A disk of 4 clip-art files: JUNGLE, COMPOSERS+, PEA-NUTS, SNAKE.

C.S. Disk 38
GEOWRITE PHOTOS - clip-art for use in geoWrite; GEOALBUMv1.1 - a DA that saves the screen to a photo album; SCANART - clip-art; C I R C E, SOLO POCKER, PUZZLE & DETONATOR 2 - 4 geos games; CULTURE - a geos game; RUNNER - simple animation demo; GEOS-MON2.0 - ??; GEOHACKER2.0 & DISK HACK'R - a geos hacker programs; GEOSECTOR - a sector editor; BIT COP-IER & BITCOPY128 - a bit copier programs; GEO-THREADER & GEOTHREADER1.3 - ??.

C.S. Disk 39
A disk full of borders: FULL BORDER 1, FULL BORDER 2, FULL BORDER 3, FULL BORDER 4, FULL BORDER 5, FULL BORDER 6, FULL BORDER 7, FULL BORDER 8, FULL BORDER 9, FULL BORDER 10.

C.S. Disk 40
Make you own calendar with this disk.

C.S. Disk 41
SHORT CUT INFO - how to use the short cut sheets; WHALES - clip-art; CENTER 80 - an Auto-Exce file for 128 user's ; SHORT CUTS C64 - a short cut sheet for use with geos 64; GEOPAINT LABELS - clip-art; ALBUMANIMATOR - animates your photo albums; JUST FOR FUN, HOLIDAYS, FANTASY, WORK & PLAY - clip-art; PRINTDRVRPATCHER - patches your printer; GEOGRAB V2 - grap scraps; GEOPOUND - C64 basic program; CBM UK - font.

C.S. Disk 42
WRITEVIEW - dump write files to screen; 40 SCRN PRINT - dump screen to printer; FOREGROUND BUFF - ??; ALARM FLASH - flashes the border when alarm goes off; LARGE ART PT1*, LARGE ART PT2*, BIG CLIPS, DICKN-JEN ART 1, FRESNO SKYLINE - clip-art.

C.S. Disk 43 - See Photo Album 5.

C.S. Disk 44
A disk full of factal clip-art: FRACTAL 1-7, FRACTAL 1, FRACTAL 2, FRACTAL 3, FRACTAL 4, FRACTAL 5, FRACTAL 6, FRACTAL 7, FRACTAL FERN, SIERPINSKI, ANIMALS A-Z, CARTOONS, SEASONS, SIGNS, THE WORLD; NEWSYSERROR - get out of a system error; SLEEVE60DPI - a disk sleeve of 60dpi printer user's.

C.S. Disk 45
A disk full of borders: BORDER 1, BORDER 2, BORDER 3, BORDER 4, BORDER 5, BORDER 6, BORDER 7, BOR-DER 8, BORDER 9, BORDER 10.

C.S. Disk 46
A disk full of borders: BORDER 11, BORDER 12, BOR-DER 13, BORDER 14, BORDER 15, BORDER 16, BORDER 17, BORDER 18, BORDER 19, BORDER 20.

C.S. Disk 47
A disk full of borders: BORDER 21, BORDER 22, BOR-DER 23, BORDER 24, BORDER 25, BORDER 26, BORDER 27, BORDER 28, BORDER 29, BORDER 30.

C.S. Disk 48
A disk full of borders: BORDER 31, BORDER 32, BOR-DER 33, BORDER 34, BORDER 35, BORDER 36, BORDER 37, BORDER 38, BORDER 39, BORDER 40.

C.S. Disk 49
A disk full of borders: BORDER 41, BORDER 42, BOR-DER 43, BORDER 44, BORDER 45, BORDER 46, BORDER 47, BORDER 48, BORDER 49, BORDER 50.
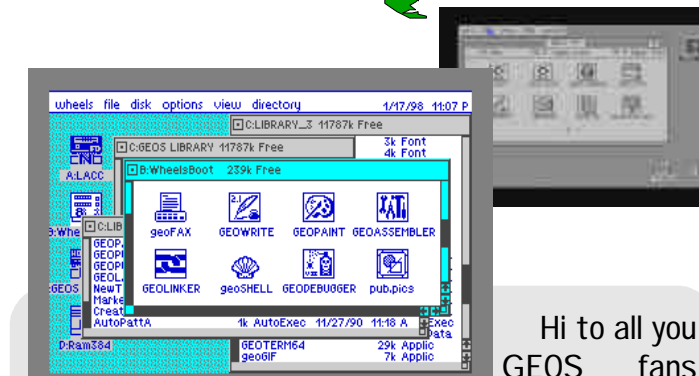
C.S. Disk 50
A disk full of borders: BORDER 51, BORDER 52, BOR-DER   53,

Dave Elliot (geoNUT)

Well it looks like I have a few more Zero Page issues to have a read through. It is always good to get new newsletters to read as the diversity of these type of publications is amazing. It warms the cockles of my heart to know that there are people all around the world still using and enjoying their C64's and C128's all running GEOS. Good on yer guys (and gals).

