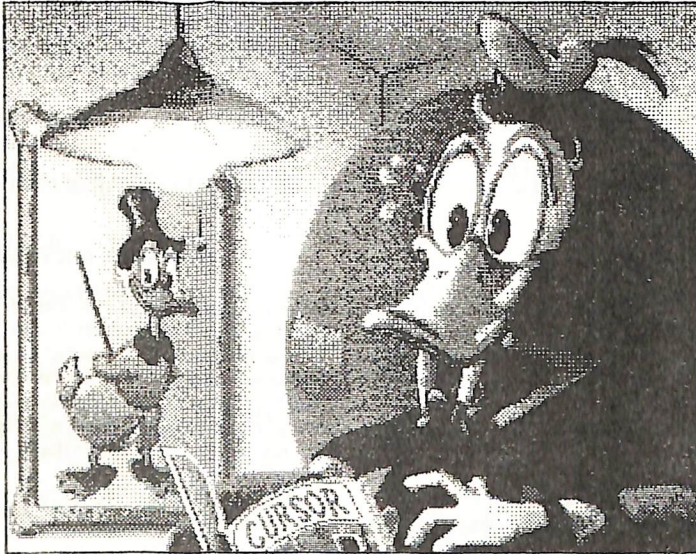


CURSOR

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Vol.6 No.2 - SEPTEMBER 1989

COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.



CURSOR READERS ARE EVERYWHERE!

**Our Next Main Meeting will take place on Tuesday,
5th September 1989, at 8 pm (Libraries & Sales at 7 pm)
at the Bardon Professional Development Centre**

SHEPPARTON COMMODORE
COMPUTER CLUB,
10/- 11 Dunrobin Street,
Shepparton. 058-214746.



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C.C.U.G. (Q) - INFORMATION

MAIN MEETING

The Main Meeting is usually held on the 1st Tuesday of the Month at the Bardon Professional Development Centre, 390 Simpsons Road, Bardon, starting at 8 pm.
 Library: 7pm - 8pm & 9pm - 9.30pm.
 Sales: 7pm - 8pm.

Entrance through the Centre's Car-park in Carwoola Street. **Parking is not allowed in Centre's grounds!**

The dates for upcoming meetings are

- Tuesday, 5th September, at 8pm.
- Tuesday, 3rd October, at 8pm.
- Tuesday, 7th November, at 8pm.

Details of this month's topic can be found in the relevant section of this newsletter.

WORKSHOP MEETINGS

C64/128 Workshop is held on the 2nd Sunday of the Month (1pm - 5pm) in the Guidance Officers Training Centre, Bayswater Street, Milton. Public Domain Disks available for copying & blank disks are for sale. Bring your own computer equipment!

The coordinator is Hugh Gravendyk
 Ph. 376 3154 (a.h.)

Amiga Workshop is held on the 2nd Sunday of the Month (1pm - 4pm) in the Ithaca RSL Hall, cnr. Nash and Elizabeth Sts, Rosalie.
 Disk & Accessory Sales: 1pm - 3pm
 Bring your own Amiga equipment.
 For information ring 300 3477.

Details of this month's activities can be found in the relevant section of this newsletter.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

CANNON HILL: Last Saturday of the month (Noon - 12pm) 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./ Philip Parkin - 818 1172 a.h.

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

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

GOODS & SERVICES

(At Main Meeting or by Mail)

AMIGA SPECIFIC:

Public Domain Disks 3½" (Amiga - Mail Order Only): \$5.00 ea (+\$2.00 P & P for up to 5 Disks)
 5¼" Blank Disks: \$9.00 per 10 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 3½" Blank Disks: \$25.00 per 10 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 3½" Disk Boxes (80 disks): \$20.00 (+ \$5.00 P & P)
 3½" Disk Labels (68x68mm) 4 sheets (= 48 labels): \$1.00 (+ \$2.00 P&P)
 A500 Dust Covers: \$16.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 Amiga Dos Summary: \$3.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 Amiga Beginners Guide: \$3.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)

C64/128 SPECIFIC:

Public Domain Disks (C-64): \$3.00 ea (+ \$2.00 P & P up to 5 Disks)
 Public Dom. Cassette Tapes (C-64): \$2.00 ea (+ \$1.00 P & P Per Order)
 Commercial Library Catalogue Disk: \$3.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 5¼" Blank Disks: \$9.00 per 10 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 1541 'Drive & Disks Testing' Disk: \$2.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 1541 Drive Dust Covers: \$10.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 Disk Notchers: \$8.00 (+ \$1.00 P&P)
 Turbo-Rom for C64 or C128: \$40.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P), or Customised Version: \$45.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 User Port Plug (Edge Connector): \$8.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 User Port Plug Backshell: \$3.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 User Port to Centronics cable: \$35.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 36-Pin Centronics Male Plug w. Backshell \$10.00 (+\$1.00 P & P)
 Public Domain Instruction Book (C64): \$5.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 Starting With Disk Drives : \$2.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 C-128 Mem. Map: \$2.00 (+ \$1.00 P&P)
 Macro Assembler Book: \$5.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 64 Sound & Graphics (by G.Perry): \$10.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)

GENERAL:

Back Issues of *CURSOR* : \$1.50 each
 Address Labels (23 x 89 mm): \$14.00 per 1000 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 Ribbons for MPS-1000, GX/LX-80 Printers: \$7.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 Ribbons for MPS-1200/1250, Citizen 120-D Printers: \$10.00 (+ \$1 P & P)
 Ribbons for Riteman C or F Printers: \$12.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)

---> **NOTE: Copying of Commercial Software is ILLEGAL, and is NOT ALLOWED at our Meetings.** <---

MAILING ADDRESS

Please address all mail which is not related to *CURSOR*, including orders to:

C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc.
P.O. Box 274
SPRINGWOOD QLD 4127

Cheques to: C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc.

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

Please advise our Secretary and *not* the Editor of *CURSOR*!

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Fees are as follows:

Joining Fee: \$10.00

Annual Membership Fee:

Ordinary* Membership: \$25.00
Country/Associate M'ship: \$15.00
Pensioner Membership: \$15.00
Family/Business M'ship: \$35.00

(* Within the B'ne Metropolitan Telephone District)

Library Fee: \$5.00

LENDING LIBRARY

It is a condition of use of our Book, Magazine & Software Lending Library that materials can only be borrowed for a period of 1 Month.

If unable to attend the next meeting, members can either mail the borrowed material to the Group's PO Box (see above), or they may leave this material with their nearest Management Committee member (but please ring first!).

By following these simple rules, you assist your fellow members who may want to borrow the books or software which you are returning.

COMPUTER ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS to C64/128 equipment are being carried out at our Milton Workshop Meeting (see Page 2) by Murray Hungerford (Ph. 848 2363 a.h.) and Philip Van Der Vliet (Ph. 848 5753 a.h.)

SERVICES OFFERED:

Reset Buttons: \$6.00 - Device Number Change: \$6.00 - Reset Re-enable: \$6.00 - C64/128 Computer Selection Switch: \$6.00 - 40/80 Column Selection Switch for C128: \$10.00, for C128D: \$15.00 - Turbo Rom Installation: C64 with Socket or C128: \$6.00 - Turbo Rom Installation: C64 without Socket or C128D: \$10.00 - Write Protect Switches: \$6.00 - Write Enable Switches: \$6.00

YOUR NEWSLETTER

CURSOR appears 11 times annually and is dependant on members' contributions for its content.

Address all Newsletter Mail to:

The Editor "CURSOR"
P O Box 384
ASHGROVE QLD 4060

Deadline for the Oct. Issue is:

FRIDAY 1st SEPTEMBER!

Short articles (less than a page) and adverts for the *BYTE* column can be submitted in written or printed form, but we prefer to receive your articles on disk.

Please use *minimum* formatting in your articles. Do *not* indent paragraphs and use a *single* space after a full stop.

If a specific page layout is required, include a printout in the desired format. Disks will be returned promptly and we pay return postage.

AMIGA Specific:

Supply your articles on 3½" disk in the form of an ASCII file or a WordPerfect file with *minimum* formatting.

C64/128 Specific:

Supply your articles on a (1541) 5¼" disk in the following format (in order of preference):

SEQ ASCII file, SEQ PET ASCII file, SuperScript/EasyScript, PaperClip/-PocketWriter files in the SEQ save option, SpeedScript files saved with the SS converter program, option 2, (SEQ Standard ASCII file). Sorry, but we cannot read 1571 formatted disks, and are unable to convert GeoWrite, FontMaster or Bank Street Writer Files.

Alternatively, if you own a modem, you can upload articles, news, gossip, etc. to the Group's BBS (Ph.344 1833 - File Area 8)

Commercial Advertising

Rate is \$30.00 per full page, per issue. This rate is for A-5 size camera-ready copy only.

Production Credits

WordPerfect 4.1.9 - PageStream -
The 64 Emulator II - GP Term -
Easy Ledgers - Epson SQ-850 Printer

Opinions expressed in *CURSOR* are those of the Author(s), and thus not necessarily those of the C.C.U.G.(QLD) Inc. or the Editor.

Permission for reprinting by other Commodore & Amiga Computer Users Groups is granted, *provided* that both the source and author are acknowledged.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT:

Greg Perry - Ph. 366 3295

SECRETARY:

Mike Williams - Ph. 209 9084

TREASURER:

John Van Staveren - Ph. 372 3651

CHIEF LIBRARIAN:

Phil Guerney - Ph. 378 9756

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Ralph De Vries - Ph. 300 3477

SUBGROUP LIAISON:

Alan Hill - Ph. 290 0264

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

C-64/128 COORDINATOR:

Leigh Winsor - Ph. 379 2405

AMIGA COORDINATOR:

Steve McNamee - Ph. 260 5827

SALES

C64/128 DISKS & ACCESSORIES:

Leigh Winsor - Ph. 379 2405

C64/128 PUBL. DOM. DISKS AND TAPES:

Doug Maclurkin - Ph. 358 4442

AMIGA DISKS & ACCESSORIES:

Bruce Wylie - Ph. 075 489 038

AMIGA PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS:

Mark Eckert - Ph. 891 5268

BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEM: (07) 8087694

SYSOP:

Graeme Darroch - Ph. 209 1999

ASSISTANT SYSOP - AMIGA:

John Dooley - Ph. 398 2774

ASSISTANT SYSOP - C64/128:

Craig Rawlins - Ph. 379 8957

Our BBS is part of the Opus Network (Node No. 3: 640/304), and can be accessed by our members at 300, 1200/75, 1200 and 2400 bps, using 8 data bits, 1 stop bit and no parity

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EDITOR'S NOTES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As usual, Greg Perry opened our A.G.M. with a few remarks relating to the day to day running of our group.

He thanked Bruce Wylie, who has decided to step down from his position of Amiga Sales Coordinator, for his untiring efforts during the last few years in which Bruce, (who lives on Bribie Island) has travelled many hundreds of kilometres to attend two monthly meetings.

Greg also welcomed Terry Baade from Maryborough, who for some years ran a sub-group of our members in that part of the world. It was nice to be able to meet Terry in person at last.

The official portion of the meeting started with the Treasurer, John Van Staveren, giving us the financial report for 1988 - 1989 (re-printed in this issue), which proves that all is well with the financial aspects of the Group.

