January, 2008 President's Page

Howdy Fellow Commodore Users!

It's now January, 2008 according to the calendar on the wall. As I am writing this, I also have my first cold of the new year. So, if this writing doesn't make sense, blame the cough drops and cold medicine, and pray I'll get better in no time.

I recently saw the announcement on comp.sys.cbm about some VIC20 products coming out soon. Seems two different folks are creating basically the same thing, yet are marketing them very differently. One going for a very low price point, the other going for a more modest price. One is going for the barebones look of just the circuit board, the other is planning package and cartridge graphics. The lower priced of the two is getting out the door first. If you saw the VIC20 Multi-cart at our C=4 Expo in 2007, that was one of the visions I am referring to. For VIC20 hobbyists, it has become a dream come true that some have waited for a long time, as other platforms have produced their versions of a multi-game cartridge. The closest thing we have seen similar to it for Commodore is the Commodore DTV. It only boasted 30 games, and was encased in a joystick that included cabling to hook up to the TV set or monitor.

The VIC20 offering works only with the original VIC20 computer, and plugs into it's cartridge port. So, if you do not have a VIC20, it really doesn't do much for you. I do plan to purchase one, if not both of the above mentioned units as more information becomes available on them. In the meantime, I wonder if some enterprising individual is thinking wouldn't it be great to have a VIC20 and all the game cartridges in a single joystick?

Keep on Commodoring!
--
David Witmer Cincinnati Commodore Computer Club President
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Editor's Report

You may notice a difference in the newsletter format this month. Not only have we included some color pictures, we've dropped the background and moved to a more informal format. There are many reasons for this, not the least of which is the eyesight of our average reader. Also, the less graphic-intensive format will allow for using less toner, the cost of which can be prohibitive. Printing and budget issues delayed the December newsletter to such an extent that the decision was made to do a super-issue for December/January.

I am still looking for articles from our members. Anything related to Commodore computers will do. Articles should be in the format of your choice (though plain old .txt would be great). Articles should be submitted by email to six@thedarkside.ath.cx, or by plain mail to Oliver VieBrooks, 17 Edwards Avenue, Walton, KY 41094.

Finally, there are two things that you should all take the time to make us aware of: 1st, if you would like to receive your newsletter via email instead of print, and 2nd, if you would like to receive the annual disk (and if so, which format, C64 or PC) that we will be releasing starting this year. See the address information above.

The man behind the Commodore 64

By [Daniel Terdiman](#), Reprinted from CNET News.com
Thursday, December 27 2007 08:20 AM

When people talk about the most influential names in the history of personal computers, you usually hear about Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, Bill Gates and Paul Allen, Gordon Moore, Andy Grove, and so forth.

But one name that certainly belongs in that group is Jack Tramiel, the founder of Commodore Business Machines (and later, CEO of Atari). As the man behind the PET, the Vic-20 and the Commodore 64--which may be the best-selling personal computer of all time--Tramiel may have had more influence than anyone.

That's debatable, of course. But there's no doubting the reverence Silicon Valley's elders have for Tramiel, an Auschwitz survivor and former member of the U.S. Army who decided that his future lay not in repairing typewriters as he'd done in uniform, but in building electronics.

On Monday night, hundreds of the Valley's graybeards turned out in Mountain View, Calif., for the Computer History Museum's celebration of the [25th anniversary of the Commodore 64](#), and there was no doubting that Tramiel was the man of the hour, not least because he rarely ventures out in public.

Among those on hand to fete Tramiel were Wozniak, IBM PC designer William Lowe, *Pong* designer Al Acorn, and many, many others.

During the event, Tramiel took the time to talk to CNET News.com about his most famous creation, about the current state of personal computers and about whether there really was a culture war between C64 users and Apple IIe users in the mid-1980s.

Q: What does the 25th anniversary of the Commodore 64 mean to you? Can you believe it's been 25 years?
Tramiel: Yes, I live it every day.

Do you still use a Commodore?
Yes, the 64.

What do you use it for?
Games.

What's your favorite game?
Pac-Man.

How many hours a day do you use your C64?
A few minutes.

We heard that about 500 people were going to show up for this event. How does it make you feel to have such a favorable reception 25 years later?
I believe that Commodore was the first personal computer, and we also were able to help supply products or parts for the Apple and the Atari. Being involved in seeing it be developed, in the marketing and traveling around the world, I saw, in its first two years, that this was going to be an unbelievable hit, and that it was going to change the world. And it did change the world, and I'm proud that I was part of it.