I have various issue to read through but the general feel of this newsletter is that of people who are dedicated to the scene and want to push their systems further and further.

Dale Lutes has offered me the use of any article from any issue for printing in Commodore Scene for which I thanked him very much, but I may go one better than that in the future and with permission from Dale I may even distribute a copy of Zero Page to all the readers as a special one off.

Lets wait and see shall we.

---

geoTELEGRAPH

NEXT ISSUE !

In the next issue of Commodore Scene we will see many new features and a new feel to the magazine and the new geo-TELEGRAPH section, among the GEOS related topics will be another look at Wheels128 and also a look at MP3.

Be there !

---

geoTELEGRAPH

GEOS
geoWrite v2.1

Part VII

Hi to all you GEOS fans and to those of you who have joined us from the geoClub UK.

Welcome to everybody.

Many things have changed in the c64 world, there are little or no new games, 'commercial' suppliers have all but dried up and many people have moved over to the PC. But GEOS keeps on going from strength to strength.

I personally think that there is much more to come in the world of GEOS and the C64/C128, well I happen to know that there is still a lot to come and I will try my best to bring you more news on the future of GEOS within these pages, stay tuned !
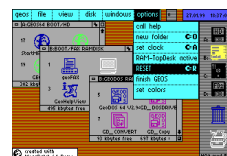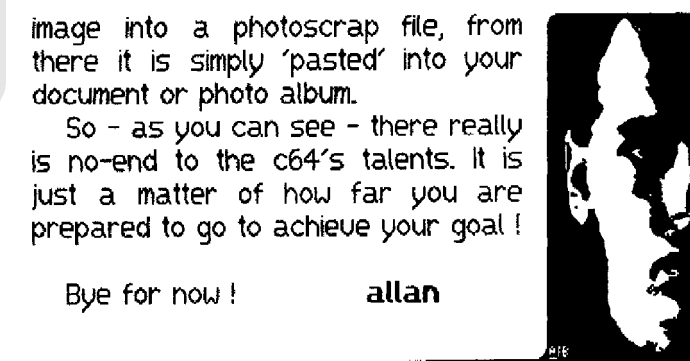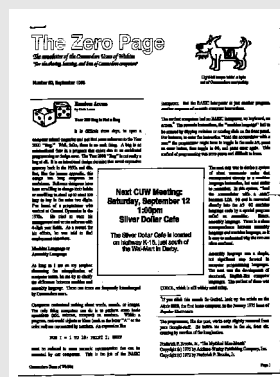
Obviously the big news of the year so far is that Dave Elliot (geoNUT) now has the complete old geoCULB (UK) disk library, which he has agreed to run through Commodore Scene. One thing that did strike me was the initials for the new library are provisionally CSL, unfortunately there is already a commodore disk library with the initials CSL so I think Dave and myself will have to have a conflab about this, watch the next issue for more news.

Allan

There is not much room in this issue for a big article and my time is very precious at the moment, what with Wheels128 v4.1 to review and the Printer Survey results article to compile.

So what shall we talk about this issue that will fit into this small space ?

I know, lets have a look at a command relating to the pictures/photo scraps that we have been placing into our geoWrite documents recently.

With the advent of inserting pictures into your documents, whether it is a nice little graphic of a cartoon or even a photo* of yourself to adorn your new letterhead creation (see last issue), there comes a time when a stock c64/single (or even double) drive system becomes too slow to keep on waiting for the screen to redraw every time the picture comes back into view. What do we do ?

Right then, if you look on the 'options' drop down menu you will see the 'hide pictures' option. It does what it says - it will hide your pictures so that geoWrite does not have to keep redrawing them. Selecting this option will replace your pictures with a blank shaded box, and will increase the screen redraw back to an acceptable level.

* It is actually possible to insert a photograph image into a geoWrite (or any other GEOS application for that matter), by simply utilising the geoFAX program as a scanner and then transporting the image into a photoscrap file, from there it is simply 'pasted' into your document or photo album.

So - as you can see - there really is no-end to the c64's talents. It is just a matter of how far you are prepared to go to achieve your goal !

Bye for now !   allan

BENCHTESTING VERSION 4.1

It arrives !

My thanks go to Maurice Randall for sending me this version of Wheels to test, review and use.

