

Commodore NETWORK

March 1995

AUSTRALIA

Vol 4 No 3

Supporting the Commodore range of 8 bit computers

NEWSWATCH

THE END IS NIGH!

For British magazine Commodore Format, it seems. It is believed that the publication's circulation was only about 10,000 in late 1994, and was being considered for closure at that time. However, a rescue effort by some of the staff saved the day and managed to earn a reprieve of from four to six months as from the January edition. This will mean that it will disappear around May or June if not sooner.

FLASH-8 SUPPORT

News from Europe is that the Flash-8 has had an Assembler written specifically for it that supports all the extra 16-bit commands.

It is also reported that a number of demos and utilities are now being produced for this remarkable piece of technology.

Watch for a full review of Flash-8 coming soon!

RIO COMPUTERS

News from the States is that Rio Computers are still trading, but have undergone a change of address and seem to be concentrating more on Amiga peripherals now-a-days. They seem to have dropped the Handy-Scanner and several other lines, hence CMD's interest in these.

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Warren Naismith
EDITOR

Contributors

Jane Voskamp-Jones
Marc Walters
Alastair Hay
E. Gordon Wormald
Heath Kirby Miller

Arthur Stevens
Art Director

Advertising Dept
(058) 71-1863
Fax (03) 803-6498

Publisher

Australia - Warren Naismith
USA - Jack Vander White

D.T.P. Software
Geoworks Ensemble V2.0(1)

Commodore Network
9 Wadson Street
Cobram
Victoria 3644
Fax (03) 803-6498

FidoNet 3:633/272
E-Mail

wn@f272.n633.z3.fidonet.org
artie@f272.n633.z3.fidonet.org

Editorial

Welcome to another month's Commodore Network. Hopefully, this issue won't be quite as late as the last, but we are already running behind. My apologies for the delays, folks, but things should be back to "normal" (if such a condition is ever possible around this place!) soon.

As a result of last month's lateness of publication, we didn't carry our usual CNPD flyer within our pages. This was due to a number of reasons, and I apologise to all and sundry for any worry caused. For all those that showed concern regarding Bev's health, my thanks, and rest assured that CNPD is still going, and going strong!

Also, whilst on the subject, correspondence has been delayed somewhat over the past few months due to my working three jobs at the moment. Once again, I ask you to bear with me, as this situation should end within the next few weeks.

In this issue we welcome back Marc Walters and his BASIC tutorial column, in which he shows us just how to do a few of these demo tricks using BASIC. I believe some of these routines have never been done before, so you are amongst the privileged few! Naturally, for those of us who do not have the time, or the inclination (or just can't get the damn things working!), all routines will appear on the next Disk-Coverer's "magazine" side.

We also have an excellent article introducing Assemblers to the uninformed by E. Gordon Wormald. An accompanying double-sided insert is also included as an aid to intending (and experienced) users of these indispensable programming tools.

Unfortunately, the next part of our 1541 maintenance series has failed to appear on time for this edition, but the good news is that, thanks to Ivan Blitz, several diagnostic programs will be evaluated and considered for possible inclusion on the next Disk-Coverer. Hopefully, this series of articles will continue with next month's issue.

LAST MONTH'S DISK-COVERER

Due to the fact that I had to leave a large portion of the production of Commodore Network, and dispatch of last month's Commodore Network and Disk-Coverer to others, it seems that there have been a number of oversights and mistakes in the items sent out. My apologies if you failed to receive, or received the wrong Disk-Coverer. Please let me know as soon as you can if this is the case so that I can rectify the matter.

SURVEY

The first returns of the reader survey have been received, and it appears that C.N. is headed pretty

much in the right direction. Hopefully, with your input, we'll continue to do so. For our overseas readers, please don't allow yourself to be left out. We do need to know your thoughts so that we can better serve you also!

BOOKLET OFFER

I recently had the opportunity of seeing a few Commodore 64/12 specific handbooks produced over the years by one John Robinson of Perth. I was so impressed at the amount of work and research that John had put into those that I saw, that I approached him concerning a possibility of making these available through C.N. John's response was that he was glad to, as long as the cost to the end user was kept to a minimum. These are NOT commercial quality, laser printed publications, but are produced at home on a dot-matrix printer. However, they are jam-packed with good, useful information on the pertinent subject, and should provide valuable and oft-accessed reference material.

In line with John's request, we will provide copies FREE with any order of C.N. product, or for a cost of 50 cents each (\$Aus.1 for overseas readers) to cover post/packing charges if ordered alone. Sorry, but due to the limited numbers available, we can only offer this from our Cobram address.

The titles presently available are:

Program Commands & Screen Printing

Sprite Making and Moving

Making Sound

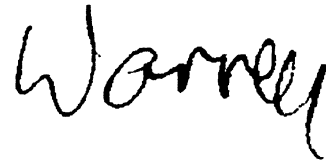
Simons BASIC

Graphics keys and Codes, Print CHR\$ Codes, and Function Key Programming

The 802 Printer

The 1541 Disk Drive

Easy Script



Warren Naismith - Editor



Before getting back into Reviews, over the next two months I am going to take a look at how you can improve your GEOS, from the stock standard system that came in your box. Most GEOS users tend to stick with what seems to be familiar to them, and trying to get them interested in enhancements just seems to scare them. The thing is though, these enhancements can considerably improve your GEOS performance. Many of the enhancements were created to overcome some of the GEOS systems limitations, by programmers who could see a way of getting around it. What exactly do I mean ?.

Well, remember that when you are in an Application {geoWrite, geoPaint, geoPublish etc.} that you can only access the first fifteen files, of each kind ?. And, when you are using the Photo Manager, only the first fifteen album files are accessible, regardless if there are twenty albums on the disk ?. Also remember that when using Applications, to open a new file you have to click on the arrow each time, just to scroll through the data files display box on the work disk to reach the one you want ?. And remember that in geoPublish, you cannot rename a geoWrite file later on, when it is already being used by Pub, without the whole thing falling in a screaming heap ?.

With so many authors and programmers stopping their production of new programs for CBM GEOS, we have a limited time left to purchase the

commercial upgrades for the Public Domain {PD} versions that are currently available. [Where possible, the PD versions of many of the following programs have been collated by Peter Hunt for the CN GEOS Disk #3, and further, some document files for the upgrades are included to tempt you].

What we will look at are DBGetFile, New System Error, GetitWrite, WrongisWrite, SetClock, Photo Mover, and ScraPeek, and a system controller DualTop {deskTop replacement}, and many other programs that, unfortunately, do not have a PD counterpart.

The Enhancements

DBGetFiles is the name of the routine used by GEOS to display the list of a particular group of files on your current disk. You see the routine when you close your current geoPaint or geoWrite document, and you go to select another from the Dialog Box {DBox}. As you are 'getting a new file', hence the name, DBGetFiles.

Most users of GEOS realise by now that the number of data files you are able to select from your current disk is fifteen, and to scroll through them, you must click the DBox arrow every single time. This is for geoPaint, geoWrite, and any other major GEOS Application, and it also applies to the Desk Accessories such as Photo Manager and Text Manager. Fifteen is not a very generous number, when you might have twenty or more that you

want to access !. While this is true for the normal System configuration, you may be sick of having to rearrange your twenty plus geoPaint files on your disk just so that you can view the remainder that the DBox won't let you access. Just when there seems to be no way of overcoming this limitation, we polish the genie's lamp and say, yes there is!.

A PD GEOS 40 column program, DBGetFiles v1.0 from MajorSoft {by Jean F Major}, will update GEOS64 & GEOS128, v1.3 and v2.0. The program is an Auto-Exec {A-E} file, which means if you place it on your Boot disk, after Configure, the patch will happen automatically. As usual with A-E files, if you have it on a Work Disk, it can also be run by double-clicking on the Icon. DBGetFiles v1.0 will update the GetFile Dialog Box of your GEOS Kernal, so that you will not have to click each time you want to scroll up or down through the files. Just hold the button down until you reach the file you want and the filenames will glide past, then make your choice as usual. However, you are still only able to access the first fifteen data files on your disk. And if you have reset your system, you will need to re-run the program to re-install the patch. Later commercial versions, v1.2 v1.3 and v2.0 addressed the fifteen file limit so that you could access the first 90 data files {up to 144 for GEOS128}. Each successive version added something new to the patch.

A newer 40/80 column commercial upgrade, DBGetFiles v3.0 is now available from MajorSoft. V3.0 also allows the glide files feature, along with double-clicking directly on the filename to open it. You can also double-click the down arrow to go straight to the last file in the list, and double-click the up arrow to go straight back to the first file in the list, and the DBox will now display up to 144 files on your disk. 144 files and no more rearranging !. But it does take a little time to read in and store this many filenames. Versions are available for GEOS64, GEOS128, and German GEOS64. DBGetFiles v3.0 is available from MajorSoft on the DBGetFiles3.0 Disk from Mr Jean F Major 119 Terrasse Eardley, Aylmer Quebec J9H 6B5 Canada. Enquire for prices and shipping details. [Allow

for conversion rates and bank charges].

NEW SYSTEM ERR.

Two PD GEOS programs, NEW SYSTEM ERRv1 and NEW SYSTEM ERRv2 by Jason Hoos, work only in 40 columns only and are A-E files which could be regarded as an improved error-trapping routines. When one is placed on your boot disk after Configure, it installs a new routine to replace the SYSTEM ERROR NEAR .. DBox.

However an upgraded commercial release, NewSysErr v1.0 a 40/80 column program by Nate Fiedler, is a better A-E file which could be regarded as a more improved error-trapping routine. When placed on your boot disk after Configure it installs a new routine to replace the SYSTEM ERROR NEAR .. DBox. At a time when the old DBox would be displayed, the new routine will reboot from the REU, or exit back to basic if you don't have an REU. Quite an improvement over a locked up computer !. This A-E really works excellently and is definitely more trustworthy than the PD offerings. NewSysErr was reviewed in the Oct94 column, and can be purchased on the GEOS Utilities 2.0 disk from Nate Fiedler 5711 Mt. Pleasant Road Bernville PA 19506-9313 USA. Enquire for price and shipping details. Or in Australia, it is distributed by Peter Hunt 70 Betula Street Doveton VIC 3177. Enquire for price and shipping details.

GetItWrite.

One PD program that overcomes one of geoPublish's greatest problems is GetItWrite v1.0 by Joseph Thomas. This 40/80 column program when run, will read through your Pub files and display a DBox listing them. Click on the one you want and click the OPEN gadget. The program then displays on screen the geoWrite files that your selected Pub file will access. Once displayed on the screen, you can access the rename option from the main menu, and click on the geoWrite file option in the sub-menu. A list of the geoWrite files for that Pub file are displayed in a DBox. All you have to do is click on the geoWrite data file to be renamed, select the OK gadget, and you are prompted for a new filename, or you can cancel. Once

completed, when you exit GetItWrite, and re-access your Pub data file, Pub will now look for the renamed geoWrite file instead. This little program is so extremely useful, all Pub users should have it on their disks.

WrongsWrite.

Now that there are so many versions of geoWrite available, users may experience problems opening files written in geoWrite by other users. Many geoWrite users therefore have the need to revert v2.1 geoWrite files to a lesser version to use with their geoWrite Application version. For a while there have been programs around to handle this job. Several 40 column PD offerings of the WrongsWrite {WIW} Application, from v6.0, v6.2, v7.0, are improved programs from Joe Buckley's original Writer's Revenge v5.0 Application, which was written to downgrade geoWrite files to the required version. These programs very effectively allow you to convert geoWrite files, up or down, to different versions. All the instructions are contained within the programs, and they are fairly simple to use.

A major 40/80 column upgrade to this awesome lineup of Applications is WrongsWrite v8.1. WIW v8.1 allows you to convert geoWrite text files between any of the three current file formats geoWrite v1.0 v2.0 or v2.1, and convert both standard CBM PET ASCII and True ASCII sequential text files into any of the three current geoWrite format files. Using WIW you may also convert any of the current geoWrite format files into a CBM PET ASCII or True ASCII sequential text files. This is extremely convenient for users of different Word Processors. As a bonus, you may also change just the font, or just the style of an entire geoWrite document in one operation. You may also replace any instances of more than one carriage return with a single carriage return. WIW v8.1 requires geoWrite files of v1.3 or higher to run. WIW v8.1 can also switch between 40 and 80 column modes {GEOS128}. A new feature for WIW v8.1 is that the Icon of the destination geoWrite text file is copied directly from the geoWrite source file. If the source file was CBM DOS sequential text file, then

the destination geoWrite file will default to the WIW Icon. WrongsWrite v8.1 is available on Storm Systems Disk 1 from Storm Systems Joe P Buckley 464 Beale Street W Quincy MA 02169-1307 USA. Enquire for price and shipping details. Although I believe that this disk is now also available from Performance Peripherals Europe Michael Renz Holzweg 12 53332 Bornheim GERMANY. Enquire for price {DM} and shipping details. [Allow for conversion rates and bank charges].

