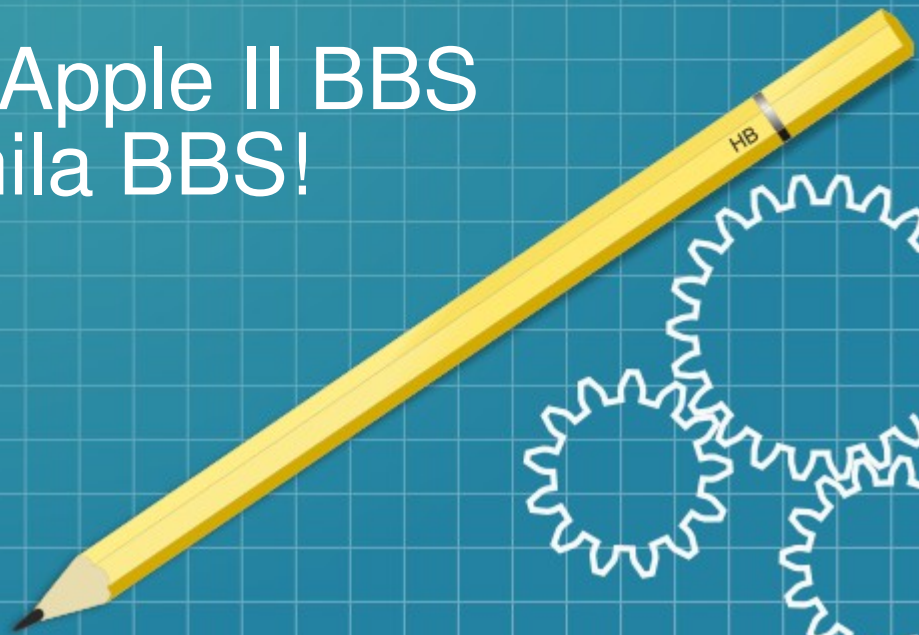
The BBS Zine
Issue 1: Bold Imaginings

By mhj

In this issue: A 80's Apple II BBS
And A 90's Manila BBS!



Foreward

A BBS(Bulletin Board System) Zine in 2019? You've gotta be mad, they'll say. Well, stranger things have happened.

In any case, I thought what I'd do was, show that BBSes are still around and are still fun places to be!

