Editor’s Column

Welcome to the first edition of the UKUUG Newsletter. At its last formal meeting in Edinburgh, your Council agreed to accept my application for the post of Editor of a bi-monthly publication, to be called news@UK.

What are my credentials for the job? I have had experience of editing an internal staff newsletter at the University of London. I have been a regular attender of UKUUG conferences and technical meetings and thus have a good knowledge of the Group and its structure - you may have seen me working on the FaceSaver stand at meetings. I also try to get to the local group meetings held in London. I earn my living as the Training Officer for staff in the central offices of the University in Bloomsbury where, to my chagrin, they run MSDOS!

The plan is for the Group to purchase some kit for the production of this Newsletter which can be passed on to whoever is the current Editor. It was felt, however, that it was important to get something off the ground as soon as possible. So until an agreement is reached on the purchase of equipment, I am producing this on a Minstrel Workstation, running MSDOS 5.0 and WordPerfect 5.1, and printing on an HP Laserjet III PostScript printer.

The aim of this publication is to keep you, the membership, in close touch with what Council is doing on your behalf; and what is happening throughout the country.

I’ve managed to grab the faces of the Council and other contributors from the archive at Imperial College; I hope this will help you to identify us at future events.

I want to include regular reports on what the Local User Groups (LUGs) are planning; as well as details of what Special Interest Groups (SIGs) have been set up - this issue contains a report from Jim Reid on an IP SIG.

I hope to bring you regular news from the archive at Imperial College - and in particular what has happened to all those captured faces and how to get them.

Regular features that you can look out for will also include reports from the Council; write-ups of the Conferences and Technical
Meetings which are held throughout the year.

In the first issue look out for a report from the outgoing Chairman, Sunil K Das. What’s he going to be doing with all the spare time he’ll now have? 1992 sees him moving into a new home and marrying Hazel so I guess he’ll have enough on his plate! Our congratulations and best wishes go to both of them:-)

What can you do to make this Newsletter more interesting and informative? I will be asking for volunteers to review books and software of interest to UNIX users. I may even be able to fund places at conferences or meetings if you agree to provide me with an article for news@UK.

Unsolicited letters or articles will be more than welcome, as will any ideas you may have for regular features. One suggestion I have already received is for a ‘Problems Page’ - send in your problems and we’ll see if we can find a UNIX Guru to answer them!

I will also accept small advertisements from individuals or organisations at no charge, but retain the right to refuse to publish them.

You can send contributions to me via e-mail, the postal service, telephone or fax. Contact addresses for any person or organisation mentioned, or connected with the UKUUG, can be found on the back page.

Susan Small

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May 1992

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September 1992
November 1992
January 1993

Copy Deadlines

19 April 1992 for May
19 June 1992 for July
19 August 1992 for September
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19 December 1992 for January

Introducing Council

Sunil K Das (Chairman)

Sunil first encountered the UNIX system in 1977 whilst employed as a research fellow in the Computer Networks Research Group at University College London, where he was investigating distributed computing environments, local and wide area networking, and network operating systems. In 1980, he joined the academic staff of City University’s Computer Science Department where he is now a Senior Lecturer.

Under his Chairmanship of the UK UNIX systems User Group, the membership has grown to over 600. He has been a committed European ensuring the UKUUG’s continued affiliation with EurOpen. Sunil acted as Technical Programme Chairman for the highly successful EUUG 1988 ‘UNIX around the World’ Conference and the UKUUG 1990 ‘Plan 9 / UNIX - The Legend Evolves’ Conference.
Mick Farmer (Secretary)

Mick, Secretary of the group, is a lecturer at Birkbeck College, a school of the University of London. Mick's first experience with UNIX was with Mini-UNIX, a stripped down version of the Seventh Edition for PDP-11/05s in the early 1980s. Only recently has his Department upgraded (?) to a network of Suns running SunOS. His interest at work is in distance learning techniques, which is why you see him producing videos of UKUUG conferences, workshops and other events. He is the Senior Consultant (Software) for the LiveNet Project, an interactive analog video network connecting seven major sites of the University. He is also the driving force behind the UKUUG FaceSaver project.

