

CURSOR

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NEWSLETTER of the COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.

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MEETINGS - WHERE & WHEN

MAIN MEETING

Tuesday 6th June 1989, in the Bardon Professional Development Centre, 390 Simpsons Road, Bardon. Entrance is through the Centre's Car Park in Carwoola Street.
Library Open: 7pm - 8pm and 9pm - 9.30pm.
Shop Open: 7pm - 8pm.
Main Meeting hours: 8pm - 10pm. Topic:

Bill Weeks: Primary Education & the C-64

C-64/128 WORKSHOP (MEMBERS ONLY):

Sunday 11th June (1pm - 5pm) in the Guidance Officers Training Cntr, Bayswater St. Milton. Bring your own computer equipment. Publ. Dom. Disks available for copying. Ph. Hugh Gravendyk - 376 3154 a.h.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

PLUS/4 SUPPORT GROUP: - Clarence Stock is acting as support coordinator for Plus/4 owners. Ph. Clarence Stock on 397 8894 a.h.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

CANNON HILL: Last Saturday of the month (Noon - Midnight) in the Cannon Hill State School. Ph. Don Friswell - 343 1735 a.h.

KINGSTON: 2nd Saturday of the month. (1pm - 12pm) in the Kingston High School. Ph. Peter Martin - 290 1537 a.h. or Alan Hill - 290 0264 a.h.

PINE RIVERS: 1st Sunday of the month (1pm - 5pm) in the Strathpine State High School. Ph. Barry Bean - 269 7390 a.h.

SHERWOOD: 2nd Friday of the month (7.30pm) in the Graceville State School. Ph. Leigh Winsor - 379 2405 a.h. or Philip Parkin - 818 1172 a.h.

WAVELL HEIGHTS: 2nd Tuesday of the month (7.15pm - 9.45pm) in the Wavell State High School, Childers St. Entrance. Ph. Cor Geels - 263 2839

SUNSHINE COAST meets regularly.

For meeting times, dates, places:
Ph. Harvey Riddle - 071 / 421 036 or Ph. Vic Mobbs - 071 / 941 330

MARYBOROUGH/HERVEY BAY: 4th Monday of the month (7pm - 10pm) in the Sunbury State School, Alice St.
Ph. Terry Baade - 071 / 215 059 a.h.

Copying of Commercial Software is NOT allowed at our Meetings!

GOODS & SERVICES

{AVAILABLE AT OUR MAIN MEETING OR BY MAIL}

Public Domain Disks (C-64/128): \$3.00 ea (+ \$2.00 Postage up to 5 Disks)
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64 Sound & Graphics (by G.Perry): \$10.00 (+ \$2.00 Postage)
Amiga Dos Summary: \$3.00 (+ \$1.00 Postage)
Amiga Beg. Guide: \$3.00 (+ \$1.00 Postage)
Back Issues of *CURSOR* : \$1.50 each
Turbo-Rom for C64 or C128: Members Price: \$40.00 (+ \$2.00 Postage), or Customised Version: \$45.00 (+ \$2.00 Postage)
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-ooOoo-

FOR HIRE (to Members only): a 1526 (MPS
802) Commodore Printer. For details contact
John Van Staveren on 372 3651 (a.h.).

-ooOoo-

COMPUTER ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS

are being carried out at our
Milton Workshop Meeting (see Page 2) by:
Murray Hungerford (Ph. 848 2363 a.h.) and
Phillip Van Der Vliet (Ph. 848 5753 a.h.)

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*The Secretary, C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc.
P.O. Box 274 SPRINGWOOD QLD 4127*

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CURSOR COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATE:

\$30.00 per Full Page, per Issue.

(All bromides, artwork etc. to be supplied by
the Advertiser.)

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PRODUCTION CREDITS:

WordPerfect 4.1
PageSetter
The 64 Emulator 2
Deluxe Paint II
Deluxe Photolab
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NEC P2200 Pinwriter

and all those members whose contributions
you are reading in this issue of *Cursor*.

-ooOoo-

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Special Rates for Users Group Members!

