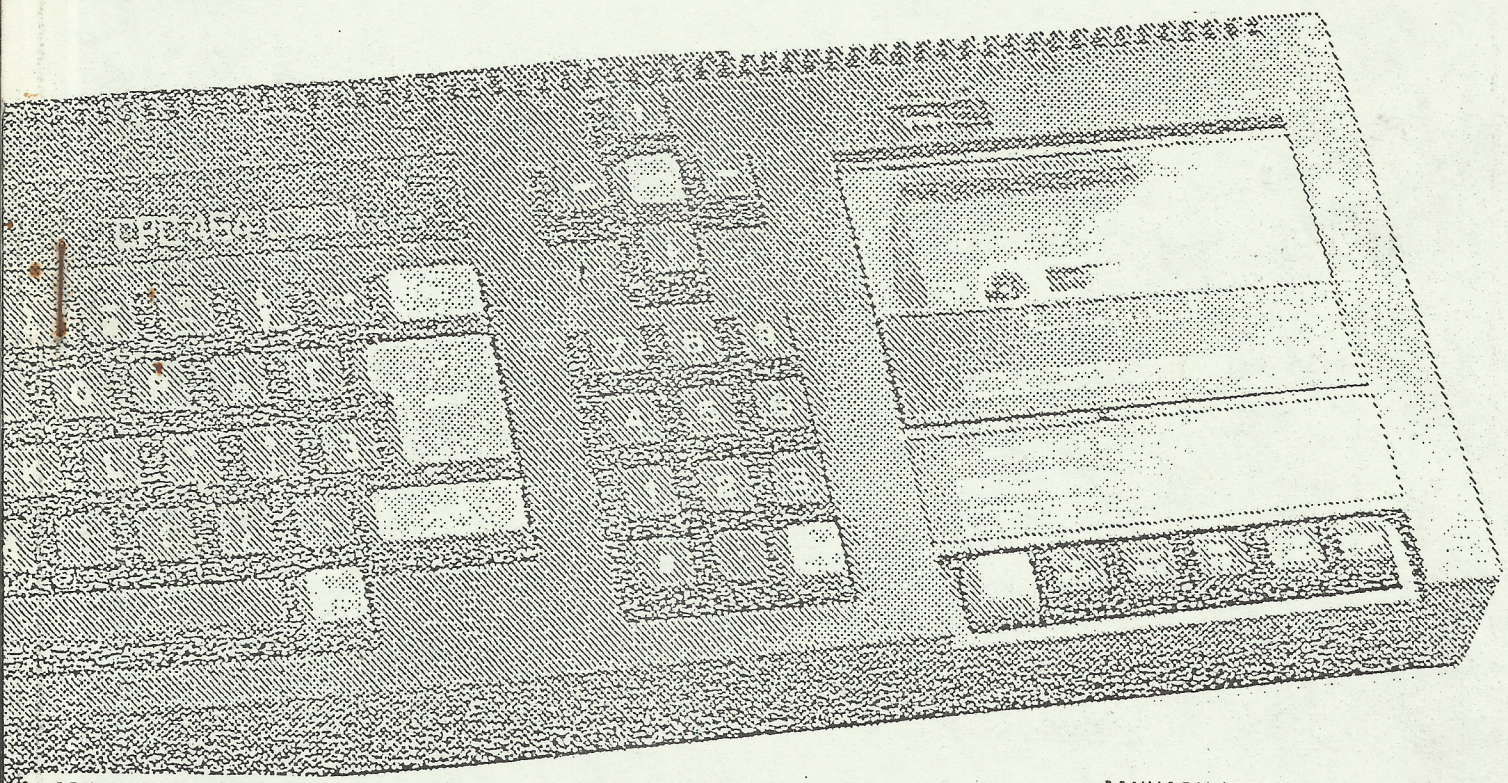
CPC USER

THE BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP



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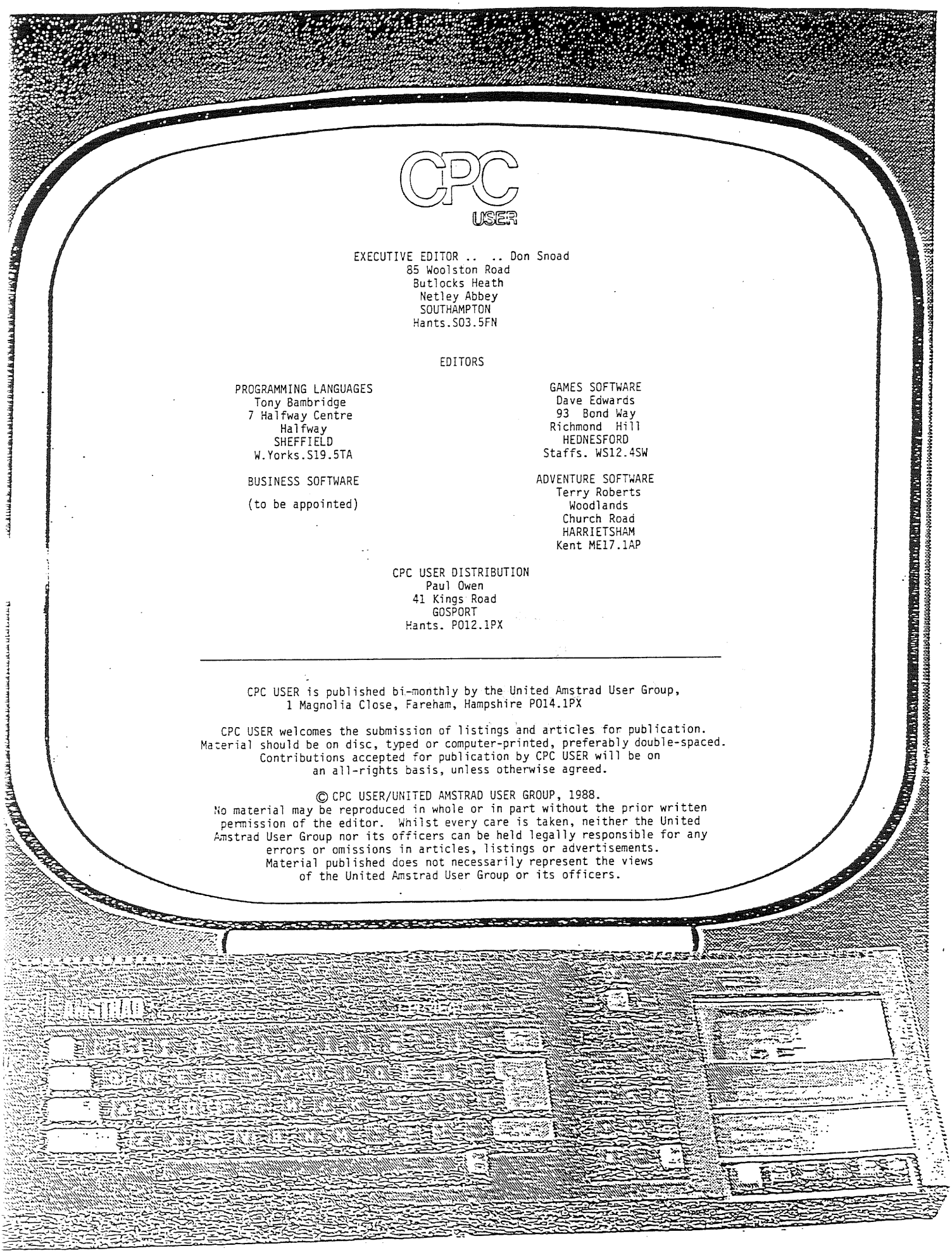

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UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP

1 Magnolia Close, Fareham, Hants. PO14.1PX

MENU

CHANGE OF ADDRESS...

Would members kindly note that John Blessing, the UAUG's Public Domain Software Librarian, has moved house. His new address is listed on the inside back cover.

EDITORIAL

How nice it would be to welcome the New Year with good news and optimism. Alas, the gloom-and-doom brigade have got in first with the strongly-rumoured close-down of CPC production. The future of adventure software in general is also in doubt due, it is alleged, to the poor quality of current programming and the industry's decision not to market many of the new programs being offered.

As in most industries, the decision to cease marketing a product is not always due to lack of demand, but is sometimes based upon profit margins that are too narrow to justify a product's continued support. Whether such decisions are commercially necessary or are influenced by greed is of little consequence, since it is invariably fait-accompli so far as potential buyers are concerned.

But it isn't just the buying public that is affected by such now-you-see-it-now-you-don't decisions. An entire industry of manufacturers and retailers supports the CPC computers and is almost entirely dependent upon their continuation. The recently announced hard disc wasn't developed overnight, and one can hardly blame the support industry for thinking twice about their CPC-related plans if the potential market is likely to be curtailed. The real danger is whether the support industry remains faithful or opts out - if it opts out, it will undoubtedly switch allegiance and is unlikely to return. The Amstrad is the only range of computers currently bundling CP/M+; all other Z80 machines (and some of the dual system computers) are using CP/M 2.2 or MP/M.

Perhaps this is the opportunity that Atari have been waiting for.

Don Snoad

CHAIRMAN'S BIT

Dear Members,

Welcome to the 7th UAUG journal and the 2nd issue in its new CPC USER format ! I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year, and let's hope 1988 is a successful year for the club.

The first thing you will notice with this issue is the re-opening of the Book Library. I would like to take this opportunity to officially thank our Life Member, Mr T W Lomnicky, for donating 15 or so new books; these books are in addition to those currently listed in CPC USER (a revised list will be published in the next edition). You will also notice that the fee has gone up to £1.50 per book/per month; this is to keep pace with the ever rising costs of running the library.

Whilst on the subject of the libraries, I would like to mention the Public Domain Software Library. You will have found a late addition slip with your last issue which stated that John Blessing has moved house. Well for those of you who did not notice the change, his new address is at the bottom of this page. (and on the inside back cover ! - Ed.)

This month also sees the promotion (?) of Simon Linssen. Simon will no longer be editing the 'Useful Bit', as he has taken on the task of Publicity Manager, responsible for spreading the word of the UAUG ! This will mean that a new editor is required for the 'Useful Bit'. If you are at all interested in reviewing Serious Software, etc, you may be the person we are looking for. For further details please write to or telephone the UAUG secretarial office.

This new appointment coincides with our advertising campaign which was put into action in January. It is still too early to say how effective it has been but hopefully it should attract many new members to the club. I feel the campaign will be more beneficial if all members could take part by getting a friend or relative to join. Remember the more members, the larger the club, the better the service to you ! If you would like a few sets of club details and application forms to give out then please write.

You will find a copy of the Constitution with this edition of CPC USER. This is most probably of no real use to you, it merely shows the organisation of the Group and its aims and policies.