Andrew Macpherson

Andrew has been using UNIX since Programmers Work Bench. Currently he manages ‘Network services’ for BNR Europe in Harlow. His interests are focused around the transition to OSI, from a background of trying to run a TCP/IP network. On the Council he tries to bring a commercial balance to discussions.

His hobbies include sailing his yacht and Go.

Zdravko Podolski (Treasurer)

Zdrav has been involved with the UKUUG ever since it was a DECUS SIG in 1978. He has been Treasurer since 1985. Zdrav works as a Project Manager for Insignia Solutions, who do their best to turn high technology workstations back into PCs. Before Insignia he worked at Glasgow University as Systems Manager.

Jim Reid

Jim is the computer systems manager for the Computer Science Department at Strathclyde University. When he was elected to the Council, he was given the conference and networking portfolios to look after. He has recently ‘volunteered’ to organise a SIG on IP networking.

Chairman's Report

Welcome to the first news@UK, the official newsletter of the UKUUG. I have been campaigning for the regular appearance of this publication for some time. Many of the membership have little idea of the role I perform as UKUUG Chairman and EurOpen Governing Board Representative. Who else serves UKUUG and what do they do? It will be through news@UK that the five member Council can keep the membership informed of their
day to day activities. Perhaps, members will be encouraged to come forward and offer their services. New blood is always encouraged. It will provide a medium for membership opinion to be aired via contributions from the grass roots. Initially, news@UK will be distributed by post to the contact on our address list. However, we envisage electronic versions to be available as well, relatively quickly. In this way, members who never see the documentation distributed by our Secretariat can keep in tune with UKUUG activities. I hope it will encourage network readers who are non-members to join our ranks. As I write, I don’t know what the final appearance of the Newsletter will be. Maybe it will be a broadsheet of one or two pages. However, with Council and membership support, the Newsletter can mature in content and quality, and resurrect within our technical user community the original meaning of the word ‘open’.

AGM Report

The 1991 Annual General Meeting was held at the Winter Technical Meeting at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh on Tuesday 17 December 1991. In addition to officers and members of the Council, there were 24 ordinary members present. This was the first AGM held by UKUUG as a limited company and the last at which our present Chairman presided.

Sunil Das reiterated his intention of standing down this year and said that elections for Council would be taking place by postal ballot in the Summer of 1992.

Both the Chairman’s and the Treasurer’s Reports were approved.

The next AGM was to be arranged on a suitable date at roughly the same time.

FaceSaver Update

Richard Murphy

The UKUUG FaceSaver project is intended to provide an equivalent service to its US counterpart. The service is a combination of a UNIX system with video frame grabbing hardware (including an R140 generously supplied by Acorn Computers Ltd), together with appropriate image manipulation software and an archive database at Imperial College.

The system has been used at EurOpen and UKUUG conferences and technical meetings to capture about 500 faces so far.

At meetings, conference badges and delegate lists containing faces can be provided and afterwards the image and basic personal information are stored on the archive service.

In 1991 the FaceSaver put in successful appearances at the UKUUG meeting in Liverpool and then at the EurOpen conference in Budapest. Some difficulties with the hard disk in Budapest resurrected themselves in a fatal form at the UKUUG meeting in Edinburgh so regrettably no faces were captured.

Acorn have kindly upgraded the hard disk on the R140 so it is hoped to provide a service at future meetings. Watch this space!
All the faces successfully captured to date have been added to the archive. There will be an article in the next issue of news@UK containing information about retrieving the face image data files and software for manipulating them.

LUGs

The following is a round-up of information from those involved in organising local groups. If you feel that your neighbourhood is in need of a local group please let the Editor have details for inclusion in the Newsletter.

ABERDEEN

There seems to be a resurgence of interest in UNIX north of the border, in spite of the demise of the Glasgow group due, primarily, to apathy. The current centre seems to be Aberdeen, where we see many new users of UNIX. Our Aberdeen contact is Gareth Davies.

CAMBRIDGE (Jane Hills)

Jane has had one response from a local user keen to see a group get together. She will raise the issue with a few of the more keen people at the next Sun UK User Group meeting on 5 March. Alternatively, she may just get a speaker, book a room at Logica and see who turns up - which may actually be the best way to get started. If you have any suggestions on speakers please contact Jane - she will even offer to buy them a pint afterwards!

