About Myself

Last Revision - Mar 1st, 1996

Below is something that I find funny (Dilbert).....

Origins

How did I come to be here - was there life before DAI? I'm originally from Romford - the home of 'Essex Man' but before I get the crap jokes note that:

1. I vote Labour.
2. I don't wear white socks.
3. I have NEVER worn a shell-suit.
4. I wouldn't be seen dead in a Capri - OK!

Brideshead Left!

I then got out and did a degree in Chemistry at Oxford University. This bears a close resemblance to the MSc course offered by this department - it's a conversion course! Look at it this way: the MSc course takes people from diverse backgrounds and trains them to become AI researchers/professionals; the Oxford Chemistry course takes a large percentage of England's and Wales' (few Scots in Oxford I'm afraid - they, quite wisely, decided to take their degrees in Edinburgh!) most talented and motivated potential chemists and converts them into accountants!

Both are very successful at what they do.......

If you don't believe me them ask any Oxford chemistry graduate! I hear that if you want to find one, you should try the offices of Ernst & Young, Arthur Andersen, KPMG, etc. [If you wonder why accountancy firms take on so many chemists - the reason is simple: chemists are not afraid of numbers, are not afraid of hard work, and (most importantly) are not afraid of boredom! After having to memorise the chemistry of the rare-earth elements, double-entry bookkeeping seems gripping stuff by comparison!].

The location and the company have little to recommend it either. Unless your idea of a fun place is a town with little going on and populated by pretentious rich kids..

Jumping Ship

However, I have Dr Hugh Cartwright to to thank for giving me a way out of a lifetime of boredom. My final year research project applied Genetic Algorithms to chemical flowshop scheduling. (Note the addition of the word 'chemical' - this was about as much chemistry as there was in the project. This kept the examainers happy and suited me fine!). To cut a long story short - I got hooked - that‘s why I‘m here in Edinburgh...

Auld Reekie

Anyway, as I‘m a certified AI/optimisation geek I ended up coming here for more of the same by doing a MSc in Information Technology: Knowledge Based Systems here last year (I recommend the course to anyone - but be warned that its hard work). My MSc project looked at adapting operator probabilities in Genetic Algorithms; an outline of my MSc project is available.

I'm now a PhD student doing (yet) more optimisation stuff - click on this link for details.

Interests

I have been known to be interested in/like the following:

- Music - Jarre, Tangerine Dream, Aphex Twin; basically anything with synthesisers really..
- Beer - especially Guinness.
- Badminton.
- AI Stuff (yes, I know....).
- Computing in general. My Geek Code is: GCS/S d++ p c+ l u e++ m+ s/+ n- h- f! g w- t+ r x?.
- Evolutionary Biology (I‘ve wierd hobbies!)..:-)
- Reading (usually trashy SciFi/Fantasy stuff).
- I also hold my hand up and admit to being a closet trekkie...

Ah, well - can‘t sit here jawing all day!