You've said you were inspired by a trip you took to Japan and that that's what got you thinking that the future was in electronics.
Well, Japan is a big story, and there's no question that they're a different kind of people than we are. If they want to do something, they put their mind to it and they do it. They're very proud of their country, which we are not. I remember shipping the PET to Japan, to develop that particular market. And it was unbelievably successful in Japan. But about two years after, a Japanese company by the name of NEC decided to go into the personal computer business. That day, when they announced it, PET sales stopped, because the Japanese were willing to wait until the Japanese computer came out.

And you haven't seen the same loyalty in the American market?
No, because we will buy from anybody, as long as it's cheap.

But the Commodore was cheap. It cost less than US$600.
That was one of the reasons why I made sure that we reduced the price--to make a fair profit, not to stop the imports that came into the country. And I felt very good because we did. There were very few foreign machines coming into the country. When I left Commodore, the world changed. Then, all of a sudden everybody came in because the prices went up. So I feel very responsible for that particular idea that I had, to give people a computer for the money, to make a computer for the masses, not for the classes.

And when you say people, you're not just talking businessmen. Kids could afford it if they saved up enough.
I wasn't thinking of businesses at all, because I didn't want to compete with IBM.

Do people still stop you to tell you their memories about the C64? There's quite a cult following out there.
There is, but I'm very quiet. This is the first real event which I've come to, because I don't like to be in the press. I'm quite happy if people do not know me.

Do you have any thoughts on the PC market today?
The PC market is very strong and it's going to become stronger. It's going to be very important how the products are being packaged from now on. The technology is there. It's about how it's packaged. I believe the smaller we make them, the more they will sell, and the easier they're going to be to use. And I think we're going in that direction.

What other computer do you use (besides a Commodore)?
A Dell.

What do you think it was about the Commodore 64 that made it so popular across the board?
Because I brought everything into it. I brought in sound, video, a full keyboard, and color. It was easy to use. And there was a tremendous following after that, supplying software and everything else. And I did not rely only on the United States. Through my previous connections with the adding machines and typewriters I was selling, I already had a network of dealers around the world. So it was easy to go back to them with computers. I just had to convert the dealers to understanding that this was a consumer product. This is what happened. The young people were able to buy it because it was very affordable.

How influential was the C64's BASIC for future programmers?
Every time I went to fairs around the world, especially the (Cebit) fair in Hannover, Germany, kids, ages 12 to 20 would come around to show me their bank books. They said, "Tramiel, I made over US$200,000 this year selling software." And that gave me a real kick. Not only did I make my employees rich, but I even made young people rich. They knew that if they worked hard and used the BASIC to design software, they could make money.

When I was in high school, it seemed like there was almost a culture war between users of the Commodore 64, the Apple IIe, and the Atari 800. What do you think was different about the machines and the people who used them?
The only difference was the price. Because it seems that in this country, if you sell something cheaper, it can't be as good. If it's more expensive, and it's the same product, it must be a better product. That didn't stop me. I still wanted to sell it for a low price. But if a person pays three times as much for a computer, he has to be proud of it, because he paid for it. He can't call himself stupid.

So you think the computers were on par with each other?
Each one. Even today, they're the same. If you take an HP, or a Dell, they're all the same.

But it seemed like people had loyalties back then, the same way people have loyalties today between Mac and PC.
Tramiel: There's absolutely no loyalty. One has 95 percent and the other 5 percent... But I believe that what Apple's doing today is one of the smartest things that they can do. They're becoming a consumer company, selling much more than computers, to everyone.

What computers or operating systems came along since the C64 that remind you of it?
Nothing reminds me of it. We live in a different world, a much more developed world today. The computer business today is different than it was in 1975. In some ways it's good, and in some ways it's bad. But the important part is that we all work hard to bring it to the way it is, and people say, "How can you live without a computer?" which is wonderful.

CNET News.com's Kara Tsuboi contributed to this report.

