Editorial Comments

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Erratum: Address for CyrTeX mail

In last issue's instance of this column, under "International news", an incorrect address was given for subscribing to CyrTUG's Russian discussion list; the instructions should have been: To join the list, send e-mail to `CyrTeX-ru-subscribe@vsu.ru`. I failed to say that there is also an English-language list for discussing cyrillic problems: subscribe at `CyrTeX-en-subscribe@vsu.ru`. To send mail to either list, remove `-subscribe` from the subscription addresses.

Both lists are archived, and are available at `https:info.vsu.ru/Lists/CyrTeX-**/List.html`, substituting `ru` or `en` for the `**` as appropriate.

Thanks to Vladimir Volovich for the correction and additional information.

History of TeX

Karl Berry reminds us that there's a site for history buffs at `ftp://tug.org/historic`. At this site are posted old releases of TeX, METAFONT, LaTeX, and other TeX-related software.

Anyone who might have any copies of source code, change files, or platform-specific distributions is invited to get in touch. I will route the information to someone who can arrange for an upload of archive-worthy antiques.

Computers & Typesetting remains in print

Although the Addison Wesley Longman web site may still not be up to date, I have been advised by the A-W Production Director that it is their intention to keep all five *C & T* volumes in print indefinitely, probably through a print-on-demand facility. All but *The TeXbook* and *The METAFONTbook* accidentally got on A-W's out-of-print list when their warehouse and inventory systems changed.

Anyone who has sought a copy of one of these volumes should keep watching at `http://www.awl.com/`, search on "knuth".

Please be aware that new printings will not incorporate errata found since the last printing; for errata, as always, look on CTAN in `systems/knuth/errata/`.

A new printing museum near Boston

In Boston, the collections of the Museum of Printing have been housed in borrowed warehouse space for a number of years. Their long search for permanent quarters has been rewarded; a building originally constructed to house the heavy looms of a textile museum was vacated about a year ago when that museum moved to Lowell, Massachusetts, to be part of the complex surrounding the Lowell National Historical Park. The new Museum of Printing is located in North Andover, north of Boston. The grand opening will be held on July 29, and there will be a preview associated with TypeCon 2000 on June 18, which I hope to attend.

This museum is of particular interest to me as I have been looking for a home for composition-related items — bits of old hardware and associated papers — used at the Math. Society before (and since) the adoption of TeX. The person in charge of the museum's collections has confirmed their interest in these objects. I now have added to my to-do list the task of cataloguing this material so that its context is not lost.

For more information, visit the museum's web site at `http://www.museumofprinting.org/`.

And visit the TUG web page for a list of printing museums around the world. We're actively updating this, so if you have any additions, please send them to us for posting.

Evolution of alphabets

Here's another web page that provides considerable food for thought. Did you know that most Western alphabets are ultimately derived from Phoenician? And that Phoenecian derived in turn from the pictographs of Proto-Sinaitic? These glyphs found in the Sinai peninsula, and dating from ca. 1500 BC, are assumed to be the source of the sound symbols developed several centuries later by the Phoenicians.

Visit `http://www.wam.umd.edu/~rfradkin/alphapage.html` for material associated with a course on "History of the Alphabets" taught by Professor Robert Fradkin at the University of Maryland.

Alphabets shown on these pages include cuneiform, Phoenician, Greek, Latin, Cyrillic, Arabic, and more. Watch shapes change, new letters appear. If you have any interest at all in where your writing system came from, this should more than satisfy your curiosity.

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