Most people know about Wheels and its recent chequered history over here in Europe, there have been problems in the UK and Europe with ALL the versions supplied not working. But because Maurice is not a 'fly by night', he has been beavering away trying to sort out the problem. The version I have been testing is Wheels128 v4.1, this , however, also has the same problem but I was expecting it - as was Maurice, so we were prepared. Because Maurice new that I had several drives at my disposal and different configurations were possible, he sent me the master disk on a 3 1/2" disk, it was hoped that this would allow some form of testing and maybe it might even work correctly !

Well, on with the review and testing

What do you get for your money ? Firstly you have an A4 sealed envelope which you know by the feel of it is going to contain some goodies. Inside the envelope there is a smaller envelope, A4 ring bound instruction manual and some A4 installation notes. The smaller envelope contains your personal ID numbered disk and the registration form (make sure you register), you will only get upgrades / help if you have registered. If you bought your copy directly from Maurice then you are automatically registered and no further action is needed by you.

What else do you get for your money ? Well, lets talk about that later shall we !

The instructions that are supplied are simplicity itself to follow so I will not talk you through it, needless to say that everything that you need to know is covered in great detail. To actually install Wheels you don't even have to read the instruction manual, simply read the installation sheets for a trouble free ride.

So, what happened ?

Well, contrary to my initial fears about 1541 drive problems and any other problems that may occur, I followed Maurice's request to try installing without any type of 1541 drive connected. What set up should I use ? Do I try just a 1581 and the C128D ? What the heck, I'll use my normal setup and see what
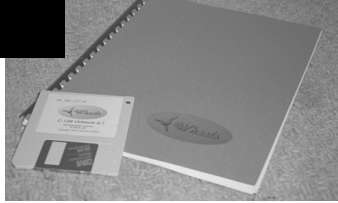
happens, if it doesn't work then I will try something a bit less optimistic !

The setup !

I went with my normal setup of :
C128D (integral 1571 as device #8)
SuperCPU128
FD2000 (device #9)
RAMLink (device #10) using an 8Mb partition
FD2000 (device #11)
CMDsmartmouse (with real-time clock)
Canon 4100 printer

As well as this, I left all my other items such as the Turbo232 cartridge and the Zoom modem attached - just to see what happens.

The Installation
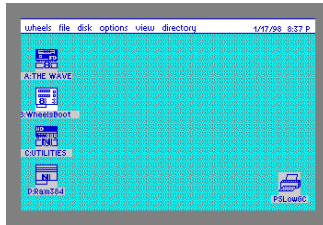
I loaded the Wheels disk and followed all the on-screen instructions. It is worth mentioning that all the instructions are to a very high standard and are extremely easy to follow. I answered all the questions asked about my system such as type of RAM and input device that I would prefer to use (you can change these later if you wish to). You are asked for your name and then you need your original master GEOS disks to complete the installation process. A bit more disk swapping is needed (not too much if you are using the 3 1/2" version) and then you are informed as to whether or not the installation was successful, mine was - great, things are looking good !

The BIG step !

After I had successfully installed Wheels the program then continues to load up and you are taken to the new look desktop - the Dashboard. Before I went any further I decided that it would be prudent to close down my system and try to reboot from the newly created Wheels disk, well this is a testing session after all !

With a big gulp and sweaty palms, I closed down and let everything settle down for a minuite or two while I made a cup of coffee - I had decided that a cup of coffee was a good step to take as I was anticipating a few problems - what a pessimist !

GEOSLEEVE - a disk sleeve; GEOS LABELS-80 - a geoPaint file; GEOGIF - data system format, geoPiant decoder for CBM computers using geos; GEOKEY & GEOKEY80 - changes the 'protect' bit on files; DENSITY DISPLAY - make your own DLD for 1541, 1571 compatibles; MENUFIX - this program fixes a bug in the 128 geos menu; FPE - change the patens in geoPaint; BRICK PATTENSET, OPEN PAT, AUTO PAT1.0; CROSSWORD.SCR - a crossword game; DEMO PUZ, DEMO PUZ.INF, CW FONT, DEMO PUZ.CLU.

C.S. Disk 15 - A disk full of geoCable printer drivers.

C.S. Disk 16
A disk full of serial printer drivers. (interface required)

C.S. Disk 17
A disk full of clip-art: GEOVIEW, TRAINS/01, RAILROAD P II, THE RAILROAD, OLD TRAIN, GONDOLA CAR, STEAN LOCOMOTIVE, TRAIN 1 (VERT), RAILROAD 3, RR CARTOONS, PS RR PIX, RA&H RAILROAD, RAILROAD STN, GARFIELD, PAINT SCRAP 2.0.

C.S. Disk 18
A disk full of clip-art: HAPPY FACES, BUCYBALL, ICONS 2, ICONS 1, POINTERS, BAT HZ, ICONS 3, ICONS 4, ICONS 5, PICSHOW.

