

The Cray Files

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These pages contain my project notes on how to build a Cray supercomputer at home. It was – and is – a fascinating journey to me into the history of computers. I’m writing my story up in hopes that others (well, you, dear reader) will find it interesting. It is somewhat of a living document, a journal of sorts. Though the story starts several years ago – and that part I recount from memory – I intend to add new pages to the files as I progress. When I tell this story I leave out some of the dead-ends and my wanderings in the digital desert, so the story-line feels more linear than it actually was. I don’t think you want to hear about all the dozens of failed attempts at solving something. I’ll only leave some of the most spectacular failures in for entertainment value.

1. [Prelude](#)
2. [A New Hope](#)
3. [The Hunt for the Red Bootcode](#)
4. [The Return of the Cray](#)

5. [The Matrix](#)
6. [First update](#)
7. [Needle in the Hay-stack](#)
8. [A Brave New World](#)
9. [Multiple Platforms](#)
10. [Jobs](#)

You can download the latest version of the simulator from the [download page](#).

Special thanks to *Andy Gelme*, *Scott G. Taylor*, *Brian Taylor* and [Chris Fenton](#) without whom I would not have been able to get this project off the ground!

The picture above shows Cray X-MP serial number 302 being assembled after delivery. I got this picture from Andy who was the source of the OS backup disk that I've used for this project. It **is** the machine that I'm simulating! The following picture shows how it arrived to the lab: through a hole in the wall.



Help wanted!

Now that the [Cray simulator](#) is finally booting the OS, I have to plead to your help! I need SW to run on this. I need source code, I need compilers, I need tools. Without these, the machine is almost as dead as if I haven't done anything. The OS is just the framework to do useful work in, but useless itself.

If you have or know of anybody who has experience, old backup tapes, disks, anything that can be used with this machine, please contact me!