
Subject: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [Andrew B](#) on Sun, 01 Nov 2015 04:21:12 GMT

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Hello fellow homebrew computer enthusiasts! Welcome to the new RBC forum.

I'll be making a few threads to cover different topics, but I thought it might be fun to start the next phase of our group with some new introductions for everyone.

I'm only 30 so I missed the eras of the S-100-type computers and the early PCs, but my the first computer my family had was an IBM 5150 that a friend gave us (formerly owned by someone who had worked at IBM's chip fab in Burlington, VT) It had all of the manuals and original IBM software, so it gave me a pretty good start on retro computers. We progressed through another used 8088 (an Epson Equity 1 with the full 640k and CGA) and a Northgate 286, before I finally convinced my family to buy a brand new PC. Even after we had a new family PC, the first PC I had that was just mine was a Packard Bell 486. So I've used a range of different eras of hardware.

The programming skills I learned in BASICA eventually go upgraded to QuickBASIC, then in college to MATLAB and Python. My work is as a mechanical/propulsion engineer designing/building spacecraft subsystems (there's some parts I built when I was at JPL on Mars right now with the Curiosityrover , and now I'm working on the new Dragon 2 crewed spacecraft at SpaceX), but I've gotten a lot out of the skills the original PC gave me in terms of not being scared to write some code to make a job easier or build a board to interface mechanical hardware to electrical hardware.

So far I've built the V1 Zeta+PartPortProp, John's 12-slot backplane for the 505-6058 chassis, the SBC-188, 4MEM, and Color VDU boards, as well as the Spare Time Gizmos SBC-6120 PDP-8 SBC (I'd love to bring a 6120 board into the fold of our ECB bus!. On the S-100 side I just finished Ant's 18-slot backplane and I've got a backlog of the S-100 boards to build a new-build S-100 system. I also distributed the run of 65 of the 6x0x-ATX-6U boards all over the world. I've got a vintage Vector Graphic MZ that I spent a lot of time getting running again - finally got ahold of the matching Mindless Terminal this fall.

Andrew B.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [rcini](#) on Sun, 01 Nov 2015 13:14:24 GMT

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Hi Andrew!

I, too, missed the original S100 boat, instead coming in with the Commodore VIC-20. Years later, I got into the "vintage computing" hobby by collecting machines that I used when I was a kid (mostly Commodore), moved to minicomputers (the PDP-11...I knew people in the Temple University CS department) and then moved to S100 when I got an Altair followed by an IMSAI. Around that time, I discovered an Altair emulator program written by a guy at Microsoft (which was mostly blinkenlights) which I took over and made the Altair32.

After that, I decided to start building "new" vintage stuff and discovered the ECB Z80 board built by Andrew Lynch. The rest, as they say, is history. Since then I've built systems based on the original Z80 board, the 80188 and the 68k. All great boards to work with.

Glad to be aboard.

Rich

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [martin_h](#) on Sun, 01 Nov 2015 14:54:08 GMT

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Hi, I'm 50, so I was a teen when the Apple II and the various CP/M systems were in their prime. So I have a fondness for all the eight bit systems of that era.

I've built a 6502 using Rich Cini's PCB and I am in the process of building a mini-68k system. Since I'll have the backplane and I/O board I'll probably build a Z80 machine down the road and figure out a way to switch back and forth.

I'm also part of an online robot building community, and we post videos of the robots doing various challenges that group members come up with. I also plan to post some additional retro computer videos as well.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [herman](#) on Sun, 01 Nov 2015 18:37:46 GMT

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As for me, I'm 62 years old, cut my teeth on what are now considered retrocomputers. First computer was a Netronics Elf with a whole 4K ram. Getting back into constructing the retrocomputers.

From this group, I've built the V1 Zeta+ParPortProp. Working on the 6x0-ATX single board computer. Hardware completed, just need to burn the software.

Also working on the FPGA multicom board by Moxham et al.

Looking forward to working through this new forum.

Herman

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [sarah](#) on Mon, 02 Nov 2015 01:31:43 GMT

Hi All,

I spent my teenage years in the Apple II era, with CP/M via Microsoft SoftCard. My first PC was a kit from Heathkit... '85 or '86 I think. I designed and built a couple of little single board computers in that era, too. Then got pulled into mostly-software for a few decades... I started a second phase of electronics tinkering not quite a decade ago; that time I got an amateur radio license and built an Elecraft K2 before getting pulled away by other things. Now apparently I'm starting the third phase of my electronics tinkering career!

I'm pretty much a newcomer to the N8VEM stuff. My first SBC V2 booted up on the first try last weekend! I'm in the process of ordering more ECB boards to play with.

I also have a little board for the Signetics 2650 CPU in the works. Maybe. It's my first pcb design ever, and the first time I've ever sent anything to a board house, and I didn't build a prototype first, so we'll see how it goes. If it works (or is fixable!) I'll be able to run Signetics' PIPBUG monitor rom on it. I've also put together a little 2650 assembler in Python so I can adjust the code, initially just to be able to change the memory map.

I hope the forum/wiki transition is sorted out soon; it feels like I'm jumping in just as things are starting to fragment and fall apart!

Sarah

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [martin8bity](#) on Tue, 03 Nov 2015 16:59:07 GMT

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Hi All,

I am 44 and from Eastern Europe, so I experienced some of 8-bit computers in late 80's as a teenager. I have never heard of 8-bit Apple nor S100 computers till few years ago when I started to discover US computers. And I like it much. I built most of the N8VEM boards, SCELBI 8H replica, Cosmac Elf 2000 and SBC6120+IOB6120+FP6120 by Spare Time Gizmos. I used to use CP/M on Z80 Sharp MZ-800 and play games on my friends' ZX Spectrum, Atari 800XL or Commodore C64. The Sharp MZ-800 is still my favorite computer and there is quite a lot going on here around it. We created some interface replicas and there is Unicard emulating floppy, RAMdisk and Quick Disk interfaces, adding VGA and Ethernet to this old computer.

Martin

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [ewout](#) on Fri, 06 Nov 2015 12:07:24 GMT

Hello All,

I am 22 and had some very enjoyable childhood experiences with a lot of systems in the mid 90s which my parents got through their work in the computer industry. So as you can guess my love for computers and electronics started very early...

A few I can remember:

- The Philips P2000 (z80 with both CP/M and some proprietary OS)
- S100 based machine (connected to the Philips)
- VME based machine (connected to the Philips)
- A lot of Tulip Intel based computers: system I/Extend (8086), At Compact (80286) and Tulip TR (80386)

Currently studying Studied Embedded System Engineering, mostly the same as Electrical Computer Engineering but more realtime OS and MCU/PLC related. Furthermore still studying for my amateur radio license so I can finally do fun things with (long range) Packet Radio and LoRa for IoT, as I now can't broadcast with more than 200mW legally.

Also I am pretty new to the whole RBC/retro community, besides having build 8051, Z80 and AVR32 based microcomputers and robots for various college assignments. Planning to build the ECB Z180 SBC Mark IV and the ECB MC68030 CPU boards together with a few boards. (Got the PropIOv3, DualSD, DiskIOv3, MF/PIC, AD/IO and the Bus Monitor. Looking forward to play with CP/M and Fuzix on The Mark IV and with (Net)BSD and (uc)Linux on the MC68030.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [computronik](#) on Sat, 07 Nov 2015 02:02:55 GMT

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Hi all, my first contact with a computer was when I was 16 years old with a MSX , now I have 43 years old .

One of my hobbies was collecting computers for example Amstrad, commodore , zx-spectrum , Msx but when I finished my studies I found that electronic repair and build computers was much more fun.

I have built about a dozen N8VEM pcb´s including the ZETA project from Sergey Kiselev .

I love the CP/M era !

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [jgalinat](#) on Sun, 08 Nov 2015 22:35:54 GMT

Hi everyone,

I am 58 years old and my first computer was an IMSAI 8080 that I built from a kit in 1977. While I had decent soldering skills because of a 2 year electronics degree from a local junior college, I had never built a kit of this magnitude before so I was amazed that it worked on power up. I remember soldering 1600 pins for the 22 slot S-100 backplane in one evening. I started with a Tarbell cassette interface but soon after purchased the North Star floppy disk system. Each disk only held 90k but it was so much more versatile compared to cassette. I sold the system in the early 1980's to purchase an Apple][+. One unique feature of my Apple][+ system was that I had a Vista A800 floppy controller on it running dual 8" drives. Each DSDD drive stored 1.2MB vs 170K for the Apple Disk][under DOS 3.3. Another nice feature of the controller was that if you had a Microsoft Z-80 Softcard installed, you could run CP/M and read & write the CP/M standard SSSD 241Kb disks (77 tracks, one head, 26 each 128 byte sectors per track) to interchange with other 8" drive CP/M systems. I still have that Apple system and have purchased a couple of IMSAI machines in order to restore them to operating condition so I can relive the old days.

