

Your

An Argus Specialist Publication

NOVEMBER 1984

80p

NEW

COMMODORE

YOUR BEST INDEPENDENT COMMODORE MAGAZINE

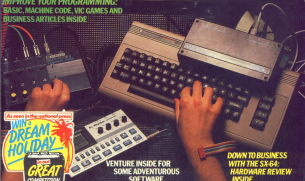


THE DIGITAL MUSICIAN

KEYBOARD CONTROL WITH THE MIDI INTERFACE



IMPROVE YOUR PROGRAMMING:
BASIC, MACHINE CODE, VIC GAMES AND
BUSINESS ARTICLES INSIDE



As seen in the national press

WIN A DREAM HOLIDAY

GREAT COMPETITION

VENTURE INSIDE FOR
SOME ADVENTUROUS
SOFTWARE

DOWN TO BUSINESS
WITH THE SX-64:
HARDWARE REVIEW
INSIDE

KoalaPad Touch Tablet

JUST PICTURE IT!



JUST PICTURE IT - BEING ABLE TO DRAW YOUR OWN HIGH RESOLUTION GRAPHIC DESIGNS ON YOUR COMPUTER SCREEN WITHOUT HAVING TO WRITE A PROGRAM ...!

Well, now you can - with the amazing Koala Pad from Audiogenic!

The Koala Pad touch tablet provides the direct link between you and your screen! It plugs into your Commodore 64 and lets you paint directly onto the screen with a selection of brush sizes and a choice of 16 colours and 16 shades from your software palette.

But that's just the beginning - because every Koala Pad package includes the incredible Koala Painter software which makes it child's play to ...

- Fill outlines with a colour!
- Draw straight lines!
- Make frames!
- Draw circles!
- Fit pictures from a point!
- Move objects around!
- Copy shapes!
- Create mirror images!
- Zoom in on an area!
- Swap shapes between two pictures!
- Save your pictures to disk or tape!

The program is controlled entirely from the tablet by moving a cursor arrow around to the different menu options. An optional Programmer's Guide is also available to tell you how to incorporate Koala Pad pictures into your own programs.

Now you don't have to be an experienced programmer to produce real high resolution graphics on your computer - the Koala Pad from Audiogenic makes it as easy as a pencil and paper. Just picture it!

Available with Cassette or Disk software for the Commodore 

From all good computer shops - or direct from Audiogenic - just fill in the coupon!

Please send me (QTY) Koala Pad Disk/Cassette! I enclose cheque/P.O. for

Commodore 64 Disk or Cassette £7.95 (+)

THE KOALAPAD IS A PRODUCT OF

 **Koala**
Technologies Corporation

Exclusive distribution in U.K. and Eire by

Audiogenic LTD

Please charge to my Access (Mastercard)†/Visa card account no.

Details complete

acceptable

Signature

Mobile/Max

Address

P.O. BOX 55, READING, BERKS.

Our COMMENT

Your trusty Editor has again tapped away at the typewriter to introduce this second fantastic issue of Your Commodore.

YOU KNOW IT ONLY seems a couple of months ago that we were sunning ourselves on the beach dreaming up the idea of a great magazine to cater for the needs of the Commodore user. And yet here we are in October looking forward to cosy roaring fires and sitting in front of our mice with the wind howling around outside the window! But there are all sorts of goodies on the Commodore scene to look forward to in the next couple of months.

What the future holds

At this very time Commodore are launching their new computers, the Plus 4 and the XL. Currah are announcing their speech synthesiser. Cherish will be producing the Commodore version of their infra-red joystick (the RAT!) and the software companies

will be starting their build-up to Christmas with the launch of undoubtedly numerous games and utilities for the Commodore range of machines.

The editorial team on your Commodore has been under intensive training to enable their finely tuned (7) bodies and minds to keep up to date with all the latest happenings on the Commodore front, so all you need to do to ensure that you are kept informed is to make sure that you get your copies of Your Commodore regularly. There is an easy way to do this — just look for the Subscriptions page in this magazine, fill in the coupon, write your cheque and sit back and wait for your copies to come popping through your letterbox. It sure beats fighting your way to the shelves in your local newsagent!

Keeping in the present

This issue of Your Commodore we believe maintains the high standards we in the first issue: we have a review of the MIDI by Chris Palmer, who apart from being a bit of a whizz on computers is something of a talented musician; Runecaster has been brought up from the Crypt to tell us of Adventures and other things; we have pages packed with news and software reviews; and we have carried on our great series on machine code and BASIC. And, as if that isn't enough, we also have some fun games for you to type in and hints on how to become a 'weekly programmer'!

Your views

It is always difficult when starting up a new magazine to gauge the response of the most important people involved — you, the readers. So here is your chance to get in on the act! By now we hope that you will have read the first issue of Your Commodore. The first question to be asked is: did you enjoy what you read? Then, was it useful/informative/fun? Did it tell you all you wanted to know?

We consider ourselves fairly approachable here in the depths of the Your Commodore offices so why don't you use the lines of communication that we are trying to open up! Tell us what you would like to see in the future — would you like more games to type in, more programming features, less reviews, etc, etc.

Those good old lines of communication can also be used for getting into contact with other Commodore users: do you want to join a local Commodore users' group? Are you having trouble finding your way out of a particularly frustrating Adventure scenario? Having trouble finding just the right program to suit your specific needs?

All you have to do is write to the Editor at the London office and we'll do our best to help — either directly or by printing your letter within these hallowed pages.

ASP fights software piracy

Much has been said and written in condemnation of software piracy but few



have taken a positive stand against it. ASP is among those few that have taken action to help curb the grave problem of home copying of commercial software.

ASP has already taken steps to eliminate advertisements in our magazines which relate to tape duplication for piracy purposes. While it is appreciated that individuals may take 'back-up' copies of their own programs, it should be noted that it is ILLEGAL to copy commercially available software for other than personal use.

Software piracy is costing the software industry huge sums of money which is detrimental to the future development of the industry. It is in everybody's interests to dramatically reduce the level of software piracy primarily because firms need funds raised from software sales to plough back into research and development of new products. This means that the standard of software products can only improve.

ASP hopes our action will help combat this serious problem in order to maintain and improve the high standards of the UK software industry. We are asking you to do the same by refraining from duplicating or copying commercially available software for anything other than personal use.





VOLUME 1
NUMBER 2

NOVEMBER 1984

Editor: **Wesley J. Palmer**
General Manager: **Allen Paul**
Advertisement Manager: **Mike**
Adviser

Advertisement Copy Control:
Joe Conaghan

Chairman: **Jim Connell**
Circulation: **Henry Spurr**
Design: **MM Design**

Editorial & Advertising Office
No 1 Golden Square,
London W1R 3JH
Telephone: 01-517 0628
Telex: 887188

Your Commodore is a monthly
magazine appearing on the first
Friday of each month.

Distribution by: **Argus Press**
Sales & Distribution: 160, 17-18
Red Lion Street, London EC3A 4DF.
Printed by: **Malvern Press**
& News Ltd, 1001, Middlesex,
Essex.

Subscriptions rates apply
application to Your
Commodore Subscriptions
Department, Inland Ltd, Times
House, 119 The Mall, London,
W1P 9PH, or to:
Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1
8E.

The contents of this publication
including all articles, designs,
plans, drawings and programs
and all copyrights and other
intellectual property rights
therein belong to Argus
Specialist Publications Limited.
All rights reserved by the Law
of Copyright and other
intellectual property rights and
by virtue of international
copyright conventions are
expressly reserved to Argus
Specialist Publications Limited
and any reproduction requires
the prior written consent of the
Company © 1984 Argus Specialist
Publications Limited.

OUR COMMENT 3

Our esteemed Editor has spoken forth
again.

MASTERING MACHINE CODE 8

We continue our great series on teaching
the basics of machine code.

VIC GAMES PROGRAMMING 17

Find out more about how to program
games on your VIC 20.

TALES FROM THE CRYPT 22

Basecaster never gets a rest from the
Adventures of Ili!

MIDI REVIEW 26

We take a look at this great musical
interface and give our opinion — so be
ready to take notes!

SOFTWARE SPOTLIGHT 30

We've thrown the spotlight on some of the
latest software packages — see what our
reviewers think about them.

FORMULA ONE 38

Drive yourself completely round the bend
with this car game.

REFERENCE LIBRARY 40

There are lots of books around for the
Commodore range — we've looked
through some to give you some ideas.

THE BASIC FACTS PT.2 45

Getting down to basics is the theme of this
informative series.

SIGNET 48

A mine of fun awaits you in this
tremendous adventure for the CBMM.

SNEAKY PROGRAMMING 56

Be sneaky and fool your Commodore with
some clever stuff — we show you how.

DATA STATEMENTS 58

All sorts of news to interest you as a
Commodore micro owner.





SAMMY THE SLUG 64

Slugs are not normally considered very friendly but you can certainly have some fun with Sammy.

RASTER INTERRUPTS 68

We show you what you can do with graphics on your Commodore 64.

INPUT/OUTPUT 74

More of your technical enquiries answered.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS 76

We go behind the doors of IBM to bring you news of their beginnings and latest designs.



DOING IT YOURSELF 80

A further part of the series that helps you write your own business software.

BUSINESS FILE 82

We take a look at some of the more serious software around.

ASP Competition 84

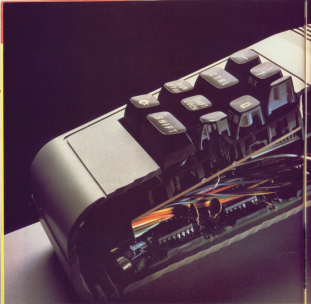
Our great competition as advertised in the national press — fantastic prizes to be won.

SX-64 Reviewed 86

As an upgrade from the CBM64 the SX-64 is a very nice machine. ...



CONTENTS



Are you only using

To play only games on a Commodore computer is like asking Albert Einstein to work out the square root of four.

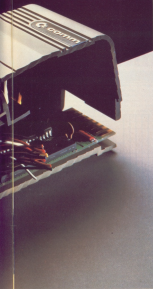
The computer's brain barely ticks over.

To really stretch it, you need more interesting software programs. For example, record keeping, interactive education, stimulating adventure games or word processing.

And for these you need peripherals.

Like a Commodore disk drive, a really fast storage and retrieval system with a vast memory. Or a Commodore cassette unit, the inexpensive way of loading and storing programs.

For those who like the idea of text and graphics being more alive and having greater clarity than on a TV, there's the Commodore colour monitor.



COMMODE IMP100
Dot matrix printer £200.00
Printer feed. Print speed
80 characters per second



COMMODE IMP200
Dot matrix printer £245.00
Printer feed for standard
paper. Print speed
80 characters per second



COMMODE CP2001
Daisy wheel printer £200.00
Letter quality print on
all types of paper. Print speed
50 characters per second



COMMODE 800
Printer/plotter £160.00. For
charts and graphs. Print speed
14 characters per second



COMMODE 1001
Dot print £200.00
100 copies, 1/32" dotsize



COMMODE 1010
Cassette unit, £100.00
For Commodore 10 and
Commodore plus 14



COMMODE 1015
£40.00 for Commodore 10

COMMODE 1016
Colour monitor £100.00

JOYSTICKS
Sports from £1.00

PARALLEL IMP200

Circle 10 on card 98100100

g 1/10th of your brain?

And for hard copy there are our three printers and a printer/plotter. These will preserve on paper—in colour, black and white, chart form, graphs or text, the fruits of all your labour.

Finally to make games playing more exciting, there are joysticks and paddles.

So use your brain. And make sure you use all of your computer's brain.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, BOX ONE FOR MORE OF THE BOOKS ABOVE, AND SEND TO THE COMMODE INFORMATION CENTRE, 1 HUNTING ROAD, BALDWIN, COMPTON, SOUTHAMPTON SO9 7EQ. TEL: 0703 250620/20000

NAME

ADDRESS

JK 6/2788



commodore

A.P. and D.),
Stephenson continue
their layman's guide
to machine code in
part 2 of this series.

MASTERING MACHINE CODE

TO WRITE MACHINE code programs, it is important to know the space in memory which is free from the clutches of the operating system, the BASIC, interpreter and the peripheral control area. This free space varies in different models. In the CBM 64, there is, fortunately, a healthy 4K of memory which is reserved for your own machine code programs. Machine code programs can be safely loaded into the 4K memory block starting from \$C000 onwards. The character 'F' will be used from now on to indicate where the number is in hex rather than decimal.

In addition to the space required to house the program, a need will arise for a few special memory locations in 'page zero' which is at the bottom of memory and extends from address \$0000 to \$00FF. In Part 1 of this series, we learned that the microprocessor communicates with the memory chips via a set of 16 wires called the **address bus** and a set of eight wires called the **data bus**. The memory may be considered as a huge bank of separately addressable locations. Each location can hold eight bits and each location has a unique 'address' for identity purposes.

The binary pattern, which the microprocessor sends out on the address bus at any one time, energises one particular memory location. This pattern is the address. However, it is easier to think of the address in terms of hex rather than binary. Furthermore, it is conventional to consider the pattern on the 16-bit address bus in two halves. The eight most significant bits (A0 to A7)

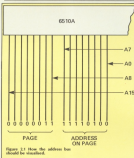


Figure 2.1 How the address bus should be visualised.

are known as the **page** and the eight least significant bits (A0 to A7) as the **address on page**. It is also conventional to refer to the most significant half of the address bus as the **high byte** address and the least significant half as the **low byte** address. Refer to figure 2.1 which illustrates the concept of a page and an address on that page.

The example shows a sample binary pattern, 0000 00111110100 which, when translated into hex, becomes \$0014 if you still cling on to decimal, this is 1952. Note that only four hex digits are required to express any of the 65K possible address combinations. Returning to the subject of pages and figure 2.1, instead of saying the absolute address is \$0014, we could say the address is \$14 on page \$03. We could

drop the leading zero and simply say page 3. Before leaving the subject of pages, it is worth studying some of the figures involved in address work.

One page contains 256 addresses. In hex, the range extends from \$00 to \$FF. There are 256 pages in the complete memory map, so again, the hex range is from \$0 to \$FF. Check: $256 \times 256 = 65,536 = 64K$.

If we have to write machine code without the aid of an assembler, we are forced to use decimal addresses because the CBM 64 does not cater for hex. Although brute force conversion from hex to decimal is quite in order, you are strongly recommended to keep in mind the division of the address bus into two sections. We should remember that a complete memory address

occupies two bytes, the high byte for page and the low byte for address on the page. The high byte is worth 256 times as much as the equivalent low byte.

To choose a simple example, if the address is \$0003 (address 3 on page 0), the decimal equivalent is $5 \times (256 \times 3) = 773$.

Let's try the more difficult address, \$200F, in order to practise some hex to decimal conversion. The low byte is \$0F which in decimal is 15 and the high byte is \$20 which is 32 decimal. So the complete address in decimal is $15 + (256 \times 32) = 8187$. If you intend to follow this series without obtaining an assembler, it will bring dividends if you spend a little time practising these methods of converting hex addresses to decimal.

The 6510 microprocessor

When you program in BASIC, the microprocessor, the workhorse of the computer, remains unseen in the background. There is no need to know what type it is, how many bits it can handle at once, how many registers there are inside it or what is the **assembling of instructions**. The situation is different for the machine code programmer. The peculiarities of the resident microprocessor are all important.

The microprocessor used in the Commodore 64 is a 6510A. Readers who have been used to the well known 6502 microprocessor will be relieved to know that the two are software compatible. The only difference is that the 6510A has a few special out put pins which the machine uses to control the cassette interface. It is possible to



plunge straight into machine code programming without troubling too much about the technical details of the 6510A. However, it pays dividends in the long run if some of the internal behaviour is understood and it can also be interesting for its own sake.

Programs written in machine code for any given microprocessor should, subject to minor variations, still run on any make of computer employing the same microprocessor. That is to say, machine code programs are microprocessor (rather than machine) specific. The 'minor variations' mentioned above include such things as differences in the way memory is allocated and the amount and location of free space. Machine code programs are usually written with the aid of an assembler and some variation in syntax can be expected between different commercial versions.

It is better to begin by reviewing the microprocessor in relation to other main components of the system. The microprocessor communicates with the rest of the computer via three bundles of wires known as 'buses'. As we have seen, the address bus is responsible for picking out the particular memory location required by the programmer. The data bus is responsible for sending or receiving data to and from the chosen location. The control bus is a hotch potch of wires, necessary for the overall discipline of the system.

The ROM chips

These contain fixed information and can not be subsequently altered by the computer. The information stored includes the 8K operating system of the computer (Commodore call this the 'kernel' ROM). The BASIC language interpreter is also an 8K ROM. The most important characteristic of ROMs is the permanence of the stored information

which is retained after power is disconnected.

The RAM chips (Random Access Memory)

The title is misleading because the essential quality of RAMs, which distinguishes them from ROMs, is the ability to change the stored information under program control. The mere fact that they are 'random access' is incidental because so also are ROMs. In other words, RAMs are really read/write memories. Depending on

MCOS transistors. The stored information, however, is a transient affair because it is only a minute electrostatic charge which leaks away in a few milliseconds. Consequently, each stored bit must be periodically re-charged in order to compensate for the leakage. This process, called 'refreshing', is inherent in the hardware design and is not the responsibility of the programmer. However, the refresh-cycle does take up extra time. Dynamic RAMs are therefore a compromise in which access time is

From now, the term RAM will be taken to mean the dynamic type.

6510A systems are **memory mapped**, a term used to denote that peripherals are addressed as if they were ordinary memory locations.

Inside the 6510A

From the viewpoint of the programmer, the 6510A can be considered as a collection of **registers**. Each register can be considered as a separate memory location within the

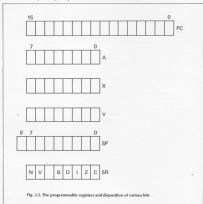


Fig. 2.2. The programmable registers and disposition of various bits.

the internal structure, RAMs may be further classified into 'static' or 'dynamic'. Some writers refer to dynamic RAMs as DRAMs, the 'D' prefix standing for dynamic. Due to the need for reducing current consumption and maximising packing density, each bit is stored within the inter-electrode capacity of

sacrificed in order to increase packing density and reduce cost.

The CBM, and indeed nearly all other makes of microcomputers, will use dynamic RAMs. The alternative would be to use static RAMs but the cost would be prohibitive and they would occupy a greater space on circuit boards.

microprocessor. With one or two exceptions, all data must be fetched from memory via the data bus and spooled to one or other of the registers before carrying out any operation. A machine code program will consist of a series of **instructions** which inform the microprocessor which registers are to be used to

carry out the current task.

Registers do not have addresses, at least not in the same way as described above. If an assembler is used, they are called up by special code letters, such as A or B or Y etc which form part of each instruction. Paths, within the microprocessor, connecting the various registers together or to the external buses are sometimes called 'highways' because they fan out over the chip area like main trunk roads.

The registers

With one exception, all the registers in the 6501A are eight bits wide, the same as the data bus. The only exception being the Program Counter which is 16 bits wide. Control lines operate the input and output gates of each separate register, ensuring that only one pair is allowed access to the highway at any one time. For example, during the machine code instruction IAX (which, as we shall see later, means Transfer Accumulator to X register) only register A output gate and register X input gate are open to the data highway. This makes the highway free to pass the contents of A to X without being jammed by data coming in any of the other registers.

The majority of instructions we give to microprocessors are in the nature of data transfers, either between internal registers or between registers and external RAM, ROM or peripherals. Some instructions, such as ADC (Add with Carry), perform arithmetical operations on the data but this may still have to be fetched from memory. Even a simple instruction like INX (Increment contents of X) involves a transfer because the X register is not equipped for altering itself.

Instead, the contents of X must be transferred along the highway to the arithmetic section before the Y can be added.

Some commonly used abbreviations

Before we even attempt to write machine code programs or before even we can attempt the precise definition of a machine code instruction, we must understand the operation of the microprocessor registers. Certain bits in these registers have special significance according to the position they occupy. The following abbreviations and conventions are, more or less, standardised and will be used from now on:

Bit 7 most significant bit.
Bit 0 least significant bit.
Bit positions within a byte are numbered 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0.
Bit 0 is the bit.
Bit 7 is the nib.
Arithmetic accumulator.
Register X.
Register Y.
Program status register.
PC—program counter.
PCL—low byte of PC.
PCH—high byte of PC.
SP—stack pointer.
ALU—arithmetic and logic unit.
AR—address register.
ARL—low byte of AR.
ARH—high byte of AR.
Process status flags:
V—overflow (bit 7).
N—negative (bit 6).
Z—zero (bit 5).
C—carry (bit 0).
Figure 2.2 shows the programmable registers and the disposition of the various bits.

A distinction is made between directly programmable and certain other registers which, although playing a vital role, remain in the background, unseen by the programmer. Instructions exist which allow the programmer to transfer data between memory and registers.

Accumulator (A)

This register has a supreme role. It is the only one capable of performing arithmetical processing. It is involved in transfers to and from memory and acts as interim data storage during

arithmetical and logic operations. For example, during a simple addition of two numbers using the instruction ADC (Add with Carry), the first number must pass to the accumulator and is then transferred to a temporary holding register within the ALU. The second number then enters A, the addition is carried out and the result sent back to A. The ALU in the 6501A, in common with nearly all other microprocessors, requires the two variables first, the add operator is then activated and the result passed to the accumulator, replacing the previous contents.

The dominance of the accumulator over other registers will be evident when we later study the complete instruction set of the 6501A. However, the fact that only one accumulator is present gives ammunition to the rival 280 microprocessor which boasts eight accumulator-type registers. A single accumulator does tend to be restrictive in organising efficient machine code.

The X and Y registers

Like the accumulator, the X register and the Y register (subsequently referred to as X and Y) are both eight bits wide. They have three primary uses in programming:

- They make up for the inconvenience of the solitary accumulator. Important data residing in A can be transferred temporarily by the use of IAX or IAY and later when A is free, transferred back using TXA or TYA.

- They can serve as up-counters or down-counters for setting up machine code loops. This is due to the ease by which they can be incremented or decremented by the instructions INX, DEX, INC or DEY. It is curious that the designers failed to provide an equivalent instruction for incrementing or decrementing A. The only way to do the relatively inefficient method of adding or

subtracting 1, using ADC or SBC.

- They are fundamental to the technique known as address modification by indexing. When using an indexed addressing mode (denoted in assembly form by a comma followed by X or Y), the data in the X or Y register is automatically added to the given address. The resultant is interpreted as the final address of the required data.

This idea was pioneered by a team at Manchester University and, at the time, represented a step forward in computer science. They called the index register, the 'B box', presumably to differentiate it from the accumulator A. Prior to this, allowing the address in loops was cumbersome. It involved loading the address part of an instruction from inside the program, incrementing it and then storing it back in the original position. In other words, it was necessary to alter the program in order to modify the address. Indexed addressing is so much cleaner to work with and certainly less error prone. Most of the indefeasible instructions in the 6501A allow a choice of using either X or Y indexing. Although indexed addressing is dealt with in some detail later, anticipation will do no harm, so study the following example:

Assume X contains 30 and we write LDA 100,X

The simple instruction LDA 100 would have the equivalent effect. They would both load the contents of address 100 into A. The advantage of the indexed over the simpler form will be apparent when organising loops involving action on consecutive addresses.

This should help to explain why the address bus, as well as the data bus, has access to the ALU. It should be understandable, if we realise that the index register contents have to be added to the operand. After all, the address modification

by indexing produces a compared address and only the ALU can truly compute.

The process status register (F)

If we define a register as an internal memory location for holding or processing data, then the Process Status register (F) is not a register at all. It is in fact a collection of isolated single-bit storage cells (flip-flops). Each bit is called a 'flag' because it conveys certain information in you/s form either for the benefit of the machine or the programmer. The flags play an important role in the 'branch-if' type of instructions; the machine code is equivalent to the IF/THEN statement in BASIC. After most instructions, the relevant flags are updated, depending on the result they give. It is important for the programmer to understand the exact significance of each flag, that is to say, under what conditions they are set or reset. It is also important to know which are under sole control of the microprocessor and which are directly programmable.

The N bit

If this is 1, the last result contained a 1 in bit 7 position. The N bit is often misleadingly called the 'sign bit' because two's complement arithmetic recognises bit 7 as the sign rather than magnitude. If the number is unsigned binary, the N flag merely indicates the state of bit 7. It is automatically set or reset and is not directly programmable.

The V bit

If this bit is 1, it indicates that the last instruction resulted in two's complement overflow, that is to say, the resultant number was too large to fit into a single byte. The programmer will always have the choice of working in unsigned binary or in two's complement form; if unsigned binary is used, the status of the V bit has no importance. The V bit is also used to indicate the status of

10	033C		*****
20	033C		
30	033C		
40	033C		
50	033C		
60	033C		
70	033C		
80	033C		
90	033C		
100	033C		
110	033C		
120	C5C3		
130	C5C3		
140	C5C3		

150	C5C3	!	*****
160	C5C3	!	*****
170	C5C3	!	*****
180	C5C3	!	*****
190	C5C3	!	*****
200	C5C3	!	*****
210	C5C3	E000	OLD
220	C5C3	F003	CPX 000
230	C5C7	4000FF	BD0 000
240	C5C4	A001	JMP 000
250	C5C0	00	LDR 000
260	C5C0	0120	TRY
270	C5C7	203000	STR 000
280	C5D2	00FF	JSR 000

290	C504	0514	STR 000
300	C5D6	0515	STR 000
310	C5D8	201300	STR 000
320	C518	A002	CLC
330	C50D	10	RDC 000
340	C5DE	050F	STR 000
350	C500	052D	STR 000
360	C5E2	052F	STR 000
370	C5E4	0531	LDR 000
380	C5E6	A000	RDC 000
390	C5E8	0500	STR 000
400	C5E4	052E	STR 000
410	C5E6	0530	STR 000
420	C5E8	0532	STR 000

bit 6 of a data byte when using a special instruction known as the BIT test. It is possible to clear the V bit to zero by the CLV instruction although there is no corresponding instruction to set it to 1.

The B bit

This is set to 1 when a BRE (break) instruction is encountered. It cannot be directly programmed.

The D bit

The 6800A normally uses straightforward binary arithmetic but it is capable of performing arithmetic on the assumption that all data is to be interpreted as BCD (Binary Coded Decimal). To force the use of BCD, the programmer must set the D bit to 1D by the instruction STD (Set Decimal). This state remains until the instruction CLD (Clear Decimal) is used. BCD is not used very often so we will leave the details until a later part of this series.

The I bit

This is called the interrupt mask or the inhibit enable. If this bit is set to 1 by use of SDI (Set Interrupt), all interrupt requests are refused until it is set to zero by CLI (Clear Interrupt). However, there is one special kind of interrupt instruction, NMI (Non Maskable Interrupt), which cannot be inhibited. The subject of interrupt is involved so it would be out of place to deal with it at this stage.

The C bit

This is the Carry bit and is set to 1 when a carry out from the add is detected. Instead of the bit being pushed out at the far end and lost, it is 'caught' and placed in the C bit. At times, the programmer will consider it as the 'next bit'. It can provide a kind of bit-contiguity between one byte and another. This is the essential idea behind multiplication.

work where two or more bytes are used, connected end to end, to hold one number.

The Z bit

This bit is automatically set to 1 if the last instruction gave a zero result. It is easy to interpret this back to front so it is worth emphasizing. If result=0, Z becomes 1. If result is non zero, Z becomes 0. It is used by the branch instructions BNE (Branch if Non Zero) and BEQ (Branch if Equal to Zero).

The stack pointer (SP)

This is an eight-bit register dedicated to the automatic control of a special area in page one of RAM defined as 'The Stack'. It is difficult to describe the action of the stack pointer without describing the stack so we must be content at the moment with the following brief description:

- (1) The contents of SP is interpreted by the micro-processor as the address of the currently vacant location on the stack.
- (2) To ensure that the address is always on page one, rather than page zero, a permanent 1 is hardwired at the most end of SP to act as a ninth bit. If for example, SP contains 0000 0111, which is 007, the address is interpreted as 1 0000 0111 which is 307. That is to say, the address is 007 on page

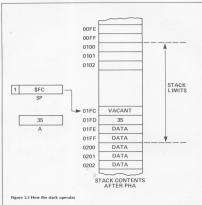


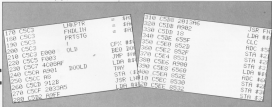
Figure 2.3 How the stack operates

one.

- (3) Special instructions exist for handling the stack, the two main ones being PHA (Push Accumulator) and PLA (Pull Accumulator). PHA will transfer A to the next available location on the stack and **decrements** SP

so that it points to the next available location. PLA operates in the reverse manner. It first **increments** SP so that it points back again to the last valid entry and then pulls the contents of the stack location back to A. It may be evident from

this brief description that data must be pulled back from the stack in **inverse** order. That is to say, the stack operates as a Last In First Out memory. In fact it is known as a LIFO memory stack. Figure 2.3 may help in visualising the stack.



ANIROG



ZAGA

MISSION

This diagonally scrolling maze game features superb 3D graphics brilliant sound effects and requires 100% concentration to successfully manoeuvre your helicopter through unknown hazards in order to complete Zaga Mission and live to play another day — Commodore 64 — £7.95

Also available on Disk at £9.95

TRADE ENQUIRIES: ANIROG SOFTWARE LTD. 28 WEST HILL DARTFORD KENT (0322) 92513-8
MAX ORDER: 8 HIGH STREET HORLEY SURREY 24 HOUR CREDIT CARD SALES HORLEY (02934) 6083
PAYMENT BY CHEQUE P.O. ACCESS/VISA 50p POSTAGE & PACKAGING

STUCK?