SetClock v1.1 is a PD 40/80 clock program by Falk Rehwagen of Germany. It is an A-E file that displays the clock on screen, in the upper right hand corner during booting, for you to enter the current time. The date is entered in European DD MM YY format, and the time in 24 hour Army format. It is actually a lot easier to set than the usual deskTop clock window, which is in MM DD YY format. An added feature is that if you run it from deskTop, with no write protect on your disk, this last access time will be recorded for you. If you do not use a RTC {Real Time Clock} device, this little program is an excellent help.

Photo Mover. Using the Photo Manager is not the only method available to GEOS users, for keeping track of their Photo Scraps and Albums. Many new products have been released which allow you to Move Scraps between albums without even going near the Photo Manager. Photo Mover v1.0 is a PD 40 columns program, which was followed by a commercial upgrade v2.7 {40 columns} which contained a few additional features, and were available to GEOS photo users.

Mover v3.0 is a new upgrade release from Rick Coleman. Mover v3.0 contains most of the features that many GEOS users have wished for. Mover40 or Mover80 v3.0 {a separate version for each mode}, are Applications to help organise your Albums. Mover will work with both v1.0 and v2.1 albums, and can access up to four drives on GEOS v1.3 and higher. Mover allows you to Open an Album, select the Scraps that you wish to move {copy}, or cut {destructive cut}, to another Album. Mover will then move or cut the selected

Scraps in the order that they appear in the original Album. For v2.1 Album Scraps, the Scrap name will also be moved. This useful program completely overcomes Photo Managers 'management' shortcomings and limitations.

Best of all, Mover v3.0 supports keyboard short cuts, direct goto Scrap feature, direct Drive access, supports up to four drives, cuts as well as copies Scraps, supports different versions of album files from v1.0 to v2.1. This feature allows you to convert larger v1.0 Albums into smaller v2.1 Albums. Photo Manager v2.1 can only support 60 Scraps in an Album. For an explanation of this, refer to the section on the 'Photo Manager Part 1, Introduction' in 'The World of GEOS HandBook II' {**}. Mover can work with Photo Scraps up to 12K in size {11.5K in the 80 column version}. You must still use the Photo Manager for Scraps that are larger than this size. Mover40 and 80 v3.0 are available on the Mover 3.0 disk from Rick Coleman PO Box44 Sheridan WY 82801 USA. Enquire for prices and shipping details. [Allow for conversion rates and bank charges].

ScraPeek v2.2 ^ v3.4

The ScraPeek series of programs are Public Domain offerings, by Ed Flinn. Some versions of ScraPeek are A-E like v2.2 and v3, and others are Applications like v3.4. Each will allow you to view Photo Scraps by themselves on disk, or in Albums. These time saving programs enable you to view Scraps without needing geoPaint or the Photo Manager on the disk. The latest version v3.4 will work with v2.1 Albums. To use the earlier versions on v2.1 Albums, you would need to use Album Reverter first. v3.4 lets you select from viewing Scraps or Albums, and it is switchable between 40/80 column modes. Very convenient for GEOS users.

DualTop v2.5 is a PD GEOS program that is an innovative system controller {deskTop replacement}. It was designed to work with GEOSv2.0, with an REU. With this set-up you can work with two real drives, and one ram drive. It can be used without an REU, but your two drives must

be of the same type. The screen displays 32 files, with the first sixteen from Source drive A, and the second sixteen from Destination drive B. Source and Destination can be easily swapped, and drive C can be called up without needing to physically swap the drive disk icons as we are accustomed to with deskTop. DualTop has many new gadgets and icons, along with the new slide bar features, and a gauge for disk fullness graphically depicted. Keyboard shortcuts are provided, along with many other new features that you would never have dreamt of with deskTop. Such as auto dir of two drives, auto sort, do source, select preferences, and others. You can also conveniently exit to deskTop if you wish. DualTop is a lot simpler to use than deskTop, which after using DualTop, seems really slow and boring. [At this stage only the GEOS64 version with documentation, is on the CN GEOS Disk #3. The GEOS128 80 column version will follow a little later, space permitting].

A commercial upgrade, DualTop v3.0 contains many more improved features, for GEOS128 {80 column only} and GEOS64, including four drive support, directory file swap, instant printer driver change, instant input driver change, a modular structure for adding new routines, auto select preferences, and auto installation from an Auto-Exec file, and much more. Though it must be noted that with DualTop, the disk border area is no longer required or supported, and CBM disks are not automatically converted to GEOS format. For more information on the border area, refer to the section 'Examining GEOS Sectors' in 'The HandBook of Commodore Disks'. There are versions for both GEOS64 & 128.

I personally use v3.0 on both GEOS64 & 128, and I really loathe having to go back to deskTop. DualTop v3.0 is available in The Landmark Series from New Horizon Software Paul B Murdaugh 2253 N Kansas Avenue Springfield MO 65803 USA. Enquire for prices and shipping details. [Allow for conversion rates and bank charges]. [Note : It seems that Paul has either moved to a new address, or has stopped selling DualTop v3, and will not respond to post or telephone enquiries. When a new address is known, we

will advise at the earliest possible time. A former beta tester, James Robbins of 2nd Floor, 326 Fern Ave Lyndhurst NJ USA, is reported to be distributing the former New Horizon Software products, but we have been unable to substantiate this to date - Gg].

All of these GEOS programs mentioned so far, show how you can get more from your standard system, using either PD programs or commercial upgrades, most of which can be readily obtained [with the exception noted]. I use these programs on nearly every GEOS day, to such an extent that I have become complacent and forget that they are actually there, and working for me. But these programs are the reason why I can do so much with GEOS. Maybe they can help you too !.

Readers Three Wishes And All That

From Roger Denham of Saratoga NSW, "I thoroughly enjoy your column and hope you can help me. My job is ... not only to help milk vendors with the actual business side of their operations, but marketing as well. My aim is to prepare quality promotional leaflets at home on my C128D system using the GEOS programs. I do believe GeoPublish is possibly the way to go, but you would be the best judge of that, and I am concerned about a suitable laser or bubble-jet printer being compatible with the Commodore system".

Gg. Thanks Roger. I believe that you could produce quality promotional leaflets at home for your business, considering that I do it myself. I do not have any personal experience with Laser printers as I produce all my material on a 9-pin dot matrix MPS-1250 in Epson mode using a 6-pass driver {EX-800 v3.5}. But I have seen a laser printout of work similar to mine, and found that it's reproduction looked chunky in comparison to my 'smoothing' 6-pass printout. I am aware that if you went ahead and obtained a Laser printer you would need an interface, such as the Super Graphics Junior Interface, to expedite it's use with Commodore equipment. You would also need the modified GeoLaser or PubLaser programs. Unfortunately, I could not obtain the modified versions myself, but perhaps another reader

out there might be able to help. I agree that GeoPublish would be the program of choice for a project like yours, and you would also need to have GEOS128 v2.0, and preferably a RAM unit of at least 512K size. Without it, GeoPublish would drive you nuts very quickly, although it can be done, as I myself used it with one 1541 drive in the beginning!. All the flyers look very interesting, and I am sure that similar quality can be easily produced on the Commodores. They may not look exactly the same, but I am sure that you probably wouldn't want that any way.

Next month, we will continue this discussion on GEOS enhancements and other programs. In the months to follow, we will catch up on the Review material that has been received. We will be Reviewing PARSEC's GEOS Stuff which includes GeoPager128 & 64, and FontPaint 128/64, distributed by Performance Peripherals Europe Michael Renz, of Germany. Followed by the wonderful SmartMouse from Creative Micro Design Inc. {CMD} USA, which incorporates a RTC. And then rounded out nicely with GeoDate and Calendars 1995 by Michael D Pearson UK, and distributed by Malcolm Brumale SA. Until then, happy GEOSing.

Send in your comments, or great GEOS discoveries, and I will respond when I can in this column, unless you wish a private reply, in which case please send a SSA{Business}E and I will write you back. Special thanks to Rick Coleman {Photo Mover fame}, our USA GENie BBS correspondent for your continued support, and to Michael Renz {Performance Peripherals Europe}, our German correspondent, for your continued support. Also, special thanks to Jeff Carey of C64/128 Public Domain Software {SA} for the temporary loan of a BBRTC for use with GEOS on the number two C128D, from Nov94 through to the end of Jan95. Much appreciated.

CN GEOSgenie
PO Box 635
Blair Athol
South Australia 5084

[*] The World of GEOS HandBook Series (I, II, III), and The HandBook of Commodore Data, are currently available from JMV Gratz

John Buckingham

So far it's been a great year for 8-bit machine users and things are shaping up for even better things to come. More and more we are all realising the importance of the role that user groups are playing in keeping the 64/128 machines alive. For many users, the clubs are their only source of supply of software and hardware. Looking through the many club newsletters I receive, it seems that those businesses that still sell 8-bit software and hardware are relying heavily on advertising in these newsletters. And of course all the expertise and knowledge on our machines lies with our club members. It is fact that without the clubs we would have seen the demise of our machines long ago. But instead we are now experiencing what new technology enables our lowly machines to do. Who needs a fancy PC when we can do it all on our Commodores!

Welcome to any new faces on club committees. Remember users need clubs more than ever.

Jim Mullen, Network's New Zealand connection, is still forming a new postal group over there. ANYONE is welcome to join his group. Write to him at 110 Main South Road, Oamaru or phone him on (03) 434 6026 for information. I'll give you more information about Jim's group once it's off the ground.

Our annual newsletter competition is now underway so send your club newsletters either to this column or direct to Warren. Let's see if last



years winners can come out tops again. It would appear that the winning newsletters all had a high percentage of members contributions in them so that seems to be the clue to provide a winner.

Keep that news about your club coming so we can all see how things are going with the clubs all around Australia and New Zealand, and I'd certainly like to see overseas clubs becoming more involved in this column now that C.N. is truly international. The address for this column is PO Box 244, WARILLA, NSW, 2528, AUSTRALIA.

Bye till next month,

BUCKY

CLUB HAPPENINGS

The Yarra Valley Commodore Users Group has now changed its name to the Yarra Valley Computer Users Group. The new contact person is Jason Huxley (03) 728 4163.

The address that has appeared over the past few months for the Hills 64 group was wrong. The correct address is PO Box 537, COCKATOO, Vic, 3781. Ivan Blitz's phone number is (059) 68 9323.

Please also note that the new address for Southern districts Computer Users Club in Adelaide's southern suburbs is PO Box 991, MORPHETT VALE, SA, 5162. Mail sent to the previous address is not being forwarded so if you have written recently and have not yet had a reply this could be the reason.

The Melbourne Commodore Computer Club will be holding its AGM in March. Its memberships at the moment consist mostly of 64/128 and IBM users with the Amiga side of the group in the doldrums. As usual a few members seem to be the ones who are doing all the work. Hopefully at the AGM there'll be no shortage of volunteers to fill all the positions on the committee. For users in Melbourne the MCCC is one of the oldest Commodore clubs in the country and meets in the Courtyard Room of the Nunawading Civic Centre, Whitehorse Rd, Nunawading at 7.30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. For any information contact the club either by mail at PO Box 177, BOX HILL Vic 3128 or phone Bernie O'Shea (President) on (03) 438 1625 or Bob Morrow (Secretary) on (03) 846 4217.

The latest news I have from Newcastle seems to indicate that the Newcastle Commodore Users Group no longer caters for 64/128 users so that group has been removed from the club listings. Unfortunately for those users in the Newcastle area there is no other club close by. But for those over 40 The Old Codgers is a mail group based in the Newcastle area. It is conducted by Gordon Screen, 18 Windsor St, Edgeworth, 2285. Gordon can also provide users in the Newcastle area with second hand software and hardware, blank disks and public domain software. He can also arrange repairs to your equipment. In fact Gordon is pleased to help any 64/128 user with any problem.

One of the first world-wide postal groups for 64/128 users now has a new address. Meeting 64/128 Users Through the Mail can now be contacted C/- Francis Redmond, Route 7, Box 7614, PALESTINE, TX 75801. This club still has Australian members and provides a good opportunity for local users to correspond with other users all over the world.