EDITOR'S NOTES

Following upon a suggestion by our member Fred LeLievre, I would like to see in our newsletter a voluntary listing of members who can offer help, assistance or information with specific aspects of computer usage.

This type of scheme has been successfully implemented by the Amiga Users Group of Victoria and I would like to propose that we start a similar scheme.

I can do no better than quote from the *Workbench*, the newsletter of the Amiga Users Group:-

"The following is a list of members who have volunteered to share their knowledge/-experiences with others. If you also want to help and have your name listed here please contact The names are not listed in any order of priority and the format may change in future listings. Please keep contacts to reasonable hours (6 to 9 pm) and remember one very important basis of this service- they are volunteers..."

After this statement follows a list of names and phone numbers with the relevant details of the members' area of expertise.

Included amongst these areas of expertise we find items like AmigaBasic (beginners, intermediate and advanced), C at different levels (even stating usage of Manx or Aztec), Art, Music, Audio sampling, Midi, Excellence!, Superbase, Video, SideCar, AmigaDOS, Amiga hardware interfacing and even Viruses!

It is obvious from the above that so-called expertise may just be one tiny aspect of computer usage, such as your knowledge of one particular spreadsheet, but sooner or later there will be somebody out there that you may be able to advise on the right spreadsheet to use or assist with a problem.

During the last couple of years I have been able to offer a certain amount of advice on dot matrix printers, based on the fact that I've gone through about half a dozen of them! No, I'm not claiming the title of 'Dot Matrix Printer Expert', but I do claim that my experiences qualify me to offer at least a modicum of reasonably sound advice.

So, when I say that we are looking for "experts", we mean that we are looking for people with a certain level of experience in a particular aspect of computer use, without necessarily being a 'whiz' at that particular aspect or application.

I feel that the guidelines set up by the Amiga Users Group of Victoria are quite sound and intend to follow their example in the first instance. I hope to publish our first *Help Network* in the August issue of *Cursor*. (There will be separate listings for Amiga help and C64/128, Plus/4 Computer help.)

Following is a list of suggested areas where help is needed. If your particular field of expertise is not listed, don't let that deter you; I have just overlooked it....:

- Basic (all levels)
- Basic-8
- Pascal " "
- Logo " "
- Assembly Language Programming
- Relative File Handling
- Basic Computer Use
- GEOS
- Graphics & Art
- Music (SID chip)
- Midi (Synthesizers - Sequencers etc.)
- Modems & Telecommunications
- Radio Communications (RTTY etc.)
- Word Processing
- Spreadsheets
- DataBases (SuperBase etc.)
- Desk Top Publishing
- Printers (Dot Matrix, Inkjet, Lasers)
- Disk Drives
- Hardware 'hacking'
- and all the other bits I've left out!

If you feel that you can help under the conditions set out above (week nights 6 - 9 pm), submit your name & phone number and your area of expertise to:

The Editor, CURSOR
P.O. Box 384
Ashgrove, Qld, 4060

or ring me at (07) 300 3477.

Ralph De Vries

RANDOM BITS

MAIN MEETING

Because the May meeting took place a week later than is normally the case, we are unable to offer a resume here of last month's proceedings. In the following issue of *CURSOR* we hope to catch up again.

JUNE MEETING

Bill Weeks is going to take a critical look at C64 software, and in particular how it fits into the Primary Education system. Bill, of course, was for several years in charge of our Primary Education Sub-Group, and just about knows all there is to know about computers and education. Not to be missed by parents with school age kids!

KINGSTON SUB-GROUP

This sub-group will now meet on the second Saturday of the month from 1.00pm until Midnight (if anyone is still awake) in the Kingston High School. The entrance to the school is from Polaris Street off Juers Road and no-one can gain entrance from Bega road.

See you there (The more the merrier).
Alan J Hill

AHOY NO MORE

The first of the 'regular' monthly American C64/128 magazines has bitten the dust. The January '89 issue of *Ahoy* made a lot of noise about their fifth anniversary, but it

was the last noise they made - they are no more. Apparently they will carry on with the *Ahoy Amiga Magazine*.