Try a Course prescribed by Dr Watson

DR
WATSON
SERIES

BASIC Courses In Space For The Commodore 64 & VIC 20

An exciting course for all children from 7 to 13. Learn BASIC while enjoying this most exciting space adventure. Master the computer to escape the Alien Spaceship.

It combines a story which is compulsive reading for the young reader with a carefully structured approach to BASIC intricately interwoven into the text. Also, each BASIC command covered is given a separate, careful explanation in a special 'easy reference' section in the second half of the book.

The tape includes the programs on the ship's computer, and four computer aided learning (CAL) programs which teach the major BASIC commands.

"It should hold the interest of an under-12 very well."

- Home Computing Weekly



BOOK & TAPE

£9.95

Beginner's BASIC For The Commodore 64

This project-based course guides you step-by-step through BASIC, developing games and utilities using progressively more complex BASIC commands. All the programs developed are provided on tape so that you can get a taste of them first, before working along with the detailed explanations given in the book.

Programs include three video ball games, a character generator utility, a sprite generator utility and a 'compositions' music utility. You also get 'Theory Aid I', a machine-code utility that adds 28 commands to Commodore 64 BASIC allowing easier programming, sound and graphics.



BOOK & TAPE

£10.50

"The Dr Watson series is rapidly becoming recognized as quality material."

"... a well thought out tutorial... if this was the total content of the course, it would prove excellent value. However, there is more... much more."

"... the course consistently encourages you to learn more and more by making learning fun."

"After... manufacturers have been shown how an introductory manual should be written."

- Commodore Computing International

Beginner's Assembly Language Courses For The Commodore 64, VIC 20 And PET

These courses introduce the real beginner to assembly language programming. No prior knowledge of assembly language is assumed and the aim is to ensure that every reader succeeds. Numerous examples illustrate the points while exercises along with solutions test the understanding.

The tape includes an assembler which assembles and disassembles code anywhere in memory. Also on the tape is a binary/BCD/hexadecimal CAL tutor program which teaches about the various mathematical notations used in machine code programming.



BOOK & TAPE

£12.50

"These simple reader oriented tutoring tapes and text together... that there aren't reader steps of learning that your computer does it."

- H&K

"No self-respecting VIC 20 owner interested in programming should miss this instruction set."

"The manual would be worth buying for the reference section alone."

"That's mine!"

- Mick Ross

"I have made more progress in a week than many spend for a year with other books and articles."

"A really super clear book..."

- The VIC 20 Book London One Group

"... this book is worth its weight in gold."

"If there was ever a good beginner's guide to this field, then this is it."

- Commodore Computing International

HONEYFOLD

HONEYFOLD SOFTWARE LTD

51 Sandford House
Bath Place
High Street, Basing
London SW9 1ED



A FREE LIGHTPEN

Yes a **FREE** Light Pen! with every **GRAPHBIT!** Graphbit is the ultimate in drawing, designing or painting! Using the light pen of course, which incidentally has a full 3 year warranty! Graphbit will amongst other things allow you to:

- Draw lines handed on the screen anything from a Micky Mouse to your latest integrated circuit!
- With all the file cabinet and menu facilities of course!
- Save/load your latest master piece to/from the disk/laser drive
- Or directly copy the drawing on the screen to the printer! And keep it for ever or send to a friend on a post card!
- Design your own colourful sprites and characters
- Play the games in the package or use the light pen in your own games/education/programs

GRAPHBIT is available on disk and tape. Tape version is £1500 and disk version (incorporated) is **£19.95**



All you 1942/1941 disk users **DMON** is here at last. Dmon is the disk monitor you have been waiting for it will allow you to:

- read/write blocks directly to the disk
- display and edit blocks on the screen
- display and send disk messages/commands
- transfer your programs from tape to disk or disk to disk or even disk to tape! ■ and more!

DMON comes on DMS at only **£9.95**

Do you use tapes? Are you sick and tired of waiting for your programs to be Loaded/Loaded from the tape? Then you need a **TORNADO!** Tornado allows you to Save/Load/Verify your files/machine code programs faster than a CIM 1941 disk drive does! Due to popular demand! Tornado now comes with new and more powerful commands plus extra instructions to assist you in making fast versions of your existing machine code files/programs. Tornado is available on tape for COM 64 and 80 - V10 20.

Do your Run/Stop and Restore keys often fail? Do you want to come out of those crashes? Or get into those undesirable programs? Then what are you waiting for, get yourself a **BREAKER!** Reset switch and let your computer know who is the Boss! Breaker can be connected to your machine in seconds, no soldering. Insulated with the Breaker is a copy of basic recovery software on tape. Now available for any COM 64 or V10 20.

MAD SUMMER OFFER
A FREE BREAKER WITH
EVERY TORNADO IF YOU
USE THE COUPON BELOW

**BSF CSL, 82 FURNACE DRIVE, CRAWLEY, W SUSSEX
RH10 6JE.**

Please send me Tornado at £9.95 + my
free Breaker

Please send me Breaker at £7.95

Please send me Rom-File at £7.95

Please send me Graphbit at £19.95 (tape)

Please send me Graphbit at £19.95 (disk)

Please send me DMON at £9.95

I enclose cheque/PO worth to the sum of £.....

Name.....Computer.....

Address.....

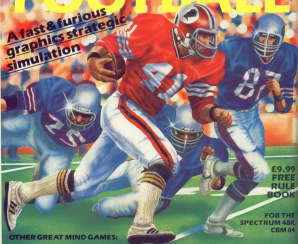
Please use this form and block letters only. All prices are inclusive of p&p (incl order only, add £2 if outside UK). Please post to:

**BSF CSL, 82 FURNACE DRIVE, CRAWLEY, WEST
SUSSEX RH10 6JE.**

MIND GAMES

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

A fast & furious graphics strategic simulation



£9.99
FREE
RULE
BOOK

FOR THE
SPECTRUM 48K.
CBM 64

OTHER GREAT MIND GAMES:



Starring The Overlord of the Universe!
The candidate (you) have to get to the Chamber of Creation. It's a laugh a minute since it's 2,000 years away on the most beautiful planet in the Universe... and your spaceship doesn't work either!



It'll feature adventure starring well known rocky aliens the Gags. Can you play the hero and stop their plans to blow up the earth.



Laser Plus
The Great Game



Starring The Jump After a desperate space battle only one fleet of heroes remain to prevent the invasion of earth. The future of humanity lies with you!

For more titles visit us with your SPECTRUM 48K or CBM 64.
Mind Games, Alpha Press Software Group, Box 7, Gutteridge, Lincolnshire LN11 8JF

In part two of his series on BASIC games programming for VIC 20 users, S.A.L. Phillips gets things under control with PEEKs, POKEs and moving about.

VIC GAMES PROGRAMMING

THIS IS THE SECOND of a five part series of BASIC games programming for the VIC 20. The series is primarily intended for newcomers to games programming, but those might well be a few useful tips for seasoned programmers.

As you will have discovered last month there can be a lot of satisfaction in creating a unique screen design, but it's static, non-interactive, and you could have used paper and pen to achieve the same result! What you are really doing when you design a screen display is to create an arena, whether it's for a space battle, gunfight scenario, or moving a lawn. Let's have a look at getting it all moving.

If you enter listing 1 and run it you will have a screen,

press the keys or move the joystick and the star moves.

The screen can be regarded as a 22 x 23 matrix with the bottom left hand corner being designated 0,0. Characters (CH) and colours (CL) can be POKE'd onto the screen using:

```
POKE P1-H-20*Y,CH
POKE P1-H-20*Y,CL
```

where P1=6564

P2=6564

and all you have to do to put the character anywhere on the screen is to specify X and Y. You also have to rub out it's previous location, which you do simply by POKING a space.

So far so good. All that remains is to get the information from you into the computer. There are lots of ways of doing this — from the keyboard, paddles, joystick, lightpen, microphone (if you have the appropriate add-on) etc. The most widely used methods are the KEYS and JOYSTICK, and I'll start off by describing the two most common methods of Key input.

The first means of input is GET AS. You can see how this works if you add lines 300-308 (listing 2) to the first program. The sequence of events is quite straightforward, but there's a problem. When you press "A" the star moves up the screen. OK that's what we want. Carry on pressing it. Just it! Where's it gone? Now you're in dangerous waters. Fear POKING around in memory locations is best left alone. STOP!!! You'll crash the

```
1 REM KEY INPUT (listing 1)
2
300 GOTO 100-4
340 FOR I=0% TO 120
350 A=
360 KEY=PEEK(P1)
370
380 FOR J=0% TO 100
390 Y=PEEK(P2)
400 Y=PEEK(P2+1)
410 Y=PEEK(P2+2)
420 Y=PEEK(P2+3)
430 Y=PEEK(P2+4)
440 Y=PEEK(P2+5)
450 Y=PEEK(P2+6)
460 Y=PEEK(P2+7)
470 Y=PEEK(P2+8)
480 Y=PEEK(P2+9)
490 Y=PEEK(P2+10)
500 GOTO 100-4
510 NEXT J
520 NEXT I
```

computer! That was an example of bad programming. For it to work I relied on you stopping at the screen boundary. One of the first rules in Games programming is not to rely on the player — they always let you down. Instead, you make it fool proof.

There are two easy ways of doing this. The first is to look at the value of X and Y and if they are outside of your required range, either define the offending co-ordinate to the other end of the screen (wrap around)

```
ie. 10 IF X > 21 THEN X=0
20 IF X < 0 THEN X=21
```

or stop it moving

```
ie. 10 IF X < 0 OR IF
X > 21 THEN X=0
```

If you modify lines 420-430 as shown in listing 3 the star will stay on the screen. You are now in control of the action. Why not have a go at

```
listing 3 1 REM JOYSTICK SCREEN CONTROL
2
300 Y=PEEK(P2+10)
310 Y=PEEK(P2+11)
320 Y=PEEK(P2+12)
330 Y=PEEK(P2+13)
340 Y=PEEK(P2+14)
350 Y=PEEK(P2+15)
360 Y=PEEK(P2+16)
370 Y=PEEK(P2+17)
380 Y=PEEK(P2+18)
390 Y=PEEK(P2+19)
400 Y=PEEK(P2+20)
410 Y=PEEK(P2+21)
420 Y=PEEK(P2+22)
430 Y=PEEK(P2+23)
440 Y=PEEK(P2+24)
450 Y=PEEK(P2+25)
460 Y=PEEK(P2+26)
470 Y=PEEK(P2+27)
480 Y=PEEK(P2+28)
490 Y=PEEK(P2+29)
500 GOTO 100-4
```

modifying it to give the wrap around effect.

The other way round the problem is to get the star to "look" where it's going, by PEEKing the location before moving, and if it's OK carry on, and if not stop dead. This technique is shown by adding lines 400-530 (listing 4) to the first program which will prevent the star moving unless there's a blank space available. This is the better method in general, as it is more flexible, and that PEEK can do far more than keep it

```
listing 4 1 REM PEEK SCREEN CONTROL
2
300 GOTO 100
310 Y=PEEK(P2+10)
320 Y=PEEK(P2+11)
330 Y=PEEK(P2+12)
340 Y=PEEK(P2+13)
350 Y=PEEK(P2+14)
360 Y=PEEK(P2+15)
370 Y=PEEK(P2+16)
380 Y=PEEK(P2+17)
390 Y=PEEK(P2+18)
400 Y=PEEK(P2+19)
410 Y=PEEK(P2+20)
420 Y=PEEK(P2+21)
430 Y=PEEK(P2+22)
440 Y=PEEK(P2+23)
450 Y=PEEK(P2+24)
460 Y=PEEK(P2+25)
470 Y=PEEK(P2+26)
480 Y=PEEK(P2+27)
490 Y=PEEK(P2+28)
500 GOTO 100-4
```

on the screen. You could use it to initiate an explosion, act as a resistor, or replace a frog. PEEKs are pretty useful.

You might have noticed in running these programs that a subtle change has come over the keyboard. All the keys now auto-repeat. This was achieved by POKE6564,128 (line 340). If you want to turn this off POKE6564,0.

Another method of getting input from the

```
listing 1 1 REM JOYSTICK SCREEN CONTROL
2
300 GOTO 100-4
310 Y=PEEK(P2+10)
320 Y=PEEK(P2+11)
330 Y=PEEK(P2+12)
340 Y=PEEK(P2+13)
350 Y=PEEK(P2+14)
360 Y=PEEK(P2+15)
370 Y=PEEK(P2+16)
380 Y=PEEK(P2+17)
390 Y=PEEK(P2+18)
400 Y=PEEK(P2+19)
410 Y=PEEK(P2+20)
420 Y=PEEK(P2+21)
430 Y=PEEK(P2+22)
440 Y=PEEK(P2+23)
450 Y=PEEK(P2+24)
460 Y=PEEK(P2+25)
470 Y=PEEK(P2+26)
480 Y=PEEK(P2+27)
490 Y=PEEK(P2+28)
500 GOTO 100-4
```

surrounded by a boundary, containing a star in the middle. There are two ways of making the star move. Either interactively or under program control. Most games programs contain both elements. Firstly we'll consider moving the star interactively, in other words

keyboard is to FEED(187). This has the same effect in practice as the GETAS statement, but the VIC handles it in a different way and it's faster. If you want to try this method out, you'll need to know the value of FEED(187) for the relevant keys. You can do this by running the short program given in listing 5, for now though, we'll stick to GETAS.

Listing 5

```
1 REM FEED FEED(187)
2
3
4 PRINT "P"
5 REM FEED(187) = FEED(255)
6 REM FEED(187) = FEED(187)
7
8 CONTINUE
```

Getting to grips with the joystick

Now you know how to get input from the keys, the joystick will present no problem. The joystick contains 5 switches, four for movement and one for fire. All you have to do is find out which one is closed, and then continue as for the

keys. There are a number of ways of doing this and one of the easiest is that described in the "Programmer's Reference Guide". I've adapted this for use in our program below (Listing 6, Lines 39-59) initialize the joystick, and the subroutine (lines 1000-1003) reads the values, and updates X and Y accordingly.

It's easy to get characters moving around the screen under program control. Again you use the X,Y co-ordinate idea and update X and Y each time you go round the program loop. A good way of doing this is to use:

```
X=X+DX
Y=Y+DY
```

The type of movement you get depends on the values of DX and DY. These can be continuously re-calculated as the program progresses to give, for example, a projectile Newton's Laws of Motion, or made to change if the object hits something. This is demonstrated in

BOUNCE (Listing 7) where a ball bounces around the screen. OK — boring stuff, but it's the basis of Break Out or Video Tennis, and maybe you could do something with it.

Listing 7

```
1 REM BOUNCE
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
1000
1001
1002
1003
```

Before we get on with the Game — you there's a game in here somewhere — it's worth thinking about using the PRINT statement to move things about. It's a shame that the VIC hasn't got a PRINT AT command, it would make life easier. However, you can use PRINT to move things. Type in and RUN listing 8. A rocket descends. Now, the rocket is made up of 16 characters. Have a go at writing a program which moves these characters on and off the screen. It won't be as good — there are too many characters. You could use this idea for the final stages of a Lunar Lander program. Start off with the rocket descending as a single character, and when it gets near to the ground switch to a magnified version of the rocket controlling the display with PRINT.

The program in Listing 9 is an example. You move a snake around a random, shifting maze, eating hearts. One point per heart, and if 5 hearts are on the screen at any one time the game ends. I've written the game for key (LJK, and L) input, but if you don't like these keys change them. Better still, if you've got a joystick, incorporate that in the program.

Up to now we've moved a single character around the screen, but here we're moving six. Actually we only appear to be moving six. All you have to do to move a snake is to move the head (HD), fill in the space left with a body section (BD), and blank out the tail. This will give you smooth movement, and works well even with quite long snakes. You have to re-define the position of each body section each time you go round the loop, and this is done in lines 300-360. The snake "looks" where it is going, and if it meets itself, the maze, or the boundary, it stops (line 400), and if it meets a heart it eats it and the score (SC) goes up by 1. The number of hearts generated is totalled (TL), and the number of hearts on the screen at any time is given by TL-SC (line 800).

As it stands the game is playable, but in need of improvement. Presentation is important, and it is unity. There should be some instructions, a replay facility, a high score record, and a much nicer screen

Listing 6

```
1 REM JOYSTICK CONTROL
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
1000
1001
1002
1003
```

Listing 8

```
1 REM PRINT MOVE
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
1000
1001
1002
1003
```

Listing 9

```
1 REM SNAKE MOVE
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
1000
1001
1002
1003
```

Let your heart out

Now for the game. In the last article I suggested that you could use a random maze as the basis of a game.

display particularly regarding the scoring. But then it's not finished — have a go and see what you can do with it. While you're at it think about the memory



used. This little program takes up 1000+ bytes. If you can cut this down you'll get an improvement in speed, and have more memory

over for the frills. You can easily get it down to less than 1K by missing out RLEMS, using multiple statement lines, subrou-

ties, DIP FNA's etc. If you can get below 500 bytes you're doing well.

If now you should have come up with a reasonable

game. The only problem is that it's all a bit quiet — where's the sound? I'll go into that in the next article.

Listing 6

```

1  REM SOUND PAUSE
2  :
3  20 200=40-40-20+1-1-2+2+0
28  20 21=31.64+21=28624
304  20 247121
114  2020-40220202020
320  2020-40220
330  202021+0-22021, 240
340  202021+0-22021, 2
350  202021, V
360  202021, V
370  2020-40221 2121 21
380  202021+0-22021, 100
390  202021+0-22021, 2
400  202021, V
410  20-40 21+11+11111+402021+V
420  *
430  2021 2021 2021
440  *
450  202021+0-22021, 100
460  202021+0-22021, 1
470  *
480  2021 2021 2021
490  *
500  2021 2021 2021
510  *
520  2021 2021 2021
530  *
540  2021 2021 2021
550  *
560  2021 2021 2021
570  *
580  2021 2021 2021
590  *
600  2021 2021 2021
610  *
620  2021 2021 2021
630  *
640  2021 2021 2021
650  *
660  2021 2021 2021
670  *
680  2021 2021 2021
690  *
700  2021 2021 2021
710  *
720  2021 2021 2021
730  *
740  2021 2021 2021
750  *
760  2021 2021 2021
770  *
780  2021 2021 2021
790  *
800  2021 2021 2021
810  *
820  2021 2021 2021
830  *
840  2021 2021 2021
850  *
860  2021 2021 2021
870  *
880  2021 2021 2021
890  *
900  2021 2021 2021
910  *
920  2021 2021 2021
930  *
940  2021 2021 2021
950  *
960  2021 2021 2021
970  *
980  2021 2021 2021
990  *
1000 2021 2021 2021

```



Your

Submissions

COMMODORE

YOUR BEST INDEPENDENT COMMODORE MAGAZINE

SO YOU OWN A COMMODORE?

SO YOU'VE WRITTEN SOME PROGRAMS?

SO WHY HAVEN'T YOU SUBMITTED THEM TO US?

Your Commodore is always on the lookout for new material for publication and we know that there are thousands of intelligent, literate, innovative and creative Commodore owners out there, so why don't we get together?

If you have written an exhilarating game or an invaluable utility on your Commodore system, share your talents with us and our readers by submitting your efforts and the form to the address below. All articles should be documented and type-written and should be accompanied by a printout of the program as well as a copy of the program on cassette or disc. All material should be original; if it is not chosen for

publication, it will be returned to you.

You may not have written any software yourself, but you have very firm opinions about the world of Commodore and all their attendant industries and products. Then put your opinions on paper and post them to us, again at the address below — you never know, you might even get paid for airing your views! All submissions should be sent to:

The Editor
Your Commodore
Argus Specialist Publications Limited
No 1 Golden Square
London W1R 3AD

PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Your Name _____

Program Name _____

Computer/memory size it runs on _____

Amount of memory program occupies _____

Other computers/memory size which your program runs on without conversion or use _____

Does your game need or use joystick? Yes No

Have you sent our game to another magazine? Yes No

Is it original or a variation on a theme? _____

Your Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Times to contact you _____



R E M E M B E R ...

the most terrifying film you ever watched.

Soon you'll be in it!

MIND GAMES

SPECTRUM 48K - CBM64



E

In pursuit of
adventure, Pete
Freebry encounters
magic, mystery and
monsters in the
second part of this
series.

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

LAST MONTH WE LOOKED briefly at the original "adventure" program created on mainframe computers and how, as personal computers improved, similar programs became available for the home computer. One of these was Level Nine's "Colossal Adventure" which is closely linked to its original forbear. This is quite large enough — or should we say "colossal" — to keep the ardent computer adventurer going for many days, weeks or even months! Although adventure games may come under many guises, the prime area still seems to come loosely under the banner of "swords and sorcery", a generic title that has seen such a boom over the last decade in the world of the written word — principally in their paperback versions. This type of fantasy adventure, although not to everyone's taste, is very popular and certainly looks like providing as with plenty of varying plots for the foreseeable future.

Some people are unable to relate to this form of "other world": it is just fantastic for them to grasp hold of its fundamental nature. No matter how well the program is written, either from the point of view of technical programming or from a literary standpoint, the basic structure does not turn them on. Without a wholehearted belief in what you are seeing on the screen, total involvement and, from this, total enjoyment cannot be achieved. Fortunately, the subject matter of adventure games is very diverse,



ranging from the loosely historical, detective stories, space/science fiction and even popular TV series! Not all of these are yet available for the Commodore computers but, owing to Commodore's sale success, most should appear in the near future.

Defining an "Adventure Game"

The term "adventure games" covers a multitude of sim. The purist would probably say that they should be a cross between a crossword puzzle, a treasure hunt and a maze, the "crossword puzzle" providing inter-linked clues that enable the player both to find the treasure and, also, assist in mapping the maze. Paper and pencil are necessities to the serious games player

since, in almost every adventure game, it is vital to be able to find your way around without either wasting moves (your help may go out too soon!) or being in danger of, for example, walking into a trap or being transported involuntarily to somewhere else! Mapping an adventure may be done in several different ways and in a future "tale" we will look at this more closely; but, whatever you do, try to ensure that you know where you are and how to get back to where you were!

Early days

A looser interpretation of an adventure game is where you take on the role of adventurer and merely (if) have the freedom of choice in which way to move and

subsequently find "adventure"! Two early examples of this form would be "Halls of Death" (Sugarsoft) and "The Valley" (APG) — both of which are available for the Commodore 64 and the latter for the expanded VIC-20. In each of these programs you move around a mapped area shown on the screen; as you move you may encounter some form of unpleasant monster or an artifact that will increase your fighting abilities either magically or physically. Both have excellent real-time fighting routines that make the palm sweat and the heart beat faster. The Commodore 64 version of "Halls of Death" has a graphics representation of individual battles and "The Valley" gives you the option of choosing one of five character types. Both require a certain amount of



'tactical logic' on the part of the player to determine when to venture into a more difficult level. No puzzles are set and there are no mazes to solve but, as good old 'monster bashing' role playing games, they are still hard to beat. Both have character save facilities so your chosen character may progress in level and expertise over a period of weeks/months. Although both are now a little long in the tooth, they are well worth having on the shelf ready for an adrenalin boost when the nights are long and you want to vent your frustration on some poor unsuspecting monster!

Library adventure

As we pointed out in our last 'tale', the pure text adventure offers the most scope for you and the computer programmer's imagination. On screen graphics take up quite a bit of your computer's valuable memory space (unless continually accessed from disc as will be many offerings in the future) and the graphics have to be good to make up for this limitation. Fortunately, every now and then there is a program that proves us wrong. The first to take up this challenge successfully was probably 'The Hobbit' (Mullins/House, Inc. 1982), originally available for the Sinclair Spectrum and subsequently converted to other machines, one being the Commodore 64. 'The Hobbit' broke new ground on several counts and must rate very highly in any 'adventure stakes'. 'The Hobbit' has a scenario based upon the classic book of the same name by J.R.R. Tolkien and a copy of the book (published by Unwin) comes with the computer program. Reading the book is beneficial, not only to get better acquainted with what the adventure is all about but also because it contains many hints on how you may play the game.

Over 50 scenes from 'The Hobbit' are represented graphically, obviously a great deal of care has gone into their production and

finding new scenes is in itself a pleasure. The program has been written with the player in mind and several points have to be remembered highly. The first concerns the graphics themselves; because these are on occasion quite complex, they may take a few seconds to draw. This is fine the first time you see

shown a picture in all its glory on your first visit to that location, thereafter you only get the text description unless you specify LOOK. Some programs insist on performing a long-winded 'picture draw' on every entry and this can detract from the steady flow of the adventure. There are several examples of such

rather than specify a list of individual items either as TAKE COPE (Return), TAKE SWORD (Return), TAKE FOOD (Return) TAKE KEY (Return), etc or even TAKE COPE AND SWORD AND FOOD AND KEY!

'The Hobbit' also provides a framework that is in itself interacting with your moves and commands. You will find Gandalf the Wizard and Thorin the Dwarf wandering in and out of your story apparently of their own volition. They may even take various objects either lying around or in your (you play Bilbo the Hobbit) possession. Further interaction even allows for you to talk to or issue requests (commands) to these characters — SAY TO THORIN "CARRY ME" is a perfectly acceptable and reasonable command.

Playing 'The Hobbit' can be a fascinating and rewarding experience. Mullins/House have even published a book called 'A Guide to Playing the Hobbit' that will help the frustrated to complete the game (well... perhaps). Even with this book at one's elbow, the attraction of playing is hardly lessened — surely this could be said of a few games!

Whilst on the topic of playing guides or hint sheets, Lovel Hirst have solved this problem in a very sensible and clever manner. Hint sheets may be obtained listing large numbers of, for example, 'things' — look up the 'things' — you are interested in (they are listed alphabetically) and you will find a number; look up this number in the answers and you will be given a useful clue. The answers are 'jumbled up' so that, if you really only want a clue rather than a big 'cheat', it is possible not to spoil your adventure by knowing too much! 'Colonial Adventure' for instance has some 120 'questions' and answers.



there but could become boring and time-consuming if they were drawn on every entry to a particular scene. In 'The Hobbit' you will be

increased playability with 'The Hobbit', one either being the use of ALL or EVERYTHING; it is so much simpler to type TAKE ALL



The Legend of Valhalla

Following the success of 'The Hobbit', Legend Software produced what



has become another classic adventure game — 'Valhalla'. This was very heavily promoted prior to its first appearance as a Spectrum program and appeared to offer an adventure game with animated graphics, with numerous characters who, it was said, could be converted to your taste, who would overhear your conversations and who may or may not be taking independent action on their own or someone else's behalf throughout the game. Once it became available, 'Valhalla' became almost an overnight success. Time passed and finally 'Valhalla' has now been released for the Commodore 64. 'Valhalla' may be viewed in several ways; it may be played as a quest, or looked on as a 'mini-episode' with you as the player interacting as little or as much as you like to try and influence the outcome of the action. As a quest you must search for and obtain six specified items in a specified order.

'Valhalla' takes about eleven minutes to load and, for a good part of that time, you will have the title page to look at: this only shows the name of the company (Legend) and the game

'Valhalla' but it's better than looking at a blank screen — perhaps you should be 'waiting up' on the instructions! Having loaded, you are given the option of loading a previously 'saved' game. Once into your adventure, you may save the game at any point — but you may only load in this data after the initial program load! So to move time back a little (so just before you lost something valuable) will take you about 14 minutes. Left in its own device, 'Valhalla' will have various characters — gods, giants, dwarves, etc. have different shapes to aid identification — appearing within the top two-thirds of the screen; this is the graphics window within which you will see a picture of your location (always looking north). Various items — food, wine, rings, jewels, keys, etc. may be visible and you are at liberty to pick them up, providing another character does not do so first! The lower third of the screen is split into a six line window telling you what is happening and a two line window where you may enter your commands. 'Valhalla' will accept single one letter directions

commands — N,S,E,W — and also move elaborate sentences such as SAGA PUT RING IN CHEST.

Time taken to draw each location is about 10-15 seconds and the time taken to action your commands varies enormously depending on what other actions (yours or those of the computer) are already on the 'stack'. This can be frustrating as you may wish to change a command because a certain character has entered the scene since you entered an, as yet, unactioned command! It can be a little difficult trying to type in what you want to do whilst the action continues on the screen. Monsters attack each other (and you) with instantaneous regularity and whilst they are slugging it out 'on screen' you must patiently wait your turn. They really are an aggressive lot but, although many are killed (including you!) this is only a temporary setback and reincarnation seems to be the order of the day — everyone returning as strong as they were in the first place.

The instruction booklet provides a fairly clear picture of how you may do various things: eat, fight,

move, buy, sell, etc. but, understandably, does not tell you how to achieve very much! 'Valhalla' players seem to fall into two distinct categories — those that absolutely love it and those that think it is a total waste of time. There does seem to be a much greater leaning towards random action interfering with your idea of progress in most adventure games but, in this purely aggravated because you are not learning from your mistakes! I suspect that the 'story-line' is fairly thin but does demand that you walk a narrow (quick) path in the right direction. Deviate far too long and you will be lost in the random factors. Make maps and record what you do: do not get sidetracked too often! It is a pity that you cannot load a saved game at any time. If you forsake the quest, it is an interesting exercise to attempt the alteration of some of the characters' alignments — bad to good (or vice versa). 'Valhalla' is certainly a fascinating adventure and will surely prove to be a classic of its type. It is worth playing it only to find out your alignment — lover or hater! Write in and tell us which you are.



It's easy to complain about advertisements. But which ones?

Every week millions of advertisements appear in print, on posters or in the cinema. Most of them comply with the rules contained in the British Code of Advertising Practice.

But some of them break the rules and warrant your complaints.

