



International Business Machines Corporation

Thomas J. Watson Research Center  
P.O. Box 218  
Yorktown Heights, New York 10598  
914/945-3000

Dear Readers,

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to write this brief introduction to this special issue of the SIGMicro Newsletter dedicated to the publication of the initial Holdings of the International Repository for Material Related to Microprogramming and Firmware Engineering. The purpose of the Repository, given in its initial announcement over a year ago, is to make available to practitioners and researchers in microprogramming, firmware engineering, and closely aligned areas, a central storing house where a wide variety of material related to these fields would be housed for access and use.

The response to the original call and to scores of individual letters which were also sent out was gratifying as more than 700 manuscripts and a few artifacts have been donated. The Holdings contained in this issue of the Newsletter represent the humble beginnings of what I believe to be a recognition that the establishment of the repository has been a worthwhile undertaking.

The repository is located in the Archives Section of the Dupre Library at the University of Southwestern Louisiana and, as such, its manuscript holdings will be accessible through the conventional inter-library loan mechanism. The materials in the repository are being cataloged so as to facilitate their access and use and thus be a viable reference source to facilitate work and historical investigations in this important sub-field of computer systems architecture.

President Ray Authement of the University of Southwestern Louisiana sponsored a day of activities associated with the inauguration of this repository on October 29, 1984, just before the Micro-17 Workshop which was held in New Orleans, Louisiana. Similar ceremonies, centered around the repository, are planned to be held on a semi-annual basis. Part of the intent of these activities is to develop a series of videotaped lectures by a number of important contributors to the field. The tapes will become part of the repository holdings and thus be available to the microprogramming community at large. It was appropriate then that Maurice Wilkes, Mike Flynn, and Sam Husson were invited to give the initial talks for inclusion in this videotaped lecture series. We were extremely pleased that Maurice and Mike were able to accept our invitation and disappointed that Sam had prior commitments that could not

be changed. Maurice, during his talk, donated a copy of the original Edsac II microcode to the repository. Mike, at one point during the ceremonies, indicated that he was going to encourage Will Tracz, to contribute his personal collection of some 400 manuscripts to the repository. A subsequent conversation with Will has, in fact, verified that he will do this, increasing the holdings by more than 50% with a single contribution! Sam has agreed to come at another time to give his presentation.

We need your help in helping the repository grow. We need copies of books, reports, MS theses, PhD dissertations, and publications in journals, conference proceedings and trade magazines. However, it is important that the repository retain the widest possible range of materials. We are thus requesting that you contribute such items as architectural specification and documentation manuals, engineering specifications and drawings, field maintenance manuals, microprogramming tools, actual microprograms for specific machines, user documentation and manuals, sketches and photographs, personal communiques, unpublished notes and papers, physical examples of fabrication and implementation technology, sales literature (including pricing and delivery schedules), breadboard systems, memoirs, and actual microprogrammable computer systems or portions of computer systems. There is no question in my mind that many of you have such material either in boxes in a warehouse or in a musty file cabinet somewhere. I was able to secure from Sam Husson the complete set of background material he had acquired when doing the research for his now famous book. Similarly, I was able to persuade Bob Rosin to send in all of the notebooks and reports that he had stashed away in his attic for the State University of New York at Buffalo's early 1970's microprogramming effort, Project Mu, which had, of course, been partly responsible for the birth of the Nanodata Corp.

Please send your descriptive material directly to:

I. Bruce Turner, Curator  
Archives/Special Collections  
University Libraries  
University of Southwestern Louisiana  
302 E. St. Mary Blvd.  
Lafayette, LA 70503-2038

Such an introduction cannot be complete without thanking publicly those who gave their time and effort or support to bringing it about. I would like to thank Maurice Wilkes, Mike Flynn, Bruce Turner, Subrata Dasgupta, Steve Landry (who took on the Herculean task of producing the Holdings document), Joe Linn, Mike Maher, Dave Andrew, Ray Authement, and to the contributors who have thus far taken the time, energy, and effort to send something in to us.

We are in the process of developing a structure to plan for continued growth for the Repository. Tentatively it will include a Technical Curator, the Chairman of the ACM's SIGMicro, the Chairman of the IEEE Computer Society's Technical Committee on Microprogramming, and a small Board of Directors. As soon as these plans are firmed up and approved by the University they will be distributed to the microprogramming community via this Newsletter. I welcome your comments and recommendations. You can contact me at:

Bruce D. Shriver  
IBM Thomas J. Watson Research Center  
P. O. Box 218  
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598  
(914) 945-1664

csnet: shriver.yktvmv@ibm  
compmail+: b.shriver  
bitnet: shriver/yktvmv

Sincerely,



Bruce Shriver