CS Newsletter 005

Hi there everybody and welcome to this first CS newsletter created and printed solely on the C64 !

CS Newsletter 005

This extremely crisp and clear marvel of production is brought to you using the superb **PP3** (Postscript Printing 3) program from Maurice Randall, also along for the ride is my new (ish) Hewlett Packard Laserjet 4/4M Plus laser printer. You will also note that this news letter is two sided and that was done via the magic of the duplexer unit which turns the page over so it can be printed on both sides - *ALL ON THE HUMBLE C64 !!*

Now this is my first newsletter produced in PP3 by me and it will not win any awards for style or presentation, but I did want to have a 'play' with PP3 and I also wanted to show those of you who have no idea what the C64 can achieve, just how far we have come in recent years. Those of you who are familiar with PP3 will notice that I have 'borrowed' the layout for this page from PP3 - I will design our own layout later. I truly believe that Maurice and Dale have made great leaps in the printing output of the Commodore over the past few years and this newsletter is the result of that hard work. Absolutely everything on these pages has been put here by my Commodore, even the photographs. There are some nice pictures on these pages and they are here just to give you a feel of the softwares power, some are geoPaint images and some are JPEG's.

BIG thanks

I must also thank three people for making this happen here at CS.

Shaun Bebbington for finally getting me a good deal on the laser printer and kick starting my Postscript dream.

Dale Sidebottom for sending me copies of his superb **LUCKY** & **UCUGA** newsletters which he does with a similar set up to mine, only he uses full colour as well !!! Watch out Dale, I'm after a piece of your action now ;-).

Lastly, but by no means least - **Maurice Randall** for writing the superb programs that now allow us to use all this technology. THANKS GUYS !!!

Appologies

As we approach the end of yet another year with our Commodore's, I do feel a tinge of sadness as I have not managed to fulfill most of my goals for this year. I have also had to admit defeat in many other areas too - not just my Commodore activities. The most obvious of my disapointments is the lack of CS issues this year. Maybe I set myself up to do too much, or maybe I didn't realise the ammount of work involved in some of the projects that I wanted to do. Either way, I do hope that next year sees me having a bit more time to myself and allowing me to bring more Commodore hardware and news to you all - fingers crossed !

Printing CS

Another problem is the increasing difficulty in actually printing CS. CS37 saw a very dramatic delay in printing which mainly came about because of a lack of knowledge at the printing shop as the turnover of staff is quite high. It seems that no sooner have I made a new contact with one person then they disapear ! This lack of customer service sees me having to detail each issue from scratch to each new employee, this also has the problem of the same mistakes croping up time after time. This is becoming very tedious indeed.

CS38 suffered the same problems - again - and enough is enough !

What can we do about it then ?

commodore scene newsletter

This page was originally produced on the c64, however, this is a 'scanned in' copy due to the original file being lost !

Firstly, I have made the desicion to produce CS completley 'in house' on my laser printer. This eliminates the problem of the printing fiasco that is currently giving me such a large headache !

Secondly, we all have to make a descion about the style of magazine that we are prepared to accept. I have three seperate ideas in mind which you may like to mull over :-

Option 1) The magazine goes completely to this 'newsletter style' (in your hands right now), but with a colour front page with the internal pages in black. Each issue will continue to be about 32 pages in length. This type of newsletter would mean that it would have to be stapled in the top/left corner.

Option 2) Take the magazine down to A5 size (A4 folded to an A5 booklet). The cover would continue to be in colour but I would have to experiment with page numbers because of folding & stapling problems. The benefit of this would be that the magazine would be a stapled book format and I think that would be easier to read, etc.

Option 3) How about supplying the pages loose, pre-hole punched so that they can go striaght into some sort of binder ? I could restructure the yearly subscription (roughly the same price) to include a nice binder to hold six issues with disks (bi-monthly). CS39 could be the first of this type and would come with the binder, dividers (?) and a sleeve for disks.

Coverdisks : Speaking of disks - because of the sterling work done by Richard Bayliss and Andrew Fisher over the past issues, the coverdisks future looks rosey. I will be consulting with both these guys before commiting myself to a 'disk with every issue' agreement. After all, they are the ones having to compile it !

