

Minutes for SCC meeting of September 21, 2005

by Dave Redell

Attending

Jonathan Cheyer
Mike Cochran
Lee Courtney
Bob Fraley
Kathe Gust
Phil Gust

Dave Gustavson
Sellam Ismail
Paula Jabloner
Al Kossow
Jim McClure
Randall Neff

Bernard Peuto
Michael Powell
Dave Redell
Fritz Schneider
Bill Selmeier

Working with other software communities

Bernard Peuto and Mike Cochran reported on some thinking they have done about ways for SCC/CHM to cooperate with other groups who collect software. A key question is: what can we contribute to their efforts – in other words, why should they want to collaborate with us? The museum would seem to have three key things to offer:

- A long-term permanent home for collected materials
People who invest a lot in preserving software want to know that it won't all disappear again when they are no longer available to take care of it
- A level of credibility as an "official" organization
By providing sponsorship or affiliation, CHM can lend credibility to deserving outside groups
- Services
Tools, hosting, mirroring, advice, referrals, etc.

The ensuing discussion pointed out additional considerations. For example, mirroring can be problematic if the outside group presents a more active interface to the world than a simple archive – e.g. cyber1's PLATO server. Similarly, setting up a clearinghouse of links to all known collecting activities implies an ongoing activity to keep the links tested and refreshed, since a clearinghouse polluted with stale links will lose much of its appeal.

One popular idea was to start an SCC Wiki. This is already being pursued by Sellam using MediaWiki. After some discussion, it was decided to start this activity using in-house CHM IT resources and revisit the effort at the October meeting. If the effort seems stalled at that point, we will explore options for proceeding with outside resources, such as a server associated with the NLS project.

Further discussion will be needed to flesh out the overall plan, but it may make sense to select one of the groups we have a connection with (e.g. cyber1.org or controlfreaks.org via Mike) as a trial case for the ideas under consideration.

NLS – Johnathan Cheyer

Augment/NLS is now running on a Linux platform via a PDP-10 simulator. It is still not fully functional – in particular, networking is not yet running – but the progress that has been made is extremely encouraging. The problem with networking is at the TOPS-20 level, and none of the project members have the expertise to debug it. There were suggestions from others at the meeting of folks who might have the necessary TOPS-20 expertise.

Other remaining tasks include producing a kit from the single existing “clean clone” so that it can be replicated with a reasonable amount of effort, and selecting an appropriate version of the Augment Terminal software for remote usage of the system.

The previously stated goal of running an NLS demo at the Fellows Dinner in early October still appears achievable, so we’ll hope for a positive report at the October meeting!

Project Status Reports

1. APL. Lee Courtney presented some slides about the possible new APL project, summarizing the history of the language and talking about possible next steps. He has been talking with Christian Langreiter in Austria about this, and will keep us updated at future meetings as this activity gets going.

2. Snobol. There has been initial discussion of a Snobol project, but Henry Gladney was not at the meeting so we had no update on this.

3. Fortran, Lisp. Paul McJones was not at the meeting, so we did not have an update on the great work he has done on these two projects.

4. PDP-1 Software. Al Kossow has read in the paper tapes and is trying to make sense of the results, including a large volume of materials from MIT and DEC. When he finishes this task, this collection of tape images will go on the SCC Plone site.

ACM History of Programming Languages Conference

The organizers of this conference have contacted us regarding possible collaboration. Bernard Peuto and Sellam Ismail will explore this, including the possibility of hosting the conference in the CHM Auditorium.

Software Collection Catalog Effort

Sellam reports continued progress in cataloging the existing room full of software. Over 600 items have been processed, but there are thousands still to do! Sellam is soliciting volunteers, and will provide training. Some of this work might even be doable at home. The goal has been adjusted based on the observable rate of progress, and is now to finish by the end of 2005.

Meeting Schedule

As an experiment, and to allow members to attend a talk by Ivan Sutherland, we decided to start the October 19 meeting **at 5:00pm instead of 5:30pm**. We will see how people feel about this afterwards and decide whether to change the normal starting time accordingly.

Upcoming Meetings

Day	Date	Time	Conf Room
Wednesday	October 19	<u>5:00 pm – 6:00 pm</u>	Hopper
Wednesday	November 16	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Hopper
No December Meeting			
Wednesday	January 18	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Hopper
Wednesday	February 15	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Hopper
Wednesday	March 15	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Hopper
Wednesday	April 26	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Hopper
Wednesday	May 17	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm	Hopper