TWIN CITIES 128

We have just received issue 24 of this first rate C128 publication. (It's difficult to know how to describe it - is it a newsletter or a magazine?) It is full of first class material and 128 users who have no intention of getting rid of their machine should seriously consider subscribing to this magazine. They have just issued a compendium with the best articles from the first 16 issues. This book is called the "Twin Cities 128 Compendium Book #1" and sells in the US for \$16.95.

For more information contact:

Twin Cities 128
P.O. Box 11578
Minneapolis MN 55411
USA

TRANSACTOR

The 8-bit issue of *Transactor* is definitely not dead, but is only published bi-monthly in Canada. Subscription is \$US 21.00 per 6 issues. If you are 'into programming' this one is a must. Subscriptions to:

Transactor
10-85 West Wilmot Street
Richmond Hill, Ontario
Canada L4B 1K7

BYTES

FOR SALE

Commodore 128. - Commodore 64 with Turbo Rom, Reset Button & CFC-501 Disk Drive. Xetec Super Graphics Interface. - 1351 Optical Mouse. 1764 RAM Expansion Unit with H/duty power supply & 240/110 Volt Transformer and GEOS 2.1, GEOPUBLISH, GEOFILE, GEOS POWER PAK. All with manuals.

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KINGSTON KAPERS

by Alan J. Hill

Sat 8th April 1989

Last night we held our local sub-group meeting at the Kingston State High School.

When I arrived at the school at 6.45pm (15 minsearly) about twenty people were already setting up and a hive of activity was well underway. Needless to say I sprang into action, grabbing membership forms and cash box plus attendance register - we charge 50c for members so we can make a donation to the school and care for our own local interests.

Getting around everybody can be quite a chore. While enrolling a new member, another nearly new member could not get his printer to work. I gave the new member a pen; *be back in a minute - just fill out the form*, I said. Now to get that printer working. *Hello this is a printer I have not seen before - got the manual?* Fiddle, fiddle, got it.

More people coming in; *50c please sign the book.*

Do I know of a wordprocessor for the 64 ? *Sure do, it's Public Domain and just right for school projects...*"How do you use it?"

More people coming in; Graeme Darroch arrives - he's one of the regulars.

Graeme give a hand to explain this program and get it up and running please, I said.

"Two boxes of disks please." "Thank you"

Hello, 50c - please sign here.

"Do you have any Public Domain disks for the Amiga?". *Sure do - over here.*

Hi, 50c - please sign the book.

"Hello I was here last month. Can I join?" *Sure can, just fill this out; be back in a minute*, I said.....*Now where's that other bloody pen.*

Good evening how are you? 50c please and don't forget to sign the book.

Hello, I've seen you here before, 50c please. "I don't have any money; see you next time." You are a member aren't you? "No." Ok I'll sign you up. "No."

At this point in relating the proceedings I would like to get serious just for a moment. Two people who have used the facilities of the sub-group more than once flatly refused to support our group in any way. I had to ask them to leave of course. I can't stand bloody spongers and that's what they are. If some of our younger members can do their bit (and they do), adults with that attitude can go jump in the lake.

Our sub-group is offering a good service to Amiga and 64/128 users and we can help new people to get set up and find that their investment has been truly worthwhile. You then feel that we are doing something worthwhile and that in itself is quite gratifying; but to continue.....

Two people approached me about Modems for the 64. We are going to have to arrange a demo soon. There is definitely some interest there. (I even gave GP 64/128 Term a plug!)

A young member enquired about tapes for his 64, and I passed him on to Peter Martin who is the expert in that field.

A couple of old faces passed by and said hello.

I finally found time to sit down with a guy whom I really did not know and introduced myself. He was copying a public domain disk that Peter Martin and I helped put together - fancy that - the ScreenShot Graphics programs for the 64.

He told me he's not into games, and wished he could do something himself. Later on a teenager said that he was fed up with games. He also wished he could do something with his machine.

Well, well that's two of them. I wonder if there are more out there as a result of our growing numbers so that more diverse interests are beginning to emerge.

I think that's wonderful. I have all of Greg Perry's Basic 1 and 2 course material. Perhaps a 'Basic Corner' as well as a 'Beginners Corner' would be more successful at sub-group level.