Since I enjoy building boards, I have various N8VEM boards either fully or partially completed. The latest board I have built is Josh Bensadon's 8080 AIR (Altair IMSAI Replacement) board. Lately I have been using Josh's built in monitor program to test the stack of 4k, 8k, 16k and 64k boards I have accumulated over the past copy of years. I now have a stack of good boards to restore a system with and a stack that needs some further attention but I am making progress.

Admittedly I am not much of a programmer but I do enjoy building & experimenting with hardware interfacing and have written some small machine language & BASIC programs to test the hardware out.

Normally I am not so verbose but I figured I would give the full story about my interests in retro computing.

Regards,
Jeff Galinat in NJ

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [jgalinat](#) on Mon, 09 Nov 2015 10:26:45 GMT

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in my prior post I wrote:

[Each DSDD drive stored 1.2MB vs 170K for the Apple Disk][under DOS 3.3.]

This is a typo and should have said 140k for the Disk][.

Jeff

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [w9gb](#) on Wed, 11 Nov 2015 17:20:48 GMT

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Hello All --

Involved with Electronics since 1970, that started with SW radio, electrical work, and high school shop electronics.

Built my first Heathkits in 1971 and electrically wired the farm's barn in 1970 (local electrician impressed).

I still repair Weller soldering stations from this era.

--

So, I started with real drafting boards and slide-rules ... by 1973 the first 4-function hand calculators (Bomar, TI SR-10) at ~ \$100.

Trips to University of Illinois (no HAL) saw the early Illiac and CDC Plato system.

In Spring 1974, we were shown the first Intel 4004 IC (ceramic, gold pins) in classroom.

Over the next 5-6 years, I spent more time with scientific programming & computing (WATFIV Fortran, CDC Basic, SPSS) and

reading about the Altair, IMSAI, Apple, etc. developments and later seeing early Atari (more game machine than computing).

Hardware building was limited during this period.

By 1980, working as an academic advisor -- some exposure to Radio-Shack's early models (1, 2, 4) and TI-99/4.

In graduate school, I purchased an IBM-XT computer and worked with first 3Com Ethernet network with an Altos 586 file server (8086, 10MHz) and various languages, Pascal, C, Basic, Lindo, some Assembler, and early PC packages dBase II, Lotus 1-2-3, WordStar, and early MS Word.

Many of my colleagues had CP/M systems (Heathkit H-100; Kaypro 2/4; NorthStar; home-built S-100 systems) --

ironically I had skipped that step -- starting with 8088/8086 systems -- and approached as clean slate.

During my summer work in 1984 saw the Apple Macintosh introduction (after Apple III disaster).

My specialty work for 15 years were the communication interconnects (analog modems, LAN, early frame-relay, and fibre-optics).

Professional work sprinkled along with variety personal and mini-computers (and OS, languages) from: Pr1me, DEC, Tandem, IBM, Honeywell, AT&T, and HP

So, been working with Intel/DOS/Windows environment for 30+ years.

In the late 1980s, worked for 5 years with a variety of Steve Ciarcia's and MicroMint embedded systems (Z80, Z180).

Looking to build a few of the 8-bit systems that I saw or worked with -- but did not DIY build at that time (poor college student).

greg
Chicago

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [nealcrook](#) on Fri, 04 Dec 2015 00:43:46 GMT

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Hi,

I grew up around the time that Microprocessors were starting to be discussed in the electronics press. I build a Z80-based NASCOM 2 from a kit (the best money my father ever invested in my education) and learned digital electronics and programming from the complete documentation that came with it and from the friendly group of people who I met as a result. These days, I feel nostalgia for the 6809 homebrew system that I sketched out at University but never built. Grant Searle's Multicomp FPGA-based design showed me that I didn't need to dream any longer. I now have a derivative of his hardware to which I have ported FORTH, CUBIX, FLEX and NITROS9. All the RTL and the software is available from my github site.

Neal
UK.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [ian-may](#) on Fri, 04 Dec 2015 08:10:07 GMT

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Hi,

The first microprocessor I encountered was the MC6800 in 1980 as part of my University degree. We used D2 kits and a cross-assembler on a CDC mainframe. Teletypes were used to punch paper tapes and then to load programs into the D2 kit. In 1981 I bought my first "personal computer" an RCA VIP with a CDP1802. After that I started building my own custom systems mainly using wire wrap. I built 6800, 6809, 1802 and Z80 machines. I built a "portable" Z80 CP/M 2.2 system in a discarded Oscilloscope case with two half height 5.25 inch floppies and a 5 inch green phosphor CRT (which was perfectly readable at 80x24). Next were some of the Rockwell "65" series machines R6511, R6541 and R65FR11 (which has a Forth kernel in on-chip ROM). My fun was finally over when I got a new job and had to start writing programs for MSDOS in both assembler and Turbo C with all the joys of near/far/huge pointers and the various memory models to choose from all courtesy of the brilliance of Intel.

Ian.
Adelaide South Australia

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [kyeakel](#) on Wed, 13 Jan 2016 22:12:48 GMT

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Hi,

I started out programming an IBM Series 1 computer in the late 70's, the first home computer I

bought was a Timex Sinclair 1000. Over the years I had TI-99a and the Commodore 64, I then transitioned to the IBM PC, AT, PS2, etc. I now collect and repair many computers, last count I have over 250 computers, most working. I was a member of the N8 forums and have built the ECB computer, backplane, DSKY. I also have built at least 20 of the S100 boards that were offered as well. My current project is completing the N8 home computer I bought but never had time to get to. It was a surprise when I went back to my old links and none of the N8 stuff was working anymore. I looked on this forum and the wiki but didn't see much related to the N8-2312. Hopefully someone here can get me pointed to the last known working ROM and other files to bring it up..

Kipp

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [Sergey](#) on Fri, 29 Jan 2016 20:40:04 GMT

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Hi All,

I've got introduced to computers in mid 80's when I was about 10 years old. I was somewhat lucky: not many people in Soviet Union had access to computers at that time, and both of my parents had computers at work. During that time home computer was mostly a dream, although a few years later several magazines started publishing DIY computer projects: Specialist, Radio 86RK, UT-88 to name a few. They all were based on KR580VM80A (Intel 8080A clone). I had a dream of building my own computer since then, but it took quite some time to realize it...

In late 80's parents bought me a factory made 8080A computer. It was somewhat frustrating - no graphics, bad keyboard. And soon a few of my friends got ZX Specturm clones with nice colorful games, so I was kind of jealous. My tape recorder failed too, so I had no ability to load software, and so I had to learn 8080 opcodes to program it directly from the monitor

Later on (in a few years) I had a ES1841 computer (XT compatible, with 20MB hard drive!), which I earned while working at a small business that bought a railroad car full of these computers. As everything soviet-made nothing worked out of the box, so I had to take these computers apart, test the components on known working system, and then rebuild them.

Then I had (and still have) multiple AT compatibles, anything from 386DX40 to the latest Intel Core i7. And while I built most of them myself, what is exactly the fun in building computers from readily made blocks - motherboards and controllers. So I was really excited when I saw Andrew L. Z80 SBC project: I liked the design, and the fact that the PCB was affordable. So in early 2009 I've ordered the PCB and built it. That was followed by building the backplane and Disk I/O (oh boy, that data separator was difficult to find and expensive).

Next I designed my own Intel 8088 based XT compatible board, somewhat using the ideas from Z80 SBC (e.g. SRAM instead of DRAM). This was followed by Zeta SBC, which was designed as a simpler to build, standalone alternative to Z80 SBC. Next I designed EBC Disk I/O V3 board, and several ISA adapters to extend my XT board (OPL2 card, floppy controller, XT CF Lite v4, Super VGA). I also made respins for the XT board (now named Xi 8088), and Zeta SBC - the V2, which adds Z80 CTC, includes more modern FDC, and has more flexible memory management.

I've been quite busy with work and life for the last half a year, but I am still around. I am trying to migrate documentation for the boards that I've designed to RetroBrew Wiki as time allows (anyone

wants to help?!).

It is nice to see all of you here. And huge "thank you" to Andrew B. for keeping this project running.

- Sergey

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [drs](#) on Fri, 26 Feb 2016 16:25:45 GMT

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Hello,

my name is Claudio and I am from Austria. Now 30 years old I have SBC and DiskIO boards before me, ready to be soldered (backplane got caught up in customs).

Building a computer from scratch was on my mind since I was about 10 but all my ventures have either been doomed by my lack of skill at the time or by the time needed to make it work. So a big thanks to all the people that contributed to this project(s) and so shifting the threshold to actually building a working computer into my reach.

