In Memoriam: David B. Arnold

David and his beloved Morgan sports car.

David Arnold died suddenly on the evening of Tuesday 25th October at the end of a game of Fives (a handball game), a sport he had played since at least his undergraduate days.

David was educated at Gonville and Caius College Cambridge and submitted his PhD, 'A Computer Model of Housing Layout,' to the Department of Architecture in 1978, one of the early contributions to Computer Aided Architectural Design. He then became a senior programmer for the Royal Naval Educational College, RNEC, Manadon, Plymouth, and Scientific Assistant at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Thurleigh, Bedford. Later he was a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Use and Built Form Studies at the University of Cambridge, before lecturing in Computing Science at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, where he was promoted to full Professor in 1989.

From 2002 he was Professor of Computing Science and Dean of the Faculty of Management and Information Sciences at the University of Brighton becoming Director of Research Initiatives and Dean of Brighton Doctoral College by the time of his retirement earlier this year.

In the early 1980s David became involved in the development of international (ISO/IEC) standards for computer graphics, a member of the British Standards Institution committee on graphics standards and a key UK delegate to the international ISO/IEC committee, becoming leader of the ISO/IEC project that developed the Computer Graphics Interface (CGI) – Interfacing techniques for dialogues with graphical devices, ISO/IEC 9636 published in 1991. The first standards documents generally had two or three parts. David took on the daunting challenge of coordinating the development of a standard with nine parts.

David Arnold became Dean of the School of Information Systems at the University of East Anglia. For many people that might have been a sufficient workload, but not for David. He co-edited a series of books on computer graphics standards, published by Butterworths in the early 1990s and wrote the first title in the series "ISO Standards for Computer Graphics – The First Generation" with David Duce. David Arnold's appetite for work was prodigious,

sleep was not a priority and food and drink were consumed (albeit in no small quantities) when the task-list permitted. The suggestion that we use the outline of a boat to illustrate some ideas didn't quite produce the anticipated result. David Duce was thinking in terms of a simple 8-vertex closed polyline, forgetting David Arnold's naval college background. The end result was a far more elaborate outline of a cruise ship. David Arnold, his PhD student/later Research Assistant and colleague, Graham Reynolds, then started a very fruitful collaboration on applications of formal methods to computer graphics.

In David's spare-time he project-managed a barn conversion near Norwich which was never the most straight-forward of tasks especially when, for example, matching bricks had to be imported from The Netherlands. Sadly his first wife, Fiona, died after a long illness in 1999, though she and their sons Phil and William were able to enjoy the end result.

David's involvement with Eurographics dates back to 1982. His first major contribution to the Association started in 1985 when he was appointed co-chief editor of Computer Graphics Forum, a post he relinquished in 1990. He was elected a Fellow of Eurographics in 1989 and became chair of the Association from 1992 to 1995 and hosted a number of memorable Executive Board meetings at the Barn.

It was probably in the late 1990s that David started to see the potential for graphics in cultural heritage as both a research theme and practical application. Many at the time saw this field as just another, and by implication un-interesting, application of computer graphics. But David was not deterred and his legacy now includes a series of very successful EU-funded collaborative projects, a network of institutions and research groups working in the field, an ACM Journal on Computing and Cultural Heritage (of which he was founding chief editor), and a Eurographics workshop series on Graphics and Cultural Heritage. Without any doubt, he can be considered to be one of the very few pioneers of this domain, contributing personally to the consolidation of visual media technologies as a main ingredient of Digital Humanities. David was never a lone-researcher, he was always a team player and an excellent project coordinator, and he would himself doubtless acknowledge the roles of many other players in bringing an initial glimpse of a vision to the healthful state this field is in today.

At a personal level, David was a truly inspiring collaborator, a man who knew his mind, but also a man who cared deeply for others and for his family in particular. He will be sorely missed by us all and to his wife, Angela, sons Phil and William and their families, we extend our sincere condolences.

David Duce