If you're not sure about which ones they are, however, drop us a line and we'll send you an abridged copy of the Advertising Code. Then, if an advertisement bothers you, you'll be justified in bothering us. ✓

The Advertising Standards Authority.

If an advertisement is wrong, we're here to put it right.

ASA Ltd, Dept 2 Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN

BrainGames

The tough nuts to crack!



ELECTION TRAIL

For the Commodore 64 Disk £9.95
Cassette £7.95

BRINGGAMES Ampleton Group
Richmond Road Brighton East Sussex BN2 3SL
Tel: Brighton (0273) 608331 Telex: 877470 AMPCOM G
Bringames is a division of Ampleton Micro Systems Limited

BrainGames

The tough nuts to crack!



FAME QUEST

For the Commodore 64 Disk £9.95
Cassette £7.95

BRINGGAMES Ampleton Group
Richmond Road Brighton East Sussex BN2 3SL
Tel: Brighton (0273) 608331 Telex: 877470 AMPCOM G
Bringames is a division of Ampleton Micro Systems Limited

Get in harmony with
Chris Palmer as he
does his musician's
hat and tunes into
MIDI.

MIDI



IT CAN HARDLY BE DENIED that for many people the home computer is a source of entertainment. For most this comes in the form of games, be they arcade, strategy or adventure.

A fact which is often overlooked when people buy their computer is that they are also buying one of the most creative tools mankind has ever built. The main reason for this is that, until recently, both hardware and software manufacturers have themselves overlooked this area, in favour of more 'artificial' pursuits.

In this article I hope to bring to light one development in the computer field which has the potential for revolution equalled only by the Space Invader.

That is, the magic of MIDI.

From Beep to Bach

In the dim, mist-shrouded days B.S. (Baron Sinclair), computers were created silent. In the back rooms of pubs and other secret meeting places,

REVIEWED

groups of users would perform strange rituals to give their computers the power to make noise. Generally, this would involve disassembling transistor radios and wadding their vitals to the computer's user port (not their own, the radio's vitals).

Then, by chanting the dark and secret language of machine-code, they would toggle their outputs to produce a frequency. When heard through the radio speaker, this frequency would sound not totally dissimilar to a musical note.

This caused much celebration in the camp of users and pretty soon they were learning to change the frequency to produce tunes.

At last! The silence had been broken. Very soon the users were producing

programs which would allow them to hear their lay friends silly with laboring single finger renditions of 'Be Be Black Sheep' and the like.

The manufacturers resented the users taking such liberties with their computers and when the threat of invalidated warranties failed to stamp out these arcane practices, the manufacturers decided to act.

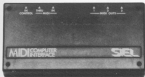
Thus was born the musical computer. At first the computers were monophonic, meaning that only one note could be played at a time. The next was to give the computer multiple voices, thus making crude polyphonic (chords etc) playing possible. Often the computers weren't very accurate in their tuning and the quality of the voices left a lot to be desired.

Recently though, things have been looking a lot better. For instance, the Commodore 64 offers not only a selection of different wave shapes, but better tuning and the ability to set up sound envelopes. With these features it is now possible to make a computer sound quite like other instruments.

On the software side things have improved considerably. No longer is it necessary to code tunes the hard way, using numbers instead of notes and FOR-NEXT loops instead of sets. Most modern day composer programs allow notes to be input in standard musical notation, some even allow the user to use the computer keyboard as a sort of piano keyboard to input the information.

Here lies the problem, and one of the reasons for MIDI.





While computers are the ultimate "back-of-all-Traders", they will always be beaten when confronted by a device actually designed to perform the function.

Just what is MIDI anyway?

For the uninitiated, the phrase MIDI stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface. As with any interface, it is a means of passing information between one location and another.

Taken in its simplest form, MIDI will enable you to plug one keyboard equipped with the interface into another and merely send information backwards and forwards between them. A single set up would be one keyboard "listening" via MIDI to what is being played on the other keyboard. The information being sent from the first keyboard would be a number corresponding to the key being pressed on the keyboard. This would be sent in digital form through MIDI to the other keyboard. When this keyboard receives it, it "plugs" it into its circuits so that the rest of the keyboard thinks one of its own keys has been pressed. All this happens very fast, so that what you end up with is two keyboards playing in unison.

Of course, this is only a small part of the information that can be sent via MIDI.

Anyone familiar with synthesizers will know that on most of them you can create a sound and store it in the synth's internal memory. This is known as a patch. During use, any of these patches can be recalled by pressing one or two buttons on the synthesizer, far better than trying to change the settings on 50 or 60 knobs and sliders.

A MIDI equipped synth will also allow you to send the patch number you are currently using through the interface. So if you are using two or more synths linked together you can change the patch number on one and also have the patches change on all the other synths.

All in all, what MIDI allows you to do in these situations is to duplicate what you are doing on one synth on up to 16 others.

How does it work?

The MIDI system is based around a serial data bus, similar in many ways to our old friend, the RS232. As with all things serial, it's got to happen fast. RS232 operations usually happen at around 19K, that's about 2K of information a second.

The MIDI system can send and receive data at 31.25K. Not surprising when you think that it might be called upon to control sixteen keyboards at once.

Each data "word" consists of ten bits. A start bit which is zero, eight data bits making up the information byte and finally a stop bit set at one. Anyone who has mucked about with defining characters on a Commodore will know all about turning an eight bit binary number into decimal, and vice versa, so I won't go into all of that now.

The format of the MIDI commands is more complex than just a single byte representing the note played. It must also take into account the information for the attack and decay rate of the note and which keyboard the note is to be played on. Also implemented is a system of control codes, which preface the information for patch changes, bends and other control information.

Enter the computer

So far we have looked at computers making music on their own and synthesizers talking to each other. Now comes the interesting part of putting them together.

What a computer is best

at is manipulating data in one form or another. We also now have keyboards pushing data out of their MIDI sockets. The first task is to find a way to intercept this information and route it into the computer.

Luckily this isn't that much of a problem. Since the history of interfacing computers goes back a long way, it wasn't long after the advent of MIDI that the first computer interfaces became available. Because of the Commodore 64's popularity, a large number of these interfaces are for the 64.

Like all pieces of hardware, it is the software which really makes the system perform. But before getting too deeply involved with the soft side of things, it would be best to meditate on the nature of time.

Now before you get too worried I just want to introduce you to a new sort of time, step time. Everything that goes on around us is said to happen in real time. Now, if we could break all the events that happen into handy "bite-size" chunks and have them happen to us when we wanted them to, time would appear to be made up of a series of steps, hence step time.

This is an important concept to hang on to when dealing with synthesizers

and computers as all the programming occurs in either of these two modes.

The simplest piece of computer music software is a step-time sequencer. Every time you press a key on the keyboard the computer will take the information it has received through MIDI and write it into memory. It will then increment a note

together to make up complete songs, or even layer sequences on top of one another to produce bass, rhythm, melody and counter melody. Being MIDI, the different parts of the song can be sent to different keyboards and the patches on the song can be changed as many times as required.

because of the size of the note events, editing is virtually impossible.

To the future

At the moment, the whole field of computers as control devices is very much in its infancy, for the average home user, the thought of spending 1500

than the price of a disc drive or printer.

The other development comes from Casio. Already Casio have firmly planted themselves as the kings of the cheap home keyboard and have done much to make music accessible to everyone.

One of their latest keyboards has a Centronics



connector and all there's waiting for you to press another key. This process is then repeated until you tell the computer to stop recording.

To play back the piece all the computer has to do is reverse the procedure and place the information back out on the MIDI bus at the rate set by an internal metronome.

The disadvantage of this system is that it is very difficult to get any 'feel' to the music. It doesn't matter what dynamics you put into your playing on the keyboard, the computer will just treat the notes back out as you in strict time.

The big advantage of this way of doing things is that it is very easy to edit the piece once it is in the computer. If you have played a wrong note you can step forward through the recording one note at a time until you reach the mistake, if you then switch the computer into 'record' you delete the wrong note and play the right note in its place.

With the more advanced step-time sequencers you can chain sequences

For those who are more at home on the computer keyboard than one of those ones with funny black and white keys, there are some packages which allow you to input the note information in alpha-numeric form.

For those who prefer sitting down at the old 'joanna' then real-time computer recording is for you. This software works in a similar way to the step-time sequencer, except that it remembers every nuance of your playing style.

The way it works is to divide the computer's memory into a lot of very short events. When you set it going the computer runs through these events in real time. Anything which comes down the MIDI bus during this time gets put into the corresponding section of memory.

In playback, the computer plays the information back at the same rate (unless you tell it differently), therefore recreating exactly what you played into it. Once again you can chain passages together or overlay passages. Unfortunately

plus on a synthesiser/interface system requires a lot of interest in the field of computer music. However, a couple of recent developments give some idea of the direction in which things are heading.

Firstly, a large number of the synthesiser and keyboard manufacturers are starting to produce stand-alone MIDI modules, primarily for use in conjunction with other synths. These devices have all the sound production capabilities of a full synth, but without the cost of elaborate controls and a keyboard. This makes them ideal for the computer-based musical enthusiast who wants to explore music and sound, but who doesn't want to pay for a full keyboard-orientated device, most of which he is not going to use. These modules are starting to become available for the cost of a few hundred pounds. Anyone who has observed the way prices of computer hardware have dropped can see that it is only a matter of time before they are available for less

than the price of a disc drive or printer. The other development comes from Casio. Already Casio have firmly planted themselves as the kings of the cheap home keyboard and have done much to make music accessible to everyone. One of their latest keyboards has a Centronics

in the end

The computer has been a great equaliser in everything it has become involved with. The beauty of computer-based music systems is that they can be extremely tolerant to whatever musical level you are at. You no longer need to be able to play an instrument to be able to express your musical thoughts. All there is stopping you now are the limits of your own imagination. But above all HAVE FUN!!!

CALL TO REVIEWERS!

You will probably have read the reviews of software in this issue of Your Commodore, of games and utilities and adventures. What did you think? Did you agree with what was said? Did you strongly disagree?

If you like using or playing with the latest software for your Commodore micro, and you think you can write clearly and wittily, why not see if your talents could earn you some money as well as fame?

If you would like to review software for Your Commodore please fill in the form below and send it, along with a sample review of your favourite program, to the Editor of Your Commodore at the following address:

Your Commodore,
Argus Specialist Publications Limited,
1 Golden Square,
London W1R 3AB.



If we think you've got what it takes to make our team of reviewers, we'll be in touch — you'll get to keep the software that you review and you'll get a small payment for your efforts too!

So don't delay — start writing now!

Name

Address

..... Post code

Telephone number

Commodore micros available

Peripherals available

Particular area of interest

Utility Games

..... Business



Your Commodore's
monthly overview of
the software currently
available for
Commodore users.

THE DALLAS QUEST
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
L.S. Gold-Datasoft Inc.
EM-75
CBM64 + Disc Drive

THE PROBLEM WITH reviewing adventure games is that you have to play it in its entirety (if you are going to be fair) and then not give anything away (or not too much at least). Now, if it is a good game it must have the following qualities to keep the player (adventurer) enthralled. It should, if it is a text adventure, be descriptive and humorous with a strong plot. The same goes for a graphics adventure with the obvious additions.

Some people argue that once you've finished an adventure that's it, the game's over! This is true but with some adventures like the Zork Series, they are very difficult indeed and take a long time to solve. The other question is why pay the prices people ask for adventures when normal games cost maybe half the price! If a lot of thought has gone into it and the planning is meticulous, then it should be worth the money.

The Dallas Quest is maybe one of the best adventure games graphics wise, but first of all let me tell you a little of the plot. You are a world famous detective who has been summoned to South Fork by Sue Ellen. The reason for this is that she would like you to recover a map that describes the whereabouts of a very rich oilwell so that Sue Ellen can become financially independent of L.S.

As far as Sue Ellen knows, the map is in the safe keeping of Jack Twigg's old friend "Chugalug Jones". Now this character is in South America running a

SOFTWARE



SPOTLIGHT

trading post and will only give the map up to the person who has the ring which Sue Ellen also gives you along with the photograph of "Chugalug Jones". Right now, you understand the plot it's nearly as good as the television programme!

As with most new adventures on the CBM 64 that I have seen they all have some degree of humour built in. For example, on Dallas Quest there are two very obvious jokes. One is to do with the oil (no clues) and the other is when you get to a Carnival Village, it says something about a lot of courage and you mistakenly hear him say feet of courage and start to dance. In this animation, three sprites of dancing girls are used.

This conveniently leads to the graphics and I must say that a great deal of thought has gone into it. Each movement leads to a one high resolution screen and I must confess that, as the game came close to it's conclusion, the screens got even better! The pictures of things like a giant statue of "Chugalug Jones" or the



"Airport" were very good indeed. The only disadvantage in having such high quality screens is they take a long time to be reproduced. Yet again, thought has been wisely used because the writer has put in the facility to switch off the screens so as to save time and enable you to get to the point where you got killed last time!

Now if you have played adventures before and wished you could save up to where you're about to try something dangerous, then this is the Risk/Race of games in enabling that

facility. In fact this program allows you to save 9 different games before you have to re-use or update a copy. When I played it, it was used to the full. Along with this feature you are given the chance to use 9 clues; you don't have to but you can if need be.

You will notice that throughout this review I have not mentioned music, the reason being that there isn't much use of S.U.D. chip at all and unfortunately what little there is does not score very highly with me.

So, finally having got through without dropping too many hints in this review, I must reach my conclusion. It is one of the best games out on the CBM 64; it shows that the 64's graphic capabilities are equal, if not better, than it's competitors and also shows that the software available on this machine is of a very high quality and gives credit to the programmers, along with Commodore.

And, if all else fails, there will be someone to listen to your strangled cries of anguish and maybe even help you!

S.L.P.

AZTEC CHALLENGE

 Coresl — AudioLogic
 £19.95 (paper) £19.95 (disc)
 CB404 + joystick (Cassette
 and Disc Based)

ATTRACTIVELY PACKAGED, Aztec Challenge comes from the same author who wrote Forbidden Forest. Previously written for the Atari, the successful change from one machine to the other has been achieved. As with

**FORBIDDEN FOREST**

 Coresl — AudioLogic
 £19.95 (paper) £19.95 (disc)
 CB404 + joystick (Cassette
 and Disc Based)

ANOTHER CLASSIC FROM Paul Norman, this has to be among my top five favourites, along with his Aztec Challenge. Although the graphics aren't totally first class (but very close to

'Forbidden Forest' a high standard of graphics and sound have been maintained throughout the game.

The game opens with the Coresl logo which changes into an Aztec god's face. Then you have the option of either a one player or two player game. Once selected, the screen displays the scoreboard and then, after pressing the fire button, goes into screen 1.

In the seven screens that follow you have to duck and jump across on the way to the temple. Dodge the blocks of stone which roll down the temple steps on level 2. On level 3, when you've got into the temple,



you have to run through the various rooms, each of which have nasty traps to be negotiated. Once through

that you meet the villain that infers the temple; if you touch them for more than a second the venom which covers them will kill you.

Having escaped the creature, you encounter a room with booby trapped tiles, a piranha infested lake and finally on level 7 the bridge which has some of the slats missing. Once you have completed these minor tasks, you return to the beginning and start again, only the game becomes a little harder. This is definitely one of the best games around and I recommend it to any budding athlete.

S.L.F.P.

to) the game itself is amazing. The game story line is as follows. Apparently while walking one day you arrive into what looks like a normal forest. This is a mistake because it is a forbidden forest.

In this 7 level game, you encounter more evil monsters than you would do visiting the Monsters' house! The game opens with you, bow and arrow in hand, ready to meet the giant spiders. Once these monsters have been

dispatched you encounter more grisly creatures including Gaea, Frogs, Dragons and then the Phantom.

It is worth pointing out on this level that the Phantom also has skeletons with it. The skeletons keep on coming until you shoot the Phantom in the hood and when you do hit him he disintegrates before your eyes. Now you meet the snake and finally our hero gets to grips with the Demogogon himself.

To make things a bit more difficult, while you're being fought these lovable creatures, it has been getting darker! The Demogogon is a difficult creature to shoot. The only time you get a chance to take a pot shot is when the lightning strikes, lighting up the sky. If you don't hit him (which is likely) well...

A superb game with a good music piece and an addictive original idea.

S.L.F.P.

Slinky

 AudioLogic — Coresl
 £19.95 (paper) £19.95 (disc)
 CB404 + joystick (Cassette
 and disc Based)

THIS GAME COMES FROM the same people who produced high quality packages like Forbidden Forest and Aztec Challenge. So, folks, they've done it again with Slinky. This game is a good quality reproduction of 'Q*BERT', but they have had the foresight to put a few enhancements into the game.

As usual with AudioLogic/Coresl games the graphics are very good. The use of spaces in this game is to the full and, in parts, very clever. The animators of Slinky (a spring jumping from one cube to another) is superb! Anyway, the actual game involves jumping on all the cubes and changing the colour. To stop you are various characters, some of which can be useful at times and dangerous at others. For example, 'Ralph the Random Rainbow' can make you wet and you can then jump faster. However, if you are wet and 'Dusty the



Elf' touches you, you've had it!

There are various other characters in this game such as magnets and a metal head which appear from time to time. There are a couple of drawbacks with this game though: the scoring system which is a little too complex and, also, the fact that you can't select a level to start on.

There is one last addition that makes it worth playing: when you complete a screen without losing a life, a little character runs across the bottom and then shows you an action replay of how you completed it!

S.L.F.P.

OXFORD PASCAL
 ★ ★ ★ ★
 Oxford Computer Systems
 (Software) Ltd.
 Approx £29.99 disc (untested)
 £15.99 Tape
 CBM 64

THE GREAT PRICE difference between the tape and disc version appears to be due to the fact that the disc version can run compiled programs indepen-

dent of the compiled program. This version claims to be a full implementation of Pascal and, from the time I have spent with it, this would seem to be true. This version also has extra commands to enable effective programming of sound and graphics. I enjoyed using them and it does indeed simplify things. The documentation is very good and there is even an errata sheet in the manual

which corrects spelling mistakes. This would indicate that a lot of thought has gone into the preparation and presentation of the program and manual. Once one knows a language it is difficult to imagine how good a manual is at teaching a complete novice. I think that although it is clear and concise with good demonstrations a true beginner would need some extra books in order to fully

benefit from what Pascal is capable of. Essentially, Pascal is intended for data handling and, like BASIC, it is a high level language. It would be wise to consider your reasons for wanting to learn Pascal as approx 50/50 is no mean amount to pay for software which may prove to be unnecessary. To sum up then if it is Pascal that you want then this would not be a bad buy.

D.A.C.



KICK-OFF ★ ★ ★ ★
 Bubblebus
 £6.99
 CBM 64: 1 or 2 Joysticks (or keyboard) (Cassette Board)

NOW HOW CAN BUBBLEBUS get it wrong sometimes and then come up with ones like this which are absolute winners! Never mind, but seriously now this is good. Bubblebus have taken the original table football and put it on a computer. The game that I refer to is the one with handles at the side which you twist furiously trying to score goals against the opposition!

The way it is played is by using either one or two joysticks depending on whether you play a friend or the computer. I don't like the one player game because I always lose against the computer (same old story), but two players and you've got the World Cup! The graphics are very good on this game as you can move your players from side to side and even watch them twist as you kick the ball.



The joystick operation is quite difficult at first but, once mastered, it can become quite fun.

The game is played over 8 balls and half-time is after the fourth ball, at which point you change ends. The ball speed can also be changed to suit expertise. It's worth the money and I hope that they will produce more old pub-games in the future.

★ ★ ★ ★ S.L.P.

BEAMRIDER
 ★ ★ ★ ★
 Activision
 £9.99
 CBM64

EVERY NOW AND AGAIN a really good, wholesome arcade rapping game comes along to completely restore your faith in programmers. Beamrider is just such a game. Operating in three dimensional perspective, the object of the game is to clear the minefield shield that surrounds the earth by destroying the enemy saucers and sector sentries. But at what stage you actually clear the shield is beyond me. The designer sends greetings from sector 28 but to what extent this is prowess or optimism I can't tell. Me, well I managed sector 14 with a fair degree of difficulty. The difficulty was in mastering the single

beam equipment of my gunship that the game so obviously requires. Points are awarded for all enemy craft shot down and each sector is cleared once 55 more saucers have been blasted. As every sector is cleared, the sector sentry passes across the beam at the top of the screen but this can only be destroyed by using special bombs of which you have three. As it begins its approach it is immediately protected by special green blocker ships which home in on the beam you occupy. Each sector has several rejuvenators which, if caught, give you extra lives with which to fight the enemy.

K.M.

DECATHLON

★★★★
Action/Adventure
\$12.95
CBM 64

IT'S ANOTHER ARCADE winner from Activision aimed at all those frustrated athletes with a hankering for the Daley Thompsons, featuring all ten events of the real Decathlon - 100, 400 and 1500 metre races, long jump, high jump, pole vault, javelin, discs, shot put and 110 metre hurdles - this game gives you the opportunity to compete for the supreme accolade of the world's greatest competitor. Although the game can be played against the computer, it is best played against a friend in order to introduce a true and necessary competitive

element into the proceedings. Just as in the proper event, points are awarded depending on the distance thrown, the height jumped or the speed with which a race is run. The graphic representations of each event are nothing short of superb and coupled with a crowd that gives you a standing ovation when you break the 1000 point barrier, it all goes to make a game that is difficult not to enjoy although may seem a little too tedious at first. But be warned, it is extremely hard on the joystick. Running and approach speeds are achieved by furiously knocking the joystick from side to side. Even if your joystick doesn't give out at some stage, your wrist is bound to be straggling long before the final 1500 metre slog.

K. M.

PESKY PAINTER

★★★★
Super Soft
\$6.95
CBM64 + joystick (optional)
(Cartridge Based)

THIS IS A VERY GOOD version of a very good arcade game. Pesky Painter is a new version of a game called Arkelar. Originally an arcade machine game when produced for the Atari VCS machine, finally it has come to the Commodore.

For those who aren't familiar with the game, a description is in order. Peter the Painter has to clean the spots of dirt off the palace walls but Peter is, unfortunately, lazy. The king of the palace tells his servants to keep an eye on him and if Peter stops for a brief moment he gets thrown out.

Once the Palace is clean,

Peter has to feed the king's pet. To accomplish this, you have to choose the right route through the maze (I won't say how!) and when the pet is released it will go the route you have chosen.

The next screen is similar to the first, except that you now have to paint the walls. The way Peter does this is to run round the outside of each square. When the square is completely cut off from the rest by paint it fills in and you get the points inside that square. There is also an incentive, in the form of the following; if you fill in the four corner squares you get the chance to catch the guards carrying more paint.

Good graphics have been used on this game along with a single catchy base line, which is now in my head!

S.L.F.P.



MANIAC FREDDIE

★★★★
Action/Adventure
\$12.95
CBM 64 + joystick
(Based)

WHEN THE PROGRAM IS first loaded the screen displays the top ten high scores table along with the credits, and credit is definitely due to the two gentlemen who designed

this game.

It says on the package 'Maniac Freddie' - "A game with a sense of humour", and I would agree with that statement. The game has an ongoing music track which has some old rock classics, such as Queen's 'A crazy little thing called love' and E.L.O.'s 'Don't bring me down'; it also includes a little of ragtime as well.

The game itself seems simple enough to start with but it isn't so; Maniac Freddie has to collect all the gold on the screen but he has to avoid the Greenblies who own the gold. To accomplish this task Freddie has to run up and down through poles (he works as a telephone engineer) on the various levels of the screen.

When two screens have

been completed, a brief interlude of a cartoon sequence with the aforementioned E.L.O. music is completed leading you into the next two screens. I don't describe what happens in these cartoons but if you get a chance to see it, it's well worth it.

A stunning graphics and music game worth playing.

S.L.F.P.

SOFTWARE

SPOTLIGHT

Widows Revenge

COMMODORE 64



WESTMINSTER

Mr Chip Software
ELM
CBM64

COULD THERE BE A Liberal revival? Might Kinnock slip on another scouse banana skin? And could Maggie be forced to eat her pebbles of wisdom?

As a game of strategy Westminster has it all, even an independent party to occasionally upset the apple cart. Accommodating up to four players each of whom takes charge of one of the political parties, Westminster has the feel of a computer board game about it. The object of the game is simply to win the General Election which is achieved by canvassing the 60 constituencies and spending the campaign

funds allotted to you by Central Party Office as wisely as possible on the campaign trail. Battle commences with 50000 stashed away in your coffers for which every 1000 spent in a constituency can be expected to gain you between 55 and 105 votes. A personal appearance in a constituency will automatically gain you between 475 and 525. Seats are only considered to be safe once you have a lead of at least 1000 votes over your rival. Additional funds from Central Party Office are allotted every half and full constituency circuit completed. All campaign funds should be used wisely with each player ideally back at the end of the number of canvassing rounds chosen at the

beginning of the game. Apart from the 60 main constituencies there are 15 random outcome boxes which can gain or lose you funds and votes or enable you to visit a marginal constituency or any of the 60. Every ten rounds of canvassing an opinion poll forecasts the result of the election. However, come the day of reckoning each party can gain or lose up to 500 floating votes which can throw the polls out completely if a lot of the votes are marginal. Although almost entirely a textual game with the minimum of graphical representations, Westminster is an enjoyable game of strategy which brings out the better elements of political rivalry requiring a tactical understanding that is relatively simple to master. E.M.

COMMODORE 64
Westminster



WIDOWS REVENGE

Buddiebus
ELM
CBM64 - joystick (Cassette Based)

THIS IS, YET AGAIN, another Centipede game and it is from the same company who released Exterminator for the M, which is again a Centipede Clone. Widows Revenge is, however, different in some aspects in that the Centipede is now a large amount of spiders and these Spiders shoot back!

In all fairness to the programmer, the game is very good. It does have an additive quality and the graphics are of a respectable level, but I really do think that Bubblebus should have released either Exterminator or Widows, Revenge, not both.

The game itself is about a bird which lays eggs. Now, if one of these roaming spiders hits the egg it stops and shoots at you. The main object of the game, therefore, is to eliminate the spiders and stop them the bird (which will return to the screen after a short period of time). To gain points in this game you have to shoot the eggs and shoot the spiders, birds and anything else that comes along.

S.L.P.

OLYMPIC SKIER

★ ★ ★
Air Chip Software
ELM
CBMII

SO, YOU HAVE ASPIRATIONS of becoming an Olympic Skier. Well this game has all the necessary elements — slalom, downhill and ski-jump — yet, unfortunately, remains fairly unimpressive. Your objective is to achieve a



maximum score of 1000 points spread over the three events. The first event which carries a four thousand point maximum score is the slalom. Here you have to ski the course paralleling left and right to take in the gates. For each gate taken in points are scored and there is a margin for error of three gates. Miss three and you are immediately disqualified. After the slalom comes the ski-jump. Accelerating down the ramp you must take off at the end and land on you skis without tumbling over in order not

to have your score penalised. You are in complete control of the skiers acceleration, take off and landing. The downhill carries the biggest maximum score of 500 points. Here you have to ski down a special course avoiding the trees and jumping over all obstacles that get in your way. At the end of it all and, doubtless without completing a course properly, you will emerge with a pretty lousy score with the game programmed to add insult to injury.

R.M.

MACHINE CODE TUTOR

★ ★ ★
New Generation Software
ELM
CBMII

TWO TAPES AND A manual make up this package, with a different program on each side. The manual is not a nice thing at all, it looks as if it has been thrown together on a 40 column printer and pushed between a glass cover. The information given in the manual is scant but what is there is accurate. I feel another book would be required by the beginner in order to fully explain what is going on. A review is a very personal thing and something that is enjoyed by one person may be hated by another. To me, the programs were excellent. I

enjoyed the very original teaching method and the ability to step through a list of instructions with an explanation of what each was doing was really very good. It is easy to go back to little bits that you did not quite understand and just as easy to go forward if you come across things you already know. This is the first machine code tutor that I have come across that really uses the machine as a teaching aid. My only criticism of the program is that at times the choice of colour makes some parts of the program hard to read but that is all, it will not teach you machine code in just a few hours but with perseverance it should prove an invaluable aid in teaching some of the finer points of writing in machine code.

D.A.C.

HUSTLER

★ ★ ★
Bubblebus
ELM
CBMII - Japanese (optional)
(Cassette Based)



THIS IS A GOOD GAME for pool enthusiasts or for people who just want to potter about on the pool table. In this particular package you get six games for the price of one. Games which include three one player games and three two player games.

I must confess that I am not a very good pool player and can never get the balls in the pockets (except the white), so when I started to play it was with reserved feelings. My feelings were magnified further with the presentation and the graphics in this game. But the actual game content made up for this.

Obviously a lot of thought has gone into the various games contained in this program with selections such as — put any ball in any pocket being easy to cope with or at the other end of the scale — put each ball in its own pocket. To make things easier, at the bottom of the screen there is a potting strength meter and the cue is represented by a cross which you line-up with the shot you have in mind.

S.L.F.P.

PIRAT

★ ★ ★
Action
ELM
CBMII

COULD THIS BE THE OLD Atari game converted for the 64, you may ask? The answer is yes and it is a little surprising how sedentary it now appears. However it is now finally beginning to



show its age.

The object of the game is to guide Pirat Harry through the jungle to find and collect 52 pieces of treasure including diamond rings, money bags and gold and silver bars. All this has to be done within a 20 minute time limit. Harry actually starts the game with 2000 points tucked under his belt. Every time he falls down one of the holes hidden in the jungle he loses 100 points and, similarly, every time he gets run over by one of the man-eating logs. He also starts the game with 3 lives but there are several ways that he can lose them as well. Scorpions and cobras have to be avoided at all costs as do the crocodiles, although Harry is agile enough to jump on their heads when their mouths are shut. There are also the wasps, tar pits and quiksoads to avoid although hardly placed swinging vines can provide the necessary escape route. To find the treasure, Harry has to use the underground passages as well as the jungle...but rather you than me mate because I just found the whole thing a bit too damn silly.

