

CURSOR

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COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.

The Write Stuff

SuperBase

128 **Sort**ing

Games Column

And many other topics...

**Our Next Main Meeting will take place on Tuesday,
5th June 1990, at 8 pm (Libraries & Sales at 7 pm)
at the Bardon Professional Development Centre**

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

MAIN MEETING

WORKSHOP MEETINGS

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.

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

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

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

The dates for upcoming meetings are

C64/128 Workshop was also held at the same time and place as above but, because of falling attendances combined with the fact that we were unable to find somebody to act as coordinator for this meeting, we have reluctantly decided to discontinue this workshop meeting.

Tuesday, 5th June, at 8pm.
 Tuesday, 3rd July, at 8pm.
 Tuesday, 7th August, at 8pm.

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

REGIONAL MEETINGS

CANNON HILL: Last Saturday of the month (Noon - 12pm) in the Cannon Hill State School. Ph. Don Friswell - 343 1735 a.h.

KINGSTON: 2nd Saturday of the month (1pm - 12pm) in the Kingston High School. 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 - 283 2175 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.

GOODS & SERVICES

(At Main Meeting or by Mail)

AMIGA SPECIFIC:

Public Domain Disks 3½" (Amiga - *Mail Order Only*): \$5.00 ea (+\$2.00 P & P for up to 5 Disks)
 Commercial Library Catalogue Disk: \$4.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 5¼" Blank Disks: \$9.00 per 10 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 3½" Disks: \$25.00 per 10 (RPS brand) or \$20.00 per 10 (Mark II) (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 3½" Disk Boxes (80 disks): \$20.00 (+ \$5.00 P & P)
 3½" Disk Labels (68x68mm) 4 sheets (= 48 labels): \$1.00 (+ \$2.00 P&P)
 A500 Dust Covers: \$16.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 Amiga Beginners Guide: \$3.00
 Amiga Dos Summary: \$3.00
 (+ \$1.00 P & P, either item)

C64/128 SPECIFIC:

Public Domain Disks (C-64): \$3.00 ea (+ \$2.00 P & P up to 5 Disks)
 Public Dom. Cassette Tapes (C-64): \$2.00 ea (+ \$1.00 P & P Per Order)
 Commercial Library Catalogue Disk: \$3.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 5¼" Blank Disks: \$9.00 per 10 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 1541 'Drive & Disks Testing' Disk: \$2.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 1541 Drive Dust Covers: \$10.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 Disk Notchers: \$8.00 (+ \$1.00 P&P)
 User Port Plug (Edge Connector): \$8.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 User Port Plug Backshell: \$3.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 User Port to Centronics cable: \$35.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 36-Pin Centronics Male Plug w. Backshell \$10.00 (+\$1.00 P & P)
 Public Domain Instruction Book (C64): \$5.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 Starting With Disk Drives : \$2.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 C-128 Mem. Map: \$2.00 (+ \$1.00 P&P)
 Macro Assembler Book: \$5.00 (+ \$1.00 P & P)
 64 Sound & Graphics (by G.Perry): \$10.00 (+ \$2.00 P & P)
 The Write Stuff (64 Word Processor), with Manual: \$18.00
 BB Speller (for Write Stuff): \$12.00
 BB Talker (for Write Stuff): \$12.00
 (The above 3: each \$3.00 P. & P.)

GENERAL:

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

MAILING ADDRESS

YOUR NEWSLETTER

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

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

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

Address all Newsletter Mail (this includes ads for the *Bytes* column) to:

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

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

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

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

Deadline for the July Issue is:

FRIDAY 1st JUNE!

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Fees are as follows:

Joining Fee: \$10.00

Annual Membership Fee:

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

(* Within the B'ne Metropolitan Telephone District)

Library Fee: \$5.00

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, semi-colon 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.

LENDING LIBRARY

C64/128 Specific:

It is a condition of use of our Book, Magazine & Software Lending Library that materials can only be borrowed for a period of 1 Month. If unable to attend the next meeting, members can either mail the borrowed material to the Group's P.O. Box (see above), or they may leave this material with their nearest Management Committee member (but please ring first!).

Supply your articles on a (1541) 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " disk in the following format (in order of preference):
SEQ ASCII file, SEQ PET ASCII file, The Write Stuff, SuperScript/EasyScript, PaperClip/PocketWriter files saved with the SEQ save option, SpeedScript files saved with the SS converter program, option 2, (SEQ Standard ASCII file).

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

Sorry, but we are unable to read or convert 1571 formatted disks, nor are we able to convert GeoWrite, FontMaster or Bank Street Writer Files.

AMIGA Specific:

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

Alternatively, if you own a modem, you can upload articles, news, gossip, etc. to the Group's BBS (Ph.808 7694 - CURSOR File Area)

Commercial Advertising

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

Production Credits

WordPerfect 4.1.11 - PageStream 1.8
The 64 Emulator II - GP Term -
Easy Ledgers - Epson SQ-850 Printer

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

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BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEM: (07) 8087694

SYSOP:

Graeme Darroch - Ph. 209 1999
ASSISTANT SYSOP - AMIGA:
Tom Yellowley - Ph. 251 5845
ASSISTANT SYSOP - C64/128:
Craig Rawlins - Ph. 379 8957

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.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT:

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SECRETARY:

Mike Williams - Ph. 209 9084

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AMIGA DISKS & ACCESSORIES:

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AMIGA PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS:

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

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EDITOR'S NOTES

LESS IS IMPORTANT TOO

In last month's Editor's Notes I wrote about the fact that sheer raw computing power is getting cheaper all the time. Be that as it may, for the majority of our members, computers are just a hobby, and the majority of these hobbyists are on a limited budget. They may have spent anywhere between \$500 to \$2000 on their hobby, but for most of them that's it. If you have a family to bring up and are paying off your house, or if you are a student and have to pay board, then there usually isn't all that much left for your favourite hobby.

Thus it's all very well to write about hard disks, laser printers, 9600 baud modems, but for the vast majority these items will remain permanently on their wish list.

I was prompted to write this after reading a whole spate of articles in Amiga magazines about process accelerator boards. These items are based on 68020 or 68030 processor chips, which allow Amigas to process information a lot faster. However these accelerator boards in most cases cost a lot more than most of our members have spent on all their computer gear put together, so I very much doubt if many of our members will ever own one.

Of course some of our members use Amigas professionally, and they may well be able to afford these items in their work. We also like to see them demonstrated and marvel at them, but, if we all start hankering after the latest gadgets which we cannot afford, hobbies have a habit of turning sour, and people lose interest.

Thus it's a great pleasure to have members like Ron Lewis. Physically Ron is severely handicapped, but mentally he is right on the ball. Ron originally owned a C64, but a few years ago he bought an A500. After owning his computer for about 6 months he had written his *Monopoly* game in AmigaBasic, to be followed a year later by his latest game *Truckin' On*, which is now also in our Public Domain Library. If you like simulation type games you'd better get a copy, for it's a real bottler.

Now remember this game was developed on a stock standard A500 with 1 Meg of memory; the sort of equipment which is owned by the majority of our Amiga owning members.

Of course Ron isn't satisfied with his work. He wants to write bigger and better games. I know that he is now experimenting with C and Assembly Language programming. He would also love to own a hard disk drive, because this would help him to speed up program development.

The simple fact is though that Ron has done some remarkable things, despite the limitations of his equipment. So, next time you grumble about not having such or such a piece of gear, think of Ron Lewis and see if you can emulate his achievements.

Although I've mentioned only Amiga equipment here, exactly the same applies to owners of C64/128s. You can learn to program without owning a disk drive or a printer - these things help, but the lack of them has never stopped the real creative computer owner.

Ralph De Vries

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- See Us for Efficient and Courteous Service
- Fast Turnaround

WHILE-YOU-WAIT-SERVICES:

C-64 PCB EXCHANGE - \$99.00
A500 PCB EXCHANGE - \$129.00
C-64 KEYBOARD EXCHANGE - \$50.00

FOR SALE:

Reconditioned Units - Please Ring.

Special Rates for Users Group Members!

LIBRARY NEWS

by Phil Guerney

The growth rate of our library is stretching me. In the week before the April meeting I catalogued over 100 new items of software, books and magazines. Sitting in front of me now are another 65 items and I've still to pick up the latest lot of magazines to arrive. At this rate, I have not had the time I have wanted to improve the catalogue, both the paper versions displayed at the meeting and the disk version we sell. My apologies for the crude, and even sometimes inaccurate, catalogue listings, but it will probably not be until after July that I will have the information in a proper database.

Our request for offers of your original programs for purchase by the Library has gone quite well. In the last month we have bought 13 Amiga games and 3 Amiga application packages. This is a good way to expand our Amiga commercial collection to meet the demand being placed on it by a steady flow of new members.

Amiga owners who use the library should take note of this easy way to help your user group and at the same time salvage a little money for your older programs - but remember the newer and better the program, the greater the percentage of the new price that we pay.

The "Software Counter" is moving further from being just a source of commercial software to borrow. Already we have some hardware in the form of three sound digitizers for the Amiga. Starting in May we will also have a modem for the Amiga for hire (see details below).

AMIGA THINGS

The new programs going into the library for the May meeting are as follows (no catalogue numbers as I haven't got around to that yet) along with some notes copied from the cover blurbs.

Starglider: space flight game, "You command Novenia's last Airborne Ground Attack Vehicle in 3D combat with the enemy spacefleet starship ... the Starglider" (a second copy)

The Faery Tale Adventure: adventure game with over 17,000 screens (so it says) with monsters, princesses and dragons.

The Sentinel: arcade game "you control the Synthoid in his attempt to dethrone the Sentinel as ruler of each of 10,000 worlds".

Fire Power: tank game, arcade style, play against computer, or another opponent who can be on other end of modem.

Virus: a shoot-out over a 3D landscape. [What a tactless name for a program! It's named so because the enemy spreads a "virus" over your territory. If anybody has had the chance to see the demo game program that comes with that amazingly fast British computer called the Archimedes, then this is the same thing! The Archimedes version was written in interpreted Basic and runs almost as fast as this Amiga port, which presumably was written in assembly.]

BMX Simulator: 7 different courses and the burms (?), bumps and ramps really work, with action replay.

F/A-18 Interceptor: This flight simulator lets fly that Hornet, or the F-16 Falcon. Let go 6,000 rounds per minute of cannon fire, fly under the Golden Gate bridge or watch yourself parachute to earth from 8 viewpoints. Two copies of this came in.

Barbarian: arcade/adventure game in which your quest is to destroy the lair of the accursed Necron and win the kingdom's crown. Hideous perils await, can you survive?

Heroes of the Lance: an "Official Advanced Dungeons and Dragons" game that recreates the epic battle between good and evil on the world of Krynn. You control eight Companions in real-time and "full" animation. Defeat monstrous Draconians, giant spiders, and an ancient black dragon.

Flight Simulator II: a second copy along with two scenery disks - "Disk 7 - Washington, Charlotte, Jacksonville, Miami" and "Western European Tour". I'm not all that pleased about those #?%&!! scenery disks, so many bits and pieces to organise and check for on each return!

Vizawrite Desktop: a word processor, older and not still on the market. Nevertheless, it will include DPaint pictures, "wysiwyg" with multiple fonts, multiple rulers, mail-merge, document histories and glossaries.

Kind Words: a second library copy of a more recent word processor program. This one has most of the above features along with a 90,000 word spelling dictionary, multiple sized fonts on one line, "Super Fonts" for extra quality output on some printers, headers and footers on screen ...

Audiomaster: the original version of the sound manipulation program (we already have Audiomaster II).

Easyledgers: accounting program from Sybiz (a South Australian company). This is a demonstration "locked" version only. However all the capabilities of the program are accessible through the use of a sample set of files. Covers sales, inventory, general ledger, purchases, reporting.

