

World's oldest original digital computer is turned back on after 61 years

By *srlinuxx*

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The world's oldest, original, still-working digital computer has been unveiled at the National Museum of Computing in Bletchley Park, the home of the United Kingdom's Second World War encryption and codebreaking efforts, where, among other luminaries, Alan Turing and co famously broke the German Enigma cipher.

The computer, originally called Harwell but now called the Wolverhampton Instrument for Teaching Computing from Harwell (WITCH), was originally powered up in 1951 (pictured above). Between 1952 and 1957 the computer was used for early atomic research, and then it was given to Wolverhampton University, where it remained in operation until 1973. Between 1973 and 1997 it was on display at a museum in Birmingham, and then it disappeared into storage, only to be discovered by chance in 2009.

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