K.M.

PEGASIS

★ ★ ★
 Asablogenic
 (ECL-9)
 CBM64 + joystick (Disc
 Based)

IN THIS GAME FROM Asablogenic we are taken back in time to the days of myths and magic. The particular myth we are

concerned about is that of Pegasus the winged horse.

As always in these trouble times there are the good guys and the bad guys. You are, of course, the good guy in white and the bad guys are in black. The idea of this game is to knock the bad Pegasus riders from their mounts without being knocked off yourself. To make life a little more

difficult, if you hit the riders from underneath you fall off. The other drawback is that you will usually be outnumbered 2 to 1 or, as you progress through the levels, 3 to 1 or 4 to 1.

This game can be played with one or two players so team work or strategy should be planned carefully. Back to the game and, as the levels increase, there

will be extra hazards to overcome. For example, on level 3 you meet a dragon and on level 9 you meet a bizzard.

The game is quite good with excellent graphics. The sprites being used are very detailed and the wings of the horse flap with the movement of the joystick. S.L.F.P.

SOFTWARE SPOTLIGHT



BUMPING BUGGIES

★ ★ ★
 Bubblebus
 (ECL-9)
 CBM64 + joystick (Cartridge
 Based)

THIS IS A RACE GAME with a difference and the difference is that it is difficult. The idea of the game is to get as far as possible in the twenty levels while collecting as many points as possible.

The collection of points can be done in many ways. First, just by driving you accumulate points as long as you don't crash. Then the other ways are as follows: you collect points by bumping or crashing your fellow drivers' cars or by only bumping them on the particular level you are on.

The level you are on also dictates which obstacles you have to overcome, from relatively simple levels at the beginning to totally insane levels later on in the game. Some obstacles I encountered, like the road



stopping and having to jump from one island to another to reach the other side, proved too much for my fingers and joystick!

The graphics aren't the best in the world but it is still quite addictive.

S.L.F.P.



FLYING FEATHERS

★ ★ ★
 Bubblebus
 (ECL-9)
 CBM64 + joystick (optional)
 (Cartridge Based)

IN RELEASING FLYING FEATHERS I think someone has dropped an egg! It isn't the best game I have seen and even though it is an original or relatively original idea, it lacks the all important 'pizz', that extra something that makes it a game worth remembering.

The idea of Flying Feathers' is to stop the marauding eagles, from taking all your fish, by being the gamekeeper instead it's your job to shoot the eagles (no wonder they

are endangered!) and save the fish. Occasionally a duck will quack its way across the bottom of the screen. This signifies that you have been awarded an extra fish due to your increasing score.

Happens that a lot more could and should have been done with this program as the graphics aren't exactly superb and it is a very slow starting game. I must confess that I left more sorry for the poor eagles than I did for the blood thirsty gamekeeper.

This game has eight levels of play with levels 4-8 allowing you to shoot as far or as close as you wish. This offering from Bubblebus is definitely not for the animal liberationist!

S.L.F.P.



SYSTEM 15000

★ ★ ★ ★
 Cough Communications
 (RLE)
 CBM64 (Cassette or Disc)

THERE HAS BEEN SOME misconception in the general software market that the above title was a utility. Far from it, it is in fact a game. The basis behind the game is that a friend's computer has been ripped off by Rasko, another large company which has been infiltrated by organized crime. It's your job, by using System 15000, to retrieve \$1,500,000 dollars and return it to your friend's

bank account.

How do you do that? Well, with the aid of this System 15000 which is a telephone modem package (not a real one!) you phone various computers and gain access to special data. The real fun is when you find that the only help you have to start with is a telephone number of a Police-technic and the password for a Computer.

Two points to remember about this game is that it is very original and it's very frustrating! There are a couple of disadvantages, the first being that there

aren't enough instructions, after all not everyone knows how to operate a modem. The other is, while playing this game, there are certain times, when the police are checking the modem link and you have to go offline for a long time, a little excessive perhaps!

I recommend you play this game if you can. It could become a cult game in years to come and listen to the dialing tones as they are relevant to whichever country you are calling at that time (talk about details)

S.L.P.P.

BOZO'S NIGHT OUT

★ ★
 Target Software
 CBM64

IT IS YOUR TASK TO SEE Bozo safely home from the boozery where he has been swilling pints and pints of wobbly juice providing, that is, that you want to. There are two ways you can guide him home — the long way and via the short cut. The long way home is also the obvious way, along the road and Bozo's home can be reached either by turning left or right out of the boozery. The road is full of temptingly pretty girls desperate to stop Bozo from making it to his destination and menacing grannies and angry-happy policemen. Bumping into any of these



JACKPOT

★
 Mr Chip Software
 (LBM)
 CBM 64

DO REALLY ENJOY THIS game you have to be a complete fruit machine fanatic and, quite frankly, I can't believe that anyone who is that kind of fanatic is likely to be messing around with computers. In short,

Jackpot is a demo of a computer game. But still, if cherries, lemons and plums be the food of addiction then play on. To win the game you have to turn your £100 stake money into £250. Each spin of the four wheels costs a mere £1. Wins can be achieved two ways, either by lining up successful fruit lines or by the numerical value of the win line exceeding six in which case

you are entitled to one or more shuffle wins. A hold facility enables winning lines to be more easily achieved and a gamble feature enables winning lines to collect anything between £1 and £100 depending on your nerve. In a nutshell, that is it. The verdict... well it has to be purely for the fruit and nuzzies among you.

E.A.

people can result in the loss of his reserve pints of wobbly juice. Losing all five spare pints will lose Bozo the game. Alternatively, there is the short cut through Weirido Park where there are some far more unpleasant obstacles to avoid. Hiding behind the vegetation has its advantages here. Once home, you can either end the game or simply start all over again with Bozo tanked up with more wobbly juice with the object of reaching the highest score in the infamous League of Intebriates. Bozo's Night Out, I have to admit, may not be an entirely captivating game as it tends to be repetitive almost to the point of being somewhat boring but it does have some very good graphics which the makers claim to be in 3D. But these graphics alone do not make a game, so on this front Bozo does not rate much more than the joker. It is meant to be. E.A.

ELIMINATOR

★ ★
 Bubblebus
 (LBM)
 CBM64 + joystick
 (Optional)(Cassette Based)

THERE IS AN EXCITING cover on the front of this software package depicting a space age man shooting a giant worm! But when you put two and two together you've got an old idea in a new package.

It must be said that the version of Centipede which I have on my computer by

Bubblebus is quite well written. It contains extensive use of graphics in the form of games with the inclusion of such creepy-crawlies as mosquitoes, scorpions and tarantulas and even an eagle just as much a creepy-crawly but with a hazard (not the same). The sound was also extensively used, maybe a little too much but the programmer has added the facility to switch off the effects.

Also included is a pause button, just in case the

phone rings while you are playing for that most important high score. The high score is displayed at the top of the screen throughout the game. If you pass the high score when you finish the game, you can type your name in and lane it yours at last.

Even though it is a copy of Centipede and that game is well known there seem to be the latest essential instructions. But every good game has to have an Achilles Heel!

S.L.P.P.

Get the thrills of the
 race track in your own
 living room with
 Simon Fong's great
 Grand Prix program.

THIS GAME IS A GRAND Prix simulation with a different twist. Being totally confident of your driving ability, you have anticipated your win in advance and celebrated before the race! As a result, you are drunk (with alcohol, not success!) and you end up driving the wrong race in the wrong direction!

You have to try to dodge other racing cars coming towards you and also avoid oil slicks on the track. At the same time, if your coordination can stand it, you must try not to crash your car into the side of the road. Your task is to complete fifteen laps unscathed. The controls are: Z — left, M — right.

Don't forget, you are only allowed three crashes, so get out there behind the wheel and drive the race of your life!

FORMULA ONE



USER EXPLANATION

INITIALIZE SPRITE	0 - 9
PRINT LINE OF TRACK ETC	10 - 54
GET KEY PRESSED	100
MOVE CARS	110 - 130
SOMETHING IN BOARD	140
CRASH ELSE NEXT LINE	150 - 240
CRASH SPIN OUT	500 - 580
THREE CRASHES!	1000
END,ELSE START AGAIN	1000 - 1010
DATA	9000 - 9120

LEGEND

SP = SPEED	SP
LA = NO. OF LAPS	LA
OS = OBSTACLE (OTHER)	OS
C = OBSTACLE (CAR)	C
SK = SKILL LEVEL	SK
P = POSITION OF OBSTACLE	P
L = NO. OF CRASHES	L
X = YOUR POSITION	X



Program Listing

```

1  M=0:4070 M1=0:4070 L1=0:4070 M1=0:4070 P0=0:4070, 00
2  M=0:4070 M1=0:4070 L1=0:4070 M1=0:4070
3  M=0:4070 M1=0:4070 L1=0:4070 M1=0:4070
4  M=0:4070 P0=0:4070 M=0:4070 M1=0:4070
5  PRINT "M"
6  PRINT "M1"
7  PRINT "L1"
8  PRINT "M1"
9  PRINT "M1"
10 PRINT "M1"
11 PRINT "M1"
12 PRINT "M1"
13 PRINT "M1"
14 PRINT "M1"
15 PRINT "M1"
16 PRINT "M1"
17 PRINT "M1"
18 PRINT "M1"
19 PRINT "M1"
20 PRINT "M1"
21 PRINT "M1"
22 PRINT "M1"
23 PRINT "M1"
24 PRINT "M1"
25 PRINT "M1"
26 PRINT "M1"
27 PRINT "M1"
28 PRINT "M1"
29 PRINT "M1"
30 PRINT "M1"
31 PRINT "M1"
32 PRINT "M1"
33 PRINT "M1"
34 PRINT "M1"
35 PRINT "M1"
36 PRINT "M1"
37 PRINT "M1"
38 PRINT "M1"
39 PRINT "M1"
40 PRINT "M1"
41 PRINT "M1"
42 PRINT "M1"
43 PRINT "M1"
44 PRINT "M1"
45 PRINT "M1"
46 PRINT "M1"
47 PRINT "M1"
48 PRINT "M1"
49 PRINT "M1"
50 PRINT "M1"
51 PRINT "M1"
52 PRINT "M1"
53 PRINT "M1"
54 PRINT "M1"
55 PRINT "M1"
56 PRINT "M1"
57 PRINT "M1"
58 PRINT "M1"
59 PRINT "M1"
60 PRINT "M1"
61 PRINT "M1"
62 PRINT "M1"
63 PRINT "M1"
64 PRINT "M1"
65 PRINT "M1"
66 PRINT "M1"
67 PRINT "M1"
68 PRINT "M1"
69 PRINT "M1"
70 PRINT "M1"
71 PRINT "M1"
72 PRINT "M1"
73 PRINT "M1"
74 PRINT "M1"
75 PRINT "M1"
76 PRINT "M1"
77 PRINT "M1"
78 PRINT "M1"
79 PRINT "M1"
80 PRINT "M1"
81 PRINT "M1"
82 PRINT "M1"
83 PRINT "M1"
84 PRINT "M1"
85 PRINT "M1"
86 PRINT "M1"
87 PRINT "M1"
88 PRINT "M1"
89 PRINT "M1"
90 PRINT "M1"
91 PRINT "M1"
92 PRINT "M1"
93 PRINT "M1"
94 PRINT "M1"
95 PRINT "M1"
96 PRINT "M1"
97 PRINT "M1"
98 PRINT "M1"
99 PRINT "M1"
100 PRINT "M1"

```

**This month's look at
the books which
should be filling every
self-respecting
Commodore user's
shelves.**

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Book Title:
Data Handling on the
Commodore 64 Made
Easy
Author:
James Gatenby
Publisher:
Granada
Price:
£5.95

Mr. Gatenby's book appears to be yet another introduction to the BASIC programming language, this time under the guise of introducing the reader to the world of data processing. It starts by allaying the reader's fears that any knowledge of mathematics is needed to write data handling programs and promises that, with this book to guide you, you will be able to design programs to store large amounts of data, display the data on the screen in an attractive and readable way, search the data for particular items and print out the relevant information and sort, update and amend the data, all at a speed to make manual systems redundant.

The book introduces the reader to the most basic tenets of computing; terms such as 'programs', 'microchips', 'cursor' or program commands such as 'LOAD', for example, are explained. The greater part of the rest of the book seems to be devoted to teaching the reader BASIC in conjunction with using BASIC to create data handling programs such as a telephone directory program, one of the examples given by Mr. Gatenby. The latter chapters cover the areas of programming more relevant to data processing such



as searching, sorting, modules, menus and file handling. The book concludes by advising the reader on how to extend his system by adding to it peripherals such as a disc drive or printer.

To conclude, this book is a clear, concise introduction to the world of

processing data to produce useful information. However, I think it is tailored really for the novice programmer; anybody with a relatively sound knowledge of BASIC who wants to explore the Commodore 64's data handling capabilities should turn to the latter chapters of the book.

Book Title:
The Last VIC-20 Book in
the World
Author:
Tony Noble
Publisher:
Sigma Technical Press
Price:
£5.95

TO MANY CHILDREN (and adults, too) the words 'learning' and 'fun' aren't usually synonymous. Mr Noble sets out to crush this idea with his book which claims to make education fun by allowing his readers to learn through game-type situations. Children may learn in their own time, unpressurised by the classroom atmosphere.

The games cover such diverse aspects as arithmetic, algebra, spelling, geography and French. Titles such as Galactic Adventure and Nessie the Loch Ness Monster may deceive the reader into thinking this book is jam-packed with run-of-the-mill computer games but, behind a facade of space ships and monsters, the reader is encouraged to improve his geometry or logical thinking. Other games included are 70 Green Bottles (to test your algebra), Word-Find (to improve your vocabulary, spelling and letter manipulation) and Crack-the-Code (to test your logic). Purely for younger children, exercises such as Del-One-Dun (to test visual discrimination) counting games are provided. Improve your French with Parlez-vous Français or your multiplication with the brain-twisting Multi Marathon. Less alluring and more self-explanatory, titles

include Geography and U.S.A. Quiz.

No, say 'Goodbye' to dull classrooms and dusty textbooks and delve into 'The Last VIC-20 Book in the World'.

Book Title:
Commodore 64 Disk Companion.

Author:
David Lawrence and Mark England
Publisher:
Sunshine Books
Price:
£7.95

THIS IS A BOOK THAT IS long overdue. It seems that Commodore have no intention of updating their own manual, and the sheet of corrections they promised to send me have not yet shown their face. Sunshine books have done it. A well written, easy to understand book which takes away the mystery of relative, user, and program files. It is easy to just dip in and find out what you need and try it. It usually works. The demo programs are not quite up to the mark though and I feel that some users may get bogged down when they try to step through what each program is doing, but their explanations make up for that if you have a 1541 drive and are still having problems then this book will save your sanity. A little expensive at 7.95 but I think I spent more than that on spares when using the Commodore manual.

Book Title:
Advanced Machine Code Programming for the Commodore 64

Author:
A.P. Stephenson and D.J. Stephenson
Publisher:
Granada
Price:
£7.95

THIS IS NOT SO MUCH A book for the machine code

ADVANCED MACHINE CODE PROGRAMMING FOR THE COMMODORE 64



beginner but for those of you with a sprinkling of machine code knowledge which you wish to build upon; the authors do claim, however, that, so long as you're got to grips with BASIC and are prepared to put in a lot of hard work, this book may be used as an introduction to machine code. Most of the material contained in the book may be used with the 6502 processor which is similar to the Commodore's 6510A processor.

Throughout the book, the text is illustrated with many examples including full listings accompanied by hex dumps. An assembler is needed to master machine code; the MIRC 44 assembler has been used to develop the programs listed in the book. Each chapter is concluded with a succinct and useful summary of the

chapter for quick and easy reference and, so as to check your progress as you plough through the book, short tests (with answers at the back of the book) are provided.

The book starts by amosng BASIC, compilers, interpreters, ROMs, RAMs and other general topics and moves on to discuss the 6502/6510A microprocessor, various modes, entering and assembling code. It then covers the area of programming in which the advantages of machine code over BASIC really come to the fore, namely sort routines, high-resolution graphics, sound and, finally, an outline of TTL logic for those readers whose interests extend beyond mere programming.

Not so much a straightforward introduction to

machine code, this book is rather the serious programmer's guide to mastering machine code language on the Commodore 64.

Book Title:
Commodore 64 Disk Systems and Printers

Author:
Ian Sinclair
Publisher:
Granada
Price:
£9.95

THE BOOK'S OUTWARD appearance is bright and eye-catching with a 'computers in space' design adorning the front cover. It provides the Commodore user, in particular the disc system novice, with information on disc systems and printers available for use with his machine. As well as covering the disc drive, the 1541, and disc systems peculiar to the Commodore 64, the book covers the commands to be used with the disc systems, primarily LOAD and SAVE, various disc utilities and, in greater detail, the filing actions, an integral part of business and database applications for which disc systems are largely required. For those of you who do not merely intend to use your disc system as a means of storing programs and data, but wish to master the techniques of copying and deleting files, backing-up discs, writing machine code disc routines or reading data from damaged discs, Mr. Sinclair's book provides you with the knowledge to fulfil these highly ingertent functions. A whole chapter is devoted to a database type program which comprises a long listing followed by a detailed explanation. The last chapter offers information on the various printers available for use with the Commodore 64 and summarises the way in which (and the success with which) they fulfil their function.

To conclude, the author believes, quite rightly, that

disc systems are a must for the serious programmer due to the greater memory capacity they afford to the computer. "Commodore 64 Disk Systems and Printers" includes a few (maybe too few) clear and succinct diagrams. The listings throughout the book are made easier to follow by replacing the usual indistinctive Commodore graphic symbols with CHR\$(n) commands. A selection of the usual appendices are provided covering, for example, Random Access Files, lists of commands and hardware supplies.

Book Title:
CBM 64 Programs
Volume 1
Programs By:
Richard Franklin
Edited By:
Nick Hampshire
Publisher:
Duckworth Home
Computing
Price:
£6.95

THE COMBINED EFFORTS of Mr. Franklin and Mr. Hampshire have produced a wide selection of programs to be loaded into your CBM 64. Games, utilities, music, graphics, writes and user defined characters, and functional programs are all covered in this book.

From an introduction to graphics character and machine code routines, the book allows you to boldly go where probably many a Commodore 64 user has been before — into space, this time with a fairly comprehensive version of Star Trek. Other games included, none of them highly original, are Hangman, Landmine, Fruit Machine, Car and Maze.

But it's not all fun and games. A useful section is included on Hi-Res graphics containing such gems as programs to plot bar charts in multi-colour, to display a three-dimensional graph in standard Hi-Res and to display the time as input



from the user in the form of a 24 hour digital clock. Keyboard Synthesizer allows you to exploit the music capabilities of the Commodore 64 by using the keyboard as notes. Other utilities include programs to change the reserved words of the Commodore 64, to convert machine code programs to decimal dis statements and add them to the program and to store personal information in the form of addresses or diary

entries in the program. The book ends on a note of adventure with Will O' The Wisp.

You will need a degree of care and patience to enter some of the lengthy listings contained in this book. Having crossed that hurdle, although most of them have been seen somewhere before, you will find here a broad selection of programs, some useful, some entertaining, for your Commodore 64.

Book Title:
Adventure Games for
the Commodore 64
Author:
A.J. Bradbury
Publisher:
Granada
Price:
£6.95

HAVING EXHAUSTED THE software industry's stock of adventure games for the Commodore 64 and consequently having realised that, with the programming know-how and one or two bright and original ideas, you could do better yourself, here is the book to get you started. Not only reviews but even experienced programmers wishing to make their adventure programs a viable financial concern should find this book useful.

The book commences with a potted history of the computer adventure program and how, and expands upon the most salient points to remember when creating your own adventure. Before churning out reams of code, the adventure store programmer has to have a story; the book goes on to guide the reader in devising a suitable storyline and in creating the characters to participate in the adventure. The reader is shown, step by step, how to build his adventure program adding graphics, words and sound until the completed adventure game eventually takes shape. Many examples and sample programs are included throughout the book. The book ends by predicting the adventure game of the future.

Although this book claims to cater for the beginner, a total novice to BASIC may have to look elsewhere for an introduction to the language before tackling some of the code in the latter half of the book. This criticism aside, Mr. Bradbury has produced a relatively original volume in a market where the subject matter of the literature is supposed to be usually highly repetitive.



Book Title:
Business Applications
Author:

James Hall
Publisher:
Sunshine Books
Price:
£5.95

THIS BOOK IS IN EFFECT one long program which has parts that interact with the rest. If you can dig out the parts that are helpful to you it has some very effective and interesting techniques. The sub-routines are useful though there are better ones available. The book does what it says but not in quite the way I like, but others see about it (but then I like B. Cardland). At 5.95 it is a good buy and one that would have its uses.

Book Title:
Vic Games
Author:
Kevin Bergin
Publisher:
Duckworth
Price:
£6.95

ALTHOUGH ENTITLED VIC games, this book is a collection of games and utility programs for the VIC 20. The games are accorded with being 'exciting and interesting'. How accurate an assessment this is cannot be ascertained without putting finger to keyboard and actually testing the games. Each game is, however, clearly explained and set out with descriptions and program structures, providing the listings.

Some of the games, such as Funze, where you have to escape the claw-of-death while on an excursion to the Fun Olive and a pretty subtle golf game (simplly called Golf), appear to be more interesting than many of the volumes of games around for the Commodore range of machines. Others



such as Air Attack or Invaders sound all too familiar. A couple of adventure games are also included: Crobbit, a mini-adventure maze-type game or Agent, the object of which is to find the microfilm and pass it over to your contact while surviving the deadly attackers. A few useful utilities are also provided: Code Creator which creates data queries from Machine Code routines and places them in user programs in BASIC lines or Tape Search which saves time by searching for and loading programs.

Maybe more thought could have gone into the order of the book's contents — placing the utilities at the end of the book may have made more sense than

interspersing them with the games. But, on the whole, Kevin Bergin has produced a good, broad selection of games for the VIC 20.

Book Title:
Commodore 64 Fun
and Games
Author:
Ron Jeffries, Glen
Fisher and Brian Sawyer
Publisher:
Osborne/McGraw-Hill
Price:
£9.95

HERE IT IS FOLK! — A BIG, bright and bumper book of fun and games for your Commodore 64. These 35 games exploit the 64's

special features such as colour, sound, sprites and graphics and, since all you need to do is copy what you see in front of you, you don't need to know one end of a BASIC instruction from another. Before launching into the games, the book whets your appetite with a set of small programs to get you used to the notation used in the program listings and the colour and graphics capabilities of the Commodore 64.

The games cover a broad spectrum ranging from the common-place, forgettable board-type game such as Dots, Spot, Reversi and Leap to the fast and furious Fire, where you have 3 minutes to extinguish a fire, and to extinguish a fire, and to Godzilla, where the might of the Japanese animal forces are attempting to catch Godzilla. Inevitably, you'll have to shoot down some large alien ships with Missiles or Dive, where the object is to receive treasure from a sunken ship. A sense of humour is required for the ludicrous Bat where you lead the life of a bat bouncing off walls, etc., or Lawn where the object is, as the title may imply, to mow the lawn as quickly as possible. Try your hand at gambling with Blackjack or Betz, create music with Piano or race either to the top of Everest with Everest or merely to the top of the board with Bonzo. And there's many more besides packed into this entertaining and easy-to-follow, albeit not entirely original, book of fun and games.



ORDER TODAY
PRINT TOMORROW
At special prices

SUMMER MADNESS SALE FROM SCI(UK)

OPEN
7 DAYS
A WEEK

EPSON PRICE SPECIALS



EPSON RX80 (DOT MATRIX)	£249.00	£199 + VAT = £258.00
EPSON RX80FT (DOT MATRIX)	£285.00	£239 + VAT = £252.00
EPSON FX30 (DOT MATRIX)	£438.00	£324 + VAT = £372.00
EPSON MX100 (DOT MATRIX)	£478.00	£358 + VAT = £408.00
EPSON RX100 (DOT MATRIX)	£459.00	£385 + VAT = £442.00
EPSON FX100(DOT MATRIX)	£569.00	£499 + VAT = £572.00

DAISYWHEELS...at an incredible new LOW PRICE!



JUKI 6100.....just £329 + VAT = £378.35

SCOPY: Bidirectional & Logic Sorting
10, 12, 15 & Proportional Spacing
Wordstar Compatible
2K Buffer: 11 inch Paper
Underline: Backspace + 1 extra more
Continuous Interface Standard

THE DAISYWHEEL THAT
HAS NO COMPETITION

OPTIONAL RS 232 TRACTOR AND SHEET FEEDER

*We will match any Genuine Price Advertised—
SCI(UK) IS NEVER BEATEN ON PRICE*

MANY MORE PRINTERS AVAILABLE - 1000s of SCHUKI BARGAINS

send now for the FAMOUS SCI(UK) Catalogue

for the cheapest prices telephone 0730 68521 or 0730 68522



MORE SCI(UK) BARGAINS

SHINWA CP80 £179.00 + VAT = £201.00



Reflex and tractor feed as standard
80pp
Bi-directional logic writing
12 x 9 dot matrix printing true descenders
Tab and superscript
Logic printing and open underlining
Condensed, emphasized, expanded and
double or the printing type (to be mixed in a font)
Parallel interface fitted as standard

FIDELITY 14" COLOUR



MONITOR
& COMPOSITE
VIDEO

£189.00 + VAT = £217.35

New from the world famous CANON Company

CANON 1080s NLQ DM best value ever at.....£289.00 + VAT = £331.00

We have interfaces for all types of computers,
including IBM 64, VIC 20, APPLE, TRS 80,
IBM, BBC, SPECTRUM, QL, etc.



14 DAY RETURN ON DELIVERY (EXCLUDES VAT & BANKING CHARGES, BUILDING SOCIETY CHECKS, POSTAL
ORDER) - SAME DAY DISPATCH - ALL ORDERS COVERED BY THE MAIL ORDER PROTECTION SCHEME
NATIONWIDE MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS ARRANGED - EDUCATIONAL DISCOUNTS VERY WELCOME

It's SUNDAY - Do you realise you can order NOW - We are open 7 Days a Week.

SCIENTIST LTD. Trading as SCI(UK)

SCI(UK)

201 016, ROBERT 1st Avenue, HAYWARD, SANTA CA, USA

0730 68521

0730 68522

EXPORT INQUIRIES
NO TAX
INCLUDES ALL COST

READ AN ENGLISH
WELCOME
WRITE FOR DETAILS

Large showrooms now open at 12 High Street, PETERSFIELD, Hants. GU32 3JG Telex 88628 MYNEWS G

In part 2 of their series on BASIC, A.P. and D.J. Stephenson discuss variables, assignments and operators.

THE BASIC FACTS



30 rougths after the decimal point) before the first significant figure. Written out in full, we would get the following involving pi:

```
0.00000000000000000000000000000000
```

Even this is abbreviated to three significant digits.

Besides being more precise for humans, this clumsy notation would be beyond the resources of the Commodore 64 because we are limited to nine digits of precision including leading zeros after the decimal point. To overcome the obstacle presented by large and small numbers, we can use exponential notation in floating point numbers. This notation consists of two parts:

- The significant digits terminated by the letter E
 - The power of 10 multiplier
- Example: 330 can be written as 3.1E2 which means 3.1 multiplied by 10 raised to the power 2. In ordinary math, this would be written as 3.1 × 10².
- Example: 0.00051 can be written as 5.1E-4.

As a final example, we return to the charge on the electron. This now becomes:

1.59E-19

(Note carefully that the negative exponent is always one more than the number of rougths before the first significant digit.)

There are certain upper limits to be observed. If you exceed them, you will get a nasty message from the computer. These limits are as follows:

```
* or - 1.7014118E+38
* or - 2.8421708E-39
```

IN PART 1 OF THIS SERIES, we discussed variable names. Before describing the different types of variable we ought to make sure we know exactly what is meant by 'variable'. This word, and many others used loosely in everyday speech, take on a more restricted and precise meaning when they are used by programmers. It would seem a hair-splitting distinction to point out that the terms 'variable' and 'variable name' are not quite the same. **Variable names**, such as A8, B5, or C3 are really symbolic addresses, chosen by the programmer, to hold chunks of information. If we write,

```
A3 = 3456883
```

we are telling the computer that an area in memory is to be known henceforth as A3 and that, for the moment, this area is to hold the number 3456883. We say, 'Go the memory' because it is quite possible that we will later on in the program, make A2 hold a different number. In other words, the contents of the memory area can be **varied** — hence the name.

We should realize that when we name an area in memory, as A2 or Z1, the BASIC interpreter in ROM is responsible for allocating the group of machine addresses in memory corresponding to the variable name we have chosen. Such machine addresses are transparent to the programmer and virtually of no interest. However, it is worth mentioning that several machine addresses are reserved to hold each variable irrespective of its magnitude. A single memory cell is only eight bits 'wide' which, if you have experience in binary arithmetic, should tell you that the highest absolute number which can be stored is only 255 decimal.

Three kinds of variable are distinguished by the BASIC interpreter and they must not be mixed up.

Integer variables

An integer is a whole number, positive or negative. It has no decimal point anywhere. For example, 1,486, 50094, 1000 are all integers. The largest possible integers allowed in the Commodore 64 are 32767 or -32767. To inform the interpreter that the variable is to hold only integers, the character 'I' must be written after the variable name. Examples: A%3, B%5, SD% are all integer variables.