We are now keeping all of the membership records on computer; although we do not have to register under the Data Protection Act, if any member would like a print-out of his/her record then send an SAE to the secretarial office along with a signed request.

I feel I must also recap on the UAUG addresses before I sign off this month. Again I have listed them at the bottom of the page. I must stress that if in doubt which address to send something to, send it to the main UAUG secretarial address.

Until next time....

Gary Carter
Chairman

. . . . . .

- General correspondence, membership enquires/renewals, letters requesting personal help and advice, trade correspondence , letters to the Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer, etc:

  1 Magnolia Close, Fareham, Hants, PO14 1PX

- Requests and Donations for the Public Domain Software Library:

  John Blessing, 26 Chichester Road, West Wellow, Nr Romsey, Hants, SO51 6EY

- Hire or Donation of Books for the Book Library:

  Brain McKiddie, 29 Hill Park Road, Gosport, Hants, PO12 3EB

- CPC USER correspondence for Monitor, Mailbox, Keyboard; members ads, or articles for publication:

  Don Snoad, 85 Woolston Road, Butlocks Heath, Netley Abbey, Southampton, Hants. SO3.5FN

- CPC USER distribution, name or address change, address alteration:

  Paul Owen, 41 Kings Road, Gosport, Hants, PO12 1PX

- Hints, Tips, Articles, Suggestions, Comments on Adventure Games:

  Terry Roberts, Woodlands, Church Road, Harrietsham, Kent, ME17 1AP

- Hints, Tips, Articles, Suggestions, Comments on other Games:

  Dave Edwards, 93 Bond Way, Richmond Hill, Hednesford, Staffs, WS12 4SW

- Hints, Tips, Articles, Suggestions, Comments on Programming Languages:

  Tony Bambridge, 7 Halfway Centre, Halfway, Sheffield, S19 5TA

NEWS

FUTURE OF THE CPC ?

They're at it again. More rumours about Amstrad's marketing plans; but this time it concerns us.

Rumours circulating in the industry are sounding the death knell for our beloved CPC6128 which, "they say", is to be replaced early this year by a new 256K RAM 16-bit model with one integral 5-1/4 inch disc drive; the new model will be non-Amsdos and non-IBM compatible.

No other details are available but, because Amstrad is strenuously denying the new model's existence, the rumour is rapidly gaining credibility. Presumably the CPC464 will also be chopped in favour of the Spectrum + 3.

MINI OFFICE PROFESSIONAL

Enquiries about the new Mini Office Professional suite of programs (mentioned in the last edition of CPC USER) have been inconclusive. Some suppliers are convinced that it is intended for the CPC machines whilst others are equally adamant that it can be used only on the PCW computers.

Although we've tried on a number of occasions in recent weeks to 'phone Database Software, we've been unable to make contact. As soon as we can establish the intended application of Mini Office Professional, we will publish a statement in CPC USER. The program itself is still not available.

UAUG BOOK LIBRARY

As readers can see from this edition, the UAUG book library is back in commission. To borrow a book, it is necessary to submit a Book Request Form; two blank forms will be included in every edition of CPC USER.

Should any member have any unwanted but suitable books they can donate to the library, Brian McKiddie would be pleased to hear from you.

CEASED TRADING

We regret to record that Durell Software has ceased trading in computer games and we can no longer enjoy the discount they offered.

SITUATIONS VACANT

We are still seeking appointees for the post of Advertising & Discount Manager. The job entails making contact with suppliers and either arranging discounts for UAUG members or selling advertising space in CPC USER, preferably both ! A telephone is essential. He (or she) will have a seat on the UAUG Joint Committee which meets four times a year.

As a result of Simon Linssen's appointment as Publicity Manager, we are also seeking a new Editor to take on the CPC USER sections concerned with hardware and 'business' software. In fact, we would like to appoint more than one Editor to the team, as there is a similar job to be done on the subject of communications. Interested members are invited to contact Gary Carter.

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Membership of the UAUG now stands at 141, compared with 131 at the last headcount on November 30th. These figures are exclusive of honorary and complimentary members.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

To those founder members who joined the UAUG a year ago, we respectfully remind them that subscription renewals are now overdue. The annual subscription is a mere £5 and, because it is so low, the UAUG cannot afford to subsidise lapsed members in the hope of receiving a late renewal. So, if you don't receive the next edition of CPC USER - you'll know why !

1988 CALENDAR

A UAUG 1988 calendar is included in this edition of CPC USER. Not only will this enable you to note the press and publication dates of CPC USER for the next twelve months, but it also lists all the current UAUG addresses.

UAUG TELEPHONE REMINDER

Remember, if you would like to 'phone Gary about any UAUG matter the number is 0329-281324. The line is open to UAUG members from 6.30 to 8.30 pm on weekdays and 4.30 to 9.30 pm at weekends. Don't forget to ask for Gary.

COMMENT

OF ROMs AND DISCS AND THINGS....

A miscellany of comment
from Don Snoad

To ROM or not to ROM, that is the question. Not so long ago, I was prepared to argue that the external ROM offers so many advantages that it was foolishness to persist with disc-based programs. Now I'm not so sure.

Admittedly, the external ROM-based program, compared with disc-based, is generally (but not always) faster, it usually allows a larger data file capacity and is much kinder to the CPC6128 in that it saves a lot of wear-and-tear on the disc drive. But then program size is limited by the 16K capacity of the ROM which, in turn, means that the program may have been unnecessarily curtailed in its sophistication so that it could be accommodated on a ROM, and for the same reasons some enhancements (such as a dictionary) may well have to be on disc anyway plus the fact that with ROM-based programs few if any configuration and customisation facilities can be saved for re-use. Another disadvantage of external ROMs is that they often clash with other programs (I'm thinking particularly of function key memories) and it is often necessary to switch off all but the DOS ROM to allow some programs to load and run. In a few instances, switching the ROMs off is not enough and the ROMboard must be physically disconnected to overcome certain incompatability problems. Nowadays, I tend to believe that programs should be disc-based and that the only use for external ROMs is for utilities. However, it is a personal preference and the same arguments may not suit everyone. But then again there are ROMs and there are ROMs. The ROMs I've referred to so far are program ROMs, but there are other ROMs such as a silicon disc.

The external ROM-based silicon disc is a different kettle of fish altogether. The two best known are the 64K and the 256K silicon discs, both of which have a distinct place in my list of worthwhile peripherals and I wouldn't be without them. The 64K version has it's limitations and, so far as the CPC6128 is concerned, is merely a means of auto bank switching. Even so, it still has its useful applications (such as holding spell check/dictionary programs), the one disadvantage being that it cannot be used in conjunction with CP/M Plus. The 256K version, however, is much more versatile and can be used to great effect with many business applications even though it shares with its smaller brother the common problem of incompatability with certain programs. Entire programs can be loaded and run directly from a silicon disc, thereby leaving the disc drive free for a data disc. For some programs, such as Microscript, this arrangement is a major advantage and a lot faster than two conventional disc drives. For other programs, some of the enhancement utilities (such as Write Hand Man) can be utilised to the full without imposing any constraints upon the use of the conventional drive. Both CP/M 2.2 and CP/M Plus can be configured to auto-initialise a 256K silicon disc and this facility can be put to good use by loading whatever program or utlitity you like by the |LOADDISC command before entering CP/M; then, when in CP/M, change the default drive and the silicon disc will do all the program work without a conventional disc ever being accessed. Mind you, some careful initial planning is necessary if you are to avoid the pitfall of different disc capacities (the silicon disc is 254K, whereas a conventional single-density disc is only 178K); it is very easy to have more on the silicon disc than can be transferred to a conventional disc !

If you use an external ROMboard, there's one snippet of wisdom that is not common knowledge which is that the ROMchip in a 64K silicon disc can be removed and mounted on an external ROMboard. This little known trick will at least reduce the amount of hardware that is flapping about in the breeze on the back of your computer ! Unfortunately, the same trick cannot be used with a 256K silicon disc.

Of course, the real answer to ROMs and silicon discs is the hard disc. I shall be very interested to see the new 10 Mbyte hard disc, recently announced by KDS Electronics, especially as it has been designed for the CPC6128 and the launch price is said to be under £200.

It is the policy of CPC USER to reply to members letters individually and, whenever possible, by return post. Correspondence is published in CPC USER for the general benefit of all members.

MONITOR

Our news item about NewWord2 (CPC USER, Issue No.6) prompted one member to relate his recent experience with version 2.17 which would not load, run or copy on his CPC6128. We were so intrigued by his story that we decided to take a closer look at the problem. Considering that NewWord2 is claimed to be a well-established word processor for the PCW/CPC computers, some surprising facts emerged, as follows:

Fact 1: We found the multi-user handbook very confusing because it is largely orientated towards IBM-compatible computers, even though NewWord2 is a CP/M based program.

The handbook supplied with the PCW/CPC version of NewWord2 comprises 275 close-printed pages of which only 14 are devoted to the PCW but there is none that is specific to the CPC. In fact, in the entire handbook, there is no mention whatsoever of the CPC computer.

Fact 2: The handbook refers to the NewWord2 distribution disc as being double density. The PCW/CPC distribution discs we handled were single density.

Fact 3: NewWord2 runs in the CP/M Plus environment and all the CP/M-related housekeeping commands quoted in the handbook are pure CP/M Plus. For a version that is supposed to be specific to the PCW/CPC computers,we would expect to see the disc/file copying commands which are peculiar to the Amstrads, but they are not mentioned. As a result, a conflict of command terminology exists and some of the commands quoted in the handbook are not relevant to the CP/M Plus system supplied with the CPC6128 computer.

Fact 4: The PCW/CPC version of NewWord2 as supplied to us could not be loaded, copied or installed on a CPC6128 in accordance with the instructions detailed in the handbook. In this respect, the procedural details given in the handbook are totally irrelevant to the CPC6128.

Fact 5: In view of the labelling on the NewWord2 distribution disc, we expected to find a dual-format program so that it can be used on either a PCW or a CPC6128 computer. This is not so. The program disc supplied to us (and presumably to all purchasers) is in PCW format and, as a result, cannot be read by Amsdos or CP/M Plus on a CPC6128. This also means that the program disc cannot be loaded or copied using the DISCKIT3 or PIP utilities on a CPC6128 computer.

Fact 6: The NewWord2 distribution disc as supplied (and labelled for the PCW/CPC computers) is completely unusable on a CPC6128 computer.