John thanked Sybiz Software of Adelaide for the donation of their *Easy Ledgers* program, which will be used to do the Group's accounting.

He also thanked Ken Pedersen who has audited the Group's books during the last three years in an exemplary fashion.

Greg Perry, in turn, pointed out that our Group wouldn't be what it is without those many people who donate their services in so many areas of the Group's activities, and went on to thank the Library Staff, those who are involved in Public Domain and Accessory Sales, the BBS personnel and our Sub-Group coordinators.

Norm Chambers, former Secretary of our Group and now honorary Life member, took the chair to conduct that part of the AGM where we elect the office bearers for the next twelve months.

Norm paid tribute to those members who passed away during the last year and then proceeded with the election. Because there were only single nominations for each position of the Management Committee, there was no need for a ballot, and your existing Committee was re-elected for another twelve months.

Following the election, Norm proposed that your newsletter editor (that's me), who has held this post for six years, be given Life membership for services rendered. The motion was seconded by Bob Devries (who is *not* related to me!) and carried by the floor.

I thank you all for this honour, and will carry on as before.

After the official portion of our meeting was over, it was the turn of Tod Thiemann, product manager for Electronic Arts (E.C.P.), to show us a demonstration of *Deluxe Paint III* and the game *Populous*.

Tod, who comes from the parent company in the USA, also told us a bit of the background of his company and answered questions from the audience, some of them being rather 'hairy'!

In his position as Product Manager, it's his task to look after product backup, advice on the use of production software etc. Hopefully this lead will be followed by other software distributors.

Ralph De Vries

PARCOM PTY LTD

Whites Hill Shopping Village
Samuel Street, Camp Hill, 4152, Ph (07) 395 2211

NORTH SIDE: 1 Clifford Street, Stafford, 4053
Ph (07) 857 6311

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- See Us for Efficient and Courteous Service
- Fast Turnaround

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VIC, C-16, +4 PCB REPLACEMENT - \$49.00
KEYBOARD EXCHANGE - \$50.00

OTHER SERVICES:

AMIGA SWITCHABLE ROM UPGRADE - \$60.00
PRINTER GRAPHICS ROM FITTED - \$80.00

Special Rates for Users Group Members!

MAIL BOX

In the belief that any criticism is justified as long as it is constructive I decided to set up my word processor.

I was disappointed to read in RANDOM BITS in the July issue of CURSOR that Student Members of the group are no longer eligible for discounted membership. Surely the aims of the group should be to encourage the interest of students in computers.

Although an inactive pensioner member of the group I feel that it is the duty of all concerned to promote the interest of the younger generation in computers.

In the same issue of CURSOR comments in RANDOM BITS and also in a full page notice on Page 14 Games Players were told to stay home and not attend Workshop and Subgroup meetings. Surely it would be better to encourage as many people as possible to attend these meetings, restrict games players to a separate area and charge non members of the group for attending.

With those comments off my chest I would like to commend all those concerned who work so hard and make such a success of meetings and CURSOR newsletter; also those members who attend meetings and contribute information.

The decision to integrate 64 and Amiga newsletters will be welcomed by many I am sure. When the Vic20 made way for the 64 many resisted the change, but it is hard to stop progress, and who wants to anyway.

Keith Goldsmith

Your letter was passed on to me by our Secretary, as he felt that it needed airing in an open forum, so here goes....

The decision to abandon the category of Student Member was primarily an economic one. The production costs of CURSOR have skyrocketed in the last twelve months and a \$15.00 membership fee would barely cover the cost of the newsletter. BUT, there is a secondary reason and fundamentally this has a lot to do with knowing the difference between right and wrong, as I shall try to explain.

Basically it comes down to the fact that the majority of student members have fouled their own nest. Earlier this year at one of our Amiga Workshops, where members have the opportunity to copy the group's wide range of Public Domain software, we counted 66 computers. At the end of the meeting we checked with our Public Domain librarian how many people had taken out Public Domain disks (he keeps a list of borrowers). The answer was 22 borrowers. Do you know what the other 44 computer users were doing? They were either playing games or (in most cases) illegally copying commercial games software, despite repeated requests from members of the Management Committee not to do so. **These people (practically 100% student members) were breaking the law.**

Yes, Keith, we are in the business of encouraging members to get more out of their computers, but you would hardly dare to suggest that we should encourage unlawful activities?

As you probably have noticed, we haven't made any changes in fee

structure to other membership categories such as country members and pensioners. In the case of our country members the lower fees were set because they cannot avail themselves of all the group's activities. Pensioner membership fees will also remain lower for economic reasons. If, to some extent, normal membership categories have to subsidise these lower membership fees, then nobody really minds, because both these groups have contributed substantially to the overall success of our group as a whole.

The same, regretfully, cannot be said for the majority of student members, most of whom only use our group as a source for obtaining cheap (i.e. illegal) commercial games software from their mates.

During 1988 there was a minor crisis amongst our sub-groups. We saw the closure of three of them and questions were raised why this should be so.

Some of the reasons given were poor management of some sub-groups (perhaps true, but irrelevant, as we are dealing here with a voluntary organisation), and complaints by members because they found that they could learn nothing at sub-groups, because only games were played there. Now this was and is a very valid complaint.

I well remember the days when we started our first workshop in Milton. Members came to this to LEARN. Some were asking advice about programming, others wanted to know why such-and-such a program wouldn't run, others still were doing hardware modifications, while in another corner we tried to figure out why a member's printer wouldn't work. Believe you me, this was the real thing! We were all learning and it was fun and useful.

But, if you came to a meeting, and nobody was prepared to help you because they were too busy with their games, you would soon give up going to these meetings, and that's exactly what has been happening. For this very reason we want to discourage the games players. They tend to take over and leave no room for other activities.

We are not against computer games as such; in fact most of us like to play the occasional game for relaxation. We like the Games Column written by those clever Phillips brothers, and we also like to see the odd game demonstration and we most certainly want to encourage members who are trying to write their own games, but, if games and games playing become the be-all and end-all of our group, which could easily happen if we let it, I, for one, will quit.

We have a lot of dedicated people who assist with the running of the group at every level. I think that I speak on behalf of the majority of them, when I say that they get the greatest satisfaction out of helping their fellow members. If that help is no longer required (as is the case when the games collectors take over), then there is no further incentive for them to carry on, and that would be every members' loss.

A) In the Sept '88 issue an explanation was given of computer modifications which are carried out by the Group. It is not possible for country members to benefit, so when the article is republished could you include circuit diagrams, which are public domain, so the modifications can be carried out by members if they wish. I am particularly interested in the reset re-enable modification.

B) Now for a hint about *The Write Stuff*. I am writing a story and so far have filled eight 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " disks. I want to print it in two columns with no spaces as would occur at the end of a file. With WS you can link files so that printout is continuous. WS is set up so that with two drives (8 and 9), you can load the program on 8 and subsequent file saving and loading is done on drive 9.

However, if you load WS on drive 8 and set the second drive up as device 8 as well, then switch this unit on and now put file disks in both drives and start to print linked files, the program will search the second drive when it finishes all the files on the first one (and provided you change the disks), it will print till the ribbon runs dry.

C) C64 Speech Synthesis: Has any member got any experience or knowledge of a company called 'Electronic Speech Systems' of Berkeley, CA? They have produced better speech synthesis examples on both PD disks and commercial programs. I'd like to get hold of their program, if it's available.

D) Becoming disenchanted with the 1541 drive, I purchased a CFC 501 drive, which I understand is the same as the FSD-1 drive which is advertised in American magazines. After nearly two years of use it packed up and I took it to a repairer and he didn't have much luck in fixing it. I understand that it has one chip doing the work of two in the 1541 and also has a surface mounted device which seems very difficult to remove for service. As the power section and read/write drive are o.k., the problem would be solved if I could get a new main PCB. The problem arises however that Commodore appears to have taken the importer to court for infringement of the 1541 design and

no spares seem to be available. What experience have other members had with their drive?

E) Last year I purchased a Toshiba T100 computer to get some experience with CP/M and another flavour of Basic. I own a Star NX-1000C printer which has a Commodore serial port and won't interface with the Toshiba which has both series and parallel RS-232 output. One can purchase a kit which will convert Commodore user port RS-232 to true serial RS-232 and it also works in reverse, but how can I convert user port output to serial TTL signal or, how can I connect a true RS-232 to Commodore serial TTL? Any suggestions would be gratefully received.

F) Well, I hope that the improvements in size of 8 bit Cursor articles will come about soon. The problem of increased computer sales and decreased interest seems to be upon us. It's a peculiar set of circumstances which seems to be world wide.

Fred Turnidge (Duramana, NSW)

A) A difficult one Fred. Although the computer modifications are carried out under the auspices of the group, the designs of the different gadgets and modifications belong to Murray and Philip. It's up to them to decide if they wish to publish the circuits for them.

B) Thanks for the *Write Stuff* tip.

C) Can any member help?

D) Yes, you and many others have been caught out. It is my sincere belief that, unless you are a whizz in electronics, to leave most doubtful imports (or even locally produced) computer hardware alone.

The simple fact is that the Australian market, in a world wide setting, is very small indeed, and as such has its own set of peculiar problems. Local hardware manufacturers and importers are often under-capitalised. As a result we have seen a steady flow of companies come and go; sad, but true.

I don't blame Commodore at all for protecting their own interests in the battle against the 1541 clones. As it stands, you have become the innocent victim and, unless you receive some help with the drive problem through these pages, you can only write it off to experience.

Based on the above observations and similar horror stories, my advice to all C64/128 owners is to leave cloned 1541 drives alone.

E) It appears to me that you may well have an insoluble problem on your hands with your printer, or at best that someone may come up with a partial solution. Somehow, I doubt if it is worth the effort, but I am prepared to stand corrected.

F) It is my considered opinion that most programmers, hardware buffs and other 'computer experts' have moved on from their C64s, Apples, Cocos and Ataris to more powerful computers, hence the scarcity of articles in both commercial and user group magazines. I don't think that this trend can be reversed anymore.

Congratulations to Ralph (and contributors) on the combined 'new look' Cursor, I love it! Although I am an '8 bit' member (I have a PET and a 128D) I welcome the change, and not only for the reasons mentioned in the Editorial. It has always seemed to me that two ver-

sions of Cursor, with a lot of duplicated material, added additional and unnecessary effort to the Editorial workload, which is a voluntary position after all. With regard to the suggestion from some members that a particular computer won't be satisfactorily covered from now on - I disagree strongly. Coverage of any Commodore model depends entirely on members own contributions and so the promotion of your particular computer depends on you! (and me). Below are some individual (and personal) comments on the 'new look' Cursor-

FRONT COVER ILLUSTRATION: A great idea, but please include brief details of the artist, equipment and method. (When I suggested to my son that an Amiga was probably responsible for the August cover, he replied - "A 128 could do something like that!"(?) I'll put him to the test when he has time.)

MAIL BOX TYPEFACE: Sorry but I don't like the 'script' typeface used in Mail Box. the idea of simulating contributors handwriting is good but frankly, I find it hard to read. This form of printing was popular with pharmacists for some time.

LIBRARY NEWS: Many thanks to Phil. Guerny for all the work he is putting into the library. I look forward to his notes each month. I am very happy about the release of the Library Catalogue Disk, which must have been a lot of work, but a boon to people like me who have difficulty in reading the lists on the wall. It should be mentioned that Doreen Horne very kindly made up a special list (available at the counter) for people with eyesight or back problems, however getting to the counter these days is harder than trying to read the wall lists!