Amiga 500 Pocket Modem 123: This bit of hardware has arrived in the library because no one wanted it when a separate hire charge was requested from you. I'm sure many of you non-modem owners would like the chance of running up a huge phone bill for a month (that is if you ever actually get on to a BBS, they are all fairly busy, including our own CCUG board). This modem will let you communicate using V21, V22 and V23 standards - this means 300, 1200 and 1200/75 bps (bits per second) to the rest of you. The modem has auto-answer and auto-dial capabilities and will do both tone and pulse dialling. We've provided a disk containing the shareware terminal program called Access! which seems quite good in terms of features and appearance, but I couldn't successfully get it to download from our club BBS. The only protocol used by the program is XModem and I couldn't get it past the initial "handshake" part of the download process. Could be my stupidity. It also doesn't support the "IBM" character set (promised in a future version) so the boxes and lines sent out by our BBS are rather spoilt when they reach your Amiga screen. We may be able to find a better terminal program to go out with the modem. Please look after this expensive bit of hardware. Modems in my experience are flaky things (though they don't all break down as much

as ones I've used) so be gentle with it. Also, I'm NOT a communications expert, so please don't ring me to work out how to use the thing when you get it home. First read the instructions and then follow them. Only after that process fails three times, look up who is currently offering help on telecommunications in the latest Cursor. How's that for passing the buck.

C64/128 THINGS

No C64/128 owners have offered any software to the Library in April. So no new software to describe. We have a few new items on order from the USA but I think they will be coming by slow sea mail (the postage charged on the batch was just \$US4).

We were donated a batch of books. Five of them were on machine code programming of the C64 and one of these, "Commodore 64 Whole Memory

Guide" by Tim Arnot, is BY FAR the best disassembly I've seen of the whole of the C64 system. Every ROM routine and pointer is both described in words and disassembled with extensive commentary. Examples of use the routines are given. Clear and concise. It was published by Melbourne House, an Australian/-UK firm, but I've never seen it for sale in a bookshop. Would have been very useful when my programming interests were centered on the C64.

The second of the Compute! Books on "scripts" for using the Flight Simulator II program ("40 More Great Flight Simulator Adventures") has been in the library for some years. At last we have the first volume. I don't know how well the scripts work with the Amiga version (it wasn't out when this book was written in 1985) but it does apply to the C64 program. A great idea and adds life to the FSII package.

-ooOoo-

BYTES

 WANTED TO BUY

Used Star NL/NX10 printer ribbon cartridges, with or without ribbons.

Contact Matthew Baker on (065) 624 234 (after 4 pm)

 FOR SALE

Commodore 64 (slimline case), 1571 Disk Drive (with Manual) in Good Condition - \$400.00.

Contact Wal Jacob on (07) 359 5811

C64/128 Software - all originals.
 TAPES: Pitstop II, Beach Head,

Starfire and Fire One, Kawasaki Rhythm Rocker. DISKS: Beach Head, Jumpman, Impossible Mission, Robot of Dawn, Crazy Comets, Assault Machine, Worlds Greatest Baseball Game, Red Ribbon Pack (6 games). CARTRIDGES: The Expert (+ 2 Utility Disks), Space Shuttle. All offers considered.

Contact Matthew Baker on (065) 624 234 (after 4pm).

 BYTES are computer related adverts, which are free to all financial members of the C.C.U.G.(Q.) Inc.

8 BITS & PIECES

I NEED YOU NOW!

Here I am, five days before the deadline, with only Will Erdmann's Machine Code article in place. Will is doing a fine job, but in the nature of things, machine language is for computer owners who know what make their computers tick and hardly for newcomers.

What I urgently need is some articles for beginners and intermediate users (such as Mike Williams' Basics articles in the Amiga section), but none seem to be forthcoming.

A few months ago there was a sudden upsurge in 8 bit articles, but now the flood has shrunk again to a trickle. As I have written on many previous occasions, the well-being of our C64/128 group is in your own hands. There's no point in waiting for a fresh stream of articles and information from those members who have moved on to Amigas or PCs; their interests lie elsewhere. You will have to do it yourself!

A similar malaise is taking place amongst commercial publications. A recent issue of *RUN* magazine was down to 64 pages. In the case of commercial publications, they just close down when they are no longer viable. In the case of *CURSOR* it will end up as an Amiga-only publication; it's up to you.

Fortunately, a few days after writing the above, I got some more articles from Leigh Winsor and Paul Blair; without these contributions this would have been a very lean section indeed.

Editor

WAVELL HEIGHTS = WINDSOR

Relieve for those members who used to attend the Wavell Heights Sub-Group. Rod Watson has offered his services to act as coordinator of the (former) Wavell Heights group which will now be held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm at Rod's home at 70 Swan Terrace, Windsor.

Rod Watson can be contacted (after hours) on (07) 857 6131.

We wish Rod and our members well at this new venue.

APRIL MEETING

This meeting was partially a continuation of the previous month's meeting with discussions about the future directions for our C64/128 members.

Leigh Winsor reports that, as yet, not many members are coming forward to offer their services as lecturers/demonstrators for our 8 bit members.

The second half of this meeting was given over to Craig Rawlins who demonstrated one of the latest in *Dungeon & Dragon* type games.

JUNE MEETING

Format: Welcome beginners, Discussion, Demo

Demo: Graham Darroch on the basics of using a modem and accessing our bulletin board. We will have a modem operating at the demo and (hopefully) be able to access our bulletin board.

SHERWOOD SUB-GROUP

The Sherwood Sub-Group, which meets at the Graceville State School at 7 pm on the second Friday of the month, has moved from the Music room to D12. We seem to have traded more tables for less power points. Apologies to anyone who failed to find us in the dark at last meeting.

APPEAL FROM 64/128 COORDINATOR

FOR DEMONSTRATORS

If you know how to use a program, or a computer skill, or idea, and would like to share your experience with other 8 bit users, the place to do it is at our Main Meeting 8-bit demonstration.

Contact Leigh Winsor (Ph 3792405).

WHO, WHOM?

Will Erdmann, who writes our lucid 8-bit Machine Language Course, would like more feedback on who his readers are, their degree of interest, at what levels of competence they are at, how closely they are following the course, what topics it might explore.

At our next main meeting I intend to compile a checklist with answers to the following questions:

1. Do you know how to use a machine language monitor?
2. Have you typed in any of the example programs from the course?
3. Do you own books or reference material on machine language?
4. Has the course increased your interest in, or understanding of, machine language?

5. What uses do you see in understanding machine language?

Feedback from readers of *Cursor* will help improve the focus of Will's course, as well as enhance the commitment of his readers and pupils, so - the more feedback the better!

Leigh Winsor

(Here we are up against a perpetual editorial problem - *who reads what, and of how much use is an article.*

Does anyone for example read Paul Blair's articles on SuperBase? Occasionally I do get a comment from a reader who mentions a point raised in one of Paul's articles, so we can be reasonably certain that his articles are of some benefit to some readers!

Don't forget that roughly only a third of our members attend our main Brisbane meetings, so the remaining two thirds of our members out there may well get a great deal of benefit from our more specialised articles; if only they would let us know!

So don't despair Will Erdmann, you just keep on writing and I'll keep on printing it! Ed.)

-ooOoo-



THE WRITE STUFF NOTES

by Leigh Winsor

1. MORE STOCK COMING SOON!

We have taken the plunge, in response to demand, and ordered 10 copies of 128 TWS v1. and v.2 integrated Speller. This puts us over the discount hurdle should further orders be required. TWS 64, Spellers and some BB Talkers have also been reordered in response to continuing demand; so be patient until next month. The price of the 128 version should be about \$28.00, and \$12 for the Speller (to be confirmed when stock arrives).

1a. SOME FEATURES OF TWS128

Column printing, Outline generator, Auto numbering of lists, Printshop and BASIC 8 graphics, 1-10 documents in memory, Split Screen, Sort on 1-10 columns, file encryption, Alarm clock, View files, Strip returns, Laser printer support, 63k text, 16k buffer allowing print to memory, 30 tutorials, 250 column page preview scroll, supports REU 17xx, 1581, seq, pgm, usr files/-Screen Code, Pet ASCII, true ASCII.

2. THE QUICK BROWN BOX

I took the opportunity to enquire about discount prices of the Quick Brown Boxes, which are battery backed up RAM expanders (Busy Bee is an agent), and a special TWS version designed to work with it.

The info should be available next month.

3. BUSY BEE PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS

We have received a number of Busy Bee Public Domain Disks which may be of interest:

a. **6 Disks of BB Templates** (a total of 600 supposedly standard business letters and legal documents), e.g. How to request your F.B.I. File under Freedom of Information; or various ways to demand payment - from polite to menacing. An index booklet is available (\$4.50)

b. **BB Reading Teacher** - an early education reading teacher which uses BB Talker to speak out sentences displayed on screen.

c. **Compulib** - It uses the BB Writer 'Mail Merge' facility to play party games and generate stories. A Si-Fi Novella included on disk! It may be a way to become expert at mail merge techniques without generating a lot of boring letters.

4. OTHER DICTIONARIES

We couldn't get a French BB Speller Dictionary (useful, I think, for students of foreign languages. Has anyone got one we could merge to BB Speller?

We will try to make a British Spelling version (when time permits) by merging a suitable word list into the American spelling dictionary

5. BUG REPORT

To save default printer macros they must first be printed or pre-viewed to become active. It's all in the tutorials on disk, so please read carefully! If any errors, defects, discoveries are found, please send a report to Doug MacIurkin, Cor Geels, or Leigh Winsor, so that the community of users can share the information.

Cor Geels has written a one page leaflet *TWS-Kickstarter* with sensible practical advice on getting off to a smooth start. It will be included with TWS64v1.

Doreen Horne has discovered a bug in an earlier version of the TWS BB Talker which was supplied by the South Australian Group (the Reciter file was voicing silent 'e's.) She has made a corrected version, and Doug Maclurkin has a copy for those who need it.

6. BB OUTLINER

TWS 128 has an Outliner, which follows the conventions of the American handbooks on 'Rhetoric'. It produces a titled, indented and numbered Sentence Outline of a Topic, in which various levels of subordination can be hidden in the pre-view or print-out. I can't get comfortable with it, or even believe it to be useful, but this may be pure prejudice on my part. (See Dennis Wright's article in last May's *Cursor*). TWS 128 has other features - flip easily between up to ten documents in memory, Split Screen, Memory Recall to positions in text - which do facilitate on-screen composition.

7. AND FINALLY,

A comment on what we are doing selling software. We are not a commercial organisation; our fundamentally different objective, rather, is to facilitate our members in their search of the resources that suit them best. We shall not allow ourselves to drift into bias or vested interest and thus play favourites with software, or anything else. We welcome all informed experience, both positive and negative, of our members with the Write Stuff.

My own opinion is that TWS64 is great fun, and the best thing since sliced bread. The 128 version has more and better features, but its 128 competitors also set very high standards. For someone like me (occasional user, one who tries to avoid reading instructions, disorganised, erratic memory), a WYSIWYG word processor with pull-down menus, like 128 Pocket Writer II or III, may have its nose in front. But the strengths of TWS are real. All its features work in an efficient and professional manner, its tutorials on disk are concise and effective, it is not copy protected, is extensible, and customisable, has an astonishing range of macro facilities, and is supported by a *B_BUG* newsletter to which we now subscribe.

