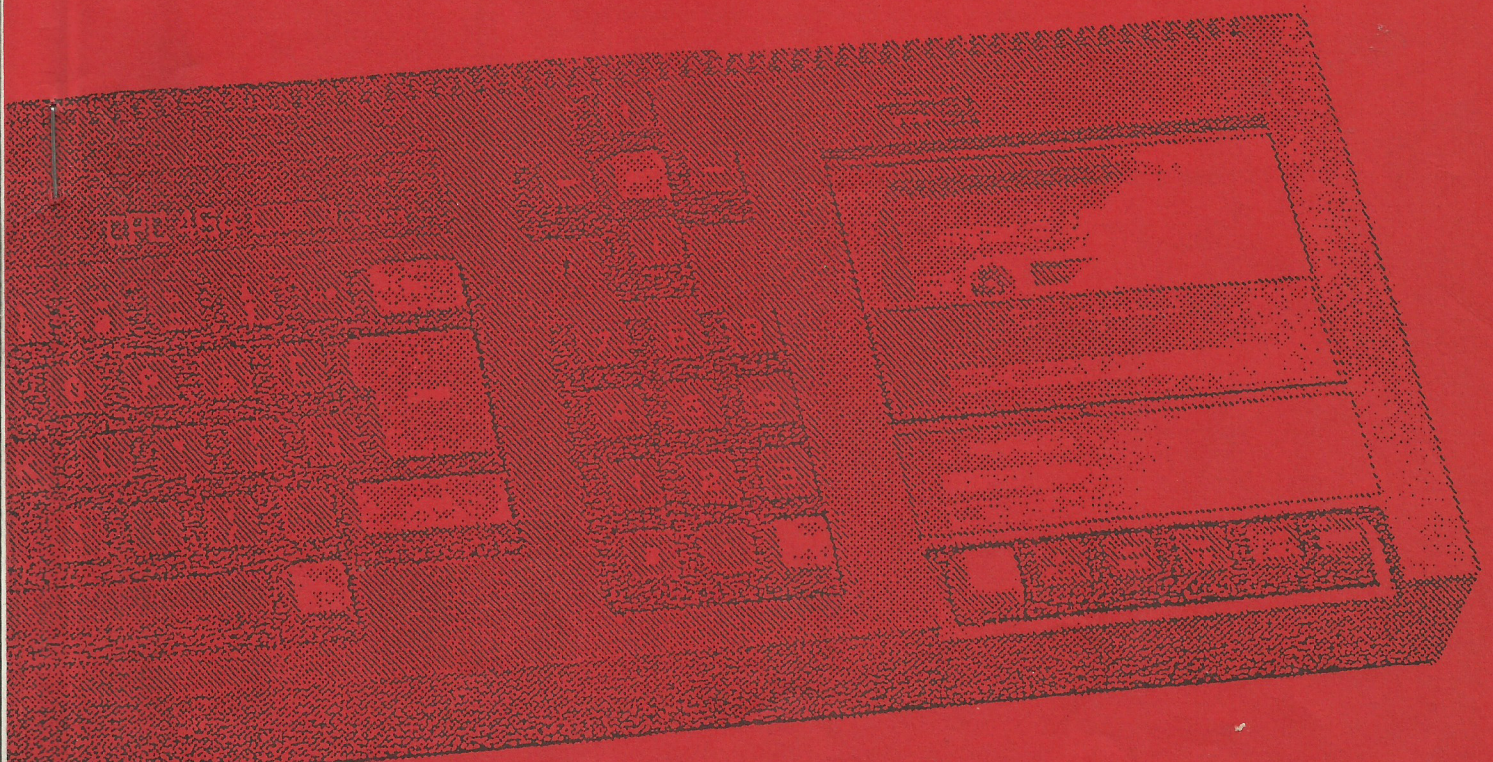


CPC

USER

THE BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE
OF THE
UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP



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CPC USER is published bi-monthly by the United Amstrad User Group,
26 Uplands Crescent, Fareham, Hampshire, PO16 7JY

CPC USER welcomes the submission of listings and articles for publication.
Material should be submitted either on disc or tape, typed or computer-printed,
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UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP

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STOP PRESS

Don Snoad has kindly agreed to fill in the post of Business Software Editor, on a temporary basis only, until either the post is filled full time or his move to pastures new arrives.

Don can be contacted at :-

85 Woolston Rd.
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Sincere good wishes for the future go to Don and his wife from all his colleagues at THE CPC USER.

EDITORIAL

Thanks to all members who sent encouraging comments about previous issues of the magazine. To the members who sent articles, letters, suggestions etc. - well done and thank you. However, don't stop there! Keep up the good work! We still need more. Think how thrilling(?) it would be to see your article in print under your byline. Don't worry about the spelling but please, please, send all contributions on disc or tape. How about some short type-ins or tips?

You will notice that we have included a review by Don Snoad of the Sinclair/Amstrad PC. No, we are not changing sides but it really does show how good the CPC is in comparison!

Also in this issue is a discount list which we hope is up-to-date. Now that David Sheehan has taken on the post of Discount Officer, we hope to add to the list from time to time. You can help to retain these concessions by patronising the suppliers.

Apologies for the late distribution of this issue, due to the Easter holidays. (The printing of the magazine is carried out by a local school).

John Stanford
Alan Stead



Deadline for all copy for issue 15 is 1st May '89 but please try to submit it as soon as possible before that date. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN'S BIT

Welcome to Issue 14. I am very pleased to report that volunteers have come forward to fill some of our vacant posts. Malcolm Pike is our new Distributions Officer and David Sheehan is the Advertising/Discount Officer.

Unfortunately I have received resignations from our Technical Editor Stephen Brokenshire, Games Software Editor Clive Bentham and Business Software Editor Brian Bristow. I believe they have changed their computers and therefore will be out of touch with Amstrad software. If you think you could fill any of these vacancies please let me know and I will explain what is involved. Remember the success of UAUG depends on enough members being willing to take on these responsibilities. In the meantime all queries should be sent to me and I will try to find someone who can give immediate help. Failing that I will pass on the queries to Mailbox.

Finally, on a happier note I propose to start a Local Contact section for those who wish to meet other UAUG members who live in their area. This idea was suggested by Peter Breckin in a recent letter. If you are interested in such meetings please write to me giving permission for your name and address to be printed in the Contact section. If I receive two or more letters from the same area I will put those members in touch with each other right away so that they will not have to wait up to two months for the next issue of the magazine. If such meetings take place, please send a report to Mailbox as I am sure others would be interested and it might encourage more local groups to get together.

That's all for this time. Best wishes. - Tony Baker.

CONTACT : CONTACT : CONTACT : CONTACT
CONTACT : CONTACT : CONTACT : CONTACT
CONTACT : CONTACT : CONTACT : CONTACT

OFFERS OF HELP

General help and advice for choosing and using Word Processors: Don Snoad, 85 Woolston Road, Butlocks Heath, Southampton, Hants, SO3 5FN. SAE appreciated, or "quickies" by 'phone (0329-283666) during office hours.

Are you a bewildered beginner? So was I four years ago and still struggling. But if there are any questions you are afraid to ask, or any problems you think another head might help to solve, try me. No guarantees- but I promise to be sympathetic. I have Masterfile 464, Protext, Brainstorm, Mini-Office II, RODOS on ROM and am Basic literate, but useless at graphics. Contact: Angela Macaulay Fonte Fria, Alportel, Sao Bras de Alportel, Algarve, Portugal.

Help with Basic, G.A.C. and Genesis adventure creators. Contact: John Packham, 60 Hightown Towers, Warburton Road, Southampton, Hants. SO2 6HH.

Help with problems on a varied subject list, except hardware and assembly language (full details on request): contact Colin Evans, Windsor Crescent, Monk Bretton, Sth. Yorkshire, S71 2LU.

HELP WANTED

What input is required for the "Life" program (PD library) to enable it to run? Details please direct or through CPC User: John Benzies, 90 Leylands Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD9 5QS.

* FULL DETAILS OF ENTRIES FOR THIS SECTION ARE ON PAGE 3 *

DAVE CUTTS
demonstrates
the use of
KEY and
KEY DEF ... an occasional article on lesser used keywords

KEYWORDS

KEY #,string

The number refers to the expansion token # which, depending on circumstances, may be from 128 to 159 inclusive. The 'string' might easily be a predetermined string-variable such as a\$="CLS" and that one had decided to use expansion number of say, 128. Then your instruction would be KEY 128,a\$ or maybe KEY 128,"CLS".

Even 128 could have been made a variable; say a%=128. Then it could well be KEY a%,a\$. The string variable may be as complex as you wish, provided that you ensure, by the use of CHR\$(34)-"quotes sign" and CHR\$(13)-(carriage return), that the string, if printed, would be a correct set of instructions particularly from a syntax viewpoint. e.g. a\$="CLS:PRINT"+chr\$(34)+"OK"+chr\$(34)+chr\$(13) would be correct. It would CLS and print 'OK'. Case is not important but looks better though!

KEY DEF key#,repeat,normal,shifted,control

Here, the key# refers to those at Chapter 7, page 23. As to 'repeat', this is 1 for continuous (auto-repeat) action or 0 for single action when the key is pressed; the speed of such action being governed by use of SPEED KEY (which see). Incidentally, the 1 or 0, is mandatory.

'Normal' refers to the action you wish to be taken when the key is pressed without either shift or control applied. The other two are, therefore, self-explanatory.

However, the figures to enter into these 3 slots need further explanation. They may take different forms. Firstly, they may be those which have been prescribed by a KEY instruction. (e.g. 128 above) or a series (up to 3) of allotted KEY functions. They may also take the form of ASCII #s or even a combination of KEY allocations and ASCII #s. Thus, e.g. KEY 130,"CLS"+chr\$(13):KEY DEF 68,0,130,65,66 would result in CLS;A & B resulting from typing TAB;shifted/TAB and Control/TAB respectively. N.B. If you only allocate 1 figure that will always be the 'normal'. If 2, then they will be the 'normal' and the 'shifted' only. The others will remain as unaltered.