"This CLI thing on the Amiga - what is it?"

Now there's another need; on a one-to-one basis sub-groups can really serve people's specific needs. We will have a CLI chat at the next meeting.

"I can't get out of Emerald Mine, level 53. Can you help?"

Now there is a very definite limit to my abilities and you just found it...however see my son he is an expert at some games. Perhaps he can help.

Hello, Graeme's got his screwdriver out again to help someone out....See what talent we have.

People start packing up... it's time to go home. Somehow I never got to talk much about Amy stuff as I spent most of my time on 64s, but I wish I could have got that sort of 'hands on' help when I first got my 64.

GEOS AND ALL THAT

by George Harris

I first tried Geos a couple of years ago and thought "How wonderful. Just what I need!" But after nearly wearing my arm and patience out continually changing disks and wrestling with a decrepit joystick I finally gave it away. Then I heard about the 1764 RAM Expansion Unit (256K of extra memory) and the 1351 mouse and I was off selling bits and pieces and counting my pennies. To the expansion unit and the mouse I added a Xetec Super Graphix printer interface, Geos 2.1, Geofile, Geopublish and the Geos Power Pak and I can now say, at last, that Geos is worth while!

Gone is the intensive disk changing. Everything gets loaded into the RAM EXPANSION UNIT, which appears on screen as a second drive and a work disk or font disk or photo-manager disk sits in the main disk drive.

Gone also is the inconvenience of taking both hands of the keyboard to wrestle with the joystick. The mouse sits to one side and operates smoothly with one hand. It's an optical device and much more sensitive than the mechanical switching joystick. Just point and click.

Along with the RAM (memory) expansion unit came a larger power supply for the 64 to allow for the extra juice consumed, a surprisingly informative manual (26 page) and a disk of demos and utilities. The power supply is 110 volt (they're not made for the

Aussie market.) so I hooked up a stepdown transformer to it and away it went first time. Upon booting, Geos 2.1 automatically detects the unit after its first installation and thereafter treats it as a second, VERY high speed drive. Almost instantaneous in fact. The manual also details the memory locations etc and how to incorporate them in ones own programs and of course disk copying becomes just a matter of loading a disk into memory with one of the utilities and then writing it back to a fresh disk.

The 1351 MOUSE also comes with a manual (93 pages in eight languages.) and a disk of utilities for installing it in ones own creations. The only thing I can think of that would be better than a mouse is a trackball installed in the keyboard, which is what I am at present saving towards, amongst other things, for my latest love. Dare I say it! Computer number seven in my overcrowded shack is an AT clone. The mouse mat takes up about 12*10 inches of desk space and my desk is getting very crowded.

The XETEK SUPER GRAPHIX interface has transformed my Epson-Commodore relationship. The manual (36 pages) is comprehensive and the disk is stacked with fonts, demos and utilities. It has an 8K buffer and any two of the fonts on disk can be stored in the unit at one time along with the built in switch-selectable NLQ mode and used with a favourite wordprocessor.

All fonts support superscripts, subscripts, underline, bold and nine print pitches. As the thing runs out of the serial port it means that my parallel Epson, or any other parallel printer, can now print out from any 64 program in graphics or text.

GEOS 2.1 is still Geos but the extra features are worthwhile. Faster disk access, multiple file handling capabilities amongst others and the manual (307 pages plus 3 disks) is comprehensive.

GEOPAINT has added features, one of which is the constrain switch on circles, squares and diagonals which gives a choice between perfect circles or ellipses etc. Curved lines can also be automatically plotted and smoothed.

I never used the earlier versions of GEO-WRITE very much so I can't compare this one to it but I have tried this one a little and find it an ok w/processor.

It has GEOSPELL (30,000 word/user expandable dictionary) with it and a few new features I haven't tried. I still prefer Super-script though after having invested a lot of time figuring out the commands.