I am building 2 units with a friend, nothing too special SBC V2 with the x8 backplane and DiskIO in a first step, I hope to make a working Network interface in a second (Did this with an atmega before).

My iron is hot now, about to start...

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [creep](#) on Fri, 22 Apr 2016 11:38:32 GMT

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Hello,

newly registered (but already reading longer) in this forum, I'd like to introduce myself, first.

46 years old, I might just be the average or below in this kind of forum. I started experiments with electronics when I was 10 years old, the usual radios, amplifiers, etc.

When I discovered literature about microprocessors (East German Z80 clones) I knew, this would be my future field!

My first computer was an LC-80 (Z80 with calculator like keyboard and 6 digital displays) which made it necessary to learn all the most important Z80 opcodes and was really a good way to understand what's going on inside a computer. My second was a second hand "Amateurcomputer AC-1" which was built after an article series in an East-German magazine. This was a "real" Z80 computer with keyboard, TV connection and still the chance to make a lot of modifications.

In '87 I got my ATARI 600XL, later an ATARI 800XE. Suddenly, the Z80 computers were suspended. During this time, I was in high school and learning a profession. At home with ATARI, at work with CP/M computers, like BC5120 and the "Unix" machine P8000, I learned to program Z80 as well as 6502 processors.

After '89, I first upgraded to ATARI ST, later Commodore Amiga, finally PC. I never again was so involved like I was with the 8-biters.

After many years just using computers, I first came back to having fun again with the beasts of my youth. I'm active in an ATARI club, I have several other retro computers. But over the years I was always thinking of how to build another Z80 computer. First chance was when I discovered Grant Searle's fantastic web page. I build the FPGA system with the Cyclone II and couldn't believe how simple it is to build (and modify) a fully working CP/M system, nowadays. By the way, I just received my order of 10 PCBs taken from the WIKI material. If anyone still needs one ...

Now, I am setting up the real Z80 computer on a bread board. First part is working fine, I will continue step by step.

This was also the reason to register here. I'm sure, I will run into problems or have questions how to make things better. My next target is to have a Z80 SBC with a bus interface which allows to add components like additional I/O, sound chip, graphics, ...

It is really amazing how much fun it can be to dive into some technology you left many years ago, thinking newer must be better!

Besides, I am working as a research engineer for a big TV manufacturer. First developing digital TV software (low-level), now unfortunately more preparing Excel and PowerPoint sheets.

René

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [Garth](#) on Sat, 23 Apr 2016 22:11:44 GMT

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Thankyou Andrew for the membership.

My early interest in electronics was mainly analog, but I took a 6502 class in 1982. My interest in computers started in 1984 when I was working in applications engineering at a VHF/UHF power transistor manufacturer. There was plenty of repetitive testing to be done using a lot of lab instrumentation, and automating the process with a computer controlling the equipment and taking data was very attractive.

There was a ton of wonderful IEEE-488 test equipment to drool over in the thick, hard-bound Hewlett-Packard catalog that came every year. I couldn't afford it, but it didn't take a genius to see

the possibilities with making my own computer and rigging up inexpensive substitutes with A/D and D/A converter ICs, relay outputs, etc.. Although my first home-made computer (1985) worked, it was far bigger and more complex than it needed to be, and wasn't very useful. I did learn a lot about what would be good though. I made my first really useful one, with a 65c02, in 1993, and have improved it a lot in the 23 years since then. I've used it in the development of a lot of products for our company that makes communications equipment for private aircraft, in controlling experiments with new ICs and analog circuits, taking data, programming microcontrollers, etc.. In between, one of the rounds of automated test equipment I designed, built, and programmed for my employer around 1991 was based on STD bus ("STD" stands for "Simple To Design"), and used a 65c02 SBC for controlling everything.

I'm starting to build a new workbench computer, this time in a half-rack-width 3U Eurocard cage, and more of everything--speed, memory, I/O bits, A/D and D/A channels and their precision, bigger display and keyboard, much better portability, etc.. It will use the 14MHz 65816 processor, perhaps dual, and hopefully reaching 20MHz, rather than the 65c02.

I have a 6502 website at <http://wilsonminesco.com/> with loads of 6502 (& related) microprocessor articles, primers, tutorials, and links. Much of it can be transferred to other processor families. There's a list of 86 of my own articles here. To support the hobby, I provide 4-megabyte 10ns 5V very hobbyist-friendly SRAM modules, plus tiny SPI-10 flash modules, and hope to provide more small modules in the future to aid in the construction of home computers.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [biged](#) on Mon, 25 Apr 2016 19:17:07 GMT

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Hi - just registered recently when this forum got a mention over on 6502.org (which turned out, I think, not to be the first mention.)

I'm a 6502 fan but also interested in all computer history from the abacus onward. I haven't built very much, perhaps the most successful project being a joint one which put a 65816 into a BBC Micro (in fact in several ways, from nearly trivial on a stripboard to something more interesting on a PCB, with a CPLD.) Most recent hardware adventure was building a PiDP-8 kit, again as a joint project.

I got interested in computers before I even had a calculator, but my first computer was a CompuKit UK101. After than a Beeb, and some years later an Amiga 500. The CompuKit was a kit, and my first major soldering project. It didn't work at first but I revisited all the joints and that fixed it. I don't think I even had a logic probe or multimeter at the time so I'm not sure what I would have done by way of diagnosis, if I'd needed to.

Very nice to see this active forum and wiki!

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [tobster](#) on Wed, 08 Jun 2016 11:51:56 GMT

Hi all,

Found this great forum a couple of weeks ago when searching for m68k-related info and stumbled upon John Coffman's KISS-68030.

I'm 38, got interested in computers when I got a C128 back in 1987. Moved on to PC's in the early 90's and later to all sorts of different platforms through my work.

I have also been tinkering with electronics for as long as I can remember. When I was 15-16, I built a Z80-based single board computer which resurfaced last year when I was cleaning out the attic. Plugging it in and seeing that it still works and remembering how much I learned when I built it, sparked an urge to build a more advanced SBC.

So right now I am building a 68030-based computer from scratch with the final goal of getting it to run Linux.

I will soon post a separate topic about this project.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [JonB](#) on Tue, 16 Aug 2016 11:52:30 GMT

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Hi

I just joined your forum after being pointed this way by a poster over on the VCF forums. I have the same handle over there (and on *. too). I'm British, live on the south coast of England and middle aged, which means I went through the 80's computer revolution. I learned CESIL, then BASIC. The first machine I laid hands on was a Research Machines 380Z that my school had acquired. It was so precious they kept it locked up in its own little room. My first computer was a ZX81 which I built myself from a kit. I soon learned how limited it was! I did an A level in computing, writing code on a 4032 PET and used CP/M with Wordstar quite a bit. Along the way I acquired a ZX Spectrum and Atari ST, but when the '90s PC boom kicked off, I offloaded all the old toys and had a PC (oh how boring). Later on I programmed system software for flight simulators, then became a computer contractor and worked in the City (of London) for various banks as a programmer. Then, about five years ago, I thought I'd get an ST from eBay to see if I was still interested in computing for fun. That turned out to be an unwise move, as I was bitten by a "collector bug" and now have a fairly extensive collection of retro computers crammed into my study.

Some time ago I stumbled across Grant Searle's site and built a Micro UK101. I had a few days doing the point to point wiring, then a real struggle to get it actually working (the clock was reluctant to tick). This was my first foray into proper digital electronics and although it was frustrating at times, eventually I was rewarded by the sight of the BASIC prompt in a Hyperterm window. Since then I have done a few interesting things, mostly repairing broken 8 bit machines, acquiring the tools required along the way (Z80 ICE, scope, signal monitor, etc). The most epic

repair was a Philips P2000C, which is a portable CP/M computer with twin drives and a 9" display. I picked it up for £24 from eBay and the repair work took months but I learned an awful lot doing it (the most important lesson was to walk away from it when getting stuck, and return later with a fresh mind). Now it takes pride of place on my desk and is fitted with a SCSI2SD card, because it has a SASI port and I wanted a hard drive.

At some point I saw Grant's Cyclone II Multicomp design, and thought I'd have a go at building the CP/M version. I got it running and am now looking to improve on it, which is how I ended up here...

Regards
JonB

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [eagletg](#) on Tue, 16 Aug 2016 17:54:59 GMT

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Thanks for approving my membership! I, too, am one of the VCF guys (but don't hold that against me). I have the same username over there. I'm interested in development of 6502 stuff using a Cyclone II-C.

My first machine was a TI-99/4A. My second was a Commodore 64, after that, a 128! I'm a big computer nerd, and have kept the old stuff around, added to it, and am really back into it now as a hobby.

Will be starting a thread shortly looking for a PCB or offering to make a batch of them and then distribute. Have a few questions first, so those will be covered in my post.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [bingo600](#) on Wed, 07 Sep 2016 06:47:48 GMT

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Thanx for letting me in.