LONDON (Andrew Findlay)

The next meeting of the London UNIX User Group will be held on Thursday 26 March at 7pm at University College London. The speaker is Dave Rosenthal of Sun Microsystems. The title of his talk will be Networks and computers in the mid-90s.

His abstract is: "Software generally makes four assumptions about the environment of computers and networks in which it lives: infinite bandwidth, zero latency, 100% availability and no security threat. Even in current systems none of these are true, but it has been possible to ignore this fact for a long time. Leaving our heads stuck in the sand like this is becoming untenable."

This lecture is being given at the Computer Science Department, University College London, in Gower Street. The nearest tube stations are Euston Square and Warren Street.

Admission is free, and is open to everyone.

Informal discussions will continue after the lecture at the Fitzroy Tavern in Charlotte Street. (The nearest Underground station here is Goodge Street.)

The speaker for the meeting on Thursday 30 April has not yet been confirmed.

For further information on LUUG Lectures, contact Andrew Findlay.
Kevin Hopkins is our local organiser and he, with David Osborne, has been trying for some time to arrange regular meetings of UNIX users in the Midlands area. Although there seems to be a lot of interest, only one meeting has been organised so far. For further information concerning this group contact Kevin.

OXFORD

The Oxford Local UNIX group is still in a very early stage of formation. It has received considerable interest and an initial informal meeting will shortly be organised to decide on future activities. Anyone interested should contact James Aldridge (see below).

Hopefully the group will be in action in time for more news to be included in the second issue of the newsletter.

SIGs

IP (Jim Reid)

It is clear that the interest in this area amongst our members is increasing, especially now that IP services have become firmly established in the UK at long last.

The current plan is to hold a one day IP event in co-operation with the JNT, almost certainly in London around April or May. This will probably have two or three parallel sessions: an IP tutorial; a technical workshop and possibly a sales/marketing session. The idea is to have a high-profile event which will be worthwhile to everyone interested in IP. Please contact Jim - if you have any suggestions for topics for discussion or speakers. Full details will be announced once the programme is finalised.

MINIX

Some members have expressed an interest in a SIG devoted to MINIX. If you are interested in this group, especially if you are willing to help in its formation, please send electronic mail to the contact at the end of this newsletter.

PC SYSTEMS

Some members have also expressed an interest in a SIG devoted to UNIX on PC platforms. If you are interested in this group, please send electronic mail to the contact at the end of this newsletter.

Forthcoming Events

UKUUG SUMMER MEETING

Negotiations are currently under way for this meeting to be held in collaboration with the Irish UNIX Group, IUUG. This is a change of venue from our proposed visit to Belfast, to Dublin, where we expect more people to attend from both user groups.

We are currently looking at Trinity College, Dublin as the venue on 4-5 June 1992. The idea is to enable delegates to stay on over the following Saturday night which means they may obtain appropriate discounts on their flights.
SUN UK USER GROUP

The Sun UK User Group are holding a one-day technical meeting on Wednesday 18 March 1992 in London. The meeting is headed Migration from PC to Sun and will focus on how PC users can migrate both standard packages and their own developments to Sun hardware. There will also be coverage of how to integrate your existing PCs into an Open Systems network including Sun and other workstations.

Details from Sun UK User Group, Secretariat, Owles Hall.

UKUUG LISA WORKSHOP

This year's LISA Workshop, organised by Neil Todd, is going to concentrate on issues associated with being connected to a network, whether via UUCP, IP or high bandwidth wet string. We are particularly interested in talks that cover experiences and lessons learned, when the step of connecting to an external network is taken. Possible topics include:-

* Name server configuration and bootstrapping
* Message router configuration, e.g. sendmail or PP
* Security, e.g. firewalls and system monitoring
* Living with a Wide Area Network connection: pluses and minuses
* Network monitoring

The date and venue for the Workshop has not been finally decided, but will probably be in London in June or July 1992. Those interested in submitting a talk please contact our Secretariat, or the contact listed below, outlining what you wish to talk about. All messages will be acknowledged.

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