C.S. Disk 19
A disk full of clip-art: GEOVIEW, PETE'S SPRITES, GEOCLUB ICONS, LETTERS NOS, GEOCLUB PICS, NUMBERS, LETTERS, BOY READING; SCRAPEEK 3.4 - peek at any scrap; ICON GRABBER 1.5 - grab any icon; FONTVIEW - view fonts; MICROFONT.

C.S. Disk 20
A disk full of clip-art: WINE BOTTLE, SCHLOSS SBG., PICTURE FRAME, SQUARE CORNER 1, SQUARE CORNER 2, ROMAN TILED, MARBLES, TRAVEL CLIPS.LL, FOOD CLIPS.LL; TASTE 64 & TASTE 64.DOC.

C.S. Disk 21
A disk full of clip-art: PAINT COMBO 3, COLOR BARS, BOY FISHING, CHILDREN 2, TOADAL KAOS, BASSELOPE, ZODIAC ANIMALS.

C.S. Disk 22
A disk full of clip-art: WESTREN GUNS, CARTOON CHAR 1, CARTOON CHAR 2, CARTOON CHAR 3, CARTOON CHAR 4, SIL6, MARVIN!.

C.S. Disk 23
A disk full of clip-art: BIRTHDAY/TRAVEL, MOM & DAD DAY, CHRISTMAS CLIPS, NEW YEAR ART 91, NY-VALSTPAT, HOLLY BORDER, HOLIDAY ALBUM.

C.S. Disk 24
A disk full of clip-art: KENNEDY/LINCOLN, WASHNTN/JEFFERSO, FDR/NIXON, L TAYLOR/M CURIE, Q ELIZ/PR DIANA, GALILEO/NAPOLEON, M & I GHANDI, FRANKSTN/DRACULA, D ROSS/A FRANKLN, BOLIVAR/SIT BULL, BASEBALL SCANS, GIRL FACES 1, GIRL FACES 2.

C.S. Disk 25
A disk full of clip-art: TMNT COLOR, EAGLE HZ, CATS HZ 1 & 2, CITY CLIPS.LL, SEASHELL SCAN, NINJA TURTLES, CAL/HOBBES HUG.

C.S. Disk 26
A disk full of clip-art: JAWS COLLAGE, 1911 OVERLAND, DIATOMS, CARS 1917 1, SQUARE DANCE CLI, CHILDREN 1.

C.S. Disk 27
A disk full of clip-art: GARFIELD, THE RAILROAD, CARTOONS CHAR1, COMPOSERS+.

C.S. Disk 28
A disk full of clip-art: PRINTFOX 1, ALIENS, CARS, FLOWERS, FANTASY, JETS, FISH, PRINTFOX 2, PRINTFOX 3, GIRLS 1, GIRLS 2, HOUSE, DOGS 1, DOGS 2, INSECTS 1, FASTIVAL, CAT, INSECTS 2, PEANUNTS, SMURF, SNOOPY, SPORT 1, SPORT 2, ANIMALS 1, ANIMALS 2, PRINTFOX 4, NEWS; PAINTVIEW_II - view geoPaint files.

C.S. Disk 29
GEO_FETCH - capture a Photo scrap from any application; GEOSLIDERS - a geos game; GEOSID - play music; ZOUNDS.MUS, FUER.MUS, VELOCITY.MUS; GEO_PIXELPUZZLER - a game; STAR MUSIC; SLIDESHOW - display geoPaint images; SLIDES 1 & 2; GEOGRAPH - make your own graphs; GEOWAR - a geos game.

C.S. Disk 30
A disk full of clip-art: *PIC P PLANES A, *PIC P PLANES B, *PIC P PLANES C, *PIC P PLANES D, *PIC P PLANES E, *PIC P PLANES F, *PIC P PLANES G, *PIC P COCKPIT., * KEY B BORDER*, *KEYF1 B/GROUND*, *KEY Q RESELECT* *PIC P CIRCUIT, *PIC P RAMBO..., *PIC P COBRA..., *PIC M KOALA, * KOALA PICS*, *PIC P FERRARL, *PIC P MCLAREN, *PIC P WILLIAMS, * PIRATE PETE*, DISPALY EDITOR.

C.S. Disk 31
A disk full of clip-art: PAINTVIEW_II, BORDER 1, BORDER 2, BORDER 3, BORDER 4, BORDER 5, BORDER 6, BORDER 7, BORDER 8, BORDER 9, BORDER 10, GETGRAPHIC, CHRISTMAS, BIRDS 1.

C.S. Disk 32 - See Photo Album 3.

C.S. Disk 33 - See Photo Album 4.

