NCCollaboration

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Written: June 14, 1988 by Peggy Irish
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See also NCCollaboratorCard and NCHistoryCard packages.

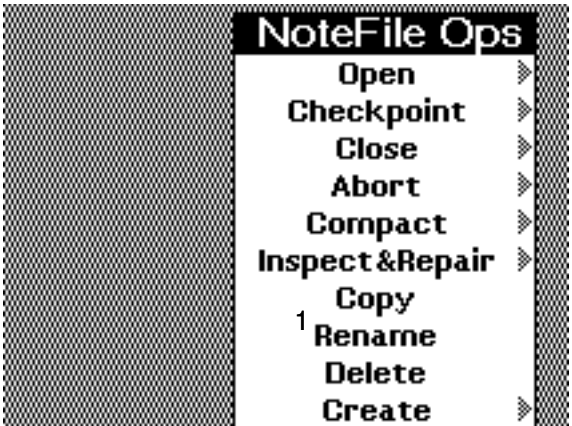
INTRODUCTION

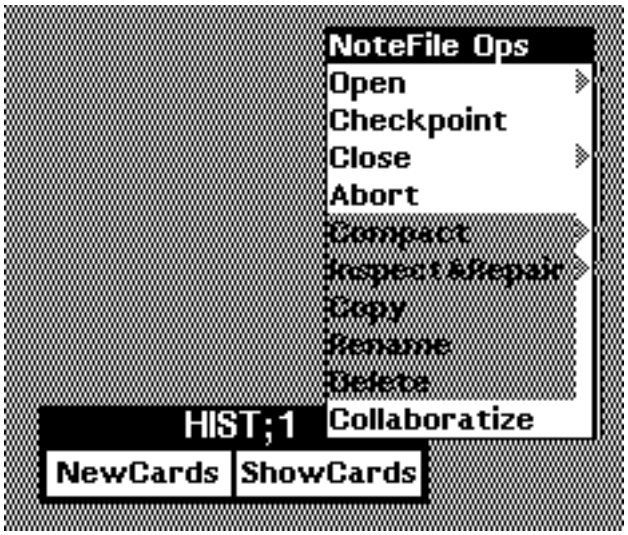
This package was written to assist people using the draft-passing style of collaboration. This style refers to settings in which a small number of collaborators work closely together, but not at the same time. Rather, they take turns using a single shared hypertext workspace. These collaborators need the ability to discuss the use of the medium as well as the work constituting the content of the project. In particular, they need tools to support the processes by which they monitor their own and each other's work.

To this end, several mechanisms have been created to support collaboration. First, the notion of having a notefile understand the identities and certain properties of its individual collaborators has been developed. (See NCCollaboratorCard documentation.) This has also been extended so that multiple simultaneous users may be recognized, in the case where several people are using a notefile while sitting together at a workstation. Second, a method for recording the changes made to a notefile by a collaborator has been implemented. (See NCHistoryCard documentation.) Finally, a "collaboratization" process for configuring a notefile so that it contains these mechanisms has been provided, and is contained in this package. (The NCCollaboratorCard and NCHistoryCard packages will automatically be loaded when NCCollaboration is loaded.)

LOADING NCCOLLABORATION

Loading the NCCollaboration package adds the menu item "Collaboratize" to the session icon notefIle menu and to all notefIle icons' left button menus:





