Software Heritage
the Universal Archive of our Software Commons

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MFG Labs
Paris, France

Software Heritage
THE GREAT LIBRARY OF SOURCE CODE
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<th>L</th>
<th>LEM GEOMETRY</th>
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<td>P0705</td>
<td>GIVEN RR TRUNNION AND SHAFT IT,S IN TANGNB,+1,FIND THE ASSOCIATED</td>
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<td>THIS ENTRY TO RRNB REQUIRES THE TRUNNION AND SHAFT ANGLES IN MPAC AND MPAC +1 RESPECTIVELY</td>
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The code is by Margaret Hamilton and her NASA team, [http://www.ibiblio.org/apollo/](http://www.ibiblio.org/apollo/)
/ This routine exploits a fixed 512 byte input buffer in a
* VAX running the BSD 4.3 fingerd binary. It send 536
* bytes (plus a newline) to overwrite six extra words in
* the stack frame, including the return PC, to point into
* the middle of the string sent over. The instructions in
* the string do the direct system call version of
* execve("/bin/sh"). */

static try_finger(host, fd1, fd2) /* 0x49ec,<just_return+378 */
  struct hst *host;
  int *fd1, *fd2;
{
  /* ... */

  for(i = 0; i < 536; i++) /* 628,654 */
    buf[i] = '\0';
  for(i = 0; i < 400; i++)
    buf[i] = 1;
  for(j = 0; j < 28; j++)
    buf[i+j] = "\335\217/sh\0\335\217/bin\320^Z\335\0\335\0\335\0"

https://github.com/arialdomartini/morris-worm
Source code is knowledge

“Programs must be written for people to read, and only incidentally for machines to execute.” — Harold Abelson

Distinguishing features

- executable and human readable knowledge (an all time new)
- naturally evolves over time
  - development history is key to its understanding
- complex: large web of dependencies, millions of SLOCs
The commons is the cultural and natural resources accessible to all members of a society, including natural materials such as air, water, and a habitable earth. These resources are held in common, not owned privately. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commons)

The software commons consists of all computer software which is available at little or no cost and which can be altered and reused with few restrictions. Thus *all open source software and all free software are part of the [software] commons*. [...] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Software_Commons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Software_Commons)
Fashion victims

- many disparate development platforms
- a myriad places where distribution may happen
- projects tend to migrate from one place to the other over time
Software is spread all around

Fashion victims

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- a myriad places where distribution may happen
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One place...

... where can we find, track and search all source code?
Like all digital information, FOSS is fragile:

- inconsiderate and/or malicious code loss (e.g., Code Spaces)
- business-driven code loss (e.g., Gitorious, Google Code)
- for obsolete code: physical media decay (data rot)
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If a website disappears you go to the Internet Archive...

... where do you go if (a repository on) GitHub goes away?
Our mission

Collect, preserve and share the source code of all the software that lies at the heart of our culture and our society.
Our principles

Open approach

- 100% FOSS
- transparency

In for the long haul

- replication
- non profit
Archiving goals

Targets: VCS repositories & source code releases (e.g., tarballs)

We DO archive

- file content (= blobs)
- revisions (= commits), with full metadata
- releases (= tags), ditto
- (project metadata)
- where & when we found any of the above

... in a VCS-/archive-agnostic canonical data model

We DON’T archive (UNIX philosophy)

- homepages, wikis → collaboration with the Internet Archive
- BTS/issues/code reviews/etc.
- mailing lists

Long term vision: play our part in a "semantic wikipedia of software"
Data flow

Software Heritage Archive

Merkle DAG + blob storage

Forge

GitHub lister

GitLab lister

Debian lister

PyPi lister

Package repos

CPAN

Listing (full/incremental)

Loading & deduplication

Scheduling

Package origins

Git

hg

git

git

svn

hg

git

Mercurial loader

Debian source package loader

tar loader

dsc

dsc

tar

Zip

Forges

Nicolas Dandrimont
Merkle trees

Merkle tree (R. C. Merkle, Crypto 1979)

Combination of:
- tree
- hash function
Merkle trees

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Combination of:
- tree
- hash function

Classical cryptographic construction
- fast, parallel signature of large data structures
- widely used (e.g., Git, Bitcoin, IPFS, …)
- built-in deduplication
The archive: a (giant) Merkle DAG
create domain sha1 as bytea
  check (length(value) = 20);
create domain sha1_git as bytea
  check (length(value) = 20);
create domain sha256 as bytea
  check (length(value) = 32);

create table content (sha1   sha1  primary key,
  sha1_git sha1_git not null,
  sha256 sha256 not null,
  length bigint not null,
  ctime timestamptz not null default now(),
  status content_status not null default 'visible',
  object_id bigserial);

create unique index on content(sha1_git);
create unique index on content(sha256);
Archive coverage

Our sources

- GitHub — full, up-to-date mirror
- Debian — daily snapshots of all suites since 2005–2015
- GNU — all releases as of August 2015
- Gitorious, Google Code — local copy (Archive Team & Google)

Some numbers

150 TB blobs, 5 TB database (as a graph: 4 B nodes + 40 B edges)

The richest source code archive already, ... and growing daily!
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Planned features...

- **lookup** by content hash (done)
- **download**: wget and git clone from Software Heritage
- **provenance information** for all archived code and metadata
- **browsing**: wayback machine for archived code and its history
- **full-text search** on all archived source code files
The road ahead

Planned features…

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… and much more than one could possibly imagine

all the world’s software development history in a single graph!
An ambitious, worldwide initiative

Inria as initiator

- .fr national CS research institution
- strong FOSS culture
- founding partner of the W3C

Supporters and early partners
ACM, Nokia Bell Labs, Creative Commons, DANS, Eclipse, Engineering, FSF, OSI, GitHub, GitLab, IEEE, Informatics Europe, Microsoft, OIN, OW2, SIF, SFC, SFLC, The Document Foundation, The Linux Foundation, . . .

Going global
building an open, multistakeholder, nonprofit global organisation
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Conclusion

Software Heritage is
- a revolutionary *reference archive* of all FOSS ever written
- a unique *complement* for development platforms
- an international, open, nonprofit, *mutualized infrastructure*
- at the service of our community, at the service of society!

Come in, we’re open!

www.softwareheritage.org — *sponsoring, job openings*
wiki.softwareheritage.org — *internships, leads*
forge.softwareheritage.org — *our own code*

Questions?