I NEED YOUR FEEDBACK ON THIS !
So please drop me a line and let me know what you want me to do.

C=VGA Adapter
This exciting new innovation for the Commodore community is still ongoing building work and at the last count, it was 80% complete. All schematics have been done and most parts are ordered/available. As with most things, there have been a few hiccups but nothing that can't be sorted out.

Watch the Commodore Scene web site for up to date news.

CS39 (new format)
Well, CS39 is underway but I have no more news other than I will do my best to get it finished as soon as is possible. There are many articles that have been held off from CS38 (due to space restrictions), these, I hope, will make an appearance in CS39.

Fireman Sam !
Running along side the above news, most of you will know that my 'real job' is being a fireman and lately (if you have been watching the news), we have been in dispute with the goverment over pay. This has obviously had a <u>huge</u> effect on my free time, especially as I am the union representative for my fire station.

Please support your local firefighters
The next life they save may be yours !

This page was originally produced on the c64, however, this is a 'scanned in' copy due to the original file being lost !

The lack of time for Commodore related items will continue throughout this dispute. Unfortunately I am not able to give you any timescales as to when the dispute will end nor can I say when I will be in a position to resume a more active role with my Commodores.

Allan Bairstow

Commodore Scene 38 (and a half !)

CS38 (and a half) was originally going to to be a Christmas special but events overtook me slightly !! As the coverdisk had already been done and a couple of late (and very good) articles came in time for Christmas I decided to make this little extra bit of reading for you all over this festive season.

I hope you all enjoy it - have a great Christmas & New Year - Allan Bairstow

Wheels SC

When I first read the following news about the latest version of Wheels SC (for the SuperCPU), I was amazed ! That was a few weeks ago, I am still amazed. To appreciate the advances of the new OS I recommend you read it a few times to fully appreciate just how much Maurice Randall has accomplished with this new release. To be able to utilize MS-DOS disks and a CD-ROM from within the Wheels environment is a great leap forward for all Commodore users.

I will be running Wheels SC as soon as it is available to me, also, I intend to run a multi-page review in an upcoming issue of CS (possibly CS39) ~ so watch this space for more news later.

How does Wheels SC improve Wheels?

One thing you'll notice is there are only two files to contend with on the boot disk. As usual, STARTER gets things fired up. It has the job of booting up the other file, the SYSTEM file. Contained within the SYSTEM file is the kernal, the Toolbox, the Dashboard, and the default input and printer drivers. No other files are needed to get up and running. The very first bootup will guide you through configuring the SYSTEM file and any changes made can be changed again from the Dashboard. All Toolbox functions are accessible from the Dashboard menus. The Toolbox interface will no longer be used.

There is only one Wheels SC version. It doesn't matter if you boot up from a 64 or a 128, it will work with either. If booted up from a 64, it will act more like Wheels 64 and use 40 column mode. If booted from 128 mode, it will act like Wheels 128 and will offer both 40 and 80 column modes.

Wheels SC does not fit on a 1541 disk. It will be supplied on a 1571, 1581, or FD Native disk.

Once booted, the Toolbox and Dashboard will remain in memory. Exiting an application is immediate since the Dashboard doesn't need to be reloaded from disk.

The biggest thing the user will notice is an improved Dashboard. Too early to discuss it too much, but it will have features that let you configure your drives easier. You'll even be able to create partitions

on the CMD devices like you can with HD-TOOLS, etc.

Now, when you double click on a drive icon, if it's a partitionable device a window doesn't pop open showing the current files in the current partition. Instead it opens a window showing an icon for each partition. You can then double click on a partition to open it into another window. Anyway, in the partition window, you can rename partitions, create new ones, etc.

The Dashboard will be able to copy files to/from MS-DOS disks.

It will be able to access CD-ROM drives connected to the HD.

Lots of neat new features will be in the Dashboard.

Classic GEOS and Wheels applications will still work. You'll be able to task switch between multiple applications. The number of apps you can have loaded at one time will depend on available memory. New applications that are written specifically for Wheels SC will be able to take advantage of its multitasking ability. New applications can also open up using the entire screen for itself like current applications do or it can run within a window on the Dashboard. This depends on how the programmer wishes to do it.

