Guide to the George R. Trimble Jr. collection

Finding aid prepared by Bo Doub, Kim Hayden, and Sara Chabino Lott
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Title: George R. Trimble Jr. collection

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Contributing Institution: Computer History Museum

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 10.0 Linear feet, 8 record cartons

Date (bulk): Bulk, 1955-1975

Date (inclusive): 1948-2000

Abstract: The George R. Trimble Jr. collection contains reports, papers, manuals, correspondence, conference proceedings, and notes that document Trimble's career in computer and data processing design and development from 1948 to 2000, with the bulk of the collection from 1955 to 1975. Materials come from Trimble's work at the Ballistic Research Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Ground, IBM, Computer Usage Company, Penta Computer Associates, and as an independent consultant. Projects Trimble worked on include programming the ENIAC computer, design and software development of the IBM 650 and 700 series computers, design of traffic control and transit systems, and software and system design for companies like Lockheed Electronics Company and Texas Instruments. The collection also includes manuals, reports, and papers authored by Trimble.

Processing Information
Collection processed by Bo Doub and Kim Hayden, May 2015.

Access Restrictions
The collection is open for research.

Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of Item], [Date], George R. Trimble Jr. collection, Lot X4586.2008, Box [#], Folder [#], Catalog [#], Computer History Museum.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Biographical/Historical Note
George R. Trimble Jr. was born April 26, 1929, in Elkton, Maryland. He received his BA from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, in 1948, and his master's degree in mathematics from the University of Delaware in Newark in 1952.

In 1948, Trimble began working at the Computing Laboratory of the Ballistic Research Laboratories at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Aberdeen, Maryland, where he contributed to the programming and development of the ENIAC, EDVAC, ORDVAC computers as well Bell Laboratories and International Business Machine's (IBM) relay calculators. He joined IBM's research labs in Endicott, New York, in 1952 and worked as a senior staff member of the Applied Science Division where he helped design many of IBM's early computers, including the 650 and 700 series systems, and wrote one of the first commercially available software programs for the 650.

Trimble moved on to Computer Usage Company (CUC) in 1956, spending 12 years at the software development company as corporate technical director of systems programming. While at CUC, he supervised major application programs and was involved in most of the company's projects, including heading the design of a computer-based air traffic control system for the Federal Aviation Administration and the development of software and an operating system for the Texas Instruments Advanced Scientific Computer.

In 1968, Trimble left CUC and went to Penta Computer Associates as the vice president of research and development. At Penta, he worked on the design and development of applications, mainly real-time and systems programming, and conceived and developed Penta's KeyLogic data entry system. Trimble left Penta in 1971 after it was acquired by REDCOR and began working as an independent consultant with his own business, T-Logic. Projects Trimble worked on as a consultant include the design of personal rapid transit systems for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration and the creation of software for companies like Mergenthaler Linotype Company and Lockheed Electronics Company, among others. Trimble also led seminars and talks on computing around the world. He died March 13, 2007.

Scope and Content of the Collection
The George R. Trimble Jr. collection contains technical papers, conference proceedings, and manuals from Trimble's work at institutions including the Ballistic Research Laboratory and Computer Usage Company, as well as records from Trimble's projects as an independent consultant. The majority of the collection's independent consulting reports relate to the Mergenthaler 5500 System and also personal rapid transit system projects for the Urban Mass Transportation Administration. A significant amount of the technical papers and conference proceedings in this collection were authored by Trimble and relate to his work at BRL, CUC, and Penta Computer Associates, though writings by others are also included. Small amounts of promotional materials and catalogs are interfiled with technical papers and manuals when they are related to the same programs and products. The collection spans 1948 through 2000 with the bulk of the collection being from 1955 to 1975 during Trimble's years at CUC, Penta Computer Associates, and as an independent consultant.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into 4 series:


Related Collections at CHM

Computer Usage Company, Corporate Histories Collection,
Professional Services History Meeting, Lot X3805.2007, Catalog number 102657948.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Computer engineering
Computer software--Development
Computer systems--Handbooks, manuals, etc.
Computer systems--Specifications
Computer Usage Company
Personal rapid transit
Trimble, George R., Jr.