GEOFILE is the best database I have tried to date for me. I have never had enough use for one to devote enough time to learning the ins and outs of Superbase. Geofile is quick to learn, easy to use, powerful and user friendly. Menu driven, it allows field sizes and shapes to be changed at any time with clicks on the mouse. If the data disk is loaded into the expansion ram then access is quick. Although I've crashed it a couple of times I've never lost much data because of regular updating to disk. The manual is comprehensive and the disk includes a trainer.

GEOPUBLISH is my youngest child's favourite. She has disks of graphics that have been converted from Newsroom and Printshop etc with the graphics grabber. She arranges sets of them, which can be smoothed, scaled, resized, rotated, inverted or mirrored and then positions them on the pages and flows in the text to the story she has written for them. The manual is good and this one also comes with a trainer. It may not be as fast as my clone but it's still as fast as I can think and type and produces an equal end product.

GEOS POWER PAK is a disk and manual (36 page) with 21 fonts, 100 clip art files and 10 applications and utilities.

There is GEOTERM, a 300/1200 baud, half and full duplex terminal program with an 8K buffer and uses Xmodem protocol.

CARDFILE is a Rolodex-type database. Names and addresses etc.

WRITE-HAND MAN will count the number of words, the number of sentences, the average number of words per sentence and the number of occurrences of each word length in a Geowrite document, if you should need it!

GEOBREAK is a version of the arcade game Breakout.

AUTOVIEW allows several different methods of scrolling around a Geopaint file that is larger than one high res screen.

PATTERN EDITOR allows any of the 32 Geos system fill-patterns to be edited and saved to disk and subsequently used in other Geos applications.

THUMBNAIL allows one to generate, from a Geopaint file, an image similar to that created by the preview option and then save to disk. It also allows the contrast of the image to be changed for better visual definition.

GEO-ORGANISER is a utility for quickly and easily rearranging the order of Geos files on disk.

CONVERT 2.2 allows Geos files, graphics or text etc, to be converted for transmission through a BBS or other communications medium, and then reconverted at the other end.

PAINTVIEW 2 is a quick and easy way of viewing Geopaint files without loading Geopaint.

So, now that I've "been there and done that" I'm off again. I'm keeping one Commodore as a briefcase size, portable packet-radio station with a little 4 inch monitor screen and selling the rest. Why? To buy an optical scanner with text recognition for my clone and a keyboard with a trackball of course!

-ooOoo-

GAMES COLUMN

by Reuben Phillips

On the Prevalence of Cute Green Blobs in Computer Recreation

The Cute Green Blob (CGB), is a standard device usually taken to represent the programmers latent wish for Nasal Purgation, or perhaps in a Jungian psycho-analytical framework (during periods of extreme stress) repressed childhood fears of 'The Bogey-Man' and things that go 'Schlork' in the night ... (Wolb,B:192)

REVIEWS

*** BOMBUZAL (Imageworks)

After a series of games of variable quality (LOCO, LOCO and more LOCOs, Blagger, Gryphon, William Wobbler, Fernandez Must Die, Zig-Zag to name a few) Tony Crowther (Mr. Erratic-person) in conjunction with David Bishop has come up with a new game. Even though it's not the most original idea ever, it none the less plays well. The game centres on a cute green blob with legs (why must they all be cute green blobs) who lives in a flat land consisting of various tiles, bombs, teleporters and other objects.

Bombuzal (the aforementioned cute green blobject) runs around setting off the bombs in an attempt to clear each of the 120 landscapes. Needless to say, Bombuzal must avoid the explosions (unless he tires of living). The levels are well graded, progress being made at sufficient a rate to leave you hooked. Some of the later puzzles are quite subtle, very devious, or both. The question arises, do cute green blobs find a life of running around dodging shrapnel fulfilling? Doesn't the limited nature of his existence ever bother him?

*** Microprose Soccer (Sensible Software)

'Blob takes a shot at goal, it's curving in, no it's not, it's missed completely, what a terrible shot from Cuthbert Blob...' Microprose Soccer takes a top-view of the large scrolling field, you control one player with

the rest of the team controlled by computer. The other members of your team are usually placed in useful positions to receive your passes, stop loose balls, shots at goal, throw-ins etc. In addition to the normal straight kicks there are 'Banana' kicks which can be used to curl a ball around the opposition goalie and cover yourself in glory. Stealing a ball off another player is accomplished by a sliding tackle, once in possession you can now dribble all over the field, and with a few well aimed passes to baffle the defense, blast the ball in past the Goalie (who's too busy looking for his contact lenses). After gloating over the replay (really well done, too) you lead your troops in a massed attack on the demoralized wretches and ... Rats, its raining, same time tomorrow chaps.