Wheels SC will also have all the Wave networking routines built into the OS instead of in Wave SC (also supplied with Wheels SC). This way, other applications can make use of the same routines. This will make it easier to build separate Internet applications that need to do some of the same type of stuff.

The windowing routines from both the Dashboard and The Wave are in the OS. New applications can make use of these routines. This includes routines to make windows that are moveable, resizable, with scrollbars, function buttons, etc.

Up to 8 drives (A-H) can now be used. 1541 and 1571 partitions are also supported on the FD, HD, and RL. Also, the new extended native partitions on the HD are supported. Current applications may not work well with drives E-H. They probably won't even know they are there. So, the usual drive swapping routines are still employed. Remember, some of the old apps only work with A and B.

I plan to take geoBasic and modify it for use in Wheels SC. This will make an easy to use programming tool for people who can work with Basic. geoBasic is also nice because it can help you build dialog boxes, menus, and other things. And of course, the geoBasic bugs will get fixed. Concept+ will get upgraded to Concept SC and will add more features for those who prefer to use assembly language.

From a programmer's point of view, the operating system no longer resides in bank 0 of the SuperCPU memory. What's in bank 0 where classic apps run is a series of jump tables and a few other assorted routines to make the new system work with old apps. All kernal routine calls are transferred to the actual SC kernal. For new apps, the same kind

Commodore Scene
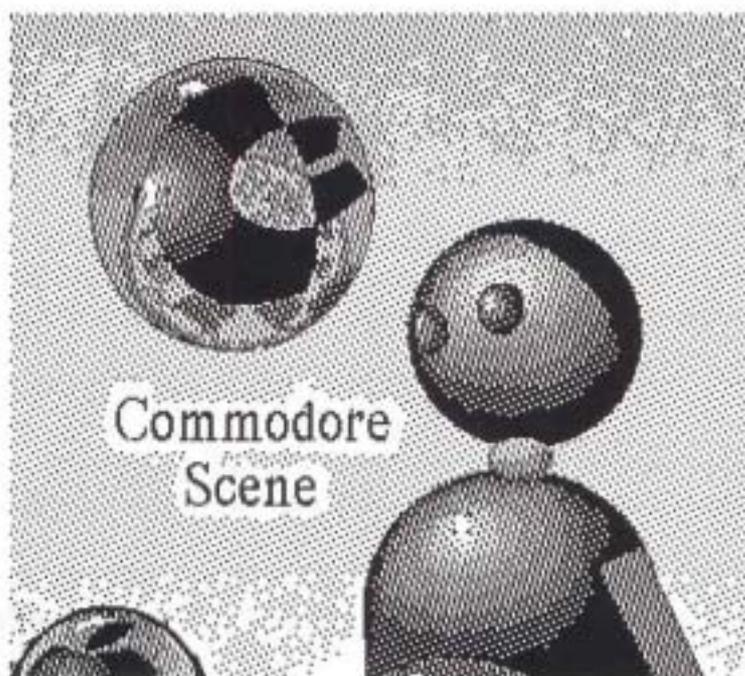
of GEOS thinking is employed where a jump table can always be found in a fixed location. It is always in bank 2. A simple JSL can call any kernal routine. Selected Toolbox and Dashboard routines can also be accessed from the new jump table. New apps will always be loaded into a 64K bank somewhere in memory. The app will have the entire bank of memory to itself (and more if needed). New apps are expected to run in native 65816 mode while current apps default to 6502 emulation mode. The kernal takes care of handling the processor mode switching during task switching and multitask handling. The kernal always runs in native 65816 mode.

Maurice Randall

MICRO MART FAIR

report by Andrew Fisher

When I first heard about the fair, I decided not to go mainly because I felt it would be mainly about the PC. Then I got a phone call from Wayne and an e-mail from Ken Ross within a few minutes of each other, which persuaded me to go. (Ken had used some music of mine on a video to be shown there - unfortunately the van carrying the display equipment broke down)

Luckily, I have my own accommodation in the area - my brother Chris, who lives in Coventry. He booked the tickets via the website to save money.

