

C News for NEXTSTEP

NeGeN/NiNe/R&A distribution [2.0]

(versions: CNews [CR.G/R&A], nntp [1.5.12.1], slurp [1.10/R&A]; NewsConfig [1.4])
July 1995

For general information contact: <negen-connect@negen.tn.tudelft.nl>²

Send suggestions and bug reports to: <negen-connect-bugs@negen.tn.tudelft.nl>

This is the binary distribution of C News for NEXTSTEP, as brought to you by NeGeN/NiNe (the Dutch NEXTSTEP user group) and R&A. It contains an enhanced version of the standard c-news software; the nntp server, which is needed by most newsreaders to access the c-news article database; plus slurp, a news retrieval agent that can be used to download news from a remote nntp-server into your local c-news installation. Also included is *NewsConfig.app*, an easy to use application that allows you to quickly setup your news site.

This README file contains some (hopefully helpful) hints to assist you with the installation of the news software, and helps you to create a configuration that is right for your system.

C News is distributed as a set of NEXTSTEP Installer packages aptly named **CNewsTools.arch.b.pkg** that contains the c-news and nntp software and documentation, and **CNewsConfig.arch.b.pkg** containing the configuration program *NewsConfig.app*.

IMPORTANT: you *must* install these packages as "root".

This is because some executables must be installed setuid news, and also because some system configuration files must be edited in the configuration process. If you don't know how to become "root", you'll have to ask your system administrator to install this package. (If you are your own system administrator and you still don't know how to become "root", you have a serious problem:-)

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² Unfortunately NeGeN/NiNe's e-mail addresses are in a state of flux as of this writing. These are the ones that should be valid as of August 1, 1995 (maybe earlier; keep an eye open for the official announcement on *comp.sys.next.announce*), so these may not work yet. In the meantime, you can use <negen-connect@**basil.icce.rug.nl**> and <negen-connect-bugs@**basil.icce.rug.nl**> instead.

FEATURES

The news software has been enhanced by R&A and provides the following features over the standard c-news (Cleanup Release) distribution:

- automatic signature appendage to posted articles (now fully configurable).
- automatic removal of empty directories in the article database to save space (configurable).
- `inews` is fixed so that canceling articles from NewsGrazer works.

and of course:

- this version of the software supports the *news overview* (NOV) database, so newsreaders that take advantage of this (like Alexandra.app) are sped up considerably.
- the *NewsConfig* application makes setting up your news site very simple indeed.

INSTALLATION

The installation of **CNewsTools** puts the news executables in the directory `/usr/local/lib/newsbin`, and the accompanying manual pages in the directory `/usr/local/man`. It also creates a new minimal news configuration in the directory `/usr/local/lib/news` if it does

not yet exist. It won't remove or overwrite an existing news configuration, so it is always safe to delete and reinstall this package. Note that this minimal configuration in itself is not enough to get your news system up and running; you have to complete the configuration yourself, e.g. by running *NewsConfig.app* from the **CNewsConfig** package (see below).

The installation creates a user and group called ``news" in the local Netinfo domain if these do not yet exist, and, if neither users nor mail aliases called ``newsmaster" and ``newscrisis" exist, offers to create them as mail aliases.

(Administrative mail used to be sent to ``usenet" in previous versions of c-news. If ``usenet" exists either as a user or a mail alias, it is still used as a default value for the ``newsmaster" mail alias, and the user ``usenet" will be made the owner of the news software in /usr/local/lib/newsbin. But if it does not exist, you will not be offered anymore to create it.)

You are also asked if you want to inhibit news processing during business hours (8:30am \pm 5pm). This may be a good idea if you intend to receive a lot of news and you want to shift the extra CPU load of processing it to quieter hours. In practice, though, for a news flow of about 1MB per day or less the CPU hit is negligible.

The installation updates some system files, i.e. /etc/inetd.conf, /etc/crontab.local and /etc/rc.local, with entries to support C News. These entries are bracketed with:

```
## Entries for CNews, added at date by NeGeN distribution revision:  
...  
## End of CNews entries.
```

so a subsequent installation knows how to find and update them.

A backup is made of every file that has been changed during the installation.

NewsConfig.app is installed (in /LocalAdmin by default) by unpacking the **CNewsConfig**

package. No surprises here³.

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³ You may, however, want to obtain the latest `active` and `newsgroups` files from your news provider and put these inside the app wrapper, before you start the actual configuration. This way you'll get the latest and greatest newsgroup information. This isn't *mandatory*, however; if you don't do this *NewsConfig* uses the `active` and `newsgroups` files that come with it (which are taken from NLnet).

