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NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PLAY

Guide to the Atari Computer Camps Collection, 1982-1984, 2021 — 121.Atari

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Description is written in: English.
Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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Summary Information

Repository:	Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong
Creator:	Atari, Inc. Home Computer Division
Title:	Atari Computer Camps collection
ID:	121.Atari
ID [aspace_uri]:	/repositories/3/resources/337
Date [inclusive]:	1982-1984, 2021
Date [bulk]:	bulk 1982-1984
Physical Description:	0.66 Linear Feet (2 document boxes)
Language of the Material:	English
Mixed Materials [box]:	1-2
Abstract:	The Atari Computer Camps collection consists of documents related to the computer summer camp sessions that Atari held from 1982 to 1984. The materials are dated from 1982 to 2021, with the bulk of the materials dated from 1982 to 1984. The papers are comprised of tutorials, curriculum books, programming modules, utility diskettes, a u-matic tape, and production documents for the promotional documentary *The Magic Room*.

Preferred Citation for Publication

Atari Computer Camps collection, Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong.

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Administrative History

In March 1982, Atari announced the Atari Computer Camps to start in the summer of 1982. The camps were a combination of practical state of the art computer instruction, hands-on

experience, and a full program of sports and social activities. They were the first effort by a home computer manufacturer to sponsor summer camps for 10- to 18-year-olds interested in computers. Atari partnered with Specialty Camps Corporation, created to run the day-to-day operations of the "summer camp" side. Specialty Camps Corporation and Atari then established the subsidiary, Atari Special Projects, Inc. Linda Gordon was Atari Vice President of Special Projects. Robert (Bob) Kahn was the Director of Special Projects. Kahn was also the Curriculum Director.

The computer camps were originally planned to be held in four locations around the United States; Pennsylvania (East Stroudsburg State College), North Carolina (Asheville School), Wisconsin (Lakeland College), and Southern California (University of San Diego). Ultimately, the camp in Wisconsin was cancelled.

The Atari Computer Camps were so successful the first year that in 1983 Atari expanded to seven locations, adding New England, "Old West" [Danville, CA], and Chesapeake, MD. Campers could choose from two-, four-, or eight-week sessions. The Atari Computer Camps ran until 1984, around the time when the video game industry was declining.

In 1982, Atari contracted with Robert Elfstrom Productions, Inc. [Bob Elfstrom and Lucy Hilmer] to create a promotional film documentary titled, *The Magic Room*. *The Magic Room* was filmed at the University of California, San Diego campus. The film captured the campers, teachers, and their experiences. Three versions of the film were created: a 3-minute version, an 18-minute version, and a 26-minute version. The 18-minute film is not a shortened version of the 26-minute runtime, it is a different edit. The film was released in 1983.

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Collection Scope and Content Note

The Atari Computer Camps collection consists of documents related to the computer summer camp sessions that Atari held from 1982 to 1984. The materials are dated from 1982 to 2021, with the bulk of the materials dated from 1982 to 1984. The papers are comprised of tutorials, curriculum books, programming modules, utility diskettes, a u-matic tape, and production documents for the promotional documentary *The Magic Room*.

The majority of the collection consists of educational tools used during the Atari Computer Camps and includes lessons, programming class information, curriculum, and software. The educational materials cover basic and advanced programming topics, BASIC, PILOT, and LOGO programming languages, guides for the use of Visicalc, AtariWriter, Band Weaving, and more.

Also included in the collections are production documents for the promotional documentary *The Magic Room* (1982) and a u-matic tape of the 18 minute edition. The production documents are comprised of invoices, agreements, calendars, photographs, film rejection letters, and a letter from Lucy Hilmer to Kay Savetz about the movie and the documents.

Series III is the smallest series of the collection, the Tri-Cities Atari Computer Enthusiasts [also called A2D2], documents the organizations beginning and includes drafts of the constitution and bylaws, final printed constitution and bylaws, and meeting minutes.

The Atari Computer Camp collection has been arranged into three series. The physical materials are housed in two document boxes. Additional scope and content information can be found in the Series Scope and Content Note sections of the finding aid.

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System of Arrangement

Series I: Educational tools, 1982-1984

Series II: *The Magic Room*, 1982-1983, 2021

Series III: Tri-Cities Atari Computer Enthusiasts, 1983

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong

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Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research use by staff of The Strong and users of its library and archives.

Conditions Governing Use

Though the donor has not transferred intellectual property rights (including, but not limited to any copyright, trademark, and associated rights therein) to The Strong, they have given permission for The Strong to make copies in all media for museum, educational, and research purposes.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The papers were donated to The Strong in December 2019 and December 2021 as gifts of Kay Savetz. The papers were accessioned by The Strong under object ID 119.7275 (December 2019) and object ID 121.9922 (December 2021) and were received from Kay Savetz in one box and two envelopes.

Custodial History

The papers that document the Atari Computer Camps including lesson plans, modules, programming class information, curriculum, and software were given to Kay Savetz by Bob Kahn, former Curriculum Director of Atari Computer Camps [object ID 119.7275].

The papers and u-matic tape in Series II, *The Magic Room* were given to Kay Savetz by Lucy Hilmer, producer of the documentary [object ID 121.9922].