C.S. Disk 34
QUICK CLIPS 1 - clip-art; GRAPIC LABELS - clip-art; GEOGRAPH SAMPLE2, GEOGRAPH SAMPLE3; PUBLIC - clip-art; WEBSTERS - clip-art; LABEL SLEVE - a geoLable template.

C.S. Disk 35
DIALOG BOX EDIT - create your own dialog boxes; ALBUM 1 & 2 - 2 photo albums; GETDIRECTORY - takes a geo directory, and places it in a geoWrite file; CAR SIGNS - clip-art; PHOTO MOVER - move photo scraps; PHOTO PRINT 2.1 - printout you photo albums; PHOTO PRINT - printout earlier versions of geos photo albums; ALBUM REVERTER - down grade you photo album; SCRAP IT - cut out any size of scrap without using geoPaint; BUSINESS 1+ - clip-art; LEISURE - clip-art

C.S. Disk 36
A disk full of clip-art: G3.300+, G1.150+, G1.175+, G1.200+, G1.250+, G1.300+, G2.100+, G2.150, G2.175+, G2.200+, G2.220+, G3.100+, G3.150+, G3.200+, G3.250+, H1+, H2+, H3+.

C.S. Disk 37

The NEW Commodore Scene Disk Library
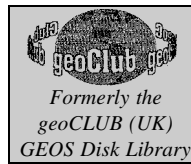
The NEW Commodore Scene Disk Library Review. Preview.

When Sharon Chambers relinquished the position of geoClub librarian, I realised that over the years the geoClub had collected a fantastic amount of Geos and Basic software. With this in mind I contacted Frank (Cassidy) and volunteered my services to run the library, not realising that Frank had decided to close down the geoClub. Since over the years I had been helping Frank with various articles and contacts, was the only one to volunteer to run the library, Frank kindly passed on nearly all the disks. Approximately 600. To sort them out into some sort of order is going to take a bit of time, plus a lot of the disk had FILE COPY only on them, which suggested faulty disks. The best bet I thought was to copy them to hard-drive, reformat the disks, rename and re-copy. I set myself a target of 50 disks before the next issue of CS, which all being well you will be reading this article from.

I intend to try and categorise the Geos disks into Applications, Fonts, Photo-Albums, Paint/Clip Art etc. Plus if I find enough programs a 128 only section. Having talked to Allan, we decided to keep the disks at the same price that the geoClub charged, £1. 30 for a double sided 1541 format disk. All proceeds from the disks will be directed back into CS. So the more You purchase, the more extra revenue Allan will have to help keep CS afloat (which having read issue 23 could become very easily the last bastion for the 64/128).

The catalogue disks are free, available in 41, 71, 81, format. All I ask is that you specify which format and send 2 first class stamps to cover the postage. Right on with the show.

C.S. Disk 1

SIDEDIR* - prints a disk directory sideways; DRIVE CLEANER - cleans the drive heads in geos; CALENDER - calendars in geos; GEOTACTOE - a O's & X's game; DUAL TOP - a geos version of the PC's Xtree directory; GET-GRAPHIC - import different types of graphics into geos; HANDY SCANNER - for converting scanned in graphics to geos;

C.S. Disk 2

NEW TOOLS - you can now do things in geoPaint that you never though you would be able to do; GEOS FORTH - Forth in Geos programming language; PAINT-SCRAP V2.1 - cut Scraps of any size. SNIPP - dumps the screen to a bit-mapped image; GET SER NR* - tell you your geos systems number; SHOW FONT; 3 PATCH PROG - allows the use of Mega Fonts in geoWrite, geoPaint and geoPublish, Roma MG must be on the disk.

C.S. Disk 3

TOPDESK 64, demo of alternative desktop from Germany.

C.S. Disk 4 - See Photo-Album 1.

C.S. Disk 5

MLABELV2.5 - one of the best Geos label applications; GRAPHIC STORM - converts to Geos from other software e.g. Printshop, Newsroom etc..; GEODIR PRINT2 - prints out the directory giving File Name, Type and Memory used etc..; ALBUM REVERTER - converts albums from different versions of Geos; QWIK TOP - an alternative Desk Top; The following files are mouse drivers - TWOBUTTONS 1 & 2, 64 L2R2L 1351 ; The following files are Font files - BACKSTRIPE, INGOT, MEGA NEWS, HEADERETTE, TUBY, EASTERN, SQUARE 16 ; RESCUE 128 - disk repair; PRE-

VIO TRANSPORT - clip art; FONTVIEW - look at all your fonts before choosing which to use; PAINTVIEW1.2 - look at paint files without geoPaint on the disk; SNEAKY SNAKE - a geoGame; ICON EDIT 2.1 - edit or design icons.

