CURSOR

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

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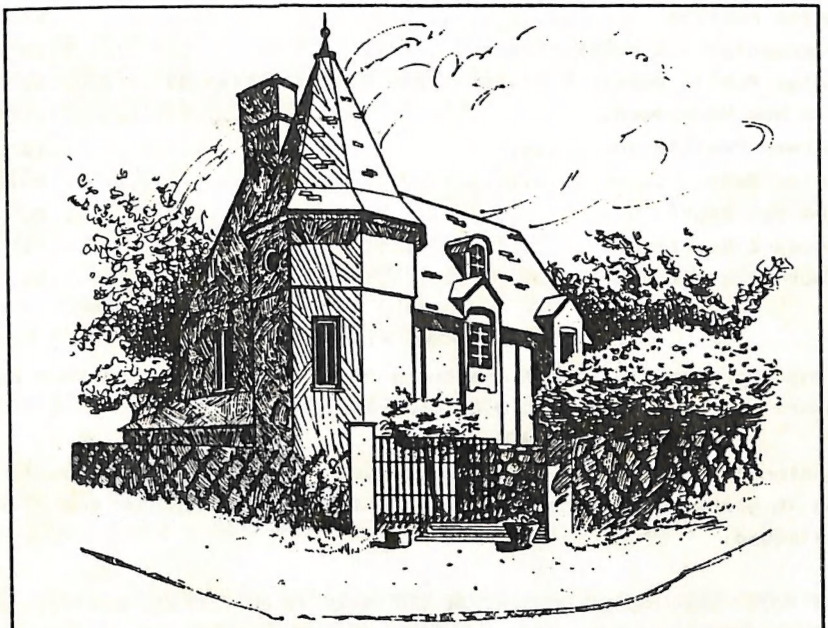

ENGLISH COTTAGE

(Clip Art ®, Supplied with PageStream V 1.8)

Our Next Main Meeting will take place on Tuesday, 7th August 1990. at 8 pm (Libraries & Sales at 7 pm) at the Bardon Professional Development Centre

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PLEASE NOTE: Copying of COMMERCIAL SOFTWARE is an ILLEGAL activity and is NOT ALLOWED at our Meetings!

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Our BBS is part of the Fido Network (Node No. 3: 640/304), and can be accessed by our members at 300, 1200/75, 1200, 2400 bps and 9600 bps, using 8 data bits, 1 stop bit and no parity.

MEETINGS

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 Carpark in Carwoola Street. **Parking is not allowed in Centre's grounds!**

The date for our next meeting is Tuesday, 7th August, at 8pm.

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

WORKSHOP MEETING

The Amiga Workshop is held on Sunday 12th of August (1pm - 4pm) in the Ithaca RSL Hall, cnr. Nash and Elizabeth St, Rosalie.

Bring your current membership card, as this workshop is strictly for members only! (i.e. no friends or relatives.)

Disk & Accessory Sales: 1pm - 3pm. Bring your own Amiga equipment.

This meeting is our *LEARNING* meeting, devoted to programming and hardware problems. We also have a *HELP* support group for beginners.

NO DISK COPYING!!! For more information ring 300 3477.

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. Phone 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.

REDCLIFFE: 3rd Sunday of the month (1pm - 5pm) in the Masonic Hall, Sutton St. Ph. Dennis Underwood - 266 8991 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.

WINDSOR: 2nd Tuesday of the month (7.30pm) at 70 Swan Tce, Windsor. Ph. Rod Watson - 857 6131 a.h.

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

PARCOM PTY LTD

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

NORTH SIDE: 1 Clifford Street, Stafford, 4053
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GOLD COAST: 171 Nerang Street, Southport, 4215
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A500 SWITCHABLE ROM - $60.00

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CURSORY NOTES

Volume 7, No.1, here we go. Due to some Freudian slip the last two issues of *CURSOR* were labeled as Vol.7, No. 10 and 11. This should have been Vol.6 of course, but apparently nobody noticed this or, if they did notice it, were too polite to tick me off! No doubt you will notice the changes in appearance. Well, there are a lot more to come, but news about these will have to wait till the next issue.

There are several articles from Paul Blair in this issue. I urge you to read his article about *Transactor - a Postscript*; Paul makes some interesting predictions and I cannot refrain from commenting...

Going on the facts as we know them at this point in time, Paul's scenario may well come true. But, and it's a big but, do we really know what new and (possibly) exciting discoveries are waiting for us round the corner?

When we first read about the Amiga back in 1985, we found it hard to believe that those clever designers had packed so many features in a home computer at such (relatively) low prices. If the Amiga had been marketed properly it should by now have been one of the largest selling computers in the world, but that is another story. Isn't it possible though that someone or some group is now working on a new computer design that will make everything else old hat? After all, this is still a very young and volatile industry, and anything is possible.

The idea of one computer standard for just about everybody, as Paul foresees it, is rather a frightening one. Take this one step further, and we may well end up with the French model, where we all have a terminal at home which is plugged into a state owned super computer - definitely shades of *Big Brother Is Watching You* there! Somehow I don't find this a very appetising scenario.

No, I don't have the answers either, but for once I hope that you will be wrong, Paul! Some sort of standard is all very well, but despite the current success of the PC standard, there's at least one company out there (Apple) which has managed, up till now that is, to put a dint in the PC monopoly. Perhaps there is somebody or some company out there waiting in the wings to kill of the PC standard once and for all, but somehow I don't think it will be Commodore!

Ralph De Vries

IN REPLY, YER HONOUR.....

by Paul Blair

This month it's a whole grab bag of bits and pieces that have been building up over the last month or two.

To start with, a personal note. As some of you know, James, a 14 year old Blair, had a spinal fusion operation late in 1989. In the last few days, he has had a series of x-rays to determine how things are mending. Happy to report, all has knitted nicely. The point of mentioning this is to thank everyone who enquired after his well-being, and to let them know he is just fine. For that matter, so are his relieved parents.

Thank you also to all those who wrote to extend commiserations about the demise of TRANSACTOR. Your good wishes are appreciated. By now, all refunds have been sent. If you haven't heard, please contact me. All that remains is to get some money back from those dealers who have been tardy in paying for goods received.

I had a letter from a User Group magazine Editor, who complained that I never sent him any material. Despite the fact that he never sends me his newsletter, and serious doubts about his sanity, I'm quite happy for any Editor to pick up my stuff from wherever he/she sees it, and re-use it, provided I get a copy of the published article. This is not glory-seeking, just to let me know where the material is running so I can be prepared if some reader contacts me. True, some do! Perhaps not many people read it anyway (it could be a sure fire way to deter readers.....!) so it might just be useful "filler" text.

If anyone ever wants to save typing and get articles/program material on disk, send me one with return postage included. The address is 35 Calder Cres, Holder ACT 2611. The phone is (06) 288 3584 after 7pm. There is an answering machine at other times.

Backchat time (sorry, Tim). A small error of no consequence (it's in a REM) crept into the recent article about archiving records with Superbase on the Amiga. In LOOP2: there is a REM that says "records > 6 months old". In fact, it should read "records < 6 months old". Only one person noticed it, so it was probably trivial anyway.

"Sorting Big Files on the 128" also drew some correspondence. Firstly, a word about creating sequential data files using Superscript. Don't. Superscript is a word-processor, and, as such, stores your words PLUS some information about other items as well - such as the TAB settings for your document. Depending on the WP you use, this extra data

will be stored on disk before or after your golden phrases. If you try to read such a file as a standard sequential (SEQ) file, you will get more than you expect. Some odd-ball characters will be returned to you, and you will wonder what the devil you have struck.

If you want straight "as-you-typed-it" text, you would need a text editor. Editors are useful for material where there is no requirement for fancy footwork - eg, no text formatting, character changes (such as bold or underlined) or other pretty things. Can you see the difference? The best way to test the program is to create a SEQ file directly. A typical way to generate a series of random entries would be:

```
10 OPEN 2,8,2,"0:BIGFILE,S,W"
20 FOR A = 1 TO 500 :REM ALTER # TO SUIT
30 A$ = ""
40 FOR B = 1 TO 6 :REM ALTER LENGTH TO SUIT
50 A$ = A$ + CHR$(65 + 26*RND(1)) :REM RANDOM CHARACTERS
60 NEXT
70 PRINT#2,A$
80 NEXT: CLOSE 2
```

This will give you 500 weird/odd strings, each 6 characters long. Now you can test out how the sorting program works.

CrossDOS

For those of us who work in a mixed Amiga-IBM environment, it is very useful to be able to transfer information from AmigaDOS format to MS-DOS format and return. There are also quite a few Mac-Amiga users, but they have their own ways of coping with that combination.

Up to now, I have been using DOS-2-DOS, which works just fine. D2D allows you to define a drive as IBM compatible, and provides some copying and format routines to help with file transfer between formats.

CrossDOS goes a little further than D2D by allowing any floppy disk to be either AmigaDOS or MS-DOS, depending how you address the drive. If you specify DF1:, CrossDOS looks for an Amiga disk. If (as I have it set up) you nominate DI1:, then it expects an IBM disk. Neat. Why bother? OK, I write some stuff at work and store it on an IBM disk. I bring the disk home, fire up my favourite word processor and ask for a file from DI1:. I can edit the file, and re-save it onto DI1: ready for the next day at the office. I like it, and it is reasonably priced (at least overseas!).

There is a PD program, MessyDOS, on Fish 327 (I think the name is MSH). My advice is - don't bother just yet. Its seems to be a pre-release version, with a few too many bugs for my liking. When it has had a bit more development it could be worthwhile.

I've also tried out JazzBench, a WorkBench replacement. The idea of JB is to provide the user with something more than the very basic functions in WB1.3. For example, as soon as an icon appears, you can select it (shades of WB1.4....er 2.0?) while all the other icons are still being found. In other words, the author is treating the Amiga as a multi-tasking machine, not a boring sequential operation one as the authors of current public versions of WB have decreed!

There is a lot more to JB than this. But, like MSH, the current version in circulation also appears to be a pre-release. Watch it, though, because it will grow in value, and perhaps restore the WorkBench to being a useful tool, without having to dive off to the Shell every time you want to do some tweaking and twiddling. When we have less buggy versions of both MSH and JB, I will tell you more.