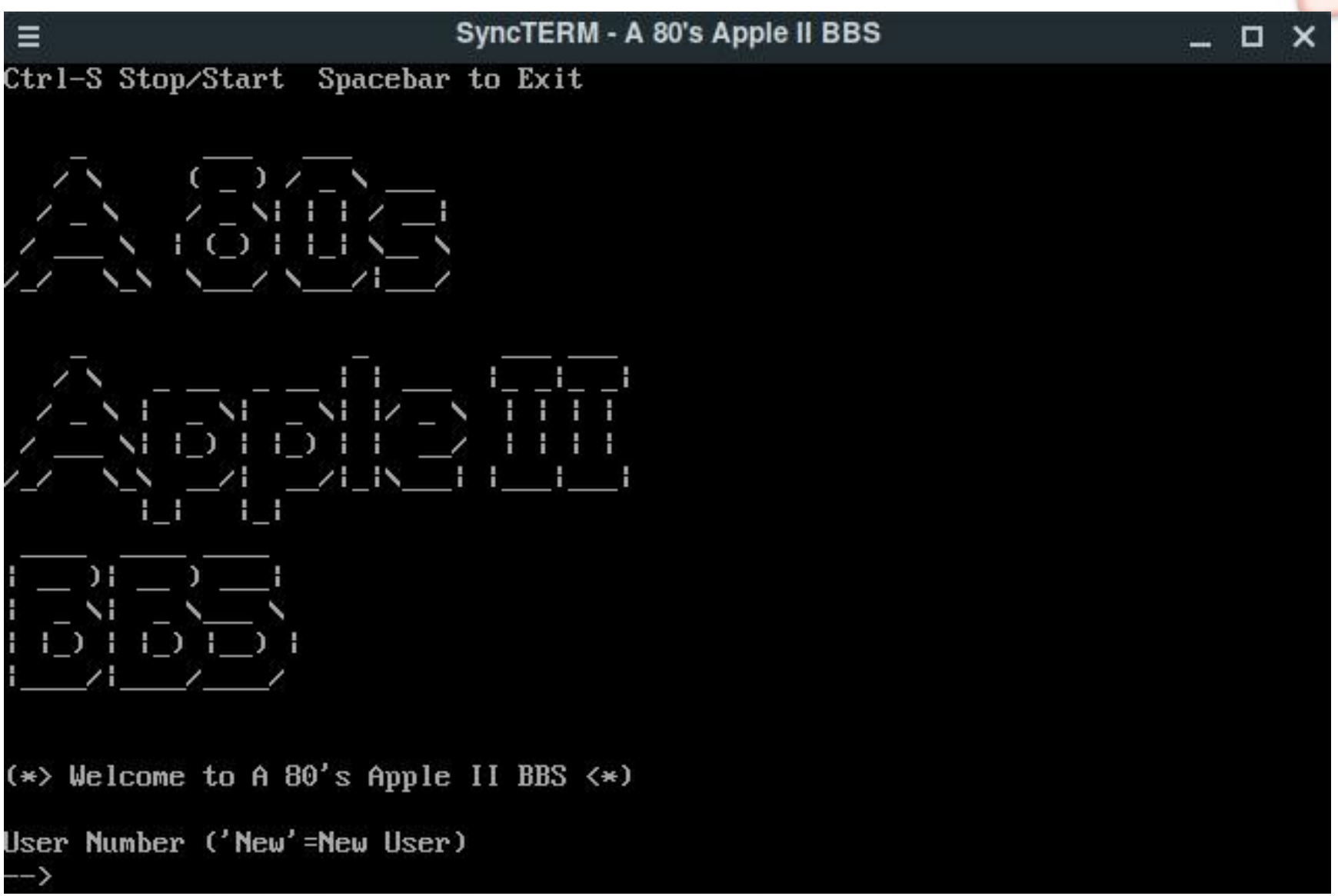
The other objectives of this zine is to show tips & tricks of how to use BBSes, setting up your own, BBS clients, door games and everything else BBS related. This zine will be published on as many sites as I can do it, usually in PDF form.

BBSes are nowadays of little activity, except for the occassional login by those who remember them. I want to change that, and I hope that with this zine, that will come to fruitition. I hope you'll come to understand that these types of places deserve as much attention as any other community.

With the increasing government and corporate interference into our daily lives online, it's become more and more important that we find outlets to discuss things. For some people, I feel that BBSes are perfect, because each BBS has it's own feel to it, as though it were a land of it's own.

Let's start our journey into these lands now! First up, A 80's Apple II BBS.