Based on the map on the back of the ticket holder, we decided to try and park in the WEST car park, which is closest to Hall 2. So, we reach the NEC just before 11 am and follow the signs for parking which take us straight past the West car park, all the way round in a circle to the main traffic entrance where we picked up the signs for the fair - and parked in EAST 1. We hopped on a shuttle bus to Hall 2 and went in, only to be handed a large carrier bag containing a complementary copy of Micro Mart, lots of advertising and a guide to the fair – with absolutely no mention of the Retro Mart section. Looking at the floor-plan, I guessed that the feature area may be our target.

After a brief look at a few stalls, we found the feature area and all the retro goodness within.

The Blackpool Amiga club had several machines running, including one running Quake and another with a specially made demo welcoming people to the show. (Bazza did accuse us of being sad for persisting with an old machine.. but who was the one wearing a black T-shirt with a logo on it? Oh, we both were!)

Another long table had Sinclair and QL machines, including a very strange machine that incorporated a telephone. They even had rare machines like a ZX80 and (American) Timex 1000, while they also had a 1K Chess Challenge.

There was another table with a range of old Atari machines, from 2600 games console to Jaguar, but none of these were up and running. Alongside them were a couple of Oric machines with members of the French Oric User Group.

In the centre of the Retro area was an X-Box demonstration pod, which consists of four machines in an x-pattern. Unfortunately I did not have time to play on the machines, which kept crashing during the day. The games, Project Gotham Racing and Halo, looked good but the sequels are already on the way. X-Box is not really retro, but it got people into the area..

Finally, the Commodore section. Imagine a 40 ft table covered in rare Commodore hardware. A MAX games console, with its paltry 2K of RAM. A C64GS (Games System) exposing its circuitry. Allan's impressive 4MHz SX64, which unfortunately was not running. The plan was to show how accelerating the processor makes even the Freescape games playable.

When I first said Hi to Allan, he was still in the middle of setting up. So we let him get on with it and had an explore of the rest of the stands. When we went back, Allan was trying to get Wheels to output to an HP Laserjet in Postscript mode. All that came out of the printer was sheet after sheet of plain text. Dave Elliott turned up, and we said, Dave will fix it, he knows what he's doing. A few minutes later he opened up the printer to discover there was no Postscript card in it. D'OH!

Also in the Commodore area was Shaun Bebbington's impressive setup. With a SuperCPU and RAMLink, Shaun was running the Wave web browser - much to the surprise of the PC people. I also got the laptop running the VICE emulator to show my POKIMON slideshow.

Of course, its nice to have something that passers-by can try, so Allans demonstration stand had the 4-player interface and BOMB MANIA running. Comments like 'I've got this on my PlayStation" or "Thats clever" were heard throughout the day, along with the perennial "I used to have one of those".

Between 12 and 12:45 I stayed on the stand and, dressed in my Commodore Scene T-shirt, started to talk to people visiting the stand. Then it was time for lunch, a large New Yorker hot-dog and a bottle of Oasis.

I gave Wayne a call on his mobile at 1 pm (as arranged) and got his voice-mail. We went back to the feature area, and there he was (also clad in a Commodore Scene T-shirt - but no beret this time), looking at the table with Allan's complete collection of Commodore Scene issues (*somebody stole my copy of CS ! - ED*). There were also some magazine stands with free copies and information leaflets, which were nearly all gone by the end of the day.

I spent the rest of the afternoon hanging around the Commodore Scene area, while my brother went off and purchased some surround sound speakers (in a big cardboard box) and a new game for his PC at bargain prices.

About 2 pm, Shaun used the IDE interface and CD-ROM drive to start playing Vangelis through the 64.

Then around 3:30 pm, the BOMB MANIA session began. At one point, myself, my brother Chris, Allan and Wayne were playing - and I was miles in the lead! Having only played the demo, I was impressed by the later levels in the full game - from the difficult night level (you can only see the bombs when the lightning flashes) to the pipes. It was also distracting to watch Wayne trying to chat up a very blonde woman who was looking around the retro area.

About 4:30 pm Allan went to get us all a cup of tea (nobody call him the tea-boy - too late!), and I got chatting to Mickael Pontier (correct spelling?) from the Oric section. He talked about the interlacing technique that has improved Oric graphics recently, and showed me the conversion of Mastertronic game PULSOIDS (a variation on Arkanoid) which was pretty good. Wayne had also played the conversion of Manic Miner earlier, which was excellent - down to the piano on the title screen and the infamous boot. Mickael also played me some Soundtracker music running on the Oric, and complained that the hardware timing on Orics is so varied that adding new hardware (like a hard drive or IDE interface) is almost impossible. Their publication, which has been running since 1985, was full of coding tips, solutions for games and interesting articles.