Superbase

The revision of Amiga Superbase V3 to V4 must be getting closer, because the parallel improvement to SB4 (Windows) for the IBM (V1.2) is into beta testing.

I've become quite facile at transferring SB files between Amiga and IBM and back again. I've also had enquiries about the degree of difficulty of moving on from 8-bit SB to either Amiga or IBM versions, or from Amiga to IBM.

In the latter case, the mental transition is easy. There is a lot of technique in common, and if you can do a few useful things in DML on the Amiga, you will find the IBM version quite alike. Data transfer is no problem, once you master the simplicity of it!

DML programs, while textually nearly identical, often require manual translation (ie, you type them in again). Forms designed in Amiga will not be reusable, either. But they are the only hiccups I have found.

Going from 8-bit to either Amiga or IBM is a bit more brain intensive. The Amiga manuals are.. well.... a bit daunting, and not as good as others I use. But the software is, if anything, friendlier than 8-bit SB, and heaps faster and more powerful. I found that, after a rather slow week or so while I got used to SB things on the Amiga (and darn near gave up, I should add!) the next couple of weeks saw me going

ahead in leaps and bounds. I now prefer SB to dBase IV (that should draw a boo or two) mainly because of the power of the pull-down menu items.

But a word of caution. All non-8-bit versions cost heaps of bucks. In addition, the IBM version requires (at least) Windows V2.10 at around $150 and a mouse (from $80 upwards...) It's nice to have all that power, but is it all necessary for your needs?

THE Music Machine (????)

What's going on here. The A***I ST as THE music machine? Well, so claimed our local TV the other night, when covering an Oz designed music tutoring system. And a recent English journal indicated that the ST is THE choice of discerning musicians! Based on what? Oh, sales. Do we believe that?

CD

The rumour mill is grinding out stories about the next sales come-on, interactive CD video games machines. Seems that at least 3 major companies (including one whose province is really IBM-type stuff) are battling to capture our hearts and minds (not to mention our pockets) using CDs to present fabulous screens and incredible sounds to run with our games. My first thought was - what a way to prevent piracy!! Then I remembered a recent newspaper article that promised an erasable CD system by the middle of 1991. Ah well.

If you have a CD music system at home, you will realise the incredible power of this storage medium. The natural progression was to use the vast storage (up to 500 Meg on a disk) for software. The first system I saw was over 3 years ago, when using Australian Census material on an IBM machine. Wow. Two lots of Oz Census data, plus one lot of US Census material barely used up half of one CD. I was impressed.

The Commodore system (nick-named "Baby"?) seems likely to be an individual offering as a total system, not an add-on to an existing machine. The product may not even have a keyboard! Like you, I'll just have to wait and see what it is all about. But if you are into games, the promises (if kept) should deliver some very exciting stuff. And where will that leave the Amy 500?

(C) Paul Blair 1990

MAIL BOX

I feel that it is about time that I put keyboard to word processor and write a few comments about our "CURSOR".

I have been a country member of "THE CLUB" since July 89, and I read every issue that is sent to me cover to cover (my own computer is a Commodore 128D, Blue Chip disk drive for my second drive, and a Star NX1000C printer). Every article, I read with interest, including the Amiga ones because I am interested in computers as a whole.

At one time not so long ago I thought that "CURSOR" was going to end up just for the Amiga user, and it is right what was written, namely that if no interest is shown by other users that is the way it will go. I just wish that I could do more in the way of programming so that I could contribute articles for the beginner and intermediate user, but alas what you can't do, you can't do, but I know that there are people out there that can do, so come on and CONTRIBUTE.

I agree with Ralph De Vries when he wrote in the June issue of "CURSOR" that even commercial publications are getting smaller, I did buy a magazine called "Your Commodore" an English publication. I started buying in 1987 and stopped in early 1990; the magazine did get thinner, and the cost was getting bigger, but that is not the reason that I stopped buying the magazine; the reason that I stopped was that they stopped publishing corrections to mistakes in their program listings. They noe expect you to send your typed in program on disk or tape to them in England and they would tell you where you went wrong and give you a copy of the corrected program. I could not afford the postage or the time to keep sending disks to the U.K.

I have had a geate deal of help from people that help to run "THE CLUB" and many thanks to all of them. Greg Perry helped me choose a modem and interface cable, and I am very happy with the one I bought namely a Avtek Mega Modem 123, and I have used it for accessing "THE CLUB'S" board, and others - ask my wife, she hit the roof when she saw the phone bill; interstate phone calles are not cheap.

Since the board has been changed I have tried a few times to download the user file, without much success, but I will keep on trying.

The last time I was on the board Graeme Darroch spoke to me, offering help; it's great to speak to someone via your keyboard.

I sent a PCB from my Blue Chip disk drive via the post to Murry Hungerford for the fitting of a device number change switch, and a very tidy job was done; it has been of great use to me.

I sent Doug Maclurkin 15 disks of Public Domain programs that I

bought from America some time ago, about 500 or so programs. I hope that most of them can be used for your Public Domain collection.

I have sent a few machine code routines to Will Erdmann and I have ordered his disk. I am following his articles on machine code programming with a lot of interest.

In answer to Leigh Winsor's Questionnaire:

1. Do you know how to use a machine language monitor? Yes I do.
2. Have you typed in any of the example programs from the course? Yes I have, all of them.
3. Do you own books or reference meterial on machine language? Yes, I have three books they are, "Machine Language" for the Commodore 64, 128, and other Commodore computers by Jim Butterfield. "Machine language Routines" for the Commodore 64/128 by Todd D. Heimarck and Patrick Parrish, A Compute! book. "Machine Language for Beginners" by Richard Mansfield.
4. Has the course increased your interest in, or understanding of, machine language? Yes my interest has been increased, but my understanding is a bit slow.
5. What uses do you see in understanding machine language? Programs run a lot faster in machine language than in basic, you can do more with machine language like using Kernal routines. And than there are interupts; a lot can be done with those.

Keep the aricles going Will, you have a follower in me.

"CURSOR" is a great magazine I hope that it stays a magazine for ALL.

Trevor Stock.

I find the views expressed by you (April '90), with regards to the memory requirements of the Amiga, insulting. I am currently using Kindwords with the extra memory turned OFF. I pull down the FILE menu, select ABOUT, and find that 15 percent of memory is still available (close the disk window before the Amiga opens the Kindwords window). 0.15 * 512 = 76.8 (more RAM than a C64 has).

Get the story right, the Kindwords manual, on page 3, advises 1 meg, but says 512 K is acceptable, with limitations. These include no multitasking, 4 colours, no hard disks, no graphics, no fonts (which I will prove otherwise). This may hold for huge documents, but what do average users expect to use their system for, I ask you.

I am a university student and only had 512 K for 3 months. During that 3 months I submitted numerous assignments for assesment, all perpared with Kindwords. Agreed, 1 meg very handy, but not vital. Granted also, a monitor is handy, but a small colour television is adaquate.

I admit that I have invested quite a bit of money in my system, incorporating all the peripherals you mention in the article, except genlocks, and a midi interface. The outlay for a modem to dial up your favorite bbs is a waste of time. And apart from this, the vast majority of readers would do no more with a modem. By the way, I bought mine primarily to dial up the QUT vax, as I live a long way from Uni, and it is convenient to do assignments from home. I regard modems, genlocks etc etc luxury extras, not prerequisites for the successful usage of the Amiga.

I feel you have done the Amiga a dis-service in your article. There is heaps of software around that will run with 512 K. Surprisingly enough, some wont run with fast ram installed. Instead of barbaric exposure of the faults of the system, why not subtly admit the downfalls, and suggest inexpensive ways of upgrading. Much second hand hardware is very good, reasonably priced, and easy to find. I suggest to newcomers, read the Trading Post; the Amiga is fully compatible with regards to RS-232 modems, and printers using the Centronics parallel interface. These can be found in abounds every month, along with original peripherals.

I share your opinion with regards to upgrading, and the slack attitude of CBM. But frankly I found your article quite depressing, and if were considering buying an Amiga, wouldn't. With any system, most people would need to progressively upgrade, but the way I interpret the articles is, you need all these extras from the onset. Heck, all you do is fuel the argument in favour of buying an IBM clone. Is this your bit?

Personally I think that anyone who compares a come-as-it-is Amiga and a C64 with a (gasp) cassette recorder, needs their head read! I know what I would rather have!

*Upon closing, may I illustrate my point about using Kindwords with 512 K. I pull down the FILE menu, select ABOUT, and find 12 percent of memory still available. 0.12 * 512 = 61.48 (still more RAM than a C64), and I CAN use multiple fonts and styles in one doc, and Kindwords CAN be used in 512 K. There is still plenty of room for more text, and if you dont believe me, try it!*

Simon Alford (Raceview)

I'm pleased to hear that you're happy with your 512K (or 1 Meg?) Amiga and your Kindwords. It appears to me though that on the one hand you tell me off for turning people away from the Amiga, but then, on the other hand. you go on to tell me that you have been buying all those extra bits that I mentioned in the April article. Doesn't that prove my point?

You say that modems are a luxury, yet you own and use one - that also sounds like a contradiction to me. For some of our members modems are a vital link with the outside world. Equally, there are Amiga users out there who would consider a printer a waste of money, so who are we to argue with them?

You may wel consider modems and genlocks luxurious extras. I don't own a genlock and probably never will, but I know several members for whom the genlock is a very vital piece of equipment indeed.

However, my article was not about the merits or otherwise of certain pieces of hardware, but about what I consider to be the cost of a basic Amiga outfit. I don't know how long you have owned your Amiga, but I can assure you that a lot of Amiga productivity software is very memory hungry. The word processor that I use (WordPerfect) is also advertised a being able to run in 512K of memory. Well, it can be done, and I have used it in this configuration - it's great if you don't mind the occasional lockup or visit from the Guru, that is.

There's no point in repeating again what I consider to be a basic all-round workable Amiga outfit. Don't forget that we have a lot of C64 users out there who may decide at some stage to go Amiga. I am inclined to think that an honest assessment of the costing of a basic Amiga system is of more benefit to them than a lot of advertising blurb. [ED]

COMMODORE RETAILERS

With the recent arrival of a new Commodore retailer in the city area of Brisbane (Computer Spot), we thought that it might be helpful if we gave you a listing of Commodore dealers (in alphabetical order) in and around Brisbane. This listing does not include chain stores.