A 80’s Apple II BBS

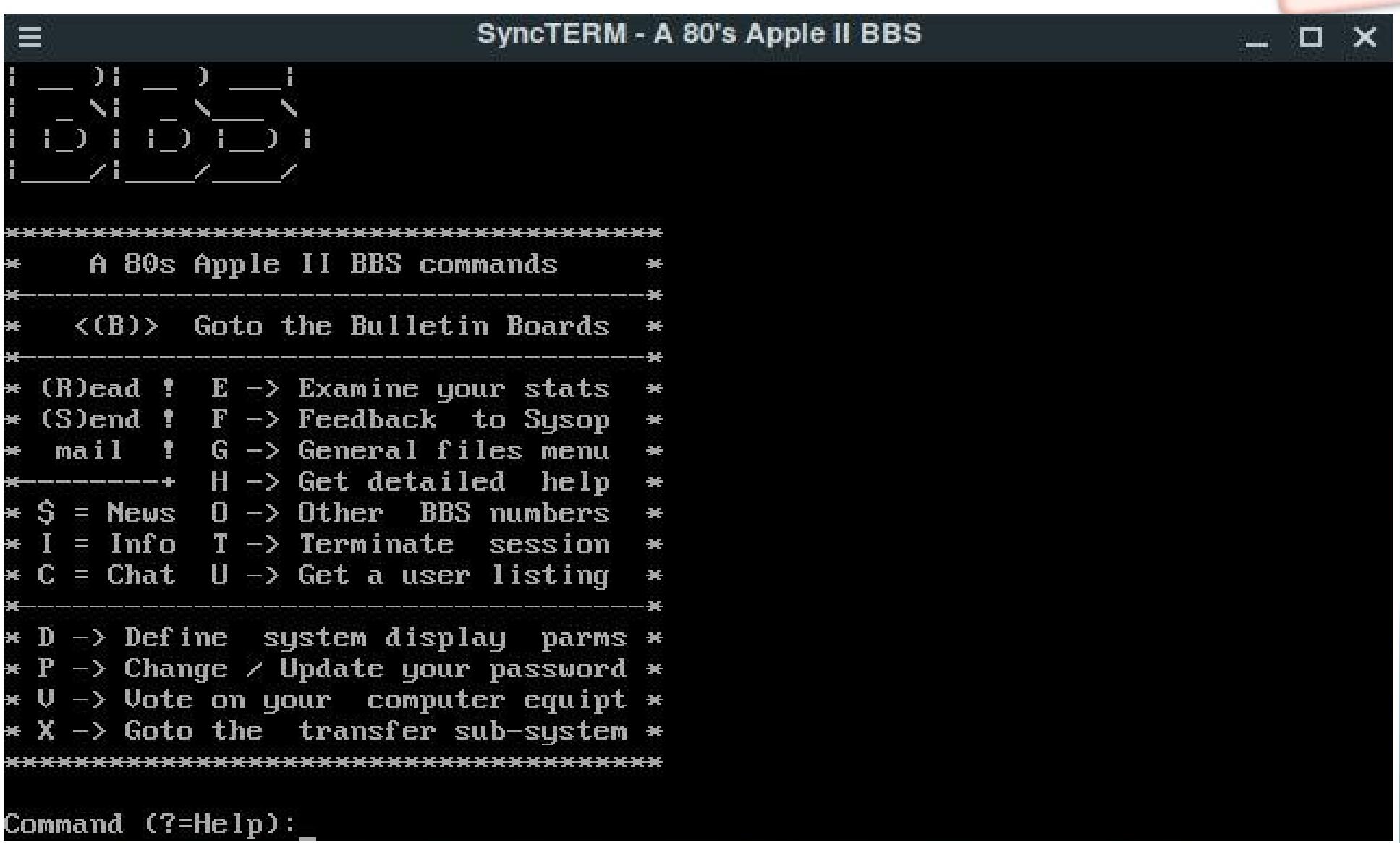


A 80’s Apple II BBS runs on a geniune Apple II, and it was one of the best selling home computers in America.

Now, when I say home computer, do I mean like the computers we have now? Not at all. Home computers generally lacked what we consider important for a computer nowadays. They could still do things like print, program, and do accounting and games, but most used tapes as their method of program loading, because otherwise you were presented with a screen that booted up into BASIC and that was it.