CLUB LIST

This is a list of some of the user groups in Australia and New Zealand that cater for members with 64's or 128's. If you want any information or details about the club contact the person listed or write to the address shown. There is also a list of mail/postal groups as well. If you write to a club please

enclose either a stamped self-addressed envelope, a stamp or reply coupon for your reply. Remember that school and public holidays as well as local events can affect meeting dates. ALWAYS check with the club contact first.

Listings marked with an asterisk (*) have been altered since last issue.

AUSTRALIA

Albury/Wodonga Commodore User Group Inc., PO Box 1014, ALBURY NSW 2640 - 1st Tuesday 7.30pm Gas & Fuel Corp. Building, Hume & Townsend Sts, Albury - Rod Graeber (060) 21 3703

C64 Developments Inc. (Wollongong C64/128 Club) PO Box 150, UNANDERRA NSW 2526 - 2nd Friday 6.30pm Unanderra Community Centre, Princes Highway, Unanderra - Jeff Gale (042) 71 5098

Commodore 64/128 Club of NSW 12 Budgeree Rd, TOONGABBIE NSW 2146 - 3rd Wednesday 7.30pm Minchinbury Neighbourhood Centre, Minchin Rd, Minchinbury - Steve Stecyk (02) 631 2323

Commodore Hornsby User Group Inc., PO Box 1578, HORNSBY NORTHGATE NSW 2077 - 2nd & 4th Wednesdays 7.30pm St Leos College, Wahroonga - Allan Hall (02) 476 4929

Commodore User Group (ACT) Inc., PO Box 409, CURTIN ACT 2605 - check for Canberra meetings' dates and venues. - Batemans Bay meetings 3rd Saturday Pearly Beach Baptist Church Hall - phone Matt Blydenstein (06) 281 2714 for all information.

Muswellbrook Combined Computer Group, PO Box 648, MUSWELLBROOK NSW 2333 - contact Jim Shorter on (065) 47 9144 for meeting details.

Tuggerah Lakes Commodore Users Group, PO Box 659, TOUKLEY NSW 2259 - phone John Davies (043) 93 1921 for any information.

*Melbourne Commodore Computer Club Inc., PO Box 177, BOX HILL Vic 3128 - 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm Courtyard Room, Nunawading Civic Centre, Whitehorse Rd - Bernie O'Shea (President) (03) 438 1625 or Bob Morrow (Secretary) (03) 846 4217

*Yarra Valley Computer User's Group (formerly Yarra Valley Commodore Users Group), c/- 13 Cumberland Cres, CHIRNSIDE PARK Vic 3116 - 1st Tuesday 8pm Lilydale Elderly Citizens Club - Jason Huxley (03) 728 4163

South Australian Commodore Computer User Group Inc., PO Box 427, NORTH ADELAIDE SA 5006 - 1st & 3rd Mondays 7.30pm North Adelaide Primary School - Phil (08) 381 8444

Southern Districts Computer Users Club Inc. (Adelaide), PO Box 991, MORPHETT VALE SA 5162 - 3rd Wednesday 7.30pm Home Economics Room, Christies Beach High School (West), Beach Rd, Christies Beach - Robert Cloosterman (08) 382 0781

Computer Club of WA Inc. (Perth) - phone Tom Lee on (06) 332 6374 for all enquiries. Cairns Commodore Users Group, PO Box 7, EARLVILLE Qld 4878 - 1st Tuesday 7.30pm Cairns Education Centre, Greenslopes Road, Edge Hill - Bruce Bimrose (070) 54 1949

Commodore Computer Users Group (Qld) Inc., PO Box 274, SPRINGWOOD Qld 4127 - 1st Tuesday 7pm Bardon Professional Centre - Gordon Wright (07) 299 7789

Woombug 8-bit - 4th Saturday each second

month 1pm - 4pm Tea Room, Masons Hall, Hill St, Woombug - Scott Roseboom (074) 48 5845

Tasmanian Commodore Users Group, GPO Box 673, HOBART Tas 7000 - 3rd Wednesday 7.30pm Derwent Regional Library, Glenorchy - Stephen Cook (002) 47 9985

NEW ZEALAND

As well as from the clubs listed below information regarding any clubs can also be obtained from Jim Mullen, 110 Main South Road, OAMARU Phone (03) 434 6026.

Christchurch Commodore Users' Group Inc., PO Box 4665, CHRISTCHURCH - 4th Tuesday 7.30pm Philipstown School - Dave Maguire (03) 348 5976

Kapiti Commodore Users Group, 24 Makarini St, PARAPARAUMI - 1st Friday 7.30pm Kapiti College, Margaret Rd, Raumati Beach - John Hughes (04) 298 4349

Manawatu Commodore Users Group, 83 Havelock Ave, PALMERSTON NORTH - 1st Monday 7pm St Marks Church Hall - Sydney Mounsey (06) 357 9858

N.Z. Commodore Users Group Inc., PO Box 2878, WELLINGTON - now folded

Otago Commodore 64 Club (Dunedin) - contact John Knight 26 Estuary Crescent Fairfield Dunedin

Whangarei Combined Computer Club - contact John Pitt (09) 438 6651 for all information regarding this club.

POSTAL GROUPS

All these groups are mail based groups that cater for those users who are not able to attend a normal club or want to join a second club. Most provide a regular newsletter and give you access to PD programs and program information as well as give you the opportunity to meet other members through correspondence or phone contact.

*FOR USERS IN NEW ZEALAND if you are interested in being part of a new postal group in New Zealand please contact Jim Mullen, 110 Main South Road, OAMARU phone (03) 434 6026

GeoCLUB (GEOS users) c/- Peter Hunt 70 Betula Street, DOVETON Vic 3177 - Frank Cassidy (03) 791 4991

*Hills 64 Group PO Box 537, COCKATOO Vic 3781 - Ivan Blitz - (059) 68 9323

Plus4/C16 Users Group 36 Western Highway, BLAXLAND NSW 2774 - Tony Ellis (047) 39 1528

The Old Codgers (over 40's) 18 Windsor Street, EDGEWORTH NSW 2285 - Gordon Screen

Woombug 8-bit c/- Post Office, WOOMBUG Qld 4559 - Scott Roseboom (074) 47 9985

*Meeting 64/128 Users Through The Mail C/- Francis Redmond, Route 7, Box 7614, PALESTINE, TX 75801, USA - Francis Redmond

Many regular clubs can also cater for postal or associate members as well. In most cases out of area members would be most welcome. Check with your local club.

Hi There! Once again it's time to for another look at the demo scene!

There's a lot to get through, so let's start with some news:

NEWS

As I write this (mid Febuary), the Aussie scene is gearing up again. In the last few weeks, eight new members have joined up, six are in The Nitros Team (TNT). Between them they code, compose music, paint graphics, and swap. They have apparently been together since at least October 1994, but only now have they become known to the scene. At this stage, music and contact demos have been put together by the group. One of their Members has painted graphics for a NewZealand group (called EXTREME). Further, the group are developing a shoot-em-up game and a demo. Their work so far looks very promising! Read more about TNT in The Grapevine #14.

Speaking of the Grapevine, its producers, The Dark Realm, have gained a new member as 1st group, as have the Aussie Crew System. Eight new sceners in under 5 weeks - it has motivated everyone who is part of this organisation! Things are improving, not fading away as some people would have you believe. In fact, somebody on the scene told me they've seen more new members in the last 3 weeks than they have in their 2 years on the scene!

REVIEW

TRIBUTE-94

This was a party held in Sweden during November, which invited 3500 past and present sceners (I mentioned it last month). The usual graphics and sound competition was held, the best of both being available on disk after the event. Five large graphics files are on this disk. The winning graphic came from Creeper/Antic. It is ABSOLUTELY BRILLANT, showing that anything the Amiga or IBM can do, the C64 can do better - or as good as anyway. The winning sound entry came from Danko/Censor Design. It is a version of the Eagle's "Hotel California". This is a great sound track, with heaps of sounds, not just a single tinnie instrument as is often heard on the Amiga. Yet it all sounds very much like the original song. One of the best pieces of

music I've heard on the C64. Second place in the music category went to "Heavy Techno" from Red Devil/Fairlight, proving the C64 really is capable of just about any style of music.

STATISTICS

According to a few disk magazines, during September-January 95, we have seen:

- 50 games
- 60 disk mags
- 30 game previews
- 70 demos
- 40 ditiized music collections
- 40 utilities disks
- 15 tool disks
- 10 graphic collections

That is over 300 releases from 81 groups, all from Europe. But of course there is more than 81 European groups, so who knows how much has really been released? These figures do not take into account the Australian or US scene. I believe these figures could be doubled, and even then they'd be a little on the light side! But it just goes to show you - no matter what sort of software you're interested in for your 64, it is out there.

THE SITUATION

No one can deny it is harder to find C64 software these days than it used to be. But for someone to say it's not out there is a blatant lie.

For the average person, C64 software is hard to get a hold of, yes. This is because the UK software houses have moved onto more economically viable machines, namely consoles such as

Nintendo, Sega etc. They used to produce the C64 software you could find in stores such as K-Mart, and other department stores and, of course specialist computer outlets.

These days smaller concerns have stepped in, such as Jon Wells in the UK.

It is from these type of companies that new commerical software is obtained over there. If we C64 users in Australia want these games, we must go to the trouble ourselves of purchasing them, which for many is a confusing process.

But a lot of what is released onto the demo scene is public domain software. You can find all sorts of games, from all around the world. "Mayhem in Monsterland" was not really a breakthrough, because games of that quality had been seen on the demo scene for a few years before it's release. As an example of this, "Black Panther", written in 1990, is, in my mind, at least, the Public Domain version of "10th Dan", a recent UK game. Even though it was written five years before it, I dare say it's better than "10th Dan", if only in terms of what you get for what you pay.

What I have said here is similar to what the UK magazine Commodore Format has been saying for a year. C64 software is still out there, it is just a matter of looking around a little bit harder for it.

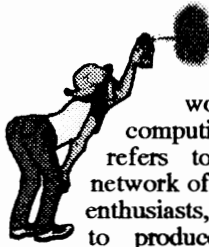
Most Public Domain libraries should be able to provide you with some recent software from the



demo scene, so check them out

And if you want to see some recent UK software reach Australia, contact Alternative software. If we get enough support for this idea, we will do it. So It's up to you the users.

DEMO SCENE



The demo scene is best described as an interesting & Alternative world of C64 computing. The "SCENE" refers to a world wide network of thousands of C64 enthusiasts, whose sole aim is to produce and distribute amongst fellow scene members ("Sceners") their own software products (demos, utilities, disk and paper magazines, games etc) and information. Each group has it's own name (eg: Camelot, Nipson, Oxyron, Fairlight, System, The Dark Realm, Entropy, etc) and the individual members of group also have their own "handles" (eg: Kitana, Vortex, Shock Wave, Raz, Red Devil, TTS, etc), used on the scene, rather than their actual names.

The members of a group may have

various tasks, such as swapping (distributing scene products), coding/programming, composing music, painting graphics, editing disk magazines, etc. Some groups also produced commercial games for the UK software houses (eg "Hagar the Horrible" from Kingsoft was programmed by a member of the crew Camelot), although these days they work mostly for German software companies since the UK software house decided the C 64 was not economically viable.

If you do not have any specialised skills, it is usually hard (but not impossible) to join an established group. Some groups, however, need swappers to distribute their products. The usual amount of contacts swappers have is between 20 and 60, although some of the large-scale swappers, called mega swappers, have hundreds of regular contacts world wide.

The usual method for distributing software in the scene is via the postal system. Software swapping is usually on a one to one basis, ie: a disk of new (less than 1 month old) software for another disk of new software that hopefully the original sender wont have. Addresses of

potential contacts are found in almost all disk magazines, and if you really want to find out more about the Demo Scene, these disk magazines are a good source of information.

This is just a very general overview of the scene that I have given. To find out more, look out for some of the more recent disk magazines (such as Smash, The Grapevine, Lamer, Domination, Shredded, and others from Australian crews).

CHEERIO!

Yes, that's it for another month. I hope you are finding this column informative and entertaining. I'll return next month with more news, reviews, opinions and what ever else I squeeze in.

Until this next time, keep 64'ing. If you wish to contact me, write to:

RMB 221
SUNRAYSIA HWY.
STUART MILL.
VIC. 3478

I'll see you next month.

Are you using Geos on your C64/128 while your "other" computer struggles with Windows?

It makes sense that if you're spending big money on a PC, then you should have the comfort of working in a familiar environment. For that reason take a look at Geoworks Ensemble. It's the award winning PC version of your favourite Graphic Environment Operating System.