At 5 pm it was time to go, hurried along by the tannoy announcement that members of the public had to leave. I imagine it was difficult for the stall-holders to leave everything overnight, but I'm sure the second day was just as successful. The organisers were hoping for 10,000 over the two days, and based on how busy the hall was in the first few hours I think they made that comfortably. Allan said to me it could be held up to four times a year there, and that he would attempt to get down at least once a year in future. Hopefully some of the people who saw the Retro area will be in touch, either to sell/buy hardware or catch up.

On the shuttle bus back to the car park, you could tell where people had been. The men and boys were carrying their Micro Mart bags and large boxes of hardware, the girls and women (for the most part, I'm not being sexist here) had carrier bags from the Dolls House exhibition in another Hall. All in all, a fun day out, great to meet Allan, Shaun and Dave, plus Wayne of course!

FOOTNOTE : 8 hours after the show closed on Sunday, there was an earthquake in the West Midlands. Was that a shock-wave caused by all those retro people being in the same place ?
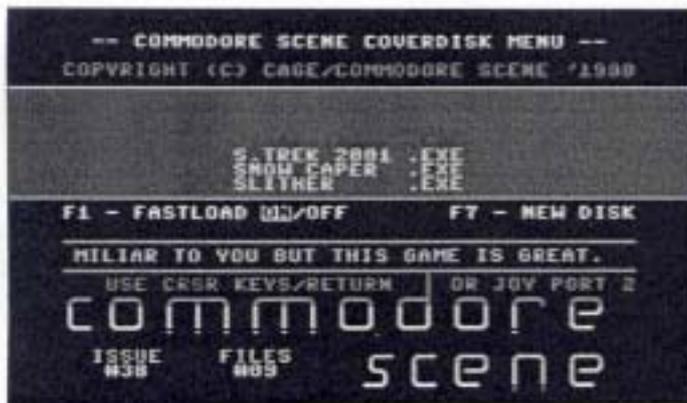
Commodore Scene 38 (and a half) Special Cover Disk

Compiled by
Allan Bairstow and Richard Bayliss

Amazing ;) Just as we all thought, that was all for CS38's cover disk, Allan has mentioned that he was going to do a freebie extra to CS38, as there was so much to add. So now, it is done ;) CS38 coverdisk X-TRA. A perfect Christmas present for your C64.

On this issues cover disk, we have a couple of Christmassy games, an assortment of games, tools, music and demos. To load a program from the CS menu, simply highlight the program you wish to load (use cursor keys or joystick in port 2) then press fire or return to load the programs. The programs will then load, decrunch and run.

The CS Menu by Danny Tod


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-- COMMODORE SCENE COVERDISK MENU --
COPYRIGHT (C) CAGE/COMMODORE SCENE '1998