The club has been extremely lucky to have Librarians of the calibre of Phil Guerney, Doreen and Allan Horne, and Maurice Hawkyard.

8 BIT COMMENTS: I would like to mildly take the Editor to task on some of his comments on the C64 and C128. Sure times are moving on and no doubt many members need to take advantage of the superior power of the Amiga's graphics and sound, however some of us find that the older 8 bit machines do all we need of them (and more). Why should I buy an Amiga for normal word processing, for example, when I am supremely happy with my 128 Word Writer, which gives me 80 cols. w.y.s.i.w.y.g. (what you see is what you get), bold, underlining and italics etc.. I feel that the full potential of the 128 has never been fully realised. After all it can be used as a 64 and load 64 programs, or in its native mode as a 128 which uses Basic 7 (an excellent programming language and sadly neglected by many), or in CP/M mode which is another neglected language with countless thousands of programs at its disposal. Honestly, I don't care if the value of the C128 goes to \$0, I don't intend to sell mine! Nor does change for the sake of change (or a new model) hold any attraction. I do agree, however, that parts, service and lack of new programs do become a problem for users of superseded models. As a point of interest: in addition to my 128D, I am still using (in my business) a PET, with its massive (?) 32k of memory. I am not alone - there is a PET in use at the Australian Antarctic Base at Mawson, as well as others, in use, at various Laboratories around the world. All doing mundane work to be sure, but in use and cost effective.

CORRECTION (LIBRARY NEWS): Australian Power Supply - the frequency

of OUR power supply is 50hz, not 60hz! North America uses 60hz. they also use 115vac (Australia uses 240vac). I only mention this to prevent someone from mistakenly ordering equipment suitable for a 115v, 60hz supply.

AND FINALLY: VALE DOUG? Is Doug dead? Has the AMA captured him for scientific examination? Was he really swallowed by an Amiga? All these questions and more will be answered soon, I hope. Doug Mac-turkin, we miss your writings in Cursor - please write soon...

Errol Rayner

Thanks for your comments, Errol. Even if they had been 99% negative, they would still have been welcome!

The front cover was from an Amiga Public Domain colour picture, which I converted to an 8 colour grey scale to give me a reasonable result when printing it out. I will mention the name of the artist if he/she signs the artwork.

As you can see, the Script font has gone, but (perversely?) I'll stick with Italics for members' letters!

I agree wholeheartedly with your comments about our Library Staff.

The fact that you still own and use a PET, shows that you are not so easily swayed by commercial pressures, and I say "Good for you!"

Sorry for not picking up Phil's voltage error!

As for Doug, rumour has it that he has been living it up on some tropical island, and it has left him exhausted! My guess is that he will bounce back soon!

Editor

THE C.C.U.G. (Q.) INC.

has a new BBS Phone Number.

The new number is:

(07) 808 7694

THE C.C.U.G. (Q.) INC.

also has a new Sysop.

His name is:

GRAEME DARROCH

and his home phone (a.h.) is:

(07) 209 1999

LIBRARY NEWS

by Phil Guerney

PATIENCE

First I'd like to thank everyone who uses the library for their patience! The queue of members waiting to return and borrow things seems very long at times around 7:00 to 7:30pm each meeting night, but by about 7:45pm the rush is over, almost all the Amiga software has gone and only a few browsers are left at the book and magazine tables. Often, some of the library helpers are new to the job and things may seem to slow down at times while they get into the swing of things. But I haven't received any grumbles about service so thanks again for your consideration.

Of course borrowers can help before they come to the meeting by making sure that ALL bits and pieces have been returned with the package (think ... have you returned the keyboard template, instructions, maps, dongle, quick-reference card etc.) as we always check. If something has been left out from a popular package I try to make arrangements for the defaulter to send the missing thing directly to the next lender the following day. If you are the next borrower and the last borrower does not cooperate then please let me know and I'll chase the other member myself with threats of withdrawal of library rights.

NEW AMIGA SOFTWARE

Pagestream, which was given a thorough review in the August Cursor, is now in the Library.

CATALOGUE DISK

At the time of writing, I'm not sure that my library catalogue disk is going to be ready for the August meeting. The catalogue files have been transferred to a database for the disks, books and magazines (8 and 16-bit collections) but not yet for the magazine disks and the Ladders-to-Learning series. My C64 catalogue file reader program is not quite finished either. My problem was that rather than write a simple sequential file reader and printer program, I got carried away and wrote code to read the sequential files and output nice formatted screens and neat printer output. I came unstuck last night with "string too long" errors which had me stumped for a while because I forgot about a difficulty with C64 BASIC. Some of the catalogue sequential files contain lines that are 120 characters long and were designed to be printed in condensed mode on your printer. Now basic strings can hold up to 255 characters so reading in a line of 120 characters from a file into a string variable (using INPUT#) should be no problem? Well there is no problem reading 80 character lines but these longer ones gave "string too long" errors with a line like "INPUT#2,K\$". A quick look up in the R.C. West "bible" ("Programming the Commodore 64 - The Definitive Guide" - get it if you are at all serious about C64 programming) reminded me that the maximum string length taken in by INPUT# is the size of the input buffer which is 80 characters! Commodore BASIC 2.0 can only input the same length strings from a disk file as it can from the keyboard.

I tried resorting to GET# and build the 120-character string a character at a time. It works fine but its much too slow for routine use. Now I'm changing the format of the database reports to give only 80 column files which unfortunately are not as neat as the wider format. Hmmm, maybe I can split the wide lines into two, read them separately and concatenate them (k\$=k1\$ + k2\$)? I'll give that a go after finishing this off. I'd like to think that the disk will make the August meeting but I'm off for a week to Perth, Adelaide and Broken Hill on business and the C128 and monitor don't fit into my suitcase. Oh, well.

NEW C64/128 SOFTWARE

I plan to continue ordering some new programs each month from now on while the treasurer says we still have any money in the bank. The only new arrivals in July were two special collections from RUN. The RUN Works disk is a bundle of seven of the best programs they have published. It includes RUN Paint, Graphmaker, Form Maker, and Label Base. The other collection, RUN's GEOS Power Pak, provides a whole lot of GEOS programs and utilities including 21 new Fonts. Others are: geoTerm (comms under GEOS); Card-File (database); Write Hand Man (word count geoWrite docs); geo-Break (breakout under GEOS); Auto-View (auto scrolls through the full picture of a series of geoPaint files); Pattern Editor (for geo-Paint fill patterns); Thumbnail (saves a "print preview" image as a new paint file); geoOrganizer (re-arrange order of files easily); Convert 2.2 (turns GEOS format disk files into Commodore SEQ or PRG files and vice versa) and finally PaintView II (view geoPaint files without any workspace having to be on the disk). Not bad for one disk.

MAVERICK

A new package entering the C64 disk library in August is "Maverick V2.0". You may have heard of it (perhaps under its previous name of Renegade), or just guess from the name, and realise that it is a disk back-up utility. This is the first program in the C64 library that can be used to copy commercial software (although the Amiga library has had one for a while) so I think some comment is worthwhile. Firstly, a back-up program is a legitimate utility that is, in many ways, ideal for a club library to offer. Members can borrow it for one month and back-up their genuine copies of protected software before the disks get corrupted. Without back-ups you are likely to find that replacements from the original publishers are impossible to get as they may well have gone out of business.

Maverick is an excellent back-up program that handles most popular protected software including GEOS titles. It also does a very fast unprotected disk copy that really moves with a C128 and two 1571's. Other goodies include a sector map editor (including a version that works under GEOS), directory editor (rearrange order of entries and add dividing lines and so on) as well as a very fast disk scanner that will find a pattern of data on the disk. It is not very expensive at \$US35 so I would like to think that if you make regular use of it for any reason that you would consider buying your own copy, if only to support the programmers of this essential type of utility. The authors make a plea to this effect at the end of the manual and I reinforce their request that you use this tool for what it is intended.

Which leads me to ...

PIRATING AND THE COMMERCIAL LIBRARY

This is obviously a controversial area and not a subject which has been discussed much on these pages. I feel something should be said, if only to prompt a few more views to be put to the Editor and so liven up the letters pages a bit!

Firstly, I think much rubbish is written about the lost sales to software publishers due to pirating. I'm absolutely sure that very, very few of the Commodore programs in pirates' collections would have actually been bought for cold cash if pirating was impossible. Its just the same with business software where you read newspaper articles based on business software publishers' press releases (or their associations) implying that every person who has ever tried out a pirated copy of dBase or Lotus 1-2-3 represents a loss of hundreds of dollars to the software company. Ridiculous.

The next question is "Does running a commercial software library result in loss of sales to software publishers?". You may think I'm being very naive when I suggest that, on balance, the library helps sell more good and reasonably priced software than it provides free copies to thieves. Of course, many people fail to destroy working copies of library programs made when on loan. This I think has much more to do with the "collector" instinct many people have, than it is to do with any attempt to deprive publishers of income. I'm continually finding that people have bought their own copies of programs that have been brought to their attention through the library. Good examples include (for the C64/128) "The Write Stuff", "OCP Advanced Art Studio" and "Basic8".

All I can ask is that when you try out an excellent and fairly-priced program (my own rule is that a good home-computer program should cost no more than a good book), and you actually want to use it regularly, then BUY the program yourself. Other publishers will then get the same idea and we will get more of them to play with.

The above discussion has been through the eyes of a C64/128 user (and about application programs rather than games as that is what most of the library is about). As yet I have not had to face the same questions about Amiga software personally. I certainly appreciate that much Amiga software has a long way to go before it becomes "the price of a good book"! The more expensive packages however are marketed as productivity tools that can earn money for the user. My discussion above would be the same for home and hobby packages on the Amiga as it is for the C64/128.

So finally, what difference is there between having a protected-disk copier available in the library and having the library at all? No difference, because the responsibilities of the members are the same whatever program they borrow.

{Ed: The price of a good book! You must be kidding, Phil! I cannot afford 'good books', at least not at Australian prices!

Of course, there's also that other argument in favour of piracy by a well known 'collector', who claims it increases sales of blank disks!}

-ooOoo-

COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.

BALANCE SHEET AS AS 30 JUNE 1989

1988		1989			1989	
\$		\$			\$	
MEMBERS EQUITY						
18,613.65	Opening Equity	25,146.54				
6,532.89	Net Profit	5,928.25				
<u>25,164.54</u>	TOTAL EQUITY				<u>31,074.79</u>	
=====					=====	
REPRESENTED BY						
CURRENT ASSETS						
10.00	Petty Cash - President	10.00				
50.00	Petty Cash - Editor	50.00				
40.00	Petty Cash - Secretary	40.00				
50.00	Petty Cash - Treasurer	50.00				
-- --	Term Deposit - ANZ	10,532.14				
13,154.99	C'wealth.T.Bank S.B'ne	4,498.40				
81.00	Sundry Debtors	445.47				
3,507.70	Stock on Hand	5,054.27				
<u>16,893.69</u>	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS				<u>20,680.28</u>	
FIXED ASSETS						
867.94	Book Library	893.95				
324.96	Magazine Library	229.38				
3,158.02	Software Library	4,458.12				
4,080.48	Equipment	4,366.17				
1,490.71	BBS Equipment	1,636.15				
<u>9,922.11</u>	TOTAL FIXED ASSETS				<u>11,583.77</u>	
26,815.80	TOTAL ASSETS				<u>32,264.05</u>	
CURRENT LIABILITIES						
1,632.76	Membership in Advance	1,070.50				
36.50	Cannon Hill Sub-Group	47.76				
-- --	Pine Rivers Sub-Group	72.00				
<u>1,669.26</u>	TOTAL LIABILITIES				<u>1,189.26</u>	
<u>25,146.54</u>	TOTAL NET ASSETS				<u>31,074.79</u>	
=====					=====	

CURSOR

COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.