GeoPublish (shareware edition)
\$20.00

Geoworks Ensemble v2.0(1)
\$169.00

Requires 286, 386 or 486 with 1 Meg RAM & 10 Meg Hard Drive space

GeoZ BBS Mail Order
7 Falconer Street
Glen Waverley Vic 3150
Tel: 018-58-15-58

GeoZ BBS is the South Pacific online support site for Geoworks Ensemble

JMV Grafix

Commodore 64/128 Handbooks

The Handbook of Commodore Disks _____ \$15

The Handbook of Commodore 128 _____ \$15

The Handbook of Commodore 64 _____ \$15

World of Geos Handbook _____ \$15

World of Geos Handbook II _____ \$15

World of Geos Handbook III _____ \$15

Geos in Review _____ \$10

Prices include Postage and Handling within Australia, and are quoted in \$A. Overseas orders please add \$A5.00

JMV Grafix

PO Box 635, Blair Athol, South Australia, 5084

Commodore
NETWORK

March 1995

Someone asked me "Is Surfing the Nets" a regular column? I've never seen it in Commodore Network before. Indeed, it was actually supposed to be in the first issue of the year too, but it got pre-empted at the last minute. The way the Cricket Test takes over from "Yank Sit-com of the week".... you know, a better offer.

I hope "Surfing the Nets" will become a regular column, not because I like to see my name in lights, but because there are many people out there with stories about their experience on the Nets.

Now, before you go charging off and asking what a session in the nets facing Merv Hughes has to do with computers, I'm not talking about the cricket nets. I am talking about the Internet, FidoNet, Worldnet, GlobalNet and all the many others accessible using a computer.

I'd like very much to hear your stories about your experiences, as they will probably help to encourage other C64/128 users onto the Information Superhighway. Just don't get run down by a Kenworth truck in the process.

In my case the world of the modem came along completely by accident. About 4 years ago I was the proud possessor of a C64 with GeoRam, 2 disk drives and an American Express card. I regularly read RUN magazine, and marvelled at the wonderful programs they had available. So I took my American Express Card, filled out the Mail Order form for various disks and sent it off. Three weeks later surprise of surprises, my Disks arrived in the mail, with an extra box and a letter. The Letter told me that "as I had purchased more than \$50 worth of software" I was now the proud owner of a complimentary modem for the C64.

So saying, out came all my magazines, the Commodore Review (now ACAR), the Compute! Gazette, RUN etc, and off I went hunting for BBS phone numbers.

I found a few listed in an old Commodore Review, all of them in the Melbourne area. Got out the new modem, plugged it into the Cartridge port, attached the phone cable, booted the software, and then tried to work out from the manual what exactly everything

meant.

OK, that done I decided to try my first dial in to a bulletin board. I forget which one it was, but I do remember that it was forgettable at the extreme. Being a C64 user I had never heard of ANSI graphics and answered "YES" to the question "Would you like ANSI graphics?". Immediately garbage filled my screen, all these little codes like....

```
[1;34;44m          [33m[36m
[DF[33m[36m 34m[0m
```

What on earth were they?

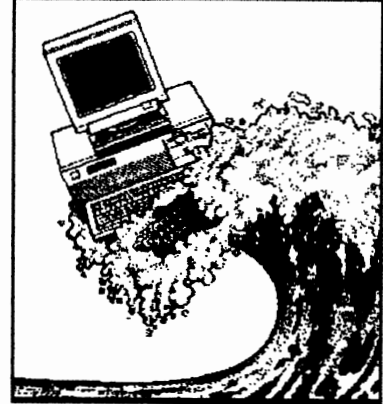
I soon found out that a VT-100 emulating terminal doesn't like ANSI graphics, and particularly on a C64.

Next step, take another look in the PAMS registry in Commodore Review.... where I found a listing - TALISMAN 059-444-061. I decided that as the 059 area was just up the road from my home (eastern subs of Melbourne) I'd give it a call.

As it turned out Telecom regards calls from my area to the location of Talisman as a local call, so I was only up for the 25 cents call fee.

Now this was a different experience. In those days Glenn Thomson (sysop of Talisman) was running Image BBS software on his C128, and it was ever so friendly to C64 users.

Graphics were in Commodore graphics style, text was in 40 column mode, and it all worked so nicely.



I left messages to Glenn and various other C64er's, and eventually did a bit to help keep the Geos64 section on the bulletin board up to scratch. Glenn took me a few extra steps, first by loaning me a 1200 bps modem, then a 2400 modem (boy was that fast after the 300 bps job).

I couldn't believe how it all worked so well, messages were left to people in the USA, and a week later there was a response. All marvellous stuff.

As you can gather, by this stage, two months into my modem career, I was addicted. My phone bill knew all about it too, as I'd called Pilbara BBS in Karratha enough times and had really started to rack up some online time.

The first \$400 phone bill brought me to earth with a crunch. This would have to stop, well, at least get settled down. I managed to restrict myself to calling two boards only, Talisman, and one at the time run by Postie (David Greening) called Melbourne 64. Both of these were local calls, and my next bill dropped to below \$200. About a year after I started messing with my modem I started to experiment with BBS software on the 64. I tried UCBBS, which worked quite well, but had a timing error, mainly due to the differences between the US 60 cycle power system, and the Oz 50 cycle system. I then tried out the little BBS function in Novatern. That wasn't bad at all, not much more than a host BBS, but it answered the phone, allowed

upload/download and had a small message area.

There are those that seem to think that because I left my C64 and went for a PC that I'd abandoned the 8 bit users, however I found that an old XT computer was a good way to set up a small BBS. Small because my first PC only had two floppy drives, so again it was mainly for a mail system. I eventually found an old 286 computer at Maxwells one day with a \$150 price tag...I offered them a \$100 and they said yeah, take it. This gave me a *GASP* 40 meg Hard Drive to run my BBS through, and so Commodore Network BBS was born.

Initially using Searchlight software, I then switched to Remote Access v1.0 as it had a bit more flexibility. I learned about adding a front end mailer so that my system could communicate with other networked BBS's, and finally hooked into FidoNet as a POINT.

Then the day came when I had to make a few decisions about the BBS. It had, at that time, been running as a part time operation off my private phone line, overnight and every weekend, however this was causing major hassles between my wife and myself (She liked the phone to talk, not make funny computer noises). I had just been appointed writer of the Geos column in Australian PC Review (the PC Version of Geos) and needed to support the column with an online area.

So, I bit the bullet. Rang Telecom and got them to install a new phone line, rang a mate and bought his old 9600 bps modem, and applied to FidoNet for my own node number.

Every single item landed within an hour of each other. I could not believe the speed it all happened.

One minute I was running a slow 2400 bps BBS on a private phone line part-time, the next I had a full BBS running at 9600 bps on its own line full time.

It's now two years since I went online with my own system, and while mine is a fairly small operation compared with other BBS's it's still not a bad little operation.

I have a 14400 Fax/Modem hooked to my Front Door system, which automatically detects between Fax and Data, switching to the appropriate area. Online is a 420 Meg Hard Disk Drive with a CD-ROM attached. I now network 4 points off my system, and feed Commodore mail to the Adelaide Commodore Network BBS, Fishbowl. I also twice weekly import mail from Sacramento, California, and import files from Virginia Beach, Virginia. By the time you read this, I'll also have Internet access organised.

Facilities online:

International & Local Mail
Downloadable Software
Games
Online Shopping
Fax Receiving Station
Internet E-Mail

For the technically minded the system is as follows:

Computer: PC 386SX20
4 Meg RAM
420 Meg HDD
CD-ROM
Software: Front Door Mailer
Remote Access v2.02 BBS
FMail v1.0g Mail Tosser
BGFax Fax receive system
Tel: 03 803 6498
Speeds: 300-14400 bps
Hours: 23 hours a day
Support: Geoworks
C64/128
Communications
Desktop Publishing

Give us a call.

ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE

Over the coming year, it is our intention to provide you with some of the latest and greatest programs for your Commodore 64 computer.

This software will include full games and game reviews, music files, a wide variety of utilities, disk magazines and demonstrations from the "Scene", plus much much more. We are going to convince you that the C64 is alive and well, with programs that show you what your machine really is capable of. What the C64 can now do goes way beyond it's original specifications, and a lot of the programs now released give the Amiga and IBM computers a real run for their money!

With the quantity of new software that is released however, we have decided on **MONTHLY PD UPDATES**. Yes, instead of releasing a disk catalogue every three or four months (which is quite a task), **EVERY MONTH** we will be bringing you the most recent software we can find. These **MONTHLY PD UPDATES** will allow you to receive software within days or weeks of its creation!

Our present disk catalogue will remain as it is for the year - depending on when it is received determines the number of the **MONTHLY PD UPDATES** that will accompany it.

This magazine's deadline means we will not advertise our **MONTHLY PD UPDATES**, due to the fact that you'd be reading the previous month's **PD UPDATE!**, which defeats our purpose.

Instead, we ask you to send a stamped addressed envelope to us around the last week of each month for that particular months **PD UPDATE**, and you'll receive any other **MONTHLY PD UPDATES** preceding the one you are writing for that, according to our records, you have not received.

We will run this system on a trail basis. We hope all C64 users will write to us to see the proof that the C64 is still a powerful home computer at a very affordable price!

ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE
RMB 221
STUART MILL
VIC. 3478

Also available: Issue 2 of "Alternative News". Only \$2. or Free with orders.

SEND \$3 FOR OUR DISK CATALOGUE (and also receive Issues 1 and 2 of "Alternative News").

GeoZ

The Victorian online support site for Geoworks

(03) 803 6498

all speeds 300 bps - 14400 bps
24 hours a day

Support for C64/128 users and assistance for Geos 64 users interested in moving to the PC platforms yet staying with Geos.
GeoPublish for PC available online
(Shareware version of Geoworks Ensemble v2.01)

Commodore
NETWORK

March 1995

Welcome to another month's reader input into Commodore Network. I must admit that I consider this column one of the success stories of our little publication, and I know a very many of you, the readers, enjoy this column. In any case, let's get on with the show!

First off this month, a letter from Bodo Schwarz of Bulli, N.S.W., who writes:

CONGRATULATIONS!

I'd like to congratulate you for what you and your helpers have achieved with Commodore Network. I certainly look forward to each issue.

I consider NewsWatch, GEOSgenie, Clublinks, damn, the whole magazine except Page 128 as I don't own a 128, a "must read". Keep up the good work!

At the last User Group meeting (Wollongong C64/128 Club) we had the pleasure of seeing the demonstrations put on by Russell Alphey. I'm looking forward to a full review of FAST-8. the C=65 certainly made a lot of members drool.

Thank you for your kind words, Bodo. A lot of hard work goes in to the production of C.N., and it is good to get a pat on the back for our efforts on occasion.

As for Russell's travelling Commodore Show, well, I hope he can do something similar in the future. There is still an awful lot of software and hardware being produced for the 64/128, and I would like Commodore Network to be able to arrange for some of these items to be made more accessible via demonstrations, etc. in the future. After all, it's all very well reading a review in C.N., but the best way to tell if something is for you is to see it in action.

MPS 1230

Up in sunny Queensland, and Don Williams writes:

I've enclosed a printout of the MPS 1230 set-up I used with success emulating a "serial" interfaced Epson FX80. Although I use GEOS as my preferred choice, I never had too much trouble using other programs. PrintShop side A, Newsroom, PrintMaster, CadPak 64, and Designasaurus, are all programs that are compatible with

the Epson FX80. There are probably more commercial programs that are as well, but I don't know of them.

Using the 1230 with GeoCable as a parallel interfaced FX80, the only programs that I know of are GEOS, SuperBase and Script, Perfect Print, Paper Clip 3, and the Action Replay 6 cartridge. I think this will pull Bill Bratby out of his misery, and help his young bloke with his nose.

To help Aaron Kernbach, he needs to undo the two wire clips on the printer and disconnect it. then set it up either as a "serial" or a "Parallel" printer. You can't have both a serial cable and a GeoCable plugged into the printer at the same time (thanks to Kiwi of GeoCable Deluxe fame for that bit of info).

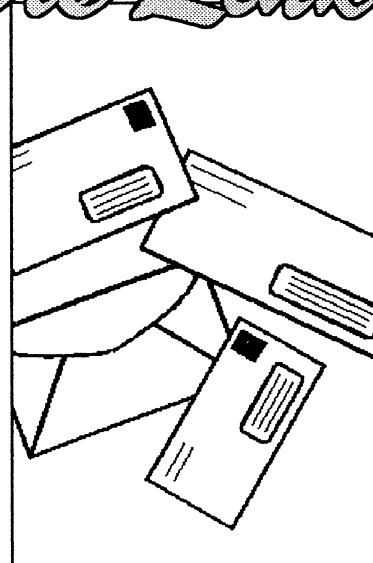
GEOS PRINTER DRIVERS

Don goes on to say:

I have recently purchased an Osborne 240C 24 pin colour printer (Epson 2500 emulation) and have just a few comments on printer drivers using GEOS. I found that the Epson LQ1500 driver was very good. Nice printouts, with no vertical distortion. I can't find a decent driver for the IBM emulation for graphics, though the one I have is alright for LQ text.

