

Namur October 27th, 2016

EN

Computer Museum NAM-IP

The first Belgian computer museum opens in Namur. It tells an unbelievable odyssey that leads from the early calculating machines to your smartphone. Four independent collections from “Informatique Pionnière” are hosted there, with the support of the King Baudouin Foundation, which now manages their preservation. The Computer Museum will open its doors on October 27th, 2016 in Namur.

At the numerical roots, machines that count

These days, everything is transformed and transmitted numerically. All the informations are processed by computer software using the binary format: zeroes and ones, and by electronic machines: from computers to connected objects. These machines count because they indeed compute! But they also count because they are precious to explain the history of computing!

The Computer Museum NAM-IP opens its doors with a permanent exhibition titled: “at the numerical roots: machines that count”.

Amongst the items coming from the collections bequeathed to the King Baudouin foundation, you can see:

- An impressive series of calculating machines covering one century of technology
- A full set of punched card machines from 1960, in working condition
- A Moon-Hopkins identical to the one used by the priest Lemaître to establish the big bang theory
- IBM punched card machines from the CGER/ASLK who handled the pensions of Belgian citizens for 50 years
- The very first prints of archaic hebrew on IBM-3800 laser printers
- An application of computing to textual corpuses from punched cards to smartphones

Cultural and pedagogical

The Computer Museum NAM-IP wants to be accessible to everyone: students and tourists, French, Dutch or English speaking people. The exhibition is documented by a timeline that puts in context, in the history of computing, all the items on display, as well as by a series of thematic information boards explaining the technologies involved.

Workshops, animations, guided tours for various scholarly levels, and guided tours with demonstrations from the curators and planned.

In Namur

Hosting computer collections requires consequent space, the one selected by the promoter is an old sports hall: 1,200 m² and 10 m high! It is located next to the provincial campus, rue Henri Blès, 2 km away from the Namur train station, at 100 m from the RAVeL of the Sambre river, and provides easy parking. There is no comparable initiative within 375 km from Namur. The opening of this museum presents the city of Namur with a cultural space in line with the concept of Smart Cities.

A museum and an exhibition in containers

The first mission of a museal space is to keep and preserve a significant patrimony in order to sustain culture over time. It has to highlight the meaning of the objects and artefacts on display. The location is divided in exhibition and storage spaces by the layout and superposition of 21 maritime containers. The history of maritime containers is quite parallel to the one of computers: a single type of container large enough to be carried by truck, train or boat. This mode of transportation can be compared to the principle of batch processing.

This choice has also determined a desire for the repurposing concept by recycling, as much as possible, elements that already had a previous life.

Practical informations

The museum is open during the week, all year long from Tuesday to Friday from 10 am to 4 pm, and between April and October, also the 1st Saturday of the month from 10 am to 5 pm.

It is accessible for guided tours on reservation: individual visits, groups and school groups. The exhibitions are accessible to people with reduced mobility.

Parking with 25 places. The documentation center and library are accessible upon request. Admission ranges from 6 € to 8 € per person.

NAM-IP, asbl
Rue Henri Blès, 192A
B5000 Namur
Phone: +32 81346499
info@nam-ip.be

Press contact: +32 471 741 186