I'm a 50'ish hobby electronics guy from Denmark.

My first PC was made around 80' and was a 6800/6809 (PCB's made , but self solder) Flex system , made by a Swede- CÅ.

Had to go 20 years ago,when i got my new "Boss .. aka married".

So i felt 20 again when i saw that i could get a new one , but smaller & faster.

I just finished a Cyclonell-C system , thanx to forum user nealcrook , who sold me the "MoBo" pCB.

Incredible that one can get a working Flex system for \$40

My preferred PC OS is : Linux Mint (Mate)

/Bingo

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [altairian](#) on Mon, 19 Sep 2016 18:01:25 GMT

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Hi all,

I'm happy to be joining the forum. Back in the mid 70s I had an Altair 8800b that I used while I was setting up a business selling microcomputers. Somewhere along the way, I lost my ship, but after wandering around in the desert for 40 years or so, I recently stumbled across an IMSAI 8080

which I am in the process of restoring. I'm hoping that members of this forum will be able to help me with advice on how to get it going again.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [smbaker](#) on Fri, 20 Jan 2017 00:07:48 GMT

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I started sometime back in the 1980s, with a Coco-2. In my mid teens I was writing BBS games on my Tandy 1000. From there I just went to newer and newer PC clones.

These days I'm a programmer by trade, but I still enjoy tinkering with hardware. I've done a lot of projects with the Raspberry Pi and the Parallax Propeller. I've built a Zeta V2. I've built an RC2014 and a dozen or so cards for it. The next thing I plan on building is an Xi 8088. A PC/XT-powered Nixie Tube Clock would make almost no practical sense, so I'll probably make one.

Scott

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [josiahw](#) on Wed, 01 Feb 2017 22:33:13 GMT

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Hi all,

I pretty much missed the 8 bit era (the first computer I programmed on was a Mac Classic), but I've just finished my PhD and and looking for some interesting learning projects in my spare time. I work mostly with mathematical software and machine learning, so learning OS development is a nice and different diversion. There is definitely something magical about older hardware that can

be built and understood. I am currently traveling, but beginning research and design to build a Z80 based machine and hopefully play with Fuzix when I have a work area again.

Josiah.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [supremespod](#) on Mon, 06 Feb 2017 08:56:51 GMT
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Hello all!

As way of introduction, I've been involved in the development of software since I was 12 - I'm now hurtling towards my 50th Birthday.

Having seen computers head the way of cars - you lift the bonnet(hood - for my cousins across the sea) and all you see is a plastic cover with the words "Do Not Disturb" I feel that by joining the "RetroBrew" community I'm rekindling my youth, back to the days of 8-bit!

My current list of home builds includes a couple of RC2014s(Z80), an L-Star (65c02) and numerous add on boards designed by Dr Scott Baker.

I'd like to thank Dr Scott Baker for his excellent designs and tutorials, Jac Goudsmit for the excellent L-Star kit, Spencer Owen for the RC2014 and Todd Goodman for his help regarding the Zeta 2 that I'm currently building.

Mark.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [mikemac](#) on Sat, 11 Mar 2017 23:04:57 GMT
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Hi,

I'm in my late 50's. Mostly a SW guy. I've ported BSD to a MIPS M1000, ported Linux to a NEC VR4122, Qualcomm Hexagon, and brought Linux up on many different boards. Did my Master's thesis on VLSI design rule checking and worked on several VLSI tool suites over the years. Wrote a bare metal x86 hypervisor for security.

I had a Sinclair ZX81. I have a Altair 8800 in the garage waiting to be refurbished. Currently working with Renesas Synergy S7 during the day. At night I'm playing with designing a MC68SEC000 16MHz board with up to 12MB of RAM, 3+MB of flash, plus 16550, plus x, y, z, plus a bus, plus Feature creep!

Still lust after my old Sun 3/60m. Best Unix box ever for SW devel. But pales in comparison to my Symbolics LispM!

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [plasmo](#) on Wed, 29 Mar 2017 21:32:35 GMT

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Hi,

My name is Bill Shen. I posted a few 68K designs recently on EASy68k forum under the same moniker of "plasmo" (short for plasmodesma--the thin communication fiber between living cells). A friend suggests that I visit this site because you have active discussions on 68K designs. I'm glad I did. There are lots to read here on various topics.

I'm a 60-year old retired engineer so I'd lived through the microprocessor revolution during my career. My profession was designing & fielding embedded computers for navigation & guidance applications. I designed with 68020/68040 in the first half of my career and ARM7 in the 2nd half. 68K is my favorite, by far. So in my retirement I thought I'll continue to explore the various features of 68K, especially in the desktop environments.

I've rediscovered, as y'all already did, the affordability of pc board. The 10ea-100mmx100mm-for-\$10 is a revelation to me. I designed several 68K board use the 100mm format which I've named "Tinyxxx" such as Tiny302, Tiny020, and Tiny030. I will put these designs on the wiki pages but for now you can find more info on them on EASy68k forum if you are interested. I'm currently thinking about a Tiny040. These are cheap & quick path-finding projects to reacquaint myself with 68K family and check out my design tools, but I find myself enjoying the projects enormously. I've drank the cool-aid and am a retrobrew faithful now!

Bill

Edit: links to Tinyxxx

Tiny030: <http://www.easy68k.com/EASy68Kforum/viewtopic.php?f=10&t=1590>

Tiny020: <http://www.easy68k.com/EASy68Kforum/viewtopic.php?f=10&t=1581>

Tiny302: <http://www.easy68k.com/EASy68Kforum/viewtopic.php?f=10&t=1574>

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [sbrk](#) on Tue, 04 Apr 2017 18:35:47 GMT

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Hello all,

I'm Zach Metzinger. I've been attached, in one way or another, to a computer for the vast majority of my 41 years. My first machine was a NCR 8150 minicomputer, moving on to 6502-based systems at school and 8086-based systems at home, then on to 6800 and 68000 embedded systems at university.

Now I have a job writing firmware for (and, occasionally, improving the hardware design of) my company's ARM microcontrollers. On the side, I like to build both microprocessor and microcontroller systems for fun. I've got a large pile of 68k, x86, and some more oddball processors (Am2900, m88k, Alpha) that I'd like to experiment with in the near future.

It's great to find a group of enthusiasts which still want to know how it all works down at the bit

level!

--- Zach

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [commodorejohn](#) on Fri, 07 Apr 2017 05:17:14 GMT
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Hello! I'm commodorejohn from over on VCF and a few other retrocomputing forums. I've been following the doings of the N8VEM/RBC community off and on for some time now (even built a Zeta SBC a few years back, still need to get it properly set up in a case and do stuff with it) but I finally got around to registering here since I've picked up a spare Xagdin/Gryphon PCB from ajlynch and will undoubtedly have a few questions as I quest to get it up and running...nice to meet you all

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [sebastian](#) on Tue, 11 Apr 2017 06:59:04 GMT
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Hello, and thanks for letting me in!

I'm Sebastian from Germany, and just a little bit too young to have fully experienced the 8-bit era first hand. Instead, I grew up with DOS and learned Pascal instead of BASIC.

In the 90's, I worked part-time as a service technician, and also became a regular at the kind of almost "Hamfest-like" computer fairs that don't seem to exist anymore today, at least not in Germany. During that time, I collected a lot of hardware items that would have been called "vintage" today, from MDA and similar early video cards to SyQuest and MO drives, even a prototype or pre-production Cx486SLC mainboard with a socketed CPU.

However, most of that is lost - destroyed due to naively choosing an inappropriate storage facility (because living in a small flat and collecting computer stuff does not fit together well). Note to others: A greenhouse, even if not used for growing plants anymore, is not a suitable place for anything of value, especially not electronics.

Working with microcontrollers, which despite their higher integration are in many aspects comparable to the classic 8-bit CPUs, and the fact that most of today's software development seems to consist of putting together modules you don't fully understand and praying that nothing breaks, has led me to appreciate the art that computing was "back in the old days".

So now I'm here, hoping to learn something from the vastly experienced people here, and put to use the things I have already learned from working at an electronics firm.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [znac049](#) on Tue, 09 May 2017 08:35:46 GMT
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Hi,

I'm from the UK and in my 50's. I built my first computer in 1978 - a Compukit UK101 (6502, 4K RAM). I modified it heavily but moved on to other processors as soon as possible, my love being the 6809. I had a Dragon32 which again, I modified heavily - serial ports, extra memory, some latches to control a digital cassette deck (so I could implement a *very* primitive seek mechanism) and loads of other stuff I can't remember. My other love was vector based games and still have a Vectrex, which has both a vector display AND a 6809 - how neat is that?

