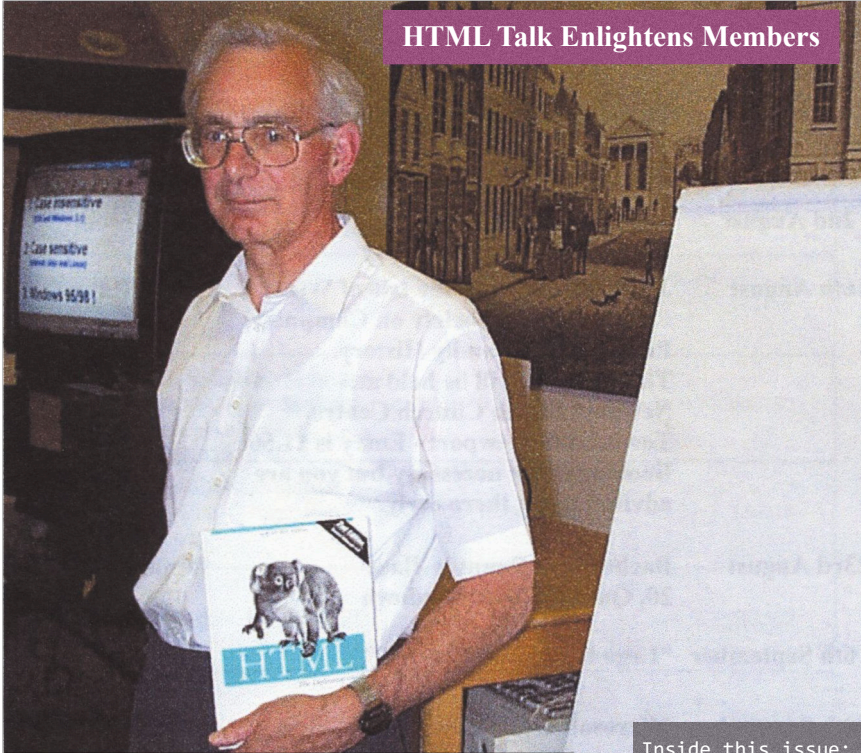




HTML Talk Enlightens Members



Inside this issue:

It was with interest, to learn more about HTML, that our members gathered at The Riverside Centre recently to hear David Broughton explain the intricacies of “Web Page Design”. The talk was well structured and informative as David clearly demonstrated how to produce web pages for uploading to the Internet. The HTML code was constructed in Notepad and Internet Explorer was the browser used by David in his illustrations. (The details of David’s talk can be found in this edition of Hot Key). The consensus of opinion, of those that were present at the meeting, was that the teaching was informative, interesting and enlightening. Those who are interested in setting up their own website must have found this talk most helpful and encouraging.

Future Meetings	2
Committee Members	3
Editorial	4
Humour	5
Objects of Desire	6-7
Lego	8-9
Web Page Design	10-13
Poem	13
Prize Puzzle	14
Messaging Service	15
About Time	15
Notice Board	16

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP- COMMITTEE MEMBERS**Honorary President:**

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“OBJECTS OF DESIRE”

Part 2



Forms have other properties including the Picture property that makes it easy to display a picture in the background of a Form. The Form only requires the Picture property to be set to accept graphic files. Any objects that are added to the Form will then appear on top of the picture. The Label and Shape objects are the only ones that show the picture through the background if their BackStyle property is set to Transparent. However, there are several disadvantages to displaying a picture in the background. Firstly, you can only display one picture at a time and secondly, you have no control over where on the form a picture is placed.

Forms have a huge number of different event procedures. They include Load, Resize, GotFocus and Initialise. I have used the Load event within my Object of Desire program to set the properties of some of the objects within the program.

Example: Start Menu/Shutdown

MENU BAR

One of the most important things in any program is providing the user with easy access to the program's functions. This is done through the use of menus. Before creating a menu the programmer needs to decide what functions to include. These functions need to be grouped into similar items and separated using a separator bar. It is important to keep a consistent feel between programs so that users find items quickly or already know how to use

an object. This is very important when dealing with menus, for instance keeping the Copy and Paste commands in the Edit menu.