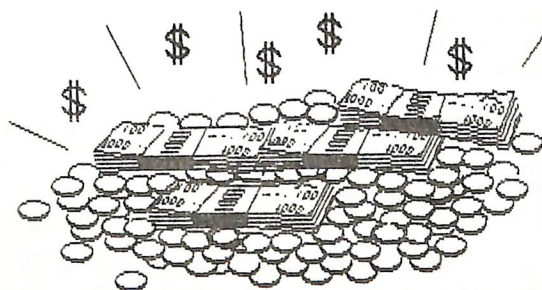
PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT - JULY 1988 TO 30 JUNE 1989

1988		1989
\$		\$
REVENUE		
18,177.20	Membership Fees	19,322.23
2,775.00	Library Fees	710.00
5.00	BBS Membership Fees	--
10.00	Consultancy Fees	--
388.70	Cursor Sales	316.50
120.00	Printer Hire	50.00
780.00	Advertising	1,089.60
.50	Donations	--
424.21	Interest	920.78
84.00	Miscellaneous Receipts	--
22,764.61	TOTAL REVENUE	22,409.11
EXPENSES		
555.34	Advertising	578.86
81.35	Bank Charges	79.55
780.93	BBS Expenses	859.93
7,964.27	'CURSOR' Expenses	7,790.89
9,454.26	Depreciation	8,679.70
45.00	Freight	--
430.69	General Expenses	414.44
558.23	Insurances	518.78
13.70	Legal Fees	14.80
53.70	M'ship/Affiliation Fees	60.14
743.56	Postage	635.74
39.00	Post Box Charges	41.00
751.19	Printing and Stationery	714.60
1,657.70	Venue Hire	1,807.50
391.48	Repairs and Maintenance	382.19
.30	Stamp Duty (State)	.50
1,487.11	Telephone	987.23
142.00	Travelling	--
25,149.81	TOTAL EXPENSES	23,565.85
8,918.09	GROSS PROFIT (LOSS) - TRADING ACCOUNT	7,084.99
6,532.89	NET PROFIT	5,928.25
=====		=====

COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.

TRADING ACCOUNT - 1 JULY 1988 TO 30 JUNE 1989

1988		1989
\$		\$ \$ \$
SALES		
16,588.54	Hardware Sales	9,803.09
41,656.66	Disk Sales	30,790.40
3,516.45	Software Sales	2,855.20
-.-	Book Sales	411.10
285.00	Modem Sales	-.-
62,046.55	TOTAL SALES	43,859.79
COST OF SALES		
4,402.00	Opening Stock	3,507.70
15,337.09	Hardware Purchases	8,026.42
34,262.31	Disk Purchases	28,409.65
2,349.86	Software Purchases	1,432.15
285.00	Modem Parts Purchases	-.-
-.-	Book Purchases	453.15
	Less	
3,507.70	Closing Stock	5,054.27
53,128.56	COST OF SALES	36,774.80
8,918.09	GROSS PROFIT (LOSS)	7,084.99



BYTES

FOR SALE

C64 Computer, 1541 Disk Drive, Epson GX-80 Printer, Datasette, Manuals, Programming Books for Beginners, 2 Paddles, Lots of Software on Disk, Tape & Cartridge. The lot - \$650.00
 Contact Justin Barker on 366 3885 (a.h.) or weekends.

Woodwork for Robot from "How to make Computer-Controlled Robots" (Usborne Books). Made from 3ply at your request - \$18.00
 Contact Peter Cotterell on (07) 369 5110 (a.h.)

WANTED TO BUY

For C-64: Mouse, Cartridge Expander Board, Speech Synthesizer (prefer Hearsay, but will consider others)
 Contact Steve Hopcraft on (07) 203 4688

HELP! COLUMN

This is the HELP! column for users of C-64, C-128 and other 8-Bit computers. If you would like to share your experience in the fields of programming, software, hardware etc. with your fellow members, submit your name with your area of expertise to the editor. Remember: the more names, the more knowledge can be disseminated amongst our members.

NAME	Help offered with:	PHONE NUMBER
Terry Baade	Contact for M'borough/Hervey Bay Members	071 215 059
Kerry De Baar	Basic, Assembly Language	379 5617
Cor Geels	SuperScript, EasyScript, PaperClip, GEOS	263 2839
Cor Geels	C-64 Newcomers, Printers & Interfacing	263 2839
Matthew James	Basic, Logo	300 5443
Ron Long	SuperScript, Label Maker, Mailing Lists	075 357 139
Ivor Laggan	GEOS	273 4212
Doug MacLurkin	MicroSwift Spreadsheet, Basic	358 4442
Peter Meharg	Basic, Machine Language	376 1621
Vic Mobbs	Contact for Sunshine Coast Members	071 941 330
George Nelson	EasyScript	848 2456
Craig Rawlins	Pascal, C, Machine Language, Modula-2	379 8957
Greg Shea	C-64 Hardware Modifications etc., Basic	345 2799
Fred Turnidge	Family Roots (genealogy), Write Stuff	063 37 1124
Denis Wright	Easy/SuperScript, CBM & Epson Printers	067 751 793
Denis Wright	C64 <---> Non-Commodore File Transfer	067 751 793

Please be considerate - these are after hours numbers, so only ring our members between the hours of 6pm and 9pm during week nights. Thank you!

8 BITS & PIECES

HELP COLUMN

I am pleased to see that, after a slow start, the *HELP* column has now taken off - a good sign. It's obvious that certain areas are very well covered by now, but there are still certain aspects of C64/128 computing where there have been no offers for help. I am thinking here of areas such as:

*SuperBase,
Graphics,
Sound, and
Radio Communications.*

If you have some expertise in these fields, I would very much like to hear from you.

We have also included in this column the names of membership contacts for Sunshine Coast and Maryborough/Hervey Bay members.

Editor

SUPER-SPECIAL RED-HOT BARGAIN!

Disktest Factory - a drive alignment checker and disk copy checker for 1541 drives.

We have recently acquired 100 copies of a Utility Disk from Spain, which may be of some use to our 64/128 members who own 1541 drives, and which will be offered to our members for \$2.00, including manual (cheaper even than our regular Public Domain disks!).

What it does:

1. In about 40 secs *Disktest* reads every byte of data on a non-error protected disk and calculates a disk test number. Disks which show

identical test numbers have a very high probability of having identical data, and different test numbers indicate that the disks are not identical.

2. In addition, *Disktest* provides an indication of drive alignment by comparing the upper and lower read times of a sample set, with a claim that the greater the range of the sample the more probable it is that the drive is out of alignment.

How valid this indicator is, I am unable to say. *Disktest* advises some caution in interpreting this indicator since it is influenced by a number of factors. Both my drives which have been happily reading and copying disks failed the test. Perhaps it is a valuable early warning of a drive drifting out of alignment, or perhaps it's more useful for drumming up work for our hardware technicians.

Disktest is shamelessly stuffed with hardsell ads for programs and even has billboard space on the disk which you must watch while the program operates, and for these I blush.

Disktest, nevertheless, is of some use; and it will be available from Doug Maclurkin at our Main Meeting or by mail (\$4.00 incl P & P).

Leigh Winsor

THE WRITE STUFF

During recent committee meetings we discussed at length the pros and cons of so-called 'magazine software', such as SpeedScript. To put it simply, this is copyrighted software and *not* public domain

software. The owner of the magazine in which the program appeared has the right to use it, but cannot distribute it as 'public domain'.

For this reason we have decided to actively encourage the distribution of *THE WRITE STUFF* shareware word processor, which is both powerful and cheap (Leigh Winsor wrote about it in the August '88 issue of *CURSOR*, and a very favourable review appeared in the Sep/Oct '88 issue of *INFO*).

We hope to be able to offer you more details in next month's issue of *CURSOR*.

SEPTEMBER MAIN MEETING

All of our members should have at least a nodding acquaintance of a compiler (which is an essential item in the Complete Computer Users Toolkit), and know what it can do for a Basic Program, and when it might be useful to use one.

In this respect, as in many others, the C64/128 resource of software is well served with a range of good Basic compilers.

Some that our group have tried and liked over the years include:

PetSpeed, a comprehensive favourite
Blitz, another favourite, simple to use and includes an Uncompiler to reverse the process
Speedwriter, comprehensive, but less well known
BASM
128 Basic Compiler
Gnomespeed 128.

But how do compilers work? And how do some achieve greater economy and speed? Do they handle garbage collection, and do they handle extensions of Basic?

These questions, as well as the practical aspects of using compilers will be answered and demonstrated by Craig Rawlins at the September meeting.

Craig has been studying a variety of computer languages for some time now and it should be instructive to look over his shoulder and see him at work compiling some Basic programs

Leigh Winsor

MINI REVIEW

HALLEY PROJECT: You will need a back up of this game to play it successfully. Object is to find your way around our solar system. A dictionary and an encyclopedia are essential. Well worth playing once.

Delightful to read the collected copies of "Cursor". Looking forward to magazines in same format. Who has any 2 ring binders to put them in please?

(Try Queen Street Press - Ed.)

Peter Cottrell

BRIDGE 5.0 (ARTWORKS 1987)

reviewed by Maurio Hawkyard

I don't pretend to be the best bridge player around. I don't even profess to be a good bridge player, but of all the games I have played over the past three dozen years or so I have won more than half and that was in spite of my partners. The losing games of course, resulted from the excessive ineptitude of my partner at the time.

For some reason, my bridge partnerships never became long term affairs despite the sound advices I provided without restraint or charge.

I have had BRIDGE 4.0 (Artworks 1983) for some time and have enjoyed using it when I felt like a hand or two and couldn't round up a foursome.

The 5.0 version is very much improved indeed, and most of the fairly brief instructions are concerned with it's being able to be used by the Macintosh: IBM: Amiga: Atari ST: Apple and Atari, (I'm quoting from the instruction sheet), as well as by the C64. Some features which apply when this program is used in other computer versions do not apply when used in a 64. On the other hand, this version has some features which the others don't have.

Artworks BRIDGE assumes the user already knows how to play the game, so it will be mystifying to the non-bridge player, and as it is not the purpose of this review to explain bridge itself, I will direct my remarks to those who know something about the game.

As far as BRIDGE 5.0 for the C64 compares to BRIDGE 4.0, the three great differences/improvements which are apparent are:-

1. Improved graphics incorporating red as well as the old black and white, showing your hand as cards rather than just numbers & symbols, and:-
2. The display of a random number at the beginning of each hand. if one records this number, the hand can be resurrected on any future occasion by directing the computer to deal that hand. Then one can exercise a further option of changing the opening bidder so that you can play one of the other three hands instead of the one you got the first time. otherwise the computer will always deal a random set of hands, and:-
3. The computer will bid and/or select which card you should play if you press return when it is your turn to either bid or play. You can regain the driving seat at any stage so it becomes possible to get the computer to make the hard decisions and then resume control in time to claim credit for the victory.

