Dedication of IEEE Milestone for Gary Kildall's CP/M Microcomputer Operating System

Friday, April 25, 2014: 2:00 to 6:00 PM
Pacific Grove, CA
The public (including IEEE Members) are invited to attend the festivities
No reservations needed

IEEE Milestone Dedication Events

Annually since 1975, the Asilomar Microcomputer Workshop (AMW) (www.amw.org) has offered an informal venue for some of the world's brightest technical minds to gather as peers. Gary Kildall was a frequent presenter at AMW. The IEEE has joined with the Computer History Museum and organizers of AMW to schedule a commemoration of the role that Gary's work played in the personal computer revolution with the dedication of an IEEE Milestone and the unveiling of the Milestone plaque following the close of the 2014 AMW workshop. The events on the afternoon of Friday, April 25, 2014, are open to the public. Plans for the IEEE Milestone dedication and unveiling are as follows:

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM Pacific Grove City Chambers, 300 Forest Ave.
Introductions by Mayor Bill Kampe, President-Elect of IEEE Howard Michels, and other dignitaries. Overview of IEEE Milestone program.
A conversation with former DRI VP of Operating Systems Tom Rolander and Gordon Eubanks VP of Languages and Tools followed by Q &A session.

4:00 – 4:30 PM 801 Lighthouse Ave.
Street side plaque unveiling and brief remarks by representatives of the City, the IEEE, and others

4:30 – 6:00 PM 734 Lighthouse Ave. (Former DRI Engineering building)
Reception with light refreshments for AMW, IEEE and DRI alumni and friends

Digital Research Artifacts and Memorabilia will be on display throughout the month of April
Pacific Grove Library, 550 Central Avenue, Pacific Grove

Updates and additional information are posted on the "Legacy of Gary Kildall" Facebook page at:
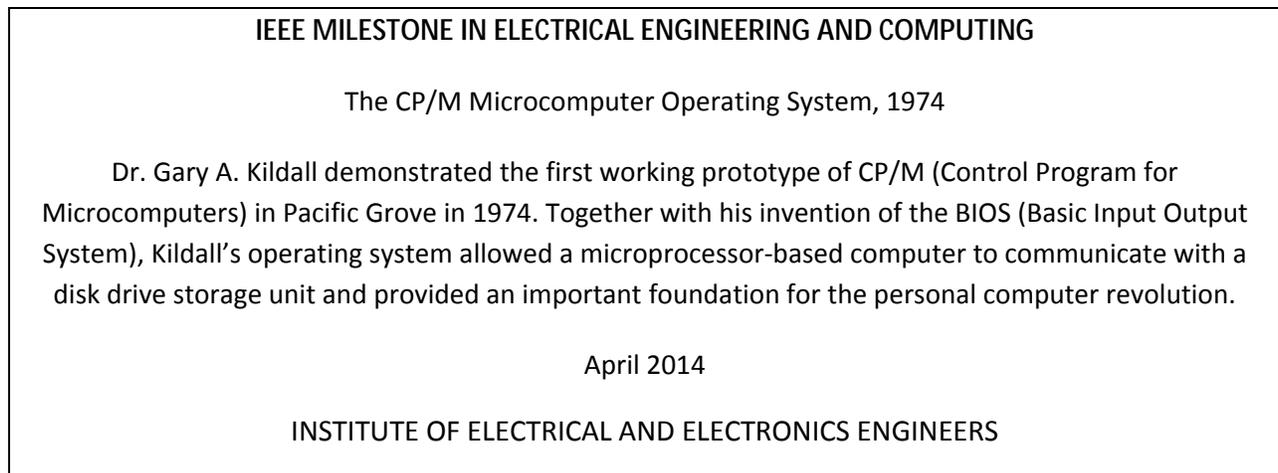https://www.facebook.com/KildallLegacy

Pacific Grove and "the birth of the PC operating system"

In 1974, Dr. Gary A. Kildall wrote a software operating system he called CP/M (Control Program for Microcomputers) to allow his microprocessor-based computer to talk directly to a disk-drive storage unit. The first boot-up of CP/M in the fall of that year at his home in Pacific Grove, California has been described as "the birth of the personal computer (PC) operating system".

An instructor in computer science at the Naval Postgraduate School in nearby Monterey and a consultant to Intel Corporation, Kildall founded Digital Research Inc. (DRI) to commercialize CP/M that together with his Basic Input Output System (BIOS) concept kick-started the PC revolution. In 1982, DRI reported that "More than a million people are now using CP/M controlled systems" and the company employed several hundred people in Pacific Grove. Sales continued to grow and expanded into other areas of computer software, including CD ROMs, educational tools, networking, and a video animation program that was purchased by a "little company called Pixar." Towards the end of the decade DRI faltered and in 1991 Novell Inc. purchased the assets. Gary Kildall died following an accident in 1994 but the legacy of his work lives on as the forerunner of the operating systems that continue to power the majority of the world's computers.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineering (IEEE), the "world's largest professional organization for the advancement of technology" has over 400,000 members. The IEEE Milestone program honors important events in electrical engineering and computing. Achievements such Thomas Edison's electric light bulb, Marconi's wireless communications, and Bell Labs first transistor are recognized with a commemorative plaque in an appropriate location. To coincide with the 40th anniversary year of the CP/M prototype, the IEEE will install a bronze Milestone plaque outside the former DRI headquarters at 801 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA.

The plaque citation reads as follows:

IEEE MILESTONE IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING

The CP/M Microcomputer Operating System, 1974

Dr. Gary A. Kildall demonstrated the first working prototype of CP/M (Control Program for Microcomputers) in Pacific Grove in 1974. Together with his invention of the BIOS (Basic Input Output System), Kildall's operating system allowed a microprocessor-based computer to communicate with a disk drive storage unit and provided an important foundation for the personal computer revolution.

April 2014

INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERS

The IEEE website that fully documents this milestone is here:
 www.ieeeghn.org/wiki/index.php/Milestone-Proposal:BIRTH_OF_THE_PC_OPERATING_SYSTEM_1974

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