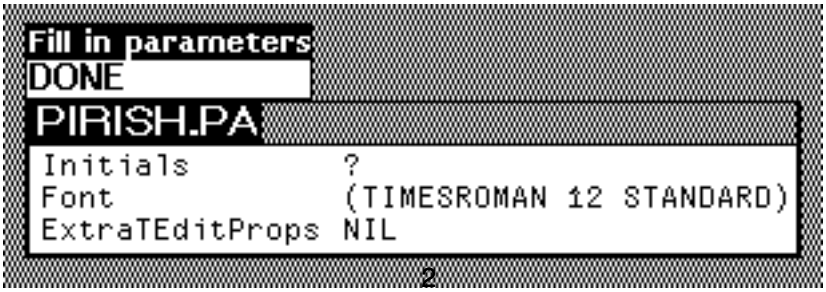
COLLABORATIZING A NOTEFILE

Selecting "Collaboratize" will cause a number of things to happen to the chosen notefile. A collaborator card will be created for the current collaborator. A new menu item, "Collaborator Info," will be added to the notefIle icon's middle button menu. The NoteFile Use History filebox will be created to hold all history cards in this notefile. Also, as part of the opening of a collaboratized notefile, a history card will be created and opened for the current notefile session. This card will automatically be filed in the NoteFile Use History filebox.

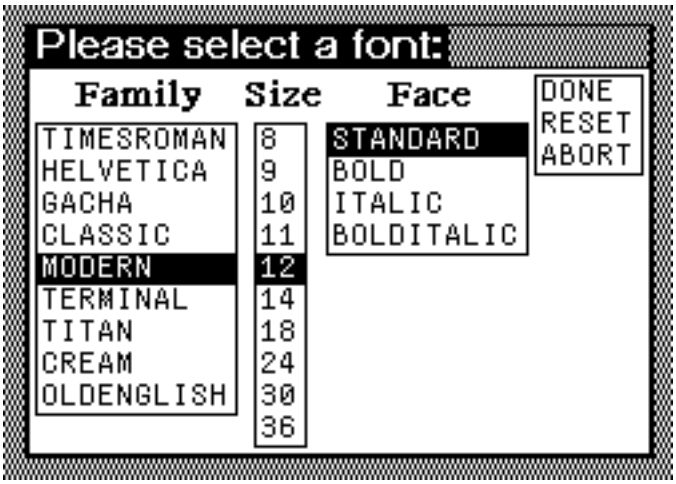
Creating a Collaborator Card

When a collaboratized notefile is opened, a menu of collaborators' names will appear, from which the current collaborator should select his name. During the collaboratization process, the notefile has no prior knowledge about collaborators; therefore the menu will contain only the "New Name(s)" option:

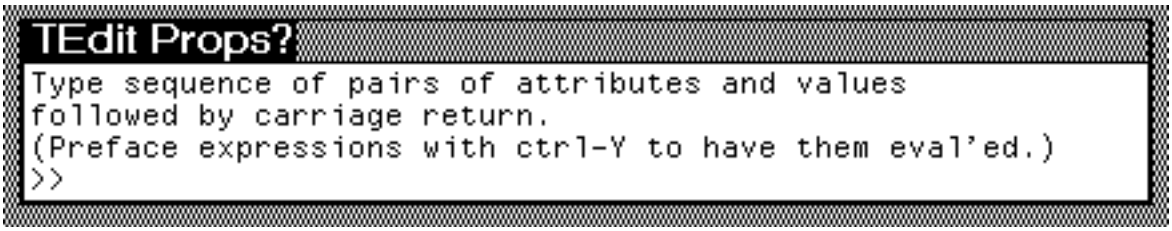
The user should select "New Name(s)," which will cause a new collaborator card to be opened:



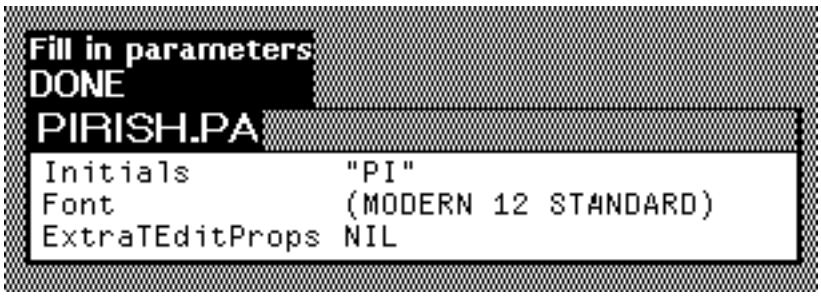
This collaborator card stores information about the current collaborator. The title of the card is initialized with the username of the collaborator, which he may change. The collaborator should fill in his or her initials by selecting the "?" with the left mouse button. A prompt window will appear, in which the collaborator can type his or her initials. These initials will appear in the titles of history cards created later. The collaborator may also change the Font property by selecting the existing Font value and choosing the desired font properties from the resulting menu,



and then selecting DONE. The ExtraTEditProps property may also be changed by selecting the existing value of ExtraTEditProps and typing in the appropriate attribute-value pairs.