Armed with this information, we contacted NewStar Software Ltd and requested an explanation. Their answer is almost unbelievable but it is the official answer nevertheless. According to NewStar Software Ltd, the same label is used for the distribution discs although there are in fact two different formats - one for the PCW and another for the CPC6128 computer. This means that every purchaser will get a distribution disc with the same disc label, marked as PCW/CPC, but you won't know which format (i.e, EITHER PCW OR CPC) you've actually got until you try to load the disc ! If you've got the wrong format, and Sod's Law decrees that you will, simply explain the situation to NewStar who will send you a new distribution disc in the alternative format (you will not be asked for the serial number, or even to return the disc you purchased).

In the absence of any registration of purchase, this marketing strategy is the most vulnerable we've come across and is wide open to abuse. You don't have to indulge in pirating software; all you need to do, if you are so inclined, is to 'phone NewStar, with a similar tale of woe, and (eventually, about a month later and after far too many telephone calls) you are likely to receive a distribution disc by post and completely free of charge ! If you choose to play-the-white-man and actually buy the NewWord2 package, it'll probably cost you over £100; that's £69 for the package, plus about £30-worth of 'phone calls to obtain the correct disc. What a way to run a business !

But even that's not the end of the story. Having obtained the correct distribution disc, the handbook advises the first-time user to make a back-up copy of the disc and then, with computer at the ready, to 'phone Newstar Software (what again !) who, when you can get through, will lead you stage-by-stage through their confidential program unlocking procedure. Eventually, having clocked up an astronomic 'phone bill and been driven potty by those infernally-irritating electronic melodies whilst waiting, a very pleasant young lady will politely inform you that the unlocking procedure is not necessary for the PCW/CPC versions of the program and that all you need to do is to type NW and press Return. What a farce !

As little else has been received from members this month for MONITOR, we take this opportunity to comment upon a situation which is, we suggest, something more than just coincidence.

Astute readers of the December editions of Amstrad Computer User and Computing with the Amstrad CPC will have noticed the same letter published in the postbag pages of both magazines. We can accept as coincidence the possibility of the same letter being published at the same time by two supposedly independent magazines, but what we find difficult to accept as coincidence is the similarity between the two replies, ostensibly written by two unconnected publications. One cannot help but wonder about their declared independence and pose the question as to how deep-rooted is their connection ? Meanwhile, they're probably still cleaning the faux-pas off the fans !

ADVENTURE SOFTWARE

THE ADVENTURE PAGE

by Terry Roberts

INFOCOM ADVENTURES

I noticed from the questionnaire responses that three quarters of UAUG members have disc drives so you can run disc-based adventures. In his article on Masterfile III in the last CPC USER, John Blessing came up with some good reasons to convince your spouse that £40 was worth spending on a database program. Well you may need an even better reason to spend £25 on an Infocom adventure! Having said that, you do get a first class program that will last the average player quite a while.

Infocoms are also packaged extremely well. They all come with documentation and bits and pieces to refer to during the game and help create the atmosphere. To my mind, though, they could do away with the fancy presentation and bring the price down. There is some sign that prices will come down and this may be because the rate of release of new games is increasing.

Infocom is an American company and the games are marketed in the UK by Activision. Just which of the adventures are available in Amstrad format can be confusing so, to summarise the current situation, I have put together a table of those which can be obtained for the CPC. The table also classifies them into adventure type and level of difficulty, using Infocom's descriptions. Several additional programs run on the PCW but not on the CPC due to lack of memory.

INFOCOM ADVENTURES FOR THE AMSTRAD CPC

TYPE	TITLE	LEVEL
Tales of adventure	Seastalker	Introductory
	Cutthroats	Standard
	Leather Goddesses	Standard
	Infidel	Advanced
Science fiction	Hitchhikers Guide	Standard
	Planetfall	Standard
	Stationfall	?
	Starcross	Expert
	Suspended	Expert
Fantasy	Wishbringer	Introductory
	Enchanter	Standard
	Zork I	Standard
	Zork II	Advanced
	Zork III	Advanced
	Sorcerer	Advanced
	Spellbreaker	Expert
Mystery	Moonmist	Introductory
	Witness	Standard
	Ballyhoo	Standard
	Suspect	Advanced
	Hollywood Hijinx	Advanced
	Deadline	Expert
Horror	Lurking Horror	Standard

When I contacted Activision's programming arm (Electric Dreams) recently to ask about conversions of the latest Infocoms to CPC format, I was amazed to learn that the marketing people at Activision are unlikely to convert any more games for the CPC. This was confirmed in the latest issues of ACE and AMSTRAD ACTION so the list I have given could be the end of the line. Hopefully Activision will review the situation since the recent Infocoms, notably PLUNDERED HEARTS and BEYOND ZORK, have had rave reviews.

Despite the gloomy outlook on new releases there is still a wide range of adventures to tackle and the best advice on where to start is to choose an "Introductory" or "Standard" level game from the group of most interest. HITCHHIKERS is the most well known of the recent batch but if its science fiction you are after I would recommend PLANETFALL. Although HITCHHIKERS is based closely on the book if you haven't read it you will find life very unusual to say the least. With PLANETFALL, its a classic "boldly go where angels fear to tread" tale and you need to work your way up from Ensign 7th Class in the Stellar Patrol. Also, the puzzles are logical.

The sequel program, STATIONFALL, has recently been released and a quick view of this shows that it is equally good. I particularly like the mystery range starting with MOONMIST and ending with the rather difficult DEADLINE. These are "whodunnit" adventures with only a few locations so they are easy to map and then you are left with some quite difficult puzzles to solve.

In future editions of the mag, I shall include some mini-reviews of many of the other Infocoms including naughty old LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS.

ADVENTURE MAGAZINE NEWS

I now have further details of WHAT NOW ? magazine from H & D Services. This started life as a photocopied booklet but it has grown to become a professionally produced glossy mag. Also the physical size has grown to A4 format. The main reason for this is the expansion beyond mail order sales to sales in a number of retail computing outlets. It is difficult to fault WHAT NOW ? since it is full of solutions, maps, hints, news and letters all presented very clearly. You can subscribe or buy single copies at £1.50 each. The most recent offering at the time of writing is Volume 2 Issue 3 and, following on from the Infocom scene, this contains solutions to LEATHER GODESSES and BEAUROCRACY (PCW only) as well as hints on WISHBRINGER and INFIDEL. There is much more and I can recommend getting hold of a copy from H & D at 1338 Ashton Old Road, Higher Openshaw, Manchester M11 1JG.

ADVENTURE PROBE and SOOTHSAYER also feature Infocoms and, for example, Issue 18 of PROBE has a solution of CUTTHROATS and serialised solutions of PLANETFALL, INFIDEL and HOLLYWOOD HIJINX. These part solutions are a great idea as they are spread out over 3 monthly issues and don't spoil the fun ! I just heard that PROBE is going up in price to £1.25 which is still excellent value.

NEW BUDGET GAME

Finally this time, Sandra Sharkey has written an adventure on the case of the mixed up SHYMER which requires you to sort out some muddled nursery rhymes (shymer=rhymes). This is not as easy as it sounds and is a rather unusual adventure. If interested send £1.99 for a cassette or £4.25 for a disc version to S. Sharkey, 78 Merton Road, Wigan, WN3 6AT. This is also the address for PROBE and SOOTHSAYER.

I use a dot matrix printer and a daisy wheel printer with my 6128, but having frequently to change cable connections at the computer is becoming a real pain. I understand that the cables can be connected via a changeover switch to obviate this - can you tell me what the switch is and where I can obtain one ?

You need a two-way printer T-switch. You also need to choose the correct type, either parallel or series connected, to suit your configuration. T-switches are marketed by a number of computer accessory suppliers and are usually available from specialist computer equipment retailers.

The switches tend to be a bit pricey; typically £50 for parallel and more for serial connected switches. The neatest and cheapest that we know of are marketed by KDS Electronics of Hunstanton in Norfolk (tele: 04853-2076); they offer two versions (software driven or mechanical) for the CPC6128 at around £22 . We recommend that you opt for the mechanical switch as it's a lot easier to use than the software driven version.

Although I've had my CPC6128 for over a year, I'm only just getting into business software. My current interest is in word processing and databases, but some of the programs I've tried will not run. I've been told that some programs will be 'locked out' by external ROMs, etc. Can you explain this please and advise me how to overcome this problem ?

You don't specify which programs you are having difficulty with, so we can only advise you in general terms. Loading and running restrictions are sometimes imposed by programs intended to be used in the Amsdos environment and which (1) utilise the function key memories or (2) were originally designed for a different computer and have been converted and re-marketed for the CPC. Even some of the latest disc utilities are constrained, but for different reasons. Very often these disc-based programs will either not load, or will load but will not run correctly, if an external peripheral is connected. By 'external peripheral' we refer to external ROMboards, memory expansions and silicon discs. Moreover, although it is usually sufficient to switch off external ROMs, it is in some instances necessary to physically disconnect a ROMboard, etc, before the program will run.

We cannot provide a complete list of all the programs that are inhibited in this way but, from experience of 'business' software, we can say that Brunword 6128 (pre-July '87 versions), Mini Office II, PenDown and the disc utility Discology have all proved to be incompatible in one way or another with external peripherals. In addition, certain other programs (for example, Tasword) will load and run perfectly well with external peripherals connected, but any attempt to make use of a silicon disc, either to load the program or to save/load text files, will fail or may cause the program to freeze. Even the mighty Protext can suffer from corrupted files by the mere presence of a memory expansion.

The extent to which programs are affected by peripherals is sometimes dependent upon the program version; conversely, some programs are more efficient when run in conjunction with a particular peripheral (for example, the latest Brunword word processor for the CPC464 is intended to be run in conjunction with a 64K memory expansion, and includes the software necessary to enable it to do so). But for other programs, the only certain method of avoiding compatability problems is to physically disconnect the peripherals at the computer expansion port, before loading the program.

In a few instances, the interaction between the peripherals themselves can sometimes create unexpected problems; we know, for example, that a SuperPower ROMboard will work perfectly well when juxtaposed with a 64K or a 256K Dk'tronics silicon disc, whereas a Rombo ROMboard usually works well enough when connected via a 64K disc but can be temperamental when connected via a 256K disc. If you suspect this sort of problem, the easiest method of identifying the culprit is by a process of elimination or substitution.

REVIEW

THE NEW BRUNWORD WORD PROCESSOR

by Don Snoad

Brunning Software has released an updated version of Brunword 6128. The new program will be supplied to new customers as from July '87; an update is available to existing users.

The program, originally developed for the Memotech range of computers, is now in its 4th update since being marketed for the Amstrad in 1984. Each copy is identified by a two-letter prefix and a numerical suffix. The suffix is the serial number (unique to each buyer) and the prefix denotes storage medium (all the disc versions are prefixed F, meaning 'fixed') and update identification. This latest update on disc is prefixed FH.