New NTSC(USA) Demo Released by Style

It's certainly not every day that a new demo comes out for the NTSC C64 users. These days it seems like there are only one or two people or groups producing anything in the NTSC format. Thus, when a new demo is released for the NTSC C64, it's something of a big event. The latest release is from the US demo group "Style" (of which I am a member), and is called "Silver" in honor of the 25th anniversary of the release of the C64.
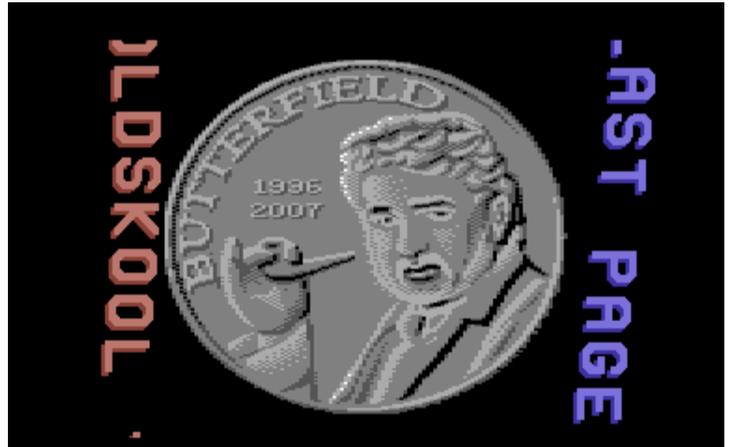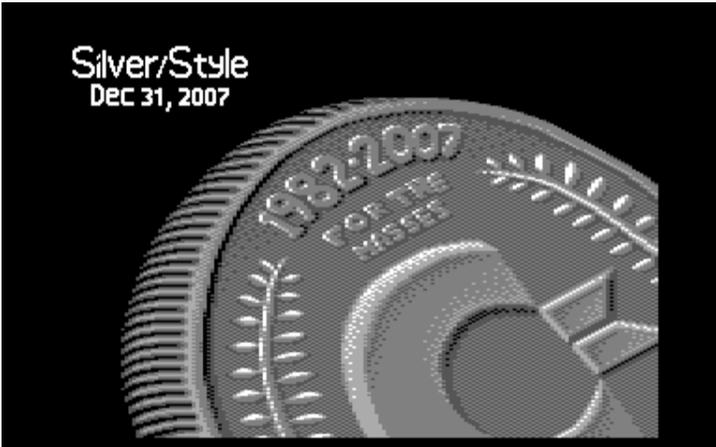

The basic theme of the demo is 25 years of Commodore computing, and reflecting on the demoscene, past and future. The demo opens with a picture of a silver coin, and some fading text describing the demo and crediting the people who worked on it. The final page shows the flip side of the coin with a picture of Jim Butterfield. The scrolltext pays homage to Jim, and the 25 years of the Commodore 64.
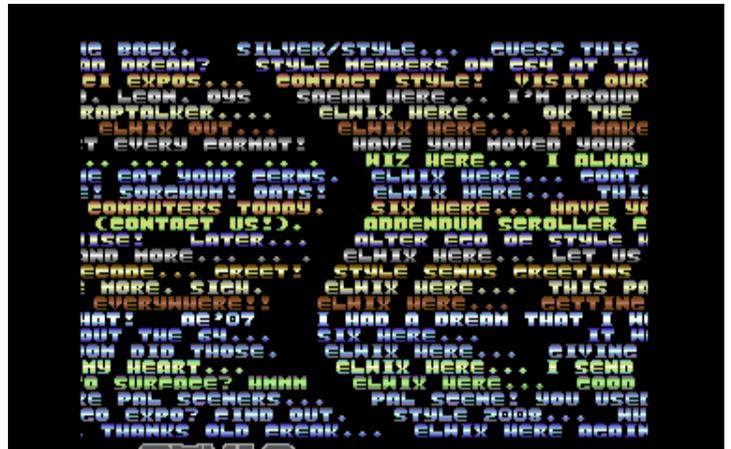
The next page (mine) has some VIC trickery, namely a chessboard effect extended into the borders with moving sprites layered on top, my first mcbm logo, and a simple scroller. After that comes Elwix's page, with 25 rasterized scrollers and a swinging logo in the bottom border. Finally we come to The Wiz's page, which has great artwork by Saehn (who also did the coin pictures for the intro/outro) and some slick color motion. All in all, though I can't give an unbiased opinion of the demo, it's certainly the best demo released for the NTSC C64 this year.

Style would also like to announce the joining of our new artist Saehn, and the return of our musicians, Warnock and Deathlok. 2008 will be a big year in NTSC.

Silver/Style can be downloaded from http://style64.org and will be demoed at the next CCCC meeting.

New Hardware for your Commodore!

