

Something Old, Something New

Date: 3rd October 2008

Place: WT126

Time 1-2pm

Presenter: Professor Bob Doran University of Auckland, Department of Computer Science

ABSTRACT

Something Old, Something New, Something borrowed, about Big Blue! The Auckland University CS Department maintains displays on the history of computing. When designing such displays there are always some surprise discoveries. Earlier this year, working on the IBM System/360 and its place in mainframe computing, it appeared that IBM had recently made a major extension to its architecture that had passed most of us by. Introduced with the new System Z10, this extension, Floating Point Decimal, is worth knowing about as it is really the first time in 40 years that computer designers have added function of such direct benefit to the end user. It is quite likely that we will all have to know about it eventually, but also has some aspects to delight the heart of the Computer Scientist. So, this talk is about the new additions to our computing history displays, in particular some interesting aspects of the System/360 back then, and of the Z10 today.

Biography

Bob Doran is now retired and is regarded as a Professor Emeritus, but he continues to work in the Computer science department as a tutor. He has also worked in the past at City University London, Massey University, and at Amdahl Corporation, California (as computer architect).

His computing interests are in computer architecture, history of computing, parallel algorithms and programming. He also has a wide variety of interests outside work !