-ooOoo-



C-64 MACHINE LANGUAGE - Part 5

by Will Erdmann

In my fifth article I would like to show you how to combine two programs into one. Below I am sure you recognise some aspects of "Simple Blob" and the "Rainbow" of the March edition.

```

1000 A9 93   LDA #$93
1002 20 D2 FF JSR $FFD2
1005 A2 00   LDX #$00
1007 BD 00 0F LDA $0F00,X
100A 9D 00 30 STA $3000,X
100D E8     INX
100E D0 F7   BNE $1007
1010 A9 C0   LDA #$C0
1012 8D F8 70 STA $07F8
1015 A9 15   LDA #$15
1017 8D 00 D0 STA $D000
101A A9 20   LDA #$20
101C 8D 01 D0 STA $D001
101F A9 01   LDA #$01
1021 8D 15 D0 STA $D015
1024 8D 1D D0 STA $D01D
1027 A9 01   LDA #$01
1029 8D 20 D0 STA $D020
102C 8D 21 D0 STA $D021
102F A0 01   LDY #$01
1031 A2 E0   LDX #$E0
1033 CA     DEX
1034 D0 FD   BNE $1033
1036 88     DEY
1037 D0 F8   BNE $1031
1039 69 01   ADC #$01
103B EE 01 D0 INC $D001
103E 4C 29 10 JMP $1029
1041 00     BRK
1042 00     BRK

```

Type in the above and load "Balloon" from P.D #47 and do the following:-

1. Type T 3000,3040,0F00 press RETURN.
2. Type M 3000,3040 press RETURN and look at the hex dump.
3. Type M 0F00,0F40 press RETURN and look at the hex dump. Is it the same as 3000,3040 ?
4. Type S "Rainbowballoon",08,0F00,1042 press RETURN to save the above program on disk.
5. Type F 3000,3040,00 press RETURN
6. Repeat step 2. Is the hex dump filled with 00s ?
7. Type G 1000 to run program.

You may be wondering why a balloon is moving down the screen. You had just filled locations 3000 - 3040 with 00s. Remember when you did this back in April (see step 3 page 25) the blob disappeared.

You will also remember that you transferred the contents of 3000 - 3040 to 0F00 - 0F40 in step 1. The balloon data in 0F00 - 0F40 then is still in tact. Check this by typing M 0F00,0F40 press RETURN and have a look.

Because A is loaded and stored in this way -:

```

LDX #$00
LDA $0F00,X
STA $3000,X
INX
BNE $1007
    
```

The contents of 0F00 - 0FFF are transferred to 3000 - 30FF accordingly.

A more detailed description of what is happening is given in the April edition of this magazine from the bottom paragraph of page 24 to the middle of page 25. The differences in the above instant are -:

1. There is an extra line in the above example.
2. An actual transfer from one data dump 0F00 - 0FFF to another data dump 3000,30FF is made in this example.

If you want to slow the balloon you can change line 102F to read-:

```

102F A0 02 LDY #$02
    
```

This will broaden the bands of colour of the Rainbow a little.

If you want a square blob instead of the balloon type - :

F 0F00,0F40,FF and press RETURN. Then type G 1000. A rectangular blob should appear instead the balloon.

Have a look at lines 1005 - 100E above. The importance of this programming technique cannot be over emphasised. Variations of this method can be found in both public domain and commercial arcade games written by professional programmers. It is used in bit manipulation, scrolling and music programs. All of these skills are to be covered in later articles at an appropriate time.

As yet only the preliminaries of machine code programming have been touched upon.

Before getting on to something different I would like to point out that because 1 is stored in D01D in line 1024 the balloon is expanded horizontally. If 1 had been stored in D017 the balloon would have been expanded vertically. If 1 had been stored in D01D and D017 the balloon would have been expanded in both directions.

```

1000 A9 05   LDA #$05
1002 8D 20 D0 STA $D020
1005 69 01   ADC #$01
1007 8D 20 D0 STA $D020
100A E8     INX
100B EA     NOP
100C EA     NOP
100D EA     NOP
100E EA     NOP
100F EA     NOP
1010 D0 F8   BNE $100A
1012 E8     INX
1013 8D 20 D0 STA $D020
1016 69 01   ADC #$01
1018 8D 20 D0 STA $D020
101B E8     INX
101C EA     NOP
101D EA     NOP
101E EA     NOP
101F EA     NOP
1020 D0 F9   BNE $101B
1022 4C 00 10 JMP $1000
1025 00     BRK
    
```

The above is a variation of the "Rainbow" program. I'm putting it here as an example of what I mean by experimenting. You should be able to see by just looking at it that the design is haphazard and quite illogical. You will note that the screen is not cleared and that the border colours are only going to be changed. However programming in such an unorthodox way may bring some unusual and surprising results. The computer term NOP means to do nothing. I've bunched up several NOPs together so as to indicate where you can put something else. This type of a program is not a work of art but it illustrates what can be done on the C-64 and is only limited by your imagination. I hope the above example will encourage some of you to work on something and send it to this magazine.

Many of you who have joined the club in the last two years or so must have come in contact with other members who own an Amiga. May be you bought your C-64 from someone who owns an Amiga and sold the outdated 8 bit machine to raise a little cash for a few extras like $\frac{1}{2}$ meg of expansion or even a hard drive. You are interested in this 16 bit marvel that has been the latest rage these last couple of years. When you come to the fellow's place to pick up the C-64 you want to know what all this 16 bit business is all about. You ask him for a demo of the Amiga. If he is in the mood he'll be more than obliging and if he knows anything about programming at all one of the first things he'll show is how CLI or Command Line Interface works. By using CLI the Amiga can run several programs at the same time. After the demo when you are suitably impressed the fellow will let you know in no uncertain terms that this feature is sadly missing in the C-64.

You go home with the C-64 not a little depressed at not having the \$2000 to buy an up and running Amiga. Supporting three kids and a spouse doesn't leave that much money left over for such expensive computers.

You barely had enough to afford the \$800 it cost to buy the C-64. (console, t.v monitor and disk drive included). Although you saved \$150 on the retail price you still feel quite angry at yourself at having been put in the position of buying what has been discarded from a rich man's table.

Does this portrait fit any of you ?

Well, if it does, don't upset yourself. The fellow was wrong about the C-64 not being able to run several programs at once. This is done by using the hardware interrupt using EA31. This type of programming requires lengthy explanations. I therefore will not be writing about it for quite some time.

As for buying something discarded from a rich man's table I suggest that provided the C-64 is in perfect working order you have invested your money very wisely. If you are not satisfied with the condition of the C-64 negotiate a price that you think is more reasonable. If you do not agree to a price, leave it there. In all probability the fellow will lower the price in a few weeks. If not there are dozens of people who are trying to get rid of their C-64s because they are upgrading to the Amiga. I bet they won't be able to program on the Amiga as well as you can on the C-64. This is because programming the Amiga in machine code is more difficult than on the C-64. The 16 bit machine is more complex to handle and very few people around Brisbane per head per population know anything about machine code programming.

Anyhow I think that Amiga owner will be laughing on the other side of his face when his Amiga will be superseded by a later model in a few years.

As for C-64 owners like yourself you don't have anything to worry about. By the end of 1991 I'll show you how to make your first game. By the end of 1992, I think you will be able to develop many of my ideas into something of your own. If you have any problems don't forget you can always write me a letter or write in to this magazine which I would prefer.

As always if you have any suggestions or contributions to make in this field please write to "CURSOR" or to me. My address is:-

Will Erdmann, Western Avenue, MONTVILLE QLD 4560.
PHONE (071) 429 226: Sat, Sun 10am - 1pm; Tue, Wed & Thu 2.00pm - 8pm.



BB OUTLINER 128

AND DENNIS WRIGHT'S TEST (*CURSOR*, MAY '90, Page 10)

by Leigh Winsor

Dennis Wright's list of necessary conditions for a good Outliner:

'If X is a good Outliner then'

<u>TEST FEATURE</u>	<u>TWS128 has this feature?</u>
1. Is a good Word Processor	YES
2. Moves items easily/logically	YES
3. Opens multiple documents	YES
4. Import/export true ASCII	YES
5. Searches for text on screen or hidden	YES
6. Strips and alters numbering by command /auto numbering	YES
7. Has easy to use macros	YES
8. Will Copy outline to new text areas	YES
9. Sorts within a group. A list?	?NO/YES
10. Creates order out of very long piece of writing	DON'T KNOW.

These are necessary conditions, but not sufficient conditions, so a word processor might pass all the tests and still be quite unacceptable as a good Outliner. Feature 10 depends on the writer more than the word processor. TWS has a brilliant column sorting feature which can (with a little fiddling) be applied to lists; but I think feature 9 is referring to the ordering of large units of a structure, and in that case the answer would be NO.

There are studies that purport to show that students write more stereotypically and less imaginatively when stretched on the Procrustean bed of a formal Outline. But perhaps it is a difficult to conduct a fair test on the matter. If we put only novice typists in front of a typewriter, we might easily be deluded into thinking that typewriters degraded writing performance and turned people into semi-literates. (In fact, I recall a headmaster in the ancient past who used to claim just that.) We must control our test for levels of skill. I would be quite tongue-tied if I tried to follow the formal outliner's routine, so I must leave judgment up to the skilled user.

PC Outliner, with its ordering of Aunties and Sisters, is clearly something more than an ordinary word processor with an Outliner; but it is surely only in the innocent culture of computing that Dennis Wright could picture such relations of logical subordination in terms of the feminine, as anything other than the essence of a Patriarchal Attitude.

-ooOoo-

SORTING BIG FILES WITH A C128

by Paul Blair

When a guy stands on your doorstep, waves a disk under your nose and says "I have 5200 names on this disk, and I need them in alphabetical order", you know you've got a challenge on your hands.

5200 names is a hell of a lot. I figured that if the average name was 8 characters long (it later turned out this was a fair assumption), then I had about 42K of data. If I tried to enter the names as strings in the C128, the computer would run out of memory when all the string storage overheads (pointers and so on) were taken into consideration.

Then I learned that the ultimate file would grow to some 6000 names. That really stopped me thinking about strings, and started me thinking about "on-disk" sorts.

"On-disk" sorting can be handled different ways. One way is to split the main file into parts, sort each part and re-write it to disk. Then you open all the parts at once and read from each input file in turn. The "smallest" item from all the parts is selected and written to disk, and then the next item is read from that particular file. This action repeats until you have read every item from every file.

The drawback is that, on a 1541/71 disk drive, there is really not enough memory in the drive to allow you to open a lot of files at once. Commodore was dead lousy by not providing a reasonable amount of buffer memory to work with. 1.25K (\$0300-\$07FF) was all we got! This severely limits how many files you can have open at once.

So scratch "on-disk" sorting.

The solution I used derived in part from a program written by Jim Butterfield a few years ago, which (in a modified form) found its way into the excellent COMPUTE! book, "Machine Language Routines for the Commodore 64/128" by Todd Heimarck and Patrick Parrish (about \$45 from good bookshops). As it appeared, it didn't work for me, so I added my "hack" to it.

The idea is this. The program reads in a large sequential file named "BIGFILE", and stores the entries in Bank 0 from \$5000 upwards. As it reads the file, it puts a "00" byte at the end of each entry - each name, in this case.

When the file is all in memory, the program hunts through the entries from the start, looking for the "00" bytes. When it finds one, it goes one byte onwards, and creates a 2-byte pointer to that location, which is the start of the next entry or name. It then stores the pointer bytes, starting at \$2000 and going up in twos.

If my entry is stored at \$8721, then the pointer is stored somewhere between \$2000 and \$5000 as "21 87".

Now the sorting starts. The program locates two entries using the pointers, and checks to see whether the pair is in correct order. If not, the pointers (not the entries) are swapped. Then its the turn of the next two entries, and so on.

In fact, this program uses a SHELL sort (a sorting algorithm designed by Donald Shell), which is probably the fastest basic sort in use. Shell does not compare adjacent entries, but slices the list into 2 halves, and compares the first entry from part 1 with the first entry from part 2, and so on. Don't worry too much about the mechanics of it, just accept it as a good thing.

Just a sideline - the study of methods of sorting lists is almost a science in itself. There have been people who have dedicated their lives to figuring out what are the most efficient sorting algorithms. I'll bet the telephone companies and the census takers are very grateful to them.

The program announces the stages - read the file, create the pointers, and bung the pointers into order. Finally, the sorted file is printed to the screen. Later on, I will show you how to do other things with the output.

There are limitations to all this. The information storage in Bank 0 can go from \$5000 to \$FF00 (minus 1), which is about 45K or 176 blocks on disk. For more space, the data could be stored in Bank 1, leaving the pointers in Bank 0. This would allow 64K (or 253 blocks) for data. I didn't do that, because the example would get confusing with all the bank swapping required.

