

A timeline history of the Stone Microcomputing Center, 1983 to present.

If you know of an interesting fact or figure from this era, please contact Michael Cook (mnc2@cornell.edu).

1983:

Mann: Howard Curtis submits proposal titled “Mann Library Instructional Computing Facility” to CALS (August 9)

1984:

Mann: The Microcomputer Center opens in April. All computers in the lab have two diskette drives. Until 1987, all software in the lab is distributed on floppy diskettes. Jim Madden is the lab’s manager.

World: Domain Name System (DNS) is established, with network addresses identified by extensions such as .com, .org, and .edu.

Writer William Gibson coins the term “cyberspace” in his book Neuromancer.

Apple Computer introduces the Macintosh (January 24th)

The Internet turns 15. 1,000+ hosts on ARPAnet/Internet.

1985:

Mann: Within six months of the opening of the Microcomputer Center, the library staff had to plan for the expansion of its facilities.

The "Online Classroom," which opened in May 1985, alleviated the problem. Located down the hall from the Microcomputer Center (in what would later become Stone II), it had two computers, a video projector, communications connections, and tables and chairs for 30 people.

The electrical load of the building nears capacity with expansions in computing.

World: Quantum Computer Services, which later changes its name to America Online, debuts. It offers email, electronic bulletin boards, news, and other information.

Symbolic.com becomes the first registered domain. (March 15)

1986:

Mann: Ellen Marsden becomes acting manager of the Microcomputer Center. Gwen Urey becomes the manager later in the year.

World: First PC computer virus, “The Brain”, appears.

Sony introduces the CD-ROM. It has 650Mb of storage space.

5000 hosts on ARPAnet/Internet.

1987:

Mann: The first network is implemented in the Microcomputer Center in the summer and made public in the Fall semester. A Novell system running on an Ethernet based network connected 29 PC's and PS/2 computers to an IBM PC-AT file server, fitted with two 72Mb hard disks.

Early networking of software was difficult, as much of the software of the time was not made for networking. A group of student network specialists worked with the manager to develop menus and guides to using the software for novice users.

World: 25 million PCs sold in US.

1.44Mb floppy drives and diskettes introduced.

10,000+ hosts on the Internet.

1988:

Mann: (still going through the vaults – check back soon!)

World: A 23 year old doctoral student at Cornell University creates a virus called the Internet Worm. It temporarily shuts down about 10% of the world's Internet servers. (November)

One of the most common viruses, Jerusalem, is unleashed. Activated every Friday the 13th, the virus affects both .exe and .com files and deletes any programs run on that day.

1989:

Mann: More powerful file server implemented (a 386), with increased storage. Planning is underway for the installation of a "gateway" that would link the Microcomputer Center's LAN to the campus backbone network.

Lab upgrades with 21 IBM-AT compatible Wyse 386 computers. This upgrade introduced the "mouse" to PC users of the computer center for the first time. Five dot-matrix printers also added. The Wyse PC's required a tedious formatting of each diskette used in their drives.

In this era, students had to check out a "boot diskette" to access the network. This procedure was introduced after rampant theft of floppy diskettes was occurring!

Ricky Stewart becomes the Public Access Computing Manager in August.

In September and October, the Novell file server is attacked by the "October 13th" virus, causing a serious interruption in the network.

World: Tim Berners-Lee of CERN (European Laboratory for Particle Physics) develops a new technique for distributing information on the Internet, naming it the World Wide Web.

100,000+ hosts on the Internet.

1990:

Mann: Nine Macs in the Microcomputing Center. At this time only two computers in the Center have access to the Cornell mainframe; resolving this issue is another goal of the "gateway" under development.

Printing in the lab is still "switch box" based – multiple computers shared access to a printer, so users had to wait for someone else's job to finish, change the switch, then print.

57 Course reserve software titles in the Center at this time.

World: The first effort to index the Internet is created by Peter Deutsch at McGill University in Montreal, who devises Archie, an archive of FTP sites.

Symantec launches Norton AntiVirus, one of the first antivirus programs developed by a large company.

ARPANET ceases to exist.

180,000+ hosts on the Internet (interpolated).

1991:

Mann: First Internet access available in the Spring semester. The Mann Library Gateway goes online. The Microcomputer Center is dedicated to John L. Stone by the Stone family on November 10th.

World: Gopher, which provides point-and-click navigation, is created at the University of Minnesota and named after the school mascot.

376,000+ hosts on the Internet (as of January).

1992:

Mann: (still going through the vaults – check back soon!)

World: "Surfing the Internet" is coined by Jean Armour Polly.

1300 viruses are in existence, an increase of 420% from December of 1990.

1993:

Mann: Via Dialog, 150 databases were added to the Mann Gateway. For the first time, Gateway users could access *Current Contents, CA Search* (a version of the Chemical Abstracts database), *FSTA, Enviroline, Federal Register, CAB Abstracts, Medline, Harvard Business Review, New England Journal of Medicine* and many others.

World: Mosaic is developed by Marc Andreessen at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA). It becomes the dominant navigating system for the World Wide Web, which at this time accounts for merely 1% of all Internet traffic. Web grows by 341,000 percent in a year.