If it is no good trying to store 34.8 in A%, if you dip, the computer will ruthlessly truncate downwards to the nearest lower integer. For example, if we write A% = 34.8, the contents of A% will be truncated to 34. The fraction part is lost. On the other hand, if we write A% = -34.8, the contents of A% will be -35. If you think this last result conflicts with our earlier remark, remember that -35 is considered by mathematical types to be a **smaller** number than -34. If I have a deficit of 34p, I am better off than if I had a deficit of 35p.

Floating point variables

A **floating point** variable can have a decimal point somewhere and can be positive or negative. Numbers and measure-

ments in real life are seldom integers, so floating point numbers are often known as 'real' numbers to distinguish them from integers such as integers. No special suffix is needed after the variable name if it is to hold floating point numbers. For example, A1, Z0, R are all considered by the interpreter to be floating point and they can all hold numbers such as, 200.46 or -456.025.

There is an awkward little quirk which needs sorting out regarding integer and floating point. Although we know that integer variables can only hold integers, it is not immediately evident that floating point variables can also store integers. This is because floating point numbers are real numbers and real numbers include integers! Thus, there is nothing against writing A = 5 or B2 = 500 or, come to that, C = 5.0, even though the 'I' is technically redundant.

Summarising, a floating point variable can hold all types of numbers including integers but an integer variable can only hold integers. When you are a newcomer to BASIC, you may find it safer and less complicated to use only floating point variables but, as your experience grows, you would be well advised to use integer variables whenever possible — they require a little quicker after a RUN and they take up a little less space in memory.

Very large and very small numbers in physics and other sciences are represented in 'exponential form' in order to cut down on the number of rougths. For example, the electrical charge on the electron is so small that it would require



Unless you are an astrophysics enthusiast (the diameter of the universe is predicted to be in the order of 10²⁶ meters) you are unlikely to even approach these limits. You may wonder why Commodore has imposed such a strange set of digits for the upper limits but, if you persevere with our series on machine code running concurrently in this magazine, you may be able to crack the puzzle.

Be very careful when entering numbers in exponential form. The power of 10 multiplier (the exponent) is more important than the significant digits (the mantissa). If you are four out in the mantissa you could be wildly out in your calculations. If you are four out in the exponent, the mistake will border on the catastrophic. The previous examples of exponential forms may have given the impression that the mantissa must always be a single digit followed by a point. This is not so. There are various ways of hiding around with the mantissa and the exponent. For example, 245823 can be written as 24.5823 or 245.823 or as 24582 because all three forms represent the same absolute number. It is just a case of juggling with the mantissa and exponent. As you move the point, a corresponding change must be made to the mantissa. Not only can you enter numbers in exponential form, the computer automatically prints out in this form if the number is less than 0.01 or greater than 99999999.

String variables

A string variable can hold virtually anything. Although a string can hold a number, it can also hold letters, punctuation and special characters. To inform the computer that the variable is to hold strings, the same must end in the dollar sign '\$'. For example, A\$, B\$, C\$, S\$ are all string variable names. Although the mixture doesn't matter, the total number of characters in one string variable must not exceed 255.



When we put something into a string variable, it is vitally important to observe the so-called 'matching' rule. This simply means that both sides of an assignment must be string variables or in equivalent string form. Before going into details of mix-matching we must remember that when we wish to assign a string of characters to a string variable, they must be enclosed in double quotes. For example, suppose we wish to store the following message in a string variable named M\$:

DANGER! UNEXPLODED BOMB

We must enclose the message in double quotes:

M\$ = "DANGER ! UNEXPLODED BOMB"

Note that there is no mix-match because both sides are strings.

Here are some legal assignments:

A\$ = "WELCOME"
C\$ = 85

Here are some illegal assignments which will cause a mix-match error:

A\$ = WELCOME
B = "GROM"
C\$ = 8
S\$ = 345

Notice the last mix-match which appears to indicate that we can't store numbers in a string variable. However, we can store numbers in strings provid-

ing we enclose them in double quotes. For example, A\$ = "145" is quite legal and 145 will indeed be stored in A\$, but you can't do normal arithmetic on numbers held as strings. It will never be treated by the arithmetic circuits of the computer as a number — it will be treated as three ordinary characters.

Concatenation of strings

Although normal arithmetic cannot be performed on strings, it is possible to use the '+' sign between strings in order to join them together into a single large string. This is known as concatenation. For example, study the following segment:

100 A\$ = "CONSER"
110 B\$ = "VATION"
120 C\$ = A\$ + B\$

The string variable C\$ will now hold the word CONSERVATION. If the last line was changed to:

120 C\$ = B\$ + A\$

then C\$ would hold VATIONCONSER. This illustrates vividly that concatenation is very much different from arithmetic addition, even though the same '+' sign is used. In normal arithmetic, 5+3 is the same as 3+5.

Concatenation does not allow an escape route for the 255 character limit. For example, suppose A\$ contains 208 characters and B\$ contains 200 characters. Writing C\$ = A\$+B\$ is an attempt to break the rule and will end in failure (and an error message).

Assignments

When we write A = B we have assigned the value of B to A. Assignments are the most common of all computer operations so it is important to examine some of the possible pitfalls. The rules are as follows:

1. The variable on the right of the equal sign is copied into the variable on the left.
2. The previous contents of the left-hand variable are lost because the new contents have overwritten

the old.
3. The contents of the right-hand variable remain unchanged.

As an illustration of the rules, suppose that before the assignment, A contained 10 and B contained 20. After A = B, both A and B will contain 20. These rules are simple but it is so easy to get the assignment the wrong way round. Remember — the left-hand variable will receive the result of the assignment. As a self-test exercise, study the following programming segment:

100 A = 30
110 B = 50
120 C = 70
130 A = B
140 C = A

The contents of the variables after the above is executed are as follows:
A = 50 B = 50 C = 50

Arithmetical assignments and operators

The left-hand side of the equal must be a single variable but the right-hand side can be any legitimate expression, usually arithmetic in nature.

The kind of operation performed depends on the operator. There are three classes of 'operator', but for the moment, we are only interested in the algebraic class. There are six of them, and although they are listed at the back of the Commodore User Manual supplied with the machine, few extra comments may help.

The '*' operator is used between two variables or numbers.

Example: C=A*B or C=B*50
The right hand side is the expression. The machine evaluates the expression and places the result in C.

The '-' operator is used for subtracting one number or variable from another. The rule is the same as in normal arithmetic, the quantity on the right is subtracted from the quantity on the left. The '-' sign can also be used before a variable to indicate it is a negative number.



Example: C=A/B

It is worth emphasizing again that the quantities on the right of the equals sign are not altered in any way — it is only the single variable on the left of the equals sign, which has its contents overwritten by the result of the operation. In the example above, although C will finally receive the result of A/B, the contents of A and B have not been altered in any way by the arithmetic process. This is because the BASIC interpreter takes copies of the variables for calculating results.

The operator \star is used for multiplying two numbers or variables together.

Example: C=A*B

We mentioned in part 1 of this series what happens if we want multiplication of A \times B but forget, due to common usage, to include the asterisk between them. In normal algebra, C=A*B implies multiplication but the computer will not multiply because AB is a legitimate variable name.

The operator / is used for dividing one variable or number by another.

Example: C=A/B

C will contain the result of dividing A by B, just as in normal algebra.

The operator is used to raise a number or variable to a power. It is called **exponentiation**.

Example: C=A3**

This is the same as writing C=A*A*A, but is much clearer and quicker.

Be careful if your variables are large and the power is large. The exponential operator has an enormous appetite for magnitude and it is not too difficult to produce **overflow** or **underflow** errors. The power can be positive or negative so we have to remember that a number too small can cause **underflow** errors although the error message from the computer will still say **overflow error**.

Example: PRINT 10^42

It will certainly trigger off an overflow error and so will PRINT 10^-42.

Parenthesis

The characters '(' and ')' are used to indicate parenthesis or, using everyday language, 'brackets'. They act as a box to override the natural rules of **precedence** in the computer (see page 27 of the Commodore 64 User Manual). As recommended in Part 1, use them liberally.



because the arithmetic in complex expressions can be very hard to follow if too much reliance is placed on precedence. Parenthesis are used exactly as they would be in ordinary algebra although, once again, it is easy to make a mistake by omitting the multiplication operator.

Example: D=(A*(B+C))

It won't work as intended. It would work with normal pencil and paper algebra but not in BASIC. It should be written D=A*(B+C).

Another common source of error which can cause frustration is where parenthesis are used wrongly in division.

Example: D=(A+B)/C*10

A+B is divided by C first and D is added afterwards, if you

intend to divide by C*D then it should be written, D=(A+B)/(C*D).

Rounding errors

It is commonly supposed that computing arithmetic is dead accurate; for most practical purposes, the supposition is true. However, slight errors can creep due to the finite precision of the BASIC interpreter. According to Commodore, the arithmetic is carried to nine significant digits. Internal calculations are taken to ten digits but, before printing out the result, the last digit is dropped and the ninth digit rounded. If you are a newcomer to computing, don't be disillusioned by this. After all, how important is an error in the ninth digit? We should remember that in prehistoric days, when the slide rule was in constant use, we were lucky to get three significant digit accuracy.

Even logs, which were considered quite good enough for most technical subjects, only gave four figure accuracy. There can be a slightly more serious problem when using the special functions such as SIN (X), COS(X) etc. These functions are produced by special machine code subroutines using equations which are good approximations to the function over most of the range. However, the accuracy of trig functions deteriorates at the extreme end of the range. This again can be expected because trigonometrical functions in real life tend to



go a bit funny near the limits. For example, the tangent of 90 degrees is infinity so it is still an enormous number when it is close to 90 degrees. Computers do their best but, like us, they are only human! All this is worth mentioning if only to warn you not to worry too much if you expect, say, an answer of exactly 3 but you get 3.99999999. To try one of these funny answers, run the following.

```
100 PRINT 10/20
```

```
You will get 0.59999999...;21 which is near enough to the correct 10/20.
```

You are trapped on
the old Colonial Base
Signet, with a
damaged spaceship.
W.A. Newland has
not made it easy, but
can you escape?

SIGNET

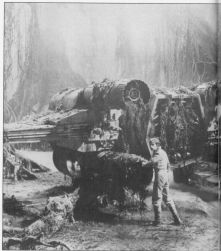
While transporting some cargo through the perilous Garbay sector of the Galaxy you ran into a meteorite storm; your ship was hit and you were forced to make a crash landing on the old Colonial base of SIGNET. On examining your ship you found that the vital Dylithium Crystals were cracked — without these your craft was useless; suddenly you remember that the class of base upon which you are now stranded is powered totally by Dylithium Crystals, you decide to hunt them down to use in your ship. . .

Program structure

This program was written as an experiment in string and data handling it is constructed in four specific sections these are: the randomizer, the interpreter, the variable initialiser and the room descriptions. The computer will pass through the randomizer, variable initialises and then into the room descriptions calling the interpreter as a subroutine from the last section.

The **RANDOMIZER** is handled by a short routine in lines 18-28, this is included to prevent the adventurer from jumping the early parts of the game if he inadvertently gets killed.

The next section is the **INTERPRETER** this handles the user's entries and carries out his instructions; the first part of this resides in lines 100-235 and finds out which of the commands has been used and moves the computer to the required section, line 248 is a default line which will print the



message: "I DO NOT UNDERSTAND" if a command is used that is not within the games vocab-

ulary (NB directions and "special" commands are handled at their specific locations). Having decided

upon which command is being used the computer moves to the routine; these routines reside at:



Program Listing

0001 *****
 0002 *****
 0003 *****
 0004 *****
 0005 *****
 0006 *****
 0007 *****
 0008 *****
 0009 *****
 0010 *****
 0011 *****
 0012 *****
 0013 *****
 0014 *****
 0015 *****
 0016 *****
 0017 *****
 0018 *****
 0019 *****
 0020 *****
 0021 *****
 0022 *****
 0023 *****
 0024 *****
 0025 *****
 0026 *****
 0027 *****
 0028 *****
 0029 *****
 0030 *****
 0031 *****
 0032 *****
 0033 *****
 0034 *****
 0035 *****
 0036 *****
 0037 *****
 0038 *****
 0039 *****
 0040 *****
 0041 *****
 0042 *****
 0043 *****
 0044 *****
 0045 *****
 0046 *****
 0047 *****
 0048 *****
 0049 *****
 0050 *****
 0051 *****
 0052 *****
 0053 *****
 0054 *****
 0055 *****
 0056 *****
 0057 *****
 0058 *****
 0059 *****
 0060 *****
 0061 *****
 0062 *****
 0063 *****
 0064 *****
 0065 *****
 0066 *****
 0067 *****
 0068 *****
 0069 *****
 0070 *****
 0071 *****
 0072 *****
 0073 *****
 0074 *****
 0075 *****
 0076 *****
 0077 *****
 0078 *****
 0079 *****
 0080 *****
 0081 *****
 0082 *****
 0083 *****
 0084 *****
 0085 *****
 0086 *****
 0087 *****
 0088 *****
 0089 *****
 0090 *****
 0091 *****
 0092 *****
 0093 *****
 0094 *****
 0095 *****
 0096 *****
 0097 *****
 0098 *****
 0099 *****
 0100 *****

0101 *****
 0102 *****
 0103 *****
 0104 *****
 0105 *****
 0106 *****
 0107 *****
 0108 *****
 0109 *****
 0110 *****
 0111 *****
 0112 *****
 0113 *****
 0114 *****
 0115 *****
 0116 *****
 0117 *****
 0118 *****
 0119 *****
 0120 *****
 0121 *****
 0122 *****
 0123 *****
 0124 *****
 0125 *****
 0126 *****
 0127 *****
 0128 *****
 0129 *****
 0130 *****
 0131 *****
 0132 *****
 0133 *****
 0134 *****
 0135 *****
 0136 *****
 0137 *****
 0138 *****
 0139 *****
 0140 *****
 0141 *****
 0142 *****
 0143 *****
 0144 *****
 0145 *****
 0146 *****
 0147 *****
 0148 *****
 0149 *****
 0150 *****



0151 *****
 0152 *****
 0153 *****
 0154 *****
 0155 *****
 0156 *****
 0157 *****
 0158 *****
 0159 *****
 0160 *****
 0161 *****
 0162 *****
 0163 *****
 0164 *****
 0165 *****
 0166 *****
 0167 *****
 0168 *****
 0169 *****
 0170 *****
 0171 *****
 0172 *****
 0173 *****
 0174 *****
 0175 *****
 0176 *****
 0177 *****
 0178 *****
 0179 *****
 0180 *****
 0181 *****
 0182 *****
 0183 *****
 0184 *****
 0185 *****
 0186 *****
 0187 *****
 0188 *****
 0189 *****
 0190 *****
 0191 *****
 0192 *****
 0193 *****
 0194 *****
 0195 *****
 0196 *****
 0197 *****
 0198 *****
 0199 *****
 0200 *****



Program Listing

```

1000  PRINT "***** WELCOME TO THE ADVENTURE *****"
1010  PRINT "***** THIS IS A 64-BIT PROGRAM *****"
1020  PRINT "***** PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING COMMANDS *****"
1030  PRINT "***** GO, GET, OPEN, CLOSE, LOOK, TALK *****"
1040  PRINT "***** QUIT TO END THE GAME *****"
1050  PRINT "***** ENJOY YOURSELF *****"
1060  PRINT "*****"
1070  PRINT "*****"
1080  PRINT "*****"
1090  PRINT "*****"
1100  PRINT "*****"
1110  PRINT "*****"
1120  PRINT "*****"
1130  PRINT "*****"
1140  PRINT "*****"
1150  PRINT "*****"
1160  PRINT "*****"
1170  PRINT "*****"
1180  PRINT "*****"
1190  PRINT "*****"
1200  PRINT "*****"
1210  PRINT "*****"
1220  PRINT "*****"
1230  PRINT "*****"
1240  PRINT "*****"
1250  PRINT "*****"
1260  PRINT "*****"
1270  PRINT "*****"
1280  PRINT "*****"
1290  PRINT "*****"
1300  PRINT "*****"
1310  PRINT "*****"
1320  PRINT "*****"
1330  PRINT "*****"
1340  PRINT "*****"
1350  PRINT "*****"
1360  PRINT "*****"
1370  PRINT "*****"
1380  PRINT "*****"
1390  PRINT "*****"
1400  PRINT "*****"
1410  PRINT "*****"
1420  PRINT "*****"
1430  PRINT "*****"
1440  PRINT "*****"
1450  PRINT "*****"
1460  PRINT "*****"
1470  PRINT "*****"
1480  PRINT "*****"
1490  PRINT "*****"
1500  PRINT "*****"
1510  PRINT "*****"
1520  PRINT "*****"
1530  PRINT "*****"
1540  PRINT "*****"
1550  PRINT "*****"
1560  PRINT "*****"
1570  PRINT "*****"
1580  PRINT "*****"
1590  PRINT "*****"
1600  PRINT "*****"
1610  PRINT "*****"
1620  PRINT "*****"
1630  PRINT "*****"
1640  PRINT "*****"
1650  PRINT "*****"
1660  PRINT "*****"
1670  PRINT "*****"
1680  PRINT "*****"
1690  PRINT "*****"
1700  PRINT "*****"
1710  PRINT "*****"
1720  PRINT "*****"
1730  PRINT "*****"
1740  PRINT "*****"
1750  PRINT "*****"
1760  PRINT "*****"
1770  PRINT "*****"
1780  PRINT "*****"
1790  PRINT "*****"
1800  PRINT "*****"
1810  PRINT "*****"
1820  PRINT "*****"
1830  PRINT "*****"
1840  PRINT "*****"
1850  PRINT "*****"
1860  PRINT "*****"
1870  PRINT "*****"
1880  PRINT "*****"
1890  PRINT "*****"
1900  PRINT "*****"
1910  PRINT "*****"
1920  PRINT "*****"
1930  PRINT "*****"
1940  PRINT "*****"
1950  PRINT "*****"
1960  PRINT "*****"
1970  PRINT "*****"
1980  PRINT "*****"
1990  PRINT "*****"
2000  PRINT "*****"

```

```

2010  PRINT "*****"
2020  PRINT "*****"
2030  PRINT "*****"
2040  PRINT "*****"
2050  PRINT "*****"
2060  PRINT "*****"
2070  PRINT "*****"
2080  PRINT "*****"
2090  PRINT "*****"
2100  PRINT "*****"
2110  PRINT "*****"
2120  PRINT "*****"
2130  PRINT "*****"
2140  PRINT "*****"
2150  PRINT "*****"
2160  PRINT "*****"
2170  PRINT "*****"
2180  PRINT "*****"
2190  PRINT "*****"
2200  PRINT "*****"
2210  PRINT "*****"
2220  PRINT "*****"
2230  PRINT "*****"
2240  PRINT "*****"
2250  PRINT "*****"
2260  PRINT "*****"
2270  PRINT "*****"
2280  PRINT "*****"
2290  PRINT "*****"
2300  PRINT "*****"
2310  PRINT "*****"
2320  PRINT "*****"
2330  PRINT "*****"
2340  PRINT "*****"
2350  PRINT "*****"
2360  PRINT "*****"
2370  PRINT "*****"
2380  PRINT "*****"
2390  PRINT "*****"
2400  PRINT "*****"
2410  PRINT "*****"
2420  PRINT "*****"
2430  PRINT "*****"
2440  PRINT "*****"
2450  PRINT "*****"
2460  PRINT "*****"
2470  PRINT "*****"
2480  PRINT "*****"
2490  PRINT "*****"
2500  PRINT "*****"
2510  PRINT "*****"
2520  PRINT "*****"
2530  PRINT "*****"
2540  PRINT "*****"
2550  PRINT "*****"
2560  PRINT "*****"
2570  PRINT "*****"
2580  PRINT "*****"
2590  PRINT "*****"
2600  PRINT "*****"
2610  PRINT "*****"
2620  PRINT "*****"
2630  PRINT "*****"
2640  PRINT "*****"
2650  PRINT "*****"
2660  PRINT "*****"
2670  PRINT "*****"
2680  PRINT "*****"
2690  PRINT "*****"
2700  PRINT "*****"
2710  PRINT "*****"
2720  PRINT "*****"
2730  PRINT "*****"
2740  PRINT "*****"
2750  PRINT "*****"
2760  PRINT "*****"
2770  PRINT "*****"
2780  PRINT "*****"
2790  PRINT "*****"
2800  PRINT "*****"
2810  PRINT "*****"
2820  PRINT "*****"
2830  PRINT "*****"
2840  PRINT "*****"
2850  PRINT "*****"
2860  PRINT "*****"
2870  PRINT "*****"
2880  PRINT "*****"
2890  PRINT "*****"
2900  PRINT "*****"
2910  PRINT "*****"
2920  PRINT "*****"
2930  PRINT "*****"
2940  PRINT "*****"
2950  PRINT "*****"
2960  PRINT "*****"
2970  PRINT "*****"
2980  PRINT "*****"
2990  PRINT "*****"
3000  PRINT "*****"

```



OH NO! SOLD OUT!

Your

COMMODORE

YOUR BEST INDEPENDENT COMMODORE MAGAZINE

Whatever you do, don't let this happen to you. When you rush down to your newsagents to get your copy of the latest Your Commodore don't suffer the disappointment of being told they've none left.

Why not sit in the luxury of your own home and feel safe in the knowledge that your copies will come neatly wrapped winging their way through the post and find themselves popping through your letter box?

Whatever your interest in the Commodore range of computers and peripherals, you simply cannot afford to miss a single issue. The magazine is packed with news, reviews of the latest

software, information about the books for sale, articles to help you with your programming, games to type in and play, useful routines to make your computing life easier, and all sorts of useful, informative and entertaining features. So whether your interest is purely in the latest games available for the VIC 20 or in reading a serious review of the most recent hardware for your Commodore, you must ensure that you read and inwardly digest every issue of Your Commodore.

And it's so easy to do! Just fill out the form below, write a cheque and send it off to the Subscriptions department. You know it makes sense!

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Get out and SEND TO:
YOUR COMMODORE
INFONET LTD., TIMES HSE,
179 THE MARLOWES,
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD,
HERTS, HP1 1BB

Please commence my personal subscription
YOUR COMMODORE with the issue

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (tick as appropriate)	£13.00 for 12 issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
	UK	<input type="checkbox"/>
	£15.00 for 12 issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Overseas Surface	<input type="checkbox"/>
	£18.00 for 12 issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Overseas Air Mail	<input type="checkbox"/>

I am enclosing my (delete as necessary)
Cheque/Postal Order/International Money

Order form

(made payable to ASP Ltd)

OR

Debit my Access/Barclaycard*

(*delete as necessary)



Please use BLOCK CAPITALS and include post codes.

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss)

(delete according/y)

Address

.....

Signature

Date

Simon Rockman gives
you all sorts of hints
on how to become a
sneaky programmer.

SNEAKY PROGRAMMING



ALL COMPUTERS AND computer systems have their quirks, the Commodore is no exception. A good programmer will know about and program around them. A sneaky programmer will exploit them to the full. This article is all about how to be a sneaky programmer.

Loading files

The Commodore tape system is slow and reliable, but it does have one feature few people know about. This is the ability to load a selected file by using part of the file name. To illustrate this imagine that you have a tape with three programs on it called "JOHN", "JAMES" and "GEORGE". To load the first program ("JOHN") you can just type in LOAD and press RETURN (or use SHEET/BURN SCROLL). If you want to load the second file, bypassing the first you can type LOAD "JAMES" and the computer will search for that file finding, but not loading, "JOHN". What most people miss is that it is not necessary to type the whole name in; just LOAD "JA" and pressing RETURN will perform the same function, similarly to load the last file, "GEORGE", with the tape wound to the beginning it is only necessary to type LOAD "E" and press RETURN. This not only saves time but means that you can load a specific file even when you have forgotten the end of the name.

Auto-repeating

The 6502 inside a Commodore computer can put



any one of 256 values into any of the 65536 memory locations. Out of these eleven million combinations one of the more useful is PC81659, 128 on the '84 and VIC. This enables auto-repeat on all keys.

Dating

In Britain we write the date in the order day/month/year, but in America they use month/day/year. The world ISO standard is however year/month/day and for computers this is the most logical method of storing a date if it has to be manipulated. This format allows the computer to sort the date. Take the 1st of January 1984 and 23th of September 1983. When used in the format 01/01/1984 and 208/1983 the date in 1983 has a greater value than the one in 1984. It would be possible to store the information like this and then chop the number up and sort all three bits separately but this would be slower and less efficient than having the date stored in 19840101 and 19830923 which follow in sequential order. When doing this it is important that you remember to pad out the spaces with zeros.

Toolkits

One of the commands often found in add-on toolkits is TRACE or TRCN, which displays the line being executed as the program runs. This is very useful when debugging code. The same sort of operation can be performed with a STOP command; before the program is run insert a STOP before and after the loops where you think the program is going wrong. Then when the program is run it will break in displaying the line number. You can continue using the CONT command providing that you do not cause an error or alter the program. STOP has the added advantage that values can be inspected by using a PRINT while the computer is in direct mode. Once the

program is debugged all the STOPs can be removed.

Rogue lines

When writing a program it is quite common for there to be a line which you are sure is right but seems to be causing the program to go wrong. The obvious solution is to delete the offending line to see if that is the culprit. If it wasn't the line has to re-enter the line and try elsewhere. This is a little counter-productive because you end up typing things in twice. A neater solution is to REM out the line, if you change the first three letters to REM then the line will do nothing while you test the program. When you want to use the line again, you can just over type the REM with the original letters. Of course just taking bits out does not cure a programming problem but it can reduce confusion when several complicated operations are taking place at once.

Screen editing

The Commodore screen editor is one of the nicest ways of entering programs that anyone has come up with. What you enter on the screen is what you get. One thing it does lack is the ability to merge lines. Imagine a program with these lines:

```
500 HAD="SNEAKY" THEN
  A$=""
  $120 PRINT "SNEAKY
  RETURN"
```

This routine will always print "SNEAKY HUH?". To change it to only print the message when A\$="" SNEAKY" would mean erasing the PRINT "SNEAKY HUH?" at the end of line 5100 and removing line 5120. The clever way to do this is to list the two lines and then move the cursor to the space between the 5120 and the PRINT command. Enter a colon (:) and move the cursor back

one space onto the colon. Now hold down the shift and press insert twenty three times, until the colon goes just past the quotes from A\$"". Still holding down the shift press RETURN. The cursor will move but the line will not have been entered. Now move the cursor up to the line above the 5100 which should still be on the screen. This line may have the LIST command about it. Type LIST again and the first part of the 5100 line will fall into place in front of the end of the 5120 line. Move the cursor up to this line and press RETURN over it. This operation sounds complicated when described on paper but if you try it, you'll get into the habit of using it, then you will save a lot time when changing your programs.

Protection

There are times when you want to protect a program from prying eyes. Most protection has to be done in machine code especially when you want to stop people from pirating your software. However, there are cases where just stopping a person from listing a line will suffice. On the Commodore 64 this can be done using a shifted L in a REM line. Just type

```
↑ REM (Shifted L)
```

then when you list it the result will be:

```
↑ REM
SYNTAX ERROR
READY
```

Please do not use this in any program you send to "Your Commodore" because we will only have to remove these lines to use the program in the magazine.

IF THEN100 may at first glance seem to be a syntax error, if I know the meaning it really quite simple. The line has the same effect as string IF \$THEN100 but saves three bytes. This is called a trick test and there are many ways in which it is possible to use the equals

sign. Try PRINT 1=1, this will give you the answer -1 which is the '84's way of saying yes. PRINT 1=1 will return 0, meaning false. These operations should be used with care and carefully REMed because they can get confusing. They are a very useful and compact way of making a comparison and will work with strings as well as numbers.

Incorporating routines

When writing a large system it is common practice to have a set of standard subroutines which can be called from disc when needed. On a small system it is often desirable to do a similar thing but to incorporate the routine in each program. If you have a BASIC extension it is possible to SAVE the routine and then RECALL it into the main program. However, if you only have a standard machine it will be necessary to re-type the section of code each time it is needed. That is unless you are sneaky. With routines that are less than a screenful you can cheat. Load the small routine and list it to the screen. Make sure that you have five lines spare at the bottom and then load the main program. Without clearing the screen take the cursor to the first line of the routine to be incorporated and press RETURN. Do this for all the lines you want to merge. If you have more than twenty lines in the subroutine you can repeat this process in twenty line chunks.



DATA STATEMENTS

Dataview

Colchester based software publishers, Dataview Wordcraft Limited, have just published an 8-page brochure claiming to unravel the mysteries of word processing, giving an overview of word processing, hardware and software, how it will save money or make money, with particular reference to their own Wordcraft software.

To obtain a free copy of this brochure, write to Amit

Roy, Marketing Manager, Dataview Wordcraft Limited, Radio House, East Street, Colchester, Essex CO1 2DB.

Dataview are also spreading the word on the continent having appointed distributors in Norway (Minor Mikrosystemer Norge A/S of Tonsberg, Belgium (Micro Belgium Application SPRL of Brussels) and the Netherlands (Intelligent Systems B.V. of Breda).



Screen graphics editor

Studio Software have recently released a new graphics designer package, Designer 64, which, supposedly, by relying on the standard Commodore graphics set, enables users to create impressive screen designs under program control which can then be incorporated easily into other programs with great effect.

As well as designers and planners, towards whom the program is largely directed, small businesses may also take advantage of

the facilities provided by Designer 64.

The package is distributed and the main program comes with seven demonstration design data files, a resampler utility program and a user guide.

