

Conference Referenced History

An old PPC Member (73), friend, and Ex boss recently sent me an 18" x 18" x 19.5" heavy box that contained a bunch of stuff that he no longer needed. These items included a TI-59 with PC100 Printer, an HP-41C with quad memory module, bar code reader, various other modules, an 82143A dedicated HP-41C Thermo Printer, an 82153A Optical Wand, and lots of documentation including 67/97 Pac books. Also included were a few electronic items yet to be identified, and a few odd sized cassette tapes plus a Tandy Model 102 and Model 200 portable computers with packs and documentation.

I have added many of these excellent condition items to the HHC 2008 Door Prize list.

I also found a PPC brown issue mailing envelope with a member letter and PPC Calculator Journal dated April 1982, Vol. 9 No. 3. What caught my eye was something I had written regarding "PPC ROM II – A Proposal."

Every legacy HP user remembers the PPC ROM, the largest independent calculator programming and documenting project ever under taken, but what is PPC ROM II?

I reproduced the article from the PPC Journal in the box at the right. The ROM never happened for a variety of reasons but the obvious one is expressed in the article, a lack of skilled programmers.

The other aspect of the article I found interesting was the mention of recently held Conferences. The HHC 2008 Conference is number 34 on the "official" HHC Conference list. See the list under WHAT at the link:

<http://www.holyjoe.net/hhc2008/conflist.htm>

One of the objectives of our Conferences is to document and record what is happening in the HP Calculator User Community. This year is a good example, especially with the work of Felix Gross and his Master Calculator Literature list.

Another interesting part of the 26 year old Journal is the bar code for the Rubik's Cube solver and the *Understanding Machine Code* article.

X <> Y,

Richard

PPC ROM II – A PROPOSAL

In the August 1979 PPC Journal I proposed to PPC Members that we could collectively program and document an 8K programmers routines ROM. Now, two years and eight months later the ROM project has been history for 1/3 of a year. The result may be described as a programmers routines ROM written in HP-41 language with a synthetic programming flavor.

Right after we shipped the PPC ROM to members, HP announced three ROM's of their own and a whole new array of peripherals for the HP-41. These new devices were designed to operate on an interface loop driven by the HP-41 as the controller using the HP-41 HP-IL module. The users need for programming routines immediately doubled or tripled. Not only would the HP-41 owner need help in programming the HP-41, but he would also need help in programming the HP-IL and its peripherals.

The recent PPC East Coast Conference placed emphasis on HP-IL. The previous North West Conference in the fall of 1981 placed emphasis on assembly language or microcode programming of the HP-41. I believe that there is adequate time and HP-41 product life for PPC members to produce a second 8K PPC ROM. This project could be PPC ROM II.

The ROM I believe that is needed could be described as a programmers routines ROM written in "machine language" with an HP-IL flavor. Many of the routines in the original PPC ROM could be re-programmed for faster execution and more efficient operation.

The problem with such a ROM is the shortage of programmers. If those who have the skill will commit to doing the ROM, I believe we can handle the task. Here is how I think it might work:

The user community at large defines and tests the routines using EPROM's as a media. A daisy chain "library circulation" procedure could be used to provide copies of the routines and documentation. Member participation could be in one or more of these areas.

- a. Definition and justification of a routine.
- b. Evaluating routine proposals.
- c. Writing the routine.
- d. Testing and verifying the routine.
- e. Documenting the routine.

Any member who has used the XTOA or ATOX routines can appreciate the speed and scratch register convenience of these machine language versions of **DC** and **CD**. HP-IL programming can use up memory fast, so it is advantages to have these routines in ROM.

Assuming that we have enough machine language programmers, I believe that this ROM will greatly enhance the 41 system and prolong its life. If you wish to participate in some way, let me know. PPC EPROM 2 is a start in the right direction. Is there any interest in this project? What can you do?

Richard Nelson (1)