                    S.TREK 2001 :EXE
                    SNOW CAPER   :EXE
                    SLITHER      :EXE

F1 - FASTLOAD [1]/OFF          F7 - NEW DISK

MILIAR TO YOU BUT THIS GAME IS GREAT.
  USE CRSR KEYS/RETURN  : OR JOY PORT 2
commodore
  ISSUE    FILES
  #38      #09       scene
```

This issues cover disks menu contains 2 tunes by me on the 1541 cover disk. The first of which is a remix of a sort of Christmassy tune, which was originally composed by the Maniacs of Noise. Theres also my version of Jingle Bells on the flip side of the disk ;) 1581 users has a tune composed by Decoy/Excess yet again. (The same 1581 menu was used as with CS38 - normal issue). Anyway, enough about the menu, we have some great stuff to detail on this page ;)

Zynax 3 by Stefan Gutsch
Music by Richard Bayliss

CS doesn't usually have SEUCK games on the cover disk, but being that this game was produced exclusively for the Commodore Scene cover disk, I just could not help adding this game. This is a very nice blaster with some similar sprites. The game also consist of a new-look typical Bayliss-style title screen and also cool music added.

Control a joystick in port 1 or port 2 and guide your star fighter through three deadly zones, blasting aliens and collecting power-ups. Watch out because these aliens will fight back. Good luck

commander.

Star Trek 2000 by Roy Batty

From Roy Batty comes this very nice simulator game based on the TV series. Invade as many Klingons as you possibly can. Watch out when you navigate the SS Enterprise, else if you go too far, you will hit a nasty force-field and lose the game. Quite a great game release. Instructions provided in the main game itself.

Splidge's Snowball Caper by Richard Bayliss,
Music by Smalltown Boy
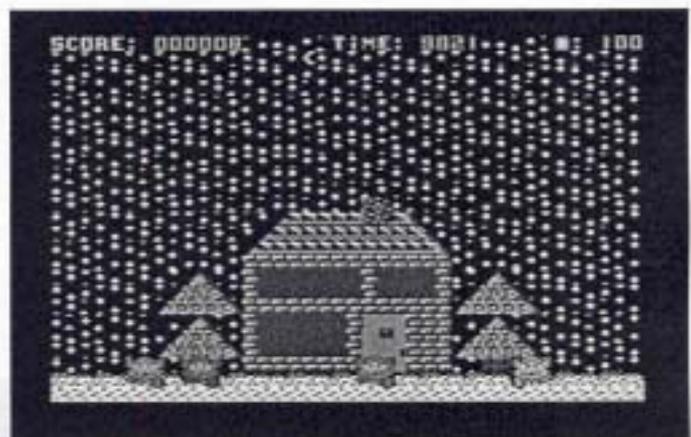
This is a little game I wrote for Christmas 2001 and released on http://tnd64.cjb.net, but now this game is released here on the CS cover disk. This is a crazy cartoon game, starring Splidge, from the Defuzion series. Throw snowballs at your friends and collect Christmas presents that fall from the sky. Watch out though because Splidge's friends might put Splidge into a giant snowball.

Slither
by Morten Jenson,
Music by Lasse Oorni (Cadaver)

This is a small PD game, where your mission is to survive so many rocks. Dodge your way past those rocks and don't get hit, else you're finished. This game looks basic, but it is a good test of your reaction skills. I quite like this game, quite fun ;)

Star Blazers
by Richard Bayliss

Imagine mixing two game genres and forming one? Well it has been done. Star Blazers is a pong/shoot'em up game, where you have to shoot a bouncing bubble and make it hit the goal beside your opponent. You can also have 1 player game as well. Or if you fancy more of a challenge, then you can have 2 players playing.

CS Promodemo by Richard Bayliss,
Music by Arne/AFL