Designer 64 is a Commodore Approved Product and is available on disc at £32.95. For further information, contact Studio Software at Boscon, Western Road, Jarvis Brook, Crawborough, East Sussex, TN6 3JY.



Danger Mouse

The popular TV cartoon character, Danger Mouse, is now starring in his own computer game. Creative Sparks, part of THORN EMI Computer Software, is releasing 'Danger Mouse in Double Trouble' on the Commodore 64.

Your aim is to help Danger Mouse, the world's greatest secret agent, to destroy ace villain, Baron Siles 'Greenback', and plan to dominate the world.

Creative Sparks have worked in close association with Cosgrove/Hall, producers of the Danger Mouse cartoon series, in developing the storyline and animation for 'Double Trouble'.

The game retails, on cassette, at £7.95 and should be available early October.

Creative Sparks are also giving the most skilled players of 'Danger Mouse in Double Trouble' the chance

to enter a competition and win a trip to the Cosgrove/Hall studios to meet the creators of Danger Mouse. And you'll arrive there in style by Rolls Royce and helicopter.

For further information, contact Gordon Reid, THORN EMI Computer Software, Thomson House, 296 Farnborough Road, Farnborough, Hants, Telephone: 0253-543333.

Craig Communications join A.V.S.

Dick Craig and David Giles have recently formed a new company to distribute and promote leisure software. Under the name of Craig Communications, they will initially market all the leisure products created by A.V.S., including Flight 015 and Whitehead 15 on the VIC 20. They are also marketing System 1500 which you'll find reviewed in the Software Spotlight section of this month's Your Commodore.



Games to test your brainpower

On 27th August, Brighton-based Amplicon launched their first two 'Braingames', *Electron Trail* and *Fame Quest*. With this new range of games, Amplicon hope to provide the micro computer market with games which offer a challenge sufficient to entice the players back to the game again and again. Peter Wood of Amplicon explains that his 'Braingames' are "... first and foremost easy to get into and great fun" but "... also need some brain work on the part of the player and so offer an element of compulsion".

In *Electron Trail*, the player finds himself campaigning on behalf of a party in the American election. As one player, you are campaigning for the Republicans while the computer backs the Democrats. Each state is worth a different number of points and has a handicap according to the likelihood of victory there. The aim is to win each state and then each region. Each player is initially presented with an opinion poll; he can then study his progress at various stages of the game by comparing new opinion polls against his original one. The campaigner can gain support through assorted means of publicity covering a range of prices such as media campaigns, a call, public debate, etc., depending on various factors such as history,

hometown, etc. In each state, voting works through from the top right hand state to the bottom with a resource demanded if final points are too close. The game concludes with the victorious party emerging to the sound of 'Stars and Stripes'!

Fame Quest claims to be a simply stratified game aiming to appeal to those who appreciate fantasy and role. There are 10 grades each of which is attained by your knight entering the castle, completing a quest and returning safely to the castle. The

screen is divided into areas as a map with a castle in the top left and bottom right corners. Starting at the top, the knight encounters various challenges and the opportunity to pick up points of fame to reach the next grade. Although his options are limited at the lowest grade, the knight may buy weapons, depending on the key pressed (eg, 'a' for east) he will head in a different direction, encountering goodies and buddies — a dragon, wizard, old man and a dwarf — and choosing his method of approach — chat, flee or

fight. With each successful encounter, the knight leaves the castle with a higher fame target.

Both these strategy games retail at £7.95 on cassette and £9.95 on disc and are available for the Commodore 64 from the end of August.

Two further Braingames will be introduced in September, *Castle Fear* and *Flame Island*.

For further information, contact Sheila Hart at Lisa Reuben at Public Image, 217-218 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9AF, Telephone: 01-580-6225.



New Passenger for Bubble Bus

Bubble Bus Software has taken over the marketing of business products from their publisher — The Computer Room.

The first package to be marketed is Supernews, a newsgroups delivery and accounting system, based on either the Commodore 64 or 8080 computers. This package, which has been

selling, considerably for two years, looks after up to 8000 deliveries, produces round lists, accounts, pre-order requirements and more. Its retail price is £495.00 incl. VAT.

Bubble Bus hope to expand its business dealer network to handle these products.

Cartridges from Aptor

News from Aptor Ltd is that, although slow off the mark, Beta 5 sales are set to equal, or even overtake, those of its big brother, Alpha 16. Reasons proffered are the relative compactness of the Beta 5 and the

fact that its 10 Mbytes of storage are sufficient for most companies.

Aptor claim that both their systems combine the particular advantages of both cartridge-based hard discs and floppy disc

systems, providing a solution to micro users who need big storage capacity with security back-up.

The units are tough and the Beta 5, like the Alpha 16, comes in a choice of a compact stacked or side-by-

side configuration, depending on your space needs.

Aptor are based at Unit 5, Victoria Road Trading Estate, Portlads, Brighton, Sussex, BN4 10Q. Telephone 0273 422512.



Channel 8 News

Channel 8 Software have recently signed reciprocal production agreements with Commodore, an American company who will produce and market the Mystical Adventure series for the Commodore 64. Accordingly, Channel 8 Software will now be able to offer some of America's best-selling Commodore 64 educational software. Each Educational Series tape contains four programs aimed at a specific age group and retails at \$6.95 inc. VAT.

Also hot off the shelves of Channel 8 come two new games, Bortak and Time Zone.

To give it its full title, Bortak...The Amazing Rugged Beastie From Botelgosa, is a fast and furious arcade type game where Bortak, our anti-hero, is trying to get back to his space ship alien, anti-mutants, crash landing on earth on route back from a party on the planet Ganolon. Bortak can run, jump, duck dodge and perform an unlimited number of anti-grav assisted jumps with either keyboard or joystick manipulating pits, pools, stone walls and various creatures on his journey home. Bortak is available on cassette and retails at \$6.95 inc. VAT.

Time Zone, written in machine code, boasts a fine array of graphics, 20 levels of play, multi-sprite animation, 5 terrain types with perfect scrolling, an on-screen printouts, arcade quality sound, three speed star field and 'Ripple' High Score Table. It is a game for 1 or 2 players, using joystick or keyboard control, the object of which is to fight alien life forms that have changed to look like creatures or objects from five different time zones, ranging from pre-history to the future. Time Zone is available on tape and retails for \$5.95.

Your Computer Christmas Fair

The Your Computer Christmas Fair will take place at Olympia 2, London, from November 28 to December 2, 1984. The exhibition, sponsored by Your Computer magazine, will have on display a large selection of microcomputers, peripherals, software and accessories.

For further information, contact the Exhibition Manager, Your Computer Christmas Fair, Reed Exhibitions, Surrey House, 1 Throgmoy Way, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4QQ. Telephone: 01-443-8848.



Games Galore from Commodore

Now for the VIC 20 from Commodore come Bomber Mission, Rapier Punch and Starbase.

In Bomber Mission, as a World War II fighter bomber on a mission over hostile territory, your aim is to fly your aircraft to the target, bomb it and then return to base. But it's not as simple as it sounds. Your mission is beset with life's niggling little problems

such as the time available to complete the mission, the amount of fuel needed, and the best type of weapon to use. And then there's the enemy: how good is enemy intelligence, can you detect enemy fighters on your radar screen before it's too late? Having fulfilled your mission by bombing your target and getting safely back to base, your ability as a pilot will be

assessed on the amount of fuel and ammunition remaining and number of enemy aircraft destroyed. Bomber Mission's aircraft is controlled by a combination of joystick and function keys, and sound effects are incorporated into the program which runs on an expanded (16K) VIC 20 and retails at £4.99.

Commodore's other two new releases may be used on any unexpanded VIC 20.

In Rapier Punch, as a knight in a dattered robe with only the areas you cross lit up, your aim is to find the hidden treasure chest before the timer reaches zero and to move on to the next level of the game. There are 100 levels in the game and details of your score, game level, number of lives remaining and time left to complete the game, are displayed on the top line of the screen. But your goal is hampered by spinning crosses, Dragons and Dragons' eggs on crossing each of your 3 lives and safeguarding the treasure.

As you destroy these by firing daggers or running into them with your rapier, and finally achieve the ultimate in collecting the treasure, you accumulate points.

The aim of Starbase is to prevent a team of scientists, diligently preparing the surface of Planet 8A2 for colonisation, from being captured by an alien force attacking the planet and to destroy all the alien spacecraft. This is achieved by patrolling each of the four quadrants of the planet (marked across the bottom of the screen) and by destroying the alien ships automatically once you have them in your sight. The top line of the screen tells you how many men you have left on the planet's surface and, once the attacking aliens have been destroyed and all your men are captured, the game ends.

Both Rapier Punch and Starbase need a joystick, include full sound effects and retail at £4.99.

Audiogenic in Game-land

Inspired by Lewis Carroll's novel, Audiogenic has launched Alice in Wonderland. This storybook game contains several different scenarios, each relating to a specific section of the book and includes many of the old favourite characters such as the White Knight, Jabberwocks, Tweedledum and Tweedledee, the Caterpillar, the Red Queen and many others. The game follows the original story line closely starting with Alice's arrival at the entrance to the rabbit hole and continuing with her dilemma with different sized doors and keys, bottles and cakes. The grinning Cheshire Cat and pipe smoking Caterpillar make an appearance in chapter two; the White Knight, Jabberwock, Tweedledum and Tweedledee in chapter three and the Queen of Hearts and her croquet game in chapter four. The game ends when Alice has run out of croquet balls.

Controlled by a joystick



and incorporating fine graphics and music, Alice in Wonderland sells for £12.95.

Audiogenic have also released Koala Pad which allows Commodore 64 users to produce full colour illustrations and drawings directly on screen with relative ease. The system

includes a small and lightweight pad, cassette or disc-based software and an instruction manual. The user has a choice of colour, brush size and basic functions (such as line, circle, box, etc.). Drawings can be saved and recalled and other options such as

copy, delete, change colour, merge images, are included.

Koala Pad is available on both disc and cassette and retails at £28.95.

For further information, contact: Audiogenic Ltd, P.O. Box 68, Reading, Berks; Telephone: 0714-654648.



Soaring Commodore sales

According to the 1984 BLS-Pedder Annual Census of Information Processing, Commodore have sold so many machines in 1983 that by value they are third in the table of market leaders, behind IBM and ICL, but ahead of DEC and Sinclair.

Although not in the same league as IBM who captured a huge 23.7% of the market, Commodore's market share jumped from 3.6% in 1982 to 6.2% in 1983, slightly behind ICL's 7.2%. DEC gained only 3.7% and Sinclair 4.1%.

Leap forward for Cheetah

Cheetah Marketing has not only taken over the sole manufacturing and marketing rights to Interpod, the Commodore 64 and VIC 20 interface, but has also reduced its price to £59.95.

Interpod provides Commodore users with full RS232 and IEEE interface facilities enabling users to access all Commodore business peripherals and take advantage of assorted independent products such as hard discs, printers, etc.

Part Electronics, who originally manufactured the Interpod on behalf of Oxford Computer Systems Ltd., recently acquired Cheetah Marketing. Oxford Computer's recent problems have given Cheetah Marketing the opportunity to take Interpod under their wing.

Mikro 80 Cross-Assembler

Supersoft hope to have released their 2-80 cross-assembling version of the Commodore 64's excellent 6502 assembler, Mikro Assembler, by September 1st. Designed to run on the Commodore 64, Mikro 80 is being written in 6502 machine code, but will assemble 2-80 opcodes, if it is a success, Supersoft intend to follow Mikro 80 with versions for other processors.

Also being investigated by Supersoft is the idea of a direct cable link between the 64 and the 2-80 as the most likely means to transfer assembled code to target computers.

Interface from 3D

3D Digital Design and Development Ltd have released their latest microcomputer interface product, the GPS. This scientific, industrial and educational interface is designed to work on the Commodore. It allows you to monitor up to eight analog signals with 12-bit resolution, and combines an integrating analog-to-digital converter and a fast, successive approximation converter enabling your Commodore to sample at rates up to 28 kilo-samples per second. Analog outputs are made available to give you proportional or three-term control, while the digital output enables your Commodore 64 to switch to up to eight loads with 80 volts at 400 mA each. The digital input facilitates the monitoring of eight binary signals or contact closures.

The GPS is self-contained with integral power supply, connection, and ribbon cable to your Commodore's expansion port. Full technical manual and a suite of demonstration programs are supplied with it. This interface retails at £700 but 80 offer a 25% discount to dealers and 50% off the price for demo units.

MARKET LEADERS IN VALUE OF COMPUTER SHIPPED IN 1983

Company	percentage	value shipped in
	1983	1982
IBM	23.7	28.3
ICL	7.2	11.8
Commodore	6.2	3.6
Digital	5.1	5.5
Sinclair	4.1	3.5
one percent =	£22.4m	£16.9m

Camden Computers

Commodore Business Machines (UK) Ltd. have announced their Commodore Dealership of the Year. Birmingham-based Camden Computers. In the year ended June 1984, Camden Computers achieved over 1000,000 of sales of Commodore business systems.

Camden Computers, formed in 1971, has been a Commodore Approved Dealer since Commodore's appearance in the UK during the mid 70s. With a nationwide, thousand plus user-base, Camden has become one of Commodore's most successful retailers. Brothers Derek and Ronald Bailey, sole directors of Camden Computers, were recently presented with a cup by Commodore to mark their achievement. Naturally, they are delighted with the award.

"We have been with Commodore since day one", said Ron, "so it's particularly gratifying to reap the rewards of our commitment. We supply many of the largest and most prestigious companies in the West Midlands with Commodore machines, from the earliest PET to the latest 8000 series computers, and for us it's been an extremely fruitful relationship".



Argus hits the small screen

Argus Press Software have just announced their first plan for the Autumn. Their latest release in their Mind Games series is 'American Football', a full graphics simulation for one or two players available for the IBM 64. With the game comes a book explaining 'all you ever wanted to know but were too afraid to ask'

about American Football.

Argus Press are promoting their products through an extensive advertising campaign in the press and on TV. They already have a TV advert for their American Football program, booked for the Superbowl final in January. Argus Press Tape Magazines will also be supported by TV

adverts from mid-September to November. The jazy characters from the 'Young Ones' will do the voice over for the adverts. The Clover Clogs series of programs will also be extensively advertised, in major consumer magazines.

Argus Software are at No. 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB.

International Programming Competition

On Saturday 20th October, the first ever European Heat in the thirteen year history of the ACM's (Association of Computing Machinery) International Programming Competition will take place at Thames Polytechnic, London. The contest is being sponsored by Commodore Business Machines (UK) Ltd. and Thames Polytechnic, and is being organised with the full support of the British

Computer Society.

The competition takes the form of a team of up to four undergraduate and postgraduate students solving a set of six programming problems in as short a time as possible. Solutions may be programmed in either Pascal or Fortran, using Commodore 8800 computers. The competition will last for six hours; the contest will be followed by a reception and

the announcement of the two winning teams who will go on to represent the European region at the Final in New Orleans next March. Included amongst the panel of judges will be Professor Wolff of BBC Television's 'Great Egg Race' spectators are admitted free of charge.

The Company's UK General Manager, Howard Stanworth, believes that Commodore should be involved with the competi-

tion due to their position in the forefront of British education. He states that his company "... intend to continue investing heavily in education in this country and this is just one of the ways that investment will take". Through a victory in the international final of the competition, he hopes to prove that "... Europe still leads the world in computer skills and programming creativity".

**Our man in Eric, John
McHale, makes some
sense of the intricacies
of raster interrupts.**

RASTER INTERRUPTS

Program 1 Listing

```

10 RST *****
20 RST * RASTER_INTERRUPTION PROGRAM *
30 RST * *
40 RST * SPLITTING SCREEN COLOUR *
50 RST *****
60 FLAG (0000123) ON
70 RSTOR (PWA-1)AND(OR)
80 ROR(OR)C,1 (OR)C1 (L)A(L)A
90 ROTATE
100 PRINT "C1 RST * SHIFT * CLAYMORE *
110 PFC(OUT)RSTOR
120 PFC(OUT)RSTOR
130 PRINT "C2 RST * 700 PWA * 1 (OUT)A(L)
140 PRINT "C3 RST * 1 (PWA) RST * CU (OR) *
150 PFC(OUT)RSTOR
160 PRINT "RSTOR (IN) (PWA) (OUT)"
170 STOP
180 PRINT "PRESS ANY KEY TO END DEMONSTRATION."
190 PRINT "PRESS 'CONTROL' WITH OR WITHOUT ' ' RST * CU (OR) * *
200 PRINT "SHIFT' TO MOVE THE SPLIT OF OR (OR) *
210 PRINT "THE SCREEN."
220 PWA(OR) (PWA) (OR)
230 STOP
240 RSTOR (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR)
250 RSTOR (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR)
260 RSTOR (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR)
270 RSTOR (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR)
280 RSTOR (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR)
290 RSTOR (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR)
300 RSTOR (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR)
310 RSTOR (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR) (OR)

```

REGIST.

R 0000 00 00 00	Stack demonstration prog. 1 (splitting	I 0000 00 10 00	}	Clear screen.
R 0000 00 00 00	Screen colour)	I 0000 00 00 00		
R 0000 00 00 00	Assembly language listing	I 0000 00 00 00	}	Enable to find the Raster interrupt enable register which will give an interrupt from the raster register to be recognized.
R 0000 00 00 00		I 0000 00 00 00		
R 0000 00 00 00		I 0000 00 00 00	}	Full all of the three registers (I, J & K) of the stack in the correct order to (RST) enable an and via vsw.
R 0000 00 00 00		I 0000 00 00 00		
R 0000 00 00 00		I 0000 00 00 00	}	Then return from an interrupt.
R 0000 00 00 00		I 0000 00 00 00		
R 0000 00 00 00		I 0000 00 00 00	}	Check if the interrupt status register is on.
R 0000 00 00 00		I 0000 00 00 00		

This article consists of four demonstration programs on raster graphics. They are as follows:

1. Splitting screen colour
2. Mixing user-defined graphics with standard 'Pet' graphics.
3. Switching between hi-resolution and text.
4. Displaying more than 8 'sprites' on screen.

The program listings should be typed in and saved immediately before any attempt is made to run them. If the programs have been typed in correctly, you will be given the option of running the demonstration, otherwise error reports will be printed on screen.

One warning: before even attempting to understand the concept of raster interrupts, you should have a fairly reasonable understanding of machine language.



Program 2 Listing (cont.)

<pre> H 0225 7F02 8447 I 0227 00 10 00 H 0229 07F0 8001 I 022B 00 00 H 022D 1200 8000 I 022F 00 10 00 H 0231 07F0 8001 I 0233 00 00 H 0235 07F0 8001 I 0237 00 00 H 0239 1200 8000 I 023B 00 10 00 H 023D 07F0 8001 I 023F 00 00 H 0241 00 00 I 0243 00 00 H 0245 00 00 I 0247 00 00 H 0249 00 00 I 024B 00 00 H 024D 00 00 I 024F 00 00 H 0251 00 00 I 0253 00 00 H 0255 00 00 I 0257 00 00 H 0259 00 00 I 025B 00 00 H 025D 00 00 I 025F 00 00 H 0261 00 00 I 0263 00 00 H 0265 00 00 I 0267 00 00 H 0269 00 00 I 026B 00 00 H 026D 00 00 I 026F 00 00 H 0271 00 00 I 0273 00 00 H 0275 00 00 I 0277 00 00 H 0279 00 00 I 027B 00 00 H 027D 00 00 I 027F 00 00 H 0281 00 00 I 0283 00 00 H 0285 00 00 I 0287 00 00 H 0289 00 00 I 028B 00 00 H 028D 00 00 I 028F 00 00 H 0291 00 00 I 0293 00 00 H 0295 00 00 I 0297 00 00 H 0299 00 00 I 029B 00 00 H 029D 00 00 I 029F 00 00 H 02A1 00 00 I 02A3 00 00 H 02A5 00 00 I 02A7 00 00 H 02A9 00 00 I 02AB 00 00 H 02AD 00 00 I 02AF 00 00 H 02B1 00 00 I 02B3 00 00 H 02B5 00 00 I 02B7 00 00 H 02B9 00 00 I 02BB 00 00 H 02BD 00 00 I 02BF 00 00 H 02C1 00 00 I 02C3 00 00 H 02C5 00 00 I 02C7 00 00 H 02C9 00 00 I 02CB 00 00 H 02CD 00 00 I 02CF 00 00 H 02D1 00 00 I 02D3 00 00 H 02D5 00 00 I 02D7 00 00 H 02D9 00 00 I 02DB 00 00 H 02DD 00 00 I 02DF 00 00 H 02E1 00 00 I 02E3 00 00 H 02E5 00 00 I 02E7 00 00 H 02E9 00 00 I 02EB 00 00 H 02ED 00 00 I 02EF 00 00 H 02F1 00 00 I 02F3 00 00 H 02F5 00 00 I 02F7 00 00 H 02F9 00 00 I 02FB 00 00 H 02FD 00 00 I 02FF 00 00 </pre>	<pre> I 02A1 0202 9007 I 02A3 00 10 00 H 02A5 1200 8000 I 02A7 00 00 I 02A9 0202 9007 I 02AB 00 10 00 H 02AD 07F0 8001 I 02AF 00 00 H 02B1 1200 8000 I 02B3 00 10 00 H 02B5 07F0 8001 I 02B7 00 00 H 02B9 1200 8000 I 02BB 00 10 00 H 02BD 07F0 8001 I 02BF 00 00 H 02C1 0202 9007 I 02C3 00 10 00 H 02C5 07F0 8001 I 02C7 00 00 H 02C9 1200 8000 I 02CB 00 10 00 H 02CD 07F0 8001 I 02CF 00 00 H 02D1 0202 9007 I 02D3 00 10 00 H 02D5 07F0 8001 I 02D7 00 00 H 02D9 1200 8000 I 02DB 00 10 00 H 02DD 07F0 8001 I 02DF 00 00 H 02E1 0202 9007 I 02E3 00 10 00 H 02E5 07F0 8001 I 02E7 00 00 H 02E9 1200 8000 I 02EB 00 10 00 H 02ED 07F0 8001 I 02EF 00 00 H 02F1 0202 9007 I 02F3 00 10 00 H 02F5 07F0 8001 I 02F7 00 00 H 02F9 1200 8000 I 02FB 00 10 00 H 02FD 07F0 8001 I 02FF 00 00 </pre>
<pre> H 0225 7F02 8447 I 0227 00 10 00 H 0229 07F0 8001 I 022B 00 00 H 022D 1200 8000 I 022F 00 10 00 H 0231 07F0 8001 I 0233 00 00 H 0235 07F0 8001 I 0237 00 00 H 0239 1200 8000 I 023B 00 10 00 H 023D 07F0 8001 I 023F 00 00 H 0241 00 00 I 0243 00 00 H 0245 00 00 I 0247 00 00 H 0249 00 00 I 024B 00 00 H 024D 00 00 I 024F 00 00 H 0251 00 00 I 0253 00 00 H 0255 00 00 I 0257 00 00 H 0259 00 00 I 025B 00 00 H 025D 00 00 I 025F 00 00 H 0261 00 00 I 0263 00 00 H 0265 00 00 I 0267 00 00 H 0269 00 00 I 026B 00 00 H 026D 00 00 I 026F 00 00 H 0271 00 00 I 0273 00 00 H 0275 00 00 I 0277 00 00 H 0279 00 00 I 027B 00 00 H 027D 00 00 I 027F 00 00 H 0281 00 00 I 0283 00 00 H 0285 00 00 I 0287 00 00 H 0289 00 00 I 028B 00 00 H 028D 00 00 I 028F 00 00 H 0291 00 00 I 0293 00 00 H 0295 00 00 I 0297 00 00 H 0299 00 00 I 029B 00 00 H 029D 00 00 I 029F 00 00 H 02A1 00 00 I 02A3 00 00 H 02A5 00 00 I 02A7 00 00 H 02A9 00 00 I 02AB 00 00 H 02AD 00 00 I 02AF 00 00 H 02B1 00 00 I 02B3 00 00 H 02B5 00 00 I 02B7 00 00 H 02B9 00 00 I 02BB 00 00 H 02BD 00 00 I 02BF 00 00 H 02C1 00 00 I 02C3 00 00 H 02C5 00 00 I 02C7 00 00 H 02C9 00 00 I 02CB 00 00 H 02CD 00 00 I 02CF 00 00 H 02D1 00 00 I 02D3 00 00 H 02D5 00 00 I 02D7 00 00 H 02D9 00 00 I 02DB 00 00 H 02DD 00 00 I 02DF 00 00 H 02E1 00 00 I 02E3 00 00 H 02E5 00 00 I 02E7 00 00 H 02E9 00 00 I 02EB 00 00 H 02ED 00 00 I 02EF 00 00 H 02F1 00 00 I 02F3 00 00 H 02F5 00 00 I 02F7 00 00 H 02F9 00 00 I 02FB 00 00 H 02FD 00 00 I 02FF 00 00 </pre>	<pre> I 02A1 0202 9007 I 02A3 00 10 00 H 02A5 1200 8000 I 02A7 00 00 I 02A9 0202 9007 I 02AB 00 10 00 H 02AD 07F0 8001 I 02AF 00 00 H 02B1 1200 8000 I 02B3 00 10 00 H 02B5 07F0 8001 I 02B7 00 00 H 02B9 1200 8000 I 02BB 00 10 00 H 02BD 07F0 8001 I 02BF 00 00 H 02C1 0202 9007 I 02C3 00 10 00 H 02C5 07F0 8001 I 02C7 00 00 H 02C9 1200 8000 I 02CB 00 10 00 H 02CD 07F0 8001 I 02CF 00 00 H 02D1 0202 9007 I 02D3 00 10 00 H 02D5 07F0 8001 I 02D7 00 00 H 02D9 1200 8000 I 02DB 00 10 00 H 02DD 07F0 8001 I 02DF 00 00 H 02E1 0202 9007 I 02E3 00 10 00 H 02E5 07F0 8001 I 02E7 00 00 H 02E9 1200 8000 I 02EB 00 10 00 H 02ED 07F0 8001 I 02EF 00 00 H 02F1 0202 9007 I 02F3 00 10 00 H 02F5 07F0 8001 I 02F7 00 00 H 02F9 1200 8000 I 02FB 00 10 00 H 02FD 07F0 8001 I 02FF 00 00 </pre>

Program 3

```

10 0201 *****
20 0202 * 020100 020000 011000 010000 *
30 0203 * *
40 0204 * 010100 0001 00 00 00000000 *
50 0205 *****
60 0206 * 0000 0000 *
70 0207 *****
80 0208 *****
90 0209 *****
100 0210 *****
110 0211 *****
120 0212 *****
130 0213 *****
140 0214 *****
150 0215 *****
160 0216 *****
170 0217 *****
180 0218 *****
190 0219 *****
200 0220 *****
210 0221 *****
220 0222 *****
230 0223 *****
240 0224 *****
250 0225 *****
260 0226 *****
270 0227 *****
280 0228 *****
290 0229 *****
300 0230 *****
310 0231 *****
320 0232 *****
330 0233 *****
340 0234 *****
350 0235 *****
360 0236 *****
370 0237 *****
380 0238 *****
390 0239 *****
400 0240 *****
410 0241 *****
420 0242 *****
430 0243 *****
440 0244 *****
450 0245 *****
460 0246 *****
470 0247 *****
480 0248 *****
490 0249 *****
500 0250 *****
510 0251 *****
520 0252 *****
530 0253 *****
540 0254 *****
550 0255 *****
560 0256 *****
570 0257 *****
580 0258 *****
590 0259 *****
600 0260 *****
610 0261 *****
620 0262 *****
630 0263 *****
640 0264 *****
650 0265 *****
660 0266 *****
670 0267 *****
680 0268 *****
690 0269 *****
700 0270 *****
710 0271 *****
720 0272 *****
730 0273 *****
740 0274 *****
750 0275 *****
760 0276 *****
770 0277 *****
780 0278 *****
790 0279 *****
800 0280 *****
810 0281 *****
820 0282 *****
830 0283 *****
840 0284 *****
850 0285 *****
860 0286 *****
870 0287 *****
880 0288 *****
890 0289 *****
900 0290 *****
910 0291 *****
920 0292 *****
930 0293 *****
940 0294 *****
950 0295 *****
960 0296 *****
970 0297 *****
980 0298 *****
990 0299 *****

```

set to a value which is out of the visible patch, e.g. 0-49 8 (inv) and 200-255 (inv).

The interrupt status register, when read, gives the current status of interrupts, i.e. if any bit in the interrupt status register corresponds with a bit in the interrupt enable register, then an interrupt from that source will take or is already taking place.