Work wise, I've written code for everything from Vax, PDP-11, 68k and I still favour C and machine code. For a few years, I did a lot of development in BCPL which is actually a really half decent language. These days, I'm an IT Manager for a company that tests digital devices (TVs, set top boxes)

Back in the day, I could never afford all the hardware I wanted but now, there are all sorts of possibilities, including FPGA. I'm intrigued by the HD6309 in comparison to the 6809 and am busy "Upgrading" John Kent's (with Neal Crook's modifications) 6809 core so it understands the additional 6309 instructions and am making good progress. I'm still intrigued by what can be achieved with this old tech without all the bells and whistles of later developments.

Enough, I think. If you want to know more, just ask

-Bob

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [just4fun](#) on Tue, 09 May 2017 18:03:45 GMT

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Hi,

I'm from Italy. The first computer I used was a Sperry Univac 1100/80 at the University. I had a lot of fun programming it in assembler (the language I like more...) and those days I did a "strange" program to "gain" more CPU time... (nowadays "that" kind of program would be called in an other way...).

The first PC I bought was an IBM XT compatible, so I missed the CP/M age.

Anyway during the 80's I designed and built a simple SBC based on a 8085 CPU that still works.

Recently I have developed a tiny Z80 system with CP/M 2.2 up and running, and currently I'm "porting" the QP/M 2.71 (with a RTC).

I'm here to share some information. I think this is the right place...

(and please don't ask me because I have started to build this things... I really don't know...!!)

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [f4hdk](#) on Sat, 27 May 2017 16:50:03 GMT

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Hello,

I am F4HDK, a hobbyist from France.

I started using computer at school with french computers (Thomson MO5 / TO5), when I was 10 years old.

Then I quickly moved to an Amstrad PC 8086 + 512ko. I discovered software programming with it. It was a lot of fun for me.

Since that time, I have always wanted to understand how computers work, in details, internally.

3 years ago, I wanted to reach this goal. I have read lots of documents about old computer, and N8VEM/retrobrew.

I read about CPU architecture, about computer architecture, about compiler, etc... But it was only theoretical knowledge for me, and to learn by doing something real.

Therefore, I started my own project, which I will describe in an other discussion.

Regards,
F4HDK.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [srm Maxwell3](#) on Tue, 25 Jul 2017 17:10:35 GMT

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I learned FORTRAN during the summer of '72, between my junior and senior years in high school. A year later, the the junior college I was attending got their own computer, an IBM 1130 like the one we wrote FORTRAN for; my music degree ambitions faded as I spent all my time in the computer room.

Over many years, I did software engineering with the likes of TDL/Xitan (ZBUG, XPIP), Lexicon (a character and graphic terminal), DEC (VAX DEBUG, VAX FORTRAN, DEC FORTRAN, ULTRIX, FORTRAN for RISC, DEC C), Borland (the RTL for a never-released FORTRAN compiler, debuggers), Applied Microsystems (CodeTEST, SoftLogic), Intel (MS VC++ floating point code generation), Google (infrastructure).

The first computer I owned was an S-100 bus, with Xitan Z80 CPU, system monitor board, 64K RAM board, floppy disk controller, and 2 each 8" and 5.25" floppies. My first C compiler was Leor Zolman's BDS C. (I gave him his first hardcopy listing for the compiler and runtime. Later on, I had several other Z-80 machines, including an IMSAI, but they're all gone, now. Sigh.

Since I first saw the specifications for the Zilog Z800, later calls the Z280, I've wanted to own a machine for which to build a C compiler, an OS (e.g. MINIX), etc. I wasn't able to afford Tilmann Reh's CPU280 at the time, so more recently I started writing a Z280 emulator. While doing some on-line searching, I found this forum and it's new effort to reproduce Tilmann's machine. So... darn... cool! Maybe I'll be able to afford one, this time. Nonetheless, I'm trying to step up my efforts on the emulator. Maybe we can learn what the Z280 might've been like with, e.g. a bigger cache? 16-byte bursts, for instructions *and* data? Branch prediction?

Thanks, folks, for helping to bring back fond memories, and sustain old dreams.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [supremespod](#) on Tue, 25 Jul 2017 18:34:47 GMT

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If you're interested in building a "new" Z80 machine have a look at the RC2014 - I've built a few of them.

Welcome to the forum.

Mark Riley
(SupremeSpod)

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [feilipu](#) on Wed, 29 Nov 2017 06:35:22 GMT

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Thanks for allowing me to join the retrobrew forum.

My main interest is in 8 bit computing, and in the intersection of hardware and software. I didn't do any software or hardware (if you exclude punching cards for a PDP-11 in Uni labs) until relatively recently. For me, it is a way to stave off mental atrophy caused by too many years in engineering sales.

I started out with AVR devices in the Arduino form factor, although I never got interested in their IDE. After building quite a bit of code, I found that the ATmega328p RAM/Flash was too small, and built a Goldilocks sized ATmega1284p device with friends.

Later, I extended the Goldilocks to incorporate analogue capabilities (so missing from the AVR), and had a bit of fun with 8 bit DSP and synthesizers.

I became interested in the Z80 during the 40th anniversary year, and decided to build "Yet Another Z180" SBC. Of course, it had to be the fastest thing that I could build, so it actually uses a Z180 CPU, together with a AMD Am9511a-1 APU, for its heart. I've tried to integrate modern I/O, so that it is useful as an embedded platform, and as a stand alone computer.

Currently, I'm working on finishing up the basic I/O to support banking, and I intend over the next 6 months to build a CP/M bios shim, and integrate the FreeRTOS to allow multiple applications to run concurrently.

Thanks again for the welcome.

Phillip

`feilipu`

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [jblang](#) on Mon, 29 Jan 2018 05:37:16 GMT

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Hi Everyone,

I've just joined the forum and wanted to introduce myself and my project. If people are interested in discussing it I can start a separate topic but I thought I would start here. I have built a breadboard Z80 Computer with an AVR microcontroller functioning as the boot loader and providing IO. I have the original Burcon Altair 8800 CP/M and the CP/M from the SIMH AltairZ80 emulator running on it unmodified. More details can be found on the Github project which I can't yet post a link to but you can find under user jblang, project z80ctrl. I have ordered an RC2014 kit, yet to be delivered, and currently my plan for the project is to produce a plug-in module for the RC2014. There are some schematics and a PCB layout in the github repo for my preliminary design.

A little about me: the first computer I used, around age 7, was my dad's Heathkit H89 running CP/M. From there I went on to use PCs for many years. I became interested in electronics and particularly microcontrollers around 2012 and have been tinkering ever since. For the last couple of years I have become more interested in retrocomputing, first with the C64, and now with my own builds. In addition to my interest in old computers, I've restored quite a few old tube radios. I have a blog on Medium called Adventures in Electronics, where I've written up some of my projects. I am a relatively new ham radio operator, call sign KG5TVD, although lately I've been a bit bored with it and haven't been on the air in a few months.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [djrm](#) on Mon, 29 Jan 2018 16:32:24 GMT

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Greetings everyone, I've been lurking here for a few months reading about the multicom and now I'm a member and have my own Cyclone IIc system running both 6809 and Z80. I've been interested in 6809 since building a simple system way back when to run figForth which I typed in the hex core manually from a listing and blew a set of 2716's. finally driving an old hall effect keyboard and 2x40 LCD. I still have the circuit boards and would like to get them working again - hopefully the eproms still have their data intact. The sources are probably on a tape or microdrive somewhere!

More recently I have resurrected a TA Matmos CP/M computer and also built a RC2014, these have been my first Z80 machines, I have always used 6502/6809/68000 type devices previously. Starting on a Ohio C1P and then Sinclair QLs.

It is fascinating seeing what can be done with the multicomputer design, it is quite an alien programming environment, I'm not sure if I'll get the hang of FPGA programming/ I always wanted a Dragon64 so being able to run NITROS9 is a very welcome bonus.

Kind regards, David.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [gbm](#) on Tue, 30 Jan 2018 07:57:05 GMT

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Hi everyone,

I got involved with microprocessors over 30 years ago (born 1965). Today I teach computer architecture and microprocessor systems and I also design embedded systems, mostly based on Cortex-M uCs. My newest retrocomputing thing is SDC_One - a low cost, simple to build, fully functional computer with classic CPU being the only vintage component. I am going to present the project here soon.

Gregory

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [smp](#) on Sun, 04 Feb 2018 20:23:07 GMT

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Hello everyone!

I'm Stephen Pereira, A.K.A smp. I've been involved with personal computing since I purchased my Altair 8800 kit back in 1976.

I graduated college with my BSEE in 1975. MSCS in 2002.

Retired in October 2016, and I'm loving every moment of it.

