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Subject: Re: Microcomputer History

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 22 Sep 2022 18:59:13 GMT

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I love those old multi-platter disk drives. And you're right that they were the size of washing machines. Shook like a washing machine too during rapid disk seek operations. They usually had a large linear motor that moved the heads, and by large, I mean 100 pounds or so. Enough force they could break your arm if it went into emergency retract while you were aligning the heads. So you had to be careful how you adjusted the heads, where you pushed them as you tightened the set screw.

Love the old 9-track tape drives too. Especially the Data General 6026, which used vacuum columns as tape tensioners. It was a beautiful drive. Loved to watch 'em jerk into motion, to seek, retrieve data and return back to BOT.

Quick update - I have created pages on the following computers:

Altair 8800

RCA COSMAC "Elf"

Synertek Systems Sym-1

INMOS Transputer

Just finished the Altair page so that reminded me to come back here and mention it. The Altair page talks about "the old days" and it also has a "build" section with links to places to buy parts. It even has a link to a page that documents the entire build process.