Museum props up set for hit comedy

VINTAGE computers take a star turn in a hit television comedy series.

The Centre for Computing History in Haverhill has been helping out The IT Crowd with set decoration after responding to a call for help with props.

The award-winning Channel 4 series centres on the misadventures of three characters in the IT department of a fictitious London company.

Its writer, Graham Linehan, made a public appeal for props for the show's third run and the Centre for Computing History responded.

Vintage computers and related artefacts loaned by the centre were used as a key part of the set design of the office basement where main characters Moss and Roy, two technicians, are based.

The show's production team said they were grateful for the centre's help, adding: "We're more than happy to salute their genius."

Curator Jason Fitzpatrick said: "As a fan of the show, I thought it was a great chance to be involved and help populate the set with some true computing history.

"The number one item that I thought just had to be there was the Altair 8800 computer - widely considered the first commercial personal computer.

Kye Mackintosh-Smith, the set designer for the show, agreed and placed the machine carefully behind Moss's desk - a centre-point for the show.

Jason said: "They asked for 'a few feet' of books and manuals to leave around the set, so I searched though piles and piles of manuals to locate visually appealing or recognisable images.

"I found one particular folder that had neither of these characteristics but did have 'MOSS' in big grey letters down the spine. This just cried out to be featured. And it was!"

The Centre for Computing History received a big thank-you from the show's production team at Channel 4. For more information about the centre, see www.computinghistory.orguk .

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