Tips Bit

More tips from Grant Sirett,

TRAZ: LOAD, Reset the computer, POKE 42200,173 and SYS 32768 for something or other beneficial.

NORTHSTAR: LOAD, Reset, then POKE 23515,173 and SYS 16384 for more of the same?

IO: LOAD (makes sense), Reset, then: POKE 27026,0:POKE 27027,173 for invincibility
POKE 25117,173 for infinite lives
POKE 24969,(any no. from 0-3) for starting level
POKE 26088,219:POKE 26089,97 press RUN/STOP to change levels. Restart with SYS 2512

Send some scribblings soon to:

GAMES COLUMN
P.O BOX 95
SUNNYBANK QLD 4109

-ooOoo-

MAIL BOX

Ross C. Smith, one of our Rockhampton members, sent us a photocopy of an article on power supplies, brown-outs, black-outs etc. The article was written by a gentleman from a company which supplies uninterruptable power supplies, but he failed to mention prices for these devices! From some past reports in the USA we gather that these devices cost many hundreds of dollars and thus could only be considered a viable proposition in professional applications.

It would be interesting if you could find out pricing details, Ross!

I have received and read Cursor for many years, but having dealt with the contents, failed to retain any back copies.

Some months ago someone wrote an article regarding transferring Superscript files prepared on a 64 or 128 to an IBM running WordPerfect. At that stage I had no application - but now I have.

I wish to prepare work (text files) at home, and later transfer to WordPerfect IBM (hard disk) at the office. I am not a programmer and would therefore need a commercial program to do the conversion. Can you assist please.

Grahame Davidson

Even your editor has his off-days; for the life of me I cannot recall any articles that cover file transfer from C64/128 to MS-DOS.

The only commercial program known to me which performs this type of file conversion is "BIG BLUE READER 128/64", by Sogwap Software. However it requires the use of a 1571 disk drive to perform the conversion.

If you are into modems, it would be a relatively simple matter to transfer text files from one computer to another, but again this requires a modem connection between the sending and receiving computers.

Hopefully this will be read by one of our members who has some practical experience with this type of file transfer and perhaps he/she will let us share in their experiences.

1571 Format Disks

I would like to throw the following "solution to a problem" into the ring for appraisal by anyone interested. It is a solution to a problem that seems very difficult to overcome, namely... How to copy a double-sided data disk using a 128D (that means with only the built-in single drive). I'm told that with the late model 128D which I've got it's darned impossible. Maybe by investing in some exotic (very expensive) software or installing special chips or whatever, a satisfactory method could be found.

Anyway, here's my two cents worth - it may turn out to be like the 'nuclear fusion at room temperature' experiment and no one else will be able to repeat it.

Firstly, credit where credit is due - one day Norm Chambers and I were kicking the problem around and Norm asked what would happen if the ending track was changed from 35 to 70 when using a copy program; however a trial was unsuccessful and we left it at that.

Days later I tackled the problem again, and I recalled what Norm had said. I experimented with various programs and this is the result:-

Power up the 128D in 128 (40 col) mode.

Change to C64 mode by using the command "GO 64" - this leaves the 1571 in double-sided mode.

LOAD & RUN the copy program "SHOTGUN II".

Change the ending track from 35 to 70 (this is the only copy program I have on which I could do this change).

Select "C" (Copy disk), then insert the source disk and hit RETURN.

The program will read and write tracks in batches. When it comes to track 35 it will continue on to tracks 36, 37 etc., reading and writing in batches until the 70 tracks are copied.

I have copied a SUPERBASE double-sided data disk containing an Inventory file of over 600 records satisfactorily, and did a printout of the file, using the backup disks O.K. Now perhaps other programs using this method would work also.