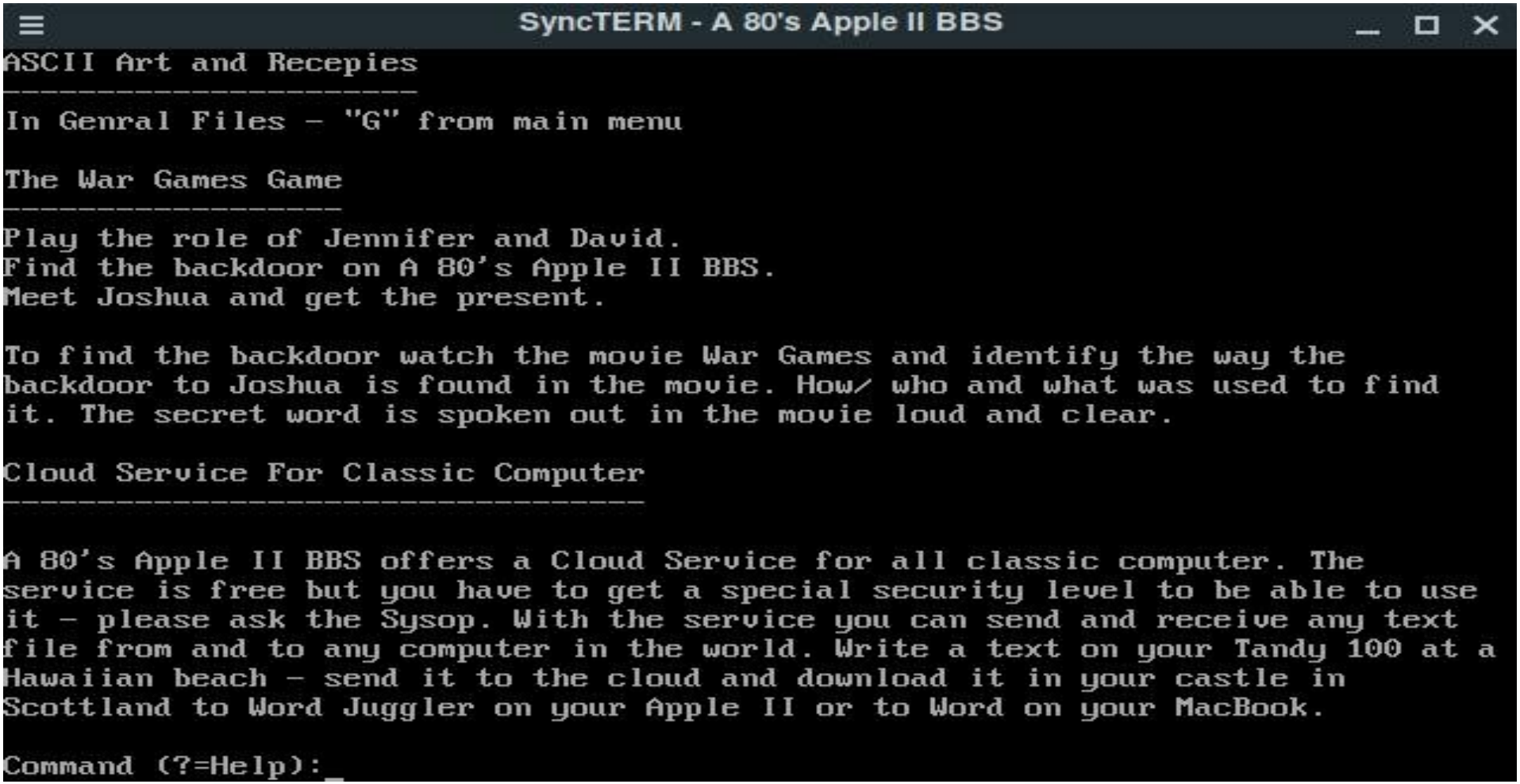
BASIC on most of the computers was very powerful, however, and the great things about computers of that era was that there was no layers between user and computer interaction. What you typed was what happened!

This BBS is a reminder of that era. Everything is slow-going, but it has tons of interesting details for you to check out. This is the help screen.