1.3 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

1994:

Mann: Available this year were 27 new IBM 486 computers, 11 new Macintosh Quadra 610 computers, 2 laser printers, a new HP ScanJet IIc scanner, a new HP DesignJet 650c color plotter, and numerous dot-matrix printers. Also new were 17-inch SVGA monitors on the PC's and 15-inch NEC MultiSync monitors on the Macs. A new LitePro 550 computer projector was added. Windows software included WordPerfect 5.1; Lotus 1,2,3 ver. 3.0; Dbase IV; Lotus Freehand Plus 3.01; SPSS 4.0.1; Typing Tutor. Macintosh software included Word 5.1; Excel 4.0; WordPerfect 2.0; WriteNow 3.0; CricketGraph 1.3. Internet access via WWW, FTP, Gopher, Telnet; email. Mosaic browsers were installed in July.

Bill Kehoe becomes the manager of Stone in March.

World: Marc Andreessen and Jim Clark start Netscape Communications. They introduce the Navigator browser. The term "spamming" first appears.

Jeff Bezos writes the business plan for Amazon.com. (April)

Microsoft licenses technology from Spyglass to create Web browser for Windows 95. (December)

Good Times email hoax tears through the computer community. The hoax warns of a malicious virus that will erase an entire hard drive just by opening an email with the subject line "Good Times." Though disproved, the hoax resurfaces every six to twelve months.

2.2 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

1995:

Mann: CALS, CIT and Mann coordinated efforts to open Stone II in the Fall semester.

Stone I had 43,550 patrons sign in; Stone II had 17,664 (Fall semester). 4080 different patrons per week! From July 1 to the end of the Fall semester there were 70,214 patrons.

World: CompuServe, America Online, and Prodigy start providing dial-up Internet access. Sun Microsystems releases the Internet programming language called Java.

Windows 95 released. (Aug. 24)

4.9 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

1996:

Mann: 3-year upgrade cycle for public computers implemented. Adaptive Technology workstation is implemented with the first publicly available Braille embosser on campus.

World: Approximately 45 million people are using the Internet, with roughly 30 million of those in North America (United States and Canada), 9 million in Europe, and 6 million in Asia/Pacific (Australia, Japan, etc.). 43.2 million (44%) U.S. households own a personal computer, and 14 million of them are online.

9.5 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

1997:

Mann: Cheri Campbell managed Stone 1 from April to September; afterwards Nan Hyland became Coordinator of Public Access Computing.

There were 24 Windows 95 PC's and 12 Macintosh computers in the lab. Printers included 2 HP Laser Writers, 1 color DeskJet, 14 dot matrix printers and a plotter. The lab also had two scanners.

195,300 people used the Stone Computing Center during Fall 1997 and Spring 1998 semesters.

2,245 people participated in workshops at Stone, 97/98.

World: On July 8, 1997, Internet traffic records are broken as the NASA website broadcasts images taken by Pathfinder on Mars. The broadcast generates 46 million hits in one day.

16 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

1998:

Mann: Jeff Diver becomes the Coordinator of the Stone Computing Center.

Printing via NetPrint becomes available in Stone I on August 18.

World: Network Solutions registers its 2 millionth domain on May 4th.

29 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

1999:

Mann: Jay Datema begins as Coordinator of Public Access Computing (October)

World: College student Shawn Fanning invents Napster, a computer application that allows users to swap music over the Internet.

The number of Internet users worldwide reaches 150 million by the beginning of 1999. More than 50% are from the United States.

“E-commerce” becomes the new buzzword as Internet shopping rapidly spreads.

43 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

2000:

Mann: Stone Computing Center relocates to the Mann New Addition.

World: The Internet bubble bursts, as the fountain of investment capital dries up and the Nasdaq stock index plunges, causing the initial public offering (IPO) window to slam shut and many dotcoms to close their doors.

72 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

2001:

Mann: CIT Loaner Laptop program begins with 20 Dell Latitude laptops (February)

CIT Public Computing Lab relocates from old Martha Van building to the former Stone I lab in the old Mann building.

Michael Cook becomes Coordinator of Public Access Computing (October)

World: Napster is dealt a potentially fatal blow when the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco rules that the company is violating copyright laws and orders it to stop distributing copyrighted music.

109 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

2002:

Mann: Bloomberg terminal added in November.

World: As of January, 58.5% of the U.S. population (164.14 million people) uses the Internet. Worldwide there are 544.2 million users.

147 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

2003:

Mann: CIT Loaner Laptops double with 40 Dell Latitude laptops (September)

World: Spam, unsolicited email, becomes a server-clogging menace. It accounts for about half of all emails.

171 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

2004:

Mann: 20th anniversary of public computing at Mann celebration, Sept. 20-24.

World: The Internet turns 35.

233 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

2005:

Mann: CIT replaces all 40 Dell Latitude laptops with new ones (August)

CALS transfers management of the 52 public computers in Warren B60 and Warren 160 computing labs to Mann Library (August)

World: 317 million hosts on the Internet (as of January).

Sources:

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