To restore the usual attributes of the keys, one needs to use KEY DEF again but now use the key refs., as stated at Chapter 7, page 21. So in the case above it would be KEY DEF 68,0,09,09,&E1. (Please note that these numbers are HEX.)

If you have other roms, then certain restrictions may be placed on your choices. For example, UTOPIA uses key expansion #s 150-159 incl. and 140 for the RUN"DISC" function. However, these can be still be altered if desired.

I hope this will help one or two of the less experienced members and would stress that one learns most by empirical means, so have a go and do not be afraid of doing harm. If your keyboard becomes hopelessly mixed up by making your c's into q's and your H's into Z's etc., and you find that trying to type, say, 'Now is the time' results in 'Hmt ko jpw jkdw', do not despair. Re-set your computer and try again!

Another point.. you may well find that duplication results in some cases. That is, that more than one key might give the same type-out. It can be avoided but to fathom out why should prove a good exercise in deduction and help you, more fully, to understand these useful functions.

THE CONTACT COLUMN

1. Any member may place a small notice of up to five lines in this section Requesting Pen-pals, Requesting or Offering Help. The author's name and address and/or telephone number must be included in the notice.
2. Entries under the first two headings will be removed after one edition. Offers of help will be removed only at the request of the author.
3. Please send all entries to The Chairman, 26 Uplands Crescent, Fareham, Hants., PO16 7JY. All entries are published at The Chairman's discretion.

choosing a second

DISC DRIVE...

PETER RACE looks at the options

My computer started out in life as a basic Amstrad CPC464 which was bought with the familiar package of a joystick and a dozen games on tape, being primarily acquired for my two young sons for playing games. Although I worked for a newspaper company at the time, this was in pre DTP days and the company Honeywell system was kept behind closed doors in a mysterious "D.P. DEPARTMENT". If I had managed to penetrate beyond these doors, the mere placing of one of my fingers on a keyboard would have provoked such an outcry that in all probability no member of the population of the entire North of England would have been able to read their Daily Mirrors or Telegraphs the following morning.

FRUSTRATION

After a few miserable failures in playing games I discovered there was also a tape in the package called EASI-AMSWORD and I was bitten with the computer bug. I then bought MINI OFFICE2 and was quite impressed by its ability to produce letters, spreadsheets and graphs, but not with its speed. But I couldn't send my correspondence on tapes and so the next purchase was a DMP3000 printer. By this time, my sons and I were becoming increasingly frustrated by the slow loading of tapes and their general unreliability and my language was also becoming more and more unprintable at the frequent sight of errors A and B. So it was time to add a disc drive and I duly obtained a DDI-1 and interface at vast expense.

Now the fever was really upon me and after adding another 64K of memory and installing the 6128 Basic chip, I discovered the world of ROMS; swiftly I filled my new Rombox with Protext, Prospell, Promerge Plus, Utopia and the two Graduate CP/M ROMS. The trouble was that the disc I used to customize Protext contained a program to set the function keys, load all the Qualitas fonts, the KDS 8 bit printer port program, a program to print a letterheading, etc., etc. After typing a letter and pressing f5 to save it, I was always being confronted by the message "Disc full!!"

By this time I had become interested in PD software and I found that I had collected a large number of programs which although fairly short in length nevertheless quickly filled up discs. Another frustration was felt when copying files from disc to disc; for this I always use UTOPIA and I would

recommend this utility to anyone as it is something which once acquired makes one wonder how one ever managed without it. The snag is that it involves continual swapping of discs and this swapping came to a head in one sense through joining UAUG. The first program I obtained was CENTROX which without two drives does again involve an awful lot of disc swapping. This is not in any way a criticism of Andrew Cope who had not only produced an excellent program but also provided me with speedy and very friendly help in my initial hassles with the program. Andrew does indeed give several warnings of the snags of only having one drive in his documentation.

THE CHOICES

The final factor that persuaded me to think seriously about adding another drive was the price of 3" discs; this I had always considered to be scandalously high although this may be explained by the fact that it appears that AMSTRAD are the only users and AMSOFT are the only suppliers. In the past I have bought discs for under £2.00 each but when I now read that Codemasters, who sell an enormous amount of budget games, are having to pay £2.30 for blank discs then I wonder just what the private user will have to pay if indeed he can lay his hands on them.

For these various reasons, I decided to buy a second drive; the question then was which one, and after investigating the market there appeared to be three alternatives, the pros and cons of which I shall attempt to identify.

Firstly the AMSTRAD FDI 3" drive. This has the same capacity as the DDI (178k on each disc side in DATA format) and if one can get hold of it, it costs a fraction under £100.00. No additional software is needed and one advantage is that it is the same size as the first drive and thus sits comfortably on top of it. But all the arguments about the high price of discs would still apply.

Secondly a 5.25" drive. There are various makes on the market and probably the best value would be the KDS version which, with software to increase the capacity to 800K, is advertised at around £150.00. 5.25" discs really score on price and can be bought for around £11.00 for 25 unbranded, double-sided, 100% certified and guaranteed. Branded discs are obviously dearer; 3M are advertised at £13.15 for 10. I cannot comment on the differences between branded and unbranded discs but

in either case there is obviously a tremendous price advantage over the 3" disc. There appear to be three disadvantages with the 5.25" drive; the actual drive is fairly large and if, as I do, you work on a small and crowded computer desk then things could become difficult. I also understand that the discs are fragile and definitely aptly-named floppy compared with the 3" variety; additionally it is easy to touch the exposed magnetic surface.

The third and final alternative is the 3.5" drive and this is the one that I decided to buy. The feature that struck me first was its incredibly small size being just over one inch high, four inches wide and around seven inches deep - much smaller than the Amstrad DDI-1. 3.5" discs are of more robust construction than 5.25" and are thus less liable to accidental damage. They are more expensive; typical prices are £24.00 for 25 unbranded double-sided discs, and £15.35 for 10 branded discs. The supplier of the drive is Siren Software of Manchester and members of UAUG can obtain very good terms from them.

DISCOUNTS

In the computer press, Siren quote a price of £124.99 for the 3.5" drive with RAMDOS software on disc and blank discs at £1.00 each; for an additional £10.00, the software is on ROM either as ROMDOS (the ROM version of RAMDOS) or Romantic Robot's RODOS. I contacted Siren, mentioning that I was a member of UAUG, and asked for their price for the 3.5" drive, the RAMDOS software, and five blank discs. The total price quoted was £97.47, which amounted to a twenty five per cent discount. So for less than the price of an Amstrad 3" drive, I could obtain a high capacity 3.5" NEC or MITSUBISHI drive together with software and five discs. Of course, if you already had the software I am sure that Siren would give a similar discount for the drive on its own.

The Siren drive is supplied with a power supply and a ribbon cable which connects to the second drive port on the 6128 or to the cable between the interface and the first drive on the 464. It literally is "Plug in and go!" but there is one small point to watch; as I have explained earlier in this article, my 464 has the 64K expansion and the 6128 Basic chip. In other words it appears to be a 6128 and the sign-on message announces it as such. But the I/O sockets are still 464 so this fact must be emphasised to Siren; I am afraid I wasn't very clear in my order and my drive arrived (delivery time was around a fortnight) with the 6128 connection on the ribbon cable. Fortunately I am not far from Manchester and thus was able to take the drive in and have the correct connector fitted.

I have made frequent references to the software and this is what makes the difference between the 40-track Amstrad drives and the 80-track 3.5" and 5.25"

drives. When the software is run, a disc can be formatted in several ways, the most useful probably being that which gives 796K. To cope with this increased capacity, the number of directory entries can be increased to 128 or even 256. I understand that the Siren drive can even reach a capacity of 880K. Although the discs for both drives are double sided only one directory is produced and there is no need to turn discs over.

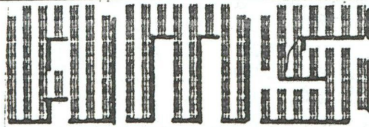
Why did I go for the RAMDOS software, bearing in mind my admiration for ROMS? The answer is twofold; not only is my Rombox full but RAMDOS also scores over RODOS by giving the large capacity not only with AMSDOS but also with CP/M+ and even with CP/M2.2. The RAMDOS programs are not protected and indeed KDS (the software producers) suggest that a copy of the relevant programs - under AMSDOS these would be ramdos.bas and ramdos.bin - is saved on each 3" disc it is to be used with. Initialisation is very simple (don't be worried by the fact that the KDS manual or the disc label are both for the 5.25" drive because Siren told me that they apply equally to the 3.5" drives); insert the 3" disc and type "run ramdos.bas" and you will be confronted with the various choices of 464,664 and 6128 configurations. A point to remember is that if you have a 464 with 64K expansion enter Option 2 but if you have changed to the 6128 chip, then you must enter the 6128 Option 5. Ramdos.bas in turn loads ramdos.bin and that is it. With Ramdos formatting is straightforward; run "formats.bin" and make your choice from the menu. In an ideal world, I should have preferred to have ROMDOS (the ROM version of RAMDOS) but to do this, I would either have to have sacrificed one of my present ROMS or bought another Rombox.

To sum up, if the reader intends to use a very large number of discs and has plenty of working space in the physical sense, then the saving in price on discs might compensate for the higher price of the 5.25" drive; there may also be a supplier who would discount the price. But I consider that the Siren 3.5" drive is an absolute bargain in price and it should be borne in mind that the computer industry is rapidly adopting the 3.5" disc as the standard; who knows what the future supply position will be on the 3" disc?

HELP NEEDED!

Since writing this, I have found one minor snag; Utopia will not copy files to the 3.5" disc so until I have solved this problem (has any kind reader got a solution?), I have used NSWP.COM or PIP.COM to transfer files. Also the Prospell dictionary will not transfer to a RAMDOS formatted disc; the simple solution if you want Prospell in Drive B is to format a 3.5" disc in the normal 40 track style (using Utopia) without loading RAMDOS and copy the dictionary to this.

