

Bach_oT_EX '94

April 30th–May 3th, Bach_oT_EX, Poland

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Guitars in the night

1 Introduction

This no-nonsense and low-budget meeting of the Polish T_EX User Group GUST was held at a lake in the woods. These grounds are proprietary of the Copernicus University of Toruń, and a very pleasant surrounding for a conference. The conference attracted some 70 odd participants.

On Saturday night we had our campfire with a nice barbecue and the audience was carried away into the music by guitar players. A very cosy and natural atmosphere. Relaxed, at ease, and I enjoyed it very much! The prelude and postlude of this evening were similar: each evening there was a gathering somewhere in a cabin with singing and people talking and enjoying each others company.

GUST is doing well. Two years ago I paid Hanna and Włodek a visit and there was not yet such a kind of a meeting, neither a GUST bulletin nor a list server or a file server. Congratulations GUST, go on, and we from NTG bear you a very warm heart.

2 Tutorials

The meeting started with what I consider the most important issue with T_EX: education. The Saturday and Sunday were completely devoted to tutorials¹

- T_EX surveyed (Marek Ryćko)
- Polish typographical tradition (Andrzej Tomaszewski)
- L^AT_EX₂_ε (Thomasz Przechlewski)
- L^AMeX₂e (Włodek Bzyl)
- Index and bibliography (Włodek Bzyl)
- T_EX + PostScript (Piotr Pianowski and Stanisław Wawrykiewicz)
- DVIPS, how to use it (Stanisław Wawrykiewicz)
- Fonts with T_EX and PostScript (Bogusław Jackowski)
- METAFONT—practical and non-practical examples (Bogusław Jackowski)

Each tutorial was written up in a A5 sized booklet of typographical good quality. I can only pity that they were written in Polish. Especially, the last survey of METAFONT is the best I have ever laid eyes on, and definitely

deserves translation.² The tutorial of Piotr treated similar functionalities as PStricks, but more complete and above all simpler. He definitely will be asked³ to rehearse on his presentation at EuroT_EX '94, and then we will automatically have the work in English. I have already gotten some of his macros, but he said that some documentation was in Polish, alas. But wait and see, it will be there in due time. It drew my attention, no escape ;-).

3 Conference

The Polish contributions were about their archive—yes they have got one!—L^AT_EX and Polish language, and $\mathcal{A}\mathcal{M}\mathcal{S}$ -L^AT_EX. The Polish L^AT_EX lecture sparked the awareness that the Polish people should cooperate on this and submit the results to the Babel branch of the L^AT_EX₃ project. During the meeting the people involved gathered and I promised to inform Johannes Braams about this.

Undoubtedly, because of his charism when talking Phil Taylor was invited to lecture about book design for T_EXies. 2 hours full of theory with after dinner another 3 hours with practicalities. One of his pleas is that the formatting of a book should be done with two facing pages as a unit to be shipped out. I'm very eager to reread all this, when it comes out in the GUST proceedings issue, or so.

The Tuesday morning was completely offered to me. Of course I was very honoured to be invited by this group with such a number of outstanding T_EXies. Off-the-self I had taken with me Manmac BLUes, and the tune was well received: if only there had been a User's Guide. . .

After coffee I could also tell about BLUE, how he copes with bibliographies, transparencies and verbatims.

All was warmly received and I was invited to work on the Manmac User's Guide, next to submitting my articles and macros to their archive.⁴ The only problem is that writing a real and attractive User's Guide is quite something, and requires skills complementary to mine. Moreover, I had made plans already to work on METAFONT in three dimensions, to emulate Naum Gabo's works.

At the end of the conference I was invited to select from the filled-in questionnaires a 'winner.' After some theat-

¹ Some of the titles of the tutorials have been 'translated' by me. I apologize for the incorrections, but the flavour is definitely correct because I was there. And Polish friends, don't blame me for not using your fancy fonts. I'm sorry for the moment. It will be on the 4allT_EX CD-ROM, so another time.

² I hope so much that Julita will actively join GUST and starts cooperating with Jackowski to translate this nice material.

³ In fact he already agreed, but he was a bit modest about his qualities as a lecturer, but we can handle that can't we?

⁴ Thank you!

rical acts hilarity was all around when I could receive from Hanna the bar of chocolate. Once again thank you all, I enjoyed it very much, not in the least because I made some real new friends.

4 EuroT_EX '94

A side-effect of this meeting was that preparations for EuroT_EX '94 progressed very much. Włodek and GUST can't do it on their own. Hanna, Phil and me are on the program committee. All LUG presidents will be invited to join the committee of trustees, to help as much as they can if not for stimulating their members to join that conference and meet the Poles (and others) themselves. The conference location is well-chosen: a former party-bosses residence at sea on one of the grounds in the delta of the Wisła. The conference theme is

T_EX: principles, practice and Poland

Hope to see you there and let us face the music.

5 Before and after

I headed for Poland a week earlier and enjoyed the hospitality of the Bzyl family. Włodek and I did some work, talked not only about T_EX but also about Knuth's works in general, next to discussing the usefulness of some other (UNIX-like) tools. Last time I was impressed by the beauty of Sopot. Now I enjoyed Gdynia, especially the pier and the shopping area.

After the meeting I received hospitality of Krzys' family,⁵ and I must say that I'll never forget the revisiting of the Wilanowa. A real romantic place. Also my goodbye evening with a nice dinner with Krzys, Hanna and Julita, followed up by enjoying the opera, will pop up now and then in my sweet dreams for sure.

P.S.

Their list address: GUST-L@vm.cc.uni.torun.pl.

The fileserver and ftp address at: halina.univ.gda.pl.

⁵Krzys gave me a copy of the 'The Euler project at Stanford, by D.R. Siegel,' and Julita⁶ shared her Chinese fonts with me. Definitely, something for the next CD-ROM.