The appropriate bits of the interrupt status register are as follows:

<p>1 2 3 4</p>	<p>Bit 0 1 2 3</p>	<p>Condition Set when raster compare reaches the present value. Set when sprite collides with background. Set when sprite collides with another sprite. Triggered by light pen/rifle. This bit is set whenever any of the above bits are set.</p>
----------------------------	------------------------------------	---

It is interesting to note that it is standard procedure for the "VIC" chip to execute

Program 4 Listing

<pre> 10000 00F 00 10001 000 0000 10002 000 00000 10003 00F 00 10004 000 0000 10005 000 0000 10006 00F 00 10007 000 0000 10008 000 0000 10009 000 0000 10010 00F 00 10011 000 0000 10012 000 0000 10013 00F 00 10014 000 0000 10015 000 0000 10016 00F 00 10017 000 0000 10018 000 0000 10019 00F 00 10020 000 0000 10021 000 0000 10022 00F 00 10023 000 0000 10024 000 0000 10025 00F 00 10026 000 0000 10027 000 0000 10028 00F 00 10029 000 0000 10030 000 0000 10031 00F 00 10032 000 0000 10033 000 0000 10034 00F 00 10035 000 0000 10036 000 0000 10037 00F 00 10038 000 0000 10039 000 0000 10040 00F 00 10041 000 0000 10042 000 0000 10043 00F 00 10044 000 0000 10045 000 0000 10046 00F 00 10047 000 0000 10048 000 0000 10049 00F 00 10050 000 0000 10051 000 0000 10052 00F 00 10053 000 0000 10054 000 0000 10055 00F 00 10056 000 0000 10057 000 0000 10058 00F 00 10059 000 0000 10060 000 0000 10061 00F 00 10062 000 0000 10063 000 0000 10064 00F 00 10065 000 0000 10066 000 0000 10067 00F 00 10068 000 0000 10069 000 0000 10070 00F 00 10071 000 0000 10072 000 0000 10073 00F 00 10074 000 0000 10075 000 0000 10076 00F 00 10077 000 0000 10078 000 0000 10079 00F 00 10080 000 0000 10081 000 0000 10082 00F 00 10083 000 0000 10084 000 0000 10085 00F 00 10086 000 0000 10087 000 0000 10088 00F 00 10089 000 0000 10090 000 0000 10091 00F 00 10092 000 0000 10093 000 0000 10094 00F 00 10095 000 0000 10096 000 0000 10097 00F 00 10098 000 0000 10099 000 0000 10100 00F 00 10101 000 0000 10102 000 0000 10103 00F 00 10104 000 0000 10105 000 0000 10106 00F 00 10107 000 0000 10108 000 0000 10109 00F 00 10110 000 0000 10111 000 0000 10112 00F 00 10113 000 0000 10114 000 0000 10115 00F 00 10116 000 0000 10117 000 0000 10118 00F 00 10119 000 0000 10120 000 0000 10121 00F 00 10122 000 0000 10123 000 0000 10124 00F 00 10125 000 0000 10126 000 0000 10127 00F 00 10128 000 0000 10129 000 0000 10130 00F 00 10131 000 0000 10132 000 0000 10133 00F 00 10134 000 0000 10135 000 0000 10136 00F 00 10137 000 0000 10138 000 0000 10139 00F 00 10140 000 0000 10141 000 0000 10142 00F 00 10143 000 0000 10144 000 0000 10145 00F 00 10146 000 0000 10147 000 0000 10148 00F 00 10149 000 0000 10150 000 0000 10151 00F 00 10152 000 0000 10153 000 0000 10154 00F 00 10155 000 0000 10156 000 0000 10157 00F 00 10158 000 0000 10159 000 0000 10160 00F 00 10161 000 0000 10162 000 0000 10163 00F 00 10164 000 0000 10165 000 0000 10166 00F 00 10167 000 0000 10168 000 0000 10169 00F 00 10170 000 0000 10171 000 0000 10172 00F 00 10173 000 0000 10174 000 0000 10175 00F 00 10176 000 0000 10177 000 0000 10178 00F 00 10179 000 0000 10180 000 0000 10181 00F 00 10182 000 0000 10183 000 0000 10184 00F 00 10185 000 0000 10186 000 0000 10187 00F 00 10188 000 0000 10189 000 0000 10190 00F 00 10191 000 0000 10192 000 0000 10193 00F 00 10194 000 0000 10195 000 0000 10196 00F 00 10197 000 0000 10198 000 0000 10199 00F 00 10200 000 0000 </pre>	<p>Point the CPU's register pointer towards the raster routine in \$C03A.</p> <p>See list of the interrupt enable register to allow raster interrupts to take place.</p> <p>Push the raster register's A.D.A.'s off the stack in the raster routine to free the test cell and raster view, then return from an interrupt.</p> <p>Check if bit 0 of the interrupt status register is set, if so then a raster interrupt has occurred.</p> <p>If set, then branch back to \$C034 to exit interrupt.</p> <p>Get raster raster register, add two to avoid flicker and move value to the Y co-ordinates of all eight sprites.</p> <p>Check if raster count flag has reached 8.</p>	<pre> 10201 000 0000 10202 00F 00 10203 000 0000 10204 000 0000 10205 00F 00 10206 000 0000 10207 000 0000 10208 00F 00 10209 000 0000 10210 000 0000 10211 00F 00 10212 000 0000 10213 000 0000 10214 00F 00 10215 000 0000 10216 000 0000 10217 00F 00 10218 000 0000 10219 000 0000 10220 00F 00 10221 000 0000 10222 000 0000 10223 00F 00 10224 000 0000 10225 000 0000 10226 00F 00 10227 000 0000 10228 000 0000 10229 00F 00 10230 000 0000 10231 000 0000 10232 00F 00 10233 000 0000 10234 000 0000 10235 00F 00 10236 000 0000 10237 000 0000 10238 00F 00 10239 000 0000 10240 000 0000 10241 00F 00 10242 000 0000 10243 000 0000 10244 00F 00 10245 000 0000 10246 000 0000 10247 00F 00 10248 000 0000 10249 000 0000 10250 00F 00 10251 000 0000 10252 000 0000 10253 00F 00 10254 000 0000 10255 000 0000 10256 00F 00 10257 000 0000 10258 000 0000 10259 00F 00 10260 000 0000 10261 000 0000 10262 00F 00 10263 000 0000 10264 000 0000 10265 00F 00 10266 000 0000 10267 000 0000 10268 00F 00 10269 000 0000 10270 000 0000 10271 00F 00 10272 000 0000 10273 000 0000 10274 00F 00 10275 000 0000 10276 000 0000 10277 00F 00 10278 000 0000 10279 000 0000 10280 00F 00 10281 000 0000 10282 000 0000 10283 00F 00 10284 000 0000 10285 000 0000 10286 00F 00 10287 000 0000 10288 000 0000 10289 00F 00 10290 000 0000 10291 000 0000 10292 00F 00 10293 000 0000 10294 000 0000 10295 00F 00 10296 000 0000 10297 000 0000 10298 00F 00 10299 000 0000 10300 000 0000 10301 00F 00 10302 000 0000 10303 000 0000 10304 00F 00 10305 000 0000 10306 000 0000 10307 00F 00 10308 000 0000 10309 000 0000 10310 00F 00 10311 000 0000 10312 000 0000 10313 00F 00 10314 000 0000 10315 000 0000 10316 00F 00 10317 000 0000 10318 000 0000 10319 00F 00 10320 000 0000 10321 000 0000 10322 00F 00 10323 000 0000 10324 000 0000 10325 00F 00 10326 000 0000 10327 000 0000 10328 00F 00 10329 000 0000 10330 000 0000 10331 00F 00 10332 000 0000 10333 000 0000 10334 00F 00 10335 000 0000 10336 000 0000 10337 00F 00 10338 000 0000 10339 000 0000 10340 00F 00 10341 000 0000 10342 000 0000 10343 00F 00 10344 000 0000 10345 000 0000 10346 00F 00 10347 000 0000 10348 000 0000 10349 00F 00 10350 000 0000 10351 000 0000 10352 00F 00 10353 000 0000 10354 000 0000 10355 00F 00 10356 000 0000 10357 000 0000 10358 00F 00 10359 000 0000 10360 000 0000 10361 00F 00 10362 000 0000 10363 000 0000 10364 00F 00 10365 000 0000 10366 000 0000 10367 00F 00 10368 000 0000 10369 000 0000 10370 00F 00 10371 000 0000 10372 000 0000 10373 00F 00 10374 000 0000 10375 000 0000 10376 00F 00 10377 000 0000 10378 000 0000 10379 00F 00 10380 000 0000 10381 000 0000 10382 00F 00 10383 000 0000 10384 000 0000 10385 00F 00 10386 000 0000 10387 000 0000 10388 00F 00 10389 000 0000 10390 000 0000 10391 00F 00 10392 000 0000 10393 000 0000 10394 00F 00 10395 000 0000 10396 000 0000 10397 00F 00 10398 000 0000 10399 000 0000 10400 00F 00 10401 000 0000 10402 000 0000 10403 00F 00 10404 000 0000 10405 000 0000 10406 00F 00 10407 000 0000 10408 000 0000 10409 00F 00 10410 000 0000 10411 000 0000 10412 00F 00 10413 000 0000 10414 000 0000 10415 00F 00 10416 000 0000 10417 000 0000 10418 00F 00 10419 000 0000 10420 000 0000 10421 00F 00 10422 000 0000 10423 000 0000 10424 00F 00 10425 000 0000 10426 000 0000 10427 00F 00 10428 000 0000 10429 000 0000 10430 00F 00 10431 000 0000 10432 000 0000 10433 00F 00 10434 000 0000 10435 000 0000 10436 00F 00 10437 000 0000 10438 000 0000 10439 00F 00 10440 000 0000 10441 000 0000 10442 00F 00 10443 000 0000 10444 000 0000 10445 00F 00 10446 000 0000 10447 000 0000 10448 00F 00 10449 000 0000 10450 000 0000 10451 00F 00 10452 000 0000 10453 000 0000 10454 00F 00 10455 000 0000 10456 000 0000 10457 00F 00 10458 000 0000 10459 000 0000 10460 00F 00 10461 000 0000 10462 000 0000 10463 00F 00 10464 000 0000 10465 000 0000 10466 00F 00 10467 000 0000 10468 000 0000 10469 00F 00 10470 000 0000 10471 000 0000 10472 00F 00 10473 000 0000 10474 000 0000 10475 00F 00 10476 000 0000 10477 000 0000 10478 00F 00 10479 000 0000 10480 000 0000 10481 00F 00 10482 000 0000 10483 000 0000 10484 00F 00 10485 000 0000 10486 000 0000 10487 00F 00 10488 000 0000 10489 000 0000 10490 00F 00 10491 000 0000 10492 000 0000 10493 00F 00 10494 000 0000 10495 000 0000 10496 00F 00 10497 000 0000 10498 000 0000 10499 00F 00 10500 000 0000 </pre>	<p>If so then all eight sprites have been displayed & return to screen to branch to \$C030.</p> <p>If not then store value back in raster page.</p> <p>Add 20 decimal to the raster compare value to get the next sprite display co-ordinates and store it in raster page and then raster compare register.</p> <p>See list of the interrupt status register to report that the raster interrupt has been completed.</p> <p>Jump to \$C034 to exit interrupt.</p> <p>Sprites have been displayed & return to screen the raster count flag to zero and reset the raster compare value.</p> <p>Y0 & X0 bits. This routine is necessary because the raster bit register has been blocked.</p> <p>Get value of last key pressed.</p> <p>Is it raster operation?</p> <p>If yes, then branch to \$C034.</p> <p>Use raster count information. Raster information starts at \$C03A.</p> <p>Is raster key flag set?</p> <p>If yes, then branch to \$C030.</p> <p>Use raster from subroutine. Raster subroutine starts at \$C03A.</p> <p>Decrement raster value to move raster up screen then return from subroutine.</p>
--	---	--	---



**Resident 'agony uncle',
Simon Rockman
endeavours to solve
your Commodore
problems.**

INPUT



Dear Sir,
I have a CP/M 1.1 disk for the Commodore 64. CP/M cartridge can I use software from other machines? Yours faithfully,
A Campbell,
Glasgow.

My answer.
CP/M is an operating system. The ROM of a 64 can be roughly divided up into two sections, Basic and Operating System; in the 64 it is known as the kernel. CP/M replaces these and uses a 280 chip as a processor. This allows the computer to conform to a rigid standard. A bit of

clever software, called the BIOS, tells CP/M how your machine is configured, that it has a screen, disc and a keyboard, and translates from the 64 hardware to the CP/M software. Every machine that runs CP/M has its own BIOS which links into standard CP/M. So CP/M all computers look the same. This means that any program written to conform to the CP/M standard will work on any of the many CP/M computers. There is one major drawback. This is the lack of a standard for a disc format. Because the hardware for disc drives has improved so rapidly it is not possible to read any disc on any drive. This is especially true of the 1541 which is totally non-standard. To run any CP/M software using the 64 cartridge it is necessary to find a supplier with the correct disc format. These are very few and far between. The other major problem with CP/M discs is that a lot of CP/M programs expect dual disc drives. The Commodore

system cannot cater for this. CP/M usually requires an 80 column display, this means that any program which uses this cannot be run on a 64. The most useful application left for CP/M on the 64 is for running languages. CP/M provides for all the major languages; all you have to worry about is disc size and format. Still at £18 the Commodore cartridge is very cheap.

Dear Sir,
When typing in programs from magazines I often find that the lines in the listing will not fit in. How can I squish all the text onto one line? Another problem I face with magazine listings is when a program comes up with an error message when there is nothing wrong with the line it says but another line has a mistake in it. Yours faithfully,
John Thompson,
Newcastle.



My answer.
Since the early days of Commodore computers life has been made easy for the programmer by the use of shorthand commands. The most common of these is the use of ? for PRINT, but there are a whole bunch of these commands which are listed in the back of your manual (page 180 if you have a Commodore 64). The Commodore screen editor will allow you to put right characters on each line (88 on a VIC) but the use of

abbreviations will cause the line to expand past this. Try this line:-

```
#####  
#####  
#####  
#####  
#####
```

you will need to move the cursor back to its return over it. When you hit the line it will have expanded out to six lines (more on a VIC). This is useful for cramming subroutines onto one line but makes the program very hard to work on because each time you want to change the line you want to convert each keyword back to its shorthand form (or token). For this reason the practice should be avoided, if necessary split the line up into two short lines. This will be slower but easier to work with.

The problem of the computer reporting the error message is one which confuses a lot of first time users. The computer complains when it detects the error not necessarily when the error occurs. The usual problem with magazine programs occurs with the READ and DATA statements. It is quite common to have a short loop within a program like this:-

```
510 FOR I=2 TO 2:READ  
N1:POKE I,N1:GOTO  
520 DATA 12,42,95,11,45,1,  
52,252
```

This routine is perfectly OK (it won't work here because it is only part of a program so don't type it in). If you should miss a comma from line 520 it will show up as an error in line 510. This will take the form of either an illegal quantity error or an out of data error. The former will happen if missing a comma has altered the program to READ a number greater than 255 (any the comma between the 71 and the 45), and the later



error will occur if all the other values are OK but it runs out of data. The illegal quantity error is produced by the POKE trying to use too large a number. The computer cannot guess what you are trying to read the data for and so will never produce an error in a data line, except when the syntax is wrong. So be careful when using the line number from an error is `...repeat`.



Dear Sir,
I want to put my name in a box at the start of a program but whenever I use a list and the graphics symbols I get a load of keywords that I don't want, how can I do this?
Yours faithfully,
Simon Jensen,
London

We answer,
In another letter we talked about tokens, the short form of keywords; you have come across a bug in Commodore BASIC. It takes any shifted character and converts it into a keyword. This is particularly noticeable in lower case mode. Press the Commodore key and shift to go into lower case and then type:-

I rem Your Commodore.
When you list it you get:-
I rem gosubour lomomere



The computer has converted the Y into a gosub and the C into a rem. There is a way around this, use quotes:-
I rem "Your Commodore" will always list correctly, so to draw a box around your name start each line with a 'REM' ; there is no need to close the quotes.

Dear Sir,
I am having an argument with a friend, he says that you should always have a letter after a NEXT, but I know that it works without, who is right?
Yours faithfully,
J Ruedrup,
Bath.

We answer,
Both of you! If you miss out the variable name after a NEXT in a FOR...NEXT loop the computer will look back to see if it is in the middle of any loops and assuming it is it will use that variable, so you are right. However don't get big headed, there is a school of thought, known as structured programming which says that not only must programs work but they must be easy to work on. That means everything should be laid out clearly. If you have a lot

of FOR...NEXT loops it can get confusing as to which FOR a NEXT is referring to. For this reason it is good practice to label the NEXT. There are two drawbacks to this — memory and speed. Putting the variable in takes up memory, only one byte but it still takes up a little.

On a '64 this may not matter but on a 1.5K VIC every byte matters. The other drawback is speed. If you omit the variable the computer assumes that it is in the right loop and ploughs on, however if you include the variable it stops for a fraction of a second to check that it is the right variable before proceeding. For this last reason I would omit the letter but this does not mean that your friend is wrong, just less efficient.



Hint: You can save memory in data statements by not using zeros. If you just have a comma the READ statement will assume zero, or null for strings:-

```
20 READ N
30 PRINT N,
40 NEXT
50 DATA 1,,1,1
```

Will produce

```
1 0 0 1 1
```



OUTPUT



Your Commodore's
 Alison Hjul heads
 north in search of
 some insight into the
 soaring success of
 Coventry-based
 software company,
 PSS.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

I WAS SENT TO COVENTRY yesterday. No, my work colleagues hadn't agreed to ostracize me from their company; the Coventry in question was the Warwickshire city of motor industry and modern cathedral lane. My mission — to detect PSS's formula for success. PSS, for the uninitiated is the acronym for Personal Software Services.

Escort by PSS's PR agent, David Crosswell, I reached my destination. PSS's headquarters are crisscrossed in a slice of Midlands' suburbia. The converted-semi exterior concealed a conglomerate of offices brimming with examples of their prolific software output (both past and present), assorted pieces of hardware and industrial staff, all more in keeping with the position they hold as a thriving software company in a highly competitive industry.

In the beginning...

PSS was initiated 26 years ago by two Warwick University management science graduates, Gary Mays and Richard Cockayne. These two young entrepreneurs, unwilling to become yet two more cogs in the wheel of a large company, decided to set up their own business.

A quarter-page advertisement for computer games on tape indicated their entry into the world of computers. With a little mental arithmetic and a

modicum of common sense, the duo established their business on the criteria that a 50p tape could justifiably be sold for £5. Armed with no computing knowledge but with their couple of management science degrees, Mays and Cockayne advertised for the tools with which to build their dreams; the result — a deluge of replies from a willing force of programmers.

Initial steps

PSS launched their career in the software industry with the creation of their own software library whereby subscribers could borrow and copy from a library of 20 tapes. For reasons unknown to Gary Mays, it failed.

But, with the assistance of a Coventry business enterprise scheme offering them £48 a week to establish their company, Mays and Cockayne overcame this initial setback. The money kept them going for three or four months until the birth of their first successful product, QBasic, a fast-load device for the ZX-81. The software and hardware were sold as a complete package and, over a period of 18 months, a sales figure of 30,000 was achieved.

Commodore hits the scene

Although PSS now design and write their own software, they originally marketed largely the

product of other software houses. Having concentrated mainly on Spectrum software, by March 1983 they were unable to avoid the advent of Commodore onto the British market. Claims Gary Mays:

"We didn't have a huge success with Spectrum; we came in too late. Everything was ticking over nicely, but it occurred to us that Commodore were going to be big".

The first hurdle they had to cross was the absence of suitable Commodore products. A lot of their software had previously been submitted by youngsters but Gary Mays saw Commodore as a different kettle of fish altogether.

"For some reason Commodore seems to be different in that they don't program it".

"I went to Chicago for the CES (Consumer Electronic Show) last June with the sole intention of picking up Commodore software from a stateside company".

Symbol Software came to their rescue and they soon had a hit with *Neodrive* which featured in the star list of various computer magazines. Gary Mays attributed *Neodrive*'s success to its exploitation of Commodore sprites and graphics which many of their rivals appeared to neglect. Also, quite simply, "it was fun to play".

Birth of a concept

Now that PSS are producing their own software, nearly all their programs are

produced by in-house programmers rather than freelancers, which has given them tighter control over both programs and time scales.

"We were ending up with a product which, as far as they [their external programmers] were concerned, was finished". And "We never knew when it [the program] was coming".

How do PSS attain their ideal? Gary Mays again: "The initial spark for an idea can come from anyone, then Richard and I and Campbell MacCaesland, the software manager, sit around a table and flesh ideas out until we agree".

Although hardly in his dotage himself, Gary Mays says that one problem PSS do face is getting onto the same wave-length as the kids (of whom their market is largely composed), so as to escape the danger of usurping the market with their own ideas. PSS include with their packages questionnaire cards to pick the brains and ideas of their buyers. This has proven a very successful formula.

Until recently, their Commodore games have been largely arcade-type games.

"We try to write simply what the market wants", judging by the direction in which PSS are now heading, their users may be crying out for something more complex than simple arcade-type game.

Into battle

Midway, a wargame based



on the famous World War II battle, was P55's first British produced package for the Commodore. Although on release for no more than 3 weeks, at the time of going to press, the reaction to Midway already seems very encouraging to P55's Gary May.

"It was a bit of a gamble. Alan [Alan Steel, Midway's creator] has been a manager since the age of 16. He kept getting different wargames but got fed up with the standard. He came to us and suggested he wrote a wargame".

In fact, since a complete wargaming system has now been devised, Midway promises to be the first of a series.

On your bike

With their newest offering, Hyper Biker, P55 are indeed satisfying the latest craze. Much to Gary May's relief, an idea inaugurated 8 or 9 months ago hasn't waned.

"Because BMX biking seems to be taking off in a solid sort of way, it's maintaining. Practically every kid I see seems to have a BMX bike... it looks good and applies well to the computer".

P55's software manager, Campbell MacCausland, gave me a brief overview of the game. It's a 4-player, 3-D game with joystick or keyboard control of the bike. Gary May's instruction:

"The first thing the player has to get to grips with is controlling the bike. A awful lot of research has gone into getting it realistic and playable".

With a selection of eight different events to choose from, for example, a flat race, an obstacle race or a wheeling competition, coupled with such accurate bike control, Campbell MacCausland believes Hyper Biker has captured as closely as possible, the real thing.

"We've really gone out of our way in not just calling the game BMX but trying to emulate as near as possible what would be done in BMX competition".



Gary May and Richard Cockayne

With a scrolling display enabling the background to pass by as you pedal, graphics which they claim cannot be faulted and the above mentioned features incorporated into a game, which, above all, is fun to play, P55 believe they are onto a winner.

Gary May's retort to my, perhaps, insolent remark that maybe a child, thrilled by the speed and excitement of riding a BMX bike would not be so enraptured by the prospect of operating a simulated BMX bike through the medium of computer, monitor and joystick, was that there was... no reason why competition in computer games could not be the same as in a street.

Maybe, come December, a TV screen in a five-lit sitting room will be more exciting than a wet and windy street, especially if Hyper Biker is as realistic as its makers claim.

Magical mystery tour

With their latest brainchild, 'Swords and Sorcery', P55 claim to have surpassed anything yet imagined by themselves or their competitors. In fact, the concept of a computerised version of the role-playing game, 'Dungeons and Dragons', has been swimming around in P55 brains for a long while. The program design has been underway for close on two years now; actual programming commenced 9 months ago and is now nearing its conclusion. Mike Simpson, its creator, is a 'Dungeons and Dragons' expert and a

highly competent programmer.

Gary May is very proud of his new baby: "Everyone who's seen it said 'You can't do it'".

"We've tried to make it the ultimate mix of Arcade and Adventure. It'll be the game of the year".

Campbell MacCausland continues: "It makes the Hobbit seem like Pacman".

"The problem we're going to have is making people believe it's as good as it really is".

The product uses the unique MIDAS (Multi Dimensional Animation System) system which, amongst other facilities, provides full 3-D animation, which, P55 believe, makes it as close as you can get to a video disc game.

'Swords and Sorcery' (which should be available mid-October) allows you to develop your own unique character and to experience, in that game, a series of adventures through assorted underground corridors. Should you tire of one adventure, with the aid of a set of expensive modules, you may transfer your character to another. P55 also hope to provide a networked system on both the Spectrum and Commodore by January, thus adding even further dimensions to the game.

They expect to develop a cut following through 'Swords and Sorcery'.

(I don't believe I can do justice to 'Swords and Sorcery' in the allotted time and space but we hope to review this revolutionary game in a future issue of 'Your Commodore' — so keep your eyes peeled).

Selling the goods

P55 certainly seem to have their eyes to the ground as far as coming up with the right product at the right time is concerned. Where other companies with, seemingly, as much potential have floundered, they have not only survived but have managed to achieve a 100% increase in turnover within the last year. The market has exploded and P55 have kept almost at it. They also feel that success has enabled them to take more of a gamble; thus, they can follow through ideas which more cautious companies can but dream about. And, naturally, the higher the standards they set, the higher the standards they will be expected to attain and, thus, will endeavour to maintain.

Advertising and the assistance of a PR company are also quite indispensable in a fast and furious business, which Gary May likes to the record singles' market.

But P55 are blooming under such pressure. When questioned on his views on the industry's future, Gary once again borrowed the record analogy by suggesting 'albums' of software. Thus, he believes, would work in everyone's favour by extending the life of a piece of software.

"I think what we'll see are compilation tapes or discs". But such a concept seems alien to P55's competitors.

"At the moment, on the one hand people talk together about loans, on the other they don't talk about money".

And so to their issue with Commodore: does Gary May see P55 opting increasingly for Commodore products?

"I think we've got to: it's a world market rather than a UK one".

With their acute insight into the software industry and courage to pursue a novel concept, I hope that P55 do maintain their confidence in Commodore as a vehicle for their products.

Lamasoft

ORIGINAL SOFTWARE DESIGN

40 MOUNT PLEASANT, TADLEY, HANTS. RG28 8BN.



SEND S.A.E. FOR FREE NEWS LETTER: "THE NATURE OF THE BEAST".



CONCRETE



WATER SYSTEMS



DEALERS may order direct from CBI Telecoms 01 688 2186 quoting account number, U.K. code number and quantity. Goods delivered within 48 hours.

The 64 Software Centre

1, Princeton Street, London WC1. Tel 01-430 0954

The specialist centre with the widest range of software for the Commodore 64 and the best service. Open 10am/5pm (incl. Sundays). Demonstration facilities.

● BUSINESS SOFTWARE:

Accounts, Stock Control, Database Systems, Spreadsheets, Statistics, Charts, Budget, Word Processors.

● HOUSEHOLD ACCOUNTS:

Banking, Budgeting, Word Processors, Databases.

● UTILITIES & AIDS:

Simon's Basic, BC Basic, Turtle Graphics, Ultrabasic, Pal, Mikro Assembler, Hesmon 64, Victree, Master 64, The Tool, Graphics Designer, Sprite Aid, Turbo Ext. Basic, Acos +, Zoom Pascal, Forth 64, Logo, 64 Doctor; Ultisynth, Synthly 64, Scope.

● EDUCATIONAL:

Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, History, Geography, French, Italian, Spelling.

● SIMULATIONS:

War, Flying, Golf, Boxing, Stock Exchange, Commodities.

● GAMES & ADVENTURES:

English and American (Cassette, Disk, Cartridges).

● COMPUTER COURSES:

Dr Watson's Basic and Assembler for Beginners, CBM 64 Tutor.

Friendly assistance and advice given. Export orders welcome. Immediate despatch for mail and telephone orders (Access, Visa, Eurocard, Mastercard). Discounts for package deals.

DOING IT YOURSELF

Disatisfied with off-the-shelf business systems? Think you can beat the 'experts' at their own game? Graham Davies offers sound advice on writing your own bespoke business software in the second installment of this series.

LAST MONTH I SAID ALL my routines would sit between lines 1000 and 2000. The first routine that you must do will be an exception to this. This is perhaps the most important routine — it is the one which saves your program to disc giving version numbers and maintaining three (or more) backups. As you develop your program, you will undoubtedly save it onto more than one disc. You may later find yourself, with two discs with the same program but one will be a later version than the other — so how do you find out — what was the latest change to that program? — probably you changed part of one line to fix a bug but which line? Another thing to remember is that it is a good idea to save your program before running it. The reason for this is that it is surprisingly easy to get a BASIC program to hang the computer. Common ways of this happening include using POKE without setting variables or using the wrong ones. This will almost certainly result in memory location zero being POKE'd with a random number thus re-pointing the 64's memory around and pagging out BASIC (unless you are lucky). Finally there are obvious advantages to having three or more backups available — disc corruptions being the first which spring to mind!

No to the code, I have put it at the end of the program so that it is out of the way. The line before it starts is an END instruction in case your program does not stop before it gets to this routine. The routine will keep a version number at the start of the BASIC program so the start of your program will look like this:

```
10 rem/Program or
   System Name
20 rem/Version 00
```

Note that in line ten you must have the closing quotes and the number of characters between the quotes exactly correct because we are going to be altering the version number which must be a fixed number of bytes from the start of the program. There must be 32 characters between the quotes. On line 20, the positioning of the version number is equally as important.

The routine checks that lines 10 and 20 have been entered correctly and gets the current version number (version number = 3^*10^4). In line 6000, set 15 to your program name (make it less than 63 characters though as the version number will be added on to this). Line 6000 opens the error channel to the disc and, if we are not up to version five, jumps past the next bit of code which scratches the oldest version from the disc. The current version on disc is then renamed giving it the existing version number then the version number in this program is altered and this program is saved under the name in 15.

If you type this program in and keep 15 as "system", then run 6000 five times you will end up with the latest version on the disc being called "system" and the backup versions called "system00", "system01", etc. so you know where

your latest version is. The subroutine at 6100 reads the error channel from disc until a carriage return is reached, printing it as it goes along. The reason for doing it this way rather than using INPUT is that this format is neat and it is unnecessary to check the value of the status except after you have saved the file.