Another driver worth trying is the DBL Rainbow GC (Epson LQ860 emulation), but it distorts vertically, though the result is not bad.

COMMODORE MPS



1230 SET-UP PROCEDURE

And still further on in the letter, Don outlines the MPS 1230 set-up procedure as follows:

TO CONFIRM PRESS LF. TO CHANGE PRESS FF. TO END PRESS LOCAL.

Interface.
Commodore Serial (*) Parallel Printer Emulated.
Commodore. Epson FX80. (*) IBM ProPrint. IBMgp.
(See note regarding emulation on page 47 of the 1230 manual.)
Character Set In Serial Mode.
USA. (*)
Device Selected. 4. (*)
ASCII Translation. Pet ASCII. (*)
Automatic Sheet Feeder. No. (*)
Double Strike Printing
Bidirectional. (*)
Character Resolution. N.L.Q. (*)
Character Spacing. 10 (*)
Enabled.L.L.No 7 Kyte Buffer. (*)
Line Feed.(Para Only)
LF=LF+CR. (*)
Carriage Return. (IBM/Epson Only)
CR=CR. (*)
Paper End Detection Yes. (*)
Paper End Detection. (IBM/Epson Only) 1/6. (*)
Slashed Zero. No. (*)
DC1/DC3Procedure (IBM/Epson Only)
No. (*)
Form Length. 11. (*)
Skip Over Perforation. 1/3. (*)
BiDirectional B.I.M. Yes. (*)
Proportional Spacing Yes. (*)
Character Length. (Para Only) 8 Bits. (*)
Would You Like To Save These Parameters. Yes. (*)
Changes Executed.

(*) = Confirm by pressing LF on the Printer Control Panel. If you use

a "GeoCable", follow the prompts for Parallel interfacing.

Many thanks for the information, Don. Printers are one of the most queried pieces of equipment in these pages, and any information, hints, tips, or articles on the subject are always welcome.

SEQUENTIAL TO PROGRAM

From McGrath's Hill in N.S.W., and Lance Bosanquet writes:

As you have been kind enough to send out a circular for us to fill in, I thought I would drop a few lines to include in the envelope. Another year gone and C.N. is better than ever. Congrats to all involved.

In the last issue of C.N., page 20, you are discussing changing sequential files to program and vice-versa. In the two short programs you have written, you have inserted a semicolon after CMD8. Shouldn't that be a colon? Also, can you please explain the benefit of this transition from sequential to program and back. I tried it, but nothing seemed to happen. Maybe I was trying to use it for the wrong purpose.

In an earlier issue of C.N. (March '93), in the "P.D. Power" column, there was an article on D.T.S., or the Directory Tracking System, for the 128. I have been using this to catalogue my GEOS disks as this is the only disk filer I have found that will satisfactorily read GEOS directories. However, there are two areas that don't operate and may be someone can tell me why?

- 1) I am unable to view the disk headers (though I can edit them)
- 2) View Disk in Memory doesn't work (is this only for 1581 disks, as it asks for a disk number and subdirectory?).

There are a couple of reasons for changing file types. The first is to make text files produced using a wordprocessor that produces either program or sequential files at least partially accessible by a word processor that read/writes in the other file-type. For example, a 128 user may use a program that saves text files to disk as program files whilst in 64 mode, but be more comfortable using software that utilises sequential files whilst using 128 mode. By changing the file

type, textfiles produced by one word processor can be made at least accessible by the other. Bear in mind that, to be readable, though, both programs will have to output text as either ASCII, Pet ASCII, or screen code.

The other possible use for sequential/program file type changing is in programming. Some programmers feel that the editing features of many full-blown word-processors simplifies dramatically the programming and debugging of routines. Once a program is created, it is saved to disk as a sequential file and translated to program format.

As for D.T.S., I gave up using it long ago since I found its limitations too restricting, and really can't remember if I encountered these problems or not. Can anyone out there help?

PARSEC

From over in South Australia, the inimitable Rod Gasson writes:

Re: Parsec problems

Far be it for me to tell you who to deal with or who not to deal with, but if you are still thinking of distributing Twin Cities, or any of Parsec's products, I feel this would be a grave mistake.. JBEE is far too unreliable and unpredictable to deal with. I've also had 'nasty' letters from him.. and when QWKRR was first developed I had permission from him to include some of the CS DOS modules with the QWKRR archives.. only AFTER I spent a month or so updating these modules and was ready to go with another release, he sent me a letter saying "Due to piracy of some of my software I have had a change of heart and forbid you to include any part of CS-DOS in your distribution files"

Is this someone you really want to be associated with ? Look how many people are still awaiting their refund for the ill fated ZIP chip.

Look how many people are not receiving TC128 in spite of still being financial.

I too have had my fair share of encounters with the "changeability" and unreliability of John Brown, and for that reason, in order for C.N. to distribute Parsec's items over here, it would need to be very much on my terms. I will not write

off the possibility of our distributing their items, but I would be fooling myself if I said it is something that is likely to happen. Nevertheless, for the benefit of Australian users, I would like to see some sort of local outlet for at least Twin Cities magazine.

1541

Rod goes on to say in another part of his letter:

Diagnostics Pt1.

Neville mentioned the ALPS alignment program.. As far as I am aware, the ALPS company only had one set of Diagnostic/alignment disks and these were neither public domain, nor commercial.. They were only made available to approved service organisations as part of their servicing agreement. Each disk set was uniquely numbered.

The diagnostic disk and program was nothing really 'special', but the alignment disk itself was.. the tracks on the disk are somewhat eccentric, and such a disk *cannot* be copied. (Well it can be copied, but it loses the eccentricity which defeats the purpose of it). (I do have a set of these disks)

Neville suggests the possibility of someone writing a program such as this, but as I mentioned above, the program itself is nothing 'special' - but creating an eccentric disk suitable for alignment requires specialised hardware. (Actually the hardware is little more than a 1541 DD that has been set up deliberately eccentric). This is not something that is viable in a 'one of' situation.

FYI, the alignment disk itself is referred to as "970016-01". It requires the use of an oscilloscope to do the actual alignment.

The Diagnostic program is written in 100% pure unadulterated BASIC.

Thank you for that information, Rod. I will pass it on to Nev.

And still further on in this epic tome:

PD Power:

You made mention of a Stereoplayer V11.0 ... I guess what this is, but the final version of the Stereoplayer by Mark Dickenson, was/is V10.3

You also stated your versions are

both corrupt.. In what way ? Over the years I've obtained the V10.x versions from several sources, and although the same prg has come in different sized archives - some with the digiplayer, others with BASIC loaders to cater for the different SID chips, and yet another with some basic info on the .ANI files (I noticed you never mentioned these BTW ?), but in all cases the actual stereoplayer itself has been fine.

As for the 'promised' MIDI support for these.. it did actually happen, but only a few people received the promised modules after they registered.. Alas, apparently this was so few that MarkD simply dropped out of the scene, and although people such as Jeff Carey and myself did in fact 'register' this program, it wasn't until long after Mark gave up on the support.

On further examination of Stereo Player v11.0, it appears that these are earlier versions of Mark Dickinson's program "doctored" by someone trying to claim a little of the glory for creating this excellent software. This "doctoring" may well explain the continual crashing of this particular version.

DEVICE CHANGES IN CP/M

Over in Victoria (Glen Waverley to be precise) and Arthur Stevens writes:

In Feb 95 edition of Commodore Network, Page 9, Mario Petrolati gave a number of addresses in the 128 memory to allocate Drive ID's to the REU.

He said "to change device M to device D we would type: CONF POKE FBE9 = 96FB" then went on to say....

"The above allocates the RAMdisk to drive D, but drive M remains as the RAMdisk also. In order to deallocate drive M, simply type:

```
CONF POKE FBE9 = 0000"
```

Now, I don't own a 128 anymore, and haven't dabbled in CP/M, however the logic of these two statements doesn't ring true. The simple fact is that if you entered the original, then the latter, you would reset the pointer to 0000, or NIL. Based on the table provided surely the original location to type so that the REU switched to device D would be:

```
CONF POKE FBD7 = 96FB
```

```
CONF POKE FBE9 = 0000
```

thus switching the REU pointer to Drive D, and nullifying Drive M.

I've been unable to contact Mario (it's the middle of the fruit harvest, and he's a hard man to catch), so I can't print his reaction. Perhaps someone else feels that they can respond.

PLOTTER PROBLEMS

From Reece Isaac in Victoria comes this cry for help:

I have a little problem I was wondering if I could get help from the readers with?

I recently bought a HP7470A Plotter to use with (primarily) Home Designer 128. I have the loan of a IEEE Flash. This interface is for C64 (or 64 mode on 128) only. I have set it up on my spare 64 just to establish that it works and do a little futsing. I also have on loan a manual for another HP plotter (the syntax is supposed to be the same) and have tried to get the C64 to talk to the plotter.

Using a sample prog. from the book to test communication with the plotter. Result, NOTHING. I changed the device number in the program from 0 thru to 32, I set the DIP switches through the numbers. When the device numbers that automatically went to the IEEE came up the result was DEVICE NOT PRESENT ERROR. When the device numbers were set to CBM device numbers the program ran and nothing happened. That is except when the number was 3, then the result went to the screen.

The example program was for the PET 2001 and is as follows,

```
10 OPEN 5,5
20 PRINT# 5,"IN;SP;"
30 PRINT# 5,"PA500,500;"
40 PRINT# 5,"LBCOMMUNICATION
OK";CHR$(3)
50 PRINT# 5,"PA0,0;SP0;"
60 END
```

I've tried upper and lower case for the plotter commands in the statements in the attempt to allow for ASCII.

The plotter functions ok from the front panel although I haven't managed to find the self test/demo program, if one exists in this machine!

The cable is integral to the interface and theoretically should be OK.

What else can I do to prove the interface before I have to decide the the fault is in the plotter.

By the way I am in the market for a Quicksilver 128 or any IEEE interface that runs in 128 mode.

Thanks for any help.

Printer and plotter problems are probably the major sorepoint with Commodore users. Unfortunately, I have absolutely no idea on how to best advise you in this instance. Perhaps some bright spark out there has the knowledge to respond.

PRINTER PROBLEM

Up north in Queensland, Allan Belcher, too, has his problems achieving a printed output. Here is what Allan has to say:

My sister in law bought a Computec printer from K-Mart that has a Commodore serial plug on it. They got it cheap as it was a demo model, but unfortunately there were no instructions with it at all. It seems to run under GEOS using the Commodore Compatible driver, but it also seems to try and fit 80 columns into 3/4 of the page width, as if it's trying to be a 100 or 120 column wide.

Is there anyone who has one of these printers and can help out with some info about it?

The printer is a COMPUTEC printer, Model # 989-785, and it has a FUJI main board in it.

OK, all you helpfull people, how about a helping hand for Allen here.

JANUARY COMMENTS

Rod Gasson must have been feeling extraordinarily chatty this month as, in another letter, he wrote:

Just a few comments in regards to January issue of CN.

Editorial:

1. Dunno about others, but I didn't get a survey sheet.

2. You spelt Gaelyne Moranec's name wrong.

GeosGenie:

Dunno where Jane got the idea from that "bordercross" is a BASIC program. It's not. It is a gateway 'document' file, which when 'installed' becomes part of the

Gateway program.

The reason for Bordercross is basically to save disk space. GEOS or GATEWAY can only 'see' the files in the active partition or subdirectory. Files stored in the 'Off page directory' are accessible

no matter what the active directory is. This way you can have up to 8 'major' applications available and freely switch directories. It is most useful (IMO) for storing gateway itself, especially if no REU is available. It means you only need store one copy of Gateway, rather than one copy in each directory to eliminate the "please insert the Gateway disk" message that you'll often get when exiting applications.

Page 128. (I wish you'd give the Authors names).

Anyway, page #8, 3rd column, it states "location 215 to ascertain operating mode. In 40 column mode this holds a value of zero (true), in 128 mode we find #128 (true), and in 64 mode a value of #13" (Not true).