The pre-update version of Brunword 6128 seemed complex due to its structure and unconventional command terminology, and was difficult to get to grips with until one realised that the menus could be by-passed and almost all the text processing commands could be called direct whilst in the text entry mode. Once this program rationalisation was fully understood, Brunword then emerged as a simple to use and superior word processor.

Brunword offers a number of advantages over its competitors. It pads out the spacing between words equally left and right during the text justification process, thus giving a perfectly balanced appearance to the finished text. It offers a true screen display of subscript and superscript, and has a useful range of printing fonts. Screen display colours can be changed, files can be security coded, deleted words can be restored, a paragraph indenting feature allows unrestricted sub-paragraph formatting within main margin settings and the program allows the monitor to be switched between 40 and 80-column displays with automatic text reformatting so that horizontal scrolling is unnecessary. Apart from all this, Brunword as the accompanying structure diagram shows has all the essential features of a comprehensive word processor. In summary, there are 13 cursor and scrolling controls, at least 30 text processing commands and a further 67 for other wp support features; a total well in excess of 100 commands.

With the introduction of the new Brunword 6128, I expected to see a number of improvements to both program and documentation - maybe even a little streamlining in favour of the CPC6128. But, in this respect, the new program is disappointing. My enthusiasm for the new Brunword 6128 rises and falls like 'Reginald Perrin' and I have very mixed feelings about its merits.

The good news is that the new program has:

1. An option for printing selected pages.

2. The facility to program a maximum of 21 special characters into the keyboard.

3. A larger dictionary of 30000 words, expandable to 35000 words.

4. An increase in working speed of the spell-check feature.

5. An option for automatic correction of a misspelt word.

6. The addition of two extra editing commands (unjustify para or all text).

7. An improved FIND and REPLACE facility.

8. The addition of double-strike and italics to the range of print features available via the function keys.

The bad news is that:

9. The earlier user handbooks for Brunword and Datafile have been combined into a single volume but in total there are five pages less than before. Despite Brunning's decision to publish a new handbook, the opportunity has not been taken to incorporate much needed improvements. The contents list is still inadequate, there is still no overall command summary, there's no structure diagram and there still isn't a detailed index. Even worse there are additional errors insofar as two command options (0 and *) are displayed on the main menu but have been omitted from the handbook, and a further two options (A and U) although listed in the handbook have been omitted from the menus. If that were not enough, it transpires that the newly-introduced Load Option (command 0) is unprogrammed and has been incorporated at this time by Brunning purely for an unnamed feature which may or may not be introduced at a later date. In addition, the on-screen edit help display lists the function keys in a random sequence and the f5 key, which has been programmed to do something (?), has been omitted from both the help display and the handbook. The new program includes two new 7K tutorial files on disc, which seem to have been added as an afterthought since they deal with procedures not covered in the new handbook. Being stored as data files, they are of little use when you are already working on a document; they can, of course, be printed out and kept with the handbook (where they should have been in the first place).

10. Although some of the references to the CPC464 have been deleted from the new handbook, all the tape functions (except the CPC464 spell-check routines) remain in the program as does the feature, intended mainly for tape users, which allows additional files to be stored in memory for fast access.

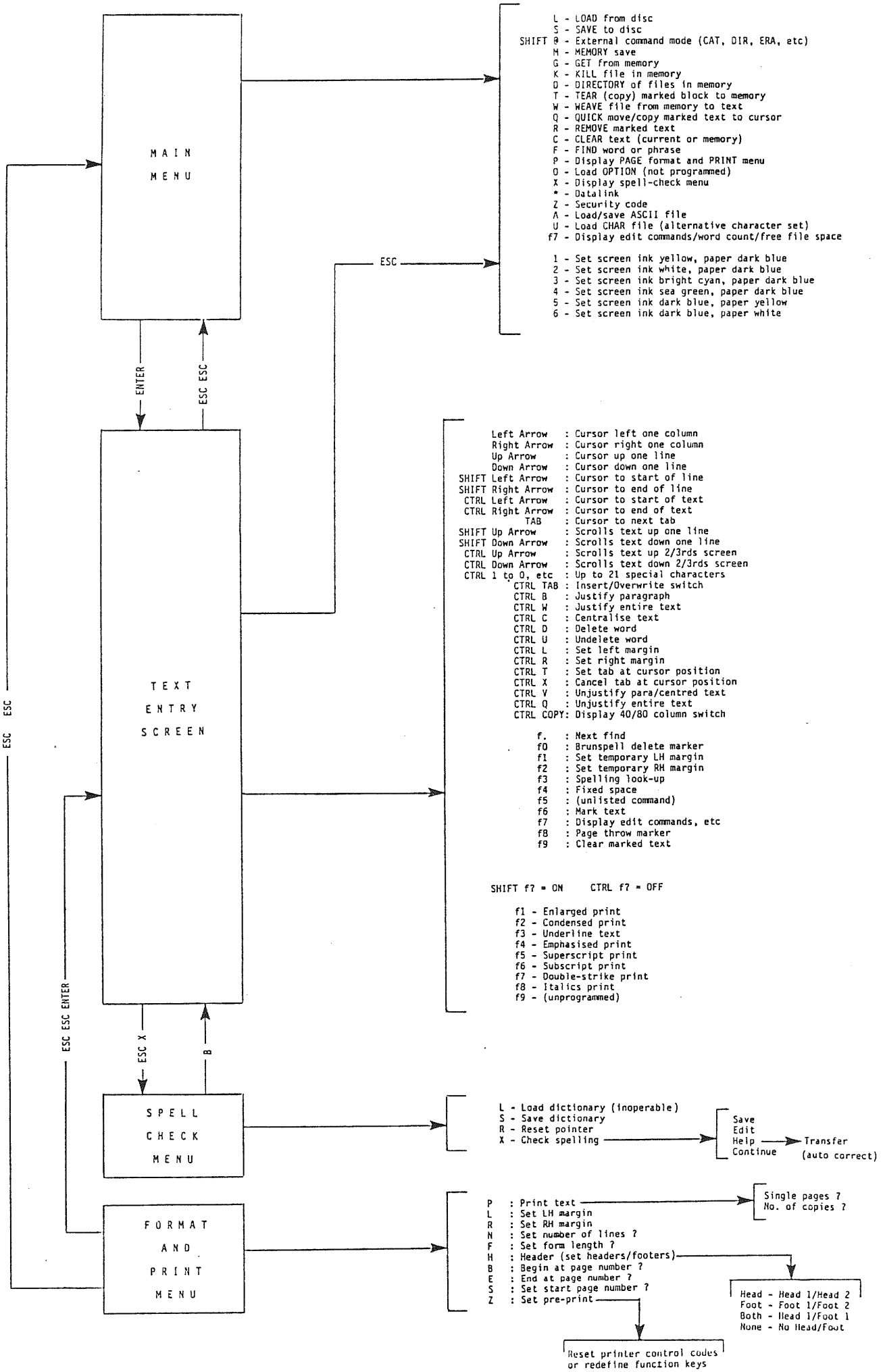
11. The unnecessarily small file size maximum of 24K has not been enlarged.

12. The new program has been protected so that it cannot now be copied to make a working disc.

13. The dictionary files, which previously had to be loaded in addition to the word processor, are now loaded automatically with the program. This means that the dictionary files must essentially be stored on the Brunword disc which also means that not only is it no longer possible to create specialist dictionaries on separate discs but it is also impossible for existing dictionaries to be used with the new Brunword program. This is particularly unfortunate for those of us who compiled separate dictionaries using the earlier Brunword program, and who rely upon such dictionaries for technical or scientific work, or for language translations. This constraint will be a major disadvantage for some existing users of Brunword, and this particular program change is I fear a retrograde step by Brunning Software. Despite this fundamental change to the program, the load dictionary option is still present on the spell-check menu even though it is inoperable; Brunning explain this by asserting that the tally "has been retained in the interests of future development".

With the new but sub-standard documentation and the loss of the additional dictionaries option, I have to say that in my view this potentially excellent word processor has been degraded. One mitigating factor is that the new Brunword 6128 program is supplied on both sides of the master disc; it is therefore possible to delete words from the dictionary files on one side of the disc to make room for the addition of other words more appropriate to the type of word processing being undertaken. This is not the ideal solution since only one special dictionary can be developed, but it is the only avenue open to buyers of the new Brunword 6128.

The price of the new Brunword 6128 remains unchanged at £25. For existing users, an update can be obtained by returning your master disc; the update costs £12.50 if you want Datafile added, but if you already have Datafile the update cost is £8.50.



BRUNWORD PROGRAM STRUCTURE DIAGRAM

MAILBOX

Mr Fred Ball (0118) writes:

" You are asking for members views on the mag. Before I start, you will want to know "who is this guy ?". I am a new member, had a 6128 for ten months, am retired though only (!) in my mid fifties, knew nothing about the subject a year ago and now am completely hooked and read everything I can get my hands on - particularly on so-called serious software. I can't do arcade games but get a great deal of pleasure from poking around other people's efforts ! I subscribe to all the Amstrad dedicated mags and must say that I enjoy your Newsletter very much; it strikes just the right balance, for me anyway.

You will perhaps gather that I do not go along entirely with Elizabeth Jansen, but nevertheless consider her article one of the best reasoned I have read for a very long time. As an old-fashioned Liberal I think that if I pay out good money to OWN something I can then do with it what I will provided I don't try to harm anyone else. If I buy a book I can tear it up or re-write it to my heart's content; that's one reason I buy and not hire. The trouble with computer software is that fiddling with other people's efforts is often the first stage of piracy; this is another matter. Why are magazine pokes so popular ? Simply that if it were not for them a great many people (people like me) simply could not get far enough in games to get any satisfaction from them. They get zapped on the first screen and give up in frustration. As it is, they can get a great deal of pleasure from 'cheating' and so go on buying more of the same.

Anyway enough of that. Having a disc oriented machine, it soon became clear that life was too short for tapes; so everything I buy goes on disc. And so we come to Multiface II and Discovery Plus. Firstly, MFII - is it 100% successful as advertised ? NO ! It is not and I suspect that it will get more problems as protection systems develop. Recently it went bananas with Mountains of Ket, will not save Mercenary and Arnold refuses to play at all when Tai-pan tries to load. But the good news is that in saving games to disc in the last several months (I am probably talking of 50 or so games) these are the only failures, which really is not bad at all. And saving is so easy, plus the bonus of the tool-kit which allows easy poking. So my verdict on MFII is - rush out and buy one.