C.S. Disk 6

This disk is full of scanned in graphics from Paul Humpherys of Hyde in Cheshire. FAMOUS PEOPLE 1, FAMOUS PEOPLE 2, TIGER P, CHIMP P, KINGFISHER, ANIMALS 1, ANIMALS 2.

C.S. Disk 7

FONTVIEW - to view at the following Fonts: SIDEWAYS+, CANDY 28, FONT.SQUARE+, OZ FONT, CAPITALS, GEOCLUB, FROSTY 24, BOXES 32, FLAG 28; The next 3 files are geos games - GEOMATH, GEOMIMIC, SNEAKY SNAKE; SCRAPEEK 3.4 - you can now see just what is in that photo scrap; GEOVIEW - view geoPaint files without geoPaint; TIGER-P, CHIMP-P, KINGFISHER, NEW BORDERS - a clip art file; TURTLES - a clip art files.

C.S. Disk 8

Various Scanned in Graphics; BEATRIX POTTER, ED. DUCK 1, ED.DUCK 2, ED.DUCK 3, ED.DUCK 4, PLANNER 1992; GEOVIEW - again.

C.S. Disk 9

GEOCANVAS DEMO - a new type of geoPaint; GETIT-WRITE - is used with geoPublish files; LAZARUS 1571 - this file works outside geos to help repair your disk; TRASH-PICKER 64 - this file works outside geos to rescue bined files; FROG PEOPLE - a font file with a difference; CLIPART 1, ALWAYS A WINNER - a geos game.

C.S. Disk 10 - See Photo Album 2

C.S. Disk 11

GEOCLUB SLEEVE - a disk sleeve for a 5 1/2" disk; MICROFONT - a font file; ICON EDIT 2.1 - edit your icons; The following files are clip-art: BIG CLIPS 2, CONCORDE, COMMODORE 64, OWL, *PIC A PLANET, *PIC A THE UFO, UFO, THE RAILROAD.

C.S. Disk 12

The following files are clip-art files: GEOCLUB PICS, GEOCLUB ICONS, CAT HZ 3, SNOOPY DIVES, CARTOON CHAR1, STARMAN ART 1, GARFIELD, ANIMALS3, REPENTHOUSE.

C.S. Disk 13

FONT DUMP III - dump your font disks to your printer; WORMDESK 5.0 - a desktop; PHOTO MOVER 1.0 - move scraps from photo albums; SCRAP IT - cut any size of scrap without geoPaint; GRABBER - take a photo scrap of anything, from any application; LOCKUNLOCK - files; INSPDISKETTE - check for errors; DIRECTORY LABEL - this file dumps a list of your disks contents onto a large label; PRINTIT - print screen; SELECTOR 64 - change your input/printer driver in an application; MOUSEMATE - change your input driver in an application; GEO_CO2 - dissember that creates geoWrite files; AUTODATE - add date at boot up; CONVERT(DA) - a converter program; DIRAID - directory organiser; QWIK-TOP - a desktop; PICSHOW - use for viewing the following files: GGEASTER, GGMICKEY, GGFATHER XMAS, GGTURTLES, GGRAPHAEL, GGKANGAROO, GGROADRUNNER, GGMR DO-BE, GGTERRY, GGXEROX, GGBART, GGSUPA-TEC, GGSUPA.

C.S. Disk 14
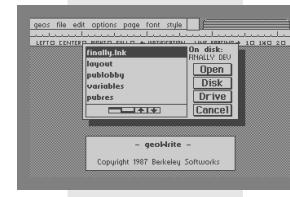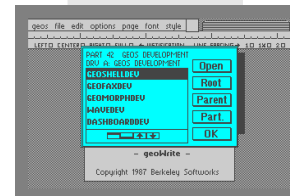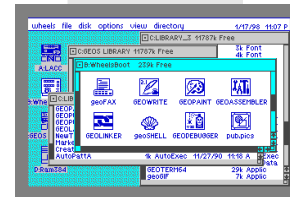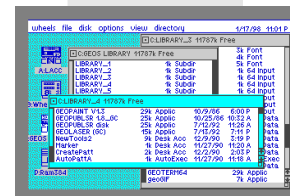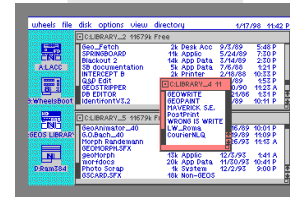
D-Day (and the rest of the weekend !)

In went the new Wheels disk, it clicked, it wirred, it made a few noises and then it ... it ... it WORKED ! Well Maurice, I told you not to worry ;-)

My coffee was still too hot to drink, Wheels had loaded successfully and I was experiencing something of an anti-climax mixed with the feeling elation due to the success of the first ever loading of Wheels going without a single hitch. As far as I was aware, that was the first time ever in the UK that Wheels had been successful, you can pat your self on the back Maurice, we're getting there !