In C64 mode this holds the value of the last character printed. Entering the peek from direct mode will return a result of #13 (carriage return) because this is the last character you would enter. In program mode this doesn't hold true.

eg.

```
10 print "test";
20 print peek(215)
```

Will return a result of #84 (ASCII "t")

(The semicolon to suppress the CR is essential).

Letters Link:

Err, I guess you either never saw, or somehow 'forgot' my 'complaint' about no staples.

I'd rather see no staples at all rather than the side stapling, but I find the centre stapling to be *highly* desirable.. I'm not a 'tidy' person, and many of my unstapled issues tend to keep losing pages.

Bring back the centre staples... I think it makes the entire magazine more 'professional'

"The 1541 Disk Drive" -

Why on earth did you print the specs of power requirements 120v at 60Hz. ? Surely as the editor

you should've updated this to suit Australia ? Besides, the power requirement of the drive itself is 12v/5v (just being pedantic).

I also see that Alternative software are advertising the Tipton collection for \$60. I still reckon your readers should be informed that this software is *free*, and that Ernie Tipton and Joi Ball will supply these disks for the cost of disks and postage. \$3.00 per disk for 20 disks, is an overcharge, considering the disks themselves are less than \$1.00 each, with postage to anywhere in Aust for \$5-\$10 for the lot.

Page#25. The Fishbowl BBS is now supporting speeds up to 14.4k (thanks to Rod Gasson).

Finally, a small typo on the back page... Commodore World is into the realms of 8-bit support, not 9-bit as advertised.

Other than these things I can only say congratulations for a job well done.. I hope that CN continues to improve and grow. It has already surpassed my expectations.

Thanks for your comments, Rod. Let's see if I can respond in a suitable fashion.

Firstly, we had some delays in getting the survey sheet ready (read me working 12-14 hour days on other things), so I decided that, rather than hold up an already late issue further, it would go out in the February issue.

My apologies to Gaelyne. I don't know how many times I checked the spelling of both her names, since neither are very common, and yet I still managed to get her name wrong.

Thanks for the info on both GateWay and the 128. Your comment on author's names is quite reasonable, and I must say that the ONLY reason we don't publish a writer's name is by their request. Some people, for their own reasons, prefer to remain anonymous.

Now, I tend to agree that some form of "binding" is necessary for Network. I have never been a fan of stapling in any form, and it does appear that the vast majority of readers are in accordance with my views. For this reason, I am experimenting with a number of options, and hopefully we'll have something arranged soon.

I've said in these pages before that I am not at all conversant with electronics. Once more this has shown through with my oversights in the 1541 maintainance article (Neville is American). I must take the blame for not making sure that, where necessary, all values were pertinent for Australia.

Lastly, as a commercial concern, it is up to Alternative Software to arrive at the amount it wishes to charge for an item for sale. Whether "I" agree with the pricing or not is immaterial. The ONLY opinion that counts is that of the potential customer.

BRUNSWICK PUBLICATIONS

Down in one of my old haunts in Numurkah, Victoria, and Tony Lines writes:

Could you tell me if Brunswick Publications is still in business as I am after a particular disk from them.

I have also got a problem with my 1526 printer. Some of my software totally ignores it! I haven't had it long, so I don't really know much about it. I did the head on my Oki printer and couldn't get another.

I was wondering, has the 1526 got any internal switches which allow it to emulate other Commodore formats, or is this printer one of those "pain in the butt" pieces of hardware you get every now and then.

As far as I know, Brunswick is still in existence and going strong, though concentrating more on the Amiga side of things.

Artic:

Re: your 1526. This is the equivalent of the MPS 802 Printer. I'm not certain why your printer is ignored by certain software, however it is possible that you're trying to send graphics to it. It is NOT a graphics printer (other than under Geos), and it has no dip switches to help you modify it either. Use standard WP software like Easyscript or suchlike and you should have no problem.

WANTED

Diskcat by D.C. Tilford for the C64/128

CONTACT:

Vic Mobbs

P.O. Box 54, Landsborough, Qld.4550

Ph: (015) 136 286

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Epyx Fast Load Cartridge (new - original packaging with instructions). Cartridge includes a Machine Language Monitor - 4 available \$55 each

Epyx Fast Load Cartridge - As above, but secondhand with no instruction booklet - 2 available \$40

RUN Magazines - February, March, April, and May '87 issues \$3 each or \$10 the lot.

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- "Compute!'s Commodore 128/64 Collection" (286 pages) \$15

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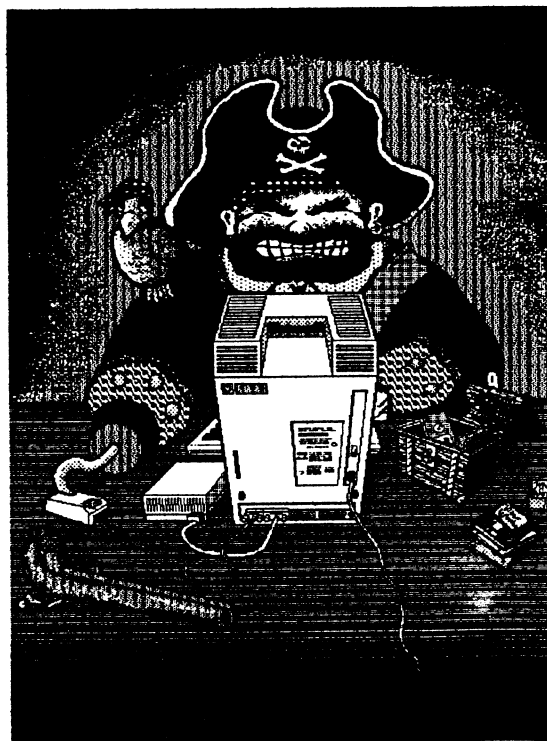
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CONTACT:

Tim Stoner

Ph: (09) 249 7589 after 5 pm Perth time.





```

1 GOTO 50
2 WAIT R, V : : : : :
POKE S, Z + P: PO
A: ON P GOTO 2, 2
5 WAIT R, V: P =
(O): PRINT AS: C
D: ON X GOTO 2
30 POKE S, PEEK
50 PRINT "[CLEAR]
GOSUB 80: CLR: PR
1.160: D = .001
60 R = 53265: V =
O = 49152: A = 1
= 200: C = 1063:
CHR$(20)
70 GOSUB 105: GOT
80 D = 49152: N =

```

BASIC tends to be rather slow in comparison to machine code, but there are some tricks that can be used to squeeze machine code-like effects from it.

Presented here are three short BASIC programs that will amaze. Program one splits the background colour into three sections, program two is a simple trick that gives the appearance of a repeated message smoothly scrolling up the screen. Program three smoothly scrolls a message along the topmost line while the rest of the screen is held stationary, this effect is in fact called "split screen scrolling" and has previously appeared only in machine code games and demos.

When typing in the programs you'll occasionally come across bracketed words within print statements. These indicated control codes, for example, [CLEAR] means to press SHIFT and CLR/HOME, [TEN DOWN] means press the cursor down arrow ten times, [SPC] means press space once.

BASIC COLOUR SPLIT

You've probably seen games where the border or background was split into several colours. This short routine does the same thing.

Line 2 MUST be typed in without any spaces. The spaces in the listing are only for clarity.

```

1 GOSUB 10
2 WAIT R, V : : : : :
POKE B, Z: POKE B, Z: POKE B,
Z: POKE B, C: POKE B, Z: X = X

```

```

+ Y: ON X GOTO 2
3 END
10 R = 53265: V = 128: B =
53281: C = 14: Z = 0: X = 1: Y
= .005: POKE B - 1, 5
15 PRINT "[CLEAR] [FIVE DOWN]
[REVERSE ON] [CYAN] [FORTY
SPACE]"
20 PRINT "[SPACE] [SPACE]
[BLACK]++[WHITE] [SPACE] THIS
IS A BASIC COLOUR SPLIT!
[SPACE] [BLACK] ++[BLUE]"
25 PRINT "[DOWN] [REVERSE ON]
[FORTY SPACES]"
30 PRINT "[DOWN] [DOWN] [CYAN]
[SPACE] REMEMBER, [YELLOW]
[SPACE] EXPERIMENT
[CYAN] [SPACE] WITH
THIS ROUTINE!"
35 RETURN

```

NOW FOR A LINE BY LINE DESCRIPTION.

(In order of execution)

1. By having the actual splitting routine as close to the start of the program as possible, processing time for GOTOs and GOSUBs (there's a GOTO in line 2) is minimised.

10. Variables are set. Border colour is set. Location 53265 holds, among other things, the ninth bit of the raster register. When this bit is set it shows that the raster gun in the back of your TV or monitor is drawing raster lines 256 to 311 which are located in the bottom border.

15. A row of reversed spaces is put here to cover the horizontal area where the border colour changes. Try putting a REM statement at the start of this line to

see why it's necessary to cover the join.

20. A message.

25. Reversed spaces for the same reason as line 15. Notice also that when the program is run the colour graduations give a nice bas-relief effect.

30. A message.

35. back to line 1.

2. This line does the actual colour splitting. Firstly, the program waits till the value in R (53265) equals the bitmask in V (the raster gun is now in the bottom border). Nine colons and three dummy instructions are used to make the program waste a bit of time before going on to the next instruction. The raster gun is now about four rows above where we want to change the background colour and by the time the next instruction is carried out will be at the row where the colour is to be changed. Variable C holds the new border colour, and is POKEd into B (the background colour register). Straight after that, another POKE command is encountered to change the background back to black. By the time "POKE B,Z" is decoded by BASIC and zero is finally put into

53281, the raster gun is now updating the screen about four rows below the first colour change. Variable X is a counter.

The ON statement reads X as an integer and if X equals ONE, the program jumps to the start of line 2, otherwise, line 3 is executed.

3. Program ends.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW.

All numeric values are expressed in variables as this cuts down processor time.

To get a glitch-free display, the main program cycle (line 2) must be completed in less than four fifths of a frame cycle (a frame cycle is the time it takes for the raster gun to update the whole TV screen, which is about 1/50th of a second).

Finding the correct timing is essential. Don't bother trying to



to 70.

2. Here the real work is done. BASIC pauses till the raster is in the border then ten colons cause a short pause. The X-fine register is then POKEd with Z modified by P. It is then POKEd with Z again but not modified with P. This has the effect of localising the screen fine scroll to the top row and halfway through the next row. P is then decremented. P holds the number of pixels that the screen is held by to the right of its ACTUAL position. P is decremented by one in a loop from seven down to zero, fine scrolling the screen from right to left. When P equals ZERO then the ON statement makes the program jump to line 5.

5. The program again pauses slightly before setting P to seven, pokes column 40 with the next character in the message and then shifts the top row one character to the left. Variable X, the text counter, has .001 subtracted and if X is equal or greater than two a jump to line 2 will occur.

30. The border is set to normal and the program ENDS.

IN BRIEF...

Timing is essential to get a flicker-free display. I had to slow The scrolling had to be slowed to one pixel per 2 frame updates to stop the screen glitches.

The scroll counter is based on .001 (1/1000). There are 160 characters in the message (40 characters * 4 strings) so the counter variable X is set to 1+.160.

Okay, have fun experimenting with these routines. Bye for now.

Software Definitions

Shareware

the program is copyright. Free to distribute but only as per shareware agreements. Usually means no charge can be made other than Postage and Handling, and usually can only be distributed in its original format.

A nominal fee is usually required for continued use of shareware programs.

Freeware

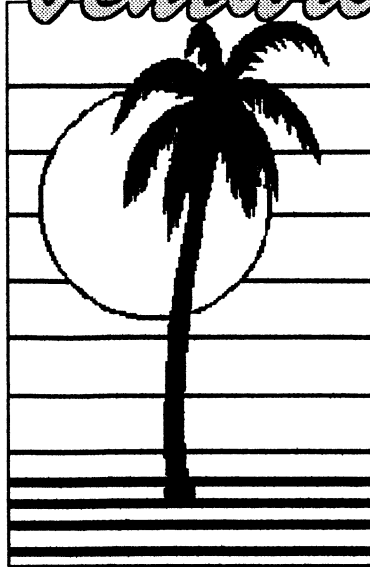
the same terms and conditions as above, except that the author does not expect or require any fees.

Public Domain

The author has relinquished all copyright. The program may be modified and distributed at will. However it is usual practice for any modified versions to still give credit to the original author.

courtesy Rod Gasson

Venturing In



Heath Kirby
Miller

Hello there and welcome to this column for another month. What I have for you this time is something quite different, which will (should) particularly interest those who enjoy role playing games, such as Ultima, The Bard's Tale and any of the AD&D games.

"What is he talking about?" I know that's what you're thinking right now. Well, I'll tell you....