The pointer space is from \$2000 to \$5000, so there is room for about 6100 pairs of bytes (pointers to data) for use.

The practical limitation is therefore about 6000 items, each of about 7 bytes long. The longer the items, the less you can sort.

The program follows. Sorry about all the data. I chose to use this method to show how to put bytes into memory, then use the ML monitor to save the stuff to disk.

Here's the main program:-

```
10 REM: FASTSORT OF SEQUENTIAL FILE NAMED 'BIGFILE'
20 REM: C128
30 REM: FROM ML S/ROUTINES BY COMPUTE!
40 REM: MADE TO WORK PFB 4/90
50 :
60 FAST:PK=2815:PRINT CHR$(147)"LOADING DATA"CHR$(13)
70 READ A:IF A=-1 THEN 80:ELSE CS=CS+A:PK=PK+1:POKE PK,A:GOTO 70
80 IF CS<>63891 THEN PRINT"ERROR":END
90 PRINT"OK. NOW USE FB TO ENTER THE MONITOR, THEN TYPE:"
100 PRINT"S "CHR$(34)"MCBIT"CHR$(34)",08,0B00,0D3B AND PRESS RETURN
```

```

110 PRINT:PRINT"TYPE 'NEW', PRESS RETURN, THEN CURSOR UP TO THESE TWO
120 PRINT" LINES OF BASIC AND PRESS RETURN ON EACH OF THEM.
130 PRINT:PRINT"SAVE THIS AS A BASIC PROGRAM, AND THAT'S IT."
140 PRINT:PRINT"1000 IF A = 0 THEN A=1: BLOAD "CHR$(34)"MCBIT"CHR$(34)
150 PRINT"1010 FAST:SYS 2816"
160 DATA 169,0,141,0,255, 32,125,255,147, 82, 69, 65, 68, 73, 78, 71, 32
170 DATA 70, 73, 76, 69, 32, 78, 79, 87, 46, 46, 46, 46,0, 32,130,12, 32
180 DATA 45, 11,169,0,141,0,255, 32,254, 12, 96, 32, 52, 11, 32,206, 11
190 DATA 96,32,125,255,13,77, 65, 75, 73, 78, 71, 32, 84, 65, 66, 76, 69
200 DATA 32,79,70, 32, 80, 79, 73, 78, 84, 69, 82, 83, 46, 46, 46, 13, 0
210 DATA 169, 63,141,0,255, 32,151, 11,160,0,140,125, 12,140,126, 12,165
220 DATA 140,145,251,32,171,11,165,141,145,251,32,171,11, 32,197, 11,177
230 DATA 140,208,11,165,140,141,128,12,165,141,141,129,12,96,169, 42, 32
240 DATA 43,13,32,184, 11,177,140,208,249, 32,184, 11, 76,101, 11,169, 0
250 DATA 133,140,169,80,133,141,169,0,133,251,169, 32,133,252, 96, 32,171
260 DATA 11,230,251,208,2,230,252,230,253,208,2,230,254,96,230,140,208
270 DATA 2,230,141,230,142,208,2,230,143, 96,238,125, 12,208,3,238,126
280 DATA 12, 96,169,0,141,0,255, 32,125,255, 13, 13, 80, 85, 84, 84, 73
290 DATA 78,71,32, 80, 79, 73, 78, 84, 69, 82, 83, 32, 73, 78, 32, 79, 82
300 DATA 68, 69, 82, 46, 46, 46, 0,169, 63,141,0,255, 32, 11, 12, 32, 37
310 DATA 12,173,127,12,208,245, 32,104, 12,176,240, 96,160,0,140,127, 12
320 DATA 32,151,11,173,125,12,41,254, 24,101,251,133,253,173,126, 12,101
330 DATA 252,133,254,96,160,0,177,251,133,140,177,253,133,142,200,177,251
340 DATA 133,141,177,253,133,143,136,177,142,208,1,96,177,140,240,32,209
350 DATA 142,144, 28,208,4,200, 76, 62, 12,141,127, 12,160,0,165,140,145
360 DATA 253,165,142,145,251,200,165,141,145,253,165,143,145,251,32,168,
11
370 DATA 76, 37, 12, 78,126, 12,110,125, 12, 56,173,126, 12,208,8,173,125
380 DATA 12,201, 2,176, 1, 24, 96, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0,169, 1,162, 8,160
390 DATA 2,32,186,255,169, 14,162,240,160, 12, 32,189,255, 32,192,255,162
400 DATA 1, 32,198,255,169,0,133,251,169, 80,133,252,160, 0, 32,207,255
410 DATA 201,13,240, 38,201, 32,144,9,240, 32,145,251,200,208,2,230,252
420 DATA 166,144,240,232,169, 0,145,251, 32,225, 12,145,251,200,145,251
,169
430 DATA 1, 32,195,255, 32,204,255, 96,192,0,240,227,169,0,145,251, 32
440 DATA 225,12,76,186,12, 56,152,101,251,133,251,169,0,168,101,252,133
450 DATA 252,152,96,48,58,66, 73, 71, 70, 73, 76, 69, 44, 83, 44, 82, 34
460 DATA 169,147,32,43,13, 32,151, 11,160,1,177,251,133,141,136,177,251
470 DATA 133,140,177,140,240,21,32,43,13,32,184, 11,177,140,208,246,169
480 DATA 13, 32, 43, 13, 32,168, 11, 76,6, 13, 96, 72,169, 0,141, 0,255
490 DATA 104, 32,210,255,169, 63,141, 0,255, 96, -1

```

I mentioned that output to the screen was included in the program. I didn't add any fancy routines for disk or printer output, because each of you will probably need a different thing. But it is simple to add a small Basic routine to run directly after the main program, like this:-

```

10 BANK 0:PE=8192:FAST
20 PK=PEEK(PE) + 256*PEEK(PE+1):A$="":IF PK=0 THEN END
30 V=PEEK(PK):IF V=0 THEN 50
40 A$=A$+CHR$(V):PK=PK+1:GOTO 30
50 PE=PE+2:PRINTA$:GOTO 20

```

This reads the pointers (which are now in order) in line 20 to find where the data is (PK). We then read from PK, byte by byte, until we find a zero. The data we read is concatenated into a string (A\$) as we go. This example also prints to the screen, but you could open a file to disk or printer, and PRINT# in line 50 to send data to the device you want.

We sorted the list in quite a respectable time, and my friend was happy. So that was that.

(C) 1990 Paul Blair

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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!

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AMIGA MONITOR

UNLUCKY WEEK

On the 9th April I moved house; an experience which I cannot recommend to anybody. Like getting a divorce, the paper war seems never ending, but it's only after the move (or the divorce) that all your problems really start! In my case one of the problems arose with my computer gear. For the first week I didn't have time to touch my computer (lovingly moved by me - I didn't trust the removalists), but, when I did switch Amy on, everything seemed to work fine. However the following day my Sun Multiscan monitor decided that enough was enough and my computer image shrunk to a 2 mm vertical line; not quite good enough for word processing.

Undaunted I pinched (borrowed really) my son's 1081 monitor and this one sounded like it was frying eggs - the typical hi-tension lead problems to which this monitor is very prone in damp weather. Everything worked fine for a day or so, but then this monitor decided to act like a neon cinema sign; it started flashing on and off. So there I was, without a monitor and hence without a usable computer.

During this particular week though, one of the chain stores was offering the Philips CM8833 monitor for \$449.00, inclusive Amiga cable and a two year guarantee. As Philips up to fairly recently manufactured Commodore's 1081 and 1084 monitors (apparently the latest batches are made by a different manufacturer), I decided to take the plunge and buy one of these monitors as a standby. This is indeed our old friend, the 1084S monitor (yes, it's the stereo model), in a slightly different livery. There's no front flap to hide the controls,

the screen doesn't have the matt coating, but everything else is the same, including that horrible Euro connector which will never stay in place when you move the monitor! However, given the lower price plus the two year guarantee, I cannot see any reason why anybody would now want to buy Commodore's own monitor.

PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS

Is there anybody out there who can keep up with the flood of Fish and other Public Domain disks? Fred Fish is, at the time of writing, up to number 340 and the flood shows no sign of abating. Amongst the latest batch we find a C Instruction Manual (# 337), a Pascal Compiler (# 339) and America's current favourite amongst Directory Utility programs, *SID* (# 338).

This last item is a very sophisticated Directory Utility program, very well documented, but Amiga newcomers may well have some difficulty getting to grips with this program. It's also recommended to have at least 1 Meg of memory on board to make full use of all its features. Some users prefer it to the commercial *DiskMaster* program, so it must be pretty good. This program ought to be demonstrated at one of our future workshops. All in all it's great to see so many programmers doing fascinating things with the Amiga, but I would now like to see some input from our members about their favourite Amiga Public Domain programs. How about writing an article about your particular favourite P.D. program and how you use it, such as Anthony Thyssen's article in this issue on Shells.

Editor

APRIL MEETING

This was the long awaited meeting where Greg Perry and Steve McNamee were going to tell us all what befell them at the Amiga Developers Conference which took place last February in Paris. Greg and Steve, with Gary Mason of Commodore Business Machines in Sydney, were the only Australian representatives at this gathering and we were all hoping for some real revelations about the 'goings-on' in Commodore. In the event we were sadly disappointed, as they had to sign a non-disclosure agreement which meant that the real meaty stuff could not be shown or talked about. Version 1.4 (now officially to be known as Version 2) of the Amiga operating

System is still under Beta testing and it may well be many months before we will see it.

Thus the boys entertained us with a series of slides of France and England, plus some hair raising tales about the drinking- and other habits of Steve McNamee, which we will refrain from repeating in this august journal. Till the next developers conference, gentlemen!

JUNE MEETING

We hope to welcome Tony May of South East Q'ld Computer Repairs, who will give us the lowdown on Super Agnus, RAM expansion, hard drives etc. Save your hardware questions for this night!

SID by Tim Martin													REQ		OUTPUT		SHRINK		
Suprad:						Suprad:													
.info					235	▲	info										156		
AmigaBASIC					103500		Aquarium												
AmigaBASIC.info					730		Aquarium.info										898		
Basic_Games							Budget												
Basic_Games.info					938		Budget.info										898		
Basic_Utils							ClipArt-HR												
Basic_Utils.info					938		ClipArt-HR.info										898		
BlitzDisk2					4024		CURSOR												
BlitzDisk2.info					357		CURSOR.info										553		
Butcher2.0							CursorPics												
Butcher2.0.info					898		CursorPics.info										898		
c							Disk.info										378		
DeluxePaintIII							Empty												
DeluxePaintIII.info					898		Empty.info										898		
devs							IconStuff												
DPC2					11216		IconStuff.info										898		
DPC2.info					378		MasterWind												
Disk.info					370		MasterWind.info										898		
DiskMaster					61780		Microfiche												
DiskMaster.info					569		Microfiche.info										898		
Empty							Pics												
Empty.info					898		Pics.info										898		
DF0	DF1	RAM	RAD	DH0	DH1	DH2	DH3	VOL	DIR	DF0	DF1	RAM	RAD	DH0	DH1	DH2	DH3	VOL	DIR
PRINT	VIEW	HEAR	RUN	COPY	RENAME	PROTECT	ALL	BYTES	ARC										
EDIT	READ	MAKEDIR	EXECUTE	MOVE	DELETE	SET	NONE	MEMORY	UNARC										
XEDIT	XREAD	COMMENT	OTHER	DUP	DISK	INFO	PATTERN	TIME	LISTARC										
000/032 Files 000/029 Dirs 11MB Free										000/019 Files 000/017 Dirs 13MB Free									

SID, a New Directory Utility - See Previous Page

VALE TRANSACTOR

TRANSACTOR (which is Paul Blair in disguise) has sent out letters advising that TRANSACTOR for the AMIGA is no more. That is very sad news for serious Amiga users.