I won't bore any of you with any of the various testing details that I carried out, needless to say that I spent the whole weekend trying various combinations of drives and types of drives. All the results that I gained were e-mailed to Maurice as soon as I had compiled them, for which Maurice was grateful as it gave him a good idea as to what was wrong with the program. Basically no type of single sided 5 1/4" disk will work, even in the 1571 drive the problem still arouse.

I digress, back to the working version. The supplied instructions give you detailed instructions on making back up 'master' disks (make some and store them somewhere safe), and also tells you how to create 'boot' disks and/or boot partitions. I opted for the boot partition on the RAMLink as I prefer to boot from the RAMlink because of the speed increase that it allows. I followed the very simple (again) instructions for creating the boot partition, within a few seconds it had been done and I then shut down the system again and rebooted using my new partition.

At this stage I put all my new Wheels bits and pieces (master disk, etc) away but I kept hold of the system user guide, all I intended to use now was the new partition that I had created. I booted Wheels again, this time (because of the RAMLink and with the SuperCPU enabled) it booted up in about 3 or 4 seconds, I didn't time it but I didn't even have time to pick up my coffee !

I also made various different boot disks and I put these in a safe place (after testing them first).

Everything was working faultlessly, so now it was time to have a 'play' - GREAT - now comes the fun bit !

Lets Play !

With all the 'hard' work done I had a little look around this new system. It is always a little daunting running a new system as you have to get used to a whole new way of working. Remember the time you upgraded from GEOSv1.3 to GEOSv2.O ? or GEOSv2.O to Gatewayv2.5 ? It is hard going but it soon becomes the 'norm' and any fears you had are soon a distant memory and Wheels feels more like home with every passing minuite. The dashboard is easy to use and all the icons are moveable so that you can customize it to your own liking, everything is there including the drive icons and the printer icon. The one thing that was lacking was the bin (trashcan / ashtray), I know that previews of Wheels that I have seen showed this icon on the desktop, unfortunately it is not there as a default icon and I was unable to locate it, nor could I find any reference to it in the user guide, ah well, it is not an essential item as deleting something is simplicity itself and the ashtray would probably never get used anyway.

What do you get for your money ?

Well you already get speed, quality & compatibility - tune in next issue to see what else you get.

And finally ......

Well Maurice, you can be quite smug now ! It works, it works well, in fact it works extremely well ! This is a major breakthrough for the C64 and C128, the support for CMD's hardware is very good indeed (although I have not fully tested that side of things yet), I have now relegated my GEOS v2.O to my personal disk archives.

Any gripes so far ?

Well I've not yet tested it fully but I felt that the first impressions of the FD2OOO driver weren't that good. I will leave judgement on this until the next issue as it may be that I do not yet fully understand how this driver works.
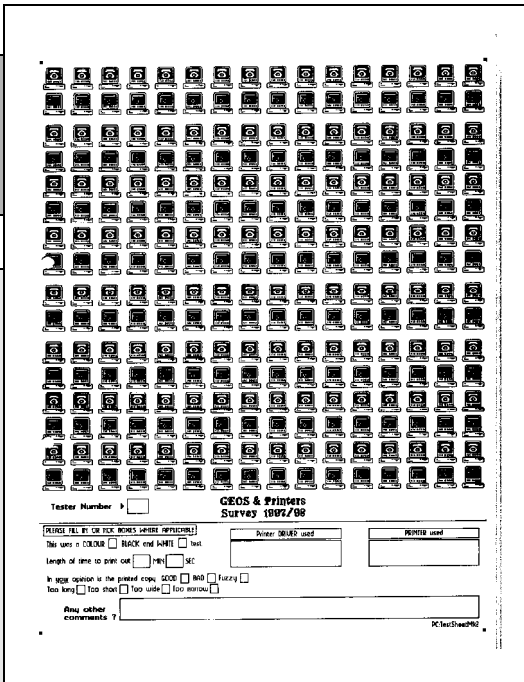
Next issue

Issue 25 will see another look at Wheels and will see us delving into customizing the Dashboard and also using applications and how they function in the new environment.

Allan
Bairstow
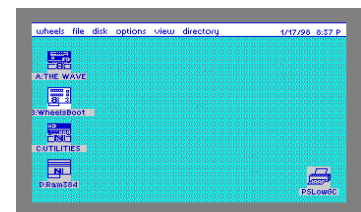
Here we are again with another look into the big world of the GEOS printer survey results.

Well, I have on the floor in front of me about 200+ sheets of printed out test sheets from various printers - where do I start ?