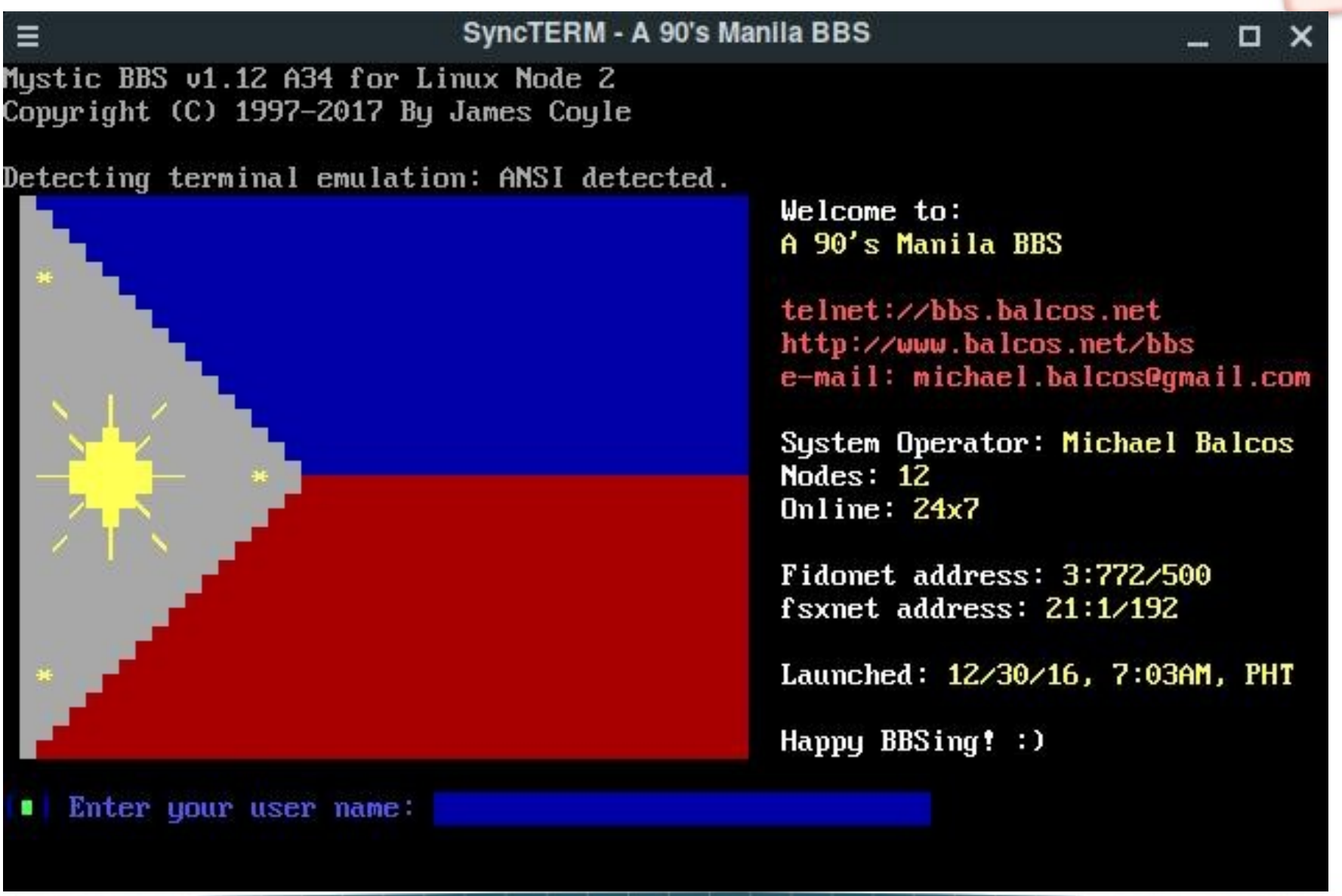


All in all I'd say that I am very impressed with the level of dedication put towards the maintaining of the system. The SysOp gets a thumbs-up from me!

Here's a screenshot of the info menu.



A 90’s Manila BBS



A 90's Manila BBS is certainly one of a kind, just as was A 80's Apple II BBS. However, what sets this one apart is the fact that there multiple door games and demos.