Computer Spot - 225 George Street, Brisbane.
Creative Micro Solutions - 21 Mayneview Street, Milton.
United Computer Group: - 991 Stanley Street, East Brisbane.
Shop 5, 124 Kingston Road, Underwood.
21 Brisbane Road, Bundamba.
Scarborough Street, Southport

LIBRARY NEWS

by Phil Guerney

Several months ago I looked at the latest lot of programs coming out for the C64/128 and realised that many were written for the proportional mouse as the main, or only, input device. Now how many members own mice? Let's ask them - hence the beginning of the survey form in last month's Cursor. Of course we asked as many more questions that could fit onto a double-sided page that would also help us plan club activities and purchases. Everybody, but especially Library users, who have not yet returned the survey form should do so NOW, and carefully answer those questions on recommendations for library purchases. We are spending your money on your behalf and we would like to know that a fair number of people will actually want to borrow the stuff we get.

It's my job to analyse the results and I'll give you until the end of August to get the forms in before I start the statistics (We could draw the free membership prize at the September meeting). By the way, does anybody know of a multiple linear regression package for the Amiga, preferably with factor analysis and cluster analysis thrown in and preferably in the public domain? Unfortunately, this might have to be a job for the PC!

I haven't anything else to talk about this time, plenty in the order pipeline but not yet in Australia. So I will use this opportunity to fill a couple of pages of Cursor with the latest version of the Amiga disk library catalogue in subject order. I have had to guess at some of the subject categories, especially for the games, as I am not familiar with all the programs. So please let me know if something has been described poorly.

C.C.U.G. (Qld.) Inc. Commercial Library
Amiga Disks and Hardware by Subject - July 1990

Subject	Title	Amiga Disk No.
Business		
accounting	EasyLedgers	122
home	Desktop Budget	46
Database		
	Microfiche Filer Plus V2.2+	35
	Superbase Personal 2	27

	Superbase Personal	44
Desk-Top-Publishing		
	PageSetter	7
	Pagestream	47
	Professional Page	12
	Publisher Plus	78
fonts	Pagestream Fonts for Postcript Printers	126
Editor		
text	CygnusEd Professional V1	50
text	CygnusEd Professional Rel. 2 (V2.11)	125
Games	Corruption	14
	Mind Walker	13
	Mind Walker	124
	Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon	15
adventure	Knight Orc	79
adventure	The Faery Tale Adventure	121
adventure	The Pawn	5
arcade	BMX Simulator	112
arcade	Emerald Mine	84
arcade	Extensor	85
arcade	Fire Power	120
arcade	Impossible Mission II	41
arcade	Joe Blade	89
arcade	Marble Madness	9
arcade	QBall	83
arcade	Return to Atlantis	92
arcade	Silent Service	3
arcade	Sim City	93
arcade	Skyfox II	91
arcade	Spitting Image	86
arcade	The Sentinel	119
arcade	Virus	118
arcade	Xybots	87
chess	Chessmaster 2000	68
chess	Sargon III	69
crosswords	The Crossword Creator	42
fantasy	Heroes of the Lance	113
flight simulat.	F/A-18 Interceptor	115
flight simulat.	F/A-18 Interceptor	115A
flight simulat.	Flight Simulator II	65
flight simulat.	Flight Simulator II	65A

flight simulat.	Scenery Disk 11	62
flight simulat.	Scenery Disk 7	60
flight simulat.	Scenery Disk 7	60A
flight simulat.	Scenery Disk 9	61
flight simulat.	Scenery Disk Japan	64
flight simulat.	Scenery Disk Western European Tour	63
flight simulat.	Scenery Disk Western European Tour	63A
flight simulat.	Starglider	4
flight simulat.	Starglider	4A
golf	World Class Leader Board	94
graphic advent.	Barbarian	114
indoor	Hollywood Poker	82
quiz	Powerplay	88
quiz	Trivial Pursuit - A New Beginning	90
various	Compute!'s Amiga Games	16
public domain	Best of Fish - Mostly Games Pack 1 (1,28,29)	109
public domain	Best of Fish - Mostly Games Pack 2 (30,37,40)	110
public domain	Best of Fish - Mostly Games Pack 3 (41,46,48)	111

Graphics

	Deluxe Photolab	29
animation	Fantavision	52
animation	The Director	28
animation	The Director Toolkit	53
clip art	Desktop Artist Vol 1	54
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(More in next month's edition)

8 BITS & PIECES

C-64 DEMO FOR AUGUST

Experimenting with Modems and the 64 Userport by Ron Rich

For our June demo, Graeme Darroch, our Sysop, showed 64 users the ins and outs of our Club bulletin board. Whether one judges a bulletin board as precariously perched electronic Leaning Tower of Babel, or a ghetto of the electronic Global Village, one need know no more about modems than that they are Black Boxes which connect computers to telephones.

But what is a modem and what can you say of a modem after you've said hello?

For our August Demo, Ron Rich takes up the question.

Ron Rich, who is well known to the 64 group for his involvement in communications and amateur radio and interfacing using the c64, will explain how modems transfer data, and demonstrate a range of interesting experiments and constructions involving the Userport and the 64.

As a User Group, we manage to assist our members towards judicious and broad skills in the use of software, and at least some acquire a range of programming skills; but unfortunately, we do not seem so able to facilitate a knowledge of basic hardware skills. This is regrettable, because at least one area where the c64 might find an enduring niche, is as a machine for experimenters with small-scale hardware interfacing.

Leigh Winsor

THANK GOD FOR THE SALVOS

Is a well known phrase but I wish to extend it slightly and thank ROD WATSON for the terrific job he has done for me.

The following story may be a help for others as it was a lesson for me.

In using the DATA FILE 3.6 program I noticed that the disk was not following the correct instructions (reading and writing). It turned out that the directory (BAM) was corrupted and appeared beyond repair. I entered into a state of shock, when I realised that a ADDRESS listing of close to 100 names and addresses had been gobbled up.

No worries if you have made a back-up....,but did I???? NO, I had not got around to do it. So what to do next?

After I had settled down and realised how much work it would be to re-type the list, I contacted one of the C.C.U.G.(Q) members, who pointed me straight in the direction of Rod Watson.

Rod offered to have a look at my problem. He discussed it with some other members, but they were afraid that the problem was beyond repair. Rod still had his mind set on a plan that ultimately resulted in a restored disk. The DISK-DOCTOR program was the secret. Rod managed to rebuild track 18 (and the directory) so he could retrieve the lost address listing.

It sounds (looks) simpler than it really was. I tried to understand Rod's explanation, even after he had put it to paper, but I am not much wiser, only happier knowing that the file had not been lost.

Lessons:

1. ALWAYS make a BACK-UP before you shut the computer down. Everybody knows that but how often does it slip your mind?
2. Always VERIFY the saved data from any program.
3. Remember that the club still has a few enthusiastic 8-bit members that can do miracles. Thank you, Rod Watson, for a job well done.
4. Think about the position of your equipment on your desk. The telephone next to my disk-drive COULD have caused the problem. It produces quite a strong magnetic field when it rings. This can be easily overlooked.

Hugh Gravendyk

-ooOoo-

Dr. Watson

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
Eddie Brook	*Amateur Radio Fax & Weather Programs*	349 4394
Cor Geels	*SuperScript, WriteStuff, PaperClip, GEOS*	263 2839
Cor Geels	*C-64 Newcomers, Printers & Interfacing*	263 2839
Ross Horn	*CP/M Family Tree Program (P.A.T.)*	395 0618
Matthew James	*Basic, Logo, GEOS, WriteStuff, Games Tips*	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
Angus Norrie	*Simon's Basic*	371 2945
Vic Mobbs	*Contact for Sunshine Coast Members*	071 941 330
Vic Mobbs	*Superscript/Superbase 128*	071 941 330
George Nelson	*EasyScript, HAM Radio*	848 2456
Craig Rawlins	*Pascal, C, Machine Language, Modula-2*	379 8957
Ron Rich	*H'ware Interfacing for Amat. Radio Prgms*	355 2623
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!

C-64 MACHINE LANGUAGE - PART 7

by Will Erdmann

Attention all those good people who purchased P.D #47. I have sent some more programs to Doug Maclurkin for updating. If you want to know more about what's in store for you in the next 7 months look out for when the revised version of this disk is available.

In my seventh article I am going to show you how to use all six sprites on P.D #47 in a simple game. I would also like to point out that putting different numbers in hex dumps can make some quite remarkable changes to the output of a program. As you can see there is no substantial difference between the setup in this program and the one in last month's issue. Check with last month's program to see the changes I have made.

SETUP

```
1000 A9 93    LDA #$93
1002 20 D2 FF JSR $FFD2
1005 A2 00    LDX #$00
1007 BD 00 0B LDA $0B00,X
100A 9D 00 30 STA $3000,X
100D E8       INX
100E D0 F7    BNE $1007
1010 A2 00    LDX #$00
1012 BD 00 0C LDA $0C00,X
1015 9D 00 31 STA $3100,X
1018 E8       INX
1019 D0 F7    BNE $1012
101B A2 00    LDX #$00
101D BD 50 0A LDA $0A50,X
1020 9D F8 07 STA $07F8,X
1023 E8       INX
1024 E0 07    CPX #$07
1026 D0 F5    BNE $101D
1028 A2 00    LDX #$00
102A BD 60 0A LDA $0A60,X
102D 9D 00 D0 STA $D000,X
1030 E8       INX
1031 E0 10    CPX #$10
```

```
1033 D0 F5     BNE $102A
1035 A9 07     LDA #$07
1037 8D 28 D0 STA $D028
103A 8D 2A D0 STA $D02A
103D 8D 2C D0 STA $D02C
1040 A9 3F     LDA #$3F
1042 8D 15 D0 STA $D015
1045 00        BRK
```

After you have copied the above type M 0A50 press RETURN and change the numbers to read the following-:

```
0A50 C0 C1 C2 C3 C4 C5 C6 C7
```

You will note that these are different from last month's program.