Please note: CCCC does not specifically endorse the products of any vendor.
This information is presented for informational purposes only.

During 2007, several new products began to appear for the C64, produced by an Australian hardware designer known as "Fotios". I will be obtaining and reviewing these products over the next few months, but I wanted to make sure everyone was aware of what was available and where it could be obtained. If anyone wanted to purchase any of these items and review them for the newsletter, their input would be very welcome.
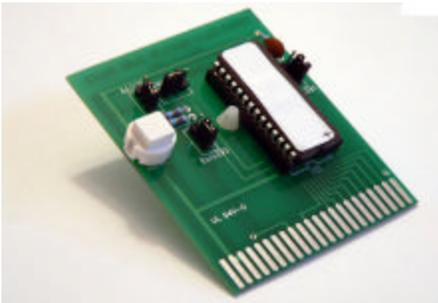
FB-512J 64KByte (8x8KB) cartridge

The FB-512J cartridge is designed to support 64KB 27512 series EPROMs. These EPROMs can store the equivalent of eight generic 8KB Commodore cartridges on one chip. Three jumpers are used to select which 8kb area of memory will be active and mapped to address $8000. A fourth jumper is used to support the native Commodore 128 mode by changing the logic state of the EXROM line of the cartridge port.

Notes:
* The FB-512J cartridge replaces the FB-512J which is no longer available.
The FB-512J used four mini-toggle switches while the new FB-512J users four jumpers.
* Cartridge case is not included. A plastic PCB support is provided.
* A UV EPROM eraser is required to erase the contents of the supplied 27c512 EPROM.
* An EPROM programer is required to program the 27c512 EPROM.
* A mini push button reset switch and plastic PCB support is included.
Availability: **In Stock** , Price: AUD$16.00 plus Postage & PayPal fees

FBU_RS-232 RS-232 interface for the Commodore 64/128 User Port

The FBU_RS-232 interface supports various configuration modes using an 8-way DIP switch which allows individual selection of lines like DSR, DTR, RTS and CT.
Speeds of 9600 baud are supported when used in UP9600 mode with Novaterm 9.6.
The FBU_RS-232 interface also includes a mini reset switch and works in native C128 mode. Two plastic PCB supports are supplied.
Notes:
* When used with NovaTerm 9.6 and the UP9600 driver, screen text speeds are 9600 baud.
*File transfers vary between 2400 and 4800 baud.
Availability: **IN Stock** Price: AUS$24.00 plus Postage & PayPal fees.

FB-MIDI Multi standard MIDI interface for the Commodore 64/128

FB-MIDI Multi standard MIDI interface for the Commodore 64/128
If your into creating music, FB-MIDI adds MIDI IN, MIDI OUT and MIDI THRU/OUT ports to your Commodore 64/128. Please check the support file area for compatiable software.

Notes:
* This product is not compatible with Prophet64.
* This product does not include support for on-baord clock(s), tape/drum sync or foot switch.
* Cartridge case is not included. Two plastic PCB supports are provided.
Availability: **IN Stock** , Price: AUS$33.00 plus Postage & PayPal fees.

FB-3XP Three Slot Cartridge Expander

The FB-3XP is possibly one of the most versatile 3-slot cartridge expanders that supports the following features: Fuse protection to prevent accidental damage of the c64/128 computer.. - High quality ROHS compliant components with gold edge contacts. - Mini push button reset switch. - Electrolytic capacitors ensuring reliable power to each cartridge slot. - Activity LED for each slot indicating when a cartridge is
on or accessing the expansion port. - DIP switches that enable/disable expansion port signals like I01, I02, ROMH, ROML, EXROM & GAME. However, one of the most important features is that the last two slots can be configured to swap the I01($DE00) and I02($DF00) lines. Depending on the configuration of four jumpers, this allows certain cartriges too be concurrently active like an REU and RS232 cartridge. Please note that not all cartridges will work when swapping the I01/I02 lines.

Notes:

* The FB-3XP is available in two configuration.
* The first is with all three slots in a vertical position.
* There's also a 2+1 version available where the last slot is mounted in a horizontal manner.
* This version is handy for large cartridge like 1764/1750 or SuperCPU.