Seriously, this feature makes 5.0 into a tutorial version of bridge besides being a very good practise game, provided you are not too critical of the computer's decisions - and I can tell readers from experience that your computer will go into a sulk if it gets kicked under the table for failing to respond to your bid or play as you wanted it to.

Highly recommended.

AMIGA MONITOR

GOOD IS THE ENEMY OF BETTER

&

ALL THINGS COME TO HIM THAT WAITS

After having extolled the virtues (and failings) of the *PageStream* program in the previous issue of *CURSOR*, it was rather galling to be shown an MS-DOS program by Phil Guerny which literally left *PS* for dead as regards the printed output.

The program in question was Lotus's *Freelance Plus, V.3*, and the output of this program on a 24 Pin dot-matrix printer was so good that it would be easy to be fooled into believing that one was looking at laser printer output. So, obviously *PS*, although a step in the right direction, is by no means the last word in quality dot matrix printer output. Better output is definitely a possibility, so we'll have to be patient a little longer.

The wait is finally over in the case of word processors for the Amiga. Quite a few former 8 bit users have expressed their dissatisfaction with Amiga word processors; *Textcraft* was too primitive and slow, *Scribble* was too finicky with its dot commands, *LPD* writer had a nasty form of copy protection, *WordPerfect* is too complicated and too expensive for most users, and as for all those hybrid programs like *Vizawrite*, *Prowrite*, *Kind-words*, *Excellence* etc., they are neither good word processors nor good desktop publishing programs. Most of them were also too expensive for the amount of features offered.

Now *Transcript* has come into the picture (see my review in this issue) and we have now a reasonably

priced, fast, flexible and powerful word processor for Amy. It doesn't pretend to be a desktop publishing program, but as a good solid word processor with most of the standard features properly implemented, it goes to the top of my list. I have been asked on quite a few occasions by teachers who use Amigas what I would recommend, taking into account that most of them have limited budgets and unexpanded Amigas. Well, your wait is over now. This is by far the best Amy word processor to serve as the basis for a fundamental understanding on how word processors work.

Next, we are waiting for the release of *PenPal*. This is another standard word processor, (i.e. it uses the fonts built into your printer), but allows one to incorporate graphics as well. Could be interesting!

Oh, and by the way..., if you are sick of reading about word processors, desktop publishing and printers, then I am very sorry. It's my only area of *some* expertise, and I would much rather publish some stuff from *your* particular area of expertise.

MEMORY - AGAIN

When you read a review of an application type program (you know the type I mean, don't you; the one that tells you on the package that it will need a minimum of 512K of memory to run), it might pay you to check out what equipment the reviewer was using. This became apparent after reading several reviews of *Professional Draw* (Gold Disk).

Most reviewers have panned this program mercilessly; slow, memory hungry etcetera, but when I read

another review of this program in Amazing Computing (Vol.1, No.5) I thought that the reviewer must have been writing about some other program, as he was full of praise about *Professional Draw*. However, in one of the last paragraphs he let the cat out of the bag... the gent had 4,5 Meg of memory and a 68020/68881 processor combination installed in his computer! No wonder that he was not complaining about the program being memory hungry or being slow!

The moral of this is to read very carefully what sort of equipment is used to review a product.

SOFTWARE & HARDWARE

Although the bulk of our membership are computer hobbyists, we find that, since the arrival of the Amiga, we now have quite a few members who use these computers professionally, and it's a fairly obvious that in due course there will be more and more professional Amiga users amongst our members. It is equally obvious that within these pages we have to cater for that section of our membership.

As editor I make it a point to read/scan through as many computer magazines (both paper- and disk based) as possible, be they Australian, American, English or German, and most of us will have noticed that the stream of both software and hardware has become a veritable flood; somehow I doubt if any individual can keep up with this huge output.

My own interests are centred around the printed word (this gives me enough to carry on with!), but we badly need input from both software and hardware users in all those other areas such as Video, Animation, Professional Sound applications, etc.

As an instance, if you were to start up into video, which genlock would suit your particular applications? Reading US magazines does not always offer solutions, because of the NTSC standard used over there. English hardware is not always available over here, etc. etc.

So, I address myself specifically to our professional Amiga users (or those well-heeled hobbyists who can afford to buy the more esoteric varieties of hardware), with a special request. If you are using a particular piece of hardware (or software) which in your opinion is good, bad or indifferent we would like to hear from you. We aren't necessarily looking for full-blown reviews, but rather how you use it, and with the emphasis on its usefulness or otherwise.

I am sure that our swelling band of professional users would be grateful for this type of information.

Editor

SEPTEMBER MAIN MEETING

Are you 'into assembly language programming', or are you trying to figure out what this assembly language business is all about? In that case you won't want to miss our meeting on Tuesday 5th September, where Glen McDiarmid will give us a demonstration of the latest version of *Resource*, the M.L. disassembler written by Glen (Reviewed in our March '89 issue by Andre Marino).

SEPTEMBER WORKSHOP

This is again devoted to our Public Domain Library Disks, which our members can copy free of charge. Disks and accessories are also for sale.

As usual the meeting will take place at the Ithaca RSL Hall on Sunday 10th September from 1pm - 4pm.

This meeting is for members only!

NICE SERVICE

We are registered owners of the AREXX programming language, and last month we received an upgrade for this program by airmail from the US, with a request to send William Hawes (the author and publisher) US \$5.00.

Not only is this a very cheap upgrade, but it is also a rare example of somebody having faith in his customers. Wish there were more like him.

STAR NX24-10C PRINTER

In the July issue of *Cursor*, David Johnson supplied an addenda to the review of this printer by Chris Gilbert.

Chris tells us that the manual supplied with his printer is obviously a later version than David's, as the Font Enhancements (Outline and Shadow) are now fully covered in the manual.

A NEAT PRINTING TRICK

Recently I was experimenting with some public domain fonts, using *Notepad*, and discovered something interesting...

The particular font that I was using was called Orchard, similar to the standard Macintosh screen font. Printing it 'normally', it looks quite good, except for letters like V and X, which show the customary jaggies. (Jagged outlines, that is). My first printout, however, was with a Preferences setting of grey scale, rather than

black & white, so I produced a print with a nice 'grey' background. I changed my Preferences to black & white and repeated the printout, and I then noticed that the 'jaggies' were not visible on the printout with the grey background.

The reason for this is quite simple of course; the grey background dots merged with the dots of the 'jaggy' letters like X and V etc., making it appear as if they are nice smooth characters.

This trick is worth keeping in mind when you want to produce a nice clean looking headline. When you set up your headlines with programs like *PageSetter* etc. create a 'box' and fill it with a grey background before entering your text. Ed.

DELUXE PAINT III

If any Amiga program can lay claim to the title of being the most popular one, it has to be Deluxe Paint.

Shortly after the initial release of the Amiga, Deluxe Paint I was released and, after another year or so, came its successor Deluxe Paint II.

Now the official release version of Deluxe Paint III is with us, written, as the previous versions were, by Dan Silva.

The Australian distributors, E.C.P. have made an upgrade offer to owners of Deluxe Paint II. If you send the frontcover of your DPaint II manual with a cheque for \$84.00 to E.C.P. (Address: 4/18 Lawrence Drive, Nerang Qld 4211), they will send you DPaint III. This offer does not apply to owners of the older Dpaint I.

1 MEG FAT AGNUS CHIP NEWS

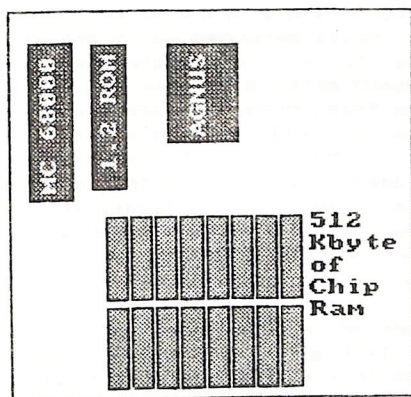
The news is disturbing to say the least. Commodore has started shipping some computers (both A500s and A2000s) with the new Fat Agnus chip which will address 1 Meg of CHIP MEMORY.

According to an article written by Dan Davies in the June issue of *Amiga Workbench* (Amiga Users Group of Victoria), the new A500s come with the new Fat Agnus chip, labelled 8372A. This model has a revised circuit board (Rev 6A cct board - older 500s have the Rev 5 cct board), and comes with 4 x 1Megabit RAM chips (512K RAM), instead

the new 1 Meg Fat Agnus chip, as the older circuit board lacks the necessary extra address bus lines; this fact was confirmed to me by Tony May. Perhaps, though, Commodore has something up their sleeves to rectify this situation? As usual they are tightlipped when it comes to changes and upgrades.

So, who can shed light on this situation? Does it really mean that existing 500 owners are no better off than owners of the A1000 and the A2000a models?

And what is going to happen when

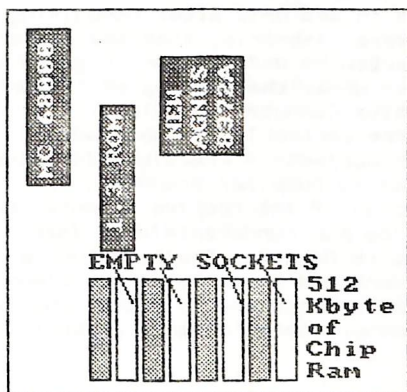


OLD (REV 5 cct Board)

of the older models' 16 x 256 Kbit RAM chips. The new model has 4 empty sockets in which an additional 512K RAM can be installed; thus with the A501 RAM Expander installed the new model will be able to give you 1,5 Megabytes of memory.

Thus it looks like that, at some stage in the future, the 500 will be sold as a 1 Meg computer.

The bad news is that apparently the older A500s cannot be upgraded to



NEW (REV 6A cct Board)

new software supports the 1 Meg graphics chips? Won't it run on the older machines?

Questions and more questions. We hope that Commodore will soon come up with some answers.

As an interesting sideline, we have seen on US Bulletin Boards that the new Fat Agnus sells over there for US\$130. I'd hate to think what the Oz price is going to be!

EDITOR

THE VECTOR SPECTRE

by Dave Apelt

We have all seen the games such as Star Glider One and Two, Elite, Mercenary, Carrier Command, Interceptor and many flight simulators. All of these games have one thing in common - vector graphics. Vector graphics give the impression that you are moving through a three dimensional environment but you are actually looking at a two dimensional screen.

Even though they are very common, digging up information on these particular computer graphics seemed to be at first almost impossible and it was only after consulting several libraries that the mystery started to unfold. Vector graphics come under the heading of 'Interactive Computer Graphics'. I found three particularly good books on the subject- *A Practical Introduction to Computer Graphics*, *Principles of Interactive Computer Graphics* and *Fundamentals of Interactive Computer Graphics* but to understand these books you almost need a doctorate in maths! Physics teachers come in handy at this point.

After about six months of trying to write my own routines and having no luck things started to go right when the books slowly started to make some sense. I am not going to try to explain how these 'transformations' (the routines that rotate the object) work (as I don't know myself!) but rather I'll try to explain the theory of the program structure.