This is a little spread demo to promote Commodore Scene magazine. This demo was produced with X-Grafik V2.0 (also on this disk)

Black Ice
by Eclipse,
Music by Moon/Flash Incorporated

This is an old demo which concentrates on Realtime, plus some scrolltext banter.

Antic Music
by Zyron/Antic

This is an oldskool style music jukebox featuring some pretty cool tunes composed by Zyron/Antic. There is also an option for you where you can save the tunes on to disk and use these in your own programs.

Shade Music Collection
by Flash Incorporated

This is yet another oldskool style music jukebox featuring a few tunes by Shade/FHI. Yet again you can also save the tunes and use these in your own programs.

Bomb Chase (FULL GAME) by Richard Bayliss

You've seen the 4 level preview, now you can play the full game this issue (and this game probably might be on CS39 cover disk for those people who have not received this special edition). Control Smudge around several deadly zones, collecting bombs, but avoid collision with monsters that try to stop you and eat you alive. Collect the bombs before they go boom.

Snow 'em Down by Reptilla Design,
Music by Demon

This is a small Christmas game from Ian & Mic. Your task is to collect snowballs from the ground and build your own snowman on the marked ground. You are on a jet-powered sky sleigh, but watch out because there's other people who are a collision course and if you collide into a sleigh, or the ground, you will lose a sleigh.

Poing
by Richard Bayliss
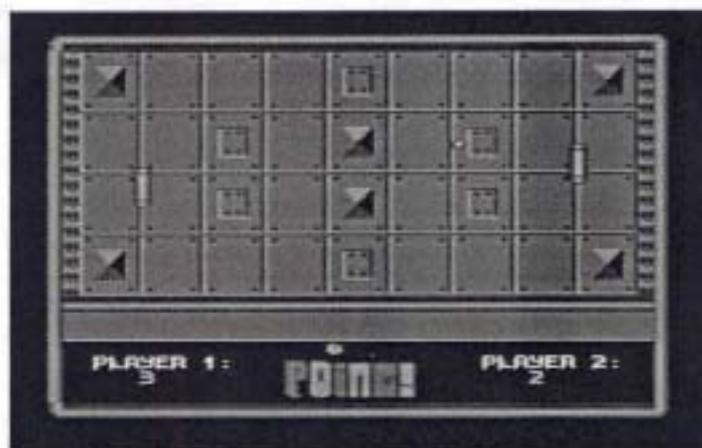
This is a new Pong remake. Get a friend to play this game, and battle against each other and

win. The scrolling forcefields are the player's goals.

X-Graphik V1.2 by Opal

This is a demo maker, where you can load in your own Advanced Art Studio picture, load a charset, load some music and write scrolly waffle. Quite a nice utility for you.

Vidcom Crazy V4 by Richard Bayliss

This is a nice demo maker that can handle Vidcom pictures. Load your own music and write a scroll text.

Ninja Tracker by Lasse Oorni

This is one of the latest music editors ever created on C64. This tool isn't that easy to use, but there are some instructions and help on how to use it. Two example tunes also included on this disk for you to load in.

Trilight by Padua,
Music by Waz and Vip/Fairlight ?

From Padua comes this crazy and very comical demo, which does stages of intro remakes on the famous more often used Fairlight and Triad intro screens :) Watch the show and you should find this interesting and pretty funny. Which intro's the best?

Trail Mix by Soedesoft & Fire Eagle

This is an old demo written by Fire Eagle featuring music by Soedesoft. Listen to the whole tune and see if you can recognise which classic C64 games and which musicians composed the music for them games? - But make sure your eyes are closed first ;)

The Satellites by Andrew Fisher

