Abstract: I will outline the history of four-dimensional topology. Some major events were the work of Donaldson and Freedman from 1982, and the introduction of the Seiberg-Witten equations in 1994. I will discuss these, and then move on to what has been done in the last 20 years, when the focus shifted to four-manifolds with boundary and cobordisms. Floer homology has led to numerous applications, and recently there have also been a few novel results (and proofs of old results) using Khovanov homology. The talk will be accessible to a general mathematical audience.