If we can remember back to grade nine maths we know that we can represent any point on a flat surface by a set of X and Y points. The X axis goes left and right and the Y

axis goes up and down. Therefore if we're given the point (7,-6) we go 7 units in the positive X direction (right) and negative 6 units in the Y direction (down). Now if we go in to three dimensions we must also have an 'in and out' axis known as the 'Z axis'. It is now possible to identify any point in space by using this (X,Y,Z) system.

"So what?" I hear you cry. If we create a number of these points and draw lines between them we can create any shapes of our imagination. This is where we start to have some fun.

Now to rotate a shape we need three small routines known as transformations. There is one transformation for each axis. A combination of these transformations makes our shape turn and twist in a variety of ways. We start off by reading the data of the points into arrays. The main loop then follows. The angle theta (θ) is increased which determines the apparent turning speed of the shape. A FOR NEXT loop follows. The X,Y and Z points are preserved in the variables x,y and z while the transformations take place. After the transformation routine the variables are shuffled so the next routine will receive the correct variables. To turn off the transformations simple put a "" in front of the gosub line. The gosubs are followed by the necessary calculations for size, offset and the altering of the X coordinates so that the shape is not stretched. After the loop is completed we clear the screen and draw up the new one. That's the explanation so let's see the program.

We'll draw a cube on the screen and rotate around every axis.

(continued)

THE PROGRAM

```
numberofpnts=8

FOR a=1 TO numberofpnts
READ x(a),y(a),z(a)
NEXT

mainloop:
  O=O+.1
  FOR a=1 TO numberofpnts
    x=x(a):y=y(a):z=z(a)
    GOSUB xaxis:x(a)=xcal(a):y(a)=yca1(a):z(a)=zca1(a)
    GOSUB yaxis:x(a)=xcal(a):y(a)=yca1(a):z(a)=zca1(a)
    GOSUB zaxis:x(a)=xcal(a):y(a)=yca1(a):z(a)=zca1(a)
    x(a)=x:y(a)=y:z(a)=z

    xpos(a)=xcal(a)*11/6*17+300
    ypos(a)=yca1(a)*17+90
  NEXT

CLS
LINE (xpos(1),ypos(1))-(xpos(2),ypos(2))
LINE ( ETC,ETC
'Draw lines between 1 & 2,2 & 3,3 & 4,4 & 1,5 & 6,6 & 7,7 & 8,8 & 5,1 &
5,2 & 6,3 & 7,4 & 8

GOTO mainloop

xaxis:
  yca1(a)=y(a)*COS(O)+z(a)*SIN(O)
  zca1(a)=-y(a)*SIN(O)+z(a)*COS(O)
  xcal(a)=x(a)
  RETURN

yaxis:
  xcal(a)=x(a)*COS(O)-z(a)*SIN(O)
  zca1(a)=x(a)*SIN(O)+z(a)*COS(O)
  yca1(a)=y(a)
  RETURN

zaxis:
  xcal(a)=x(a)*COS(O)+y(a)*SIN(O)
  yca1(a)=-x(a)*SIN(O)+y(a)*COS(O)
  zca1(a)=z(a)
  RETURN

DATA 1,1,1, 1,1,-1, 1,-1,-1
DATA 1,-1,1, -1,1,1, -1,1,-1
DATA -1,-1,-1, -1,-1,1
```

This is just the start of vector graphics. (Unfortunately they can't be taken much further in Basic because of speed.)

Routines exist that hide the lines (that are hidden) behind another surface, allow windowing (only showing part of the entire picture) and filling the faces, allow surfaces to be curved and shaded and allow the shape to have a disappearing point (larger looking at the front and smaller looking at the back).

Unfortunately some of these routines are quite large and complicated and would require several *CURSOR's* full of explanation but I hope this small introduction to vector graphics has helped solve the mystery for some people. Even though the program was written in Amiga Basic it is quite easily converted to 64 Basic if you can get you hands on a line routine and a screen clearing routine. So try this program and be no longer afraid of the dreaded VECTOR SPECTRE.

-ooOoo-

HELP! COLUMN

This is the *HELP!* column for users of Amiga computers. If you would like to share your experience in the fields of programming, software, hardware etc. with your fellow members, submit your name with your area of expertise to the editor. Remember: the more names, the more knowledge can be disseminated amongst our members.

Name	Help offered with:	Phone Number
Dave Apelt	<i>Vector Graphics</i>	366 4761
Ellen Appleby	<i>Using Amigas in Education</i>	369 4629
Bob Devries	<i>OS9 Operating System</i>	372 7816
Ralph De Vries	<i>Dot Matrix printers - WordPerfect</i>	300 3477
Steve Hovelroud	<i>Audio Digitizing</i>	298 5128
Gary Lloyd	<i>C Programming (Beginners)</i>	269 7818
Brendan Pratt	<i>Modems, Telecommunications, Sidecar</i>	(075) 463 317
Grant Robinson	<i>AmigaBasic</i>	359 4315
Michael Thomas	<i>Forth, Prolog, C, and Modula-2 Programming</i>	800 4511
Mike Williams	<i>AmigaBasic (Beginners), Sound</i>	209 9084

Please be considerate - these are after hours numbers, so only ring our members between the hours of 6pm and 9pm during week nights. Thank you!

-ooOoo-

BOOK REVIEW

AMIGA C FOR BEGINNERS

by Joseph Armstrong

Let me start off by saying that *Amiga C for Beginners* by ABACUS is one of the most logically structured and easiest step by step guides I have ever come across. I had previously avoided C as it looked to be not only quite a chore but a gobbledegook hocus pocus method of achieving something that BASIC handled quite well, even if ponderously.

The book is well laid out and covers all aspects needed for a novice C programmer to be up and running in a few hours - I was writing and actually getting things to work after several pages. The Table of Contents is comprehensive and appears to take one from a brief introduction and covers many aspects of program nuance and all those old BASIC friends like loops, strings, arrays etc.

There are areas that may appear to be gray to those used to BASIC and so the ABACUS book kindly inserts BASIC equivalents here and there to help clarify the code object. The step by step instructions are like being held by the hand whilst learning to walk. Once the need to hang onto the parent has passed, the parent is always there, hovering and watching but allowing the novice to move ahead at his/her own pace.

All examples are clearly and logically commented, are easy to follow and are broken down into a step by step procedure for clarity and understanding.

After several hundred pages, the "Tips & Tricks" section comes into play for those who have followed to this point. We are introduced to Intuition and WorkBench with screens and windows appearing to be child's play. We are shown how to make a simple yet pleasurable drawing program and move onto DOS and directory reads.

The appendices introduce several functions used in C, give a brief history on the language development and an introduction to a couple of compilers and linkers, tools necessary to take advantage of the language. The conclusion is quite precise and makes apology for brevity but follows through with the introduction to the next in the ABACUS series, *Amiga C for Advanced Programmers*, once more, another fine work by ABACUS.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I highly recommend this book to any one who is considering the first step into C. For those too lazy to type, ABACUS will supply a disc containing the source code for a moderate sum. My previous experience with ABACUS has been of excellence and courtesy - I had phoned orders in on Friday evening /Saturday morning and have found their product in my mailbox the following Friday.

Amiga C for Beginners is available direct from the publishers or can be found in the BCF Bookstore, Elizabeth Street, the City, just up from the Forum theatre. A 10% discount is available to members upon production of membership proof.

EPSON SQ-850 INKJET PRINTER

Review by Ralph De Vries

It doesn't seem all that long ago when we used those very first dot matrix printers with their 7 pins to produce our first computer generated letters and program listings.

To be honest they were really only suitable for program listings, as the print quality was not really very good, what with their coarse dot structure and lack of descenders on letters like g, j, etc.

Then came the 9 pin printers and gradually we saw some improvements. We got our descenders and in due course *Near Letter Quality* became the rule rather than the exception.

Next came the printers with more and finer pins in the print heads and this has settled down to the new standard of 24 pin printers.

Now *Near Letter Quality* has become *Letter Quality*, and associated with this improvement is an increase in built-in or add-on font styles on most printers.

Prices have come down as well. The 9 pin printers now range from \$350 to \$500, and 24 pin printers come in the range of \$650 to \$1500, depending on features.

(Yes, there is an Epson 48 pin printer out there as well, but very little is known about this one, except that it is expensive!)

This review will take a closer look at Epson's newest dot matrix printer, model SQ-850.

"But", I hear you say, "this is an ink jet printer isn't it?"

Well, yes, it is, but let us first take a closer look at the print head of a 24 pin dot matrix printer, and you will see 2 vertical rows of 12 pins which form the characters.

If we now look at the printhead of the Epson SQ-850 inkjet printer, we will see 2 vertical rows of 12 holes which produce the characters.

This means in effect that characters are formed in exactly the same way in both systems; hence my description of the inkjet as a top-of-the-line dot matrix printer!

However, there is one important difference, which at first is not all that apparent, but in intensive testing it does show up.

The actual size of the dots in the inkjet is both smaller and more consistent than those produced on a 'normal' 24 pin printer. This I proved to my own satisfaction when I used the desk top publishing program *PageStream* to print out the same pages on an LQ-850 and on the SQ-850 printer.

To sum up the difference between conventional 24 pin printers and the inkjet, one word will suffice: *consistency*.

Dot matrix printers use ribbons and, as we all know, with use, results become fainter and fainter.

An inkjet sends a measured amount of ink to the paper, and results are consistent from the first page to the last (unless your ink cartridge runs dry!).

These are the prime advantages for using an inkjet, but, in the case of the SQ-850 there are several others as well.....

First, the printer control codes are compatible with other Epson 24 pin printers; this meant that I could switch from my Epson LQ-850 printer to the new one without having to make any changes.

Second, the speed of the printer. In draft mode 500 to 600 characters per second and in Letter Quality mode it runs at 165 characters per second, and that is fast!

Thirdly the 10 inbuilt fonts; more about these later on, but these do offset to a large extent the higher price you pay for this inkjet, as Epson's 'normal' 24 pin dot matrix printers come with 3 built in fonts and they charge about \$100 per font cartridge!

Let us now take a look at the disadvantages of this printer...

Inkjets are of no use in an office situation where multi-copy forms are used - they can only print single copies.

Inkjets are fussy when it comes to types of paper used. I get perfectly good results on good Bond 70 gms continuous computer paper, but had trouble with smudging on labels and photo copying papers. Humidity and temperature also play their part.

Initially a bit of trial and error is the order of the day.

Size and weight; the SQ850 is large (537 mm wide x 450 mm deep x 177 mm high) and quite heavy (12.0 kg).

So there you have it, both positive and negative aspects. As for price, expect to pay around \$1700 - \$1800 for this printer but, as mentioned

earlier, this is to some extent offset by the fact that all the fonts are built in. If one buys an Epson LQ-850 printer for \$1000 and adds the 7 fonts cartridges, there would be a difference of only a few hundred dollars.

In use, this printer is a dream. The control panel on the front controls all functions. There are no dipswitches in this printer; all standard settings are keyed into this control panel and memorised. They are also very easy to change.

Included is a function to clean the nozzles of the print head, but this is normally done automatically when switching on the printer.

There's a built-in push tractor which works faultlessly, as well as a single sheet feeder. To change from one to the other is only a matter of pressing the paper select button on the control panel - it couldn't be simpler.