Now press RETURN type M 0A60,0A68 press RETURN and change the numbers to read the following-:

```
0A60 25 35 78 35 C8 35 FF 35
0A68 A2 D0 A2 D0 C8 8B 20 20
```

Now load "Balloon" type T 3000,3040,0B00 press RETURN
Load "Cat" type T 3000,3040,0B40 press RETURN
Load "Man" type T 3000,3040,0B80 press RETURN
Load "Duck" type T 3000,3040,0BC0 press RETURN
Load "Bow" type T 3000,3040,0C00 press RETURN
Load "Arrow" type T 3000,3040,0C40 press RETURN

The above transfers the sprite data into the corresponding hex dumps. Now type G 1000. There should be a Balloon, Cat, Man and a Duck along the top of the screen and a Bow and an Arrow on the mid bottom of the screen.

Now resume typing at line 1045.

```
1045 20 70 10 JSR $1070
1048 20 90 10 JSR $1090
104B 20 C0 10 JSR $10C0
104E 4C 45 10 JMP $1045
```

These commands instruct the computer to Jump to the three Subroutines at 1070, 1090, 10C0 accordingly. When the last JSR routine is executed the whole process from line 1045 is repeated again. (line 104E)
Type D 1070 press RETURN and continue typing the first of the three

subroutines. This one increments the horizontal positions of sprites 0-3 by 1. Because of the RTS instruction in line 107C the computer returns to the main program to carry out the next instruction following line 1045. I've called it Horizontal Sprite Movement Subroutine.

HORIZONTAL SPRITE MOVEMENT SUBROUTINE

```
1070 EE 00 D0 INC $D000
1073 EE 02 D0 INC $D002
1076 EE 04 D0 INC $D004
1079 EE 06 D0 INC $D006
107C 60       RTS
107D 00       BRK
```

The second subroutine starts at 1090. It is a delay loop that is written differently from the one I have used so far. Instead of incrementing X and decrementing Y locations C000 and C001 are used. I've called this Delay Loop and Stop Key Subroutine because I have written a RUN/-STOP Key routine in it as well. I am using these names for convenience only do not try to type them in.

DELAY LOOP & STOP KEY SUBROUTINE

```
1090 EE 00 C0 INC $C000
1093 D0 FB    BNE $1090
1095 20 E1 FF JSR $FFE1
1098 F0 F7    BEQ $1091
109A CE 01 C0 DEC $C001
109D D0 F1    BNE $1090
109F A9 02    LDA #$02
10A1 8D 01 C0 STA $C001
10A4 60       RTS
10A5 00       BRK
```

The next subroutine starts at 10C0. This is something completely new. I've called it the joystick subroutine because if you plug your joystick into port 2 the bow and arrow are activated when the rest of the program is typed in. If you push the joystick left sprites 4 and 5 (bow & arrow) will move left. If you push the joystick to the right the bow & arrow will move in that direction. If you press the fire button the arrow sprite 5 will move up the screen. This is because when the

joystick is moved in those directions or the fire button is pressed a value of either 7B, 77 or 6F is held in location DC00. When the contents of DC00 is loaded with A it can be compared to 7B,77 or 6F accordingly. Then only when the joystick is pressed left, right or the fire button pressed will the relevant routines be executed; e.g the correct branch instruction is performed.

JOYSTICK SUBROUTINE

```
10C0 AD 00 DC LDA $DC00
10C3 C9 7B    CMP #$7B
10C5 F0 16    BEQ $10DD
10C7 C9 77    CMP #$77
10C9 F0 08    BEQ $10D3
10CB C9 6F    CMP #$6F
10CD F0 21    BEQ $10F0
10CF 60       RTS
10D0 00       BRK
```

MOVE BOW & ARROW RIGHT

```
10D3 EE 08 D0 INC $D008
10D6 EE 0A D0 INC $D00A
10D9 60       RTS
10DA 00       BRK
```

MOVE BOW & ARROW LEFT

```
10DD CE 08 D0 DEC $D008
10E0 CE 0A D0 DEC $D00A
10E3 60       RTS
10E4 00       BRK
```

MOVE ARROW UP IF FIRE BUTTON PRESSED

```
10F0 A0 F0    LDY #$F0
10F2 CE 0B D0 DEC $D00B
10F5 20 90 10 JSR $1090
10F8 20 70 10 JSR $1070
10FB 88       DEY
10FC D0 FA    BNE $10F2
```

```
10FE 60     RTS
10FF 00     BRK
```

As you probably have guessed the last one does a little more than just move the arrow up the screen when the fire button is pressed. Because Y is loaded with 15 in line 10F0 and decremented in line 10FB the arrow moves slower than would have been the case if this delay loop was not there. You will note that the other delay loop in line 1090 is also used and the four other sprites are kept moving while the arrow is moving up the screen.

Well that's all for now. Please let me know if you have any difficulties with this program and/or suggestions to make. I would very much like to know how I could improve this course in any way. I would appreciate it if someone who can use SPRITE MAGIC on P.D #47 would draw some sprites which could be used in an animation sequence such as a mouse running across the screen. Don't forget you can use Ron Lewis' SCREEN MAKER to design some screens. The instructions are in the SCREEN MAKER program. Please send the sprites, program improvements and screen maker screens to-: Will Erdmann, WESTERN AVENUE, MONTVILLE QLD 4560 Phone (074) 429226: Sat, Sun 10.00am -1.00pm; Tue, Wed & Thu 2pm - 8pm.

-ooOoo-

HOW NOT TO LOSE FILES

by Denis Wright

I am not by nature a tidy person. I tend to have books, papers, and sundry items scattered around my study at any given time. This is probably the legacy of pre-computer post-graduate study - but, fortunately, the age of the computer has made some timely inroads in my untidiness.

Maybe this is why people who are naturally immune to fastidiousness love the computer so much. Filing cabinets, bits of paper, unfiled duplicates - they're all in the past. Well, perhaps not quite, but we're on the way to this point. It's all there, on a few skimpy little scraps of vinyl called floppy disks - a well-organised filing cabinet in a container smaller than a lunchbox, storing information that's easily and almost instantaneously accessible.

Perhaps that's why I have double standards when it comes to computer equipment. I can stand a messy room, but not a heap of disks lying around without their covers on. Or a computer that is dirty and unkempt. I like labels on disks, disks in boxes. I like the computer equipment laid out so that you can reach everything - ergonomically satisfying, let's say. In my otherwise rather chaotic world, I love order when it comes to computers, their peripherals and software, and I've spent a lot of time creating that order. It is a mini-miracle to me that I can, within seconds and with certainty, track down a letter or file I created maybe three years ago. The computer gave me a chance to be mentally tidy. For that I'm eternally grateful. That's what I'm on about in this article.

Whether you're working on a C-64 or a computer with a zillion megabytes of memory or storage, sooner or later you're going to come to grief if you don't get organised. A few simple rules or principles are necessary, and, especially if you are just starting on computing, it's best to learn the easy way rather than from (usually) bitter experience.

2. What you need

First, you've got to decide just what sort of records you're going to keep on diskfile. That's going to vary enormously from one person to another, but one of the things most computer users have in common is that they keep important letters that they've written on disk. This is probably a good place to start an explanation of the process of file organisation, and you can then adapt the principles to any other data or programs you store. I'm going to assume that you are a C-64 user, although much of what I have to say applies to practically any type of computer, from IBM to Amiga or mainframe. You need the following.

A. A workdisk

I know there are several other ways to go about storing files - such as having different disks to store different types of datafiles, but that means lots of different disk swaps. It's a bore to have to change disks perpetually. I use one workdisk for all datafiles. If you follow the advice below, you will hardly ever need to change disks, and even archiving your files will be simple.

The overriding advantage of having just one current workdisk is that it is easy to back up after each session - whereas if you use a

number of data disks at once, you have to spend ages backing them up - often just for the sake of one or two new files. That's inefficient.

My workdisk for the C64 contains my word-processing program on one side, together with my favourite utilities, while the second side is reserved for my appointment record and the files I'm creating or working on currently. As my files are mostly word-processing, I can store up to a month's worth on that disk. That means I don't have to think about shunting them off on to an archiving disk more than once a month. Consequently, every session on the computer means putting just one disk in the drive - loading up the word-processor or one or two other programs I use frequently from Side 1, turning over the disk, and having Side 2 ready for datafiles. I rarely need any other disk on an average day. That works well for me.

B. A backup workdisk

At the end of every day's session, you should do a straight diskcopy of your current workdisk to a backup disk. That way, should something go wrong with your workdisk, you won't have lost more than a day's work. If you don't do daily backups, ask yourself this question: is there anything on this disk that I cannot replace easily? If the answer is yes, then you should be backing it up every day, or at least, every time you don't want to lose important work. If you never backup your disks, let me give you this advice. It is not a case of IF the disk crashes, but WHEN. Believe me, it will. And Murphy's Law says it will happen at the time you can least afford it to.

C. Spare disks for archiving

Disks, especially 5.25" ones, are dirt cheap, so you can afford to archive plenty of your data. When in doubt, do store it. Another Murphy's-type law of computing is that the file you wiped because you could NEVER imagine using it again will be needed within 24 hours of having been erased for ever. As well, when you fill an archive disk, make a backup and store it somewhere else. Remember, programs are usually replaceable - your data is not. If a disk is a dollar, it's money well spent for peace of mind.

3. About workdisk files

A. You need a way of identifying what your documents are just by look-

ing at the filenames. Filenames that you store the item under on disk are of critical importance.

A good filename is one that you can recall at least part of, or make a good guess at. There's not much point in naming a report to your sporting club doc.123456, unless you have perfect recall or some weird system of interpreting numbers.

A good filename doesn't use mixed upper and lower case (because you can never remember exactly when you used a capital).

It doesn't include strange characters - such as ~&*()#>={}, unless you can think of a useful and consistent reason for putting them in.

It doesn't use spaces either - not usually, anyway, though there may be a case for using something as a separator.

Lastly, a good filename includes some method of dating the file, so you can tell which is the most recent one or just when it was created. More on that later.

So what you have to do is to think about how you are going to arrange things when filing them on disk. You need a structure. A hierarchy, if you want the fancy title. For example, you might make your main classifications PERSONAL, FINANCIAL, MISCELLANEOUS, SPORT, RE-PORTS, etc. - whatever suits you best - but try to use categories that have differing first letters. When you've decided this (actually, you can add to it as you develop your system), you can think about a second level in the structure; for example, LETTERS. If this is unclear at the moment, then examples below should help.