I have in front of me a handbook entitled "What Is Play By Mail?". If you don't know, I'm going to explain it to you and tell you how you can get involved.

PLAY BY MAIL (PBM) - WHAT IS IT?

It is a way to play games by yourself with someone else. What does that mean? Well, you play a game with a lot of other people, but you never meet them. You mail your moves (order sheet) to the Games Master (GM) who processes it (usually with a computer) and sends the results back to you.

The results may be good or bad, depending on what decisions you made, and what moves were performed by the other players in the game. You decide what you want to do and send your order sheet back to the GM.

WHO CAN PLAY?

Anybody! PBM is particularly suited to those people who can't sit down for hours with friends and play games. You can plan your moves while you go about your

daily tasks and then sit down for 30 minutes or so every two weeks and fill in your order sheet.

WHAT TYPE OF GAMES ARE AVAILABLE?

Many, ranging from simple to extremely complex. Fantasy, science fiction, war, rail road, business, role playing (just like on your computer!) and many others available.

I DON'T KNOW ANYONE WHO PLAYS

Not that you need to! You can be set up in a game and may find someone who lives reasonably close to you and you could become good friends.

WHAT ARE THE DISADVANTAGES?

Well, there had to be some. The cost to play is between one dollar and five dollars a week.

I DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER

Why are you reading this then? All you need is a pencil, an eraser, a pen and liquid paper (to correct your turn sheet!)

I DON'T HAVE TIME!

YOU DO! You don't have to sit down for hours at a time to play. Just think about what you are going to do during the week and spend 30 minutes filling in the order sheet.

I DON'T KNOW THE RULES

You will be taught. Each PBM game has a rule book. If these are not enough, you can phone or write to the GM for an answer. Most games come with a "How to play" sheet.

I'M TOO YOUNG/OLD

For what? Sounds like a personal problem. Go see your doctor.

I DON'T LIKE BEING COMITTED TO A GAME FOR YEARS!

No problem! One of the available games lasts 16 turns. If that's too long, join any game and the GM will arrange to get you knocked out very easily!!!

A BONUS

PBM'ers have a common bond and It's a good feeling to know you have unmet friends all over Australia.

INTERVAL

Are you interested to know more? There are over 20 games available at present, but if a particular game is not getting enough players it will be eventually have to be dropped.

QUEST

This is one of those games going extermely well at the minute. The reason? It seems to be because most members of the Australian demo scene are playing it! (you knew I'd mntion the demo scene somewhere, didn't you). Yes, it's true. It all started when a member of The Dark Realm got into the game, and wrote a huge article describing it in issue 13 of their mag, The Grapevine! He even wrote a mapper program for it! QUEST is undoubtedly the toughest of the PBM games available . It can also be played by E-mail if you are more into this side of things.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

To get hold of the "What Is Play By Mail" booklet, which describes all of the available games and their cost, write to me at:

**RMB 221
SUNRASIA HWY.
STUART MILL.
VIC. 3478**

Enclose \$1.50 in stamps for a photocopy of the booklet to be posted to you.

THAT'S IT!

Well, I hope you found this examination of the PBM games interesting. I'm still deciding which to go for, they all sound quite good! I'll probably go for QUEST because I like a Challenge! Anyway, I will be back next month so if you have anything to contribute to this column, you know where to send it. Bye for now.

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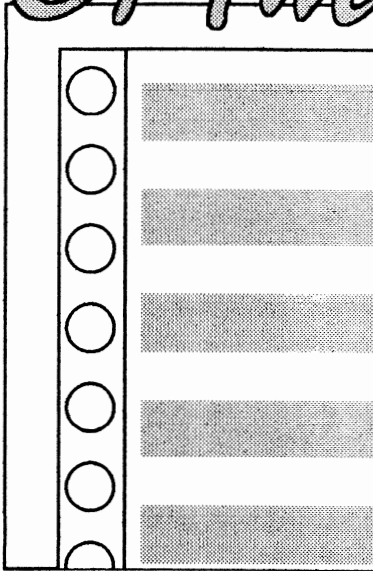
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March 1995



SETTING UP DBASE II

Hello again in 1995. This year I thought we might take a look at some simple ways of setting up files to make running dBase easier. dBase has the knack of showing you only a dot (period) at boot up, which is not very inviting to say the least. It is, of course, waiting for you to type something, but what do I type, you may well ask?

Well, let's assume that you have already created a file on your boot disk called `profile.sub` which, amongst other things, should contain on a single line by itself, the instructions "dbase it". Mine looks like the following :-

```
conf 40col=off, prt1=ascii,
vol=12, feel=1, repeat=5
c1571 [a,d]
setdef *,b: ,c: ,d:
dbase it
```

Now you ask, what is this about? Well, you see, dBase uses the `DO` command to execute a file, and I have instructed dBase to `DO IT`. "IT" is my startup menu, which we will look at in a moment. However, as you will want to ensure that you have the correct date on startup, we should create a database (DBF) file consisting of one item only, like this:-

NAME TYPE WIDTH

```
Date C 008 (this holds the
date in a DD/MM/YY format)
```

The DBF file and the `IT.CMD` file must both be on the `BOOT` disk in drive A: as the `IT.CMD` menu will log you on to drive B: or whatever drive you nominate. Here then is the very simple `IT.CMD` file :-

```
* Written by A.G.V. Hay 8/1989
* Printer default is EJECT OFF with POKE 15325, 0, 0
* Printer eject back On is POKE 15325, 205, 5
* save this file on the A drive
* DATE.DBF must be on your A drive
* It.CMD file starts here
```

```
SET TALK OFF
STORE ' ' to mdefault
ERASE
use A:DATE
store da to dax
? chr(7)
@ 15.5 say "Enter DATE DD/MM/YY ";
GET dax Picture "XX/XX/XX"
READ
Set date to &dax
replace da with dax
use
* set defaults (Printer Eject OFF)
POKE 15325, 0, 0
@ 10,8 say "Default Drive?" GET mdefault
READ
SET DEFAULT to &mdefault
DO WHILE T
*Display a menu:
store "?" to action
*Display a menu:
```

```
* clear screen. display search alternatives. . . .
ERASE
@ 1, 0 SAY "++=====+"
@ 1, 50 SAY "=====+"
@ 2, 0 SAY ";; DBASE START up & OPERATING"
@ 2, 51 SAY "ROUTINE ;;"
@ 3, 0 SAY "++=====+"
@ 3, 50 SAY "=====+"
@ 4, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 4, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 5, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 5, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 6, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 6, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 7, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 7, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 8, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 8, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 9, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 9, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 10, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 10, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 11, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 11, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 12, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 12, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 13, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 13, 78 SAY ";;"
@ 14, 0 SAY ";;"
@ 14, 78 SAY ";;"
```

You can select by the following methods . . .

- (W) Go to WORDSTAR"
- (1) MAINMENU"
- (2) List Files on Default Drive"
- (3) Sweep and Return"
- (4) Return to dBase DOT"
- (5) STRONGBOX"

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```

@ 15, 0 SAY "::"          (6) NOT IN USE"
@ 15, 78 SAY "::"
@ 16, 0 SAY "::"          (X) QUIT to CP/M"
@ 16, 78 SAY "::"
@ 17, 0 SAY "::"
@ 17, 78 SAY "::"
@ 18, 0 SAY "::"
@ 18, 78 SAY "::"
@ 19, 0 SAY "::"          How do you wish to select "
@ 19, 46 GET action PICTURE "X"
@ 19, 78 SAY "::"
@ 20, 0 SAY "::"
@ 20, 78 SAY "::"
@ 21, 0 SAY
-----+-----
@ 21, 50 SAY "-----+-----"
READ
ERASE

DO CASE

CASE ! (action)='1'
DO MAINMENU
CASE ! (action)='2'
ERASE
LIST FILES LIKE *.*
WAIT
CASE ! (action)='3'
QUIT TO 'SWEEP B: ',' dbase it'
CASE ! (action)='4'
CANCEL
CASE ! (action)='5'
DO BOXMENU
CASE ! (action)='6'
DO
CASE ! (action)='X'
QUIT
CASE ! (action)='W'
Quit to "A:WS","dbase it"

ENDCASE
ENDDO

```

The POKE command is used by me to ensure that I do not get any problems when printing out, such as the printer suddenly feeding up one full page if I have made a slight error in placing @ SAY or PRINT commands correctly. I have used this method for many years, and never once had a problem.

You can make the appropriate alterations within the menu to suit your needs.

Now, the other important factor is that the IT.CMD always offers the option to go to the MAINMENU, which I place on EVERY disk under the name MAINMENU.CMD. I write a mainmenu to handle whatever I need on that particular disk, so that no matter what dBase disk is in drive B or C, etc., I will always get to my MAINMENU and will be ready for action. dBase works from a series of command files which can be easily written with Wordstar in NonDocument mode, and altered quickly to suit many, many applications. Study the CASE commands, and you will get the idea. CASE is another alternative to IF, and can incorporate OTHERWISE statements, just as IF can incorporate ELSE statements.

Well, that should give you something to get working on until the next article. Happy DOing until next time!



The FISHBOWL

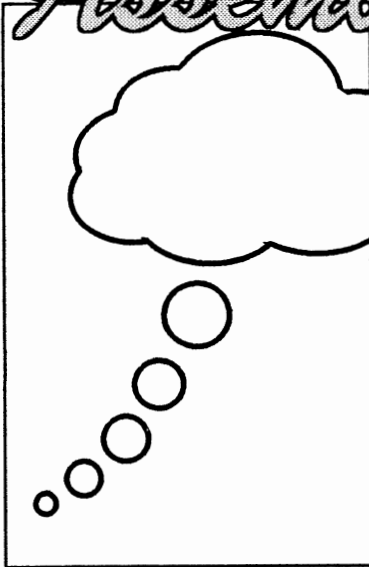
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ANOTHER INTRODUCTION TO ASSEMBLER

(More on theory than
practice)

WHY ASSEMBLE?

Computers work by exercising their CPU (Central Processing Unit) in a program for the task in hand. The type and range of instructions with which the CPU directly interacts is intimately related to its logic structure, and is one of the critical elements of its design. It is known as its Machine Language (ML); and is a set of very flexible, fast, but elementary operations. Consequently it can be tedious and error-prone to write computer programs in ML. A wide range of "higher-level" languages such as BASIC aim to make programming easier by isolating the user from ML.

Of course, many users never write in BASIC or such, and even fewer using ML. This may be a matter of personal inclination, but fear of the unknown can be a factor. My aim is to alleviate such trepidation. Remember, you cannot hurt your computer by programming (even if it is possible to muck up disks - hence the importance of backups). Normality can always be restored by turning off the power.

```
10101001 01000001 10001110
00000000 00000100 . . . . .
. . . . .
```

In this age it is hard to believe that there was a time when some computers were often programmed bit by bit (= binary digit) as the most elementary form of ML. The method made sense for bit-serial computers (i.e.. Which operated on one bit after another).