Each menu item has its own properties that control its behaviour or indicate its status. Three of these properties are called Visible, Enabled and Checked. Visible determines whether the item can be seen and Enabled determines whether the item is greyed out. The Visible and Enabled properties are controlled by the programmer and can be set at either design time or run time. The Checked property determines whether a tick is displayed next to a menu item. If you look closely at a menu within a program you will see a gap down the left-hand side. This is available for the tick even if no items within the menu are capable of using it. This gap is also capable of displaying pictures although few programs take advantage of this.

Although menu items are not objects, code still has to be written to let the menu items perform tasks. A menu item only has one event: the Click Event. This event is triggered when the user clicks on the menu item or when user selects an item and presses Enter.

Example: At the top of nearly every Windows.

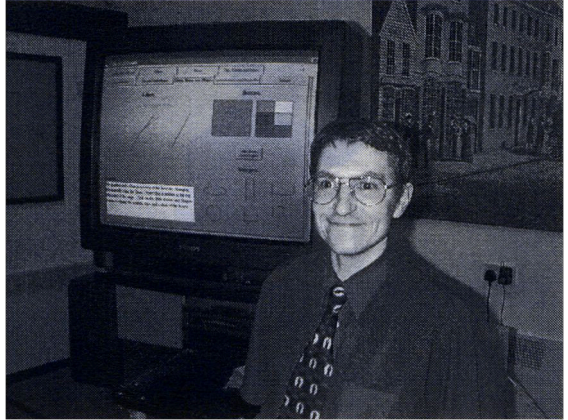
TAB PAGES

Tab Pages are like the dividers in a notebook or the labels on a group of file folders. Using a Tab object you can define multiple pages for the same area of a window or Dialog Box. The Tab object provides a group of tabs, each of which acts as a container for other objects. Only one of the tabs is active at a time and the active tab page displays the objects it contains to the user while hiding the controls in the other tabs.

There are two different types of tab pages: SSTab and TabStrip.

Both the SSTab and TabStrip objects enable multiple pages to be displayed within a single form and allows the user to easily navigate between them. The tabs that enable the user to

get to a particular page can be either displayed in one row as they are in the Internet Options Dialog Box or can be placed in multiple rows such as can be seen sometimes within the Advanced Settings of the Display Dialog Box. Nearly every Tab object you come across fills the whole form and only uses one row. However, it is possible to have multiple Tab objects within one form. If you look closely at a Dialog Box such as Add/Remove Programs you will see that the OK and Cancel buttons are actually outside of the Tab object which means that they are displayed all the time.



My favourite out of the two is the SSTab because it is much easier to program and use both at design time and run time. I used the SSTab within my Objects of Desire Program.

Example: My Computer/Control Panel/
Internet Options Computer/Control

COMMAND BUTTON

The Command Button is used to begin, interrupt, or end a process. It appears most often within Dialog Boxes enabling you to either cancel the Dialog Box, continue on or get help. The size, style, colour and text can all be customised but most buttons use the same style and colour so that a consistent feel is maintained throughout all the parts of Windows.

Command buttons allow the user to simply click them to perform actions. When the user clicks on the button, it not only carries out the appropriate action, it also looks as if it's being pushed in and released and is therefore sometimes referred to as a push button. When clicked, the Command Button's Click Event is triggered and any code written for the Click Event procedure is executed. Clicking a Command Button also generates the MouseDown and MouseUp events. The order in which these three events occur can vary depending on the object. Command Button Events occur in this order: MouseDown, Click, MouseUp. The Objects of Desire

program demonstrates the most used Events and also shows when they occur.