When it comes to printing graphics, the performance is similar to Epson's 24 pin printers. A maximum dot density of 360 (H) x 180 (V) is a bit of a disappointment, as some other 24 pin printers (including Epson's new LQ-860) are capable of giving us 360 x 360 d.p.i.

When printing dark colours one can still (just) see the passes of the print head; this is a pity, but obviously a limitation of systems which use a moving printhead. The HP Deskjet (another inkjet printer) exhibits similar characteristics.

All in all, I consider the SQ-850 the best in 24 pin printer performance at this point in time.

On the following page you will find a small selection of font types and font enhancements.

EPSON SQ-850 FONT TYPES & STYLES

1: Draft Mode	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
2: ROMAN FONT	ABCDEFGHIJKLMnopqrstuvwxyz
3: SANS SERIF FONT	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
4: COURIER FONT	ABCDEFGHIJKLMnopqrstuvwxyz
5: PRESTIGE FONT	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
6: SCRIPT FONT	ABCDEFGHIJKLMnopqrstuvwxyz
7: ORATOR-S FONT	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
8: ORATOR FONT	ABCDEFGHIJKLMnopqrstuvwxyz
9: OCR-B FONT	abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
10: OCR-A FONT	ABCDEFGHIJKLMnopqrstuvwxyz

The first 6 font types are available in 10, 12, 15, 17, 20 characters per inch, and (with the exception of the Draft Mode) can also be used in the proportional mode.

10 PITCH 17 PITCH 15 PITCH 12 PITCH 20 PITCH

Fonts 7 - 10 are available in 10, 12, 17, 20 c.p.i. and proportional mode. Fonts 7 and 8 are taller by one row of dots compared with the other fonts; this makes them very good for headings or sub-headings, but they are harder to read for ordinary text. Fonts 9 and 10 are the so-called Optical Character Reader fonts, and of limited use in day to day applications.

Of course we have all the normal font enhancements like **BOLD**, *ITALICS*, UNDERLINING, DOUBLE UNDERLINING, ^{SUPERSCRIP}T and _{SUBSCRIP}T, as well as

both **Horizontal** and **Vertical** Enlarging.

We can also give you:

OUTLINED FONTS

SHADOWED FONTS

OUTLINED WITH SHADOW FONTS

-ooOoo-

BASICS FOR LEARNERS - PART 2

by Mike Williams

This is the second article in a series which will try to explain in plain, simple English, how to use your Amiga computer to do other things than just play games.

I will assume that you have the basic system of an Amiga 500 with 512K of memory and no extra disk drives; and that you have little or no knowledge of operating the computer in the WorkBench environment.

I will also assume that you have read the previous article (in the August Cursor) which explained how to make an AmigaBASIC work disk, and along the way showed how to use some of the features of the WorkBench environment.

This month we will continue on with our inspection of the WorkBench disk, and the different programs and commands contained in that disk.

Now, before we do anything, we had better make a copy of our WorkBench disk.

It is always a good habit to make a copy of your original disks, and then only use the copy. This a safety precaution, because accidents CAN and regularly DO happen, especially when you are learning. It is much easier to recopy a duplicated disk that you "mucked up", than it is to buy another original program.

There are at least three different ways to copy or duplicate a disk using the WorkBench (and two more ways using the CLI); but I will explain just the easiest way for people with one disk drive.

COPYING A DISK - USING Duplicate:

1. Make sure your WorkBench disk is write-protected, and that you have a spare, blank disk which is write-enabled.
2. Put your WorkBench disk into the disk drive.
3. Turn on your Amiga - the WorkBench disk will load or "Boot" up.
4. Select the disk you want to copy (in this case the WorkBench disk) by placing the red pointer over the disk icon and click once on the left hand mouse button. The icon will change colour to show that it has been selected.
5. Select the menu command "Duplicate" by:-
 - (a) pressing and holding down the right hand button. The menu bar at the top of the screen will now show "Workbench Disk Special".
 - (b) Moving the arrow to the word "Workbench" on the menu bar. As soon as the arrow touches the menu bar, a menu or list of commands will appear.
 - (c) Still holding down the right button, move the arrow down the menu to "Duplicate". The word will "Highlight" or change colour from blue and white to orange and black to show that it has been selected.
 - (d) Release the right mouse button.
6. Follow the instructions shown in the "Requestor" boxes on the screen to:-
 - (a) Put Workbench in the disk drive (it's already there) and click on "Continue".
 - (b) Replace the WorkBench disk with the blank disk and click "Continue".
 - (c) Repeat steps (a) and (b) several times until the disk copy is complete.

You might ask "Why did I have to change disks all the time?"
The reason is because your computer

doesn't have enough memory to do it all in one go.

Your standard Amiga has 512K (or roughly 512,000 bytes) of available memory; but every time it does anything it uses that memory to store the instructions needed to do whatever it is doing.

When you boot up your Workbench disk, what you are really doing is loading up a series of instructions into the computers memory, and this reduces the amount of memory you have left to do other things; it usually leaves between 370K and 400K of memory, depending on which Workbench version you use.

This "free memory" is displayed on the menu bar if you click once on the Workbench disk icon.

When you selected "Duplicate" to copy your Workbench disk, your computer read the "Duplicate" instruction from your disk into memory (which used another 30K of memory) and then used that instruction to copy the disk.

As each 3.5" disk contains 880K of information, but you only had about 340K of memory left, it copied as much of the disk as it could into memory and then asked you to change disks so that it could recopy it from memory back onto the other disk.

It kept repeating this until the whole 880K had been copied; and you ended up with a disk called "Copy of Workbench1.3"

You can now use the "Rename" menu command to delete the "Copy of " part of the name, as described in my first article in last months Cursor. You should end up with two disks, both named "Workbench1.3".

Can the computer tell these two disks apart ? Yes, it can! And it does it by looking at the "Date-stamp" of each disk (the date and time it was copied).

We can prove this by leaving the new, copied Workbench disk in the disk drive and trying to use a menu command such as "Info".

If you select "Info" you will be greeted with a requestor asking you to "Insert Workbench1.3 in any drive".

So you scratch your head and say "It's already in the disk drive, Dum Dum!".

And you are right, there IS a disk called "Workbench1.3" in the disk drive, but not the right one. The computer wants the original Workbench1.3 disk (the one that it booted up from), because THIS is the disk that it knows it gets all its instructions from, including the "Info" instruction.

To get around this problem and to make sure that your copied Workbench disk really works, leave the copied disk in the disk drive and reboot your computer by either turning the computer off and then back on again, or by pressing and holding down the two red A keys and the CTRL key (all at the same time).

Your screen should blank out and then load up Workbench again, but this time from the copied disk.

You can now put away your original Workbench disk, and from now on, only use the copied disk that you just made.

Well, that is all I have time to write this month. I hope to take you exploring a little deeper into the Workbench disk next month.

TRANSCRIPT

A FINE WORD PROCESSOR BY GOLD DISK

reviewed by Ralph De Vries

Wanna buy a good word processor for \$99.00? Go and get yourself a copy of *Transcript* and forget all about *Textcrap*, *Scribble* and most of the others!

Here we have the first Amiga word processor which does what it promises to do in both an efficient and economical manner. It is not a desktop publishing program or pseudo DTP program à la Prowrite, Vizawrite or Excellence.

Praise must first go to those two Canadian programmers, Chris Zamara and Nick Sullivan, who programmed *Transcript*. This program is well and truly written by people who understand the Amiga and know how to make the best use of both its strengths and weaknesses.

What you get

One single unprotected disk and an eighty page manual. The disk holds two versions of the program and the spelling checker program.

The program is written in such a fashion that it can in fact be used by owners of unexpanded Amigas (512k), although, as usual, extra memory makes it easier to use.

The normal program is about 160K in length, but the second program on the disk (called *TransEdit*) has the printing capabilities removed and is only 100K in length. So, if memory is very tight, you can enter your text using *TransEdit*, save it, and when you are ready to print the document you load *Transcript* to do the job.

The spelling checker (*TransSpell*) is a separate program and can be loaded independently to check a text file. If you have enough memory you can of course load both programs in memory - this obviously speeds up the procedures.

(The spelling checker is another version of *GoldSpell* - a stand-alone spelling checker, also published by Gold Disk.)

When commercial magazines review products they are always very careful not to make direct comparisons with programs of a similar nature; after all they may offend their advertisers. Fortunately I don't have these restrictions and intend to compare *Transcript* with the similarly priced *Textcraft Plus*.

Let it be said first and foremost that, if you only write one or two letters a year, you may as well stick with *Textcraft*, particularly if it came with your Amiga package.

However, if you use a word processor more frequently, and you are sick and tired of *Textcraft's* slowness (a competent typist can easily type faster than the screen is refreshed), you will find that *Transcript* is both faster, uses memory more efficiently and offers more features.

(Former C64/128 users who owned *EasyScript*, *SuperScript* or *PaperClip* will particularly like *Transcript*, as the program structure is very similar.)

It is not my intention to describe each feature in detail, as the program supports most of the standard word processing features.

However, the implementation of most features is a cut above the rest, compared with earlier Amiga WP's. Just some that come to mind include:

Search & Replace function will also search for text enhancements like bold, italics, underlining and for line feeds and escape codes. Very handy when you import a text file from other sources.

Numeric keypad on A500 and A2000 can be programmed for cursor movements.

File requester ignores .info files and is able to sort files alphabetically.

You can send escape codes to the printer, but (regretfully) only those that are defined as "ANSI style commands".

Moving around a large document is very fast with a special feature which allows you to insert up to four special 'markers', to which you may wish to return frequently.

You can choose between a 'normal' or hi-res screen (more lines per page + flicker!), or even customise your documents for either mode (you can also change screen colours for individual documents).

You can have several documents on the screen, depending on the amount of memory available.

Special formatting commands are accessed with the Shift/Alt and letter 'S' combination. On screen you will see this sign: §, followed by commands such as lm10:rm70. These formatting commands control page settings, page size settings, headers and footers, text justification and several other codes. This may seem more complicated than Textcraft's menu options, but in

practice they actually prove to be a lot more flexible.

A set of ten macros can be defined by the user; these can include just text strings that you often use or special strings of formatting commands. *Transcript* also supports Mail Merge and an Auto Index feature.

The spelling checker (90000 words) works fine and will create user dictionaries as well.

Printing text is very flexible. You can change Preference settings from within the Printer requester, and also change the overall margins, page length and text length from this requester, as well as turning hyphenation on! Now, before you start printing, there's a preview mode which allows you to see what your document looks like before printing it out - this is a real paper saver.

The 80 page manual is very concise of course, but quite excellent, both for newcomers and more experienced users.

What you don't get

Transcript does not have a Thesaurus and does not support text in columns, footnotes or endnotes and some of the more esoteric features that you find in programs like *WordPerfect* and some others, but look at the difference in price!

Conclusions

Given the price and its features, this, for my money, deserves to become the standard word processor for the Amiga, mainly because it is written to get the very best out of Amy in terms of speed and memory usage. If you are in need of a word processor and the features suit, go and get it!

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Fish Disk 221

AllocMaster - Allocmaster is a program inspired by Nick Sullivan's "Reserve" article in Amiga Transactor, for controlling the amount of both Chip and Fast memory available to the rest of the system. It is very useful for testing applications in low-memory situations. It also has a snapshot feature to report differences in available memory before and after running an application. Version 1.17, binary only. Author: John Gerlach Jr.

