1906 - 1992

Grace Hopper

Helped to create the first commercial electronic computer

Grace was one of the first computer programmers to work on high-level languages and programming tools.

After graduating in mathematics from Vassar and Yale, she taught mathematics at Vassar. When the USA entered the War, in 1943, she joined the US Naval Reserve and was assigned to work on an electromechanical machine for mathematical calculations, built at Harvard and funded by IBM. After the War, she worked for a number of computer companies.

In developing one of the first high-level languages, Hopper created programs for translating more abstract instructions into machine code, compilers. She also created individual programming components – procedures – and tools for combining the different object codes into executables, linkers. Her data processing language FLOW-MATIC used English language statements, rather than mathematical notations, and shaped the creation of the business language COBOL, an early high-level programming language very much in use today.

Hopper was a Commander when she retired from the U.S. Navy in 1966. However, she returned the following year and remained in service until the age of 79, retiring as a rear admiral and the oldest serving officer in the U.S. Armed Forces. In 1996, the navy named a destroyer after her.

Full name: Grace Brewster Murray Hopper
Born: 9 December 1906
Died: 1 January 1992
Hometown: New York City, USA
Occupation: Mathematician, computer scientist, and high-ranking officer in the U.S. Navy
Best known as: One of the first computer programmers to work on the Harvard Mark I

Swansea University Prifysgol Abertawe | History of Computing Collection

technocamps

@technocamps