Notes from my past history:

In November 1976, I opened the first computer store in NH: Microcomputers, Inc. We sold IMSAI, Polymorphic, and Northstar kits, and assembled cards and computers. We attempted to sell complete systems into local small businesses. My partner and I operated until the fall of 1978, when we went broke.

I have (currently working):

Altair 680, IMSAI 8080 with JAIR-8080 CPU replacement running CP/M v2.2, HP-86B with HP-82900A Auxiliary Processor (A.K.A. CP/M System) and HP-9121D floppy disk drive, HP-110+ with HP-9114 floppy disk drive, HP-200LX, HP-41CL, HP Jornada 820, TI-74 BasiCalc, Apple

IIC+, Apple IIGS (ROM 3), Tandy 2800HD, CoCo 3 with SDC, CoCo3FPGA, Heathkit H8, Osborne 1, Osborne Executive, Kaypro 2, Macintosh 512KE, Macintosh PowerBook 170, Macintosh Graphite iBook 466MHz (M6411), DEC PDP-11/23;

and (currently non-working):

(another) Kaypro 2, Heath/Zenith Z-110, SPARCclassic, a small variety of Macintosh desktop units.

Plenty of stuff here to keep me busy. I recently purchased a Tiny68K board from Bill Shen, and I'm having a blast playing around with it.

Thanks for listening!

smp

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [putnamelectronics](#) on Sat, 24 Feb 2018 18:47:10 GMT
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Hi Everyone!

My name is Jason (or on my YouTube channel, "Corneleous Worthington") I'm super excited to find this forum and like-minded people!

Here's my computer history:

My first computer was a Commodore 64, but growing up I enjoyed playing with a lot of computers (it seemed like each of my friends in the 1980's had a different kind of family computer to use) A couple of friends had VIC-20s, a nuch had C-64s like me, a bunch had PC XTs and PC ATs (or clones), one friend had a Timex Sinclair/1000, etc. My dad was a speech writer, and I remember he used to bring home a TRS-80 Model 100 for work, and that computer was neat! At school there was a yearly field trip to a science center, that had Commodore PETs we'd program BASIC and LOGO on, and they also had Apple IIs. Later in highschool we had Mac Plus/Classics. So, growing up I came into contact with all sorts of neat/awesome computers! I used to love to type in games and programs from Compute! and Compute!'s Gazette, and I absolutely LOVED calling BBSs. Later, in the mid 1990s I hosted my own BBS, a Wildcat!4.20 single line system on a 386 built from dumpster-dive parts! Those were the days!

Currently:

I've been bitten by the electronics bug. Back in college, I got a job fixing circuit boards from pinball machines, video games, and juke boxes. That started a love of circuit boards, and lately, I've started designing my own. I designed a single board computer, called the "PE6502", which is very much like a suped up Apple 1. I talked about it on my YouTube channel (starting with my design and early breadboard experiments) and eventually, once I had boards made, people started reaching out to me asking if they could buy one! I wrote a really cool instruction manual, and started selling kits of this computer through my website (putnamelectronics.com).. I've been selling a lot of kits, and have lately decided to start designing/selling a sound-card add-on (SID

compatible for you Commodore fans) I'm also going to start selling a full kit of the Zeta2 computer (from Sergey Kiselev, and thoroughly documented here on RetroBrew Computers forum, where you can also buy just the board I believe) so if someone wants to build one, they can buy everything they need in one kit. I promised Sergey I'd write a detailed assembly manual first, so that even a newb could build one and feel comfortable, so I'm working on this now. It will come with the ROM already burned with the awesome firmware made by Wayne Warthen, Douglas Goodall, and David Giles (RomWBW) which includes CPM, a monitor, and other cool features.

Other projects:

I'm restoring a broken Apple II+ I got off eBay. I've got the display capability running, but it looks like my keyboard encoder is blown up. I'd like to make a new one using off the shelf components (I'm thinking an Atmel or PIC microcontroller based system).. I could use some collaborators on this if anyone would like to help. My strong suit is hardware design and implementation. I kinda suck at software!

I also cloned the awesome Briel AltairMicro- I wanted to buy one, but Vince is currently not selling them. I sure hope he starts selling his awesome products again! I hear he might sell through ReactiveMicro? If anyone knows anything about this, please let me know! I've built my own, and it is fully functional, but there are a LOT of parts in this- I have no idea how he was able to sell these for a reasonable price. This was a really fun project though! What I'd really like to do is, design a front panel for use with the Zeta2, so that the Zeta2 computer can be mounted in the AltairMicro style case, and can have the panel be a fully functional interface (in addition to a real S100 backplane too, so old-school cards can be used with the new tech SBC Zeta2). Now THAT would be cool!

OK, sorry for the ramble, and I hope this didn't sound too much like a commercial! I'm just excited to be here and to talk to you guys!

Jason

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [gr4eme](#) on Sat, 03 Mar 2018 10:08:56 GMT

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Hi

My name is Graeme,

Quick computer history, First computer was an Acorn Electron back in the 80's, First PC was a Chendai that belonged to my uncle that was loaned to my parents when they started their business. First PC owned was a Toshiba T1000 laptop. Went through the process f 286,486 and pentiums. Was a Windows 95 beta tester and one of a handful who managed to remove the os back to DOS with reformatting the hard drive , didn't have a lot of choice as the family business was on the computer i was using lol took me about 19 hours straight to find all the hidden directories and files and get a functioning dos based machine back. Last windows machine was XP as i jumped to Macs.

I have been working in the High End Audio industry for 23 years mainly as a speaker designer, went self employed in 2012 which has meant me learning a lot more electronics as active and streaming become more common place.

Have interests in old cars and electronics sadly whilst micro controllers interest me i cant program, recently started watching the 8 bit guy on you tube which sparked an interest in the old computers of my childhood then found Sergeys projects and this group. Currently have the Micro88 and the backplane which i hope to get building in the next month as time permits

Im sure i will have questions and always looking for things to build

Graeme

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [ale500](#) on Sun, 22 Apr 2018 05:41:09 GMT

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Hello everyone,

I'm Ale, and I love retrocomputers. I grew up with a Brazilian TK-85, Z80-Based and a discrete clone (no ULA) of the ZX-81. I have several half-done projects involving 68K (68000, 68020, 68040), Z(x)80s, and some on the drawing board for 8086, 80188 and K1801VM1 (Russian PDP-11 clone). I'm quite proficient with FPGAs what brings the dilemma: is something FPGA-based a "real" computer or not...

A Tiny040 would be great ! It would probably have to be a "double decker", the 040 is quite a large package at ~5x5 cm.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [scottie4442](#) on Thu, 06 Sep 2018 13:42:40 GMT

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Hi everyone

I have been working with computers since 78. I started on an IBM system 34 doing COBOL and RPG programming. My first computer that I owned was a hand built trs-80 model 1, found out at the time that you could order the boards at the local radio shack and I got a copy of the model 1 technical reference manual. I collected up the parts and built it myself, my grandpa built me a case for it out of wood (wish I still had that computer). I was an assembly language programmer for a long time, worked with z80, 8080, 8086, 6502, 6800 and 68000. I just got the boards for the zeta v2 and the z80-mbc2 and am working at finding the parts. I also own my original model 4p, had it since 87. I like to work in retro computer scene and tube audio equipment. Teach at the local community college, my program is computer networking, my main area of expertise. I also work on the side as a system engineer/administrator for a bunch of local companies.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [rvumbaca](#) on Fri, 28 Sep 2018 01:26:43 GMT

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Hi everyone,

My name is Ross, I am an electronics engineer and I like to repair and play with old computers and technology. I design modern electronics in my day job. Unfortunately modern technology makes it very hard to have a complete understanding of an entire system, unlike previous times.

Thanks to everyone for keeping retro computers alive and for sharing their designs!

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [Tawez](#) on Thu, 18 Apr 2019 21:50:23 GMT

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Hi,

I am the software engineer that has been born about 20 years too late and now desperately trying to catch what I've missed.

Spending my childhood on decomposing various devices into pieces now trying to do the opposite.

Enchanted by beauty of 68000 architecture, trying to build my first m68k based computer.

Hoping to have a lot of fun.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [protocall7](#) on Mon, 14 Oct 2019 21:27:41 GMT

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Hi All,

I'm proto, a 33 year old devops engineer. I too missed out on many of the machine types discussed here -- my first machine was an 80286 in the early 90s. That said, I was exposed to the Apple II from a very young age at school, and worked my way through computers of the 286, 386, 486, AMD K5, AMD K6, Pentium, Athlon, et. al. families.

Since 2014, I have been working on the design of my first homebrew machine. It is Z80 based, sporting a 32K ROM, 32K RAM, bus buffering and decoding on-board, and several peripheral expansion slots. I am intending this machine to be a platform to develop the peripherals I will require to run a more full-fledged system. I am targeting CollapseOS for the first rev of this machine (I was previously torn between BASIC and a custom ROM monitor), and maybe a TinyBASIC ROM. The first set of boards should be arriving from China sometime this week, so I will probably have plenty of questions for the group as I start assembling and testing my design.