Apart from the speed of loading, with disc software there is the added benefit that you know you will not get "read error B" or simply a no-load. The only little niggle I have with MFII is that the black box needs to be plugged in for the saved software to load. And some software will not load at all with MFII in place. In the case of Tai-pan, for example, this means removing MFII before you load an unblemished tape or disc; not a catastrophe but a bit of a pain. And so to a less happy story - Discovery Plus. I should stress that I bought mine in May '87 by which time, in my opinion, protection systems had already overtaken it (hence the new Splocktrans II). When transferring a new game to disc, I always try DP before MFII. However, these days, I am pleasantly surprised if DP will do the job. This point was brought home to me when I bought a compilation the other day. These were all oldish games and most transferred easily with DP. Nevertheless it is still quite useful as it has some other file-handling facilities which I use a lot. I am sorry to knock this utility, particularly as Simon Cobb of Siren is one of your complimentary members. If it's any consolation to him, I recently bought Discology (Siren again) to examine discs in detail and to provide back-ups to valuable discs. I am absolutely delighted with this utility and would recommend it unreservedly. I believe this sells in France at the equivalent of £35, while here club members can buy it for a little over £11. "

Well, good for you Fred and we wish you many years of happy retirement ahead of you.

Mr John Benzies of Bradford writes:

" I have subscribed to both Prestel and Telecom Gold, in anticipation of being able to use EMAIL both nationally and internationally. Telecom takes up the attitude that anyone I want to write to should become a Telecom subscriber, and they offer no further help. However, I want access to JANET, the system used by many British universities and to BITNET, used by several USA universities. Do you think that MAILBOX could help ? Any assistance would be much appreciated. "

We have not heard of the systems you mention but enquiries are being made; we will contact you as soon as any information comes to hand. Meanwhile, if any member can help, will they please contact the Editor.

Mr Paul White (0034) of Cumbria writes:

" As 68% of your readers also read Amstrad Action I would think that Mr K.Howard (0115) might have seen the letter from David Marek of Edinburgh regarding monitors. For those who didn't, and for the benefit of Mr Howard, both the Amstrad mono and colour monitors are sold separately by Comet. Prices are £71.95 for the GT65/64 (Comet code 880-2309) and £165 for the CTM 644/0 (Comet code 880-2391). "

Many thanks Paul for the information, which we are pleased to pass on to members. Judging by the enquiries received for the monitor advertised in the last issue, there is certainly a demand.

BOOK LIBRARY

UAUG COMPUTER BOOK LIBRARY

by Brian McKiddie

Having recently taken over the Group's book library, I thought it would be useful to review a book for each edition of CPC USER. This may help members to choose the most suitable book for their particular needs. So, here goes.

Book Title: THE COLOUR CODED GUIDE TO MICRO COMPUTERS

Whether you've got to grips with Basic or don't know a bit from a byte, this clearly written guide will help you to explore the world of computers. The book is presented i n twelve chapters, as follows:

Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 6 cover the Basic language and simple programming.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 give details (not too complicated) of how a micro-computer works.

Chapters 7 and 12 offers help with the more difficult Basic programs and explains how to unravel some of the complex programs published in magazines and periodicals.

Chapters 9, 10 and 11, plus 4, 5 and 6, explain how a computer works especially with regard to the use of peripheral devices.

All in all, I found the book good reading as it contains information often unclear in computer user handbooks.

So much for this edition's review; now for the library itself.

The available books are listed below. To borrow a book, simply complete a Book Request Form (see elsewhere in this edition) and send it together with your remittance for £1.50 to me at the address shown. Unfortunately, we have had no option but to increase the hire fee to cover the cost of packaging and postage (it's still cheaper than buying !).

If the book you require is already out on loan, it will be reserved and sent to you as soon as the book is returned by the current borrower.

The rules are fairly fundamental. Books must not be retained for longer than one calendar month and must be returned promptly with postage prepaid. Books must not be passed on or loaned to other persons (not even if they are UAUG members). Whilst in your custody, books must be treated carefully; every precaution should be taken to avoid defacing or damaging books. The UAUG reserves the right to impose a charge if books are lost or damaged.

Should any member need information about a particular book, you are welcome to contact me on Gosport 580538 any weekday after 6 pm.

UAUG BOOK LIBRARY - LIST 1 (January, 1988)

Ref. No.	Title
B1001H	Colour Coded Guide to Micro Computers
B1002P	Computer Programming in Basic
B1005P	Writing Adventure Games on the Amstrad
B1006P	60 Programs for the Amstrad 464
B1008P	Machine Code for Beginners
B1009P	Using your Amstrad 464 - Made Easy
B1010P	Computer Challenges for the Amstrad
B1011P	Advanced Amstrad Basic
B1012P	Introducing Amstrad CP/M Assembly Language
B1013P	Subroutines for the Amstrad 464 and 664
B1014P	Sensational Games for the 464
B1015P	Applications for the 464 and 664
B1016P	The Working Amstrad
B1017P	Filing Systems and Databases for the Amstrad CPC464
B1018P	Amstrad Advanced Users Guide
B1019P	Using Dr Logo on the Amstrad
B1020P	The Amstrad Pentacle Adventure Creator
B1021P	Write Your Own Adventure Games for your Micro Computer
B1022P	Understanding Computer Graphics
B1023P	Amstrad CPC464 Computing
B1024P	Introducing Logo
B1025P	Mysterious Adventures for your Amstrad
B1026P	The Amazing Amstrad Omnibus
B1027P	CP/M - The Software Bus
B1028P	CPC464 Users Instruction Handbook.

FEATURE

LOW-COST 2ND.DISC DRIVE FOR THE CPC6128

Don Snoad describes an innovative method of obtaining a 2nd disc drive for as little as £40

6128 owners running business software will invariably benefit from a 2nd disc drive; for some software, a 2nd drive is essential.

Ideally, a 2nd disc drive for the 6128 should have its own power supply, but such drives are few and far between and tend to be a bit pricey. The Amstrad FD1 2nd drive is OK but is often in short supply and, in any event, costs nearly £100. The Timatic high- density drive costs over £200. There are also a number of 5-1/4 inch drives available, but they too are expensive (£150 or more).

The simple solution is to DIY by marrying a proprietory disc drive to a power supply unit of proven quality; this may sound daunting to some but in reality it couldn't be easier. All that is needed is a suitable drive unit, a few connectors, an Amstrad MP-2 TV Modulator (the MP-1 modulator is unsuitable for this purpose) and a common-sense approach to electrical wiring.

Why use a TV modulator ? Because it's reliable, of proven quality, and it's the cheapest purpose-built power supply unit available.

The total cost, including the MP-2, will be approx. £70; but less if you are an Amstrad User Club member (about £30 less if you already have an MP-2). The parts needed are:

Amstrad MP-2 Modulator	: £29.95	
Hitachi 3 inch Disc Drive	: £28.69	(Matmos Ltd)
Disc drive housing	: £ 2.79	(Tandy Ref 270-627)
Amstrad DL2 34-way disc drive lead with connectors	: £ 6.95	
4-way disc drive socket	: £ 0.50	(Radio Spares No.471-424)
5mm line socket (for 5V line)	: £ 0.55	(Techno-Trade)
5mm line plug (for 12V line)	: £ 0.45	
0.25m of 4-core 2 amp cable	: £ 0.20	
PVC sleeving (optional)	: £ 0.10	
	£70.18	
	or £40.23 if you already have an MP-2	

Assembly is as follows. Carefully strip the outer insulation from the 4-core cable for 4 inches at one end and for 1 inch at the other end; then strip the inner insulation from each end of all four cores to obtain 5mm of bare conductor. At the end with 4 inches of outer insulation removed, solder two of the four bare conductors one to the inner terminal and one to the outer terminal of the 5mm line socket then at the same end of the 4-core cable similarly connect the remaining two bare conductors to the inner and outer terminals of the 5mm line plug. (The optional PVC sleeving is to cover the cores of the 4-core cable from which the outer insulation has been stripped). You should now have a line socket and a line plug each connected to two conductors at the same end of the 4-core cable.

Now crimp or solder the four bare conductors at the other end of the 4-core cable one to each of the four 'pins' supplied with the 4-way disc drive socket. You should now have a 4-core cable with a line socket and a line plug each connected to two cores at one end of the 4-core cable, and four crimped or soldered 'pins' one to each core at the other end of the cable.

Using a short length of adhesive tape, tape down the four 'pins' to a scrap piece of any non-conductive material; the purpose of this is to ensure that the 'pins' are separated and cannot touch each other whilst a simple continuity check is carried out. Using a multimeter if you have one (or a torch battery and bulb with flying leads will do), check that continuity exists between a pin and the plug/socket terminal to which it is connected. It is important to also check that continuity exists only between one pin and one plug/socket terminal; check each pin in turn and ensure that each of the four 'lines' are electrically independent.

When satisfied with the tests, check the 'lines' again and make a note of which pin is connected to which terminal of the line plug and line socket; identify the 'pins' by the numbers 1 to 4 as follows:

Identify the pin connected to the outer terminal of the plug as No.1;

Identify the pin connected to the inner terminal of the plug as No.2;

Identify the pin connected to the outer terminal of the socket as No.3;

Identify the pin connected to the inner terminal of the socket as No.4.

Use a Biro pen to mark the adhesive tape adjacent to the appropriate 'pin'. Double check to ensure that you have correctly identified the 'pin' numbers.

These pin numbers now directly relate to the disc drive connector, and this can be confirmed by viewing the connector attached to the back of the disc drive; the connections are numbered 1 to 4. If you have a multimeter and are aware of the necessary precautions, you can connect your new cable assembly to the MP-2 (cable assembly socket to MP-2 flying plug, and cable assembly plug to 12V socket on MP-2 case) and then connect the MP-2 to the mains supply, then check the following:

Pin 1 should give 12V +ve dc

Pin 2 should be ground (i.e, 12V -ve)

Pin 3 should be ground (i.e, 5V -ve)

Pin 4 should give 5V +ve dc

Incidentally, Pins 2 and 3 are linked at the disc drive PCB, so the connection to either socket or plug is not critical so long as both pins are -ve. Having established correct pin numbers, etc, disconnect the MP-2 from the mains supply. Now insert the pins into the moulding of the 4-way connector so that the pin numbers coincide with the numbers on the disc drive PCB (i.e, 1 to 4, right to left); the numbers are also moulded into the 4-way female connector, so there need be no mistake. When you are satisfied that all the pin numbers coincide, press the pins fully home into the connector moulding (once pressed in they are almost impossible to remove). Do not re-connect the MP-2 to the mains supply.

