Dedication to Hermann Zapf, 1918–2015

Donald Knuth

The METAFONTbook is dedicated

To Hermann Zapf:
Whose strokes are the best

and this has an (intentional) double meaning: Not only does it say that he drew the most beautiful shapes. It secretly implies that he also gave the most valuable feedback! Because, in English, we get a "stroke" from another person when that person pays us a compliment. Hermann had very strict standards, and he never praised anything that he didn't really like. Therefore I could always count on hearing his true opinions, good or bad; this was indispensable during my years as an apprentice learning about type. I couldn't trust strokes from other colleagues, but Hermann was the best teacher because he didn't hold back criticism.

He and I collaborated closely on three projects during the 1980s: Computer Modern, Euler, and the book *3:16 Bible Texts Illuminated*.

Subsequently we corresponded rather often, and visited each other's homes several times. I could count on receiving both a Christmas card and a birthday card from him in most years! In his most recent letter (January 2015) he did say that his health was not so good.

The photos at right were taken when Hermann and Gudrun visited my house on 10 September 2001.

References

[1] Hans Hagen, Taco Hoekwater, and Volker R. W. Schaa. Reshaping Euler: A collaboration with Hermann Zapf. *TUGboat*, 29(2):283–287, 2008. http://tug.org/TUGboat/tb29-2/tb92hagen-euler.pdf.

[2] Donald E. Knuth. *The METAFONTbook*, volume C of *Computers and Typesetting*. Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, USA, 1986.

[3] Donald E. Knuth. *Computer Modern Typefaces*, volume E of *Computers and Typesetting*. Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, USA, 1986.

[4] Donald E. Knuth. *3:16 Bible Texts Illuminated*. A-R Editions, Inc., 801 Deming Way, Madison, WI 53717-1903, USA, 1991.

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Hermann Zapf, Donald Knuth, and Gudrun Zapf von Hesse.

HZ and DEK at work on Don's computer.

Photos by Susie Taylor of the San Francisco Public Library.