ANSIED - Demo version of an ANSI screen file editor. It allows you to easily create and modify a screen of ANSI-style text/graphics on the Amiga. The standard ANSI color set (red, green, yellow, blue, magenta, cyan, white) and text styles (plain, boldface, underlined, italic) are provided, along with some simple editing and drawing functions. This demo version has the save features disabled. Version 1.2.0aD, binary only. Author: Gregory Epley

BallyII - Amiga port of the former arcade game named Click. This version adds a "cheat" mode and fixes some minor bugs. Version II+, an update to disk 205. Binary only, shareware. Author: Oliver Wagner

DFrame - A utility that helps you to create animated bobs. It installs itself in DPaint II, after which you can draw each bob in DPaint II within its own frame and check the animation by calling DFrame from within DPaint. Version 1.02, binary only. Author: Jan Buitenhuis

IFFM2 - Demo version of an IFF support module for Interface Technologies M2Amiga Modula-2 system.

Includes a version of ViewILBM (with source) that uses the IFF support routines. Version 1.0.0D, binary only. Author: Gregory Epley

Steinschlag - A tetris like game (Steinschlag means "Falling Rock") submitted by the author. Version 1.5. Author: Peter Handel

Fish Disk 222

MemGauge - A tool to display the current memory usage, very much like the usage bar Workbench displays in root directories. Version 1.4, includes source. Author: Olaf 'Olsen' Barthel

Mischief - This little program is in the long tradition of "display hacks". It uses the input.device to perform various acts of mischief. Incl. source. Author: Olaf Barthel

Plplot - A library of C functions useful for scientific plotting on the Amiga. The library is Lattice C compatible. Contour plotting, three dimensional plotting, axis redefinition, log-log plotting & multiple subpages are a few of Plplot's features. The plots can be displayed on a monitor or sent to a graphics file for subsequent printing. Version 1.00, includes source. Author: Tony Richardson

Fish Disk 223

Csh - Version 3.03a of a csh like shell derived from Matt Dillon's shell, version 2.07. Update to version on disk 199. Includes a couple of new filter commands, new dir option, new editing options, sourcing of a standard startup file, and some bug fixes. Includes source. Author: Matt Dillon, Steve Drew, Carlo Borreo, Cesare Dieni

FixDisk - A program to recover as much as possible from a defective disk. It can sometimes recover damaged (unreadable) tracks, check file integrity, check the directory structure, undelete files, copy or show files, fix corrupted directory pointers, etc. Full intuition interface. Version 1.0, binary only. Author: Werner Guenther

GravSim - Program to animate up to 6 planetary masses, all of which exert a mutual gravitational force on each other. The planetary masses can be placed anywhere on the screen, and their mass and initial velocity can be determined by the user. The program then steps the animation through time, plotting and displaying the new position in the trajectory of each mass. Version 1.50 Author: Richard Frost

Iff2Sun - A small utility for those of you who may have access to a Sun workstation. Takes an Amiga IFF file and converts it to a Sun rasterfile format. Update to disk 174, with better parsing, support for HAM mode, and some bug fixes. Source only, as the program needs to be re-compiled & run from a Sun. Authors: Steve Berry, Mark Thompson

IFFtoSUN - This program takes a standard IFF format image and translates it into a SUN rasterfile format, like the Iff2Sun program also on this disk. However, this one runs on the Amiga. Version 1.31, includes source. Author: Richard Frost

Paccer - A pacman clone with sound and a game screen editor. This is version 1.0, shareware, binary only. Author: Dirk Hoffman

PopInfo - A small utility which "pops open" to give you information about the status of your devices. Version 3.0, an update to disk 204. Author: Jonathan Potter

SetCPU - A program designed to allow the user to detect and modify various parameters related to 32 bit CPUs. Includes commands to enable or disable the text/data caches, switch on or off the '030 burst cache line fill request, use the MMU to run a ROM image from 32-bit memory, and to report various parameters when called from a script. V. 1.5, an update to v.1.4 on disk 187. Includes source. Author: Dave Haynie

Fish Disk 224

CLImax - For all those people who wish that their CLI windows had 25 lines of 80 characters just like an old fashioned non-windowing computer, the answer is here. CLImax creates a borderless backdrop CLI window on a custom screen. Also thrown in is MoveSys, which reassigns SYS:, C:, S:, L:, DEVS:, LIBS:, and FONTS: to a new volume with one simple "pure" command. Incl. source. Author: Paul Kienitz

KickMem - A program for A1000 hardware hackers that have done the Amazing Computing 512K upgrade. KickMem will patch your 1.2 or 1.3 kickstart disk to perform addmem during kickstart. This allows warm boot surviveability of ram disk devices and eliminates addmem commands from your startup sequence. Version 2.0, includes source. Author: Dave Williams

MoreIsBetter - These two hacks make MORE more useful. One is called V; it's a small "pure" CLI command that acts as a front end for More, causing it to create its own window. Make V and More both resident! The other is Fenestrate, which surgically alters the CON: window spec inside More enabling it to, for instance, use ConMan features to create a borderless window on the topmost screen (very useful with CLImax). Author: Paul Kienitz

PetersQuest - This cute game has you, the intrepid Peter, following a trail of hearts through a world of 20 levels, riddled with porcupines and other hazards, to rescue Daphne, the love of your life that has been kidnapped by the evil Brutus. Version 1.0, binary only. Author: David Meny

Who - This is a rewrite of "who", from disk 79, which gives substantially more elaborate information about the tasks currently running (or waiting) on your Amiga. Includes source. Author: George Musser, rewrite by Paul Kienitz

Xebec - A couple of hacks to make life easier for those who have Xebec hard disks. One makes it more possible to mount a Xebec hard disk with the Fast File System, the other is a compact head parking program. Includes source. Author: Paul Kienitz

Fish Disk 225

AmigaTCP - This is the KA9Q Internet Software Package. The package supports IP, ICMP, TCP, UDP, and ARP as basic services, and implements the FTP, Telnet, and SMTP protocols as applications. It runs on IBM PC and clones, the Apple Macintosh, and the Amiga. Includes source. Author: Bdale Garbee, Phil Karn, Brian Lloyd

MyMenu - This program allows you to add your own menus to the Workbench menu strip, to run commonly used commands. MyMenu will allow you to execute both CLI and WorkBench programs, and is configured with a normal text file. Includes source. Author: Darin Johnson

Fish Disk 226

Vlt - VLT is both a VT100 emulator and a Tektronix (4014 plus subset of 4105) emulator, currently in use

at SLAC (Stanford Linear Accelerator Center). Although the VT100 part was originally based on Dave Wecker et al.'s VT100, many enhancements were made. The program requires ARP, and it has an AREXX port. XMODEM 1K/CRC and Kermit protocol support also included. This is version 4.036, with many enhancements over the previous version, 3.656, included on disk 202. New features include support for other serial ports, external file transfer protocols, and chat mode. Improved behavior on the Workbench. Tektronix emulation now allows saving IFF files, PostScript files, and printing bitmaps to the printer. Binary only. Author: Willy Langeveld

Fish Disk 227

MidiLib - A disk based library that permits sharing of the serial port by MIDI applications through a MIDI message routing and processing system. The midi utilities include a midi monitor to display incoming midi messages to the console, a routing utility, a midi library status utility, and more. This is version 2.0, an update to the version released on disk 101, and includes significant speed enhancements, new utilities to play with MIDI files, and updated utilities, documentation and examples. Binary only (source for examples and bindings however). Author: Bill Barton

PickPacket - PickPacket gives you a visual display of the DosPacket structures that are sent to handlers, and lets you see the results. You can actually perform handler operations such as open files, read or write data, Examine or ExNext locks, and so forth, all by talking directly to the file system handler involved using PickPacket. Version 1.0, includes source. Author: John Toebes and Doug Walker

RexxArpLib - A library which originally was supposed to be an ARexx interface to the ARP library. However, it has also become an interface to various Intuition functions, containing over 50 functions including a file requester, string-/boolean requester, environment variable functions, simple message window, wildcard expander, etc. This is version 2.3, an update to version 2.0 on disk 178. Binary only. Author: W.G.J. Langeveld

Supports the TX81Z, DX100, DEP5, DW8000, and K-5. Includes source. Author: Tim Thompson, Steve Falco, and Alan Bland

JazzBench - A drop-in multitasking replacement for WorkBench. It has more features than WorkBench and is fully multitasking (no more waiting for ZZZ clouds). It allows you to extend it, add your own menus, key shortcuts, etc. Alpha version 0.8, binary only. Author: David Navas

RexxMathLib - A library which makes various high level math functions such as sin, tangent, log, etc, available in ARexx. Version 1.2 and 1.3, binary only. Author: W.G.J. Langeveld

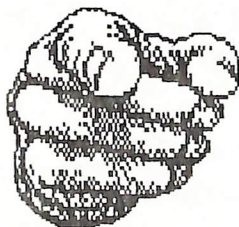
Xoper - Very comprehensive program to monitor and control system activity. Monitor cpu, memory usage, ports, interrupts, devices. Close windows, screens, show loaded fonts or last Guru code number. Clean up memory, flush unused libraries, devices, fonts. etc. and a whole bunch more! Spawns its own process. A very handy background task to have loaded. This is version 1.3, an update to version 1.2 on disk 171. Assembly source included. Author: Werner Gunther

Fish Disk 228

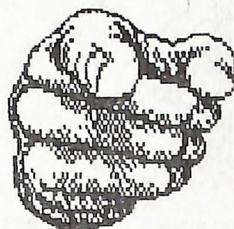
Az - A nice little text editor that is fast, simple to use, and very Amiga'ized. Version 1.40, binary only. Author: Jean-Michel Forgeas

Glib - A text screen oriented librarian and editor for synths.

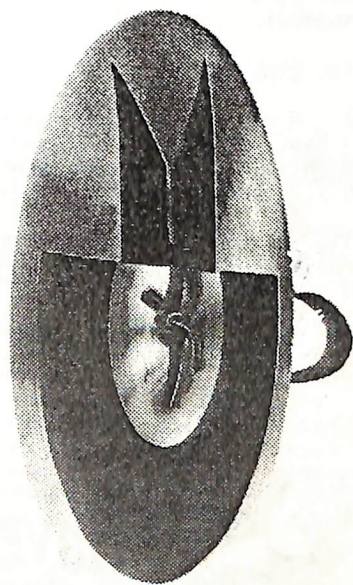
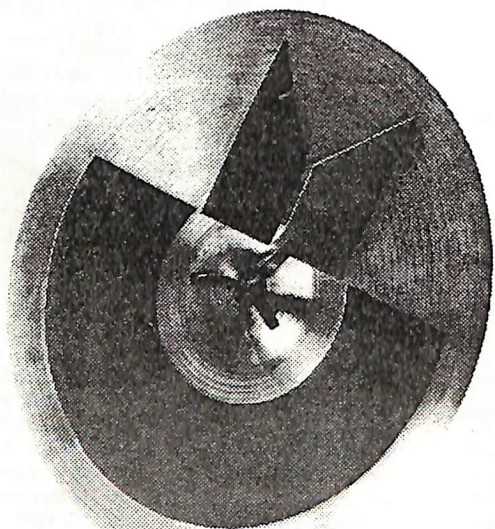
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