-. - MUSIC
 -. - MUSIC
 -. - MUSIC



ADVANCED
 MUSIC
 SYSTEM

reviewed by
 STEPHEN FISK

As far as I know UAUG has not so far devoted attention to the Advanced Music System published by Rainbird. Yet a user group would seem to be the ideal forum in which to develop an interest in music software. Advice on using AMS could be passed around and music files could easily be exchanged between group members. No doubt several other UAUG members possess AMS and I hope this article may help to sustain their interest in using it. For anyone else who would like to use their CPC to make music I would thoroughly recommend acquiring this excellent piece of software.

The Advanced Music System has three sections or "modules". The main section, the Editor (or Editor-Keyboard module, to give it its full title), was originally published on its own under the title "The Music System". "Linker" and "Printer" modules were added later. The Editor is used to create music files, but each file is limited to 999 notes. Longer pieces can be produced with the Linker module by stringing several files together. The Printer module allows you to print out a music file on paper, with the option of adding lyrics if you wish.

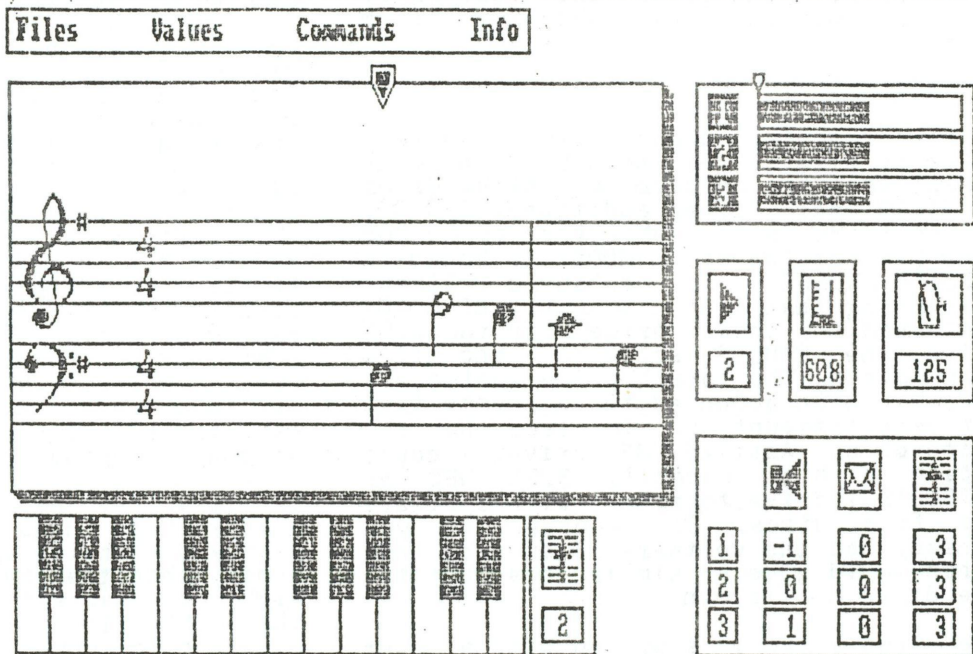
A slightly irritating feature is that the three modules are not properly integrated. In order to move between modules it is necessary to exit the current module and then load the second module from disc. Before using the Printer module, for example, you have to save the current music file, exit from the Editor, load the Printer module and then re-load your file.

The central part of AMS is the Editor. Part of the screen display shows a two-octave keyboard. If you are so inclined you can produce single-line music by "playing" the keys along the top two rows of the CPC keyboard and each note will simultaneously be represented on the screen keyboard.

However, the main purpose of the Editor is to construct music files. A small section of the musical score is displayed on the screen and each note can be entered or edited in a variety of ways.

LIMITATIONS

The musical possibilities of AMS are of course limited by the constraints of the sound chip in the CPC (the AY-3-8912). In particular you are restricted to three channels of sound at a time. Any music with more than three lines of notes will have to be adapted.



A TYPICAL "AMS" SCREEN DISPLAY

Another limitation of the CPC is the poor quality of its loudspeaker. However, this can be overcome by linking the computer to a hi-fi system via the stereo socket. Extremely attractive stereo music can then be produced.

The Editor has a wide variety of facilities. A range of seven octaves can be produced, you can change the key of a music file (transposition) and you can vary its speed. The notes within each line of music can be played at various volumes and with a choice of sound envelopes.

Most of the facilities of the Editor can be used in two alternative ways. On the one hand there are several pop-up menus that allow you to select various features, but as with all menu systems this requires a sequence of key presses and is therefore relatively slow. For more experienced users many operations can be carried out by individual key presses. In practice it should not take long to memorise the keys for each operation.

As a music file is built up, full information about it is provided on screen. The music score indicates what notes have been selected, with volume and envelopes, while a "barmeter device" tells you how much of each voice has been used and whereabouts the current note lies within the voice.

Readers who have used the Basic "sound" command will be familiar with the concept of a sound envelope. During the course of a given note it is possible to vary both its volume and its pitch. AMS contains two sets of pre-set sound envelopes, each set consisting of seven envelopes. Although it is easy to switch from one set to the other, there is a serious bug in the software which means that in certain circumstances (which seem to arise very often!) such switching may corrupt existing envelopes and also make it impossible to save files to disc. It is in fact not at all clear why the envelopes are divided into two sets rather than having a single larger set.

SYNTHESISER

A major feature of AMS is the ability to create new sound envelopes using the "Synthesiser" section within the Editor-Keyboard module. The Synthesiser display occupies a large area of the screen and provides information about the volume and pitch envelopes as you change them. For various reasons this may prove to be the most difficult part of AMS to get to grips with. However, a patient trial and error process can produce some very rewarding results.

Another bug within AMS sometimes occurs when you enter the Synthesiser. The effect is to wipe out the voice you are currently working on. Fortunately this bug too can be easily avoided (by making sure that you enter the Synthesiser on the empty note at the end of the voice).

As mentioned earlier individual music files can be put together by means of the Linker module. In this way, continuous pieces lasting some ten minutes or more can be produced. A problem here is that there is always a brief pause between linked files. While it is often possible to get round this by completing each file at a natural break in the music, some types of music that can be reproduced most effectively on AMS (especially Bach) tend to flow in a continuous fashion.

THE PRINTER MODULE

With the Printer module you can print out a music file on paper. It is possible to combine two music files so that up to six lines of music are printed, but this results in a very cluttered printout. If songs are printed the words can be added beneath the music score. On the whole the quality of such printouts is very pleasing, but there are a number of problems and limitations within this module. The computer simply freezes if the printer is not on-line as there is no mechanism to check this. In addition it is not possible to use printer control codes.

Two manuals come with AMS, one covering the Editor-Keyboard and the other the Printer and Linker modules. They are well produced and on the whole clearly written, but the authors have not been able to resist the temptation to introduce a certain amount of jargon. You have to learn the meaning of phrases like "Voice Monitor Window" and "volume/pitch switch".

How will AMS be used? The owner with little or no musical training can use it to listen to electronically produced music, and may fancy a little experimental tinkling on the keyboard. Users who understand a music score will want to transcribe pieces for the AMS, try out different sound effects, and so on. The more adventurous (and I am afraid I do not include myself) will attempt original compositions. I would imagine that this is potentially the most rewarding use as the music could be composed to take advantage of the special characteristics of AMS.

The authors of the manuals describe AMS as the musical equivalent of a word processor and it is true that the analogy can be pushed quite a long way. In particular it is a complex piece of software that can be used at various levels. Satisfactory results can be produced after a short period of familiarity, but a good deal of persistence is needed to make full use of all its facilities and create musical results of high quality. As in the case of word processors, the manuals are essential but more can be learnt by hands-on experience.

The original Music System appeared about three years ago, and Advanced Music System quite soon afterwards. Since then there has been, to my knowledge, a disappointing lack of development work, though I would be delighted to be corrected by any UAUG member who knows differently. One person, however, Rob Baxter, has done a great deal to sustain interest and assist others to make fuller use of AMS.

Continued in page 8 

● An introduction to

BULLETIN BOARDS - -

by JOHN CARVER ●

You will have little success attempting to connect your computer to a Bulletin Board without the necessary modem, interface and software. Once aquired, the next step is to learn to use them. After digesting the manuals (no I don't mean eat them!) the best way to learn is to PRACTISE.

Bulletin Boards fall into two main types, Viewdata and Scrolling (sometimes called ASCII). Viewdata is the one that draws pretty pictures, like Teletext; it is terribly slow but simple to use. So simple in fact that I won't mention it again. (Yuk, - I am not a fan of V!*\$&@ta).

Scrolling (ASCII) Bulletin Boards need to be contacted using suitable scrolling software such as Honeyterm or even PD free software like UKMODEM' or MEX. The most common mistake is to fail to set the parity correctly. It is not necessary to understand what the parity does just that if it is set incorrectly you will send and receive instructions which will be translated as gibberish onto your monitor. Most Bulletin Boards accept eight bits, no parity and one stop bit. The next most important thing to set before logging-on is the connect speed. Most of the popular boards accept 1200/75, that is receive at 1200 baud and transmit at 75 baud. I would recommend this setup for beginners.

Once you have managed to set the software, then dial the number of a board. Lists of boards can be found in many magazines; there is bound to be one near you. At the last count there were about 2000 in the UK. If you can't find one then try [0962] 69322 (Winchester ROS).

If everything is set correctly and the number is not engaged, a welcome message will scroll onto your computer monitor. DON'T PANIC! Answer the questions asked of you by typing them into your keyboard. Before long you will find yourself looking at a bunch of daunting menus. Don't be intimidated by them; you won't damage your computer by selecting an option. Remember, if you get completely stuck you can always pull the plug out.

On the first visit to a bulletin board it is always polite to leave a message for the SYSOP (SYStem OPERator) who will usually validate you for access to all the goodies for your next visit.

I have kept it simple for this short introduction. Should you already own a modem and want further advice, then contact me on Winchester ROS, [0962] 69322.