Command Buttons can have access keys just like the ones within menus. The access key is a key pressed while holding down the ALT key that allows the user to open a menu or carry out a command. For example, alt+F opens the File menu. You will notice that the F of File is underlined. The underlined character is the character that needs to be pressed at the same time as the Alt key. Access keys are assigned to commands, menus, and controls by using an ampersand (&) directly before the character being used as the access key, e.g. &File or Format. This is typed into the Caption property of the object. Each access key is unique and not always the first letter of the word. The Format menu in a word processor uses the access key R because F is already used by File. It is possible to assign the same access key to multiple menu items but the user would then need to press the access key several times to get to the right place. However, this defeats the purpose of an access key and also would frustrate beginners who may see no apparent way to select the desired choice. You may not have noticed that the OK and Cancel Command Buttons never have access keys. This is to avoid accidentally pressing an access key that exits a Dialog Box.

Example: Start Button or buttons within Dialog Boxes.

To be continued



LEGO - PAST AND PRESENT

by Tim Bateman

Introduction

When I first mentioned to Brian that I wanted to do a talk about Lego the conversation went something like this.

Tim: I would like to do a talk about Lego.

Brian: What's that, does it stand for anything?

Tim: [Tim acts surprised] Are you telling me that you have never heard of Lego?

Brian: Do you mean those blocks you stick together?

Tim: Yes

Brian: It was just that I could not see any connection between Lego and computers.

Tim: There is, but you will have to wait for the talk to find out what the connection is.

I did not want to spend the talk covering the history of Lego so this article is an introduction to my talk. Please bare with it as the connection will become clear near the end.

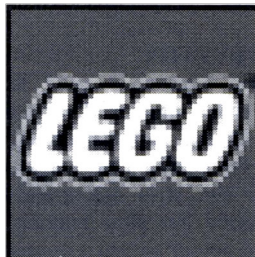
Lego - The Past.

The Lego Company is a family-owned and actively managed company founded in Billund, Denmark by carpenter Ole Kirk Christiansen, grandfather of current president and CEO Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen. (The last names are spelled differently due to a mistake made on the birth certificate of Ole Kirk Christiansen).

Ole Kirk opened his carpentry shop in 1916 and built houses and furniture for the region's farmers. In 1932, he began making wooden toys, including buses, animal pull toys and piggy banks. He switched to toy making because Denmark was in the midst of a depression, and he believed that while parents would make do without new furniture, they still would provide play opportunities for their children.

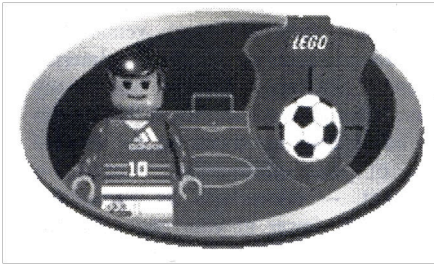
The Lego Company produced its first plastic toys. including baby rattles and toy tractors in 1947. In 1949, Ole Kirk introduced interlocking plastic blocks, the forerunners of today's Lego bricks.

During a 1954 trip to a toy fair, Ole Kirk's son, Godtfred, met a toy buyer who complained that no company offered a comprehensive toy system. In response, he began to develop what later became known as the 10 characteristics of the Lego System of Play:



1. Unlimited Play Potential for Girls and for Boys.
2. Fun for Every Age.
3. Year-round Play.
4. Healthy and Quiet Play.
5. Long Hours of Play.
6. Imagination.
7. Creativity
8. Development
9. The More Lego Elements the Greater the Value, Extra Sets Available, and Quality in Every Detail.

Sales improved dramatically in 1958 when the company introduced a combinable



brick. Children could build tall structures of practically any shape. By the end of 1950's, Lego bricks had become the most popular toys in Europe.

The Lego Company introduced Lego Duplo preschool toys in 1969 and the Lego Technic advanced building line in 1977, expanding the System of Play from toddlers to teens. The 1995 introduction of Lego PRIMO (now called Lego BABY) expanded the Lego System of Play to babies as young as three months. The company continues to enhance the System, introducing new sets each year.