Defining standard strings and constants

As the start of your program you will need some standard strings and constants that you will often use in your programs. You will of course add all your own ones to this brief list.

```
1000 loc=1000:q0=q1=q2=""
      nextline set up
      qarech of 80
1020 q1=chr(47):q2=chr
      (34):q3=chr(32)
1030 rem carriage return
      quotes escape
      character
1040 loc=17400:SI=bar
      loc+1 rem border
      background
1060 wd="Record"
      keeping" rem
      system name
1080 loc=10021:quote11"
      40964"126:font1
1090 rem clear our sound
      chip
1100 dim the array you
      need here
1120 define any functions
      required here
```

The above is quite self explanatory but you may wonder why line 1000 is included. A carriage return is often required when printing to a printer or a disc drive and it is a very useful way of truncating data on

```
9999 end
10000 open 18,15:close1 rem about disc files
10020 rem on start of program
10030 q1=chr(47):q2="" if hprint"missing quote on
      line 87" stop
10040 b=peek(j+and 15):c=peek(j+and 15) rem version
      no
10060 if c > font : hprint"illegal version no." stop
10080 wd="Record" keeping" rem system / system name
10100 open 18,15:if v1 < 5 then 60000
10120 z1=5-mid$(j+18*vn-4),1
      print"scratching"
10140 print1,"z1:"z1:gosub 6100
10160 z1=5-mid$(j+18*vn-3),1
      print"scratching"
10180 print1,"z0:"z0:"R:gosub 6100
10200 p=peek(j+vn-10):w=48:peek(11,vn-1):q=chr(48)
10220 print"using"z0
10240 save(z1,q,gosub 6000)
10260 end
10300 gsub1,q1:print8,"z1:"chr(13):zard 1000
10320 repeat rem disc status print
```

input, if used regularly, it is quicker and easier to type $q\downarrow$ than $chr\$(13)$. The quotes $chr\$(34)$ cannot be typed into a string so if it is required, you will have to type $chr\$(14)$. Once again, if it is easier to type $q\downarrow$ and far more reliable than trying to remember its code every time. The last one, the escape code, may not be needed, if, however, you are talking to an ASCII device such as a printer then the escape code is essential as the listening device will perform special functions depending on the data received after the escape. I have included it for completeness and as a further example of the kind of thing you will find useful to set up.



Key to success

No matter how fast, fanciful, clever and flexible a program is, the major key to its success is how pleasant and easy to use it is. This means making the information on the screen and printer appear in a neat, formatted style. It also means that the input of the data wants to be safe and friendly. The BASIC input command is provided of course but it falls far short of the necessary standards and flexibility required. It does allow full screen editing but does not trap any characters such as home or ch home,

cursor up, cursor down and so on. It is evident that we need a flexible but safe utility to do this. We need to specify where on the screen we want to input, how long the field is, what sort of data is to be typed into this field and so on. After all, you do not want accidental key pushes to cause the program to crash or wrong data to be entered. For example, if we were asking for a number, and we accidentally type $\downarrow 45$ instead of 145 (not unlikely due to the proximity of the keys) we would get

lowflow error when using

the basic input command. Even if we entered it as a string then took the val of it we would get the same error. This is more likely than you may think as I know of one package which when inputting data, took the val of every string regardless, and then produced this error in the middle of an address! This was because the post code was something like $\downarrow 45$.

This sub-routine will require several variables passed to it. You will find that you can easily improve the flexibility of this sub-routine to include post over

special function keys. You could have one which aborts the whole screen or takes you to the bottom entry and so on but each of these keys will have to be tested for separately in your code. This routine will require the starting position across the screen to be in $\%C$, the starting position down the screen to be in $\%D$, the length of the field, $\%E$ will be the type of the field and the default will be in $\%F$. The default is what was in the field before you started editing, if creating something, then it will be zero blank most likely but, if amending something, it should contain the details from the file. The type will be one of the 3 below.

Routine 4 is quite straightforward but is very flexible. Once you are happy that you understand it, try adding a function which clears everything to the right of the cursor. At the moment, the only way out of the routine is to press return but we can add to this. You may use the function keys as when they are pressed you can test the ASCII of them. I suggest you make this routine return another variable such as $\%K$ to say if a function key has been pressed and if so, which one it is. Do not forget to set $\%K$ to zero if return was pressed though.

The 3 types of variable available.

- 1 = any alphanumeric character (including comma & colon)
- 2 = positive or negative floating point number
- 3 = positive or negative integer

Once you have got this routine to work, by adding other types such as positive only integer and so on. The routine uses $\%H$ to store the new data in and returns $\%I$ as the value of the field (if numeric).

```

1040 obj% = Chr$(?) : cursor down * 25
1050 rem set up the obj,ql and qd at the start
1090 obj% = Chr$(?) : ql% = 1 : qd% = 0 : rem make 03 correct length
1210 print(ql%);obj%;qb%;pback% - 1;chr$(ql%);:
1250 print chr$(obj%); mid$(obj%,2) : chr$(ql%);: mid$(obj%,2)
1290 rem a is the cursor position along H
1330 print chr$(ql%);: obj%;: obj%;: chr$(ql%);: quotes
1370 getak chr$(?) : chr$(13)
1380 obj% = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + obj% * 128 : rem one right
1390 obj% = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% - 1 : goto 1210 : rem left
1410 obj% = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + 1 : rem right
obj%, = Chr$(?) : ql% = ql% + 1 : rem CLR

```

```

1250 rem line 1258 is least
obj%, = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + obj% * 128 : rem left
obj%, = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% - 1 : rem right
1260 rem line 1368 is delete
1270 obj%, = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + 1 : rem pressed return
1280 obj%, = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + 1 : rem pressed obj%,
1300 obj%, = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + 1 : rem type 1
1310 goto 1390
1340 obj%, = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + 1 : rem type 2
1350 goto 1390
1360 obj%, = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + 1 : rem type 3
1370 rem add in type 4 here
1380 obj%, = Chr$(obj%);: ql% = ql% + 1 : rem type 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0, 12, 13
1390 goto 1210 rem chr ok : chr pos in string and end
1400 goto 1210 rem add in an error loop here
1410 print(ql%);obj%;pback% - 1;obj%;: : chr$(obj%);: chr$(obj%);:
1440 return
rem exit

```

Routine 4.

Our business expert, David Crisp, assesses some of the latest business software releases for the Commodore.

THIS MONTH I'VE BEEN FEEDING my 64 with some fairly low-cost software which aims to help you work out your business or home finances. The first one I tried was *Autocalc 64* from Richard Shepherd Software. It costs £14.95 on cassette and £19.95 on disc and is a low cost spreadsheet. After loading you are asked whether you are using tape or disc. This is fine to start with but, after having to specify tape or disc more than a couple of times, it becomes very much a chore. If you have never used a spreadsheet before I feel that this one may put you off them. A good spreadsheet is an invaluable aid for financial planning and financial analysis but they are unforgiving things and can be very frustrating.

This spreadsheet does all the important things that spreadsheets should do — the frustrating thing is, how it does it. When moving from one part of the sheet to another there is a very disturbing screen flash which tires the eyes after a while, and with a machine with the capabilities of the 64 there are much smoother ways of performing a sideways screen scroll.

Perhaps the most disturbing thing about it was when it crashed. I had spent about an hour copying in a set of information and calculations and intentionally put in a division by zero. Instead of the expected error message the whole thing crashed. On trying again with less information it performed correctly and then on a third run it crashed again. Disturbing.

There is no printer interface software built in and my software would not run at the same time as this and so I was unable to test the printout facility. A lot of people now have Centronics printers and this program is limited to just a few of Commodore's own and a couple of others. Use others and you invalidate the guarantee.

The new documentation is barely adequate for a spreadsheet program and only describes the bare bones of what to do. I get the impression that everything is being left to the demonstration files.

I was very disappointed with this program and with its lack of documentation and inability to give

BUSINESS

BUSINESS FILE



DISK
CODE 64

		PROFIT	REVENUE
SALES	REVENUE	1200.00	1000.00
LESS		14.00	1700.00
GROSS	PROFIT	1186.00	2000.00
S.P.	PROFIT	75.00	63.00
EXPENSES			
RENT		100.00	100.00
UTILITIES		50.00	50.00
ADVERT.		20.00	20.00
TRAVEL		10.00	10.00
TELEPHONE		10.00	10.00
TOTAL	EXPENSES	190.00	190.00
NET	PROFIT	1000.00	2000.00

100% MACHINE CODE SPREADSHEET
An intelligent aid to planning and analysis for the Commodore 64

RICHARD SHEPHERD SOFTWARE

a printout on a good range of printers. I would say that it is only really suitable for people who want to fiddle with a spreadsheet. If you really want a spreadsheet to use in your business then I recommend that you spend a little more money and get something with more potential. It is true however that it is

a low price program and because of this I feel that it is reasonable value for money. Shame about the crashes.

After a couple of hours on that one I loaded up *Figaro* from *Jason Computing*. The blurb on the back was mouthwatering and I couldn't wait to get it into the machine. I had



to restrain myself from diving straight in and so left the computer to spend an hour with the manual. I'm glad I did. The amount of information was incredible.

The program is a type of database. It is intended to store numeric information and analyze it in different ways presenting final output as a list of comparative information or in virtually any type of graph you care to mention. Because of the complexity of the program I only had time to work on the demo files provided — and these impressed me. I feel that this is a program that could prove invaluable to any business where cash projections, growth rates, sales targets, and seasonal forecasting etc. is invaluable. I have doubts as to whether many small business users would be able to stretch it to its limits but if there are any financial wizards out there who want to impress the boss then this is a winner.

Now the bad news. It says that high resolution printers are possible using Commodore and Centronics printers. I tried with a CP III and a Smith Corona TPI and got nothing. Both printers checked out OK and work well with Superbase and Easy Script etc. We'll be checking with Xerox to try and discover why things did not work; I hope I will be able to tell you about the printer facility in a later issue.

In an article like this it is not possible to describe its potential fully as it would need a whole article of its own. That may be possible in the future. In the meantime, if you feel that this is something you may be able to use, I recommend you pop down to the local computer store and have a look. I think you will be impressed. Damn shame about the printer! ...

From day now, and I have just loaded up **Purchase Ledger** from **Temp**. I use a purchase ledger program in my business, and it was my intention to run this in parallel with my existing system. Somebody who knows a lot about purchase ledgers has written this program. Unfortunately, they don't seem to be totally effective programmers.

This had a lot of potential as all the functions were there. It was let down by its poor display, non-existent error trapping and inconsistent inputs. Some parts of the program require you to input 'yes' as a whole word, other times just 'y' will do. On the main option page, if you make an incorrect entry, up scrolls the screen and eventually the whole menu disappears until you have to guess what the menu said.

During stages of the program, one touch of the break key will halt everything and typing in **CONF** only works sometimes. **CANT CONTINUE ERROR** comes up 50% of the time. **Re-RUN** and it's goodbye to your data.

Keypunch are always quite good but simply warning you not to touch the **CLRE/HOME** key and then saying, if you do, just reposition the cursor, is not good enough in a business program. That type of thing should be error trapped and **Run/Stop** keys should be displayed. It can be argued that a program like this is easy to tailor to your own needs, but specific entry points can be put into a program to enable you to tailor a program.

Needless to say, I did not run this in parallel with my existing ledgers as, in short, it was just not up to the job. Sorry.



Ten Superbase Stopping Stones piled in front of me. Great I thought as I am a Superbase fanatic. The programs can only be run with Superbase and the titles I had for review were as follows:

Club Records
Estate Agents
Job Costing
Purchase Day Book
Cash Book
Accountants Time Recording
Solicitors Time Recording
Stock Records
Travel Agents
Sales Day Book

Some of these I would not know enough about to give a valid review so I will only be able to give an overview of what they were about. It must be pointed out that these are just stopping stones. They are not complete applications. Each one consists of neatly formatted records and pre-written report layouts. This means that the easy bit is done — the hard part, which is linking it up to an actual Superbase program, is not. To be fair, it is possible to use them from a menu and so they are

ready to go in that respect but it is a long winded way to go about it. They are excellent for showing the potential of Superbase and can easily be modified but, as I say, it is not a complete and fully running inter-linked application.

To pick one out and show the sort of thing they do was a hard job but in the end I went to the **Club Record Controller**. This I feel is one that most people may be able to use. The files set up are orientated towards the sports type of club not the stamp collector type but this could be modified; it will produce a members list, overdue fees, equipment on hire, what each person's particular interests are, all the things in fact that a club secretary would need to know.

If you have or indeed are thinking of buying Superbase (which I recommend) and are going to use it for an application for which a **Stopping Stone** is available then it would be a good buy. It would take a lot of the groundwork out of writing the finished article and would probably point out some little things that are easily forgotten. Documentation with the **Stopping Stones** is non-existent but you can print out the **HELP** pages to produce a fairly comprehensive **DIY** instruction manual. All in all for the money they cost they are a good buy and they are something which I shall use in the future. **NICE WORK.**

Back to **Richard Shepherd** and his **Cash Controller**. Basically this is a home budgeting system which performs quite well. You put in the amount you intend to spend on such things as phone etc etc and, as time goes on, it works out for you if you are under or over budget. (My bank manager usually does that anyway). With this you can also keep track of your bank account and it will take into consideration standing orders, etc, and will produce a statement on demand. To me the most useful part was a **loan/mortgage** calculator. I certainly learned a thing or two on that part. If a particular company gives you a quote for credit it will work out a fourth variable from three you must enter, eg, if you borrow £1000.000 for 12 months at 21% APR, it will tell you how much you must actually pay back. Quite shocking some of them. A home budget program would not be for me but I am sure the loan/mortgage calculator will save me more than the program costs. If you are looking for this type of program then I feel that you could not go far wrong with this one.

As seen in the national press



The Prizes:

You could win **£2,500** to be spent on a **dream holiday** of your choice for you and your family!

Second prize—a complete Canon portable video outfit worth **£1,300**.

Third prize—a BBC Model B micro computer plus software worth **£450**.

Fourth prize—Minolta X700 camera with a 50mm lens and flashgun, worth **£280**.



How to enter:

Just identify the twelve objects pictured opposite....

HINT—the Argus Specialist Magazines listed below might give you a clue.

Electronics Today International
Personal Computing Today
MovieMaker
Your Model Maker
Clubs
Home Computing Weekly
Realbox
Ham/Radio Today
Electronics
35mm Photography
Model Cars
Model Boats

Games/Computing
Photoplay/Movies and Video
2X/Computing
Military Modelling
Hi-Fi Noel
Winemaker
Citizens Band
Model Boats
Video Today
Popular Crafts
What's Video?
Your Commodore

and write your (one-word) answers in the spaces provided on the coupon. For instance, if you think that number 9 is a record, write 'record' in the space next to (on the coupon) and so on. Then tell us in up to 20 words why.

MAKE IDEAL HOLIDAY READING. Complete the coupon in **BLOCK LETTERS**, and send it to: **DREAM HOLIDAY COMPETITION, Argus Specialist Publications Ltd, No 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB**, to reach us no later than **31st December 1984**.

Competition rules

1. The magazine property of UK and low readers except employees of Argus Specialist Publications Ltd, its agents and distributors.
2. An original stamped coupon from the magazine of your choice (subject to any purchase order) and the number of magazine copies purchased (if applicable) must accompany it.
3. Entries must be submitted before 31st December 1984.
4. Prizes will be awarded to the four entries who identify the best objects correctly and whose complete answers fit subject the most appropriate.
5. The correspondence of participants whose complete results are judged (subject to entry withdrawal) to be satisfactory and the results will be published in future issue of the magazine.



The 12 objects are

- | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. |
| 4. | 5. | 6. |
| 7. | 8. | 9. |
| 10. | 11. | 12. |

Magazines make ideal holiday reading because (up to 20 words)

NAME (BLOCK LETTERS) AGE (Under 16)

ADDRESS

Send to **DREAM HOLIDAY COMPETITION, Argus Specialist Publications, No 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB**



The SX64, a portable version of the Commodore 64, has been freely available for over six months and seems to have established a solid base. David Crisp weighs up the pros and cons of Commodore's portable micro.

THE SX64 REVIEWED

The Commodore SX64 is a Business/Home micro which has a built-in 5" colour monitor and a built-in 1541 single disc drive. The SX64 was intended to be a dual drive version but according to Commodore it will not now be released. I am led to believe that overheating of the second drive is the reason for this. However, an ordinary 1541 disc drive can still be connected up through the serial port. It comes with some free software which I will deal with later and a manual which is a rebashed version of the regular 64 book with parts of the 1541 disc drive handbook mashed in. As with most Commodore documentation, this is a disaster and in many places totally inaccurate. Some work has been put into correcting errors that were contained in original manuals but just as many new mistakes seem to have crept in.

The SX64 looks good. It is dark grey and some thought seems to have been put into making it aesthetically pleasing. There is a very thick, robust handle which makes carrying the moderately heavy machine much easier and no protruding parts on which to catch your feet. The front of the machine, when opened, reveals a slightly smaller keyboard than the normal 64 with dished white keys with the graphics symbols

clearly marked. The keyboard has a slightly empty feel but over all is comfortable in use although it is quite noisy. The keyboard section is very light and due to that mine has crashed to the floor on many occasions pulling its lead from the socket but so far it shows no signs of

damage. The lead which connects the keyboard to the machine can be detached but I find it does not get in the way even when it is carried around so I leave mine in place all the time.

What a view

On the left of the machine is the five-inch monitor. Despite being so small the picture is surprisingly clear and I have no trouble reading text providing there is good colour separation. There is slight pin cushion distortion at the edges of

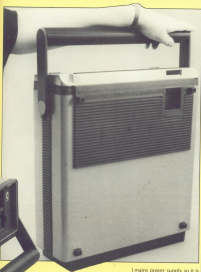
the screen but not enough to have any detrimental effect on clarity. The brightness, contrast, colour, vertical hold and volume controls are under a small panel on the right of the machine. They are a little fiddly but, once set, they do not waver far, so are quite adequate. I once read a review where the writer complained that there was no tuning control but on a colour monitor a tuner is not required as there is no DRIFT as on a normal TV set. Also, hiding behind this flap is a reset button. This is not a reset button as on most machines; it serves only to reset the disc drive

in case of lock up. If you have a second drive plugged in and the device number has been set



through software, pressing the reset button will mean that the drive goes back to device 8. A nuisance if in the middle of a program. The disc drive is very obviously much smaller





suffice all LOAD/SAVE commands with 'S'. If you attempt to use tape, eg. with LOAD "program" :), then you get the response "ILLEGAL DEVICE NUMBER". Many people say that you do not need tape on a business machine, but it is often forgotten that this is not only a business machine and anyway hasn't anybody heard of executive games! As time goes on though and more and more software is being released on disc, the lack of a tape port is getting less and less of a nuisance.

The computer for the Commodore 64 will not run on the 5004 and as far as I know this is the only program that will not if anybody knows of other programs that will not run please write in and say as it may be possible to print a list of those programs and so save other SX users time and money.

In/Out...

On the top of the machine is the cartridge port. This is a nice place to have it as it is easy to see and easy to get at. No fumbling at the back of the machine trying to pull out International Football only to find you have also pulled out the disc drive, TV lead and printer. It is difficult not to notice that a cartridge has been left in but should you leave one in and carry the machine then you are likely to take a reasonable sized chunk out of your knee. At the back of the machine are two joystick ports. These are for games and, I presume, the MOUSE wires, and if it is released, Close by also at the back is the serial socket. It is possible to plug in either a second disc drive base or a printer. I have heard some people say that you can only have one or the other attached at once but if you have a second drive plugged in then you can plug the printer into the second drive, a process known as DAISY CHAINING. There is also the versatile USER PORT into which you can plug all manner of things. Centro-

is there and so the slot remains relatively useless. Cigarettes and matches live in mine. Seriously I have always kept my discs in the slot and although I would not say this is a safe practice, so far I have lost no data. Suggestions please on what can be kept in this slot.

Weighty problem

This is a portable machine but as I have said it is reasonably heavy. Unfortunately it cannot be used on a train or in a car etc, as it is dependent on a 240 V

main power supply so it is only portable in the sense that it can be taken from place to place, but not used on the way. In use it is identical to the Commodore 64 except when it comes to tape use. There is no facility at all to use tape; in fact the routines that handle tape in the ROM have been savagely torn out. I say savagely because that is all that was done. It would have been sensible when removing tape functions from the ROM to have made all commands default to the drive. This wasn't done and so it is still necessary to

than the normal 3241 drive and, to my mind, much quieter as well but also still a painfully slow. Still at the front end, the most obvious thing is the large black hole just above the drive. In the original this was meant to house the second drive but is now designated as a storage slot. Commodore say in the manual that it is not advisable to store discs in the slot; they do not suggest what you can store

nics printers, ETE interfaces, in the U.S.A. even a polygraph (lie detector). I believe. The main socket is also here and finally the audio/video socket. This last one is very important. It has been written that, because there is no modulated TV out socket, it is not possible to plug your S664 into anything but a Composite monitor. Almost true. For those of you who are lucky enough

in compact there is plenty of room on a computer desk for printers, second drives, boots etc and, because the keyboard is remote, it is easy to push it to one side while making notes or reading manuals and so on. I use my machine almost every day to program, to review software, and also to run my business.

From a programming point of view the BASIC is a little dated. There is no easy

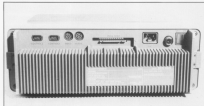
Commodore ROM without needing to modify it. There are prices to be paid for compatibility but I feel that some things are worth the sacrifice. Look how much the Electron had to sacrifice to be compatible with the BBC B and eat your hearts out all the Spectrum/QL owners. (don't QL stand for Quite Late). There is nothing of user RAM on the 64 although there is a good chunk of it available. Some

are intelligent you will find that, when you plug in a disc drive for instance, no great chunks of RAM are used up to control it. Each 1541 drive has its own on board RAM and a 6801 processor to run it. Is the 64 there is what is known as a kernel and this is a loss to machine code programmers; there is not room in this review to describe it fully but in simple terms it is a jump table which allows some compatibility between machines when writing code routines which need to jump to specified ROM routines.

If you are thinking about getting a 64 and a portable machine would be of use to you then I would not hesitate in suggesting that you have a good look at the S664. It has got its faults but over all I feel Commodore did a good job and, although it is expensive for what it is, I would not be without mine.

SE-tras

When you buy your S664 you will get some free bits and pieces. Some of it will be software. When I bought my S664 I pulled out EASY SCRIPT, BASHILLE, FUTURE FINANCE, HIGH FLOOR,



to have an S664 and a Video recorder then here is what you do. Your video recorder has probably got an aux-vid in socket. Simply take the video signal from the socket of the 64 into the recorder switch from tuner to AUX and hey presto a 26" picture. The other advantage of this is the fact that the socket on the recorder is usually at the front of the machine and so there is no swapping of leads behind the television required.

With the S664 the great thing is the lack of the spaghetti of wires connecting drives to computer, printer to drives etc. This means that you can usually get going by simply connecting the mains and turning on the power with the large easy to find, difficult to hit accidentally, rocker switch.

In use...

The S664 is a pleasure to use. Everything is easy to get at and the screen can be tilted up by using the carrying handle. Because everything

way to program sound and graphics without using a lot of POKE commands. This is a nuisance but with the many utility programs these features become easy to use. Sound and graphics on the 64 are excellent. The SID chip controls sound and it is a chip that many synthesizers would be proud to have. There are four sound channels including white noise and these allow stunning sound effects and tunes. The graphics are really something, if you get a chance look at International Football: that should show you how much potential there is in the 64. There are a lack of disc handling commands and loading a directory of a disc wipes out anything you may have in memory (I'm not using special routines which add disc commands). Channels have to be opened and closed manually and, although this makes programming a little long winded, I feel that at least I can take a BASIC program and load it into my

extra RAM is also available for machine code routines which is not available for BASIC programs. Because Commodore peripherals





COMPENDIUM OF GAMES and a DEMO DISC. That is, not quite the truth as when I opened the boxes which should have contained EASTFILE and SUPERSCRIP I a pre-printed note fell out saying "Because of shortages you will find that the discs containing the programs are not here. If you fill in the enclosed form

we will send you the discs as soon as they are available." Well, considering that Commodore do their own disc copying I would rather they had spent time copying

discs than spent time printing leaflets saying they did not have your advertised free software. Apart from that, despite sending the forms and phoning up

leaving messages on the answerphone and talking to nice ladies, I still have not got EASTSCRIPT or EASTFILE (Please Commodore!). I have got the boxes and the documentation. I only lack the programs. The software that I have been able to look at can only be described as fair but as it is free I am not moaning. High Flyer is a low level business simulation where you have to run your own aircraft business and the compendium of games contains half a dozen games that are being sold off in their magazine as cheapies. The demo disc I like. Apart from some awful spelling mistakes the demos are very good and I'm looking forward to Christmas when I can have the all singing and dancing Christmas card running 24 hours a day. Finally, there is a cloth bag with a large velcro pad in which you can store odds and ends such as manuals, leads and floppy's. It is big enough to hold 2 standard sized disc boxes and is a very useful thing. A nice touch.

To prove the portability of this machine this review has been written in bed, in my computer room, at work and in the kitchen. THAT'S PORTABLE!!!



PROCESSOR	6582 (206A) as add on
RAM	64K
ROM	20K
I/O	Commodore serial bus; external composite video
AUDIO	6581 SID CHIP
VIDEO	6567 VIC CHIP
LANGUAGE	BASIC V 2.0/4 compatible, with C/P/M as add-on
DISC DRIVE:	
PROCESSOR	6502
RAM	2K
ROM	16K
DRIVE CAPACITY	170K
DISCS	5.25"
MONITOR:	
SCREEN SIZE	5"
CHARACTER	48x25
DIMENSIONS:	
SIZE	125 h x 370 w x 370 d
WEIGHT	13 kg

It's easy to complain about advertisements. But which ones?

Every week millions of advertisements appear in print, on posters or in the cinema. Most of them comply with the rules contained in the British Code of Advertising Practice.

But some of them break the rules and warrant your complaints.

If you're not sure about which ones they are, however, drop us a line and we'll send you an abridged copy of the Advertising Code. Then, if an advertisement bothers you, you'll be justified in bothering us.

The Advertising Standards Authority.

If an advertisement is wrong, we're here to put it right.

ASA Ltd, Dept 2 Brook House, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN



MAIL ORDER PROTECTION SCHEME

If you order goods from Mail Order Advertisers in this magazine and pay by post in advance of delivery, this publication will consider you for compensation if the advertiser should become insolvent or bankrupt, provided:

1. You have not received the goods or had your money returned, and
2. You write to the publisher of this publication explaining the position not earlier than 28 days from the day you sent your order and not later than 3 months from that day.

Please do not wait until the last moment to inform us. When you write, we will tell you how to make your claim and what evidence of payment is required.

We guarantee to meet claims from readers made in accordance with the above procedure as soon as possible after the advertiser has been declared bankrupt or insolvent to a limit of £1,800 per annum for any one advertiser, as affected, and up to £5,400 p.a. in respect of all insolvent advertisers. Claims may be paid for higher amounts, or when the above procedures have not been complied with, at the discretion of this publication, but we do not guarantee to do so in view of the need to set some limit to the commitment and to learn quickly of reader's difficulties.

This guarantee covers only advance payment sent in direct response to an advertisement in this magazine (not, for example, payments made in response to catalogues, etc, received as a result of answering such advertisements).

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS ARE EXCLUDED.

IT'S NEARLY CHRISTMAS

SO WHY NOT

RING MIKE SEGRUE

NOW TO DISCUSS

YOUR COMMODORE

ADVERTISING ON

01 437 0626 EXT 311

ANIROG

AT LAST 1 TAPE 2 MACHINES

COMMODORE 64 VIC 20

LAS VEGAS



MINIPEDES

It is the height of summer and the garden is buzzing with bees and bugs. Minipede, a mutant mushroom monster advances relentlessly towards you, devouring everything in its path. 16 screens of fast and furious action make Minipedes a real challenge to the arcade enthusiasts.

Commodore 64 - VIC 20 18K

J.S. or K.B. £5.95



Experience the thrills of the gambling world from the comfort of your own armchair. Both versions include features such as spinning reels, hold function, feature nudges, gamble/object spin score and hi-score.

The Commodore 64 version has additional features, nudge, reward lucky 2, stop-a-win and hi-score tables.

As with any arcade machine the odds are stacked against you!

Commodore 64 - VIC 20 18K

J.S. £5.95



TOM THUMB

Tom is trapped in a crawling maze populated by loathsome creatures, quarters of the lost treasures of the Magecom. Six separate screens, five levels of difficulty and four player action provide an exciting challenge for the whole family. Another success from the author of BONGO!

£1 to 4 players

Commodore 64 - VIC 20 16K

J.S. £5.95



J.S. AND KEYBOARD
£7.95



J.S.
£7.95



J.S. AND KEYBOARD
£5.95



J.S. W/ KEYBOARD
£7.95



J.S.
£7.95

COMMODORE 64 VIC 20

TRADE ENQUIRIES: ANIROG SOFTWARE LTD. 29 WEST HILL DARTFORD KENT (0322) 93513/8
MAIL ORDER: 8 HIGH STREET HORLEY SURREY 24 HOUR CREDIT CARD SALES HORLEY (02934) 6083
PAYMENT BY CHEQUE P.O. ACCESS/VISA 50p POSTAGE & PACKAGING

BUSICALC 3

- the sophisticated spreadsheet !

Easy to learn, easy to use - something that can't be said of many business programs. But it's true of all the programs in the BUSICALC series.

BUSICALC 3 can handle all sorts of jobs - budgets, expenditure analysis, stock lists, price lists, and product costing are just a few of the possibilities. Three-dimensional formulas automatically access data stored on disk, so that you can easily pull together information from several different sheets and summarise or manipulate it.

It's simple to transfer data to other programs such as Easy Script. And you can use virtually any printer with BUSICALC 3, whether dot matrix or daisy wheel, Commodore or non-Commodore.

For the CBM 64 and PET/CBM 4000 & 8000 series.

Available through dealers or from:

Supersoft, Winchester House, Canning Road, Harrow HA3 7SJ

Phone 01-861 1166 for more details and a free catalogue.