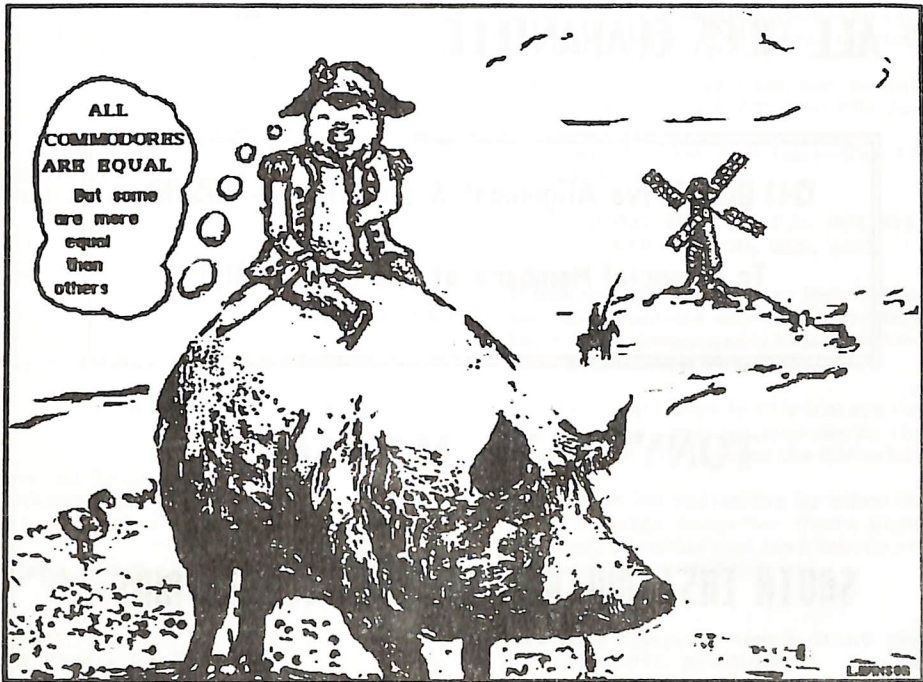
LATE NEWS... I've just been told that there's an 'all bells and whistles' program called "RENEGADE" which will do the trick.

Len Heffernan

Thanks for your tip, Len It's nearly three years ago since I last used a 128, but was fortunate enough to own two drives, which made disk copying a lot easier

I would earnestly ask other 128 owners with a single 1571 drive who have come up against the same problem and have found a solution, to share their experiences with us through these pages. You'll be doing your fellow members a real favour

-ooOoo-



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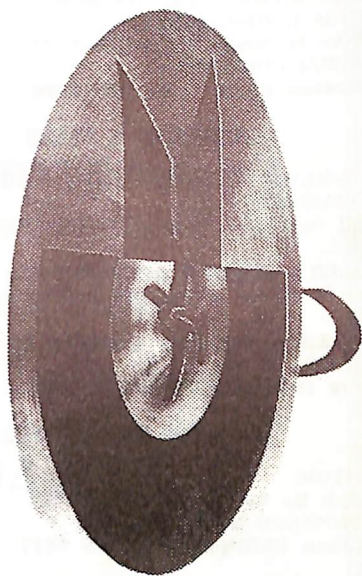
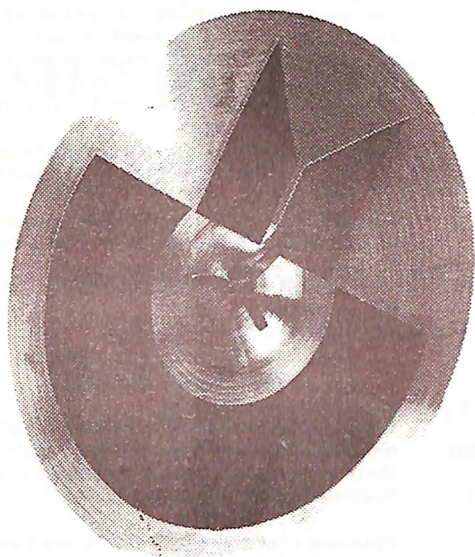
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