Okay first things first, before we start lets get a 'myth' sorted out shall we - for all those people telling you that your C64 won't connect to a modern printer you can reply to them with this - 'A Commodore 64 computer WILL attach to and run ANY modern printer and it WILL run it'.

A bold statement, can I back up my claim with facts ? - YES, I can. And it is all thanks to all you good people who took time out to complete the tests, thankyou all.

What do you need ?

Well, it depends on what you want to accomplish, do you want to just get a printout regardless of quality ? Do you want faster printouts ? Do you want high quality printouts AND speed as well ? Do you want printing speeds to rival and exceed those of PC's ? And finally, do you want better speed and better quality than PC's can do ?

It can all be done on the C64 but quality costs money, and speed ? Well, speed costs a LOT of money - but it is achievable !

The basic order of printers/C64 set-ups is listed below with the cheapest coming first, this lower down the list you can get will ensure a faster / better output.

FOR SPEED

Dot matrix printer with serial connection.
Dot matrix printer with serial connection and REU
Dot matrix printer with serial connection, REU and SuperCPU
Dot matrix printer with parallel connection.
Dot matrix printer with parallel connection and REU
Dot matrix printer with parallel connection, REU and SuperCPU
Bubble jet printer with parallel connection and REU
Bubble jet printer with parallel connection, REU and SuperCPU
Laser printer with parallel connection and REU
Laser printer with parallel connection, REU and SuperCPU

FOR QUALITY

Normal GEOS printer drivers
Reduction printer drivers
Interlace printer drivers
High quality (HQ) printer drivers
Using the printers in-built fonts
PPLQ set to 'high' mode

Which printers are the best ?

At the moment, comparing speed against quality I would have to say that some form of bubble jet printer would be the best choice. The Laser printers are still too expensive but the bubblejets can be picked up for as little as £20 second-hand, but if you wanted a new bubble jet then even they are as cheap as £60 brand new - shop around.

Several Canon bubblejets were tested and these gave excellent results, Canon have very good Epson emulation - which is what we need - both testing in black & white and also in colour (where possible) proved very successful with the following printers : BJC 4100, BJC 4200, BJ 10e, Epson Stylus 500 and the Hewlett Packard 520 Deskjet

A word of warning, I would stay well clear of printers that do not have a good Epson emulation. You may be tempted to buy a bubble jet printer because your local shop has a 'special offer' on, but beware as printers

such as Lexmark and other 'spurious' makes DO NOT perform well, even some of the Epson printers don't work.

Which printer drivers are the best ?

I would have to say that in general the best type of drivers are the ones which allow a compromise between speed and quality, these would include all the Epson drivers, of which the EpsonLQ(GC) is probably the best / quickest for most printers. Obviously the (GC) means that it is a parallel driver but the normal EpsonLQ variant would be just as good but a great deal slower.

The more astute of you will have noticed that you can get a VERY quick printout with VERY good quality if you use the printers own inbuilt fonts. However, this does have its drawbacks, little or no control over paragraph settings, fonts, bold, italic, etc, etc. Basically I wouldn't bother if I were you, although it is worth mentioning because there are times when a quick printout is needed and this may well be the best way of doing it.

What can I do to improve printing ?

Simply put, I would strongly recommend the PPLQ system as this will transform your humble dot matrix printer into a 'king of the hill', it will give it (and you) a new lease of life. Because of the nature of PPLQ, it is quite slow as it needs to perform miracles - and as we all know, miracles take time ! Not only does the PPLQ system come with the fine printing program but it also contains lots of new-type HQ (high quality) printer drivers which surpass the normal drivers by tenfold. All you need to do is find a replacement driver for the one you are currently using and then print ! - You'll be amazed at the difference.

How quick are they at printing out ?

Speed is relative. The drivers are very quick if attached via all the latest hardware, in some cases as quick as a few seconds to printout an entire A4 page. You can achieve quite fast printing if you are prepared to forgo the quality, a prime example of this is with the

PPLQ system. PPLQ allows the user to decide how the printout will look by selecting the print quality required. A higher print quality results in a slower print time and vice versa, a lower print quality will substantially reduce the time required to print it out.

STICK YOUR NECK OUT, ALLAN !

Okay then, I will.

In my personal opinion I would say that a good minimum set-up would be : any Canon bubble jet (out of all the printers tested, not one Canon failed), a geoCable and preferably also running the PPLQ system (although not essential). This will give you a superb printing system with the ability to set it up as you require.

What do I use ?

I have a Canon BJC 4100, geoCable II and a SuperCPU running at 20Mhz - with that type of set-up the printer gets 'warm' very quickly ! :-)

NEXT ISSUE

An in-depth review of the Canon BJC 4100.

Allan Bairstow