Editorial comments

Barbara Beeton

After long employment at the American Math Society, I retired on February 5. My term on the TUG board has been extended for four more years, and I expect to remain editor of *TUGboat*, as long as I can continue to do a creditable job. It's been an interesting run.

A memorial for SPQR

Sebastian Rahtz had a favorite place — The Protestant Cemetery in Rome (Il Cimitero Acattolico di Roma). A bench with a tribute to Sebastian has now been installed in the cemetery, providing a place for visitors to rest and contemplate.

The director of the cemetery sent this report:

> [...] We put it in the Parte Antica some weeks ago and people immediately started sitting on it! I had to ask them to move so I could take the photo! It is a lovely addition to the Cemetery. We put it near the Garden Room, and people are allowed to move it around as they like. In winter they put the benches in the sun, in summer they like to sit under the shade of the trees. The benches are a wonderful way for people to relax (we all do far too little of that these days) and a possibility for people to chat and renew or make new friendships. I like to think that Sebastian would have loved that.

The Protestant Cemetery is the final resting place of many visitors to Rome who died there; it may be best known as the gravesite of the English poets Keats and Shelley. It is one of the oldest burial grounds in continuous use in Europe, and in 2016, its 300th anniversary was celebrated. The website for the cemetery, `www.cemeteryrome.it`, provides a virtual visit, or information to plan for an actual visit.

Project support from UK-TUG and TUG

The UK-TUG committee has posted a reminder that there is a standing call for applications for project funding. Details can be found at `uk.tug.org/about/funding/`, and proposals sent to `uktug-committee@uk.tug.org`.

TUG also offers project funding: see `tug.org/tc/devfund`.

Installing historic TeX Live on Unix

For Unix only, Péter Szabó has written scripts for convenient installation of historic TeX Live distributions. The years now covered are 2008 through 2018. The scripts and information are at `github.com/pts/historic-texlive`. This can be a welcome backup in case you have an older document that won't run with the latest distribution.

All TeX Live releases (and much more) are available at `ftp.tug.org/historic/systems/texlive` and `ftp.math.utah.edu/pub/tex/historic`. (Additional mirrors would be most welcome.) Péter's new scripts download from this archive.

Converting images to LaTeX: `mathpix.com`

The `mathpix` application purportedly allows one to take a screenshot of math and paste the LaTeX equivalent into one's editor, "all with a single keyboard shortcut". This tool (`mathpix.com`) appears to hold more promise than other attempts. We have solicited a review, which we hope will appear later this year.

Fonts, fonts, fonts!

More than the usual number of font-related announcements have appeared since our last issue. Many notices came via CTAN, but those are ignored here; instead we briefly mention several gleaned from other sources. It isn't known whether (LA)TeX support is available for any of them, but it's likely to happen sooner or later.

We finish up with a more expansive review of a website devoted to "fonts in the wild" — photos of lettering found on surfaces in a city environment.

Helvetica redesign! On 9 April 2019, Monotype introduced the Helvetica Now family, a redesign of the venerable and ubiquitous typeface. The last redesign resulted in Neue Helvetica 35 years ago. The announcement describes the changes as expressly tuned "for the modern era". The new rendition includes three optical sizes and "a host of useful alternates". Read the full text and watch the video at `tug.org/l/helvnow`.

Making Study: New clothing for the twenty-six leaden soldiers. Study is a new typeface, "completed" by Jesse Ragan based on a design by Rudolph Ruzicka, a Czech type designer active in the 1940s–60s. Ruzicka's typefaces, produced in metal by Mergenthaler Linotype and used for books in their heyday, were never effectively reworked for newer technologies, and are not much in use today. However, although he completed only two designs, Ruzicka never stopped coming up with new ideas. A collection of these ideas was published

in 1968, when Ruzicka was 85, in a work entitled *Studies in Type Design.* One of the designs, Study, was clearly well developed, but lacking kerns and normalization of features such as stem and hairline thickness, which are necessary for the typeface to be usable. It is this design that Ragan chose to complete. The story is fascinating. Read it at `xyztype.com/news/posts/design-notes-study`.

Public Sans — The U.S. government gets involved. As its name implies, this is a sans serif typeface intended for public use. It is part of "a design system for the federal government", to "make it easier to build accessible, mobile-friendly government websites for the American public." Nine weights are available, and there is an invitation to contribute to its development on GitHub. Details, such as they are, are at `public-sans.digital.gov` and links therein.

Diacritics to die for: Brill. The Brill typeface, designed and implemented principally by John Hudson of Tiro Typeworks, is a custom design for the Dutch scholarly publisher in Leiden now known as Brill. This firm has a history of more than 330 years of publishing in many languages and scripts, including the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). As if the different scripts weren't enough of a problem, the proliferation of diacritics — often multiply applied to the same base character — exceeded anything that I had ever seen. This came to my attention in a question on `tex.sx` asking for help in reproducing the image on page 22 of these slides: `www.tiro.com/John/Hudson-Brill-DECK.pdf`.

The implementation of diacritic placement uses the GPOS table of OpenType fonts. This can be accessed with X∃TEX, with some limitations, as pointed out by Khaled Hosny in his response to the referenced question (`tex.stackexchange.com/q/485523`). If you think math is complicated, read through the entire slide presentation and marvel.

Brill has made their eponymous types available for non-commercial use by individuals.

Berlin Typography. The website "Berlin Typography" (see `berlintypography.wordpress.com`) is a wide-ranging photo essay showing off signs and other examples of text that appear on buildings and other surfaces in Berlin. The series was started in 2017 and is still active in 2019. Each post highlights a different topic; the most recent posting examines "Shoes and their makers: Footwear in Berlin". Other selections include street signs, shops offering various merchandise and services, plaques, text on stones and grates in the pavement, and much, much more.

Perhaps my favorite collection is `.../2017/03/06/berlins-bridge-typography` — typography on Berlin's bridges. Search for the term "blackletter" to see the photo that would have been included here, had our attempt to obtain permission been successful. (We were unable to find contact information.)

In 2018, an interview with the creator of the blog, Jesse Simon, appeared online: "Celebrating Berlin's Typography, before it vanishes: A tour of the city's most striking signs", by Anika Burgess. It's well worth a look: `www.atlasobscura.com/articles/berlin-signs-typography`.

These essays inspire one to be aware of one's surroundings — look both up and down — and notice what's there in plain sight.

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