CONFIGURATION

The easiest way to get your news site up and running is to use *NewsConfig.app*. The application offers on-line help that should guide you through the configuration of your news system. It is a simple tool, meant to setup your news site in such a way that it can receive news, from a single newsfeed, quickly and easily. It does **not** address the more arcane aspects of C News configuration, like: multiple newsfeeds, expire control, send batch control, mailpaths, `newgroup/rmgroup` authentication, `checkgroups` authentication and nntp access control. These are explained in more detail in the section "Advanced News Configuration" of *NewsConfig's* on-line help. Reasonable (we hope) defaults are established for these aspects when you install **CNewsTools** for the first time. Also keep in mind that it only sets up *your* end of the news system; you'll almost certainly have to contact your news provider to actually *get* any news.

Of course, if you're brave (or you know what you're doing), you can also configure C News the hard way, by reading manpages and editing the configuration files by hand. Some people may even <shudder> prefer it that way.

Release History

2.0 ± July 12, 1995

- *CNewsTools: update to latest versions of CNews (Cleanup release, with patch CR.G) and nntp (1.5.12.1) software. Added slurp (1.10).*
- *CNewsConfig: new option 'Allow new newsgroups hierarchies'. Updated online Help. Recent (July 7, 1995) active and newsgroups lists from NLNet.*

1.3 ± May 20, 1995

- *The nntp executables in CNewsTools, which were accidentally compiled only for HPPA and Sparc architectures in the previous release, are now quad-fat.*

1.2 ± May 5, 1995

- *CNewsTools has been recompiled quad-fat;*
- *CNewsConfig has been updated with recent (May 4, 1995) active and newsgroups lists from NLnet, and has been recompiled quad-fat.*

1.1 ± March, 1995

- *First public release.*

From the original C News READMEs

Cleanup Release of C News, with patch CR.G

April 1995

The current C News distribution can be retrieved by anonymous FTP from <ftp.cs.toronto.edu> (file `pub/c-news/c-news.tar.Z`) or <ftp.zoo.toronto.edu> (file `pub/cnews.tar.Z`). Please avoid major use of FTP during our peak hours (0800-1800 Eastern time, zone -0500). Major archive sites such as <ftp.uu.net> and <ftp.funet.fi> also usually have the latest distribution.

[...]

We are grateful for financial support of C News development by the following, none of whom are to blame for the final result (some more detailed information can be found in the "sponsors" directory):

UUNET Communications Services Inc. (provider of Usenet news feeds)

ClariNet Communications Corp. (publisher of a Usenet-format E-newspaper)

[...]

C News is an implementation of the storage and forwarding subsystems of a news system. We include a simple reader as a bonus, but more complex ones will usually be wanted.

[...]

Discussion of C News issues usually takes place in the Usenet newsgroup news.software.b (the name is historical). There is no C News mailing list.

If you've found a problem, we definitely do want to hear about it. But, we **do not** want to see 2000 lines of diff listing! What we want to see is a concise human-readable description of what the problem is and how, if at all, you solved it. If we want the diff listing, we will ask. Similarly, we are interested in hearing about changes and improvements, but want to see terse descriptions first.

To send comments, complaints, problem reports, etc., do **not** mail to Geoff or Henry personally, but to:

	c-news@zoo.toronto.edu
aka	c-news@zoo.utoronto.ca
aka	utzoo!c-news

(Note that this has changed, c-news used to be on utstat.) If you want a response, make sure you give us a valid email address to respond to! You'd think this wouldn't need comment, but maybe once a week we get mail from an address which looks normal... but our reply gets bounced back as undeliverable. Sorry, but we get too much mail to make heroic efforts to solve each such problem.

Geoff Collyer

Henry Spencer

From the original NNTP README

NNTP README

December 3, 1994 (NNTP 1.5.12)

[...]

INTRODUCTION

This package contains the code necessary to compile an NNTP server daemon. If you need the NNTP client code, get the 1.6 release of the client software.

[...]

INTRODUCTION TO NNTP INSTALLATION

First, figure out what you are trying to do (this is good advice under most circumstances, and it is especially apropos here). NNTP can be used for two things: (1) Remote news reading, where news is stored on one machine and read from remote machines across a high-speed local area network such as Ethernet, and (2) News transfer, where news is transmitted to NNTP servers on remote machines over either local or long-haul networks.