Availability: (ETA 15Jan08) , Price:AUD$33.00 FB-3XP (3 vert slots) $40.00 FB-3XP (2 vert, 1 horiz slots) + Postage & PayPal fees

FB_SS Stereophonic-SID Cartridge for the Commodore 64/128

The FB_SS Stereophonic-SID Cartridge for the Commodore 64/128
There are two version avaliable to suit the 12v 6581 SID and the 9v 8580 SID.
The FB_SS interface features a jumper and 8-way DIP switch which allows the SID chip to be mapped at any of the following memory addresses:
$DE00, $DE20, $DE40, $DE60, $DE80, $DEA0, $DEC0
$DF00, $DF20, $DF40, $DF60, $DF80, $DFA0, $DFC0
Most Stereo SID players support memory address $DE00 for the second SID chip.
Notes:
* As per photo, this cartridge includes a pass-though cartridge socket.
* This is ideal for anyone with a Prophet64 cartridge.
* The idea is to plug your Phophet 64 cartidge into this Stereo-SID cartridge and then plug both into the Commodore at the same time, No more SID2SID hacks required!.
*A SID chip is NOT included with this cartridge.
*You'll need to provide and install your own SID chip of the correct voltage for the cartridge ordered.
Availability: **In Stock** Price: AUD$33.00 plus Postage & PayPal fees
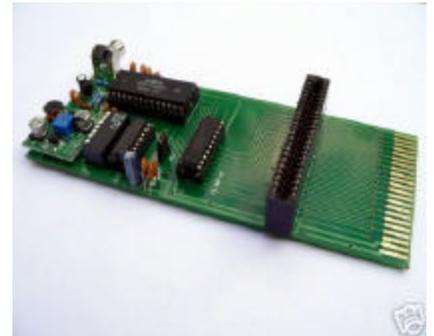
FB-NET Cartridge

The FB-NET cartridge is a new Ethernet adaptor for the c64/128 thats compatible with both the RRNET and TFE (The Final Ethernet). The FB-NET includes and Olimex CS8900a-h header board and two jumpers used to set any of the following I/O addresses: $DE00, $DE08, $DF00, $DF08 The Olimex CS8900a-h board is soldered onto the to FB-NET cartridge board. For more information about the Olimex CS8900a-h please refer to. http://www.olimex.com/dev/cx8900a-h.html
Notes:
* Price includes Olimex CS8900a-h board which is solderd onto FB-NET cartridge board.
* Cartridge case is not included. A plastic PCB support is provided.

Availability: **1 to 2 weeks** ,Price: AUD$55.50 plus Postage & PayPal fees

Commodore 64/128 Bulletin Board List - 22 December 2007, By Andrew Wiskow
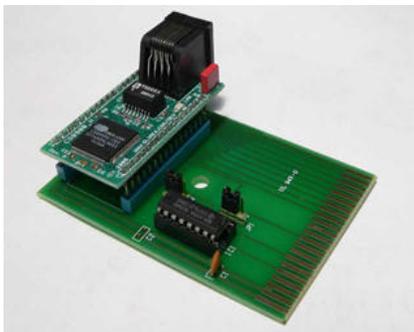
This is a list of all known ACTIVE Commodore Bulletin Board Systems operated on GENUINE or EMULATED Commodore 64 or 128 computers, sorted by dial-up/Telnet and BBS name. This list is published with no set schedule, whenever additions or deletions need to be made. The latest copy is always available at: http://hometown.aol.com/cottonwoodbbs/cbm-bbs-list.txt (normally within minutes of arriving at the servers). Certain items are abbreviated and those abbreviations can be found near the end of this document. Readers are encouraged to upload this list to any BBS or Web Site and to notify me of any additions, changes, corrections or recommendations at wiskow@verizon.net. If you wish to keep the list updated in any publication or online service, feel free to do so.

The PETSCII version of this list can be found at: http://hometown.aol.com/cottonwoodbbs/cbm-bbs-list.seq , and will be updated shortly after this list is posted (normally within minutes after this appears in the newsgroups).

Many thanks to everyone who has helped me with this list by providing the information contained in this list.