In 1998, Lego Mindstorms robotics products and Lego Media games were launched. Today, the Lego assortment includes more than 2,000 elements in more than 700 sets. Lego toys are sold in 130 countries and have been played with by over 400,000,000 children over the years. Lego was also voted toy of the century in the UK.

The Lego Company now comprises 50 companies on six continents with 9,000 employees, 1000 in the United States. The Company, however, continues to observe the motto adopted in the 1930s by Ole Kirk Christiansen, "Only the best is good enough".

Lego - The Present.

At present, the Lego categories are as follows:

- Lego BABY (Ages 0 - 36 months)
- Lego DUPLO (Ages 1 1/2 - 6 years)
- Lego Action Wheelers (Ages 4+ years)

- Lego (Ages 3+ years)
- Lego Media Software (Ages 6+ years)
- Lego System (Ages 3 years to 12 years)
- Lego Technic (Ages 7+ years)
- Lego Mindstorms (Ages 9+ years)

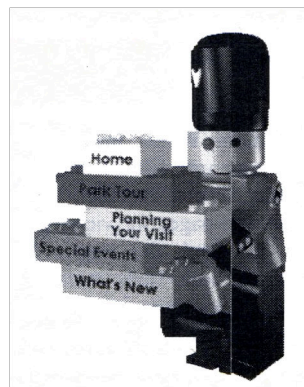
It is the Lego Technic and Lego Mindstorms categories I want to focus on. Lego has two versions of the Mindstorms product. One for the home market and another for the school market. This can cause some confusion.

Lego Mindstorms

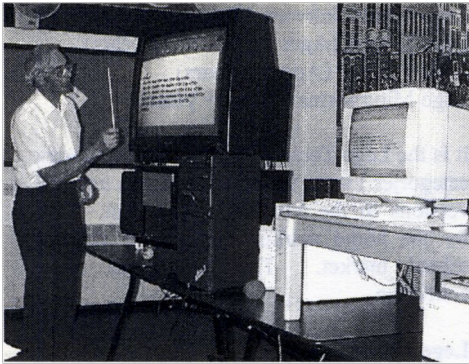
Lego Mindstorms is the brand name for the set of products that presently includes the Robotics Invention System (the home product) and RoboLab: Mindstorms for Schools (the school product). There are also Expansion Sets available for the Robotic Invention System, and Lego continually adds more products to the Mindstorms brand.

Robolab: Mindstorms for Schools

Robolab is the software distributed with the school version of Lego Mindstorms. Robolab consists of two components: Pilot, which is an introductory, template-based programming method, and Inventor, which is an advanced, open programming environment.



To be continued



TALK ON WEB PAGE DESIGN

3 MAY, by David Broughton

I volunteered to give this talk when the title had twice appeared in last years' schedule of meetings but had been cancelled. It was not the title I would have chosen because I felt that members would be less interested in the subtleties of design than they would be in the details of getting their own web page up and running. So although some design guidelines were in my talk, I concentrated more on the mechanics of the process.

The purpose of having a web site is to tell the world about yourself or your activities. This could be for personal or business reasons. You might want to show off personal achievements or interests in a hobby or you may want to advertise a small business or campaign for some cause.

To get started you need a computer and an internet connection. Whilst the world will have access to your web site 24 hours a day, it is your Internet Service Provider (ISP) who will store your web pages for viewing and it is your job to send the pages (called uploading) to the web site's storage area. Your ISP will tell you how much space you have and how to address it. After you have uploaded your pages or amendments to pages you have done your part and you can switch off.

Web pages are accessed using a web browser and there are many versions of these around, such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer, Netscape, Mosaic and many others. They all work slightly differently so don't concentrate too much on the detailed layout of your information. Content is paramount -- appearance is secondary. Besides, the viewer of your pages has the choice of five different font sizes and can change the size of the web browser's window and this can significantly change the layout.