The Satellites is a music selector with five different tunes to represent each satelite. Each tune was also composed by Andrew Fisher. Prod a key, relax and listen all the way through each tune.

Dutch USA Demo by Andrew Fisher

This is yet another music demo by Andrew.

This demo features a SEUCK-like menu screen, and pressing a number key will play one of the ten selected tunes, which Andrew composed using the USA music Assembler.

Well that wraps this issue's cover disk. There was going to be Protovision's Vision 2002 game compo entries on this issue's cover disk, but being that the party disk wasn't ready, I was unable to do this, so I picked a few programs for this issue's cover disk, and how good they are as well. I'm sure you'll enjoy this months disk :o)

Well that rounds up this special edition of the CS cover disk. Planned for next issue's cover disk will be Vision 2002 game compo entries, North Party 7 releases and a BIG game called Westfront 64.Because there might be heck of a lot of programs to add on to the CS39 disk, programs may subject to change or maybe an extra 1541 cover disk may be arranged.

Enjoy this special cover disk.

Richard Bayliss

Well, boys and girls, that is it for this year. I hope that next year sees us going from strength to strength, we already know that there are some great things happening to our computers next year with the development of several new pieces of hardware and some wonderfull software too. Lets hope we can make our presence felt in a larger way than we currently are.
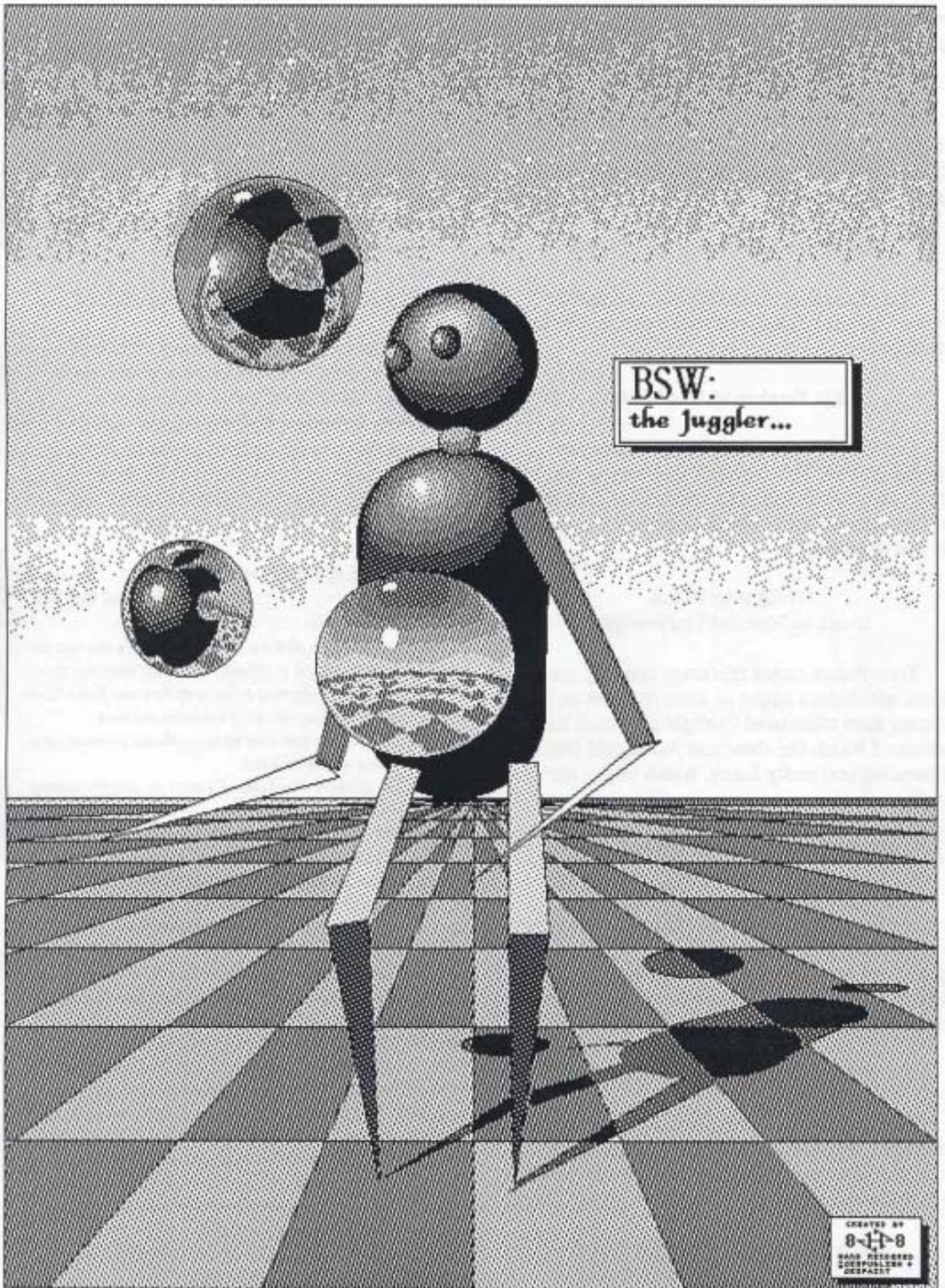
Speaking of which, I (and other CS staff) are already planning our next show with Micro Mart so keep a few days spare in your diary for 2003 - more news as and when it arrives. Also, just in time for this last section, I have been informaed of a new 'off the shelf' retro publication. The magazine in question is called 'gamesTM' and has a permenant RETRO section at the back which is about 30+ pages in length. It is not a bad read but it suffers from the usual problem that the writers have just written about what they know and the rest has been plundered from the internet. As I said, it is not bad and I have to admit that I have enjoyed reading it, but there is no mention of the current status of the c64 or the hardware and software available for it - I (and others) have offered our help to change this situation - we will have to sit tight and wait and see what develops. The magazine itself is 4 quid but there is an offer where you can subscribe for 6 quid and get 3 issues delivered to your door - not a bad offer that !

Anyway, no more space left so see you all in the new look Commodore Scene in 2003 - first section will be out at the end of February (I have even started printing it now so it WILL be ready).

One last thing, the picture on the back cover is the BSW JUGGLER which is a geoPAINT file printed with PP3.

Have a great Christmas & New Year,

Allan Bairstow

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