On a Commodore, you have 16 characters to play with for a file name. That's not many when you think of all the things I've recommended a filename should do, but it's better than MS-DOS. On an IBM, you have only 8 plus a 3 character extension, which is pretty lousy. Let's stick with the Commodore. If you're going to reply to a personal letter from a friend, and you want a good filename, then try doing it this way.

It's personal, so begin the file with p. As it's a letter, make the next character l (for letter). You could use a space or a full stop (or apostrophe) as the next character, just to separate it from the remainder of the filename. Now use the first six letters of the person's name, followed by the date on which you wrote the letter. Use year/-month/day {yymmdd} sequence - I'll explain why later. So the filename should look like this:

p1.jackso900108

This filename tells you that the file is a personal letter to someone (probably) named Jackson which you wrote on 8 January, 1990.

There's a fair bit of info in that filename, don't you reckon?

Why I recommend saving the date in this format is that if you write Mr Jackson another letter in a month or two, its filename will sort in chronological as well as alphabetical sequence. That is, all your letters to Mr Jackson from first to last will be in order both on your workdisk and in your complete file catalog. That's quite useful. And consistently using the first six letters of the person's name ensures that you can use just these characters as a search string if you need to look for the file in that way.

4. Software

A. Workdisk utilities

Apart from a good disk cataloger, here are some programs I recommend you have. Space does not permit me to describe each of them. I do have very good public domain (or else I've programmed them myself) programs for handling each of the tasks below. If you want them, send me a packaged blank disk and return postage and I'll copy them for you free of charge. (Address: Dr. D. Wright, History Dept., UNE Armidale NSW, 2351.) You'll have to find your way round them on your own, though, as I don't have manuals. They are pretty self-explanatory.

a) disk squeeze and alpha sorter
b) fast file copier
c) disk editor
d) sequential file reader
e) fast data disk copier
f) The disk cataloging program

You need a good disk cataloging program. By that I mean a program that will do the following:

record the identification or title of each disk and all the files on these disks.

will sort them all into alphabetical order together with their disk IDs, so that you can view the sorted list either on the screen or in printed form.

will (ideally) allow you some sort of search facility within the catalog file. (This may not be absolutely essential, if the disk cataloguer saves the file as a sequential one, and you use a word-processing program like Superscript or Easyscript that save its data in sequential form. If this is so, you can load up the filename list gene-

rated by the disk cataloguer in your word-processor and use its search facilities to look for a string of characters.)

5. When to archive

A. When the workdisk is 80% full

It is bad practice to cram too much on to a workdisk. The time will come when you want to Save With Replace a large file, and you'll get a Disk Full error message. You will probably also create a splat file (i.e., one with zero blocks but ending with an asterisk (*) which is a dangerous condition eliminated only by validating the disk (not by erasing the splat file - that might seem to solve the problem, but it may well plant a timebomb on your disk that will wreck your files.) Validating a disk is simple (see your manual) but time-consuming, so archive unused files off your workdisk when you get to round only 100 or so blocks free.

B. When you anticipate working on long files or ones that will build quickly.

After what I said above, the reason for this is self-evident. If you are likely to be using several really long files - over 100 blocks or so - then there may well be a good case for using a separate disk just for them.

6. Definitions.

It might be helpful if you know exactly what I meant by certain terms and the way they are used in this article.

A. alpha sort

This is sorting of filenames into alphabetical order, which is not as simple as it might seem on the surface, because we may use numbers in our disk titles, or spaces, or characters which just ain't alphabetical! Most disk cataloging and file sorting programs have standard ways of dealing with these, so they put punctuation marks and numbers first, followed by lower case letters and upper case. (This is why you should not mix upper and lower case in filenames.)

B. archiving

This means saving particular files more-or-less permanently on to archive disks. These are the disks which you will keep for future reference, so it is vital that the files on them are organised consistently and properly. They should be kept in a safe place and write protected when full.

C. disk editor

This is a program that you can use to edit diskfiles directly, by track and sector on the disk. If you don't know how to do this, then don't experiment on important disks. You can always make a copy of one of your workdisks and experiment with a disk editor on it. That way, if you scramble the disk, you've gained experience and lost no data.

D. disk ID (on C-64 disks)

These are the two characters you find following a diskname when you call up a directory to find out what's on the disk. As several disk cataloging programs use these characters to sort your disks, I recommend that you start your archives with something like aa, and then go to ab, ac, and so on. You can use a disk editor to change these id characters if you've got awkward ones on your archive disks already. Some programmers warn against this practice, because it doesn't really change the ID on each block and could conceivably confuse the computer if you did a lot of disk switching, but I must admit I've been doing it for years and have never had any problems that I could trace to this practice.

E. disk squeeze

This is a program that will compress the directory on a well-used disk (i.e., one that files are frequently scratched or replaced on) and sort the directory alphabetically, if you like. There are some great old programs of this type that do an excellent job of keeping your directory in order.

Well, that describes what you need to get started with file organisation, especially on a C-64. The more sophisticated machines have all sorts of built-in searches for lost files, but I must admit there is nothing quite so tidy and satisfying as using a good reliable system of your own.

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DESK TOP PUBLISHING ON THE AMIGA

Are you interested in this topic? Well, so am I, and I think that it's about time that we formed a *DTP Special Interest Group*. Do give me a ring on 3003477 and we'll see what we can organise about meeting.

Editor

JUNE MEETING

At this meeting we had a welcome return visit from Tony May of South East Queensland Computer Repairs. By means of an series of schematics Tony gave us a simplified explanation about the function of the major chips in the Amiga, and the most likely problems we might encounter. He also showed us how several versions of the A500 motherboard differed, and how to go about the upgrade of the Super Agnus chip with the necessary cautions about this procedure. Did you know that when the Caps Lock key flashes 12 or 13 times, you may be having troubles with the Agnus chip? All in all, a very educational lecture which was very much appreciated by our audience.

AUGUST MEETING

This, of course, is our Annual General Meeting. After the official part is over (Reports and Election of Officers) we will devote the balance of the evening to discussions and (time permitting) have a Question & Answer session with a panel of 'experts'.

AUGUST WORKSHOP

This is NOT the Public Domain Meeting, but the meeting devoted to programming-, software- and hardware problem solving. If your only interest in the Amiga is playing games (or worse still, copying games), we suggest that you stay away from this meeting.

Please note as well that our workshop meetings are *for financial members only!* Yes, we do check for current membership cards.

NEW PC/XT CARD FOR THE A2000

Overseas, Commodore has released a replacement for the A2088 PC/XT card. It's called the A2088T (for Turbo) card and is based on the NEC V-20 chip.

This chip will allow it to run the card at 4.77 MHz (the speed of the original A2088 card), as well at speeds of 7.16 and 9.54 MHz. The package uses the computer's inbuilt 3½" drive (720 KByte) instead of the older 5¼" drive (360KByte) which came with the A2088 and comes with 640 K of memory (compared with 512K on the A2088). At its highest speed (9.54 MHz) it runs twice as fast as its predecessor, which is about half the speed of the A2286 (AT) card. Price in West Germany is fairly similar to its predecessor as no extra drive is involved. Oz release not known at this time.

This begs the question though; "isn't it a bit late in the day for another XT emulator, when by general consensus the XT standard is just about dead?".

NICE GESTURE

Some time ago we ordered from the USA through Lightspeed Distributors a C(omputer) A(aided) D(esign) package, called X-CAD Designer. When we tried to run it, the program failed to do so, because this particular version would only work in the USA on NTSC machines.

In the meantime our suppliers had apparently gone broke and we were wondering what to do with the, to us, useless program. We decided to contact the software authors in the UK and explain our predicament.

Some weeks later we received from the manufactures with their compliments a free replacement PAL copy of the program. This type of gesture restores your faith in humanity.

SWITCHED ON

Gareth Hall, a member of our group does modifications to Amigas such as: Boot switches, RAM ON/OFF switches, Hi-Pass Audio Filter switch and a Pause/Reset switch. Ring Gareth for details on (07) 208 023.

LATTICE BITES THE DUST?

(The following messages were downloaded from a US Bulletin Board by David Campbell.)

Given all the speculation that usually flies around this group I'm surprised no one has commented on the article about Lattice in the June 11 issue of PC Week (I know, why would anyone from this group read PC Week?). According to the article SAS is pulling development, sales, and support of all the C compiler products from Lattice. Also according to the article, rather than selling the products commercially, "...SAS will concentrate on selling Lattice C to corporate and government users already working with SAS' statistical software and mainframe compiler." They will also be laying off almost half of Lattice's staff by the end of June.

Obviously the article has an MSDOS orientation, but it did mention the Amiga compiler among the products. The big question is what does this mean for the future of Lattice Amiga C?

An announcement posted on CIS by Mike Roth of Lattice only said that responsibility was being transfered to SAS for the Amiga, Atari, MS-DOS and HP compilers. If I remember correctly the current versions of at least the Amiga 'C' compiler were done by John Toebes, who I believe is with SAS anyway.

Am I right on this?

Yes, John works for SAS. He took over control of the compiler when SAS acquired Lattice. However, the difference between SAS and Lattice is that Lattice is a marketing organisation that sells and supports C compilers and related products. SAS sells and supports statistical software. The compiler development at SAS is primarily to support the internal use of said compilers for development of the main product: statistical software. John was able to do such a successful job with the Amiga compiler because 1) he has a lot of political clout (!) in the company, and 2) he used the Amiga compiler development to drive development of the entire M68000 compiler line (Apollo, Sun, etc.) used internally at SAS.

I have no doubt that if marketing of the Amiga compiler continues then John will continue the incredible pace of development he has maintained so far. The question is whether SAS has any interest in marketing and supporting a commercial compiler for the Amiga, considering how far this diverges from their primary product line.

What I have heard is that Jim Goodnight has given the OK to this, and that a support group is going to be set up for compiler products (using a 1-900 number, like Microsoft has already). SAS already has a far more extensive manufacturing and distribution facility than Lattice anyway.