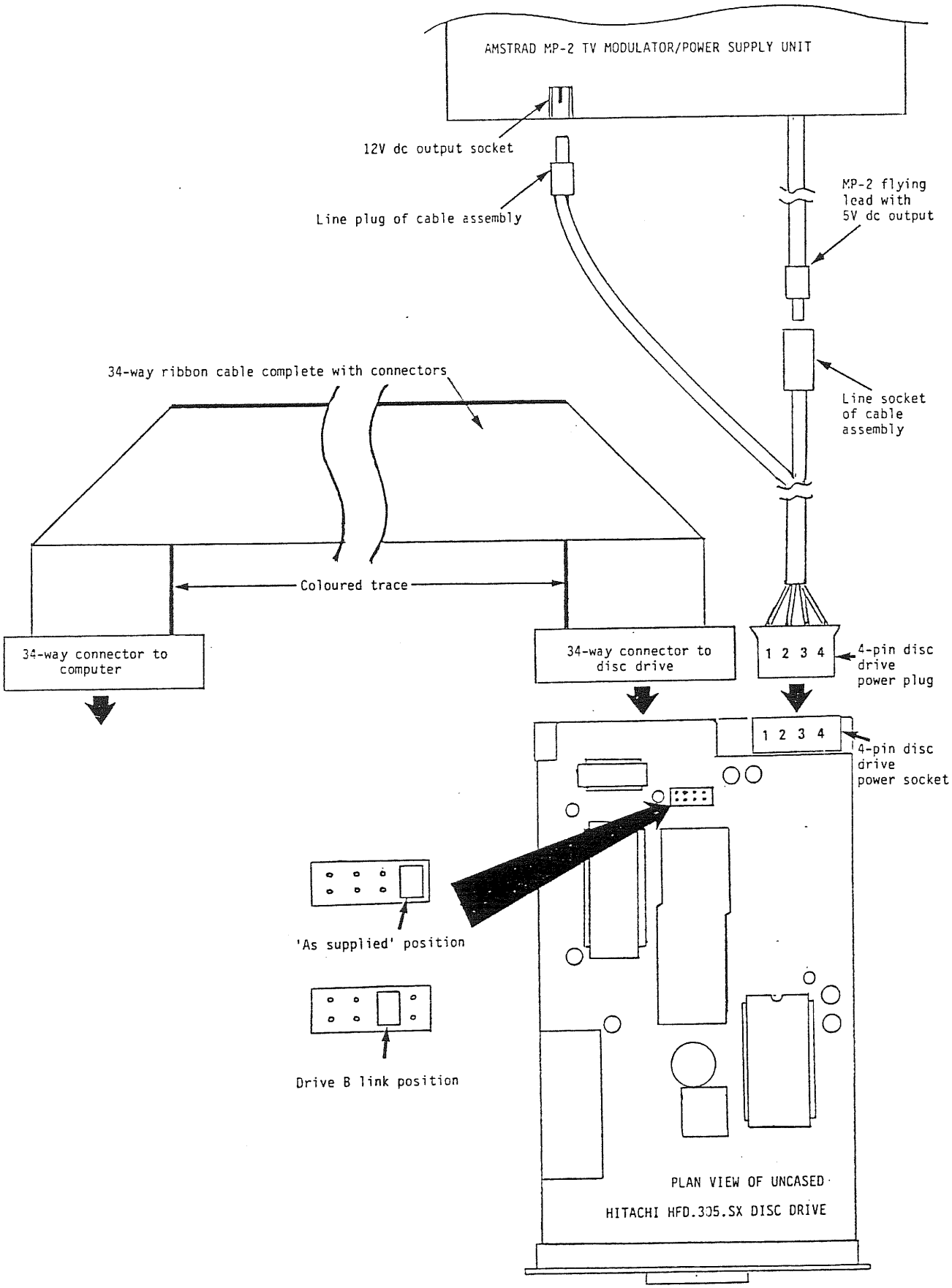
Now connect the 34-way ribbon cable, one end to the disc drive unit and the other to the 2nd disc drive connection at the computer. Now turn the disc drive upside down so that the motor flywheel is upper-most. Connect the MP-2 to the mains supply and switch on; then switch on the computer. If the disc drive motor starts and runs continuously (observe the motor flywheel), switch the computer off then switch off the MP-2. All that's wrong is that the ribbon cable is connected the wrong way round; simply unplug it from the computer, turn the connector over and plug it in again (but don't alter the connection at the disc drive as well !). The coloured trace at one side of the ribbon cable should normally be positioned at the computer connector so that it is on the opposite side to the trace at the disc drive; unfortunately, this is not always true, so the best way is to connect up and try it out. If you do connect the ribbon cable the wrong way round, don't worry it'll do no damage.

Having connected the ribbon cable the correct way round at the computer, reconnect the MP-2 to the mains supply and switch on then switch on the computer and all should be well. All that needs to be done is to fit the disc drive housing. Meanwhile, the 2nd drive can be quickly checked by loading your CPM+ disc into drive A and entering the DISCKIT3 command; the screen display should confirm that two drives have been found (it may first be necessary to initialise the drive with a |B command). Next, insert a different CPM disc in drive B and enter a DIR B: command; this should result in a directory listing on screen of all the files on the disc in drive B. Now you are in the happy position of being able, amongst other things, to format and copy discs without all that disc swapping hassle! Of course, the drive will work equally well under Amsdos.

One must accept the possibility that everything may not work as expected at the first attempt. Provided your MP-2 is serviceable and the power cable has been correctly assembled and connected, the only module likely to malfunction is the disc drive itself. Should you find that the drive refuses to log-on (usually indicated by a 'Drive B: Disc Missing' message despite there being a disc in the drive), this is most likely to be due to incorrect drive configuraton. Almost all disc drives are provided with a link-pin arrangement which allows the installer to configure the drive as drive A, B, C or D. The CPC6128 will only recognise a 2nd drive as drive B, so it is essential to check that the link-pin is correctly positioned; if the link-pin is not correctly positioned, the drive will fail to log-on and will be unusable. The physical arrangement of the link-pin differs slightly between one type of disc drive and another; as an example, the diagram shown overleaf illustrates the link-pin arrangement for a Hitachi Type HFD.305.SX and shows the 'as-supplied' link position and the correct position to configure the drive as drive B.

All that now remains is to remind you always to switch on the power supply to the MP-2 before switching on the computer, and to switch off the computer before switching off the MP-2 (if you find this confusing, the simple answer is to make up a mains power lead with two 13 amp sockets (for the computer and the disc drive) and switch both the computer and the disc drive on or off simultaneously at the wall socket).

Two final points. Firstly, by using line connectors for the 12V and 5V supplies, the MP-2 can still be used as a TV modulator whenever you choose simply by unplugging the line connectors and the ribbon cable. Secondly, an MP-2 with the cable assembly described in this article can be utilised as a 2nd disc drive power supply unit not only for a Hitachi Type AMS (or HFD.305.SX) 3-inch disc drive, but also for a TEAC Type FD.30A 3-inch disc drive, a Shugart Type SA300 3½ inch disc drive or a TEAC Type FD.55A 5-1/4 inch disc drive. However, due to the limited output of the MP-2, it should not be used to power disc drives other than one of those listed in this article. It is also important to adhere to the drive models mentioned, as some drives with similar identification are not suitable for use with the CPC6128; for example, a Hitachi HFD.305.S 3-inch drive unit cannot be utilised due to different control signalling.



SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM OF DISC DRIVE, POWER SUPPLY AND COMPUTER CONNECTIONS

LABEL YOUR DISCS

It is very easy to set aside full discs without listing all the files they contain. This is OK while you can recall which file is on which side of which disc, but there comes a time when one's memory hic-cups and from then on chaos reigns. This situation is easily remedied by printing out a directory of each disc in a format which is small enough to slip inside the transparent cover of a disc case. Proceed as follows:

Ensure that your Epson-compatible dot matrix printer is switched ON then, in Basic, enter

```
PRINT #8,CHR$(27)+"A"+CHR$(8)+CHR$(27)+"M"+CHR$(15)
```

Press RETURN, then load CP/M+. When the A> prompt appears, press CONTROL P. Replace the CP/M+ disc with the disc for which a directory listing is required, then enter DIR and press RETURN. When the printer stops, remove the disc and turn it over with the opposite side uppermost and re-insert it into the drive, then enter DIR and press RETURN; the directory for the second side of the disc will be printed out. As many disc directories as you like can be printed out in this way (remember to enter DIR and press RETURN after each disc change); on completion, enter CONTROL P. As each disc directory is printed, it is prudent to identify the two listings with the disc side numbers before cutting the printout to size and slipping it into the disc case.

There's no reason why the Basic program shouldn't be saved as, say, DISCLABL.BAS and loaded each time you need to use it.

```
1 dir
  A: APROTEXT REV : PPROTEXT REV : FFROTEXT REV : EASIAMSW REV
  A: AMSWORD  REV : BRUNWORD REV : TASWORD  REV : MINOFFWP REV
  A: PENDOWN  REV : PYRAWORD REV : TEXTPROC REV : WORDSTAR REV
  A: WPERFECT REV : NEWWORD  REV : MSSCRIPT REV : MCWORD   REV
  A: LOSCRIPT REV : LOSCRIPT WC  : PROTEXT  WC  : MASTRFIL REV
  A: ATLAST   REV : CATALOG  REV : RHMAN    REV : INSRECAL REV
  A: MCFILE   REV : DATAFILE REV : MINOFFDB REV : MAILLIST REV
  A: PCW8     REV : PCW9     REV : CPC      REV : SUGAR    HIS
  A: SUGAR    TDG : EPSON    HIS : EPSON    ART : SILVREED REV
  A: MP165    REV : NETWORKS ART : MSSPREAD REV : MATRIX   REV
  A: WORDSTAR WC  : LOKSMITH REV : MSTRDISC REV : QDDJOB   REV
  A: DPUTILIT REV : PROMERGE REV : PROSPELL REV : TASPELL  REV
  A: PFWRITA  REV : PFCALC   REV : PFFILA   REV : UTOPIA   REV
  A: FIDO     REV : TRANSMAT REV : FUNKEYS1 PGM : FUNKEYS2 PGM
2 A>dir
  A: MSCRIPT  BAK : DISCLABL PGM : DWP      SPL : MSCRIPT  DEM
  A: DWP      LET : GOWIDTH  ART : GOFORMAT ART : WHICHWP  ART
  A: CHOOSEWP ART : GETNOYOU ART : PRINTERS ART : ENVIRON  ART
  A: PROSEVAL ART : ZOSCDRIV ART : CPM      ART : LOCBASIC ART
  A: CPM      HIS : HANDBOOK ART : DPRCT+CT SUM : COPYRITE SUM
  A: TRADESAC SUM : SOFTWARE GEN : HARDWARE GEN : FIRMWARE GEN
  A: CONFIGWS PGM : MONITORS ART : CHOOSED9 ART : DISCS    ART
  A: CHOOSEBT ART : BBCBASIC ART : PERIFRLS ART : WYSIWYG  ART
  A: POWASUPL ART : ROMBOARDS ART : DSKTOPUB ART : AMSCOMMS ART
  A: UAUGLETA 001 : AMSTRAD  001 : AMSTRAD  002 : AMSTRAD  003
  A: AMSTRAD  004 : AMSOFT   001 : WORDPROC 001 : AMSOFT   002
  A: AMSOFT   003 : WORDPROC 002 : WORDPROC 003 : DATABASE 001
  A: DATABASE 002 : UTILITIS 001 : UTILITIS 002 : WPENHANC 001
```

Sample Print-out (Actual Size)

PROGRAMMING

PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES - INTRODUCTION

by Tony Bambridge

Hello and welcome again to the programming languages section. In the last issue we saw the beginning of the programming section, featuring Nevada Fortran. I intend to expand the section with two new series; one will be a regular feature and the other will be on an occasional basis to begin with.