Projects, Series 1, Bulk, 1972-1975 1966-1995

Language of Material: English
Series Scope and Content

This series contains materials related to Trimble's work as an independent consultant after he left Penta Computer Associates in 1971. Materials consist mainly of reports, correspondence, and notes related to projects that Trimble worked on dating from 1966 to 1995, with the bulk of materials from 1972 to 1975. The largest portion of this series is made up of reports for personal rapid transit system projects for the Urban Mass Transportation Administration. Another large portion of this series consists of reports and manuals, most of which were authored by Trimble, for the Mergenthaler 5500 System. There are also records related to a rejected patent application for Trimble's Computer Tutor, Penta project proposals from Trimble's time with the company, and folders containing records related to Penta, KeyLogic, and Penta's acquisition by REDCOR, including press releases, promotional material, photographs, clippings about Trimble, and his letter of resignation. This series is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

102734237 Advanced Group Rapid Transit System (AGRT) 1975-09
102680144 Commodity activity display board 1980-1981
102672848 Computer Tutor 1962-1974; bulk 1972-1974
102672672 Data General Corp. antitrust litigation 1980
102672838 Debevoise &test Plimpton communication system 1983
102734235 Dual Mode Transit System (DMTS) 1973-1974
102734179 High Performance Personal Rapid Transit (HPPRT) 1972-1975
Language of Material: English
Series Scope and Content
This series contains technical papers, notes, articles, and correspondences relating to various computing machines, software, and companies that Trimble was associated with. Some of the earliest papers in this series were written by Trimble and others during work at the Ballistic Research Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Aberdeen, Maryland, in the early 1950s. This material also includes writings about BRL written at later dates. Other institutions represented as either publishers or clients in these records include Auerbach Info Inc., Computer Usage Company, IBM, Penta Computer Associates Inc., Lockheed Electronics Co., Texas Instruments, Gilbarco Inc., and Amtrak. A small amount of promotional material, brochures, and newsletters are interfiled with papers that address the same products and companies. Other topics covered in this series include the Monte Carlo Method, ENIAC, linear programming, Project MAC (for multiple access, time-shared computers), work performed at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, the CPC Model II, and systems addressing transportation technologies. This series is arranged chronologically.

Series Scope and Content
This series contains proceedings from conferences including the Deep South High-Speed Computer Conference (1954), various Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) conferences and workshops, and the Third Australian Computer Conference (1966). Many of the proceedings in this series feature papers and talks by Trimble. Trimble's work is featured in conferences and educational symposia held by the American Management Association (AMA), the Computer Usage Company, Computer Usage Education, Inc., and the University of Chicago Center for Continuing Education. The most recently published proceedings (2000) document a symposium and celebration inspired by the 50th anniversary of the invention of the ENIAC, held at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, in November 1996. These proceedings were bound and published by the United States Army Research Laboratory (ARL). This series is arranged chronologically.

Language of Material: English

Series Scope and Content

This series contains manuals, brochures, and product descriptions from computer companies from 1966 to 1988, with the bulk of materials from 1968 to 1973. A few of the folders also include product catalogs, product price lists, order forms, worksheets, sales agreements, and invoices. The REDCOR folders include a large corporation profile report of the company from 1970. This series is foldered by company and arranged alphabetically by folder title.

102734192 A guide for software documentation 1969
102734246 Computer Machinery Corporation (CMC) 1970-1972
102734248 Digital Equipment Corp. 1969-1973
102734247 Entrex Inc. 1971-1974
102672846 Four-Phase Systems Inc. 1972-1973
102734254 General Computer Systems Inc. 1972-1973
102734250 Honeywell Inc. 1966-1968
102672669 IBM Card-Programmed Electronic Calculator (CPC) ca. 1952-1954
102672845 Inforex Inc. ca. 1972
102734241 Interdata Inc. 1968-1975
102734244 Lockheed Electronics Company Inc. 1971-1973
102734255 Logic Corp. and GTE Information Systems ca. 1971
102734245 Mohawk Data Sciences Corp. (MDS) 1972
102734253 Prime Computer Inc. 1978-1979
102734249 Radio Shack TRS-80 1979-1981
102734251 REDCOR Corp. 1969-1970
102734243 Scientific Data Systems Inc. (SDS) 1966-1968
102734242 Texas Instruments Inc. (TI) 1968-1980
102672670 Training materials 1970; 1988-08-18
102672839 UNIVAC 1967-1968
102734252 Varian Data Machines 1968-1972; bulk 1968