Winchester ROS has a reserved area for the UAUG. If when requesting validation you state your membership number, you will be given a higher access level and more on-line time to download all those PD goodies.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7



In the bleak mid winter frosty winds made moan

FROM JAZZ TO BACH

Rob Baxter's biggest achievement has been to produce a series of discs crammed with very high quality musical transcriptions. A lot of his music comes from the eighteenth century, including an enormous amount of Bach and a delightful rendering of the Four Seasons by Vivaldi. In addition, however, he has succeeded in transcribing a variety of later classical music and a certain amount of jazz music. Especially notable is his version of Mussorgsky's Pieces at an Exhibition. He has also tried his hand at composition, and his own "Halloween" shows off AMS to full effect.

Rob has also written a very useful paper, "A Look at Envelopes". As well as clarifying the somewhat obscure description of the Synthesiser in the manual, the paper gives detailed advice on how to get the most out of this part of AMS.

Rob's address is 50 Milton Grove, Whalley Range, Manchester, M16 0BP.

In conclusion, I hope this article will prompt other AMS owners to write to the magazine describing their experience in using it and passing on any tips.

A BIT OF HISTORY....

QWERTY by
DVORAK Don
 Snoad

Have you ever wondered why your keyboard is sometimes referred to as a QWERTY keyboard? Or, more importantly, have you ever asked yourself why the keys are arranged in the layout seen on almost all typewriters and computer keyboards in the western world? The answers to both questions are rooted in the work of Christopher Latham Sholes.

Way back, about 150 years ago, when mechanical typewriters were being invented, the keyboard was laid out so that the most used keys were nearest the most used fingers; the idea being that the most used fingers of the human hand must be the strongest and should therefore be adjacent to the most frequently used keyboard keys. As typists became more proficient, their typing speed increased to the point when they exceeded the ability of the mechanical linkages to keep pace; the result was that the linkages either jammed or the typists were compelled to slow down. This did not suit the businessmen of the day and the new fangled typing machine began to fall into disrepute, so much so that manufacturers such as Remington and Sun commissioned engineers and inventors to overcome the problem. However, at that time no-one could improve upon the design and there was serious talk of abandoning the typing machine altogether. This is when our hero, Chris Sholes, appears on the scene.

Sholes, like his contemporaries, could find no way of improving the efficiency of the mechanical linkages so he approached the problem from an entirely different direction. Sholes did not invent a more efficient typewriter. He invented a much less efficient keyboard with the most frequently used keys under the least used fingers. With this intentionally difficult arrangement of keys, typists seldom overloaded the capacity of those early typing machines. As typewriter mechanisms improved, the keyboard remained unchanged. Sholes did a good job; his intentionally inefficient keyboard has plagued typists for generations.

The electric typewriter came along in 1920 and because of its much improved design there really was no reason why the QWERTY keyboard should continue; but continue it did, mainly because tutors and proficient typists refused to retrain. In 1930, August Dvorak took the bull by the horns and produced a 'simplified' keyboard which placed the most often used letters under the most often used fingers. After a number of false starts, manufacturers eventually became interested but World War II put the mockers on it. After the war, there was much talk about the Dvorak keyboard but the majority of typists dug their heels in and refused to learn a new keyboard even though it promised increased speed and less fatigue. The new Dvorak keyboard was a total non-starter in the UK and the Americas but had some following in France and Belgium. It became popular with the Esperantists but only one manufacturer, namely Smith Corona, produced a Dvorak keyboard.

With the boom in home and small business computers, there are sound arguments for resurrecting the Dvorak keyboard. Most computer users in this category are not trained typists and the earlier arguments for resisting the Dvorak keyboard are not valid. Whilst it must be accepted that the computer industry in its entirety is unlikely to adopt the Dvorak keyboard, there is no reason why individuals should not reconfigure their own keyboards and it won't be long before some bright spark markets a utility program to do just that.

The concept of the Dvorak keyboard makes sense and the evidence in support of it is convincing. Typing becomes much easier - quicker to learn and faster to use - and is less tiring than the QWERTY arrangement.




```

5 ' BIRTHDAY CARD
7 ' by Sophy Hodson
10 CLS
15 ORIGIN 0,0
20 DRAWR 50,0
30 FOR i=1 TO 11
40 DRAWR 0,40
50 DRAWR 40,0
60 DRAWR 0,-30
70 DRAWR -20,0
80 DRAWR 0,10
90 DRAWR 10,0
100 DRAWR 0,10
110 DRAWR -20,0
120 DRAWR 0,-30
130 DRAWR 40,0
140 NEXT i
150 DRAWR 0,50
160 FOR j=1 TO 6
170 DRAWR -40,0
180 DRAWR 0,40
190 DRAWR 30,0
200 DRAWR 0,-20
210 DRAWR -10,0
220 DRAWR 0,10
230 DRAWR -10,0
240 DRAWR 0,-20
250 DRAWR 30,0
260 DRAWR 0,40
270 NEXT j
280 DRAWR -50,0
290 FOR k=1 TO 11
300 DRAWR 0,-40
310 DRAWR -40,0
320 DRAWR 0,30
330 DRAWR 20,0
340 DRAWR 0,-10
350 DRAWR -10,0
360 DRAWR 0,-10
370 DRAWR 20,0
380 DRAWR 0,30
390 DRAWR -40,0
400 NEXT k
410 DRAWR 0,-50
420 FOR l=1 TO 6
430 DRAWR 40,0
440 DRAWR 0,-40
450 DRAWR -30,0
460 DRAWR 0,20
470 DRAWR 10,0
480 DRAWR 0,-10
490 DRAWR 10,0
500 DRAWR 0,20
510 DRAWR -30,0
520 DRAWR 0,-40
530 NEXT l
540 DRAWR 50,0
550 WINDOW #1,5,34,8,21

```

```

560 PAPER #1,2
570 CLS #1
580 PEN #1,0
590 FOR p=1 TO 15
600 PRINT #1,CHR$(238);CHR$(198);
610 NEXT p
620 FOR s=1 TO 15
630 PRINT #1,CHR$(198);CHR$(238);
640 NEXT s
650 PRINT #1:PRINT #1
660 PRINT #1:PRINT #1
680 PRINT #1,TAB(6)"HELLO ERICA"
690 ' Change Name as Required
700 PRINT #1,TAB(6)".....HAPPY
BIRTHDAY"
710 PRINT #1:PRINT #1
720 PRINT #1:PRINT #1
730 FOR r=1 TO 15
740 PRINT #1,CHR$(238);CHR$(198);
750 NEXT r
760 FOR q=1 TO 15
770 PRINT #1,CHR$(198);CHR$(238);
780 NEXT q
790 SOUND 1,239,15
800 SOUND 1,239,15,0
810 SOUND 1,239,15
820 SOUND 1,239,15,0
830 SOUND 1,213,60
840 SOUND 1,239,60
850 SOUND 1,179,60
860 SOUND 1,190,120
870 SOUND 1,239,15
880 SOUND 1,239,15,0
890 SOUND 1,239,15
900 SOUND 1,239,15,0
910 SOUND 1,213,60
920 SOUND 1,239,60
930 SOUND 1,159,60
940 SOUND 1,179,120
950 SOUND 1,239,15
960 SOUND 1,239,15,0
970 SOUND 1,239,15
980 SOUND 1,239,15,0
990 SOUND 1,119,60
1000 SOUND 1,142,60
1010 SOUND 1,179,60
1020 SOUND 1,190,60
1030 SOUND 1,213,120
1040 SOUND 1,134,15
1050 SOUND 1,134,15,0
1060 SOUND 1,134,15
1070 SOUND 1,134,15,0
1080 SOUND 1,142,60
1090 SOUND 1,179,60
1100 SOUND 1,159,60
1110 SOUND 1,179,180
1120 END

```


Sophy Hodson of Clynderwen writes:-

I have been following recent correspondence in CPC User with much interest and am in complete agreement with the complaints regarding badly written manuals, and difficulty on obtaining information on scientific and technical programmes. Commencing from being mathematical literate but computer illiterate I have found it extremely arduous trying to further my acquaintance with computers on a self-taught basis, via magazines and books, since most explanations of one bit of jargon involve at least three more which you (sorry, I) have never heard of. Your magazine is one of the few (the only one I have found) which caters for those of us who, while wanting to get to serious grips with using computers, are out of reach of the range of evening classes, computer clubs, etc. available to those living near towns large enough to support such luxuries. Even books have to be bought by post, or on a rare trip to the bright lights.

To give you an idea how far I have progressed, I enclose my latest achievement, a birthday card for my daughter - I'm sure any programmer worth his/her salt would run rings round it, but it gave me a lot of brain-stretching.

To come to the main point of this letter, can anyone help me with any of the following:-

1. You mention the Software Authors Yearbook. Our library hasn't heard of it, and could not find it on the microfiche for the books in the County. Can you give me any more detail, eg. ISBN No.?
2. The items KPFLY and DC10 on PD7/5 are marked "Not configured for CPC" can you advise me what range of computers these are configured for?
3. I am considering getting Nevada Fortran - can this run on a 464 with DDI-1 on CPM2.2?
4. I have a fairly short program which would be extremely useful to me, but it needs the function of arc-sin, the inverse of sin, which the 464 does not support. Is there any means of deriving the inverse trig functions?

Thank you for your letter and type-in, to which I have added line 15 to force repeat runs to start at the same point. A very impressive beginners brain stretcher.

There are three books on Basic in the UAUG library, Ref's B1002P/34P/43P, all available from our friendly librarian. I hope one of these may be of help.

The Software Authors Yearbook eludes us. Perhaps someone out there can give some details. Also could help be forthcoming on Sophy's queries.

Fred Hilton of Merseyside writes :-

In your 5 star service you have a PD library. I would be interested in any utilities for the DMP-1 printer, ie a printer dump, character generator for printer and/or keyboard. Can any of your members tell me the control codes to redefine the printer character set in the DMP-1. I have the Protex Word processor on tape.

I have just received issue 12 of the magazine and find it interesting and informative. Can you please advise me of any back issues I need to load and run the PD library utilities.

Sorry, but we do not have any printer dump utilities in the PD library. Perhaps someone has written one and can help.

PD software should run from within the required working environment, ie CPM, or AMSDOS using the normal commands. If you have a specific query on a particular piece of PD software please let us know and we will endeavour to help further.

