overlapping, is dl.acm.org/action/showBmPdf?doi=10.1145%2F3406494; if only all conferences and journal papers could be as thoroughly reviewed and so much developmental help given.

PROFESSOR V. RAJARAMAN. Readers of this journal may have read Prof. Rajaraman's "History of Computing in India: 1955–2010" in this journal in 2015.² Recently, we received a note from Prof. Rajaraman stating that he has published a book entitled *Groundbreaking Inventions in Information and Communications Technology*, which is available for about \$5US.³ This book seems aimed at a popular audience as is a series of shorts articles he is writing for issues of the *Computer Society of India Communications* which he calls "Titbit from the History of Computing." Number 13 in the series in the August 2020 issue is on "CTSS—The first time-sharing operating system." At present, the CSIC issues are publicly available at csi-india.org/csic.

Prof. Rajaraman is himself an important personage in the history of computing in India, both for his own research and for helping to expand digital computing in the country (writing text books, starting academic program in computer science, serving on government and industry panels, and consulting to industry). In 2012, Prof. Rajaraman noted that his *Principles of Computer Programming*, originally published in 1969, was in its 50th printing.

Prof. Rajaraman served on the IEEE Computer Society History Committee from 2011–2018, during which time his India computing history monograph was published.⁴

NEWS FROM NORWAY. Yngvar Lundh died on August 15, 2020, at his home in Tinsberg, Norway. Lundh was a leading figure (some say the leading figure) in the development of digital computing in Norway.^{5,6} Along with Pål Spilling,⁷ Lundh also was a key participant in bringing the ARPANET to Norway and the U.K. and in Norway's involvement in the earliest Internet activities.

Tor Olav Steine, has written a new book, *Norsk Data—hva gikk galt?*, on Norsk Data, the innovative and high-flying Norwegian minicomputer company of the 1970s and 1980s.⁸ Steine's prior book on Norsk Data, *Fenomenet Norsk Data*,⁹ tells the story of Norsk Data from its start in Yngvar's Lundh's research group at the Norwegian National Research Establishment, through the company founding in 1967 and eventual explosive growth, and until the personal computer wiped out minicomputer companies. The new book, published by Steine's own publishing company,¹⁰ investigates the details of and alternatives to Norsk Data's decline. While Steine's books have been in Norwegian, Steine has published some of his study of Norsk Data in English in the *History of Nordic Computing 3* (2010) and *History of Nordic Computing 4* (2014), both published by Springer Link.

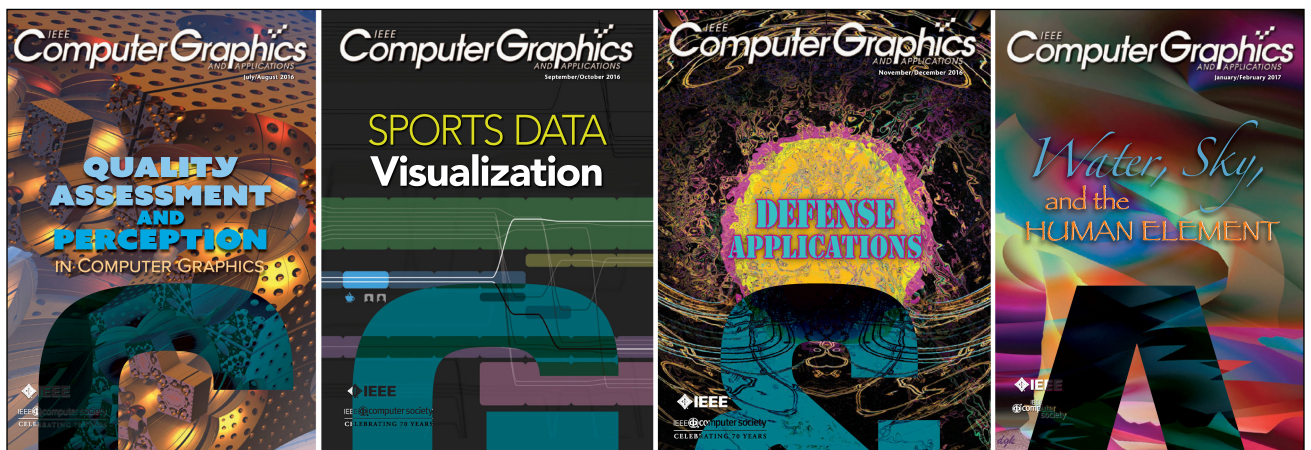
Three of the citations above are to stories published in digi.no. This could be a location to keep an eye on for occasional reports of things relating to Norwegian computing history.

ANNALS-EXTRAS.ORG NEWS. At the link from "More about Departments," we have added a complete-as-possible list of all items published in the Events and Sightings department (or under its previous department names) since the *Annals* was founded. The purpose of this new list is given on its web page (annals-extras.org/pubs/EandSindex.html).

■ REFERENCES/ENDNOTES

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10. The ebook is available from ark.no/boker/Tor-Olav-Steine-Norsk-Data-9788230345542. Steine's "self-publishing" is an example of the positive trend I see of serious amateur historians making their work available to the public despite academic publishers not being interested in their books.



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