The first new series, presented in this issue, is the start of a series of tutorials on Locomotive Basic using a structured approach. This series will run parallel to the compiled language series and I hope will be of use to newcomers to computing.

The series will deal with all aspects of Locomotive Basic, including structure and presentation, input, output, sorting, graphics and sound and, finally, the actual development of a full-size applications program using either top down or modular programming.

The second series will complement the programming series by providing information on the use of flowcharts, top down programming, modular programming and any developments that might take place in the world of computing. For example, I will try to give an insight into the high-level defence language currently being discussed in the USA; that is, the language known as ADA. I also hope to bring you articles on EXPERT SYSTEMS and ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE and investigate their application on the CPC, including information on the language used which at the moment is PROLOG.

Finally, I will with YOUR help provide a SUBROUTINE LIBRARY for all UAUG members, but this can only succeed if YOU send me those routines which you have developed for a particular purpose. Please remember that ANY routine will be USEFUL to SOMEONE.

So what's on the menu for this issue ? Well, we start with an article purely for the absolute beginner. The article gives a good introduction to computing and leads naturally into the first of the series on STRUCTURED BASIC using Locomotive Basic. This will be followed by the continuing Nevada Fortran series, etc.

So what do you need ? Well at the outset not much. Having said that I would like you if possible to obtain two RSXs which were published in COMPUTING WITH THE AMSTRAD; the most important one is the PROCEDURES RSX, as I will be using this RSX extensively. The other RSX that you may find useful is the one for the PRINTER which echo's the screen display to a printer. At the end of the article I will give details about the issues in which the RSXs appeared.

We can also ask our Chairman if he can work his magic and persuade DATABASE PUBLICATIONS to allow us to provide the RSXs at minimal charge or even free (What about it Gary ?).

Well I think that says it all for this issue. However if you have any other aspects you wish me to write about, please let me know and I will see what I can do but no promises (even I must sleep !).

Now for the information regarding the RSXs. The PROCEDURES RSX appeared in VOL 3 No.5 MAY 1987 Page 88. The PRINTER RSX appeared in VOL 3 No.12 DECEMBER 1987 Page 23.

So, as the BEATLES said, LET IT BE

See You Next Issue !

PROGRAMING

BASIC COMPUTER LITERACY
(OR WHY MY CPC KEYBOARD SAYS QWERTY)

by Tony Bambridge

This is a very light introduction to CPC computer programming with the CPC's resident language Locomotive Basic.

One of the first concepts of a computer was that of a sequential calculator. If you look at the Amstrad CPC keyboard you will find that nearly all the keys are familiar. You should have no difficulty in locating the figures zero to 9 especially as they occur twice. One of the first things you will notice is that the numerical zero is represented by an 0 with a slash to distinguish it from the letter O and it is very important that you remember this. In the same way, you should easily recognise the "+" and "-" signs which represent, as you would expect, plus and minus respectively. What you will not find on the CPC is the standard multiplication sign or the standard division symbol. Because the computer uses both the alphabet as well as the numbers, the computer cannot use the letter "X" as the multiplication sign because it would become confused and probably blow a 'fuse'. This problem is overcome by using the asterisk * for multiplication and the oblique stroke / for division. The oblique stroke is used for division because of technical reasons which render it impossible to produce the normal division symbol on a television or VDU screen.

Another symbol which you will no doubt be familiar with is the " = " key, but you will need to come to terms with the fact that you have been using this symbol incorrectly (I know you don't believe it but read on). When you press the keys of a calculator to obtain, say, the sequence 2 + 2 = ; the equals key is not telling the truth. You are not using the equals key to state equality but to give an instruction. So, in effect, you are saying DO IT, whereas on a computer you must say precisely what you mean. The key which instructs the computer to "RETURN me an answer" or "EXECUTE" my instructions or "ENTER data" is the key marked on the CPC as the ENTER key and is the equivalent of the "=" key on a calculator.

So by now you should have no difficulty in using the computer as a calculator at the very least. Simply type out the calculation you want and press the ENTER key. On the Amstrad CPC you will need to start your calculation with a KEYWORD, the keyword being PRINT in order to obtain your result on screen. If you make a mistake don't worry about the ERROR reports - you cannot do any damage (unless you throw it across the room in frustration !).

If you are familiar with the more advanced calculations normally carried out on a scientific calculator, you may find that the computer appears to be a bit limited by comparison due to the lack of scientific function keys. Do not despair, try this for size: type PRINT SQR (123.456789) then press RETURN. You should have 11.111111 etc staring at you on the screen. This is an example of a FUNCTION keyword, SQR being the keyword for the square root function. A full list of all the keywords and commands is given in the CPC MANUAL, but you won't need it as I will supply all the information necessary.

The alphabet keys on the CPC computer are laid out in exactly the same way as on a typewriter and, as you press a key, you will get the letter on the key displayed on the screen. In jargon terms this keyboard layout is known as a QWERTY keyboard, due to the sequence of letter keys in the top but one row of the keyboard.

The words we use when talking to the CPC computer are COMMANDS, FUNCTIONS and KEYWORDS - functions being a subset of the keywords - all of which will be explained in the Structured Basic series beginning this issue. This article has introduced BASIC very gently so you should not have had any difficulty so far; maybe you are even ready for the real thing. However, I happen to believe that you should start at the beginning rather than in the middle so you will have to put up with this elementary article. Next issue we start on STRUCTURED Basic.

As Sherlock Holmes said: "Elementary My Dear Watson"

PROGRAMMING

NEVADA FORTRAN FOR BEGINNERS - PART 2

by Tony Bambridge

Hello again. I hope you enjoyed Part 1 of our series. This month will be mainly a discussion on variables and constants and how Nevada Fortran deals with them. We will also mention the format required for writing Nevada Fortran programs using a text editor (say ED80), and we will begin to actually analyse the Nevada Fortran Language and write our first Nevada Fortran program. Finally, I will discuss compatibility of FORTRAN 66 and FORTRAN 77, and supply you with a quick reference chart for ED80 (plus a few other snippets).

NEVADA FORTRAN V3.3 (MOD 2)

The following files on your disc refer to NEVADA FORTRAN:

FORT.COM - this is the Nevada Fortran compiler.

FRUN.COM - this is the execution and runtime package.

CONFIG.COM - this is the program which creates the error file and then sets up the compiler and runtime options. This is one of the programs that you are already familar with in Part 1.

ERRORS - this is a text file which is used by the CONFIG.COM program and enables CONFIG.COM to create the error file.

ASSM.COM - this is the assembler program.In this series we will not be directly involved with this program although FORT.COM needs this program when compiling; therefore you MUST NOT delete this file.

RUNA.COM - this program is the run-time loader for assembly files.

There are other files on the disc which I will discuss when necessary.

THE NEVADA FORTRAN CHARACTER SET

The Nevada Fortran character set consists of the UPPER CASE (or capital letters) of the alphabet i.e. A through to Z.

The NUMBERS 0 through to 9

The character set also consists of some special characters which are given below:

1. The blank (obtained by pressing space bar)
2. The = sign used for assignments etc.
3. The $ sign. When this sign is used to preceed a constant than that constant is treated as a HEXADECIMAL CONSTANT.
4. The plus sign +
5. The minus sign -
6. The asterisk *
7. The slash /
8. The left parenthesis (
9. The right parenthesis)
10. The comma ,
11. The decimal point or full stop .
12. The hash sign #. When this sign is used to preceed a constant, it indicates that the constant is an HEXADECIMAL CONSTANT and that this constant is stored internally in binary format.
13. The ampersand &. This has two functions which will be described later.
14. The backslash \. This will also be described later.

A NEVADA FORTRAN PROGRAM

We will now write our first Nevada Fortran program. It will be a small program which calculates the area and circumference of a circle.

The program must be written using a text editor and I suggest either ED80 or ED (ED is CPM's single line editor and useful if you don't have a full screen text editor).

The Fortran language was designed for 80-column punched cards, so strict rules regarding the columns MUST be adhered to.

Well, now for our first program; it is shown in Table 1. I have numbered the columns to enable easy reference later.

Well that's it folks; it doesn't look like much of a program but it introduces many points and provides a basis on which to build.

```
                              COLUMNS
1.....7.....................................................72

C       PROGRAM 1 NEVADA FORTRAN PART 2
C       CALCULATES CIRCUMFERENCE AND AREA OF CIRCLE
C       DATE 19-10-87
C
        PI = 3.14159
        READ (0,*) 'ENTER RADIUS OF CIRCLE ',RADIUS
        CIRC = 2 * PI * RADIUS
        AREA = PI * RADIUS * * 2
        WRITE (1,*) 'AREA OF CIRCLE = ',AREA
        WRITE (1,*) 'CIRCUMFERENCE OF CIRCLE = ',CIRC
        END
```

TABLE 1

PROGRAMMING

COMMENT STATEMENT

I am sure you will have come across BASIC and no doubt you are aware of the REMark statement which enables you to document your program.

In Nevada Fortran, this statement is referred to as a COMMENT statement and is obtained by using the CAPITAL LETTER C (this is shown in the program in Table 1).

There are, however, strict rules regarding which COLUMN the "C" appears; that is, it MUST be written in COLUMN 1 only and you are advised to leave a space afterwards.

This strict column format is critical because, as previously stated, it was based on 80-column punched card.

From the program you will see I have used four COMMENT statements. When the compiler reads the "C", it will ignore that line completely and carry on to the next line.