Peter Mead from Edinburgh writes:-

I have now been a member of UAUG for about 6 months and it is time I contributed to Mailbox. I am a retired electronics engineer with some professional computing experience in the past and now with a CPC464 and 2 disc drives. My principal computing interests are in programming (including machine code), especially tools and utilities.

I hope soon to send you an original machine code program for a fast and flexible screen dump which gains speed by directly accessing the screen memory and by only dumping a specified graphics window, not necessarily the whole screen. There is also a choice of bit image modes for Epson-compatible printers and other facilities, so as well as offering it as PD software, it could well form the subject of a short descriptive article, with or without a listing. It is fully completed and proven, but I would like to add a self-relocation facility.

I would like to ask a question about BASIC compilers. Some months ago I bought the Hisoft Turbobasic compiler, which seemed very reasonably priced. My immediate use for it was to compile an excellent but rather slow assembler written in BASIC by R.A. Waddilove, in Computing with the Amstrad in 1985. I first had to modify this program considerably to comply with the compiler's limitations, as listed in the manual and others which I found. In due course I got it compiled but when run I found that some data in arrays was always corrupted. After struggling for months, I wrote to Hisoft, who replied that they were out of touch with the originator, but had marketed it at a low

MAILBOX

price because they knew it had limitations! They could only suggest that the program being compiled was too long (though within the limits in the manual) and certainly it worked with short programs.

However a compiler is scarcely worth using on short programs, because of the large amount of "baggage" they have to carry in the way of extra memory (for the Hisoft, about 2500 bytes and higher in some other BASIC compilers). Can you give some information about BASIC compilers? I can never understand why they cannot use the code generated by the BASIC interpreter. A few years ago a program published in Computing with the Amstrad claimed to do this. It was a relatively short program but to enter the code took a good hour, but when used it gave a message "April fool. You cannot use the interpreter for compiling", but did not explain why!

It appears to me that FORTH is one of the best compiling languages, it compiles quickly and is economical with memory and like BASIC can be used in immediate mode. It has its enthusiasts, of which I am one, but has never been really popular. Perhaps you will have a future article on FORTH in your programming series.

Welcome to the UAUG. Thanks for getting off to a good start by sending in your offering on disc.

Two very good subjects for articles and/or reviews. Any takers to help our new member.

A similiar program was written for the Comdador (sorry, another machine). It took a friend a week to enter and de-bugg after being promised a brill program. He was not impressed.

■

P.W. Race from Stockport writes:-

Firstly - the brickbat. On the 5th December, I wrote to Stephen Brockenshre for some advice on the pros and cons of various types of second disc drives for my expanded CPC464. Despite enclosing a SAE I have received no reply.

Secondly - the bouquet. having excellant advice from another User Group of which I am a member, I decided to buy a 3.5" drive from Siren Software and wrote to Simon Cobb for a price, mentioning that I was a UAUG member. The price he quoted for the drive plus 5 discs was less than the normal Amstrad price for the standard second 3" drive and the discount was, therefore, approximately 25%. Someone has obviously negotiated very good terms with Siren and makes membership of UAUG very worthwhile.

We can only apologise on Stephen's behalf for our failing, but pleased to know that our discount service was of help.
PS. Thanks for the review on drives which is printed in this issue.

John Packham from Southampton writes:-

Recently, in various magazines, I have noticed several letters and articles about upgrading the 464 to a 6128, by opening up your dear old Arnold, removing a bit of his inners and giving him a transplanted 6128 ROM (No. 40025). This could quite possibly result in a bit of soldering.

Well now, there's an easier method (if you can afford it).

Some of you may have noticed in the recent edition of ACU an article by Phil Craven for making a ROM changer. Well, Phil Craven also produces a thing called the ROMBOARD EXTRA.

This is more or less a standard romboard and contains 7 ROM sockets, the important thing being, that one of these is reserved for the 6128 ROM ONLY, but you can use the other 6 sockets for any other standard ROM's that you might have.

On top of the board (which stands upright behind Arnold) is a switch, which, when positioned towards the centre changes the 464 to a 6128. To return to 464, simply flick the switch back away from the centre. If the switch is operated while the machine is switched on, then it may be necessary to press the RESET button which is also incorporated into the board. Personally, I prefer to make the selection prior to switching on the machine. The RESET button is also handy in those cases when the SHIFT+CONTROL+ESC key does'nt work.

Also on the board are 7 small blue links. These are like small plugs. They can be removed tquite easily, and in doing so, Disable the appropriate ROM socket. Be careful when removing these plugs, because, as I said, they are small, and if you are not careful they could be dropped and lost forever.

If you purchase them, I hope you will find them as usefull as I have.

PS I have no vested interest in this company. I'm just one satisfied customer.

The ROMBOARD EXTRA (£20), and 6128 ROM (£19.95) are available from :-

MICROSTYLE
212 Dudley Hill Rd
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD2 3DF

Thank you John. Sounds like the ideal conversion kit for those amongst us who prefer not to play around inside their Arnolds about, but I wonder why MICROSOFT went for removable links rather than switches. All you need now is a copy of CPM+.

John Goodwin from Sheffield Writes:-

I would like to know if any member has heard of any developments regarding a hard-disc drive for the CPC range. I use both a hard-disc and hard card in the computers at work and have seen the benefits of these, particularly the large storage capacity. I also like the use of sub-directories and the speed at which the commands are carried out. I have read in various magazines that there was such a device under development, but that was some time ago. Also in my work I use Dbase 111+, an excellent database. Before that I had used Dbase 11 which was also very good; the point I'm getting to is, I know Dbase 11 is available for the CPC's, but I'd like to know more. I am considering buying this package and wonder if any member had seen this in action. Obviously it will not be as good as on a PC because of the memory size difference. I'd like to know if it will run without memory expansion and just how good it is.

I recall the rumours about hard disc drives for the CPC's, but they never came to fruition unless, of course, someone knows different.

Can anybody help with the Dbase 11 info.

Alan Beecher of E.Sussex writes:-

When I tried to unsqueeze NSW.P.DQC following the instructions by Don Snoad in iss 9 p.5 of CPC User, I met total resistance from my computer. My set-up is an expanded 464 with 6128 chip, DD1 drive, ROMbox with PROTEXT and a silicon disc.

The sequence of actions and reactions are as follows:-

1. load CPM+
2. A>PIP
3. CPM 3 PIP VERSION 3.0
4. Change to PD disc
5. *B:=A:NSWP.DQC
6. ERROR: FILE NOT FOUND - A:NSWP.DQC

and nothing I can think of to do will make it change its mind.

When I DIR the disc it shows NSW.P.DQC so what am I doing wrong. Any help will be most appreciated.

I have followed the actions as described in your letter and I'm afraid that I had no problem. Your equipment is not standard but should work OK. Have you tried the same procedure to copy a file other than NSW.P.DQC? If it fails on all files then it may be a hardware fault - perhaps the set-up for the silicon disk is incorrect?

You should get the following sign-on message when CPM+ has booted up:

CP/M Plus Amstrad Consumer Electronics
PLC v. 1.0 61k TPA 1 disc drive

If not then this might be a symptom of other problems.

However there is no need to copy NSW.P.DQC if you just want a print out of the file. The procedure is:

1. Put the disc with NSW.P in your drive at the CPM (2.2 or 3) prompt and type 'NSWP'
2. Replace the NSW.P disc with the one containing your squeezed file
3. Type '1' followed by 'a0' (assuming you are using drive a) to log-on the new disc
4. Press SPACE until the squeezed filename appears.
5. Press 'V' or 'P' to print to screen or printer respectively

Sorry I can't be of more help.

Fred Ball from Blackpool writes:-

I have a 6128 and have been thinking of a second disc drive for some time and was taken by the review of Siren's 3.5 Drive in Feb ACU. This size seems ideal. However, I wonder if you could give me some advice.

Would it be difficult for a layman to marry any such drive with a 6128 if something like RODOS were added.

It seems to me, a novice in this field, that the two criteria which must be satisfied are the voltage compatibility and cabling to the computer.

Any advice would be very much appreciated.

I think that firstly you must ask yourself the following questions. What do I want to use the second drive for and how much am I prepared to pay.

Firstly, if you want to use a second drive as anything other than a 180k per side then it is doubtful that any commercial software that is protected will work as you will not be able to run any driver software. So that narrows it down to another 3" or 5.25" used as a standard drive. If you are not of a technical nature then I suggest you do not try to buy a drive that needs cables and power supplies made up, as all this will add to the cost.

I have heard very good reviews of the Siren disc and believe it is possible to get one at a discount. See also letter and review on the Siren drive by Peter Race in this issue.

See also the review by Peter Race in this issue.

Peter Breckin of Bury, Lancs write:-

I have recently made contact with with two other members, Mr. John Benzies and Mr Tony Bradford, and have spent a few enjoyable hours with with each.

Is it possible for the author of the PD program "WALES" to produce an article on how it is done, or how about one on Lancashire & Yorkshire.

Could you please tell me how the Christmas card was produced.

Recently chasing disc cases I managed to track some to the Multi-Coloured Shop at Redcar, they are 39p each plus £1 postage putting them at 50p each. Quite an increase from the 25p ea as stated in issue 10 page 13. Perhaps an approach, along with K & M Computers of Skelmersdale, to see if they are willing to give UAUG members a discount.

At the last Amstrad Exhibition in Manchester I obtained a copy of Stop Press but with Pagemaker manual. I wrote to AMS Ltd on 1st December with several queries but received no replies so I visited them. They exchanged the manual but did not answer any of my queries satisfactorily. The two I have not solved are how to extract a cut-out and use it by itself, secondly my printer seems to give a very elongated print to the cut-outs and the letter fonts (this does not happen with any other programs, my printer is a Star DP150). I have calculated that if the height is multiplied by 0.66 they would be about right. Is there any way of altering the program so that this is done? And is it possible to use any fonts from D.R.Draw with Stop Press?

The PD program "LASBALL" is written for a colour screen - what changes are required to make it easily seen on a green screen.

I would appreciate an article on the program by Alex Aird - "CATS" on how it works.