Paul started publishing both the 8-bit and Amiga TRANSACTORS in Australia in a bid to bring down the price - at the time (1988) an imported magazine was around the \$9 mark. The local production was priced at \$5, which was very good value. At the same time, a UK offshoot was established to look after the European market.

But the parent magazine in Canada was in trouble, and an English company (which had no connection with Transactor UK) bought them out.

Meantime, the UK and OZ Transactors continued production, bringing us the best technical material available. But the decision late in 1989 to cease the Canadian version sounded a warning note. Many writers who were keen to see their

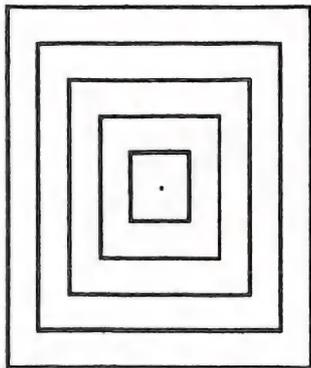
material in print in their home country decided that enough was enough.

The situation was complicated by what seemed to be a lack of support from Commodore themselves. For various reasons, information and life-sustaining support was non-existent. The market-place perceived this, and so publication became a hand-to-mouth operation.

The closure of TRANSACTOR is a loss for us all. Although there are other publications, they tend to follow the entertainment side, and don't cater for those people who pump the life into the Amiga world - the programmers and enthusiasts who produce the software without which the Amiga would be just another plastic box. Paul and his colleagues obviously gave it their best shot, and we thank them for their efforts. But we will miss his cheery "G'day" at the helm!

The question now is - will he stay with the Commodore fold?

-oo0oo-



Question:

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WHY BUY A MODEM

by Ron Lewis

For eight years, as a member of the largest computer club in Queens-land, I felt convinced that my membership fees were a worthy investment. No I didn't attend any meetings, or bothered really to try to meet other members; those I did happen to meet (with exceptions) all talked in a language far removed from my own. What with the latest turbos, databases, spreadsheets, parameters, desktops, roms, rads, etc. So it was far more sensible for me to pay my yearly fees (when I remembered), receive my monthly *Cursor* and let the other members do their own thing.

I carried on with my trusty C64, conducting programming classes and generally doing my own thing in promoting computer awareness for the handicapped. I really thought I was doing the right thing and doing all of these unfortunate people a favour. Well, perhaps I was, but I failed through ignorance to inform them of the benefits of adding a modem to their hardware. It is true that I was aware of the modem's existence; in fact I'd early in the piece organised for the use of the Multiple Sclerosis building for the demo of our first bulletin board. Where I failed was in not realising the benefits a modem and our bulletin board could bring to my life.

You don't have to be physically handicapped to experience a sense of inadequacy in a club of this size. I would imagine that many new members could relate to my experience and consider their input to be of a nature that may result in ridicule and as such refrain from comment.

This in turn makes attending meetings tedious and boring and better left to these other people.

You may well ask at this time, *Big Deal, SO WHY BUY A MODEM...* - good question. Possibly the best reason, although perhaps selfish, is the easy access to Public Domain software. Our Sysop (computer talk for the poor bugger who volunteered to run the board) has amassed a huge array of utility programs only previously available at workshop meetings. These programs can be downloaded (computer talk for COPY from board) from home, but better still, there've all been tested and commented on.

There are numerous areas on the board, but no doubt my favourite is the message area. Here we have an assortment of literary gems ranging from the high tech to the quite absurd. The advantage of access to this area is that if you can't understand the high tech conversation going on between users then the only witness to your ignorance is your keyboard. Contact can be made with people who previously, I'd been told, were unreachable or disinterested in us lowly members. These people really do care and I now realise that I could now be multi-linguist if only I'd made contact sooner.

I've been told that there's a bloke in the club called the librarian - now this guy is so popular that members wait in queues metres long just to talk to him. With my new modem it's a cinch, no queues, no hassles, just leave a message on the board and whacko(!), next day there's a reply.

Now I'm not saying that he's able to send books or disks along your phone line yet, but it was nice to meet him without having to stand in a queue.

Another area I find of great benefit is the programmers conference area; boy if you need to get high on high tech talk then this is the place! After reading some of the stuff here you can nearly fly.

Fortunately there is still a lot of stuff written for human consumption so if need be, skip the intimate stuff between processors and absorb only the English translated versions.

I've only wandered around a small portion of the Clubs system yet and I know many of the present users will condemn my publicising its worth, but if you would like to really partake in computer land then save your pennies and buy a modem.

I would be amiss in this saga, if I failed to explain the joy I receive when I log on (computer talk for phone the board) to the clubs bulletin board and find messages addressed to me.

If you can imagine being a member of a club of whom you've only met perhaps five people in eight years and now suddenly other members realise you exist and communicate via the message area. This contact is extremely gratifying, and certainly enables me to feel part of the group as an actual player.

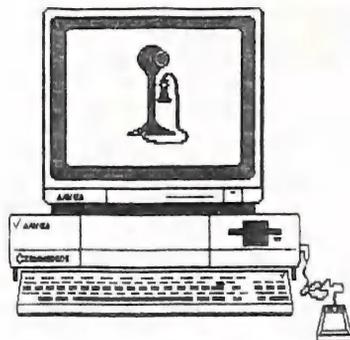
Now I'm not saying everyone will feel that a personal message left on an electronic encyclopedia is akin to a meeting with Lady Di, but what I do know is that I'm not the only one who gets a buzz out of seeing his/her name in print.

Now I'm not going to mention that our club board is only one of many throughout Australia that can be assessed with a modem. I don't mention it mainly because I've never tried to contact any of the others for fear of ringing a number in Timor or somewhere and then copping a huge phone bill. I stick to the local call area to play safe but no doubt the more adventurous of you will have a go.

Just for the record I use an AVTEK Mega Modem 24, with the software program G.P.Term - both were supplied by Greg Perry and I'm extremely happy with the purchase. You needn't be a computer whizz to use the product which is just as well, but I must say that if you choose to read the instruction book past page four, then I would suggest you have a straight jacket handy. It is possibly best to read up until total confusion sets in, then ignore the book and give it a go.

Well, see you on the Bulletin Board....

-oo0oo-



ABOUT SHELLS

by Anthony Thyssen

In an earlier issue of CURSOR I saw a review of *WShell*. This was well and good but the person involved (no offence) obviously had little experience with Command Line Interfaces commonly known in the computer world as "shells".

I have over the last two months been looking for a shell to use on a full time basis (as a programming environment) and thought that *WShell* had a lot over others I have seen. The manual also was well laid out and easily referenced. Prompt and window control was only a minor and unimportant part.

And now for the Nitty Gritty...

I looked at five user interfaces I had/have available to me for my Amiga. These are the CLI (not what I call a shell), *AmigaShell* (WB 1.3), *ARPShell* (as provided by ARP 1.3), *WShell*, and *CSH* version 4.01a. These all have their good and their bad points.

What makes a good shell? I have been asking myself that question for some time now and, based on these experiences, these are the bits I require of my user interface.

EDITING

If I am going to do a lot of work I want to be able to edit commands.

On the Amiga, editing is often left up to the console handler you are using; CLI uses CON:, the default console handler which only provides a backspace facility to correct mistakes. *AmigaShell* improved on this with NEWCON:. This provides

full line editing and a full history list (previously executed commands), which you can at the touch of the up arrow key cycle through and edit. This is the one I like. The third is CONMAN as provided in the Lattice C compiler and as part of *WShell*. It also gives full line editing and a history and as well provides Close window gadgets, function keys, including two to "pseudo iconise" (shrink and expand to the uninitiated) the screen, and, on opening the window, border colour selection. I absolutely hate CONMAN's history list as the last command executed is not necessarily the first history command on the list (arrgh!). CONMAN also provides a unnamed pipe facility (called PIP:) which both *ARPShell* and *WShell* use extensively. Even though these two use the Conman pipe facility you can still use another console handler for editing (I use NEWCON: and also have Conman mounted as PIP: for piping). *CSH* however uses the normal console handler and provided its own editing controls; you can however tell it to use the console's own editing facility.

RESIDENT COMMANDS

AmigaShell, as you all know, provides Resident commands. That is to say commands which are "in memory" and thus don't need to be loaded from disk but are available instantly. *ARPShell* and *WShell* also have this facility, however as both of these shells were pre-Workbench-1.3, commands made resident in one were not available for use by the other type of shell. If you use only one type there's no problem; just make sure you use the appropriate resident command for the appropriate shell, e.g: resident for *AmigaShell*, Ares for *ArpShell*, and Resi for *WShell*.

Arp, W and C shells however also provide some built-in commands, usually commands to run your shell or batch files faster (i.e.: IF, THEN, ELSE, SKIP and maybe ECHO). This is great, but I myself prefer the "LS" command to Dir and List and thus would not want Dir and/or List as a shell built in, but an optional Resident command. Arp and W shells only provide the basic minimum commands. CSH however has an LS command and many rarely used commands built in to it, thus increasing its memory usage and decreasing its upgradability. Neither does it seem to have any Resident command facilities.

ENVIRONMENT VARIABLES

What I mean by this is the AmigaShell's use of environment variables, not only in the IF statement but in all commands, e.g.: echo \$foobar will echo the contents of the variable foobar to the screen. This requires commands to be read by the shell and any variables in the command to be replaced with the contents of the variable, such as in the case when pre-parsing of command lines are required. ARP, W and C shells all do this. This means that commands can "lookup" user preferences stored in environment variables, or save a filename or user input for later use. At this time two types of variables exist. Amiga variables as used by batch files stored in the assigned ENV: directory or Aztec C "set" or "stored in memory" variables. ARP-Shell uses both of these (the memory type over ENV: type), WShell uses just ENV: variables, and CSH uses only memory (Aztec) variables. NOTE: I must stress the importance of this feature. Using a normal batch file, it is almost impossible to ask the user for a line of text and then process that input. Under a shell with variables one just uses a special command (like "read"

in ArpShell) to store it in a variable and insert it into a command line. (To do this with AmigaShell 3 separate batch files and a number of temporary files must be used (I know I tried).

PIPES AND PIPING

A Pipe is a sort of temporary file - in fact you can always use a temporary file over a pipe. However, although this is the case, the computer wastes a large amount of time, first writing all the data out which is then read back it and then removed for the next command. This is highly inefficient, and on a multitasking machine like the Amiga the command, writing the data, could be running at the same time as the one reading the data, thus speeding up the job no end.

A Pipe instead buffers the output from one command while at the same time another command (running concurrently) reads and further processes the information. E.g., almost everyone who has written a batch file has used the format capability of the LIST command to create a batch file to be then executed. With a pipe the output of the list could be sent directly to the execute command (or in CSH the shell command) so as to be executed immediately without the need of a temporary file; i.e. "LIST <options> ! execute ". As shown, a pipe is represented as a '|' character. Commodore provides a PIPE: device, but I find it next to useless. ARP and W shells rely on the CONMAN console handler for its "PIP:" device. CONMAN does not need to be used for the console or command window to use PIP: - it only needs to be mounted as PIP:. In fact I hope at some stage (when, where and how I don't know yet) to pull PIP: out of CONMAN or fix CONMAN's history! (You don't need a CONMAN console to use PIP: only

have PIP: mounted.). CSH provides Pipes by creating temporary files in RAM: (why RAM: and not T: I don't know!) which is o.k., but means no multitasking of the commands involved.

COMMAND SUBSTITUTION

This is weird and hard to understand. Command substitution is a bit like the use of variables as described above, but also like Pipes in that the output of a command is used as the input of another command.

It works like this:- suppose you want the ARGUMENT of a command to be the output of another command, well, this does exactly that. To say more is difficult at this time (A good example is usually very contrived and Shell dependant); suffice it to say that at times it can be horrible without it. Note that this feature is more useful in batch commands rather than command line arguments. Only ARPSH shell and CSH supports this; WShell left things like this for AREXX to handle.

BITS AND PIECES

That leaves just a lot of little things. All shells provide alias facilities to rename commands. All but the AmigaShell provide >>file redirection, meaning append to file rather than create a new one.