You will also notice that I have started the rest of the program at COLUMN 7 this is because columns 1 to 6 are reserved for other purposes; these purposes are:

1. Column 1 can be used as mentioned for the LETTER C to indicate a comment statement.
2. Columns 1 to 5 can be used for LABELS; these will discussed later.
3. Column 6 will be left BLANK or contain a ZERO. If ANY other letter etc is placed in COLUMN 6, then this indicates that the statement CONTINUES on the next line. For this series, this COLUMN will nearly always be left BLANK (space).
4. Columns 7 to 72 are used for the main body of the program as is shown in my example; the only exception is the COMMENT statement. I could have started my documentation in COLUMN 3, but I always start at COLUMN 7 to help prevent me from mis-typing etc.

NUMERICAL CONSTANTS

There are three types of numerical constants in Nevada Fortran:

a. Real Constants

b. Integer Constants

c. Hexadecimal Constants

A constant is a quantity that never varies and is therefore FIXED. Examples of REAL,INTEGER and HEXADECIMAL constants are given below.

Integer Constants : 1, 456, -98, -6

Real Constants : 2.987, 345.77, -678.987, -7.9

Hexadecimal Constants : $7654 $FFFF

The range of each type of constant is clearly defined in Nevada Fortran; these are as follows: (this range also applies to variables)

Integer Constants	: -99999999 to +99999999
Real Constants	: -0.99999999E-127 to +0.99999999E+127
Hexadecimal Constants	: Can have a maximum value of $FFFF

You will see from the program in Table 1 that there are two integer constants; one which occurs in statement 7 and one which occurs in statement 8. In this case, both have the same value i.e 2. Also there is a REAL constant defined in statement 5 (i.e PI = 3.14159 etc).

VARIABLES

There are four types of variables in Nevada Fortran these are:

a. Integer Variable

b. Real Variable

c. Double Precision Variable

d. Logical Variable

Declaration Of Variables

Variables may be declared EXPLICITLY or IMPLICITLY. First we will deal with variables which are implicitly declared; again we are only considering numeric integer or real variables.

Implicit Variable Declaration

Most of the variables we use in Nevada Fortran will be given symbolic names.These names may consist of ONE to SIX alphanumeric characters; each name MUST begin with a LETTER. This letter, unless the variable is explicitly (see later) defined, will dictate whether or not that particular variable is a REAL or INTEGER variable. The rules are as follows:

If your variable name BEGINS with I , J , K , L , M or N , then that variable will be treated as an INTEGER variable.

If your variable name BEGINS with any other LETTER then that variable will be treated as REAL.

Consider our example program IN TABLE 1; the Real Variables are: RADIUS , CIRC , AREA

You will notice that since none of the names BEGIN with I , J , K , L , M , N , they MUST be REAL variables.

Explicit Variable Declaration

It is possible to OVERRIDE the implicit declaration by EXPLICITLY defining your variables. How do we do it ?

Here are a few examples on declaring your variables EXPLICITLY.

Consider a variable name of LOAD and we want this variable to be a real variable. If we use LOAD without EXPLICITLY defining LOAD, then the compiler will assume it is an INTEGER variable and therefore it will report an ERROR (the name begins with L).

To define LOAD as a REAL variable, all we do is:

```
REAL LOAD  (don't forget to start at column 7)
```

This variable will now be treated as a REAL variable; likewise, for EXPLICITLY defining an INTEGER variable we would do the following:

```
INTEGER SPEED
```

Where SPEED is the INTEGER variable which otherwise would have been treated as a REAL variable.

PROGRAMMING

ED80 QUICK REFERENCE CHART

CURSOR MOVEMENT

CHARACTER LEFT	CTRL S
CHARACTER RIGHT	CTRL D
WORD LEFT	CTRL A
WORD RIGHT	CTRL F
LINE UP	CTRL E
LINE DOWN	CTRL X

QUICK CURSOR MOVEMENTS

END OF FILE	CTRL QC
START OF FILE	CTRL QR
BEGINNING OF LINE	CTRL QS
END OF LINE	CTRL QD
GOTO LINE?	CTRL QG
GOTO BLOCK START	CTRL QB
GOTO BLOCK END	CTRL QK

IN FILE

LINE DELETE	CTRL Y
WORD DELETE LEFT	CTRL QT
WORD DELETE RIGHT	CTRL T
ABANDON EDITING	CTRL KQ
DISC DIRECTORY	CTRL KF
SAVE FILE	CTRL QQ

BLOCK COMMANDS

MARK BLOCK START	CTRL KB
MARK BLOCK END	CTRL KK
MOVE A BLOCK	CTRL KV
COPY A BLOCK	CTRL KC
DELETE A BLOCK	CTRL KY
READ A BLOCK	CTRL KR
WRITE A BLOCK	CTRL KW

FIND AND SUBSTITUTE

FIND FIRST	CTRL QF
FIND NEXT	CTRL L
SUBSTITUTE/FIND?	CTRL QL
SUBSTITUTE ALL?	CTRL QA

OTHER COMMANDS

HELP MENU	CTRL J
EXIT WITHOUT BAK FILE	CTRL QQ
EXIT WITH A BAK FILE	CTRL KX
ERASE FILE	CTRL KJ
RESTORE LINE	CTRL QR
TOGGLE AUTO INDENT	CTRL O
TOGGLE FREE SPACE	CTRL OF
INSERT/CHANGE TOGGLE	CTRL V

PRINTING A FILE

WHEN FILE NAME IS PROMPTED TYPE

LST:

TABLE 2

Well that's all on programming for this issue. Next time I will discuss the remaining statements and show you how to run the program.

COMPATABILITY

As I am using Nevada FORTRAN, I will devote some time explaining the differences between FORTRAN 66 and FORTRAN 77, and then I will try to explain the difference between FORTRAN 66 and Nevada FORTRAN; you will then be able to switch implementations. I will start with the differences between FORTRAN 66 and FORTRAN 77.

1. In FORTRAN 77 there is a PROGRAM statement this is not available in FORTRAN 66.

2. In FORTRAN 66 all the comment statements MUST start with a "C" in column 1; whereas in FORTRAN 77 you can leave a line completely blank.

3. In FORTRAN 66 the block structure IF-THEN-ELSE-ENDIF is not available. In FORTRAN 77 they are available.

4. In FORTRAN 66 there are no OPEN and CLOSE statements but in FORTRAN 77 these are available.

5. In FORTRAN 66 there is no SAVE statement but this is available in FORTRAN 77.

Well thats all I am going to say on compatibility this issue. I will continue in Part 3 with further comparisons.

I hope you are enjoying reading the series. You will find that you don't need the Fortran manual or a text book, as I am attempting to provide you with a working tutorial as well as a reference text.

Later in the series, I will provide a quick reference guide on the commands that I have covered; this will appear, say, once every three issues.

For those who have Nevada Fortran or who are thinking of buying Nevada Fortran, there are so far as I know NO books available in the UK specifically on Nevada FORTRAN; hence the reason why I have decided to attempt a series of tutorials (just thought you might like to know !).

According to the Fortran user manual there is a self-teaching course but this is only available in the USA (unless YOU know something I don't; if you do PLEASE LET ME KNOW !).

One final point before we terminate this session: if you are using VDE text editor under CPM+, then you may find that when you press CTRL ESC nothing happens. This is because in VDE this is not accepted; instead use the following: (for those who don't know, VDE is a PD text editor)

CTRL [

This is equivalent to CTRL ESC

I am sure you are aware just how much this language is changing and at the present time FORTRAN is again being reviewed in the USA.

Can you imagine a FORTRAN 2000 ? (wouldn't be far off drawing my old age pension !)

You will find the ED80 quick reference guide in Table 2.

Please remember that the commands given are ED80 default commands. You can if you want change the commands to suit you.If you wish to do this then just read the user manual page E-1.

COMPETITION

WINNER OF COMPETITION No. 6

The winner was Robert Lunt (0087) who will be receiving a copy of Elite's game Paperboy. The runner up, who will be receiving the budget game Dizzy, was Frank Ashton.

Both members correctly located all the words on the word search. Due to lack of space, we will not be divulging the answers in this issue.

COMPETITION No. 7

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3. No cash alternative is available.

4. The judge's decision is final.

THE QUESTIONS:

1. What does COBOL stand for?

2. How many tracks are there on a 3" disc in Data Format?

3. How many K are available to the User in Vendor Format?

4. Name the type of connector used on Amstrad compatible Joysticks?

5. How many K of memory is directly available for use on the CPC464?

THE ENTRY DATE:

All entries must be received by 1 March 1988. The winner will be notified shortly after. The correct answers and the winner's name will be published in the next edition of CPC USER.

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- -

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
31					1	2
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February

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July

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August

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September

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November

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December

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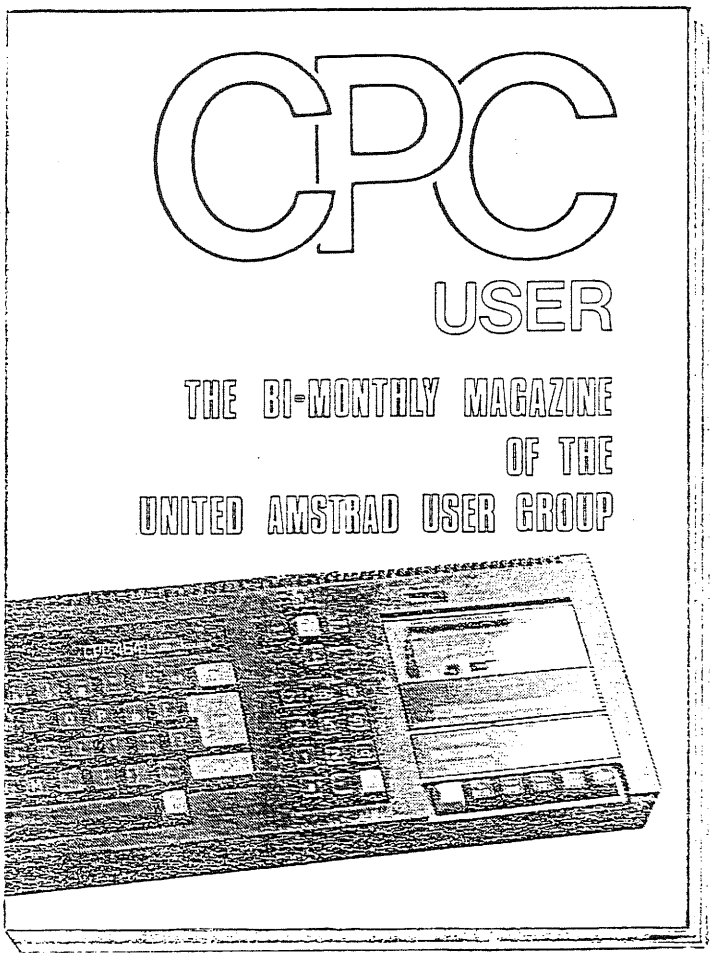

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