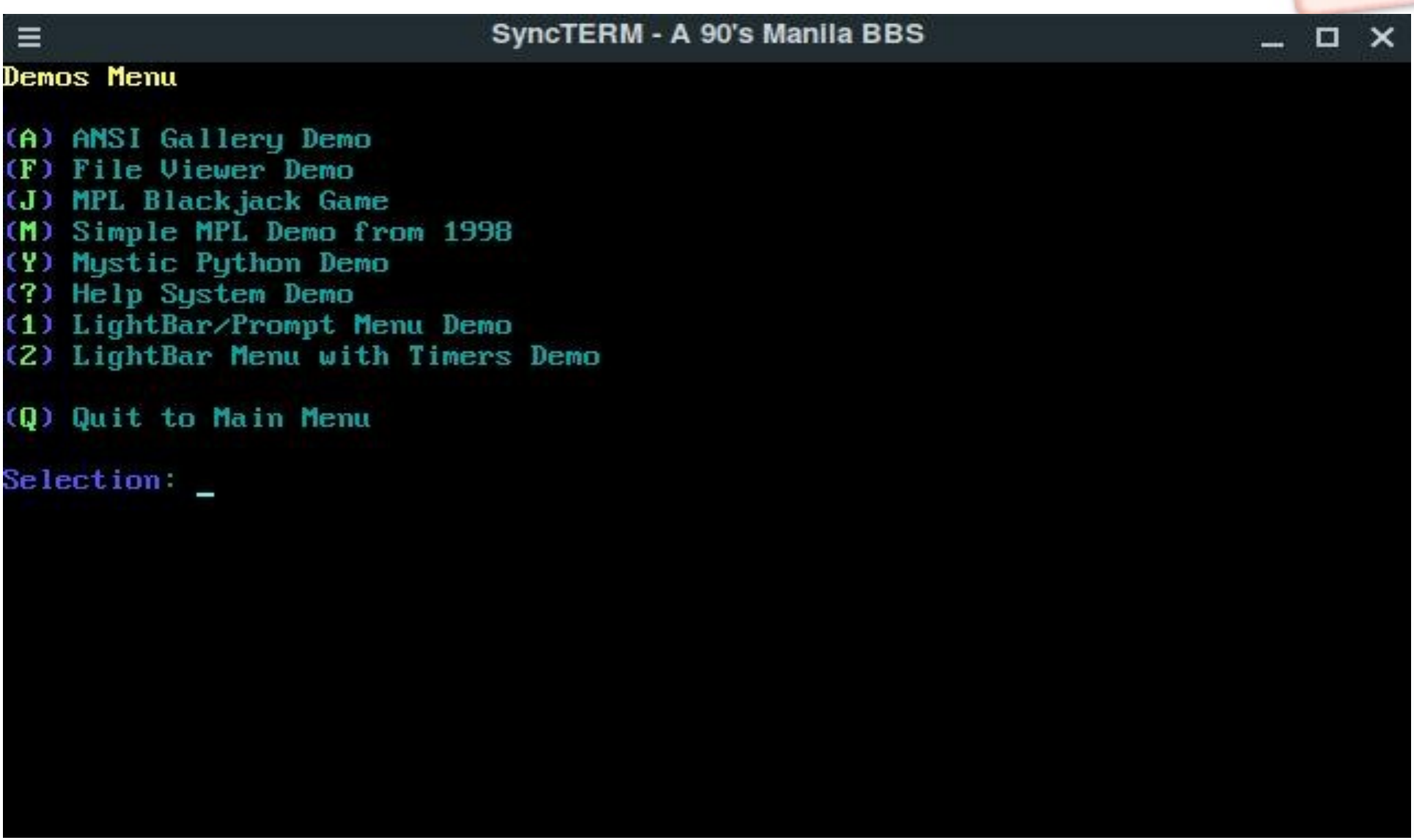
Now, I didn't try any of the games or demos, as they also had a files area, which I assume is for BBS software and the like. Overall, they seemed to present a kind of iddylic setting for a community to be, but, there was one problem I could see, and that was that the system itself hadn't seen any updates since 2017.

Hopefully more BBS System Operators(SysOps) will be around the communities they create.

The main menu.

The door games menu. Lots of choices!

Demos menu.


SyncTERM - A 90's Manila BBS
Demos Menu
(A) ANSI Gallery Demo
(F) File Viewer Demo
(J) MPL Blackjack Game
(M) Simple MPL Demo from 1998
(Y) Mystic Python Demo
(?) Help System Demo
(1) LightBar/Prompt Menu Demo
(2) LightBar Menu with Timers Demo
(Q) Quit to Main Menu
Selection:

The files menu.

Guide to BBS clients

Now, as far as clients go, there are certainly a multitude of them. I'd say it really depends on your operating system.

The greatest success I've had is with the SyncTerm client, but I've also heard that NetRunner and Qodem are good as well. I'd say to give all of them a try and see which one works best for you. The nice thing about SyncTerm, however, is that you can import the list of BBSes from the Telnet BBS Guide site and easily dial into any BBS on the menu. Makes it quick and easy to get up and running in the world of BBSes! I don't know if you can do that with other clients.

Useful Links

SyncTerm - http://syncterm.bbsdev.net/

Telnet BBS Guide - https://www.telnetbbsguide.com/

Qodem - http://qodem.sourceforge.net/

NetRunner - http://www.mysticbbs.com/downloads.html

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a BBS?

- A BBS is a Bulletin Board System, usually hosted on an individual's server, sometimes in their home or on a Virtual Private Server. They were huge in the 80's and 90's before the advent of the world wide web. The main benefit back then was that it was easy to find a local community, files, email and other things just by dialing in to one.

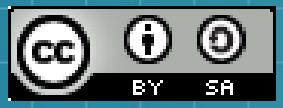
Contact

You can contact me, mhj, on the web at the following address:

mhj@sdf.org

Please include a subject line or else I will assume it is spam. Also, I can't respond from that email, as I only have an ARPA account on SDF, so expect one from my Tutanota account.

Thank you.



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