TRANSACTOR - A POSTSCRIPT

by Paul Blair

Closing down production of TRANSACTOR was (for me at least) a bit more than just another magazine title gone from the Commodore world. It's closure will have a major effect on the direction of my life from here on.

To judge from the phone calls and letters, the T will be sadly missed. Readers have offered me consolation, money, pledges of help .... and some quite interesting theories connected with the distribution of technical information about the Amiga, and a few possible clues as to the current attitudes prevailing in Commodore.

For me it means time on my hands, a situation I will find novel. I will have to think about my options carefully before re-investing in another project. Time to do what? Paint the house? Go for an overseas trip? Contemplate where I go from here in the computer sense? Its certainly food for thought.

What I'm trying to do is to guess where the computer world will be in 3, 4 or 5 years. Because I figure I should start investigating those waters now!

OK, let me try my hand at crystal ball gazing. Where will we be in 3 years? To start with, 8-bit machines will probably be dead by 1993, at least in Australia. In some overseas countries they are now, and will be then, all the rage. But not here. So forget 8-bit stuff.

Amiga will be there, I reckon, but only just. It's currently 5 years old, and has only reached a low level of market penetration. It is badly priced and marketed, and with more and more people becoming aware of what constitutes traditional Commodore support, breathing in short puffs. For the most incredible computer I have ever seen, this is tragic.

Its market is largely outside the USA/Canada area, which could make it vulnerable in years to come. An 8 year old design is almost terminal in a fast-moving world. The 3000 machine... well, apart from the 'in' crowd, it seems unlikely to make any appreciable impact in the overall computer market. Its concept is just too far away from the mainstream for that.

PC's, 80286 or 386, flood the market right now, at very low prices. The 486 is nearly here, but so are RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computer) machines. And I reckon that inside 3 years, RISC machines will be where 286/386 machines are today. They seem set to grab a huge slab

of the market place dollars, certainly in the corporate market.

Watching the corporate market is the best barometer I can find. Why? Consider this. Five years ago, very few offices had much in the way of readily available computer power. A few people had access to the company mainframes, on which they processed payrolls and so on. The great unwashed who wanted to compute had to wait until after 5pm to rush home, kiss the wife, then lock themselves away with their beloved computers.

Now they have a computer on their work desk, and access to some of the very powerful software that they use for their daily toil. They are now at ease with those packages, get frequent upgrades and ... well, its only a short step from there to wanting to have the same stuff at home. PC clones are being pushed heavily, and when the software comes "free", the outcome is predictable.

In the middle of this we have the drive by some major companies to put laptops into the hands (or laps?) of students in our schools. The reason goes beyond just moving product. Studies show that we all retain a brand loyalty to anything we use/learn on, whether it be the brand of car we learn to drive in, or the computer we start out with. Smart stuff, and a guarantee of future sales. Commodore is trying hard here, but a few other companies are trying even harder. Take a look at Toshiba!

So what if a clone is monaural (and only just) and won't multitask? The VGA screens show reasonable graphics, memory and mice are cheap, and a lot of new games are coming out for the PC at the same time as they appear for other computers. The overall price is, in many cases, less than the Amiga. Need I say more?

The business world will embrace RISC because (1) it will give them more grunt per box and (2) cost less than the present gear on offer. Network systems will operate more cost-efficiently, and with the kids now coming "on-stream" into the work force with ready-built computer hands, there will be no reason to stay with the "old" stand-alone desktops.

Maybe this broad picture will have a few different colour tonings, but the frame will be attractive and affordable. I wonder which computer manufacturers will risk (no pun intended) swimming off at a tangent?

What do others think? Matters of opinion will undoubtedly have a wide spectrum of views. Join in and agree or disagree as you will. Are there other perspectives out there to help me plan my life?

(C)1990 Paul Blair (dead sober)

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AMIGA PUBLIC DOMAIN LIBRARY

TBAG #35

31	(Game)
NewLook	(Utility)
Frog	(Game)
TurboPacker	(Utility)
Kilby.Pic	(Picture)
RawCopy	(Utility)
Stars	(Demo)
Ruler3	(Utility)
CalcKey	(Utility)
SetCon	(Utility)
Clk	(Utility)
SI	(Utility)
cmpPath	(Utility)
Stat	(Utility)
Devinfo	(Utility)
SuperInfo	(Utility)
diskchk	(Utility)
TDPatch12	(Utility)
FF	(Utility)
TDPatch13	(Utility)
Kill	(Utility)
TY	(Utility)
LeftyMouse	(Utility)
Who	(Utility)
Meter	(Utility)

TBAG #36

3DLook	(Demo)
Mansion.Sham	(Picture)
Bugs.Pic	(Picture)
Quattro_NTSC	(Game)
Einstein	(Picture)
Quattro_PAL	(Game)
EvilEinstein	(Picture)
Parrot.Sham	(Picture)
Emporus	(Game)
SuperSham 3.2	(Utility)
Knack	(Demo)
TT-V1	(Game)

TBAG #37

AmigaHaven.Demo	(Demo)
Mort	(Utility)
Edge.Demo	(Demo)
Mosaic	(Game)
Hacker.Demo	(Demo)
MuchMore	(Utility)
Klide	(Demo)
PopUpMenu	(Utility)
King.Demo	(Demo)
SkyPaint2.0	(Utility)
LHArc 1.0	(Utility)
SlotCars	(Game)
MegaWB	(Utility)
XColor	(Utility)

TBAG #38

BecomeProject	(Utility)
HyperHelp	(Utility)
BecomeTool	(Utility)
Icons	(Icons)
CopyDefTool	(Utility)
KV	(Utility)
CopyIconImage	(Utility)
Monitor.II	(Picture)
Display	(Utility)
MSizer	(Utility)
FloatIcon	(Utility)
Snap	(Utility)
Goo!Clock	(Utility)
st_player	(Utility)
H-Ball	(Game)
VirusX 4.0	(Utility)

TBAG #39

BoingsDYN	(Picture)
PopUpMenu	(Utility)
Dyna-Show 1.3	(Utility)
TBar	(Utility)
FastDiskII	(Utility)
TDraw	(Utility)
GlassPyraDN	(Picture)
TreeFrog	(Animation)
IChing	(Game)
Txt2Exe	(Utility)
Kap-Othello	(Game)
XenoZap	(Utility)
MouseCoords	(Utility)

TBAG #40 (2 Disk Set)

Activator	(Utility)
Scene3.Pic	(Picture)
AnyMonth	(Utility)
SceneGenDemo	(Utility)
BollIntro	(Demo)
SnowFall	(Utility)
CrystalHammer	(Music)
Snow.Pic	(Picture)
DeadLock	(Music)
StarBlanker	(Utility)
DiskTalk	(Utility)
SeaWave	(Utility)
Echoing	(Music)
TBAG.Anim	(Demo)
Fenster	(Utility)
TBAG.Demo	(Demo)
PCopy	(Utility)
TrackDisplay	(Utility)
PT	(Utility)
Wizard.Pic	(Picture)
Scene1.Pic	(Picture)
Zap	(Utility)
Scene2.Pic	(Picture)

TBAG #41

Drawers Icons	(Icons)
Mischief	(Demo)
Enveloprinter	(Utility)
Network	(Demo)
GMan	(Utility)
PRFont	(Utility)
Juggette.anim	(Demo)
TBAG.demo	(Demo)

TBAG #42

BounchBench	(Demo)
NoIcons	(Utility)
ConBuffer	(Utility)
Requ12	(Utility)
ColorCycle	(Demo)
RoadRoute	(Utility)
ColorFlash	(Demo)
SmartIcons	(Utility)
ColorSwell	(Demo)
StarStruck	(Demo)
Echo	(Utility)
VMK	(Utility)
FSDirs	(Utility)
WhatIs	(Utility)
Iff2Ex	(Utility)
Zoom!	(Utility)
Mutant	(Game)

FISH DISK # 351

PDC - Publicly Distributable C (PDC) is a complete C compilation system including a compiler, assembler, linker, librarian, and numerous utilities, documentation files, libraries, and header files. PDC supports many ANSI features including all ANSI preprocessor directives, function prototyping, structure passing and assignment. In addition it supports Lattice C compatible libcall pragmas, precompiled header files, builtin functions, and stack checking code. V. 3.33 with source.

FISH DISK # 352

MG - Beta version of mg3, including ARexx support. This is probably the most stable beta for the next year, as many new features are going in after this. Amiga-only release. Sources compressed with lharc to fit on the disk. Update to mg2b on disk 147. Author: Mike Meyer, et al.

PrintHandler - A custom PRT: driver which offers easy single sheet support as well as limited data spooling. Version 1.6, an almost entirely rewritten update to version 1.1 on disk 282. Includes source in
TreeWalk - File tree walking subroutine designed to be fast, robust, and not use a lot of any critical resource. Update to ver. on disk 289.

FISH DISK # 353

AztecArp - An Arp package fixed to work with the 5.0 release of the Aztec 'C' compiler.

CompDisk - A disk compression/disk compression package which was written to be fast and easy to use. Includes an Arp and an Intuition interface. Includes source in 'C'.

NorthC - A complete freely redistributable C environment for the Amiga based on the Sozobon Ltd C compiler, Charlie Gibb's assembler, the Software Distillery's linker, and portions from other sources. Steve has pulled everything together and added some enhancements in the process. This is version 1.1, an update to version 1.0 on disk 340. Partial source only. Author: Steve Hawtin, et. al.

FISH DISK # 354

FastBlit - A small tool to speed up blitter operations by up to 60%. Version 1.0, binary only.

KeyMacro - A keyboard macro program, configurable via a text file, that also supports hotkey program execution. Ver. 1.4, update to version 1.0 on disk 325.

MandelMountains - A program that renders three-dimensional images of blowups of the Mandelbrot set. Ver. 2.0, update to v. 1.1 on disk 295.
MemGuard - MemGuard is a MemWatch like program which has been rewritten in assembly language for maximum speed and efficiency. Ver. IIIa, update to v. III on disk 325.

MXMLib - An example Amiga shared library compiled with Aztec 'C' 5.0. This library contains basic support functions employed by programs such as KeyMacro or PrintHandler.