Hopefully with this first machine, I will be able to develop serial communications (via an SIO),

persistent storage (I'm thinking CF Card, but I did pick up a couple of the WD1773's that norwestrzh posted about over the summer), an RTC, and banked memory. If I can get all of that functionality running, I believe I will have a fairly complete platform for running FUZIX.

I look forward to joining in the community, and the opportunity to learn and share information!

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [jl28](#) on Tue, 15 Oct 2019 12:26:01 GMT

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Hi all, glad to be here :)

I've recently got the RC2014 bug having built the Zed Pro kit. I have a few PCBs for the Zeta V2 SBC on their way from the PCB fab too. I've been playing with electronics most my life, but lately it's mostly been limited to Arduinos, until I saw the RC2014. Prior to that I designed and built an 8051 SBC at uni over 2 decades ago. First computer was a TRS-80 MC-10, followed by a C64, Amstrad PC1512, generic 386SX33, DX2-66, etc. Picked up a few more interesting machines along the way such as a SPARCstation5, MicroVAX, VAX4000/705A (donated to a museum), AlphaServer 2000 (also donated).

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [beb](#) on Tue, 15 Oct 2019 12:52:42 GMT

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Hello to all members of the forum,

my name is Benoit, I am a 52yo french electronic engineer who has the chance to work almost everyday on systems based on old processors, like the 68020 or 68000, VME bus, G64/G96 bus, etc... I also work a lot in the domain of vintage synthesizers CPU boards (most based on 8085, 6809, 6303 and other 8 bits processors)

My first computer was a Computers LYNX 96K, which is still working !

I am a FPGA specialist and my main activity is to develop FPGA based emulators of retro/obsolete chips. I work a lot on the MiST platform for retrocomputing but since a few months I am working in parallel to create a kind of "universal retro-CPU" board based on Terasic DE0 Nano daughterboard (able to switch between 6809/6502/Z80/8052 CPUs just by changing the FPGA bitfile). I also have the dream to build a vintage video adapter based on a FPGA model of the EF9356 video processor (but time is missing for now...)

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [skip](#) on Fri, 18 Oct 2019 23:09:29 GMT

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Hello everyone!

I'm excited to see interest in Retro computers from "the kids", I didn't have any idea that 70's tech would interest anyone other than "old farts" like myself.

I'm 66 years old and my first computer was a wire wrapped 8008 that I designed when I was in college. It had 2K of 2102 memory and used a model 15 Baudot teletype as it's console. I eventually added a 64 x 16 line CRT controller and a parallel keyboard. The monitor was an old Sony B&W TV that I'd tapped into past the video decoder. It looked pretty good for the time (no RF demod!).

My second computer was an IMSAI which I slowly expanded over the S-100 years. It ran as an RCP/M system ("The GFRN data exchange) for many years from dual 8 inch double sided double density floppies. It was one of the first 1200 baud dial up BBSs. The AC power was TRIAC controlled by the modem's DCD line. The system would actually boot from floppy from scratch for every caller.

In it's final configuration it had 192k of banked switch memory (4 64k DRAM memory boards), a 10 MB hard disk and ran MP/M with 3 users.

I still have it in my garage and it looks very similar to this picture from 1983:

The system in the lower half of the rack is a surplus Xerox 820 which ran a second RCP/M that was accessible to ham radio operators on 220 Mhz, 9600 baud. I don't have an exact count, but I suspect fewer than a dozen people ever connected to that system. It also was AC power controlled by a TRIAC connected to the radio modem.

I was a member of the Southern California Computer Society (SCCS) and never missed a meeting from the first one in Don Tarbell's condo's rec room to the last one when the no one showed up with keys to open the cafeteria at TRW where the meetings use to be held. (Rumor had it that one of the board members had absconded with several thousand of dollars from the most recent group purchase which caused the clubs demise).

I started off life as an hardware engineer, but for most of my career I've been a freelance software consultant. Most of my work in for the last 10+ years has been with embedded Linux systems. Recently I have worked mostly in the lot consumer electronic field.

My primary hobby interest these days is messing around with FPGAs primarily with surplus PanoLogic boxes.

You can read about a couple of my PanoLogic projects here:
https://github.com/skiphansen/pano_z80 and here: https://github.com/skiphansen/pano_man

Skip

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [b1ackmai1er](#) on Fri, 18 Oct 2019 23:49:13 GMT

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Hi Skip.

Yes heaps of us still reliving the golden age! What's really wonderful is all the new development and designs being done with lots of crossovers of technology.

Enjoyed reading about your Panologic project the other day. Feel free to post some updated pictures of system. I'm in Australia so we don't have as much of the old tech as others do, so it's always nice to see.

Regards Phil (b1ackmai1er)

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [athaphian](#) on Sat, 19 Oct 2019 07:14:56 GMT

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Hi everyone,

Let me introduce myself.

Like many others I was too young to actively participate in the home building of computers. I was born in '83 and the first computer I felt I 'owned' was a 486 MS DOS machine, which I learned QBasic on.

I did have an MSX too, but without tape or disk drive it was a bit of a useless machine for me at that time. I recently sold it, since I was not planning to do anything with the machine anyway. My father had build an Acorn Atom in the time before I was born and I can still remember him playing around with it before he upgraded to x86 DOS machines. He still has that thing somewhere in the attic.

Currently I work as fullstack java / javascript (and everything related from sql to html) developer for various companies in The Netherlands. I have been doing this for about 12 years now. I have also been playing around with PIC microcontrollers (both in assembly and C), Arduino, Raspberry pi's and other stuff and now I have become obsessed with going the same route my dad took and build an 8 bit machine from chips and pcb's. Purely for educational purposes. I am already learning lot's of stuff by reading up on the technology.

For now I don't feel comfortable enough to design my own computer yet and have settled on building the Zeta v2 SBC, since I am very intrigued by the memory paging and chip select logic on that board.

I have sourced most of the hardware, but am still in the market for a Zeta v2 PCB. If anyone has them in stock, please send me a pm. I'd like to take one off your hands :)
Otherwise if I can't find any in the upcoming weeks, I might pull the trigger and contact a manufacturer and order a bunch myself.

-Athaphian-

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [oldspark](#) on Sat, 01 Feb 2020 12:05:59 GMT

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Hi guys,

I'm an 56 years old german, born in the eastern part of germany "behind the iron curtain".

I've built my first Computer out of chips around 1980 or so, it was an small Z80 based system.

Now an old man, I'm still playing with some computers, I own some (Mikro)-PDP11's, Microvaxes, and old robotron Stuff, Z80 and 8086 Systems from the former GDR.

I've worked as system admin and Electronican in the time from 1989 until 2006 for different employers,

our university here in Freiberg where I was able to play with all kinds of big and samm Computers, was one

of them. Since 2007 I'm running my own business, developing electronics, build prototypes and repair

industry related electronics. I'm an Unix Guy, mostly have FreeBSD running since I love BSD since I had an

account on an russian PDP11/34 like system (SM1420) running 2.9 BSD.

An PDP11/83 running 2.11 BSD is still under my desk, ok haven't switched in on for a while..

Lat year a german buddy gave me two blank REH CPU280 Boards which I put together, both are running.

I've build a system with an REH IDE Interface and am 128MB "Disk on Module" Flash disk which is the cause

that I've registered here.

Kind Regards,

Holm

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [fritzeblink](#) on Sat, 01 Feb 2020 12:48:30 GMT

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Hi oldspark

and Welcome here.

We'll see you at Interested in a Z280 SBC (Z280 SBC retrobrew (CPU280 Revival))

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [craig](#) on Mon, 16 Mar 2020 07:04:38 GMT

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Hello everyone. I just joined the forum and look forward to great interactions with like minded people.

I doubt that anyone in my town had a computer when I was a kid so I didn't get started until college. First mainframes and FORTRAN programming -- which really didn't do anything for me-- but then I came across the microprocessor. The microprocessor really threw me for a loop and soon I was head over heels for anything MCS-80 or 85. over the following years I did a fair amount of assembly programming until the 80386 came out when I switched to C. I also did a fair number of hardware designs and builds but eventually my career took me to other places. Somewhat recently retired, I have gotten out all of my old computers I can find, acquired a few too many others, and am now back in the game.

I live in the Pacific Northwest of the US, so am hunkered down with the Mrs for the next several months probably, but spending lots of time with my bit-bucket friends downstairs.