The files which define the content of web pages are called html files. HTML = Hyper Text Markup Language: "Markup" because it tells the browser how to format parts of the text, to display text in bold or underlined or to show headings, for example; "Language" because certain syntactic conventions have to be observed to distinguish between the markup instructions and the text itself; "Hyper Text" because of the links that can be used to jump from one topic or page to a related page.

I recommend the use of a plain text editor for producing the html files. My favourite is QEDIT because it is so versatile and customisable to one's own keyboard conventions. QEDIT is a DOS program. For those who prefer to use a Windows product, Notepad is recommended. You can also use word processors (but see below).

"White space" is any combination of spaces, tabs and newlines which are together. Browsers will regard all white space as just one single space. What this means is that the text in your html file and your text as it appears on the browser's screen bear little resemblance one to the other, other than that the order of words remains the same. This gives you the freedom to arrange your html text as you wish.

An html file is in two parts: a HEAD and a BODY. TAGS are used to show the parts and all the markup words. An example of a

tag is `<HEAD>` which is placed at the start of the head part. Most (but not all) tags have an ending version which is simply the same word preceded with an oblique stroke. Thus, `</HEAD>` terminates the head part whilst `<BODY>` `</BODY>` enclose the body part. The less-than and greater-than symbols enclose each markup language symbol, making a tag. Upper or lower case or a mixture may be used but it is conventional to stick to upper case.

The basic structure of an html file is as follows:

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE> .... </TITLE>
</HEAD>
<BODY>
....
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

Notice each tag has a corresponding closing tag. The above text should be typed into a file called blank.htm and used as a template for all new html files.

The head part contains the title of the page and may contain other details that tell web search engines what the page is about with keywords and descriptions.

The body part is the main part that contains the main text. As you proceed you can check the appearance on your own browser. You can arrange that the "source" selection (available on some browsers) will start up your text editor on the html source file so that you can edit and view stage by stage as you compose your web page. Make sure you click "save" on the editor and "refresh" on the browser.

There are four main layout tools available:

1. Simple paragraphs. This is text arranged in paragraphs. The only tag you need to use is `<P>` to introduce the start of each new



paragraph. The closing `</P>` is optional because every new paragraph is assumed to terminate the previous. You may like to use `` .. ``, `<U>`.. `</U>` and `<I>` .. `</I>` to show emphasis using bold, underline and italics characters. They can also be used in combination. Another useful one is `
` to force a line break. Although `<P>` will also force a line break, paragraph breaks are larger than the standard line separation.

2. Lists. You can have an unordered list using `` .. `` or an ordered list using `` .. ``. The difference is that items in an ordered list will be numbered by the browser whilst an unordered list will have a bullet symbol at the start of each item.

3. Tables. I have found that tables are one of the most useful layout structures. Apart from their obvious use to show rows and columns (as you would use to display a database, for example), they can also be used in a variety of other contexts. Take, for example, the minutes of the club committee meetings. You can see these on the club's web page at <http://www.ddina.demon.co.uk/iwpcug/> by selecting "Committee Minutes" from the left hand menu. The schedule of meetings is also arranged in a table using three columns.

4. Frames. The club's web page is divided into three frames. These are rectangular sections of the screen that can contain pages that scroll independently of the frames on the



same screen. This is particularly useful to show a menu of items that remains visible whilst one scans another page in another frame.

You will also want to include pictures here and there. The web is a good place to put family photos if you have relatives around the world. But there are two important guidelines here:

1. Make sure the size of the photo in pixel units matches the size you intend to display them. Using a higher definition only wastes download time and web storage space. Assume 640 x 480 pixels as a minimum screen dimension, or at most 800 x 600. You have no control over the viewer's screen definition size but you can specify photo sizes as screen percentages rather than in pixel units. You may need to resample ("resize" is another word used for the same thing) your photos if their definition is too high, as is likely after using a scanner or a digital camera. For example, a photograph which is 1024 x 768 would waste a lot of storage and download time even when compressed if it is only to be displayed at one third the page width. This would need to be resampled to about 200 pixel wide.

