
In memoriam Bernard Gaulle

Maurice Laugier*

The past president and founder of GUTenberg¹ passed away on 2nd August. Here I would like to pay a tribute to him. As our association was unable to be represented at his funeral, we sent a telegram.

Bernard Gaulle was quite discreet, even secret about himself: it has been difficult for us to reconstitute his career. First he was a computer scientist at the Blaise Pascal Institute, part of the CNRS,² grouping scientific and management applications at the end of the 1960s. Then, as soon as the national centre of scientific computer engineering (CIRCÉ³) was created at Orsay in 1969, he entered it as a system engineer specialised in operating systems like MFT,⁴ ASP, MVS⁵-JESS3, on the IBM⁶ mainframe. He became the head of the user assistance group and stayed on at this position until 1993. In particular, he was in charge of publications (users' documentation, course manuals, newsletters) and was interested in the rise of DTP⁷ tools. In 1983–84, 'a researcher turned up in my office, carrying a magnetic tape that came from Stanford,' he narrated in No. 0 of the *GUTenberg Letter*, dated February 1993. The history of the beginning of the GUTenberg association can also be found in this issue. That was how he discovered T_EX, was persuaded, and spent his life to promote it not only for scientists — which was quite easy — but also the general public.

About 1984, he set up the SAPRISTI⁸ system at CIRCÉ. He conceived it out of T_EX, developed it, and got his secretaries to use it. At this time, that was very innovative and ... audacious!⁹

In June 1984, he met Jacques André and together they launched a project for a French-speaking T_EX Users Group. Four years were needed in order for this association to be set up. However, Bernard Gaulle was already organising manifestations and represented French-speaking people at the first

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¹ *Groupe francophone des Utilisateurs de T_EX*, French-speaking T_EX users group.

² *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*. French governmental organisation of scientific research.

³ *Centre InterRégional de Calcul Électronique*, inter-regional centre for electronic computation.

⁴ Multiprogramming with a Fixed Number of Tasks.

⁵ Multiple Virtual Storage.

⁶ International Business Machines.

⁷ DeskTop Publishing.

⁸ *Système Assisté de PRoduction Intégrant Simplement Textes et Images*, literally: 'assisted production system integrating texts and images easily.'

⁹ Bernard Gaulle narrated this part of his life and his problems at this time in two articles of the French group's journal (*Cahiers GUTenberg*): the first is included in No. 0 (1988), the second in Nos. 15 and 17 (1993).

EuroT_EX conference at Como, Italy. The GUTenberg association was created 23rd September 1988, and Bernard Gaulle was elected President.

He was actively involved in the association and was re-elected President. In this way, he participated in TUG's board of directors as Vice-President for GUTenberg, then as Special Director for GUTenberg. He regularly published editorials and notes concerning his ideas about T_EX and the association. To get more involved in his own work and his programs outside T_EX, he resigned his position as President in 1992 and passed the office to Alain Cousquer.

Another turning point in his career happened in 1993: CIRCÉ was replaced by IDRIS.¹⁰ Bernard was a *chargé de mission* by IDRIS' Director for the distributed systems for scientific computer engineering.

Bernard Gaulle devoted his efforts to the maintenance and diffusion of his **french** package since 1993. His numerous articles in the *Cahiers GUTenberg* and *GUTenberg Letter* informed the French-speaking T_EX community.

At the same time, he was also interested in French legal problems regarding software put on the Internet (he presented a survey about that in *Cahiers GUTenberg*, No. 25). This led him to create the *Litiel*¹¹ association. He became President of this association and was involved in it until his passing, although he had already left IDRIS in May 2005 for health reasons: a cancer he faced bravely.

Bernard did much for both GUTenberg and T_EX in general. He left not only two major works (GUTenberg and **french**) but also a recollection of a kind president, pleasant, and devoted. He was very active, resolute in his developments, even pugnacious.

We wish to express our pain and sympathy to his wife, Catherine Gaulle — who participated in preparing GUTenberg and EuroT_EX meetings — and their daughters.

(English translation: Jean-Michel Hufflen.

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¹¹ From 'logiciel', French for 'software'.