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Computer Hobbyvereniging Eindhoven CHE-1

Submitted by [Tom Owad](#) on January 19, 2004 - 5:06pm. [Apple II](#) | [CHE](#) | [Computers](#)

[Gerard Goorden](#) tells of his experiences with the Computer Hobbyvereniging Eindhoven CHE-1...

In the early 80's some people from the Research lab of Philips in Eindhoven (The Netherlands) made an Apple][clone, which you could assemble yourself. It was called the CHE 1, which stands for Computer Hobbyclub Eindhoven. Once you joined the club you could purchase the DIY package. The club provided support for building the machine and had numerous projects running for extending the capabilities of the CHE, like a printer card, a serial card and floppy drives.

I bought one at that time and I enjoyed it very much, making me an Apple fan for life. I still have it sitting somewhere in a dark and dusty store room at my parents' place.

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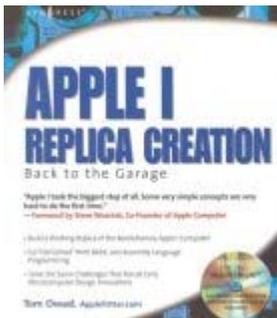
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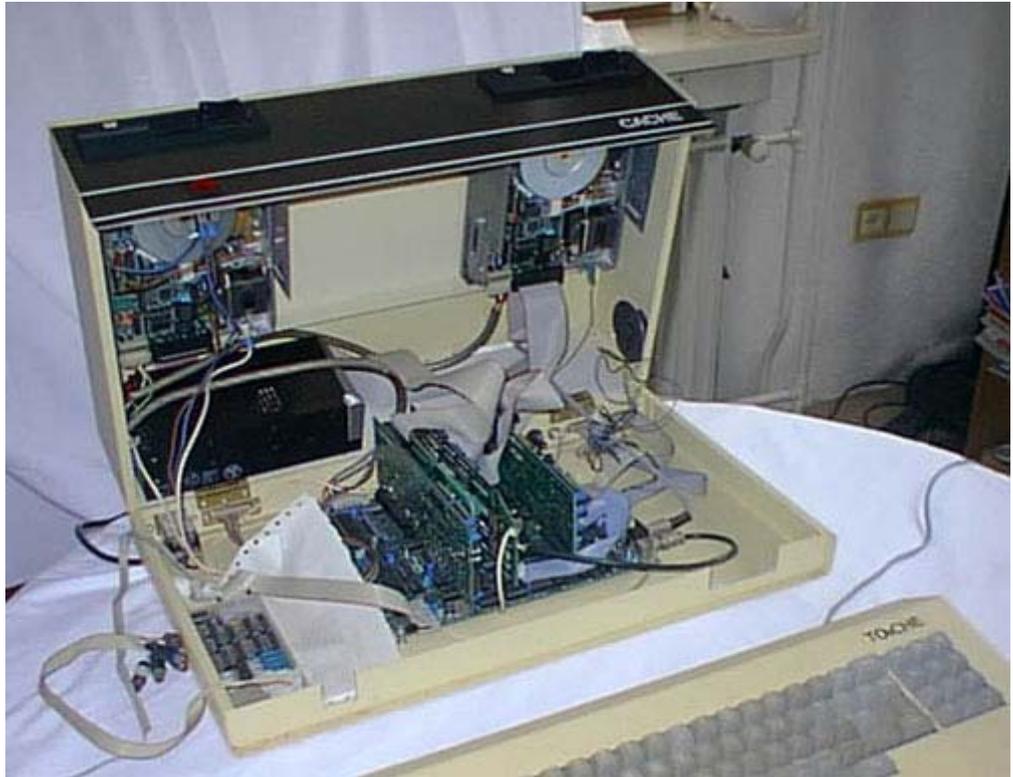
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Although some of the designers worked at the Philips Research centre, they designed it in their spare time and later (1982) founded a society called "Computer Hobbyvereniging Eindhoven". The computer was named after the society: CHE 1.

The motherboard of the CHE 1 was completely designed from the ground up and was compatible with an Apple][+ with 64 kbyte of memory and 8 slots for expansion cards.

After joining the club it was possible to buy the self-assembly kit consisting of the motherboard and all other components, like IC's, resistors, crystals and capacitors. The EPROMs with the firmware were officially not part of the delivery.

During the lifetime of the society approximately 1300 motherboards were sold.

More projects for expanding the possibilities of the CHE were organised by the society.

First there was the project TouCHE, which was a newly designed keyboard, also an assembly kit. It was fitted inside a CHE-designed metal casing. For the motherboard itself also a casing was designed, in the project CaCHE. When pronounced, CaCHE sounds like the Dutch word "kastje", which means little box. However, the box was not that small, as it had room for a switching power supply, up to two 5 1/4" floppy drives and an EPROM programmer socket. The box could be opened very easy and would hinge open to provide easy access to the inside. Another project was the floppy drive card called CHID. In this project also (slightly modified) TEAC drives could be purchased. A special version of the operating system (System CHEAP or CHE DOS) was developed to be able to store up to 640 kByte on one floppy. With the standard Apple DOS only 160 kByte could be stored on one floppy. Later a printer card (CHIP), with a parallel centronics interface and a 64 kByte cache was added to the CHE program.

Many more smaller projects were completed, such as an RGB card, Serial card, Cache card, RAMdisk, tapedrive interface, etc.

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The society:

The society in Eindhoven was a very active club during a few years and a lot of students from the Eindhoven University of Technology joined it. It had always some technical projects running which were developing an expansion of the CHE. The club also had a support structure in place: the members were in groups of 10 assigned to a Decurio, (named after a Roman military rank) This Decurio was a senior member of the club and was the primary person to ask for support. The decurio also had the task of delivering the ordered project components to the members in his group. Also a bulletin board (CHEBULL) was operated by the society.

The club was founded in 1982 and remained very active for 5 years, after which the founders were leaving the country and the Apple][became less popular. One of the designers of the CHE later headed the Philips team in the US which developed the Tri-Media processor. In 1989 the society changed its structure into a foundation and became more dormant.

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