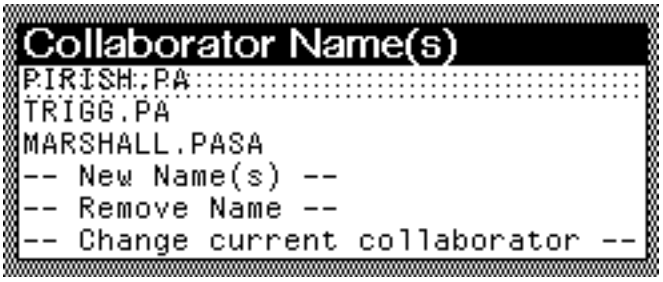


The Font and ExtraTEditProps properties define the defaults to be used in cards created by this collaborator. Once the collaborator is satisfied with the collaborator card, he or she should select DONE.



COLLABORATOR INFO

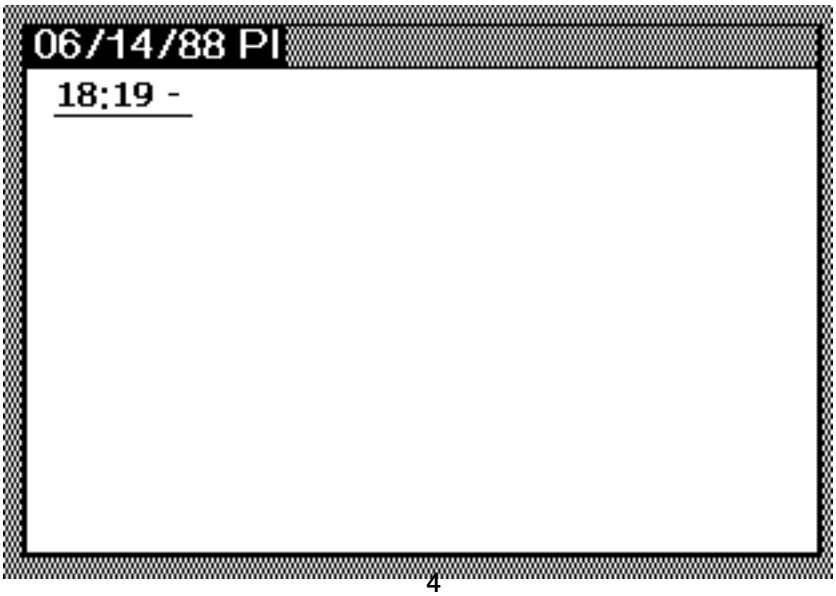
If the noteflle icon middle button menu item "Collaborator Info" is selected, a menu containing the collaborators in this notefile will appear, with the current collaborator's name highlighted. Three commands also appear at the bottom of the menu:



The information in any of the collaborator cards may be changed at any time by selecting the name from this menu and editing the collaborator card that is brought up. The "New Name(s)" command is used as described in the **Creating a Collaborator Card** section, with the exception that a new collaborator card does not have a default title unless it is the first one created in the notefile. The "Remove Name" command allows the current user to remove a collaborator name from this notefile. The "Change current collaborator" command allows a different collaborator name to be chosen for the current session in this notefile.

CREATING A HISTORY CARD

Once collaboratized, (and upon collaboratization), a new history card is automatically created for a notefile each time the notefile is opened. Each history card is automatically filed in the NoteFile Use History filebox. Upon creation, each history card is titled with the current date and the initials of the current collaborator. A time stamp is entered in the card to indicate when the current session began.



For more detailed information on history cards, please see the history card documentation.