```
A9 41 8D 00 04 . . . . .
. . . . .
```

This is the modern (hexadecimal) representation of the same bits, grouped as 8-bit bytes. I know a few people who still prefer to program their computer in ML by entering such codes directly to its memory. Others use a Machine Language Monitor (MLM), in particular the one built into the C128 and accessible from <F8>. However, most with such a need find it easier, faster and more convenient to employ an Assembler, a program which can translate and compile mnemonic (easily remembered) instruction codes into ML. There is the outstanding benefit that each assembly recalculates the relative address offsets for all branch instructions, thus eliminating what is otherwise a time-consuming and error-prone task.

LDA # 'A' : STA \$0400 is the (source) text from which the bytes opening the previous paragraph would be compiled by an Assembler running on a C64 or 128. Notice how much more understandable the program is when in this form. It is easy to see that the object is to Load Accumulator (one of the processor's inbuilt registers) with the ASCII value representing A, then to Store from Accumulator to memory location \$0400. This is 1024 in decimal, the first character position in memory allotted to the 40-column screen, where A will appear if the foregoing code is executed (perhaps by SYS) and if the screen is in Upper Case/Lower Case display mode.

By the way, the near equivalent of

that ML in BASIC is:

```
99 PRINT " <HOME> A"
```

Why would anyone bother with ML when BASIC has so many attractions? Sometimes there functions more easily achievable in ML, sometimes programming details are to be hidden, but usually because increased speed of execution is necessary. Depending on the task, running 10 to 100 times faster is typical (try to clear the 40-column screen by poking 32 to each of its 1000 locations and watch how slow it is compared to the blink taken by ML).

There are costs in the effort of learning and remembering a new programming language, and in the time taken by the extra manipulation of files during Assembly. The latter can vary widely between Assemblers (my favourite is "BUDDY 128" from Pro-Line). It is to help remembering (even if made easier by the mnemonic form of the Assembler instruction codes) that I prepared the enclosed summary sheet many years ago; and I still keep it handy when coding. May it help you as well.

ASSEMBLER FUNCTIONS

Assembler mnemonic instruction codes have become reasonably standardised after years of settling down, although there are still differences. For example, the object code byte \$D0 usually results from assembling BEQ (Branch if Equal), although there are assemblers which insist on BRZ (BRanch if Zero) instead. There are a rare few which will accept either. It is essential that a proper specification of the full set of codes for your Assembler be at hand before starting. My Summary is suitable for most Assemblers, but will require revision for your program purposes if apparently legitimate mnemonics are rejected as erroneous by your Assembler.

Labels play an important part in assembly. In effect, any point in the code can be tagged (almost like equating to a variable in Basic) so that various parts of the source code may refer to it even before its value is known as a result of assembling. This is particularly important for branch instructions. Unfortunately not all Assemblers agree on rules for allowable labels (so be sure to

know yours). For instance, I do not know any other Assembler which allows BUDDY 128's convenient -, +, and / reusable temporary labels.

Assemblers also differ in other conventions. Comments, number representations, status bit designations and a wide range of auxiliary operations and macros may also be handled differently. Be sure to read and absorb the documentation for your Assembler.

The primary Assembler function is to provide object code for source text. Object code may be dumped in a file requiring other operations (loader &/or linker programs), or (much more conveniently, as with BUDDY) dumped to memory ready for testing &/or saving.

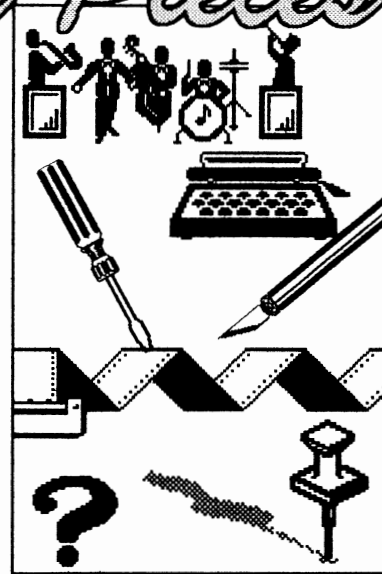
Ability to edit the source code is also vital. Good Assemblers allow this directly. Others are more messy, requiring much extra file handling. This can slow the edit-assemble-test cycle considerably.

BUDDY's source files are in BASIC format; and the edit facilities are those of BASIC 7.0 augmented by renumber, autonumber, range-delete, string search and replace facilities. It is hard to beat.

WHERE

Before starting, decide where your object ML is going to reside in memory. Remember that the so-called "Application Program RAM" (C64 \$C000 - CFFF or C128 \$1300-1BFF) is often claimed by other programs with which you may have to compete.

Of course the problem is eased if the ML is to stand alone, in which case the whole BASIC program text area may be used. But usually ML is auxiliary to BASIC and must coexist in memory. With precautions, it may be put into various nooks in RAM unused by BASIC, perhaps into the tape buffer or (128) the modem buffers, the sprite storage area, or part of the function-key definition area. On suitable occasions I put small amounts of ML into the 40-column screen text RAM. With care, the C64 can use ML in RAM under ROM, and in the C128, you can steal some of the BASIC RAM. For instance, GRAPHIC 1 : GRAPHIC 0 moves BASIC by 9k up in RAM, or you fudge the start-of-BASIC or bottom-of-memory pointer to create areas not accessible to BASIC.



CLEANING DISKS?

Recycling those used disks? Wondering how the heck to get that gummy residue left over from previous labels off? Well, try common, everyday lighter fluid. It is a good solvent, doesn't attack plastic or most paints, and is good for grease and oil!

BULK FORMATTING?

Want to format multiple disks all at once on a multi-drive system? Well, it's easy! All you have to do is set all your disk drive numbers to eight and issue the format command.

ANTI FREEZE

Here's a little something I found amongst an old E-mail packet I was going through. It was posted in response to a query from one Andrew Lim regarding putting protection against an Action Replay "freeze" into ones own programs. The respondent (and hence the author I imagine), was one Rod Gasson.

```

460 FOR L = 0 TO 22: CX = 0:
FOR D= 0 TO 15: READ A: CX =
CX + A: POKE 49152 + L * 16 +
D, A: NEXT D
470 POKE 53280, (PEEK (53280)
AND 15) + 1
480 READ A: IF A <> CX THEN
PRINT "ERROR"; 500 + (L*10):
STOP
490 NEXT L
500 DATA 32, 68, 229, 169, 0,
141, 32, 208, 141, 33, 208,
169, 7, 141, 134, 2, 1714
510 DATA 162, 0, 19, 82, 192,
240, 6, 32, 210, 255, 232,
208, 245, 162, 25, 154, 2394
520 DATA 169, 200, 141, 3, 1,
173, 3, 1, 201, 200, 240, 249,
162, 255, 154, 32, 2184
    
```

```

530 DATA 68, 229, 169, 10,
141, 134, 2, 162, 0, 189, 253,
192, 240, 6, 32, 210, 2037
540 DATA 255, 232, 208, 245,
169, 0, 133, 198, 32, 228,
255, 201, 32, 20, 249, 76,
2721
550 DATA 0, 192, 13, 13, 32,
32, 32, 32, 32, 32, 32, 32,
32, 65, 78, 84, 733
560 DATA 73, 45, 70, 82, 69,
69, 90, 69, 32, 82, 79, 85,
84, 73, 78, 69, 1149
570 DATA 13, 32, 32, 32, 32,
32, 32, 32, 32, 32, 45, 45,
45, 45, 45, 45, 571
580 DATA 45, 45, 45, 45, 45,
45, 45, 45, 45, 45, 45, 45,
45, 13, 13, 13, 624
590 DATA 32, 32, 32, 80, 76,
69, 65, 83, 69, 32, 80, 82,
69, 83, 83, 32, 999
600 DATA 84, 72, 69, 32, 70,
82, 69, 69, 90, 69, 32, 66,
85, 84, 84, 79, 1136
610 DATA 78, 32, 79, 78, 13,
13, 32, 32, 32, 9, 79, 85, 82,
32, 67, 65, 888
620 DATA 82, 84, 82, 73, 68,
71, 69, 44, 84, 72, 69, 78,
32, 85, 83, 69, 1145
640 DATA 32, 84, 72, 69, 32,
39, 82, 85, 78, 39, 13, 13,
32, 32, 32, 79, 813
650 DATA 80, 84, 73, 79, 78,
32, 79, 2, 32, 83, 73, 77, 73,
76, 65, 82, 1148
660 DATA 32, 84, 79, 32, 82,
69, 84, 5, 82, 78, 46, 13, 0,
13, 13, 32, 824
670 DATA 32, 32, 73, 32, 71,
79, 84, 67, 72, 65, 32, 33,
32, 89, 79, 5, 957
680 DATA 32, 72, 65, 86, 69,
32, 74, 85, 83, 84, 32, 85,
83, 69, 68, 32, 1051
690 DATA 84, 72, 69, 13, 13,
32, 32, 32, 32, 32, 32, 32,
32, 32, 32, 32, 603
700 DATA 70, 82, 69, 69, 90,
69, 32, 66, 85, 84, 84, 79,
78, 46, 13, 13, 1029
710 DATA 13, 32, 32, 32, 80,
82, 69, 83, 3, 32, 84, 72, 69,
32, 39, 83, 917
720 DATA 80, 65, 67, 69, 66,
    
```

65, 82, 39, 32, 84, 79, 32, 84, 2, 9, 32, 1047
730 DATA 65, 71, 65, 73, 78, 13, 0, 10, 101, , 53, 40, 21, 8, 85, 74,
765

You'll need to use a SYS 49152 to activate/deactivate.

NOTE: This routine will appear on the next Disk-Coverer disk set's "magazine" side for your convenience.

THE SYS LIST

part #1

Here is a far from comprehensive list of SYS calls that achieve some interesting results.

C64		C128
42100	- return to READY prompt -	19787
42115	Return to BASIC WITHOUT the READY prompt	
42582	NEW	
-----	Prints a screen code character	49155, char, colour
-----	Prints an ASCII character	49164, char
52684, 7, 9	Toggle character size (84 mode only)	
-----	Adjust 80 col. screen horizontally (128 only)	52684, H, 2
	where H has a default value of 102	
-----	Adjust 80 col. screen vertically (128 only)	52684, V, 7
	where V has a default value of 29	
	Reset EPYX FASTLOAD cartridge	
57194	Warm start	16387
58235	Initialise	
58250	Cold start from within program leaving screen colours intact	
58260	Print the start-up message	16795
58266	Clear the screen and home the cursor	
58692	Home the cursor	49488
58726	Advances cursor one space	51284
59062	Cursor to previous line	51303
59137	Move your cursor down a line	51290
59516	Scroll the screen a single line	51914
59826	Clears a line of text	51851
59903	BASIC cold start	16384
64738	BASIC warm start	16387
65126	Go to 84 mode (128 only)	85357
	Closes all your open files	85354, A
65511	where A (128 only) is the device number on which to close the files	

PEEKING AND POKING

Here are some commonly accessed memory locations, and what they do.

C64		C128
19, 32	removes the "?" in an input prompt	21, 32
19, 0	restores our "?"	21, 0
22, 35	LIST without line numbers	24, 37
22, 25	LIST with line numbers	24, 27
152, 0	Close all files	
153, 15	disable the keyboard	2592, 0
153, 0	keyboard back on line	2592, 10
198, 0	clear the keyboard buffer	208, 0
204, 0	set cursor to blink during GET	
204, >0	restore normal GET cursor	
211, 0-79	place the cursor in the column indicated	
214, 0-24	set the cursor to that particular row (must be followed by PRINT)	
646, 0-15	change the character colour	
649, 0	disable the keyboard	2592, 0
649, 10	enable the keyboard	2592, 10
650, 128	all keys set to repeat	
657, 128	disable the SHIFT key	
657, 0	re-enable the SHIFT key	
788, 226	cold start from error	
789, 252	as above	
770, 226	cold start from within a program	
771, 252	as above	
774, 0	LIST line numbers only	
774, 26	return to normal list-out	
775, 0	LIST disable	
775, 168	disable the LIST command	
775, 171	cause a crash on the issuance of the LIST command	
788, 52	disable the STOP key	
788, 49	re-enable STOP	
792, 193	disable RESTORE	
792, 71	re-enable RESTORE	
808, 225	RUN/STOP - RESTORE disable	
808, 234	disable STOP	
808, 235	restore RUN/STOP and RUN/STOP-RESTORE to normal	
808, 237	re-enable STOP	
808, 251	disable RUN/STOP	
818, 32	disable SAVE	
818, 237	re-enable the above	
819, 246	disable SAVE	
819, 245	re-enable SAVE	
53265, 11	blank screen	
53265, 27	restore screen	
53272, 21	toggle between upper case and graphics modes	
53272, 23	toggle between lower/upper case characters	
53280, 0-15	change the border colour	
53281, 0-15	change background colour	
56325, 0-255	controls speed of cursor blink	



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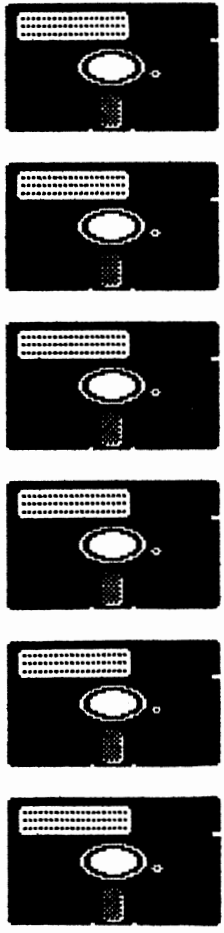
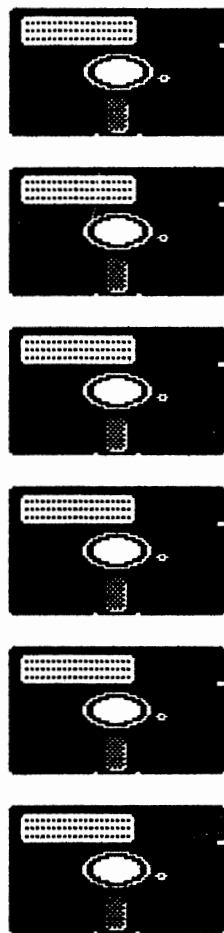


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