All the shells except CSH can execute a normal AmigaDOS batch file. CSH instead uses its own built-in shell language - more learning if you don't know UNIX Csh, which it is emulating. CSH however can execute a file with, quote: "to execute a Amiga DOS batch file use 'RUN Execute <file>' ".

Shells can however have problems with BCPL commands. ARP replaces

all these and Commodore is slowly doing likewise. Problems using the EXECUTE command are also often present. ARP's replacement execute command, fixes it for ArpShell and provides ARun to run a command under ArpShell. WShell has a program "PatchExecute" to fix these problems for it. CSH can't use its '>>' redirection on a BCPL file

WShell and CSH allows you to have multiple commands on a single line. WShell does it in an AmigaDOS friendly way by using '+' as a separator between different commands, while CSH used the AmigaDOS comment character ';'. Note that under the Unix environment '#' was a comment (as it is in CSH) while ';' was the command separator.

WShell has direct support for AREXX while CSH has Rexx commands. ARP-Shell does neither, nor does the AmigaShell.

That seems to wrap it up. What, Huh! What do I use? Currently I am using ArpShell, using a NEWCON: console handler (for the proper history list), and have PIP: mounted from CONMAN. This is not an arrangement I like; having two console handlers is a pain but I am planning to either fix CONMAN or remove PIP: from it. Any suggestions would be appreciated.

-ooOoo-

NOTE:

The Rosalie Workshop, which is held on Sunday 10th June, from 1 - 4 pm, is NOT a Public Domain Copying meeting, but is aimed at members who want to learn more about programming, software and hardware.

See you there!

THE SUPER* PAGE

by Paul Blair

As many of you would know, I have been using Superbase4 on an IBM PS/2 for some months now. After using Superbase 3.01 on the Amiga for a while longer, I am greatly impressed by the speed and facility offered by SB4. The PS/2 itself runs about 50% faster than the Amiga, but SB4 runs yonks faster again.

There has been some pressure on Precision Software (authors of SB) to upgrade the Amiga version - and, yes, it is happening. It seems that Commodore has become aware that PC offerings are much more efficient than the present Amiga version, and they are even offering help to get SB4 (Amy) on the road.

Sad to relate, there has not been any great rush to get a SB3 or SB4 book on the market. Bruce Hunt won the thanks of 8-bit users of SB with his "Superbase:The Book", but it seems there are no volunteers to repeat the exercise.

This is a bit odd, and may be a reflection of the general lack of publicity given to SB in general. Take a walk through your local bookshop and see the huge variety of texts about Word, Windows, Word Perfect, Lotus 1-2-3 and dBase. Our local shop has a bewildering array to choose from. But not a darn thing for SB.

Maybe that will change soon. Sales of SB4 in the USA have taken off recently with bulk orders being placed by the US Air Force, and the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA). I believe the orders are very large indeed, and will ensure that the product gets around, even if only by evaluation copies. But it also means that Precision will be assured of a market, and we will be assured of continuing upgrades and support for the product.

Maybe we'll get SB in stereo when Commodore announce their new "Amiga in a Box + CD" package later this year?

On with the story. What follows is a brief record of my attempts to trim a large file down to size by deleting non-current records, after transferring a copy of each out-of-date record to an archive file.

The user in this instance runs a business from home, using an Amiga to keep track of customer purchases. The SB file is quite active, and gets up around the 1000 record mark every year. Because the file is pulled into RAM:, there is an obvious upper limit on how big the file can become before some purging is required.

Users of 8-bit SB will recall the tried-and-true method of picking records from one file and writing them to another. In case you have forgotten, the general idea was to read a record, assign the field contents to variables and strings, and then assign those variables and strings to new fields in a second file.

This had the charm of allowing you to redesign the second file if you wanted - there was no absolute rule that field names had to be duplicated across files, or that you even had to transfer all the information if that was not required. The process was a bit tedious, however, and really only worked well with two drives.

Tackling the same job on the Amiga, I thought "Well here we have a lot more power going for us - what efficient system can I design to make the data transfer really sing along?" After a few trials and as many stumbles, I concluded that the old method was probably the most efficient I could find.

As I saw it at the outset, I could use Export (followed by Import), or Query, picking the records I wanted from the main file.

Query was my first choice, because of the programming simplicity it offered. In fact, it is possible to have SB (nearly) write the program for you by setting up a Query, and saving it. By renaming the ".sbq" file to ".sbn", you have an instant outline.

The Query program looked something like this:-

```
OPEN FILE "....."
SELECT field1,field2,field3,..... and so on
WHERE some condition is set as a filter
TO FILE "....."
```

SB automatically creates a new ".sbn" file for you with the fourth line. And that's where Query came unstuck for me. I didn't want a new file every time, I wanted to append the discard records to an existing file. No matter what tricks I tried, SB always tried to create a new file. I suppose I could have made a new file every time, and merged it with the main archive file, but that seemed a bit roundabout to me. Scratch Query for this job.

So it was back to the old ways. No, not the old ways really, but a mix of the old and new. Here's what I did.

```
REM : Archive program
REM : Paul Blair 20 Apr 90
REM : V1.1 Both files on df1: 180 days backcount
:
SET HEADING " Archival Action V1.1 ":CLS :NUMBASE "999"
CLOSE ALL :SET PAGING ON
```

Now open the source file ("clients") and the archive file ("history"). I'll keep a tag on the original number of records in each with c1% and hi%.

```
OPEN FILE "df1:clients":SELECT FIRST :c1% = RECCOUNT ("clients")
OPEN FILE "df1:history":hi% = RECCOUNT ("history")
? @28,13 BF "COMPANY ARCHIVES" BF OFF
da$ = DATE$ ( TODAY ):ma% = DAYS (da$) - 180:x$ = DATE$ (ma%)
? @23,15"Archiving up to "x$:WAIT FOR 3:CLS :FILE "clients"
```

```

loop2:
IF orderdate.clients > ma% GOTO loop3 : REM records > 6 months old
SET HEADING " Reading Main File ....."
BLANK FILE "history" : REM set up a blank record
    
```

This next part is different to the old 8-bit method. There I would have done something like:

a\$ = lastname, etc etc. Then I would close the "clients" file, open the "history" file, and write "lastname = a\$". In SB, the fields can be equated directly.

```

lastname.history = lastname.clients
inits.history = inits.clients
title.history = title.clients
add1.history = add1.clients
add2.history = add2.clients
state.history = state.clients
orderdate.history = orderdate.clients
invoicedate.history = invoicedate.clients
invoiceno.history = invoiceno.clients
    
```

And so on. It looks a bit involved, but in operation it is quite efficient.

```

d1% = d1% + 1:IF INT (d1% / 25) = d1% / 25 THEN CLS
? " d1%" Archiving "orderdate" from "lastname;
FILE "history"
SET HEADING " Making Archival Record .."
STORE ,1 :REM batch store
FILE "clients":SELECT CURRENT
SELECT REMOVE :? IT " and deleting" IT OFF :SELECT PREVIOUS
    
```

Note the "SELECT PREVIOUS". If you don't do this, you will skip a record. REMOVE automatically grabs the record AFTER the deleted record, and the SELECT NEXT in the next line down would take you one record further on again. So it's back one-forward one, and you will then be able to check all records.

```

loop3:
SELECT NEXT :IF NOT EOF ("clients") GOTO loop2
SET HEADING "Tidying up the file ...."
STORE ,2:SELECT WHERE :CLS
    
```

Now to reconcile the record numbers, and report back.

```

hy% = RECCOUNT ("history"):ct% = RECCOUNT ("clients")
t1% = c1% - d1%:t2% = hi% + d1%
a$ = "All OK!"
IF t1% <> ct% THEN a$ = "Possible reconciliation error"
IF t2% <> hy% THEN a$ = "Definite reconciliation error"
CLOSE FILE ("clients"):CLOSE FILE ("history")
? @22,10" ---- FILE RECONCILIATION ----"
? @22,12"Original Records in Main File      "c1%
    
```

CURSOR

```
? @22,13"Original Records in Archive File "hi%
? @22,14"-----"
? @22,15"Total Records transfered "dl%
? @22,16"-----"
? @22,17"Final Records in Main File "ct%
? @22,18"Final Records in Archive File "hy%
? @22,20a$
SET HEADING ""
END
```

I wish I could be more economical, but this is not too bad. 400 records, each of 25 fields, were moved over in around 45 minutes. Given the slowness of Amiga peripherals, I guess that's acceptable.

On the PS/2 using SB4, the same process took about 8 minutes, working with floppies.

As a final test of the functions built into SB3, I followed the Query path, making a new file directly using the pull-down menus. Then I completed the action by using Process Remove to wipe the unwanted entries from the main file. Query was certainly quick, but when I added in the Remove time, the total was a bit longer than using the method described here.

I am still not convinced that this is the best way - I rank it as satisfactory. If anyone out there has tried something similar, and can demonstrate an improvement, I would welcome news from them. Please.

There was a funny at the end of all of this. My test file (500 records) had been 125K in size before I started deleting records. After deleting nearly 400 records, my test file was still 125K! Oh.

That had me puzzled for a while, so I went into "check mode" and actually added a dozen new records to my now shrunken test file. Lo and behold, the size stayed at 125K. So I concluded that SB does not actually free up disk space after a deletion, but it does keep the space set-aside for use by the active file. The only way to free up disk space then is to REORGANISE. That may or may not be convenient, depending on what you're trying to do.

In my case, it was not convenient. With the full (original) file on disk, plus a growing archive file, I had disk space problems. I had thought that the growth of the archive file would have been compensated by an equal reduction in the main file, but 'tweren't so. Certainly there was no room for a new file using REORGANISE.

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-ooOoo-

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BASICS FOR LEARNERS - PART 8

by Mike Williams

In this article, we will continue to explore the various programs that are hidden in the drawers of your WorkBench 1.3 disk, and how they can help you.

Have you got your BACKUP COPY of the Workbench1.3 disk? If not make a copy now and boot up from the copied disk. (See part 2 of this series if you don't know how to copy a disk.)

Now ... first, double-click on the Workbench1.3 disk icon to open its window.

In my previous article (Part 7), we looked at all the programs in the System drawer. In this article we will look at what's in the Preferences drawer.

If you previously had the WorkBench 1.2 Version, you would have noticed that "Prefs" was not a drawer, but just one program. In Version 1.3 of Workbench, Commodore have made each section of preferences into a different program, with its own icon, and then put all the programs into a separate drawer, called "Prefs"

Double click on the "Prefs" drawer icon now to open and display its window.

Here we see 5 program icons.

PREFERENCES Clicking on this icon will open the main Preferences window. Click on it now and we will have a look at what goodies are in it.

As I have probably said before, the Amiga is a very versatile computer. By design, the computer has been

made so that you can change almost anything in it to suit yourself, and the way you like things.

Well in this drawer, you can be the computer designer, and it is here you decide how you would like the Workbench environment to be and how you want it to look. Did you know, that in the Preferences window alone, you can make 16,424 different changes to the Workbench? (I cheat a little bit, as 16,384 of these changes are different colours).

We'll look at each section of the Preferences Window, starting at the top left hand side.

RESET ALL Clicking on this resets all the preferences back to a standard set-up (when you first bought your computer). It is handy if you get a bit lost in making all the changes and you just want to start from the beginning again.

LAST SAVED This will wipe out any changes you have just made and take you back to the last lot of preferences you had when you clicked on the SAVE button (at the bottom right hand side of this window). If you have not saved any changes since you bought the computer, then the above two buttons will do the same thing.

KEY REPEAT DELAY Under this heading there is a long rectangle with a white dot near the middle and with the words "Short" and "Long" at either end.

This control adjusts the delay between when you press and hold down a key and when it starts repeating

itself (in the CLI, SHELL or a Text-Type of program). To change the delay, place your pointer on the white dot, press and hold down the L.H. mouse button and move the dot sideways. Fully left, gives the shortest delay (about 1/6th of a second), while fully right gives you the longest delay (about 2 seconds).