NNTP "server" machines are machines that have a full installation of USENET news on them. An NNTP process, the "server", allows remote sites to connect to the server machine and read or transfer news. The server machine DOES NOT NEED "reader client" software such as "rrn". It MAY NEED "transmission client" software such as "nntpxmit" if you want to use NNTP to transfer news.

NNTP "client" machines do not have a full installation of USENET

news on them. They get their news from an NNTP server machine across the network. They DO have NNTP "reader clients" such as "rrn" installed on them.

[...]

IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS

Contact Stan Barber <nntp@academ.com> for nntp bugs/questions/etc.

I'm very interested in learning what hacks need to be made to nntpd to get it to work on various systems, and certainly, if there are outright bugs, please let me know. Bug reports and fixes for nntp are posted to the newsgroup "news.software.nntp". Announcements of new versions of nntp software are posted there, too.

From the original Slurp README

SLURP - An advanced passive NNTP client

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Version 1.10

Written By Stephen Hebditch

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Slurp is an advanced passive NNTP client for UNIX. It will connect to a remote NNTP server and retrieve articles in a specified set of Usenet newsgroups that have arrived after a particular date (typically the last time it was invoked) for processing by your local news system or forwarding on via UUCP to another news system. It replaces nntpxfer from the NNTP 1.5.12 reference implementation and nntpget from the INN distribution.

[...]

QUICK START

The slurp manual page contains full details on how to operate slurp. As a quick start all you need to do is:-

1. Edit slurp.sys to set the hostname of the server you wish to connect to for retrieving articles and the groups you wish to receive.
2. Edit slurp.<hostname> and enter a single line containing the time a couple of days previously, say, in 'YYMMDD HHMMSS' format.
3. Run 'slurp <hostname>' and sit back while the articles flood into your local news system.

If you are running C News, then the next time that newsrun is invoked from cron, the articles in the in.coming directory will be added to the news system.

If you are running INN and do not have the slurp output set to rnews, then it will be necessary to run 'rnews -U' to have the files from the rnews spool directory processed by the news system. If slurp's output is set to rnews then articles will be piped to innd as they arrive - doing this will lower the speed at which articles are transferred from the remote server.

Patches for the NNTP 1.5.12 server are available on request which implement caching of article locations during a NEWNEWS so that a further access of the history file is not required when an article is retrieved.

CONDITIONS OF USE

The Slurp package and individual code as detailed is Copyright (C) 1992/93/94/95 TQM Communications, BCM Box 225, London, WC1N 3XX. All rights reserved.

This package may be freely distributed provided the following conditions are met. The files detailed in the contents section of this file must all be included. No charge, other than basic online charges or media costs, may be levied. You are permitted to make alterations to the code for your own personal use but not distribute modified versions without the prior consent of TQM Communications.

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All trademarks acknowledged.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The original inspiration for slurp came from nntpxfer, written by Brian Kantor. The article batching code is inspired by batch.c in the NNTP 1.5.11 package, written by Stan Barber and 'based on work by Henry

Spencer and Geoff Collyer'. The fakesyslog code is inspired by the code in the NNTP 1.5.11 package where it is credited to John Robert LoVerso and Paul McKenny. The space code to determine whether there is enough space on the news disk was originally taken from the NNTP 1.5.11 package where it is credited to Stan Barber, Tad Guy, Chris Jepeway and Tom Lane. Regular expression expansion courtesy of Nick Lai. Network knowledge thanks to W. Richard Stevens, author of the most readable UNIX books around. For bug fixing, porting and enhancement ideas, thanks go to Chris Benson, Pete Bentley, David Boyce, David Clunie, Scott J Ellentuch, Nick Holloway, David James, Bob Kemp, Paul Lynch, Jeremy Prior, Keith Pritchard, Tim Rylance, Stefan Schwarz, Barrie Spence, Philip Shearer and Chris Stenton with apologies to anyone I forgot.

CONTACT INFORMATION

All comments, bug reports, bug fixes, etc. should be sent to steveh@tqmcomms.co.uk.

MAILING LIST

If you wish to be kept informed of new releases of Slurp, write to listserv@tqmcomms.co.uk with a message that starts with the line

subscribe slurp Your Name

e.g.

subscribe slurp Fred Bloggs

This is a very low volume list that will only be used for announcements

of new versions.

For details of the current status and availability of Slurp, write to
slurp-info@tqmcomms.co.uk.

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