

Some Reflections on the Early Days

Ken Brodlie

I have very fond memories of the early days of Eurographics UK. The idea of a UK Chapter was born in 1981, and the historical record shows that it was formally founded in December 1981. My own hazy memory recalls a conversation with Bob Hopgood at a conference I organised at Leicester in January 1982, where Bob suggested I might like to play a part in this new venture.... Of course the conversation was at the bar and of course it seemed a great idea.... When I awoke the following morning, I found that I was to be the first chairman, David Duce found he was the first secretary, and Howard Watkins found he was the first treasurer.

The graphics world in the UK at that time was rather fragmented, with separate events being organised by user groups of the leading packages of the day – GHOST and GINO-F – and by a specialist group of the British Computer Society. Eurographics UK provided an opportunity to bring these groups together under a single umbrella, while still allowing them to continue their own identity. Over time, the smaller groups have come to a natural close or change focus, but EGUK has endured.

We put together our first event as a one day seminar on “3D Computer Graphics” at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in summer 1982 – with an attendance of 200 , and with Alastair Kilgour as opening speaker. The first conference was held at York in April 1983, with John Illingworth as local organiser, and with the smaller groups organising their own half-day programmes in parallel as part of the overall conference. The Eurographics 1980-84 Report mentions that “delegates expressed their wish for the event to be repeated the following year”. It is wonderful to think that it has been repeated every year since then.

I ‘retired’ in 1984 and Terry Hewitt took over as chairman. A proud moment in my professional life was the establishment of the Ken Brodlie award for the best paper at the conference – the prize appropriately being a bottle of excellent whisky! It has been nice to present that in person every so often. This actually is quite important in order to prove I have not expired. More than once, I have been approached by someone who had heard about the ‘Ken Brodlie Award’ and assumed that I had passed away. So if anyone says to me now: ‘I am surprised to see you here...’ I never quite know what they are really thinking!

References:

DA Duce. The Formation of a National Chapter. Computer Graphics Forum, Vol 1, No 2, pp 36-37.

Eurographics Report 1980-1984.

http://www.eg.org/EG/Docs/GA/Eurographics_Report_1980_1984.pdf

AC Kilgour. An Overview of 3D Graphics. Computer Graphics Forum, Vol 1, No 3, pp.143-152, 1982.