Well I have given you enough to chew over. I look forward to the next issue.

□
LASBALL - edit lines 110 & 120 to the appropriate ink values. A suitable change might be brilliant white (but not the background):

110 INK 1,27:INK 2,27:INK 3,27

I cannot help with the cut-outs and Dr Draw fonts. These probably need some investigation into the file structure. Assuming that Stop Press has not been changed since I threw it in the bin, the following describes how it prints a page.

Each page is made up of 568 rows, each 114 bytes (912 pixels) wide. The standard depth of a row using one pin of the head is 3/216 inches. Simple arithmetic shows that 568 x 3/216 is not deep enough to

fill a page. So Stop Press prints each row twice with a 1/216 inch linefeed between, effectively giving a row depth of 4/216, which will fill the page.

This explains why Stop Press is bad for your patience and your print head - it has to print 1136 pixel rows using just

Now, I guess that your Star DP10 is not truly Epson compatible and does a 3/216 line feed when Stop Press sends the Epson codes for a 1/216 line feed. This would mean that each pixel row is effectively 6/216 inches deep and not 4/216, hence your correction factor of 0.66.

The solution, assuming your Star is capable of a 1/216 linefeed? Sorry, it won't be easy. To do this you MUST use a backup copy of Stop Press. You will also need a good disc editor (eg Discology). You should try to find the overlay file which does the printing - do a search for the standard Epson codes for a 1/216 line feed (27 51 1). Then edit this file to substitute the Star's code. Easy to say, maybe harder to do!

The Christmas card was produced by Gary Carter using Printing Press on a PC1512 (shame on him) and a Panasonic KX-P1081 9 pin dot matrix printer. The program is not available for the CPC's.

■
M Catton of Gosport writes :-

A belated reply to Pieter Cox's query concerning redefinable characters.

With the CPC's limitation to 7 bits, it is only possible to control the bottom 7 pins. To control the upper 7 would require an attribute byte greater than 127, which cannot be sent. Since text uses the upper 7, apart from tails, text and redefined characters are displaced 2 dots. The best answer to the difficulty is to fit the KDS 8-bit port, with which either the top 8 or the bottom 8 pins can be controlled.

As an alternative, the paper can be jiggled vertically by 2 dots to bring the two into alignment. The Epson codes 27,74,6 advance the paper by 2 dots, and 27,106,6 reverses the paper by 2 dots. These two printer codes will cause the redefined characters to be printed on the same line as the text.

□
We hope this clears up your problems Pieter and apologise for the long wait.

Phil Morley of 11 Kingfisher Rd., Whittlesey, Peterborough, PE7 1YF writes:

I would like to offer my services as a DTP contributor, mainly in short article form, using Micro Design by Siren Software, Advanced Studio Art by Rainbow and Printmaster again by Siren Software.

Does anyone know how to print Quadruple Height on a Citizen 120 printer.

Paul Newman of Leiston asked about a Spectrum to CPC conversion program. "Your Computer" did a 2 week type-in some time ago. Please contact me for more details.

Peter Breckin of Bury asked about other members, without typing too many words we could have a list in the back pages of members who were willing to have their addresses published for the purpose of people local to each other to make contact in whatever way they thought.

Mrs Terry Walker of Hythe asked about a knitting program (see below ED).

The Siren update to Discology is £5.99 plus the your original disc.

Has anyone found a better TAPE to DISC copier than Discology.

To get a working copy of Mini Office II use Discology.

□

We welcome all article contributions but would very much appreciate our time being made more profitable by contributions being presented on disc.

A similiar article was written in CWA a while ago but it only allowed the transfer to the CPC in a usable form. To get the transferred program to run, a great deal of further work was required. Not having read the article you mention, I wonder this program is not of the same vein.

The subject of printing members addresses has been gone into in previous issues.

For further information on the knitting program write to :-

Terry Mason
15 Inishmoyne Green,
Antrim.
N.Ireland. BT41 4JZ
Tel 08494 62381

See last issue of CPC User for an article by Tony Baker on Nirvana, a disc handling utility.

EDITORS MEMO

When writing to the magazine, will members please send their letters to the appropriate editor, (see inside front cover for addresses) to ensure a speedy and satisfactory reply. Please enclose a SAE if a written answer is required. The Executive Editors reserve the right to edit and publish such letters as they see fit, unless clearly marked "Not for publication".

Apologies to members whose letters have not been published. Some will be carried over to the next issue.

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ALL TITLES FROM KONAMI'S COIN-OP HITS
SUMMER GOLD BY US GOLD; DAMBUSTERS; BEACH HEAD II - 10th FRAME - BRUCE LEE IMPOSSIBLE MISSION
FROM THEY SOLD A MILLION; SABREWOLF - BEACH HEAD - JET SET WILLY - DALY THOMPSONS DECATHLON

An enormous amount of time has been spent and hundreds of transfers made whilst developing SPEEDTRANS. It is, without doubt, the best speedlock transfer utility on the market today and is capable of transferring more SPEEDLOCK games to disc than any of its competitors.

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FIRETRANS II

(For CPC's 464/664/6128)

FIRETRANS II transfers a large number of FIREBIRD games to disc automatically including most screens. All games saved are STAND-ALONE. Programs do not need FIRETRANS as their host. Firebird tapes can be roughly split into EARLY and LATE types. This disc contains two programs, selected from menu, to cater for both types of loaders.
Among the EARLY Firebird games tested were: DONT PANIC, HELICOPTER, WILLOW PATER, HYBRID (by Starlight), NINJA MASTER, PARABOLA, REALM, STARGLIDER, RUNESTONE, CHIMERA, THE COMET GAME, GUNSTAR, SPIKY HAROLD, BOOBY, ZOLYX and some versions of THRUST, HARVEY HEADBANGER, and BOHSCARE.
Among the LATER Firebird games tested were: BEACH BUOY SIMULATOR, BIOSPHERES, BRAINSTORM, EUROPEAN 5-A-SIDE, GOTHIK, HUGGINS THE SPACEMAN, MYSTERY OF THE NILE, NINJA SCOOTER SIMULATOR, POGO STICK OLYMPICS, RAGING BULL, STUNT BIKE SIMULATOR, ULTIMA RATIO.

*** DISC ONLY ***

UK £11.50 EUROPE £12.75 REST OF WORLD £13.50

DMP2000/3000 SERIES

PRINTER BUFFER UPGRADE KIT

The buffer presently in the DMP 2000/3000 series printer is a 2k RAM. Most of this RAM is used by the printer's operating system leaving, on average 1/2k as buffer space. Our upgrade kit contains a new static RAM which will increase the printer buffer by 6k (about 4 pages of text). This upgrade will also allow all of the Download Character Set to be re-defined thereby allowing the user to design his own special characters for use in scientific and other purposes. The kit is supplied with full pictorial instructions to allow the amateur to carry out his own modifications.

UK £14.50 EUROPE £15.75 REST OF WORLD £16.50

SCREEN COMPACTOR

COMPACTOR is one of the latest additions to our range of utilities. COMPACTOR will allow you to load a standard 17k screen, set the mode, border and ink colours and then save it as a compressed screen containing its own mode and ink colour information. Most screens compact down to an average of 9k which is an enormous saving on disc space. Loading time of compressed screens is also proportionally reduced. Can be transferred to disc using SAMSON.

TAPE UK £5.00 EUROPE £6.25 REST OF WORLD £ 7.00
DISC UK £8.50 EUROPE £9.75 REST OF WORLD £10.75

SAMSON

(For CPC's 464/664/6128)

SAMSON has been developed by us to transfer not only the normal programs but also many of today's where the code is much longer. SAMSON differs in many ways from other Tape-to-Disc utilities, the main differences being:
SAMSON retains original file suffixes (SAMSON.SCN will be saved as SAMSON.SCN) * Improved file relocation method * Elaborate Tape read/Disc write system which reduces Tape Motor, Slave Relay and Disc Drive Motor wear substantially. * A large reduction in tape transfer time is also achieved in all but a few cases * NEW 'SPLIT' option for today's longer games and we will be using this option in future routines * All file information is displayed on screen and can be echoed to your printer if needed. SAMSON also transfers itself to disc.

TAPE - UK £ 7.50 EUROPE £ 8.75 REST OF WORLD £ 9.50
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ARCHIVER

ARCHIVER will automatically save to tape the entire contents of a disc extremely quickly. A DATA formatted disc will archive in about 15 minutes without any attention from the operator. Restoration of the tape back to disc takes the same amount of time. ARCHIVER will also allow you to enter your own header information (up to 80 characters) so that the archived tapes can be easily identified at a later date. ARCHIVER also contains a verify option allowing archived material to be checked against the original. This utility will allow you to create tape back-ups rather than use expensive discs for back-up purposes and it will also allow recovery of valuable disc space occupied by programs that are no longer regularly used, but may be required at a later date.

TAPE - UK £5.00 EUROPE £6.25 REST OF WORLD £7.00
DISC - UK £8.50 EUROPE £9.75 REST OF WORLD £10.50

MASTERFILE III on EPROM

Those of you using Campbell Systems MASTERFILE III will agree that it is just about the best database available for the Amstrad CPC's. We have now programmed it onto two Eproms in such a way that you can still use all of its features such as User Basic, Key Expansion Pokes etc. etc. To obtain your MASTERFILE III Eproms send us your original MASTERFILE III disc with your payment for:

UK- £25.00 EUROPE- £26.25 REST OF WORLD- £27.00

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NIRVANA

(For CPC's 464/664/6128)

STILL USING ORIGINAL DISCS? SPLIT ANY COFFEE ON THEM YET? CAN'T FIND ANY PROGRAM THAT WILL BACK THEM UP PROPERLY?

