20 Years of HPCC

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Abstract

This paper summarises the history of the club, and also summarises how the book that Włodek and I edited to celebrate 20 years of HPCC, '*RCL 20*', came about.

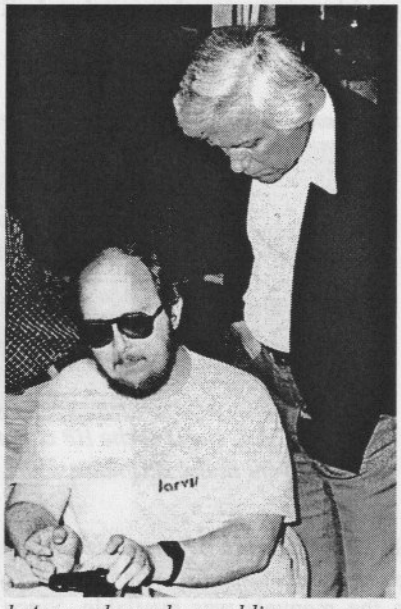
In the tradition of special editions of DVDs, I'm also going beyond the conference presentation and including behind-the-scenes details and an "editor's commentary" about what it took to create *RCL 20* from scratch.

Introduction

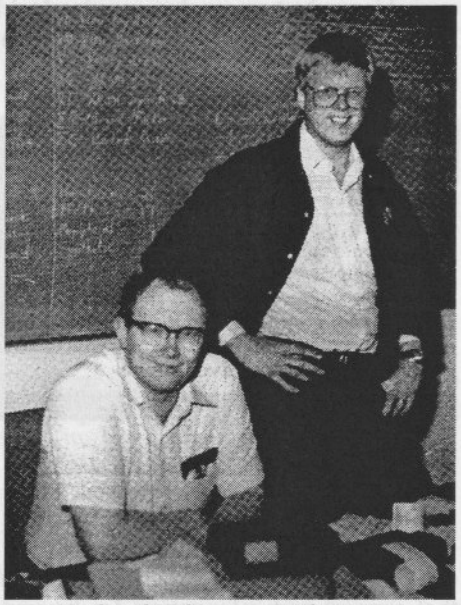
HPCC was formed in 1982 as PPC-UK, the British chapter of the international group PPC. The 20th Anniversary conference seemed a suitable time to look back over the history and development of the club. In thinking about how best to achieve this, it became apparent that it would make sense to set the club in the wider context of the development of personal computing devices. It also became clear that it would take more than a reminiscing issue of *Datafile* to do justice to what we wanted to say, and so early on, Włodek and I decided to write a book; but more about that later.

HPCC: Getting Started

Hewlett-Packard's introduction of the HP-35 in 1972 started a line of small personal computing devices that would continue through the HP-65, 67 and 41, and that ultimately created the need for user groups to support the use of these amazing little gadgets. In 1974, Richard Nelson started publishing *65 Notes* as the newsletter of what became the *HP-65 Users Club*. This provoked an identity crisis in 1977 when the HP-67 and HP-97 arrived, which was resolved by renaming the club to *PPC* (with unspecified derivation), and renaming the publication *PPC Journal*. The introduction of the HP-41C in 1979 helped to push PPC's growth to its peak in the early 1980s.



Jim deArras shows how adding memory to his HP-41C yields 831 registers, 1980



Richard Nelson & Keith Jarrett working on the PPC-ROM, 1981