BBS Name .... The Antidote
Telnet Address .... antidote.hopto.org
Location .... Sweden
BBS Software.............. C*Base v3.3
BBS Platform/Hardware C128
System Operator Handle ... Taper/TRIAD

BBS Name .... Cottonwood
Telnet Address .... cottonwood.servebbs.com
Location .... Moreno Valley, California, U.S.A.
BBS Software.............. AA128
BBS Platform/Hardware C128
System Operator Name ..... Andrew Wiskow (wiskow@verizon.net)
System Operator Handle ... Balzabaar
WWW Presence .... http://hometown.aol.com/cottonwoodbbs

BBS Name .... Cottonwood II
Telnet Address cottonwood.servebbs.com:6400
Location .... Moreno Valley, California, U.S.A.
BBS Software.............. Ivory
BBS Platform/Hardware C64
System Operator Name ..... Andrew Wiskow (wiskow@verizon.net)
System Operator Handle ... Balzabaar
WWW Presence .... http://hometown.aol.com/cottonwoodbbs

BBS Name .... Excalibur's Stone
Telnet Address bbs.excalibursstone.com:6400
Location .... Unknown
BBS Software.............. DMBBS v5.3
BBS Platform/Hardware C128
System Operator Handle ... Excalibur

BBS Name .... Inner Circle
Telnet Address .... innercirclebbs.com
BBS Software.............. Centipede
BBS Platform/Hardware .... C128, CHD 4GB, RL, SC128
System Operator Handle ... Eddie

BBS Name .... Jamming Signal
Telnet Address .... bbs.jammingsignal.com
Location .... Toronto, Ontario, Canada
BBS Software.............. EBBS 64 v3.3
BBS Platform/Hardware C64
System Operator Name ..... Leif Bloomquist
System Operator Handle ... Schema
WWW Presence .... http://www.jammingsignal.com

BBS Name .... Lost Caverns
Telnet Address lostcavernsbbs.dyndns.org:6001
Location .... Macomb, Michigan, U.S.A.
BBS Software.............. Centipede
BBS Platform/Hardware .... C128, LtK
System Operator Handle ... Mo
Comments .... An additional port is lostcavernsbbs.dyndns.org:6002

BBS Name LV-426
Telnet Address lv426bbs.homeip.net
BBS Software.............. Image v1.2a
BBS Platform/Hardware .... C128, CHD
System Operator Name ..... Unknown
System Operator Handle ... The Alien

BBS Name .... Mad World
Telnet Address .... madworld.bounceme.net
Location .... West Philidelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.
BBS Software.............. Centipede
BBS Platform/Hardware .... C128, CHD 2.1GB, RL
System Operator Handle ... Cyberjank

BBS Name .... Realms of Mystery
Telnet Address bbs.pipesup.ca:6400
Location .... Ontario, Canada
BBS Software.............. C*Base v3.x
BBS Platform/Hardware C64
System Operator Name ..... Ian Colquhoun
System Operator Handle ... Mystery

BBS Name .... Retrograde
Telnet Address .... retrogradebbs.com
Location .... Boardman, Ohio, U.S.A.
BBS Software.............. Color V8
BBS Platform/Hardware C64-EMU
System Operator Name ..... Dave Hartman (mm@retrogradebbs.com)
System Operator Handle ... Metal Mage
WWW Presence .... http://www.retrogradebbs.com

BBS Name .... Riktronics
Telnet Address .... rkbbs.net
Location .... Unknown
BBS Software.............. Image v1.2
BBS Platform/Hardware C64
System Operator Handle ... J.Rotten
WWW Presence .... http://www.rkbbs.net

BBS Name .... Temporal Vortex
Telnet Address bbs.petscii.com:6400
Location .... Orrville, Ohio, U.S.A.
BBS Software.............. TVBBS (Custom Software)
BBS Platform/Hardware C64
System Operator Name ..... Jeff Ledger (jeffledger@gmail.com)
System Operator Handle ... Jeff Ledger
WWW Presence .... http://www.petscii.com/

BBS Name .... Wizard's Realm
Telnet Address .... wizbbs.dyndns.org
Location .... New Jersey, U.S.A.
BBS Software.............. Centipede
BBS Platform/Hardware .... C128, CHD
System Operator Name ..... Ray
System Operator Handle ... WizardNJ

Abbreviations:
AA128.......All American BBS 128 v12.5c
BPS.........Bits Per Second
C64.........Commodore 64, 64C or SX 64
C64-EMU.....Emulated C64
C128........Commodore 128 or 128D
C128-64.....Commodore 128 or 128D operated in 64 Mode
CBM.........Commodore Business Machines
CHD.........CMD Hard Drive

CMD........Creative Micro Designs
Color V8....Color 64 Version 8
Color V8.1..Color 64 Version 8.1
GB..........Gigabyte
K..........Thousand or Kilobyte Depending on How Used
LtK........Lieutenant Kernal Hard Drive
RL..........CMD RAMLink
SC128.......SuperCPU 128

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