2. Don't put too many pictures in the index page. The index page is the first page the viewer will see. It is important to keep this page clear of possibly unwanted material and to use links to pages containing graphics and

larger descriptive text material.

One of the most important features of web pages are the links to other pages and sites. Your own pages will be held in a local directory and can be referred to with a simple file name. Other pages will need a complete url (uniform resource locator). The simple case (called a local link) is like this:

```
<A HREF="page2.htm">Here are my own
opinions</A> whether you like them or not!
```

The above text would be displayed by the browser so that the part between <A> and will be coloured and underlined to show that it is a link. The other text will be shown normally. So you can choose which words will be used for the viewer to click on. If your link is to a page in another directory, use the forward slash as a separator (unlike PC directories where you use a backwards slash. For example: "personal/page2.htm". If your link is to a page outside your own set of pages, replace the part in quotes with the full url. For example:

```
<A HREF="http://www.compost.co.
uk/">Information on composting methods</
A>
```

The advantage of using local links is that you can check out the linkages on your own computer before going on line. You should keep a directory structure on your own computer that matches the directory structure on your ISP's site.

Obviously, this article can only give you a flavour of the HTML language and you will need to get hold of a book on the subject. I use "HTML -- The Definitive Guide" by Chuck Musciano and Bill Kennedy but there are many books of a similar nature.

You can avoid learning HTML by using a word processor like Word for Windows that can output in html format, or Microsoft's Front Page or Publisher programs. By using these programs you will remain ignorant of

the actual processes that go on behind the scenes and you will produce web pages about ten times larger than they need to be, and as a consequence will take longer to download for everyone who looks at your pages. Another important point is that Microsoft have extended the html language to make their browser match the output from their other software products. No guarantee can be given that the pages will look the same on other browsers that will not recognise the Microsoft extensions. But you can make up your own mind about this. I prefer to stick to a plain text editor and understand what is going on.

On the club's web site you will find a link marked "HIWEB" on the startup page (right hand main frame -- scroll down to the end of the page). That is my own personal campaign after experiencing some awful web page designs, some by reputable companies. You may not agree with me but -- have a look!

When you get to the stage of uploading your files you need a program like WS FTP (downloadable from a web site) which must be configured to access your own web site. You can also use your web browser to upload files but I find this less convenient. You will need your password. It is important to use lower case file names for all your files (and don't forget to refer to them in your links as lower case). The WS FTP program has an option that will force all destination file names into lower case.

For space reasons this article has not provided much of the detail you may need to get started so feel free to e-mail me or other members if you need more information.

David Broughton



Ode To My Computer

I have a spelling chequer
It came with my pee see
It plane lee marks for my revue
Miss steaks eye cannot sea

Each thyme when aye have
Struck the quays
I weight for it to say
If watt eye rote is wrong or rite
It shows me strait a weigh

As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose be four two late
And I can put the err or write
As this rime demon straits

I've run this poem threw it
I'm sure your policed to no
Its letter perfect in its weigh
My chequer tolled me sow

(Ann On)

Taken from the Internet



Prize Puzzle for JUNE 2000

by David Broughton.



The puzzle this month is on the Hot Key cover disk as the program ESCAPE. The file name is ESCAPE.EXE and is for running at the MS-DOS prompt. (The program is also available for download from the club's web site: <http://www.ddina.demon.co.uk/iwpcug/> click on "Downloadable Binaries" from the left hand menu and follow the instructions.)

To encourage competitors who have not yet had a go at my computer puzzles, this one is in two parts: the first part is quite easy and if you complete it you will be entered into the prize draw once. Go on to complete part two as well and you will be entered twice into the draw. In both cases you are given a secret code word on successful completion. Send that code word to me (see page 3 for addresses) to arrive by 5th July.

If you know the secret password to the first part you can go directly to the second part either by giving the password on the command line or supplying it after the program starts.

