

SQLUG

SCOTTISH QL USERS GROUP

APRIL 1999

NUMBER 108

THE SCOTTISH QL USERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

LAST MEETING AT PORT OF MENTEITH VILLAGE HALL

SUNDAY 14TH MARCH

We had a visit from Alan Pemberton for this meeting. He did in fact join again but his main purpose in coming was to show off QEmulator working under Windows on his PC. You may remember this one; it was actually written for the Mac, but now the original author has adapted it for the PC. I think it needs a fairly high spec model; Alan has one of the Pentium chips in his. If the PC isn't of a decent spec I guess the emulator could look a little slow. I thought it was reasonably fast, but some of the others present who are used to faster systems were not over impressed. The screen is where I found fault, as it gives a very small font. Used on the lowest resolution possible on the PC I think it would be readable. Alan got it from the WWW. You can do that to try it out and if you like it then you register and get the full version with all facilities. This costs \$60. In spite of our criticisms we were very pleased to have the opportunity to see this, as this is likely to be the route forward for most of us. We also had our AGM which is reported below.

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held at 1.30pm on Sunday 14th March in Port of Menteith Village Hall.

1. FUNCTION HOLDERS

The current holders were confirmed in their functions,

Newsletter Editor and Secretary	Ronald Bezzant
Software Librarian	George Gwilt
Treasurer	John Sadler

I took the opportunity to point out that when we get to the end of the session about to start I will have done as many newsletters as Alan. Not bad for a temporary caretaker. It would be nice to think that someone is considering taking over at that time. I would hate to have to just walk away from the job without handing over properly.

2. FINANCIAL POSITION

John Sadler will present full accounts in April, but he reports that we have funds to complete the year, more or less breaking even. This means a balance of about .

3. SUBSCRIPTION

The Treasurer's recommendation to set the subscription at £6 for the year was accepted.

4. LIBRARY BOOKS

George reported that there are still seven or so books that he can't track down. It is at this point that I wonder whether you read what I write in this newsletter. On at least two previous occasions I have asked you to let George have a list of the books you hold. So this the third if not fourth issue of this request; please DO IT.

GWILT AT C

GEORGE GWILT

Continued from last month

2. Intractable Error

My C manual describes two dimensional arrays and says that it is more efficient to use an array of pointers to the rows of the array rather than access the array directly (if you see what I mean). I have been trying to operate the following arrays by pointers.

```
"int in1[3] =
(1,3,5);
int in2[2] =
(7,9);

int *in[] = { /* 'in' should be a
in1 , in2};   pointer to an array of *
               pointers */"
```

Having done that I wanted to manipulate the numbers using "in". More efficient, says my manual. Since it didn't work as I wanted I tried all sorts of combinations of

```
printf("%d\n",<exp>);"
```

I give a list of results, some of which come from running the compiled program and others are the errors reported by C68.

I should remind you that:

- * means 'the number pointed to by '
- [r] means 'the rth element of'
- ++ means 'add I to' or 'advance to the next'

exp	result	
*in[0][1]	3	
*in[1]	7	
(*in)[1]	3	
(*++in)[1]	l-value required	
*++in	9	
**++in	l-value required	
**in	l-value required	
(++)in	identifier expected	
(++in)	l-value required	
*++*in	3	
++*++*in	4	(must be 3 + 1)
in	7931978	(evidently an address)
++in	l-value required	
*++in	l-value required	
(++in)	l-value required	
(*++)in	identifier expected	
in[0]	7949302	
in[1]	7914642	

Any explanations of these will be gratefully received.

3. Improvements in GWASS

By adding the option "-S" to a\$ at Step a iii I was able to stop compilation before GWASS took over. I could thus examine the assembler code C68 produced. Now inside GWASS there is one place which detects a terminator when reading a string so that words can be identified. There are 20 terminating characters (though when GWASS started there were probably only about three). I decided to see what C68 produced for this. Incredibly I produced a valid program for this problem and discovered that C68 solved it by table lookup using a method found elsewhere in GWASS. C68's solution was so much better than mine that I decided to alter GWASS in this much used area. This exercise shows that C is capable of bettering human assembler programmers.

However, to complete the story I should say that my change GWASS is significantly better than the C method!

NEXT MEETING

PORT OF MENTEITH VILLAGE HALL, SUNDAY 11th APRIL,

11am - 5pm

Our meeting is on the usual second Sunday of the month which is fairly late in the month this time, so I will post this early in April.

CONTACTS

Details of current membership are in SQLUG for March. I'll hold off publishing CONTACTS again until we have next session's list.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1999-2000

These are now due as newsletter No. 108 is the last one in the present series. You can pay me in cash if you attend our meeting. Alternatively send your cheque to me, made payable to 'Scottish QL Users Group'. The sub' is the same as previous years, £6. Please don't overlook this or else you will not receive a newsletter next month.

LIBRARY

The best way to get material from the library is to come to our monthly meeting. George Gwilt has agreed to offer the postal service so if you can't manage along you can always send to George for disks by post. To do so, send the appropriate number of formatted disks, together with adequate return postage. Give the reference numbers of the disks from the library index when you are ordering. Remember also that the index disk will need to be updated from time to time, and can be sent back when ordering. The standard format is 720 Kb 3 1/2 inch disk, but if your format is different, we still may be able to help you. Contact me in the first instance.

LIBRARY BOOKS

Our LIBRARY BOOK collection is looked after by George, although there are also a large number of books held by different members of the group. We have copies of most books published about the QL, and George has produced a dbf file. If you let him know that you want to borrow a particular book, he will bring it to the next meeting, or tell you who is looking after it.