Use NIRVANA before it is too late!! NIRVANA is an extremely powerful disc handling utility which has the following features:

- * Disc to Disc back-up copier which will handle nearly all commercial discs (including BRUNWORD)
- * Options include copying whole discs or specified tracks
- * Unique file copier, copies individual or multiple files in one operation
- * Automatically senses, and fully uses additional memory when file copying
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 - * Disc formatter - much easier to use than CPM
 - * Handles any disc drive combinations
 - * Directory Editor (not ROM)
 - * Sector Editor (not ROM)
 - * Disc file map (not ROM)
 - * Change file attributes
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 - * Change filenames
 - * Erase files

Disc - UK £15.00 EUROPE £16.25 REST OF WORLD £17.00
ROM - UK £32.50 EUROPE £33.75 REST OF WORLD £34.50

CHARACTER FONT DESIGNER

(For CPC's 464/664/6128)

This utility takes all the hard work out of character designing to the extent of making it a pleasure. You will probably find yourself using it just for fun even though it has serious applications such as designing special/scientific characters and Cyrillic or Arabic fonts. The printer part of the program will, of course, only work if your printer is capable of "downloading", and is Epson compatible - your printer manual will give this information. The program will work with either 7-bit or 8-bit computer output (8-bit port). Some printers, such as the Amstrad DMP 2000/3000 series have the downloading capability but are restricted by printer memory (RAM) so that only a very few characters can be redefined. Our printer buffer upgrade kit overcomes this problem on the Amstrad DMP 2000/3000 series

PLAYTRANS

(For CPC's 464/664/6128)

PLAYTRANS is our latest product written to specifically transfer many programs using the Cassys Protection System 1986. We know that this protection system has been regularly used by Players, Mirrorsoft, Interceptor, Incentive and Activision. There may be others which we have not seen. As is our usual practice PLAYTRANS is a totally automatic transfer utility which requires no fiddling or meddling and all programs saved are stand-alone programs which do not need PLAYTRANS as their host. Included on the disc is our SCREEN COMPACTOR program together with a program to check tapes for the Cassys Protection. Some of the programs tested were: TETRIS, DRILLER, RAMPAGE, METAL ARMY, REFLEX, JOE BLADE, RADIUS, TANIUM, SHANGHAI KARATE, STAR TROOPER, and SWORD SLAYER.

*** DISC ONLY ***

UK £8.00 EUROPE £9.25 REST OF WORLD £10.00

TAPE TO DISC TRANSFER SERVICE

We can transfer 99% of software that is available on tape today. Ours was the original Tape to Disc Service and still the best - Who else can do SCRUPLES? We make sure that all the program code has been transferred to disc, that all levels /scenarios are present and the game runs correctly. All you need to do is send us your cassette + instructions together with a blank disc and your payment. Please ask for a quotation on your compilation cassette.

(PER TAPE)

UK £3.50 EUROPE £4.75 REST OF WORLD £5.50

DELILAH

(For CPC's 464/664/6128)

DELILAH is another development enabling &BCAL head-erless files to be transferred to disc. In most cases the files saved are self running. In a few cases additional programming etc may be required to get the program running correctly. Some of the tapes we have tested are: GHOSTBUSTERS, SNOWBALL, WORM IN PARADISE, RETURN TO EDEN, OBSIDIAN, SKYFOX CONFUZION, and A VIEW TO A KILL

TAPE - UK £ 7.50 EUROPE £ 8.75 REST OF WORLD £ 9.50
DISC - UK £11.50 EUROPE £12.75 REST OF WORLD £13.50

DMP2000/3000 RIBBONS

UK £2.75 EUROPE £4.00 REST OF WORLD £4.75

BCPL

By
ANDREW COPE

BCPL is one of the lesser known high level languages. To a large extent it has been overshadowed by its big brother, 'C'. While that might be acceptable on a 16 bit machine 'C' is too big for 8 bit micros in most cases.

BCPL stands for 'Basic Computer Programming Language'. It was developed in 1967 and was quickly recognised as an ideal bridge between machine code and humans. As a result it became widely used in systems development.

For someone brought up on a high level language such as BASIC, BCPL proves to be quite an eye opener! It has only one data type...the 16 bit word! Though this may appear to be restricting, bare in mind that the same 'restrictions' apply to machine code.

It is often simpler to think of BCPL as being machine code with Procedures, Loops etc. added to make structured writing easier. Anyway, here is the familiar "noddy" program undergoing another conversion:-

```
// Program DAFT
GET"LIBHDR"

LET Start() BE $( FOR Loop1=10 TO 1 STEP
-1 Do $( Writen(Loop1); Writes(" green
bottles, sitting on a wall*n");
Writen(Loop1); Writes(" green bottles,
just about to fall*n"); Writes("If one
green bottle should accidentally fall*N")
Writes("There'll be "); Writen(Loop1-1);
Writes(" green bottles sitting on the
wall.*N"); $) $)
```

Line 1:Just a comment...causes the compiler to ignore the rest of the line.

Line 3:Compile the contents of "LIBHDR" file, before continuing with his file. LIBHDR contains definitions for useful procedures (such as WRITES, WRITEN etc.).

Line 5:Define a procedure...START is a special procedure that is executed when the program has finished loading.

Line 6:Open bracket..marks the start of a block of code.

Line 7:I'm sure you all know what this does!

Line 9:Write a number to the screen.

Line 10:Write a string to the screen.

The program is quite straight forward at first sight but BCPL-like 'C'-has some tricks up its sleeve. As with machine code, trying to use strings or (heaven forbid!) floating point numbers requires that you write your own routines (though elementary string handling is offered).

BCPL can be used to good effect if assembler is just a little too involved for you...on the other hand, apart from the control structures (which are similar to those of PASCAL and C) you don't get any other improvements above machine code worth mentioning.

CPC Versions

The only version I know of is sold by Arnor. It comes on disk or ROM and is an excellent compiler. I can say from my own experience that you can use it to write arcade games and professional looking wordprocessors with out too much hassle. The only point to be wary of is that whoever wrote the library files (such as LIBHDR) has made one or two mistakes!

Conclusions

Right, here is where the cat fur starts flying! Firstly, let me say that I have spent four years programming on Spectrums, three years on CPCs and in the last sixth months, on IBM PC compatibles.

In all that time I've enjoyed the fun of creating programs on all machines...even the bugs! No doubt people who have used my programs-such as Centrox-have their opinions of me! Anyway, I have to say that in all that time I have found only two ways of writing professional (ie: Saleable) programs:-

1. Machine code on any machine...obviously!
2. Any language on a PC.

This is, perhaps, an over simplification but it does make a point worth noting. It's all too easy today to listen to people extolling the virtues of micro computers. In practice, they are good....but NOT THAT GOOD!

If you want to become a professional programmer, don't stay blinkered, ignoring your friend next door with the 16 bit beast...get to know him and his machine!

Before you all write to get me thrown out of the UAUG, perhaps I should add that I'm very much a champion of the Z80.....but only as a hobby these days!

SALES & WANTED

FOR SALE

ADVENTURES. @ £1-50. EACH.

KILLED UNTIL DEAD	REDHAWK
THE SYDNEY AFFAIR	KWAH!
THE HOBBIT	MORDON'S QUEST
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FOREST AT THE WORLDS END	SHARD OF INOVAR
PASSENGERS ON THE WIND II	JEWELS OF BABYLON

ARCADE @ £1-50. EACH.

KRAKOUT	DRAGONTORC
DEFLEKTOR	MATCH DAY II
GFL CHAMPIONSHIP FOOTBALL	THREE WEEKS IN PARADISE
SAMANTHA FOX STRIP POKER	HEAD OVER HEELS
LAS VEGAS VIDEO POKER	ROLAND ON THE ROPES
COUNTDOWN (TV Quiz)	SUPERSLEUTH
AMERICAN FOOTBALL	FIRELORD
GEMS OF STRADUS	GHOSTBUSTERS
IMPOSSABALL	

MUTANT MONTY } Instructions missing.

GRAPHIC ADVENTURE CREATOR (GAC) @ £4-00.

All above software are original AMSTRAD cassettes with packaging and instructions. Please send payment with order plus postage @ £1.00 for 1 to 5 tapes, £2.00 for 6 to 10 etc..

R. A ADAMS
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WELWYN GARDEN CITY,
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FOR SALE

Alien 8	£5.00
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Mini Office II (Disc)	£9.00

All above are original software with packaging and instructions.

All enquiries to:-

Alan Stead
65 Wallisdean Ave., Fareham, Hants
PO14 1HS Tel: (0329) 289760

WANTED

Instructions for MONEY MANAGER (CPC6128) also
2nd (& final) part of STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT by D. G. Shedden from Popular Computing Weekly Vol. 4 No. 20 or a copy of the complete program (with instructions) on disc or tape

DAVE ROWLANDS, 62 Eastern Ave.,
Chippenham, Wilts., SN15 3JW.
Tel: (0249) 651888

FOR SALE

Laser compiler	£4.99
Armageddon man	£3.99
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Star wars	£2.99
Nexor	£2.99
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Skyfox	£1.50
Hunt for red October	£3.99
Raid	£1.99
First steps with Mr Man	99p

Prestige collection (Eidolon: Rescue on Fractalus: Ballblazer: Koronis rift) instructions in French: £2.50

Coin-op connexion (Crystal castles: Breakthru: Express raider: Metro cross) £2.50

Tank busters: Xevious: Beach head: Rasterscan: Flash Gordon: Fighter pilot: Scalextric all at 99p each

ADVENTURE GAMES

Subsunk: Seabase Delta: Necris Dome: The experience: Warlord: Message from Andromeda all at 99p each

Price of magik: Seas of blood £2.99 each

Silicone Dreams (Snowball: Return to Eden: The worm in Paradise) £3.99

ALL SOFTWARE IS ON TAPE ONLY : PLEASE ADD 40P FOR EACH ORDER TO COVER POSTAGE

SOFTWARE WANTED

SUPER SPRITES by Pride Utilities
MICRO GRAPHICS PACK by ?

Also any software (tape or disc) to do with graphics but NOT The Image System. Will pay cash or swap for any of the above software.

