# The IBM 1130: The Journey from Waikato University to the Bob Doran Museum of Computing

In 1969, the University of Waikato purchased an IBM 1130, equipped with punch card input and a single disk drive approximately 40 cm in diameter. Manufactured between 1965 and 1972, the IBM 1130 operates on a 16-bit binary architecture and holds up to 65 KB of memory.

Before the arrival of the IBM 1130, the University relied on a cumbersome process of sending programs via punch cards to the University of Auckland for processing. The introduction of the IBM 1130 allowed computing to be done locally on campus.

In the late 1960s, all of the universities in New Zealand acquired an IBM 1130. For Canterbury and Auckland, the 1130 was their second computer, adding to the IBM 1620 they already had. For Lincoln, Massey, Victoria and Waikato, the 1130 was their first computer. It is believed that New Zealand had twelve 1130s, but only the Waikato one survived.

The IBM 1130 quickly became a central resource at Waikato University. By 1975, however, the University’s computing landscape began to evolve rapidly. After visiting several Australian universities to survey their computing facilities, Waikato University decided to upgrade, purchasing a PDP 11/70 along with several video display units (VDUs). This shift significantly changed the way computing was conducted at the University, and the IBM 1130 was gradually phased out.

As the once-vital IBM 1130 slowly faded into obsolescence, it became less a tool of daily use and more a relic of the past. It was eventually mothballed, finding itself in various storage spaces, including the corridors of the computer centre. By the time the University moved its computing facilities to the newly constructed G-block in the 1990s, the IBM 1130 had been reduced to a forgotten piece of equipment tucked away in a technical staff room. As the University continued to modernize, the old IBM 1130 was moved to another building, where it lingered in hallways, largely ignored.

In early 2018, the University's ITS department underwent a major relocation, and the IBM 1130, along with other outdated equipment, was deemed surplus. The Waikato Museum was invited to take any items of interest, and the IBM 1130 found a temporary home there in an exhibition. However, as the museum concluded its exhibition, it became clear that the computer needed a more permanent place to reside. It was then passed on to the Bob Doran Museum of Computing.

On October 26, 2022, the IBM 1130 made its final journey from Hamilton to Auckland. Now housed at the Bob Doran Museum of Computing, the IBM 1130 serves as a tangible reminder of the early days of computing at New Zealand Universities and in the country.

Roger Barclay comments: "This computer has great significance for me. I was the IBM engineer who serviced and supported this machine. I was transferred to Hamilton around 1970 from Auckland to look after this and other 1130s across the country."

*Source: Nevil Brownlee (University of Auckland), Mark Apperley & Simon Travaglia (University of Waikato), Anita Robertson (Waikato Museum).*