KEY REPEAT SPEED A similar set-up will allow you to change the speed at which the computer repeats the key that has been pressed. Fast typists will probably want a fast speed so that they can "space" along a line quickly, or quickly enter a line of dots, etc.

WORKBENCH INTERLACE This has two switches "ON" & "OFF". The one that is highlighted in the orange colour is the one selected. It should be showing "OFF". If you click on "ON", nothing will seem to happen. This is because the interlace mode can only be made operational by rebooting your computer, or by using a public domain program such as "SetLace" to change it. If you click on the "ON" button, then save the change by clicking on the "SAVE" button and then give the Computer the three-finger salute (by pressing down the two red "A" keys and the CTRL key together), the computer will boot up in interlace mode.

There will now be 512 lines down it instead of 256 lines and so the whole window will be squashed up into the top half of the screen.

You will probably also notice an annoying flicker (which will drive you mad after a while).

The flicker is caused by the Amiga "cheating" to give you a high-resolution 640x512 dot screen. A normal screen (640x256) is redrawn on the monitor screen every 1/60th of a

second. Because it is drawn so quickly, the human eye can't see the changes, and it looks still and stable. However to make a high-resolution screen, the computer draws 256 lines and then starts again and draws another 256 lines "interlaced" between the first lot of lines. Because it is drawing twice the number of lines, it takes twice as long to do it (1/30th of a second), and at that speed, the human eye can detect the change, and sees it as a flicker.

CHANGE SERIAL, CHANGE PRINTER and EDIT POINTER all have their own icons in the Prefs drawer, and require a separate article.

TEXT 60-80 This is used to change the size of the text on the Workbench window and the numbers refer to the number of letters that can fit across the screen on one line.

Clicking on these buttons will not do anything until you also click on the USE button. Most workbench systems are set up with the "80" columns so that you can fit more across the page, but some of you might like to use the "60" column setting if you are using a TV set instead of a monitor, as the larger letters are easier to see on a TV screen.

SCREEN PLACEMENT The large rectangle in the middle of your Preferences screen should have an up-side-down L towards the R.H. side.

If you grab this "L" button the same way as the "Key Repeat" buttons, and move it around, you will see that the whole Preferences screen moves around too. So if you find that your screen is not centred properly, or you can't see all of the screen because the top or the bottom is off the screen, use this button to correct it.

MOUSE SPEED To the right of the big rectangle is a picture of a mouse and three buttons marked "1", "2" & "4". These buttons are used to change the speed of the mouse.

Selecting 1 gives the fastest speed, 2 is average and 4 is slow. Newcomers to using mice will probably want to start with "2" until they become used to handling the mouse and then they will change to "1".

People who use a painting program a lot, such as Deluxe Paint, like to use "4" because it gives them more control when they are using the mouse to draw.

MOUSE BUTTON CLICK SPEED Next to the mouse speed control is another button to adjust the speed which the computer recognises as a double click; (remember to open a drawer you double-click on it). If you like double-clicking slowly, you will need to move the white dot towards the bottom, or the computer will interpret it as two separate clicks rather than a double-click.

COLOUR SELECTION At the bottom of the window is the section to select the colours of your workbench. The Amiga Workbench uses 4 different colours. (Even the Apple-Macintosh only uses 1 colour). And what's even better is that you can select each of these 4 colours.

You have a choice of 4096 different colours for each of the 4 colours. At the left hand side will be 4 boxes:- Blue, White, Black & Orange. Around the Blue box will be an orange square, which means that that colour is selected. If you click in any of the other coloured boxes, the orange square will surround that colour, and the three white slider buttons will change position.

You change the colour by moving the slider buttons left or right. The more you slide it to the right, the more of that shade will be in the colour. The letters "R", "G" & "B" stand for Red, Green & Blue of course.

If you get hopelessly lost in all the different colours, you can always go back to the original colours by clicking on RESET COLOURS.

SAVE Clicking on this will save whatever settings you presently have on the screen, and every time you boot up with that disk, you will use those colours and settings. It will also exit you out of Preferences.

USE Clicking on this button will not save the settings, but they will stay as you selected until you change them again or you turn off or reboot your computer. It will also exit you out of Preferences.

CANCEL Clicking on this will make your Amiga forget any changes you have made and exit you out of Preferences.

Well, that completes our look in the "Preferences" drawer.

It also completes this series of articles, for a while.

If there is anyone out there who is finding these articles helpful, I could be bribed to continue them ... All you have to do is write or phone me and let me know that someone is getting something out of them. If I hear nothing, I will know that I am just whistling-in-the-wind.

Happy Computing and Bye for now ...

Mike

GAMES COLUMN

by Reuben Phillips

Yo ho ho, and welcome to the Games Column (where else can you get promoted to Supreme Commander of an invasion force when your total military experience amounts to a few games of Rampant Yeast Monster II at the local fish shop?).

*** PORTS OF CALL (Aegis Development)

As Captain, Pilot, and Business Manager of a fledgling shipping company it would seem you have a task of epic proportions ahead of you. With only five million dollars (only) you plan to build an oceanic dynasty. Starting with one rusty tub (you won't get much change out of your \$5 Meg) and your first chartered cargo, you finally stand Nelson-like at the helm, steady hand on wheel, jaw set as you venture forth into the wild Atlantic, salt spray lashing against... lashing against your air-conditioned cabin with a radar pinging in the background.

Ports of Call invites you to try the Global shipping game, juggling such factors as deadlines and fuel consumption, the possibility of chartering a paying cargo at your next destination, storms, geographical considerations like reefs and icebergs, the odd dodgy offer to carry 'a small package', and fuel and maintenance costs - and making not just enough to stay afloat but to expand. Another consideration in picking a cargo, and thus a destination, is the layout of the port. The quickest way to bankruptcy is by damaging your tub (M.V. Unwieldy) while trying to tuck it into a tiny notch at one

end of a tangled mess of channels. The result is lost time and exorbitant repair bills. The alternative of paying tugs to berth you seriously erodes any profit your trip may have made. Considering that docking will be the one thing you do most, it's a pity that the control system isn't quite up to it. Visually however the game is immaculately presented, with the position of any of your flotilla pinpointed on a 3D globe, the occasional colourful segment (eg. sinking - frequently) and clear uncluttered graphics for the functional parts. The game has a depth and an air of authenticity about it that suggests it has been thoroughly researched. This and its quietly gripping nature help to provide a long term challenge.

*** RED LIGHTNING (SSI)

Welcome to World War III, please take your seats as opening hostilities are about to begin ...

Red lightning simulates the clash resulting from a surprise Warsaw Pact invasion of central Europe in the early 1990's. As supreme commander of either the NATO or Warsaw Pact forces, you have the responsibility of marshalling your scattered troops on the front line (East/West Germany) and deploying reinforcements as they arrive. Over the following 10 or 30 days you must either hold Russia off (NATO) or overrun Western Europe (Warsaw Pact).

You have full control over any unit's deployment and movement and a limited control over air force deployment, a North Atlantic cam-

paing is waged offstage, over which you have little control. Play is on a 25 km scale hex map with 12 hour turns, either against the computer or versus another armchair General. As NATO commander your ground forces are of variable strengths (a mix of US, Brit, French, Belgian, Dutch and others) and at a numerical disadvantage; you must depend somewhat on a superior airforce & defending from strong positions. Luckily, the Warsaw Pact as aggressor must take the initiative and come to you - a losing proposition if you are firmly entrenched in suitable terrain. The Warsaw Pact has more uniform troops and an excellent Special Operations (paramilitary) capability and the emphasis is on aggressive and sustained attack. Units (regiments, brigades, divisions, corps, and corps or army HQs) and air forces may be examined

to the level of individual vehicles, squads, and heavy weapons. Apparently almost everything above small arms size deployed in Central Europe is available for inspection.

At higher skill levels the computer makes a dogged NATO opponent, holding terrain grimly; as the Warsaw Pact the computer onslaught is aggressive and sharp. Red Lightning should be of interest to the blooded wargamer, the rules aren't too complex but might be offputting to beginners.

Got anything to say Gameswise? Bung it in a letter to:

Comrade Reuben
The Games Column
PO BOX 95
Sunnybank Qld 4109.

-ooOoo-

HELP! COLUMN

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

Name	Help offered with:	Phone Number
Dave Apelt	<i>Vector Graphics</i>	366 4761
Ellen Appleby	<i>Using Amigas in Education</i>	369 4629
Bob Devries	<i>OS9 Operating System</i>	372 7816
Ralph De Vries	<i>Dot Matrix printers - WordPerfect</i>	300 3477
Robert Googe	<i>Video & Audio Digitising</i>	288 8863
Steve Hovelroud	<i>Audio Digitising</i>	298 5128
Gary Lloyd	<i>C Programming (Beginners)</i>	269 7818
Brendan Pratt	<i>Modems, Telecommunications, Sidecar</i>	(075) 463 317
Grant Robinson	<i>AmigaBasic</i>	359 4315
Michael Thomas	<i>Forth, Prolog, C, and Modula-2 Programming</i>	800 4511
John Van Staveren	<i>Easy Ledgers Accounting Program</i>	372 3651
David Walton	<i>Bridgeboard (IBM)</i>	(071) 834 742
Mike Williams	<i>AmigaBasic (Beginners), Sound</i>	209 9084

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

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CCUGQ DISK # 30

Another disk full of Clip Art, this time originating from the Mackintosh. They have been assembled into 22 full, 640x512 high resolution screens by Ralph De Vries, our Newsletter Editor. Icons have been attached and they can be viewed using the program "SeeAll", which is included in the C directory on this disk.

CCUGQ DISK # 31

This disk and disk # 32 are our Club member Ron Lewis's new game titled "TRUCKIN-ON". Although written in AmigaBasic, this program is very professional and would only require some good sound effects to make it a commercial product. It is a good example of "State of The Art" in AmigaBasic programming and shows just how much can be done with what some people call a "pretend" or "beginners" language. Similar to the commercial game "Ports of Call", except you are not a ship owner but a fleet truck owner based in an Australian town or city of your choice.

CCUGQ DISK # 32

This is the second disk of Ron Lewis's game "TRUCKIN-ON". (See above).

CCUGQ DISK # 33

This is the 4th disk in our series of THEME disks ... this time on PRINTING.

TextPrint - Icon-based text printer.

Print - A printer utility that sends a text file to the printer from the CLI only.

LabelPrint - Program to produce disk labels.

PrtDrivers - This drawer contains 6 printer drivers you won't find on your Extras 1.3 disk (It's all I could find on the Fish Disks)

PrtCmds - Program and tutorial to allow you to change printer settings which Preferences doesn't change e.g. the skip-perforation; and have the computer recognise these instructions on boot-up of the disk.

Form - Method of printing formatted output to a printer through the PRT: device using codes to change the formatting.

ShowPrintII - Program to load and print picture files or PageSetter IFF files.

DiskStick - Program designed to print labels for 3.5" disks on standard printers using tractorfeed labels.

Pr - Produces a printed listing of one or more files, separated into pages headed by the file name, page number and date.

Print1.2 Another program, similar to Pr, but with added features.

PrtDrvGen2.3 - A program by Jorgen Thomsen to allow you to design your own printer driver, in case there is no driver already available.

TitlePage - A printing utility to print banner title pages using your choice of fonts and size and layout.

Lexical - Program which performs a number of useful functions on a text file. It outputs word count, long word count, sentence count and performs 3 readability algorithms on the document.

PrintIt - Program prints IFF pictures on Epson-compatible 9-pin printers. It converts colour pics to grey-scale a number of different ways and allows you to change the size of the printout. It has a number of other features.