FISH DISK # 355

Berserker - A viruskiller which checks for certain conditions indicating possible virus infection. Different from other programs of this kind, Berserker does not rely on checksums only, it will also check the possible virus behind the altered checksum. Even new viruses with old infection methods can be traced and resident tools are not touched.

ImageEditor - A simple to use graphics editor which allows you to draw and save images/sprites as assembler or C source code. Includes IFF support, undo, and an iconify function. Ver. 2.4 and includes source.
LoadImage - An IFF ILBM reader. Ver. 1.11, update to v. 1.9 on #281.

RexxHostLib - This is a shared library package to simplify the ARexx host creation/management procedure. Version 34.12, update to version 1.6 on disk 325.

SoundEditor - An 8SVX stereo sound file editor written in assembly language for speed and minimum size. Version V.8, binary only.

TrackSalve - A Trackdisk patch which removes all known bugs, and one un-

known so far, and patches the Trackdisk task to allow various enhancements, such as reading good sectors from partially bad tracks, write verification, write protect simulation, auto motor off, auto update and turning off clicking. Ver. 1.3, update of ver. 1.0 on disk 312.

Tron - Another game about the lightcycle race sequence in the science fiction computer film "Tron". One or two players and other options.

FISH DISK # 356

AlgoRhythms - An algorithmic composition program that improvises music over a MIDI interface connected to the serial port. A MIDI interface and synthesizer are needed.

NComm - A communications program based on Comm version 1.34, by DJ James, with lots of very nice enhancements. Version 1.9, an update to version 1.8 on disk 230.

FISH DISK # 357

Empire - Empire is a multiplayer game of exploration, economics, war, etc, which can last a couple of months. Version 2.1w, update to version 1.33w on disk 329.

FISH DISK # 358

Blob - Screen hack. Makes red drops of slime flow down your screen.

OPS5c - Is a compiler for the expert system language OPS5. The compiler takes OPS5 source code as input and creates a C source code file to be compiled to create an executable. Arbitrary C code may be linked with the executable and executed as a result of firing rules.

Pipeline - A game like the commercial game 'Pipe dream' (Pipe mania). Needs a joystick and PAL display. High scores are saved to disk.

ReDate - Scans a disk and dates each directory according to the most recent item contained within (not including .info files). Ideal for use after a COPY ALL CLONE, where the directories are CREATED rather than copied and thus lose their date information.

RoadRoute - Revision of trip planner program to find "best road route" between any two points of travel. The user is encouraged to customize files CITIES and ROADS to suit travel interests. Ver. 1.5, an update to the original version on disk 251, and makes provision for very large city menus and itineraries. You might like to use files from disk 328.

ScanIFF - Scans through an IFF file, identifying the elements. Faster than standard utility IFFCheck since it uses Seek, but does not do IFFCheck's detailed format checking.

ViewDir - A LIST type of utility showing contents of a disk or directory. For directories, shows SIZE. For files, takes a quick look and identifies TYPE if possible. Update to original version on disk 251.

FISH DISK # 359

ABridge - An interim solution to Anim-5 incompatability problems. Identifies the origin of an Anim-5 file and modifies it to facilitate easy exchange between AniMagic, Videoscape, Animation Station, DPaint III, Animation: Editor(v1.11), The Director, SA4D, Movie2.0, Photon Paint 2.0 and Cel Animator. Fully intuitionalized interface, full ARexx support including a "Find ARexx" option if you start ARexx after running ABridge.

DICE - Dillon's Integrated C Enviroment. A C frontend, pre- processor, C compiler, assembler, linker, and support libraries. Also includes the editor, dme. Features include ANSI compatibility, many code optimizations, and autoinit routines (user routines called during startup before main is called). Version 2.02, shareware, binary only.

TextPlus - A word processor for the Amiga, with both German and English versions. TextPlus enables you to write letters, books, programs etc. in a very easy and comfortable way. Version 2.0, binary only.

FISH DISK # 360

UUCP - Implementation of uucp for the Amiga, including mail and news. This is Matt's version for the Amiga, based on William Loftus's Amiga UUCP 0.40 release with news code from his 0.60 release, and months of work by Matt to make fixes and add enhancements. Ver. 1.06D, an update to v.1.03D on disk 313. Includes source. Author: Matt Dillon.

I'M NOW MODEMISED

by Ron Lewis

Someone said "Life was not meant to be easy" some time ago. Now I did not agree with this bloke often, but I'm sure he was talking about Modems on this occasion.

Having obtained my full registration to the BULLETIN board and had my allotted time increased, I felt as though all my troubles were over and from here on in I could really contribute to this club to which, for so long, I'd only payed lip service.

My first task was to rescue those damned BBS instructions, print them out, read carefully and then get back to the board, full of confidence, and start modeming. Now I'd already seen that GP Term had a printer menu and arranged the necessary driver for my Commodore Printer to be in the right place. I didn't dare look in the instruction book for fear of loosing my new found confidence, so proceeded to attempt to download to the printer direct from the board. Now I must admit that this was not a huge success as the printer couldn't keep up with the input from the board and there did seem to be a few minor hiccups with paper pouring out of the machine and irate symbols appearing in no special sequence all over the screen. Fortunately GP Term is a very forgiving program and the board seems to have a sense of humour, because after going into complete panic mode and switching of the printers umbilical cord and pressing every cancel button I could find, everything seemed to return to normal. I considered that this approach could be deemed as not quite correct but didn't lose faith because it didn't invoke the dreaded GURU of which all Amiga owners are aware and which is an insight into failure. No I just misjudged things a bit and could do much better with a more conservative approach.

I place a newly formatted disc in the second drive because God only knows where this file is going to go if I ever download it.

I figure that all my bases are covered with this tack, and wherever it goes, will be fine by me. I'm in the file area which I meticulously wrote down when masquerading as the phantom and I'm informed that the file I request is not there, OH! NO!, why is this happening to me! I now realise the importance of having the extra time. O.k., I find the file in a different area number to that portrayed in the introduction and consider that this is perhaps just another precaution to stop me from obtaining my modem independence.

The download went without too much of a hitch although they threw up

another new word (PROTOCOL) just before the main event. I bluffed my way through this interrogation by picking the first option on offer (using the same system I use when voting or answering yes/no questions) which, as usual, passed the test. Lights flashed and menus appeared informing me of every byte, bit, or baud (?) that came streaming down my phone line. Very shortly I got the okay that all was well.

Now there is a thing with humans that regardless of how many cock-ups there have been on the trail, when the destination is reached, all is forgotten and when asked of the progress it is stated with pride that 'it was a cinch'. Well I was no different. I logged off and left a message with the sysop that I'd had a pleasant stay and thanked him for the service.

I found the file once again on the Ram disk and immediately clicked it to uncover the mysteries of this wonderful new service. Unfortunately, the instructions were slightly overdone with Hebrew and, for one so new to the system, only tended to confuse this recruit to the system.

Now I could be wrong but I'm sure that instructions really only make sense to the people who don't need them; this seems to apply regardless of what the instructions are for. In fact while on the subject I would suggest that there should be a law prohibiting anyone even vaguely familiar with a product from having anything to do with its operating instructions.

Back to the task at hand. The instructions were held in a file nearly 14 pages long and included every conceivable operation the board was capable of carrying out.

I decided that to avoid any further hiccups I would print them out and pin them to the wall directly in front of my work area; this surely would be the answer to my BBS (Bulletin Board System) woes and enable me to effectively master this newfound freedom. Now, as I'd had such a huge success with my initial download it was decided that this operation seemed to hold the least barriers to my progress, so the following day I re-entered the BBS with the intent to download as many files as I could in the time allotted. I reached the file area without the slightest hitch and found that the very first file was a list of all of the files in that area, along with a brief description of their relevant worth. Now this I thought was the high water mark of order and surely warranted my first attack on the system.

The obtaining of this index file went as before, using my rule of thumb to answer any query that arose and I must say now that it felt good to finally have this tiger tamed. I logged off (hung up) and perused this file with interest. I had chosen the utilities file area as

my first assault and was indeed impressed by the vast array of programs which were now available to my every whim.

Now for all of you who attend the workshop meetings, this quantity of public domain programs is the norm, but for people like myself, it blows the mind. For the last eight years, if I needed a utility to do a specific job, I wrote it. Now I find it's all been done before and was just waiting to be found.

There was one puzzling aspect of the files and that was their peculiar names. Now I'm telling you, who in their right mind would name a file "lharc.zoo" or "az.lzh" or cop this "screenx.arc" - it was obvious that the authors of such material were slightly demented, but that is not to say that the quality or usefulness of such programs should be scoffed at, just because these authors had a fetish for caged animals. I figured that I'd take the comments attributed to the files as my guide and download anything slightly related to programming, which by the way is my fetish. I wrote down about 10 choices and re-dialled my new found friend; no sweat, straight through again.

Using my BBS instructions now nailed firmly to the wall directly in front of my face it was easy to use the shortcuts to go directly to the file area previously mentioned, and without the slightest hesitation or drama downloaded 10 files in a matter of minutes. Look this was so easy that I was trying to work out how the hell I got myself into so much trouble when I was just a novice.

I thought that now that I had mastered this service supplied by the club I should do the right thing and leave a message for Greg Perry and Steve McNamee thanking them for there assistance in getting me involved. I went to the message area with as much ease as flipping a page and attempted my first general message.

Now, at the risk of the reader thinking I'm a complete nutcase, I must admit I struck a few snags in this simple process, but they were not terminal and the end result did end up reading the way they were intended.

Now, log off and let's see where those files are and inspect the booty. O.k., I found the files; GP Term has provided me with an icon even - this is great, but hold it, this just displays the program on a text editor and I can't understand a zzxx<><>xxzz word of it! Now don't get riled, Ron, there's an answer there somewhere. I know, go to the CLI and run them through there.

Now I must point out that my use of the CLI up to this stage of my vast experience with the Amiga is to say the least limited, but I have, even if it was by accident, run a program from this god forsaken place, so it was not beyond my limitations to expect that I could do the same again.

I'm now in the CLI. I've moved all of the downloaded files to the main disk for ease of attack and all I get is the same message that initially convinced me that CLI is short for CAUGHT LIKE an IDIOT.

Now if I have been told once, I've been told a thousand times (my mum used to use that phrase and I've been dying to use it too) that *This Is Not An Object File*, well then my name is not Ron, but you guessed it, it's now 1001.

