

# THE PETER HEWESTON COMPUTING COLLECTION



# INTRODUCTION

I joined the CSIRO Division of Land Research in 1969 as a CSIRONET user, operating a teletype connected by a wire strung across Black Mountain to the CDC 3600 – one of the earliest remote computer users! My job involved programming in Fortran, and shuffling environmental data stored on punched cards and paper tape.

I subsequently went on to join CSIRONET during the heady days of the CDC 3600 and 7600, working under Terry Holden. Terry worked on CSIRAC in his younger days – it's a story worth hearing some time – and I feel in some ways I have a direct link back to CSIRAC, although I've never actually seen it. I do however have a couple of CSIRAC paper tapes in my collection.

In 1987 I started my own company, developing PC-based software for the management of water resources and environmental data. The Hydstra software is used by over 100 agencies worldwide to this day.

My collection encompasses calculating and computing artefacts from the earliest days of mechanical calculating through the era of PC's and on to smart phones and tablets. I will specifically highlight a few items relating to the CSIRONET era.

An important component of the collection is a significant archive of scanned documents from the CSIRONET days, including technical notes, manuals and newsletters. Many of the documents are from Terry Holden's personal archive, which was passed to me by his wife Patti after Terry's death. This material can be freely browsed and downloaded from Dropbox at: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/zzt6779kxtzke4q/CSIRONET%20Documents.zip?dl=0>

Be warned – there is 4.6GB of data in some 240 files. Each .pdf file has a parallel .txt file with a similar name, which facilitates simple text searching.

# THE COLLECTION

The collection represents a lifetime of collecting artifacts relating to the history of calculating and computing. Items in the collection include:

Abacuses  
Slide Rules  
Calendars  
Comptometers  
Adding Machines  
Early Office Equipment  
Enigma Fragments (yes, The WW2 Enigma)  
CSIRAC Data and Program Tapes  
Paper Tape and Punch Cards  
Core Memory  
Microfiche  
Electronic Calculators  
Removeable Storage  
Modems  
Vintage Software  
Hard Drives  
Magnetic Tapes  
Luggable PCs and Laptops  
Data Loggers  
Apple Products

Offers and contributions to the collection will be gratefully considered, though space is tight.

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