Regards

Craig

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [explodinglemur](#) on Fri, 27 Mar 2020 16:23:44 GMT

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Allo! I'm interested in older computers both from a nostalgia standpoint (Apple IIe was my first computer experience in school, then eventually a Mac SE at home) and to get more experience with less complex architectures to learn from. I'm in the Seattle area.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [knivd](#) on Sat, 16 May 2020 17:18:38 GMT

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Hi All,

Thanks for allowing me into the forum. I have been building computers since the 1980s. Started again more actively in the recent years after a long break.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [trianon](#) on Mon, 25 May 2020 06:58:28 GMT

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Hello everyone,

After years of reading this forum I will now also join actively and post my project(s).
I'm a 48 years old electronic engineer, started with the C64 and then a lot of assembler on the Amiga.

My career started with repairing 68k boards, later on I was the main PCB designer on an 68360 compact PCI card.

After ten years I changed to embedded ARM computers with Win CE on them, we did the full design HW & SW.

During all of this time I have gathered a lot of parts to do with the 68k (chips, boards, books,...)
but never got around to build something with it. Until now :)

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [ashtons](#) on Mon, 25 May 2020 14:28:56 GMT

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Hello! Considering how young I am (19 now, 20 years old in a few months), I might be a bit out of place on this forum but oh well!

As said previously, I'm pretty young compared to most of y'all, and also very inexperienced - I've rarely even had a chance to mess with hardware.

I have a Commodore 64 which I purchased earlier this year, in January, which was repaired by the guy I bought it from.

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [phil_g](#) on Sun, 29 Nov 2020 21:55:33 GMT

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Hi, I'm Phil and I'm 66 from North Yorkshire. I fondly recall the early microprocessor days of the mid 70s when if you wanted a computer, you had to build one and program it in machine code with LEDs and binary switches. I still have my own-design SC/MP microcomputer which runs KITBUG in its 2k ROM and 1k RAM. I scrapped my own much, much modified Nascom-1 some 20 years ago and have regretted it ever since - it literally went in the local dumpsite skip. I originally built the Nascom from a prototype kit for Lynx and its no exaggeration to say I owe my career to that board :d

Back in the 70s I joined the recently formed 'Amateur Computer Club' where everything was homebrewed, this was long before BBCs and such, & later found the "ACC North-West" through the newsletter and used to drive over the Pennines every month to meetings held at Manchester Uni. After a year or so about 10 of us founded the ACC-Sheffield, but by then the commercial stuff was starting to push out homebrewing. I think the local group only survived a further year, then the ACC itself completely faded away from existence.

We started a homebrew computer group within BT and did very well for a few meetings, most were homebrew but one lad had a kit-built Sinclair Mk14 (much in common with my SC/MP) but it too petered out. Things changed so quickly and electronics was expensive. I'd been running a dialup mailbox/BBS on the expanded Nascom-1 for some time by then.

At work we found some scrapped ticket machines that had a Motorola 6800 inside, I pulled the processor boards, wrote a monitor for it and made a few development boards for the club, still have a couple here. It had a heady 1k of RAM, a hex display and hex keyboard.

By this time I'd assembled (from a Ferguson Big-Board, rather than built from scratch) a CP/M machine with 180k diskettes (!) and I joined the CP/M user group which was mostly a library and disk-format-conversion service, I made a few modest contributions, custom BIOS stuff, bios extensions, Remote CP/M, and BBS s/w and a few Ham programs like RTTY, Morse trx, Mailbox, AX25 etc.

The CP/M User Group survived for a couple of years after the IBM PC arrived then that too folded - all the work was done by Derek Fordred and his wife, I think people took advantage of his good nature. I still have my CP/M box (its huge) but I've no idea if it still works - but no matter as I now have a Z80-MBC2 mini-CP/M board which is brilliant - smaller, faster and with more storage than the Fergy!

I like the idea of an accurate software emulation of the old gear, on a familiar, modern processor... I built one of Karen Orton's pic-based MK14 clones which works great, also her pic NIBL basic project, both of which use her SC/MP emulation. I've also an unbuilt-as-yet kit for the Altairduino which is a 100% cycle-emulation of the old Altair 8800, capable of running CP/M and hence a myriad of crappy software obsolescence, with a proper printed panel which faithfully recreates the look of the old rig. I'm so looking forward to assembling it and playing the original, text-only Star Trek game!

I'm going to call the Altair "Ralf" :d In the mid 80s Whiz Kids was my fave programme on TV!

Looking forward to more retro stories and projects

Cheers
Phil G4PHL

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions
Posted by [berzerkula](#) on Wed, 20 Oct 2021 21:31:13 GMT
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Greetings,

William from Northwest Arkansas! I started with Kaypro II's, TS1000's, TRS80's (mostly from the Ham Radio club WOLF) and then moved onto XT/AT machines and pretty much everything in between up till now.

I've set my sights on some 6502 and M68K projects. So far all pretty well. I've had fun building the RC2014 and its add-ons, Ben Eater's 6502, Sergey's Xi8088 (that one was a doozy but fun),

Rosco's M68K (still in progress but have it running and get serial i/o), and KISS-68030.

I can't leave this one out! The Single Board Relay Computer Trainer!

<http://relaysbc.sourceforge.net/> Now that one still has to be tweaked. Some relays may be having issues!

-- William

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [moritzp](#) on Mon, 03 Jan 2022 13:13:08 GMT

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Happy New Year!

Before I start posting to ask questions in the forum I would like to introduce myself.

In the early 80s I got my first computer. A Kosmos CP1 student computer (www.8bit-homecomputermuseum.at/computer/kosmos_computer_pra_xis_cp1.html) to go along with the electronic learning eco system and which I had to program with a decimal assembly code.

In 1987 a XT clone and later in 1993 a 486SX25 followed. And then many more but I never dived into understanding the computer as I did with my XT clone until many years later I started tinkering with Rasperry Pis and Arduinos.

Fast forward to 2018 - I decided to return to my roots and I to build my own XT based on Sergey's design.

Many years ago I picked up a used book from 1983 about designing and building a microcomputer based on the Z80 including peripherals with the intention to have a look at it later. (Rolf-Dieter Klein: „Mikrocomputer selbstgebaut und programmiert - Vom Bauelement zum fertigen Z-80-Computer“, Franzis' Verlag, 1983, 2nd edition)

Today is later.

Instead of following all the steps in the book and use the included PCB layouts I came across the RC2014 eco system and the SBC / ECB designs in this forum.

And this is why I have joined the forum.

Edit: <https://peitzsch.wordpress.com/intel-8088-8087-retro-computer/>

File Attachments

1) [IMG_1531.jpg](#), downloaded 745 times

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [cheshirenoir](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2022 05:50:49 GMT

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Hi All,

Greetings from Perth, Australia.

I'm 50, and the first time round, I started on the good old Commodore 64, then Amiga 1200, then onto a series of increasingly boring PCs. (I did have a brief encounter with a couple of S100 based systems at Uni, but never any serious contact.)

I got into retrocomputing about 8 years ago when a friend gifted me an old Commodore CD32. Since then I have amassed an increasingly large collection of old systems, some common, some less so.

Last year I bought myself an Omega MSX2 PCB, plus the components and built myself my first kit computer, but I hope it won't be my last.

Next on the cards is I want to build a Sinclair Spectrum 128k compatible. I have been contemplating a Harlequin, but I'm open to suggestions. I feel it will nicely complement my Spectrum 48k.

Cheers!

John "Cheshire Noir" Parker

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [hds1](#) on Wed, 25 Jan 2023 06:44:06 GMT

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Hello all,

i'am 62 from Germany and started my computer experience in the late 70ies. ZX80 or 81 where financially out of reach, but my first real uC was a Sinclair QL, which brought me to the m68k processors. Nice ideas in it, but the hardware was in real need of improvement, unfortunately.

Afterwards the usual stuff. Build IBM XT from scratch parts, onto the 80286 processor, pentium etc.

My diploma work was a graphic board with the NEC7220 vector controller chip in a HP68000 system.

I never had the chance to see it action. So my object of desire is a to revive my diploma thesis and build a graphic controller board with the successor IC NEC72120 for the ECB bus. The board is finished but i do not had a chance to bring it to live.

As an Retro-uC-Interface i build the KISS-68030 because it is able to run Linux.
But that brudder is giving me some headache.

So hopefully i can find some assistance here to get the KISS board running.

Heiko

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [plasm0](#) on Mon, 30 Jan 2023 15:31:06 GMT

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Welcome!

There are discussion about NEC7220 and I'm interested in 68K so perhaps you can start a topic about NEC7220 and 72120 with 68K.

Bill

Subject: Re: Welcome to the new RBC Forum & introductions

Posted by [kkeeley](#) on Tue, 31 Jan 2023 22:07:47 GMT

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Welcome Heiko,

I too would be very intersted in seeing/hearing more about the NEC7220/72120 with a 68K as I've been looking at ideas on a graphics controller for my still in the planning stage system.
