July 3rd

Babbage Writes to Davy
July 3, 1822

Charles Babbage [Dec 26] wrote an open letter to Sir Humphry Davy, president of the Royal Society, giving a detailed description of his Difference Engine No. 0 [June 14]. He also had the letter published as the pamphlet, "On the Application of Machinery to the Purpose of Calculating and Printing Mathematical Tables". This was Babbage's first public statement about his calculating engine.

Even at this stage he was considering improvements to the design, such as support for direct multiplication.

The letter would go on to persuade the Royal Society to advocate the government support (and funding) of Babbage's work in May 1823.

UCLA as the First Station
July 3, 1969

UCLA issued a press release stating that it "will become the first station in a nationwide computer network which, for the first time, will link together computers of different makes and using different machine languages into one time-sharing system."

They were referring to the ARPANET [July 29], the first wide area (long distance) packet switching network and the precursor to the Internet.

The First IMP (interface message processor) was delivered to UCLA by BBN [Nov 00] on [Aug 30], and the second to SRI on Oct 1. The first transmission between the two occurred on [Oct 29].

Julian Paul Assange

(born Julian Paul Hawkins)

Born: July 3, 1971;
Townsville, Queensland

Assange was the editor-in-chief and founder of WikiLeaks [Oct 4] in 2006, a media website dedicated to publishing information supplied by whistleblowers.

By 2016, WikiLeaks had published more than 10 million documents, and was described by Assange as "a giant library of the world's most persecuted documents".

Following 2010 leaks by Chelsea Manning [Nov 28], the US government launched a criminal investigation into WikiLeaks and asked allied nations for assistance.

Assange was granted asylum by Ecuador in August 2012, and took up residence in the Embassy of Ecuador in London.

Julian Assange speaking from the balcony of the Ecuador embassy in London (2012). Photo by wl dreamer. CC BY-SA 3.0.

On April 11, 2019, Assange's asylum was withdrawn following a series of disputes with the Ecuadorian authorities related to paying for his Internet use and cleaning up after his cat Michi. The police were invited into the embassy, and he was arrested.

Ecuadorian President Lenín Moreno announced, "We've ended the asylum of this spoiled brat."

Terminator 2 Released
July 3, 1991

Tri-Star Pictures released the action sci-fi film "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" [Aug 29], directed by James Cameron and starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. It featured the first wholly digitally generated major film character, the shape-shifting T-1000, The liquid metal CGI effects were rendered on a Silicon Graphics [March 23] IRIS Indigo workstation in Industrial Light and Magic (ILM [Sept 12])'s computer graphics department. The team had grown from six artists to almost 36 during the project, but it still took eight months to produce the footage, which amounted to just four minutes of screen time. However, if all the effects shots are counted, this increases to almost 16 minutes. Also see [Oct 26].

Billy Mitchell's Perfect Score
July 3, 1999

Billy Mitchell, aged 33, became the first person to achieve a perfect score of 3,333,360 on Pac-Man [Oct 26] after just over six hours of game play. This record was achieved at the *Funspot Family Fun Center* in Weirs Beach, New Hampshire, and the entire session was videotaped by the arcade.

Funspot itself joined the *Guinness Book of World Records* in 2008 as the world's largest games arcade. It had opened in 1952, and had grown to operate over 500 current games, as well as running the *American Classic Arcade Museum* for games built before 1988.

Many other world record high scores have been set at *Funspot*,

including ones for "Space Invaders" [June 5], and Centipede.

Sadly, Mitchell's story took a downturn on Feb. 3 2018 when his high scores (3rd and 20th highest) in "Donkey Kong" were cancelled after "Donkey Kong Forum Judge" Jeremy Young announced that they must have been obtained on the open source arcade emulator MAME rather than on an actual arcade machine; Mitchell claimed otherwise.

For more video game playing records, see [Jan 8], [May 14].