All right I've got the files, I can't get them to run or anything else, but the day can't be deemed a failure because I did enjoy that feeling of getting something for nothing and there was also that excellent movement through the BBS, but I still can't deny that some feelings of submission were starting to ebb back into my mind.

Now for all of you modem users out there with thousands of downloaded files that don't run, don't despair because in a following issue, all will be revealed and the innermost secrets of our BBS will be explained!

-ooOoo-

SCREEN POSITIONING

Ever loaded a program where the screen is all pushed over to one side of the screen (usually towards the top left corner)? It happens mostly with games programs, and in most cases you can do nothing about it because you cannot access *Preferences* from these disks to make the necessary adjustments to the screen image.

The information about the screen position (and many other startup parameters) is held in the *System-Configuration* file. If the program with the off-centre screen does have a system-configuration file, it's a simple matter of replacing that system-configuration file with the one you normally use (i.e. the one from your Workbench disk).

However if the program in question does not have a system-configuration file, there's still another way to centre the screen image.

Start by formatting a new disk and, via the CLI, INSTALL this disk.

Next you boot up with this newly installed disk and you will end up with the familiar blue screen, with the image off-centre (usually somewhere towards the top left corner). With the mouse you change it to its

maximal size. Now you find the horizontal and vertical screen positioning knobs (depending on your monitor, they may be either on the front and/or the back), and centre the image. (Don't mistake these controls with the horizontal width and vertical height controls - we leave these alone.)

You will now find that the disks which were formerly off-centre will be centred properly as well.

It only remains to now boot up your workbench based disks and reset the screen position via Preferences and save this new configuration. From now on all your disks should be centred properly.

(I found this tip in the German *Amiga Magazin* of June 1990 - Ed)

-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	*Vector Graphics*	366 4761
Ellen Appleby	*Using Amigas in Education*	369 4629
Bob Devries	*OS9 Operating System*	372 7816
Ralph De Vries	*Dot Matrix printers - WordPerfect*	300 3477
Robert Googe	*Video & Audio Digitising*	288 8863
Steve Hovelroud	*Audio Digitising*	298 5128
Gary Lloyd	*C Programming (Beginners)*	269 7818
Brendan Pratt	*Modems, Telecommunications, Sidecar*	(075) 463 317
Grant Robinson	*AmigaBasic*	359 4315
Michael Thomas	*Forth, Prolog, C, and Modula-2 Programming*	800 4511
John Van Staveren	*Easy Ledgers Accounting Program*	372 3651
David Walton	*Bridgeboard (IBM)*	(071) 834 742
Mike Williams	*AmigaBasic (Beginners), Sound*	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.

THE NEW STUFF

MORE INFORMATION

by Ralph De Vries

With the forthcoming release of the A3000 and Version 2.0 of the Operating System, quite a few questions are going to be asked, particularly by owners of older model Amigas.

During the last couple of weeks I have waded through a considerable amount of information in both computer magazines and bulletin boards and present the facts here that I've been able to discover.

VERSION 2.0 OF AMIGA DOS

When released this will consist of the Systems Disk(s) and the new 512K Kickstart Enhancer Rom Chip. (Sorry, no news about a possible upgrade to AmigaBasic.)

Once you have the Enhancer chip installed, you can boot up with Version 2.0. The system will know which version of the Agnus and Denise chip you have in your computer and adjust the parameters accordingly. However, to be able to access the 1 Megabyte of Chip Ram and the new graphics modes, you will need to have the Super Agnus chip as well as the, soon to be released, Super Denise chip. What all this is going to cost is still a big question mark, but my guess is that the total upgrade package will be in the vicinity of $300 (I hope that I've grossly overestimated this!).

You may have read that the A3000 can address 2 Megabyte of Chip Ram, and a lot of people are asking if this can also be done on the older models. At this stage the answer is 'no'. The Super Agnus for the A500 and A2000 is no. 8372A and the one for the A3000 is no. 8372B. "You cannot easily add this one to the older machines as the pinout is different and you don't have another meg on the chip bus", according to Dave Haynie of the Commodore design team (however he feels that in due course hardware hackers will get around this one).

The new Super Denise chip will give us several new graphics modes. There is the Productivity mode of 640 x 512 *non-interlaced* and either 2 or 4 colours, which can only be used with a VGA or multi scanning monitor such as Commodore's new 1950 monitor or the NEC Multisync monitor range. Most multi scanning monitors are priced in the $800 + range! This will become the preferred mode for (b & w) Desk Top Publishing.

As well there are the new 1280 x 256 and 1280 x 512 (interlaced) modes, which can be used with a conventional 1084 type monitor, but in four colours only.

To get rid of the interlace flicker you still require a *Flicker Fixer* type device (as well as a multi scanning monitor), however the A3000 has its own built-in de-interlacer, so 3000 owners don't require this item. There is some speculation that this new Commodore de-interlacing device may become available on a card for 2000 users.

Super Denise also has some very nice new features which are of interest to those people who are into genlocking and video applications.

By and large, we can upgrade our older machines to a great level of compatibility with the A3000, but we have to be satisfied with half the amount of chip ram and we will never be able to match the speed of the 32-bit bus.

I have now had a good look at the new V.2.0 Operating system and can only say that I'm impressed.

It has a far more 'professional' look than the earlier versions, and has so many new features that it would take half a dozen issues of *Cursor* to describe them all in detail.

The new colour scheme of the Workbench (black, white, grey (background) and blue), combined with new icon designs, makes you think that you are looking at a new computer.

Given the memory, you can now boot up with 2, 4, 8 or 16 colour screens in several resolution modes (yes, even in overscan), although the Super hi-res modes of 1280 x 256 and 1280 x 512 will only allow 4 colours. You can now choose a pretty background pattern for your Workbench screen or design your own pattern, such as having your own initials on the background! It's also possible to define from the Workbench what size text font you want on the screen - great for people who are visually impaired. The Workbench screen itself can now be shrunk (Iconified).

As yet the Compugraphic Scalable Font technology is not part of the system yet, but will become available as an upgrade. In the mean time you are able to scale the supplied standard bitmap fonts in a range of sizes.

Items that were formerly available only as Public Domain Utilities are now part of the system, such as a Screen Blanker, Mouse Accelerator and Function Key Definer - there's even a hard disk backup program!

Most important of all, this new Workbench appears to be well nigh 100% 'complete', in the sense that you can now do almost anything from the Workbench without having to use the CLI or a Directory Utility.

I have only touched upon some of the more obvious improvements which stand out, but there's so much more, such as the Fast File System on floppies, the speedy opening of windows and drawers, the new Preferences menu, the 'lassoing' of multiple icons in place of the older 'hold down the shift key and click on the icons' style for multiple selections etc. etc. In fact it's too much for most of us to take it all in at one sitting, and I predict that there will be a great deal of re-writing of Amiga manuals in the near future.

The big question is how this new version of the operating system will work with existing software, and this is going to be a difficult one to answer at this point in time, as the signals coming from the USA are very mixed - we have read conflicting figures about percentages of software which will or won't work with version 2.0. Most problems will be encountered with games software, but quite a substantial portion of productivity software may produce some problems as well. In any case, most graphics software, be it paint programs, video programs, DTP programs etc. will have to be upgraded to be able to access the new graphics modes - it appears that software houses are going to have a ball!

AMIGAVISION

This new authoring system will be bundled with new sales of both the A2000 and A3000 in the future, but the rest of us will have to buy it (not much use pirating this one - it comes with a huge manual!).

AmigaVision is Commodore's answer to the Mac's HyperCard, but is, if anything, even easier to use and program. "Program?", I hear you say. Well, yes, because AmigaVision is really a programming language by means of ICONS. If you have worked with programs such as *The Director*, *Deluxe VideoIII*, *CanDo* etc. you will know what AmigaVision is all about, but as I've never used an authoring package, I feel that I am not the right person to comment any further, beyond the fact that the program looks great!

Hopefully I'll be able to entice our President to write an article about AmigaVision because, as an Amiga Developer, he has access to a pre-release version of this program, and should be able to let us know how good AmigaVision really is. If early press releases are any guide, it promises to be a winner.

At this point in time we have no local release dates for Version 2.0, the Super Denise chip or AmigaVision, but as far as I'm concerned, it can't come soon enough!

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(At Main Meeting or by Mail)

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Short articles (less than a page) and adverts for the *BYTES* column can be submitted in written or printed form, but we prefer to receive your articles on disk. Please use *minimum* or *no* formatting in your articles. Do *not* indent paragraphs and use a *single* space after a comma, semicolon or 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.

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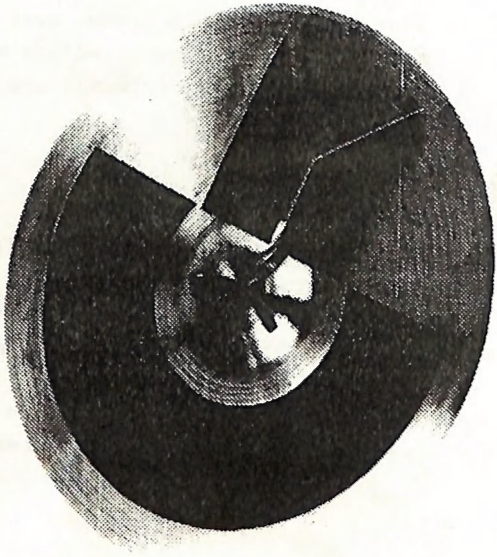

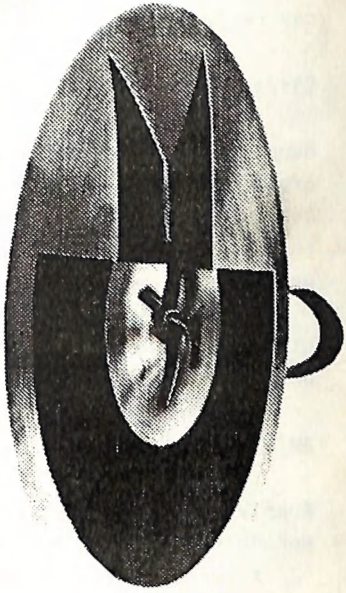

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