Mike Williams

TBAG Disk of the Month #32

ArtMuseum: (Picture)
 PowerPacker 2.2a: (Utility)
 ATree: (Utility)
 Protecta: (Utility)
 Crunch: (Utility)
 Scroll: (Demo Utility)
 Daz: (Utility)
 SeaHavenDemo: (Game Demo)
 DeCrunch: (Utility)
 ShowPrint 2.4: (Utility)
 FixDisk: (Utility)
 TBar: (Utility)
 IconMaster: (Utility)
 Woodland2: (Picture)
 PopDir: (Utility)

TBAG Disk of the Month #33

Ami3270: (Utility)
 Menu Runner 2.0: (Utility)
 BeetleJuice: (Music)
 MusicLoop: (Music)
 MusicLoop2: (Music)
 MusicLoop3: (Music)
 BMP 2.0: (Utility)
 Cloud: (Utility)
 CX-1: (Picture)
 PPrefs: (Utility)
 Diskview: (Utility)
 StarBattle: (Picture)
 FlamKey: (Utility)
 SUB: (Utility)
 FutureCar: (Picture)

TBAG Disk of the Month #34

ATRS (Utility)
 MemGauge (Utility)
 ATRTerm (Utility)
 QED (Utility)
 ATRZ (Utility)
 SkyPlay (Utility)
 DiskOpti (Utility)
 XIP (Utility)
 GhostSword (Picture)
 XIV (Utility)

Fish Disk 321

DezHexBin - Intuition based programmers tool to convert integers

between decimal, hexadecimal, and binary.

IconJ - IconJ significantly enhances the IconX program, and is 100% compatible.

Ifs - An Iterated Function System viewer which graphically displays iterated function systems and allows the user to interactively create the affine functions that define such systems.

Planets - Some routines that compute the location of the planets (as viewed from a specific point on the earth) and the phase of the moon, for an arbitrary date and time.

Turtle - A shared library of "turtle" functions for drawing in a RastPort. UnixDirs Program which intercepts calls to dos.library to add the UNIX style '.' and '..' syntax for current and parent directories, respectively, to file and path names.

Whereis - Another "find-that-file" utility.

Fish Disk 322

Gwin - GWIN or Graphics WINDOW is integrated collection of graphics routines callable from C. These routines make it easy to create sophisticated graphics programs in the C environment.

Fish Disk 323

ColorTools - Three tools that manipulate the colors of your screen.
 C2Ed - A complete midi package for use with all Casio CZ synthesizers.
 Show - Very versatile program to display IFF ILBM files.

Fish Disk 324

ANSIEd - Demo version of an ANSI screen file editor.

DiskFree - Small iconifiable intuition program that shows the amount of free space available on all mounted disk devices.

DPFFT - Enhanced version of DPlot from disk 290.

Mailchk - A mail client for Dnet, which will inform you of any new mail and will give the choice of viewing, deleting, or printing a message.

Tetris - A PD clone of the popular Tetris type games.

Fish Disk 325

Batchman - Allows the user to execute CLI programs and batch files simply by clicking on a gadget.

DClock - A "Dumb Clock" utility that displays the date and time in the Workbench screen title bar. Version 1.12, update to v. 1.5.

DoRevision - This program implements easy creation of source code revision headers (very similar to the log headers to be found at the top of Amiga 'C' include files).

FAM - A File Access Manager for the Amiga that allows multiple ARexx programs to access a buffered version of a directory in a consistent and serialized manner.

FarPrint - Debugging functions for programs which don't have any links to their environment.

KeyMacro - A keyboard macro program, configurable via a text file, that also supports hotkey program execution.

LifeCycles - Biorhythm program.

MemGuard - Is a MemWatch-like program which has been rewritten in assembly language for maximum speed and efficiency.

RexxHostLib - This is a shared library package to simplify the ARexx host creation/management procedure.

Fish Disk 326

CBDump - This is a CLI utility for those who are working with the Amiga's clipboard device.

DispMod - Display module that only understands ARexx messages.

Irb - This program converts an icon to an IFF picture (brush) file.

MicroTerm - A very small, very simple, almost brain-dead terminal program.

NeuronalNets - Some programs for playing with Neuronal Nets using Hopfield and Hamming algorithms.

PopScreen - Hack to pop a hidden screen to the front from the CLI.

Snap - Tool for clipping text or graphics from the screen, using the clipboard device. Version 1.4, update to v. 1.3 on disk 274.

VSnap - Enh. version of Snap 1.3.

Fish Disk 327

ARTM - ARTM (Amiga Real Time Monitor) displays and controls system activity. Includes both a PAL and an NTSC version. Version 1.0, update to V. 0.9 on disk 277.

MM - The game Mastermind.

MRBackUp - Hard disk backup utility. Version 3.4, update to v. 3.3e on disk 279.

Msh - An Amiga file system handler that handles MSDOS formatted diskettes. You can use files on such disks in almost exactly the same way as you use files on native AmigaDOS disks.

Softfont - Converts portrait soft fonts for HP LaserJet compatible laser printers to landscape format.

Fish Disk 328

AnalytiCalc - A full featured system for numerical analysis and reporting. Version V24-01a, update to v. V23-2A on disk 176.

Hames - Some miscellaneous programs from Chris Hames: DirWork is a fast, small, simple efficient Dir-Utility. FSDirs V1.3 is a floppy accelerator program. VMK V27 is a small virus detector/killer that knows about 27 different viruses and can detect new ones. NoInfo V1.0 stops programs from producing ".info" files.

RoadRoute - Update to version 1.0 on disk 251, with expanded database of cities and roads in the USA.

Fish Disk 329

CPU - Two programs, one in C and one in assembler, which check for CPU type.

DiskSpeed - A disk speed testing program. Version 3.1, update to v. 2.0 on disk 288.

Empire - A complete rewrite, from the ground up, in Draco, of Peter Langston's Empire game. Version 1.33w, update to v.1.0 on disk 118.

FileSystems - Displays AmigaDOS disk devices with information about the head geometry, BufMemType, and the lower level exec device.

OnePlane - Removes the highest number bitplane from the WorkBench screen.

Fish Disk 330

Mostra - A very versatile program to display IFF ILBM files. Version 1.0, an upgrade to the Show program on disk 323, and adds SHAM, double buffering, faster decompression, color cycling, Texdocs, startup files for easy customizing, and complete WorkBench support through ToolTypes and Style icons.

Palette - Tool which allows you to change another program's custom screen colors. Version 1.1, update to the version on disk 55.

Vt100 - A vt100 emulator for the Amiga. Version 2.9a, update to v. 2.9 on disk 275.

XprKermit - An Amiga shared library which provides Kermit file transfer capability to any XPR-compatible communications program.

Fish Disk 331

CRobots - A game based on computer programming. Version 2.2w, update to v. 2.1w on disk 311.

Csh - Version 4.01a of a csh like shell derived from Matt Dillon's shell, version 2.07. Update to version 4.00a on disk 309.

Iff2Ex - A program to convert IFF pictures to an executable. It can

handle NTSC/PAL, interlace and overscan.

LhArca - An intuitionized and faster version of lharc for the Amiga. Requires ARP library. Version 0.99a

LVR - Link Virus Remover.

NTSC-PAL - Utilities which allow Amigas with the new ECS 1Mb Agnus to easily switch between PAL and NTSC display modes. Version 1.0

PatchLoadSeg - This program patches the loadseg routine to automatically detect link viruses when a program is loaded.

VirusUtils - Two programs to detect viruses on disk and in memory.

Virushunter removes all known viruses in memory. Viruskiller removes all known viruses in memory and after removing the viruses the disks can be checked without the virus copying itself to the disks.

Fisk Disk 332

AniPtrs - Some cute animated pointers.

DevPatch - A program that installs a patch for OpenWindow to check the NewWindow structure.

Helper - A little InputEvent hack, activated via the HELP key.

K1_Editor - An editor for the Kawai K1(m) synthesizer with two auxiliary programs for managing sound dumps.

Kryptor - A small, simple and comfortable file encoder/decoder.

RevBut - Another InputEvent hack, giving you a toggling right mouse button.

Fisk Disk 333

MultiPlot - A package for making 2D plots conveniently. Ver. XLNb, update to version XLN on disk 292.

Fisk Disk 334

FBM - An Amiga port of the Fuzzy PixMap image manipulation library. This package allows manipulation and conversion of a variety of co-

lor and B&W image formats. Supported formats include Sun raster-files, GIF, IFF, PCX, PBM bitmaps, "face" files, and FBM files. Also has input converters for raw images, like DigiView files, and output converters for PostScript and Diablo graphics.

PPMore - A "more" replacement program that reads normal ascii text files as well as files crunched with PowerPacker. Version 1.5, binary only.

PPShow - A "show" program for normal IFF ILBM files or ILBM files crunched with PowerPacker.

WhatIs - A neat little utility which not only recognizes a wide variety of file types (executables, IFF, icons, zoo files, etc), but prints interesting information about the structure or contents of the recognized file types.

Fisk Disk 335

BoingDemo - Demo version of a neat game due for release in March 1990.

DTC - A utility providing a simple calendar which can hold and show appointments.

SeeHear - A program to do a spectrogram of a sampled sound file.

Fisk Disk 336

Car - A two-dimensional full screen scrolling racing game with realistic four channel stereo sound and overscan.

FileWindow - A completely public domain file requester which may be used in any program, even commercial ones.

MiniBlast - A shoot'em up game which runs just fine in a multi-tasking environment.

Sys - A game built on the addictive game PONGO but with several added features.

Fisk Disk 337

CManual - A complete C manual for the Amiga which describes how to open and work with screens, windows, graphics, gadgets, requesters, alerts, menus, IDCMP, sprites, etc.

Fisk Disk 338

Cpp - This is a copy of the Decus cpp, ported to the Amiga. Update to the version on disk 28. It has had some ANSI features added.

SASTools - Various submissions from "Sick Amiga Soft". Includes some virus tools, some screen hacks, some small games, and miscellaneous utilities.

SID - A very comprehensive directory utility for the Amiga that supports at least a couple of dozen different commands for operating on files. Version 1.06.

Fisk Disk 339

PCQ - A self compiling, Pascal compiler for the Amiga. The only major feature of Pascal that is not implemented is sets. V. 1.1c, update to v.1.0 on disk 183. Much enhanced and about four times faster.

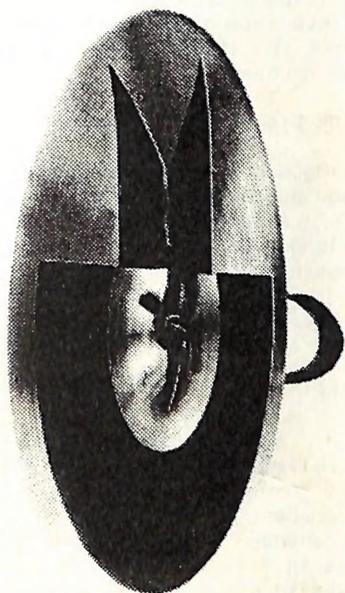
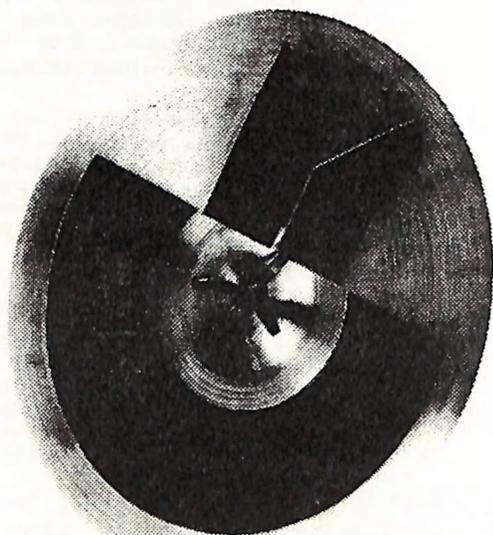
Fisk Disk 340

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.

Plot - A library of C functions useful for scientific plotting on the Amiga. Library is Lattice C compatible. Version 2.6, update to v. 1.00 on disk 222.

SpeakerSim - Demo version of SpeakerSim 2.0, a loudspeaker CAD program. Simulates vented (Thiele--Small) and closed box systems. Also simulates 1st, 2nd, and 3rd order high and low pass filters.

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