ANSWER TO THE APRIL PUZZLE

This puzzle was to use all ten digits to make a sum. There are many answers. Some competitors tried to find the total number of solutions. Here is a typical answer: $579+483=1062$. The following members sent in correct solutions: Peter Greenhalgh, Rosemary West, John Bownas, Peter Woollerton, Michael Hodge, Dennis Linzmaier and Ken Cameron. John Bownas was pulled from the bag first (if you know what I mean!), then Dennis Linzmaier. Both generously agreed that their names be excluded as they had won several times before.

Peter Greenhalgh was then drawn and he won the £5 book token. Well done all.

The Isle of Wight PC User Group

welcomes all owners and users of IBM Compatible Personal Computers.

It is a group which seeks to exchange ideas and seek new information.

Our meetings are informal on the **first and third Wednesdays of each month at The Riverside Centre, Newport, 7.30- 9.30 pm.**

The first Wednesday has usually a formal talk whilst the third Wednesday is more informal, geared to the new user and aims to help out members with specific problems.

Membership is £12 per year.

This journal, "**HOTKEY**", is produced every month.

Visitors are welcome.

If you would like to know more about us, either come along to one of our meetings or contact one of our Committee Members on one of the numbers on page 3.

How to send a text message to a mobile phone

<http://www.orange.co.uk>

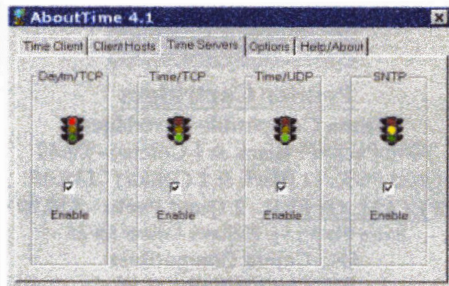
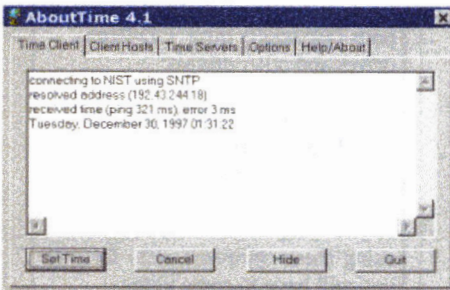
The Orange web messaging service allows you to send a free of charge, text message from the web to an Orange phone or Hutchison Telecom pager. In order to use the service you must first register using the form on the website. **The messaging service allows you to send up to 20 text messages in any 30 day period.**

If you are sending to a Cellnet phone.....Register with
<http://www.cellnet.co.uk>



ABOUT-TIME - Checks your PC clock regularly against time servers on the Internet. .

You can download it from:- <http://www.arachnoid.com/abouttime/index.html>



Don Chiverton and Rosemary Pears pictured at Riverside Centre

MEMBERS NOTICE BOARD

**This Board is FREE to members
Please use it!**



FOR SALE

Caldera Linux 2.3
3 CD's and Boot/Install Disk
Plus manual
£14

Contact Editor
Tel. #####

WANTED

Free - any non-working computer parts (especially mice, CD-Rom drives and other drives).

They are needed for my talk "Lego in the 21st Century" in September.

If you want to know what I will be using these computer parts for then you will have to come to the meeting!

Tim Bateman - Tel. #####
tim@*****.freeserve.co.uk

FOR SALE

Printer Cartridges

Epson Compatible Cartridges

Twin Packs (1 Black & 1 Colour) - £9.49

Quad Packs (2 Black & 2 Colour) - £15.49

SPECIAL OFFER- 2 Quad Packs - £28.99 Extra Blacks
for £3/Extra Colour for £5

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FOR SALE

Canon 600e Bubblejet Colour Printer

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£45.00

Contact Molly Mills
Tel - #####

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Epson Perfection 610 Scanner

Hardly used
Complete with software
£75.00

Telephone Don Chiverton - #####

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