Parting Comments:

(Patrick)

As of this writing, I'm just happy as a dog in a room full of fire hydrants!!   All I can say is, '94 is starting off in a kick butt fashion and if it keeps up this way, I'm gonna love it.   In any case.... Homer has come a long way in the 2+ years I've been using it (boy wouldn't you love the first few versions), and other than the documentation and some bug testing, I haven't done much.   Tob takes all the credit and the grief.   In any case.. if Homer doesn't work properly and/or you have problems with it, be civil about things.   Tob has spent a LOT of time working on this program and for essentially nothing other than to hopefully see a decent graphical interface for IRC so people can become intersted in it.   If you like the program and intend to use it, then by all means send in the fee.

(Tob rambles for a while)

IRC can be a lot of fun, if you find a channel that's frequented by people who are on your same wavelength.   If you don't find such a channel, you have a couple of options.   First, you can just give it up and never join IRC again.   Second, you can create your own channel with a witty   name and topic, and hope that someone stumbles by who has the same interests as you do.

Unlike a few other programs I've written, where I had an initial idea and then just implemented that idea and was finished, Homer's been evolving since day one.   Homer first came into a semi-functional form in June of '92, and I started using it as my IRC front-end from that time on.   Because I know a few great folks, I spend almost all of my waking hours logged in, sad as it is to say.   As such, I've had a LOT of time to use the program, to get a feel for what's good, what's bad, and what's missing, and try to remedy those things as best I can.   Homer 0.92 is the first version that I feel is robust enough to make public, and even with this version I'm dreading the heaps of bug reports and complaints I'll most likely receive.   There are still a few major features I'd like to add, such as a robust notify feature, and a sort of advanced macro feature, but I think 0.92 is a relatively good base client.

Homer is AppleEvent-aware, so by sending and receiving AE's via an external program, it's possible for that program to send and receive IRC data.   There's no end to the potential that this system has for mutli-player games and collaborative systems, but I've been too busy working on Homer itself to worry about a Homer client program.   If you're a programmer and want to give a client a go, drop me a line at tob@zaphod.ee.pitt.edu and I'll send you a little file to get you started.   Right now, the tour de force Homer client is Codpiece, a programming wonder which allows people to send and receive sounds with a group of other people, via IRC.   Also coming in vogue recently is the concept of Hypercard-based Homer clients.   Using Hypercard, almost anyone with a little knowledge of IRC can write a Homer client.   Currently there's one that allows two people to play chess, one that allows multiple people to draw on a "whiteboard," and one which causes the user to spit out inanities on command.

I think that's about it.   I somehow envisioned myself saying lots of really witty things in this section, but I'm not, so   I reckon I'll just stop now.