Processed by

Stephanie Ball, March 2025.

Controlled Access Headings

- Computer camps
- Computer programming
- Computer programming--Handbooks, manuals, etc.
- BASIC (Computer program language)
- PILOT (Computer program language)
- LOGO (Computer program language)
- Computer games -- Design
- Atari Computer Camps
- Documentary films
- By-laws
- Atari, Inc. Home Computer Division
- Atari Special Projects, Inc.

- Tri-City Atari Computer Enthusiasts

Collection Inventory

Series I: Educational tools, 1982-1984	box 1-2

ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53597

Series Scope and Content Note

This series consists of the educational tools used during the Atari Computer Camps. The documents consist of modules, curriculum books, reference sheets, and tutorials. The lessons in the series cover BASIC, LOGO, and PILOT language, advanced topics, player and missle graphics, creating a computer show, and more. The series also contains 18 - 5 1/4" program utility diskettes and an Atari Computer Camps branded white binder. The folders are arranged alphabetically by title. The archivist maintained the titles of the lessons.

Title/Description	Instances	
Advanced topics books and diskettes, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53600	box 1	folder 1
Advanced topics diskettes, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53601	box 1	folder 2
Art and the computer tutorial, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53602	box 1	folder 3
Assembly language programming module, 1984 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53603	box 1	folder 4
AtariWriter guide - draft 1, 1983 June ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53604	box 1	folder 5
Band weaving guide, undated ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53605	box 1	folder 6
BASIC curriculum book 1, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53606	box 1	folder 7-8
BASIC programming resource guide, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53607	box 1	folder 9
Camp curriculum book 1, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53608	box 1	folder 10
Camp curriculum book 2, 1983	box 1	folder 11

ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53609

Creating a computer show, circa 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53610	box 1	folder 12
Custom display lists module, 1984 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53611	box 2	folder 1
"Guide for training and assistance in use of Visicalc" - draft 2, 1983 June ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53612	box 2	folder 2
Internal representation of text and graphics module, 1984 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53613	box 2	folder 3
Introduction to LOGO, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53614	box 2	folder 4
LOGO units teachers' guide, circa 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53615	box 2	folder 5
Machine architecture module, 1984 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53616	box 2	folder 6
"Master Mind" game code, 1982 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53617	box 2	folder 7
PILOT utility diskettes, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53618	box 2	folder 8
Player-Missle graphics, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53619	box 2	folder 9
Reference sheets, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53620	box 2	folder 10
Word processing module, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53621	box 2	folder 11
Atari Computer Camps branded binder [empty], circa 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53622	box 2	object 1

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Series II: *The Magic Room* documentary, 1982-1983, 2021 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53598	box 2	

Series Scope and Content Note

This series consists of the *The Magic Room* u-matic tape [00:18:00 runtime] and documents related to the production of the promotional documentary. The documents are comprised of invoices, a film description, rejection letters, agreements for production, musical composition, equipment loans, and distribution. The series also includes production calendars, a price proposal, and a letter from Lily Hilmer to Kay Savetz about the documents. The materials in this series have been digitized and uploaded to the Internet Archive.

Title/Description	Instances	
The Magic Room u-matic tape [00:18:00 runtime], 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53623	box 2	object 2
Agreement - Addendum, 1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53624	box 2	folder 12
Agreement - Distribution, 1982 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53625	box 2	folder 13
Agreement - Equipment loan, 1982 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53626	box 2	folder 14
Agreement - Musical score and composer, 1982 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53627	box 2	folder 15
Agreement - Production, 1982 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53628	box 2	folder 16
Application - American Film Festival, 1982 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53629	box 2	folder 17
Calendars - Production, 1982 July-August ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53630	box 2	folder 18
Correspondence - Gordon, Linda S., 1982 November-December ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53631	box 2	folder 19
Correspondence - Hilmer, Lucy, 2021 July 10 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53632	box 2	folder 20
Correspondence - Rejection letters, 1983 February ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53633	box 2	folder 21
Invoices, 1982-1983 ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53634	box 2	folder 22
Photographs, 1982	box 2	folder 23

ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53635

Proposal - production pricing, 1982	box 2	folder 24
ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53636		

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Series III: Tri-Cities Atari Computer Enthusiasts, 1983	box 2

ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53599

Series Scope and Content Note

This small series documents the formation of the Tri-Cities Atari Computer Enthusiasts [also called A2D2] organization and includes the constitution and bylaws and meeting minutes. A2D2 was founded in 1983 as an Atari users' group. An Atari users' group is an organization of people that own Atari computers. The main purpose of A2D2 is to promote and share the common interest in computer hardware, software, programming, and operations. The organizations officers were:

Larry Williams, President

Bryan Schroeder, Vice President

Randy Yeats, Treasurer

Rick Raymond, Secretary

Bob Grant, Librarian

Atari provided user groups with a complete technical library, including hardware and software manuals, demo disks, promotional materials, and training videos.

Title/Description	Instances	
Constitution and bylaws, 1983	box 2	folder 25
ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53637		
Meeting minutes, 1983 March-June	box 2	folder 26
ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53638		
Newsletter costs, circa 1983	box 2	folder 27
ID [aspace_uri]: /repositories/3/archival_objects/53639		

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