JOHN PACKHAM, 60 HIGHTOWN TOWERS,
WARBURTON ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON, SO2 6HH

FOR SALE

MICROGENIC ROMBOARD

8 Socket, on/off switch, through port and dip switches	£17
RODOS on ROM (Operating system) . .	£15

MASTERFILE (tape)	£6
TEACH YOURSELF BASIC pt 1+2 (2 tapes)	£8
COLUSSUS BRIDGE (tape)	£4
DEACTIVATORS (tape)	£2.50
MINI-OFFICE II (tape)	£5
DRILLER (disc)	£5

4 BUDGET GAMES (Saboteur: Battleships: Knightmare: Colony - all for £3

ALL THE ABOVE ARE AS NEW : UNWANTED AND UNUSED AND COLLECTING DUST : INCLUSIVE OF P+P.

Payment or enquiries to-
JOHN GOODWIN, 39 FOURWELLS DRIVE,
HACKENTHORPE, SHEFFIELD, S12 4JB

SINCLAIR'S FIRST VENTURE
INTO THE WORLD OF THE PC....

PC-200

REVIEWED HERE BY DON SNOAD

The latest release from the AMSTRAD stable is the Sinclair Professional Series PC-200 micro-computer with a distinctive all-black livery. Externally, the PC-200 is similar in shape and size to a BBC Master and has its keyboard mounted at the front end of a wedge-shaped case on which stands the separate monitor. The PC-200 is marketed as a combined games machine and entry-level IBM clone with 512k of RAM and an integral 3 1/2" 720k drive; an external 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" unit can be optionally connected as a second drive. Two monitors are available; these are a 14" CGA colour monitor (said to be the same as that supplied with the PC1512) or a 12" mono. The colour monitor is not very impressive and it is reported by those who have used it that the graphics and sound quality are pretty poor. The resolution of the monitor is quite good but has no graphics capability. The PC-200 has two expansion slots plus a socket for a maths co-processor, all three ports being tucked away beneath a hinged lid on the top of the case. Unfortunately, the expansion ports are badly sited as, with a board fitted, the hinged lid cannot be closed and this in turn demands some form of independent shelf on which to stand the monitor. The PC-200, which can be used in conjunction with a domestic TV set, is equipped with serial and parallel outlet ports for modem and/or printer and comes complete with a two-button mouse and one joystick. The software supplied is an MS-DOS system disc with GW Basic but no applications software is included.

Prices are as follows:

Keyboard and microprocessor unit	: £299 + VAT
With mono monitor	: £399 + VAT
With colour monitor	: £499 + VAT

● If you enjoy reading this magazine, why not introduce a friend to the UAUG?

.. SOME QUIRKS (OR ANOMALIES) OF THE AMSTRAD

DMP2000

- 1. For some strange reason Standard Proportional print comes out as Proportional Bold, a combination which the manual calls illegal but which I find nearly as smart as NLQ.
- 2. The paper-out sensor will stop the printing of a single sheet of paper on the eighth line from the bottom, therefore it is best to have a bottom margin (excluding any footer margin), of seven lines when using single sheets, otherwise the paper-out sensor stops printing and leaves several unwanted line-feeds in the printer buffer. These seven lines can be safely reduced by only one line if the paper-out sensor is disabled, because the machine will lose grip of the paper on the next line or two down. Conclusion: to fill the paper with print, use continuous paper!
- 3. Hidden just in front of the print head and not mentioned in the manual, is a ruler marked from 1 to 80. Each mark indicates the centre of each column of characters for 10 cpi fonts. Note that it starts from 1, not 0. So for example, with 6" wide paper, (60 characters wide), the paper should be centred about the 1 and the 60 marks; (you will find that because the marks show the centre of each character, the paper is slightly wider than the distance between these marks). If your paper is wider than 8", then it should be centred about the 1 and 80 marks; (the printer will not print a wider line than this). This is the purpose of the Letter, 9.5", A4, 10" and 9" marks at the front of the printer, also not mentioned in the manual.
- 4. If the lid is removed and in danger of being sat upon, turn it around and you will find that it fits perfectly on top of a colour monitor!
- 5. Dip switch DS2-5 'SLCT IN signal' needs to be down for a CPC664, otherwise nothing happens. Don't ask why - see the top of page 7/4 of the manual for a clue. - (Anon)

● JOHN PACKHAM
says "I'll give
it eight...!"

AFTERBURNER

"...experience the white-knuckled
REALISM of a supersonic dogfight"

"...Experience brain-numbing G-
FORCES; bone rattling with the
body-jarring pitch and yaw ...scan
with your RADAR, lock on your
target and FIRE!"

This is what the blurb on the back of
the manual says. You may well ask if
it's true. Well to be honest ...MAYBE!

The first thing I noticed was the lack
of appropriate sound. By that I mean
that although there's the usual dose of
superb explosion sounds and an average
dose of theme music, there are NO engine
noises and the cannon fire from the F-14
must be the QUIETEST I've ever heard (in
other words - NONE!).

The instruction manual, (Mission
Briefing), clearly states that an option
menu is available on loading. Well I
must have blinked and missed it 'cos
I'll be blown if I saw one! You're also
told that in the event of an aircraft or
missile approaching from the rear, it is
necessary to do a 360 degree flip by
moving from one side to the other in
quick succession. If YOU can do it, then
you're a better pilot than I am.

The cannons on board are supposed to be
activated automatically as soon as the
enemy appears, but they're a little TOO
automatic because they start firing as
soon as you're in the air and there's no
way to stop them. Fortunately you have a
never-ending supply of cannon fire.

The only other weaponry on board are
heat seeking missiles. Whatever you do,
don't get too trigger-happy with these
or else they are soon used up. There
are, fortunately for you, refuelling
stops during the game which are taken
care of automatically, whereupon you're
given a fresh load of missiles.

Bonus lives are also given throughout
the game but I haven't yet figured out
why! One minute I've got one life
remaining, the next I look down and I
have three!

The graphics in the game take up about
two-thirds of the screen, which probably
accounts for the extremely fast
responses to the joystick. All aircraft
in the game are very well done and you
can indeed have a darn good dogfight at
times, but unfortunately, in my opinion,
the rest of the graphics have let the
game down. It looks as though the
designers have created a tremendous game
and then discovered some memory left
over, so filled it with some odds and
ends.

The scoring in the game had me worried.
I thought it had a bug in it; it just
keeps clocking up and up. It wasn't
until I had been playing for a while
that I realised. The longer you stay in
the air, the higher the score you
attain. The score is also connected with
your speed. The faster you fly, the
faster the score clocks up, so if you
want a really HIGH score then you'll
need to be a kamikaze pilot! The speed
by the way is toggled with the space bar
(the only key needed during play if you
select the joystick option) and has
three settings, CRUISE, FAST and EXTRA
FAST (although the last one tends to
overheat your engines and gradually
decreases back to FAST.

My only serious criticism is the way the
the game loads. You first load side 'A'
then you're told to turn over the tape
to load some more. Then whenever the
game ends, you have to rewind side B to
reload the data (NOT the main game).
During play, you need to keep the play
key down ready to load the next section
(if you're lucky enough to get
through!).

All in all, the game ain't bad! I'll
give it 8 out of 10. The only other game
of this type that I've enjoyed more (and
still do) is ATF. So, if you think you
can beat a score of more than 7,000,000
then go and buy it ...NOW!

AFTERBURNER on tape at around £7.45

~~~~~  
"RETURN OF THE JEDI"  
~~~~~

Set by CLIVE BENTHAM

Let's have another go at a competition
shall we? This time let's hope everyone
gets more than minus 4 days to get their
entries in! (we don't hang about in the
UAUG you know)

Right then, up for grabs is
"RETURN OF THE JEDI"
The game of the film.

Below are listed 4 classic Amstrad games
titles. All you do is name the software
house from which they came. The first
correct answer drawn wins the prize.

- (a) ELITE
- (b) EXOLON
- (c) GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR
- (d) STAR AVENGER

Entries to:
Competition, 4 High Walk,
Fareham, Hants., PO15 6BS.
Closing date for entries 1 May 1989.

NEWS AND TIPS

FROM THE GAMES WORLD

BY CLIVE BENTHAM

Silverbird the budget label from Telecom Soft are soon to launch a new racing game priced at £1.99 called International Speedway.

This spectacular racing game gives you a chance to test your street-wise skills in the world of league riding. Fight your way to the top of the local league to get your big break in the nationals. From there you must do battle against experienced riders in the continental league before achieving your big chance - to race in the World Championship.

Use your skill and judgement to steer your powerful machine around the perilous track. Too much throttle could lead to a false start, oversteering will slow you down and your boost control could make or break - So be careful!!

GRANDSLAM

Look For a Winner in
LIVERPOOL FC

Grandslam Entertainments have announced that it has secured rights to use Liverpool Football Club to endorse one of their products this year.

Grandslam Managing Director Stephen Hall confirmed the deal after extensive negotiations with the famous club's officials. Few precise details are available at present, though Grandslam are confident that a Liverpool product will achieve a great deal.

"We've had great success with Peter Beardsley's International Football. The popularity of this type of product, plus what we consider the greatest sports licence yet seen in this market, means we've got a real winner on our hands" Hall enthused. "There has been a great amount of excitement at Grandslam about this deal. Now we're ready to take on the challenge of producing a game that will match the enormous stature that Liverpool Football Club enjoys."

Launch information has not yet been finalised, though "Liverpool: The Computer Game" will be released across 8 and 16 bit formats in keeping with Grandslam's product policy. Hall added: "This cements us once again as one of the major players in the entertainment software market-place. This is a superb licence, but will of course be one of many great Grandslam products for 1989."



If anyone is struggling with Yie Ar Kung Fu then here are some tips for this classic beat-em up from Imagine Software, courtesy of Steven Bentham.

(1) BUCHU - This character is your first opponent and although he is unarmed he is able to leap at you through the air and attacks with feet and hands on

landing, usually behind you. He is very vulnerable when in the air and this weak point is used to defeat him. As he flies towards you, move along until you are underneath him and then let go with a roundhouse kick to his body, by pushing the joystick to the right and pressing fire. When a successful strike has been made, which is indicated by a red star appearing at the point of impact, move backwards and wait until he leaps at you through the air again. Repeat the procedure and keep scoring hits with blows to the body until he is knocked out.

(2) STAR - This lady is armed with Chinese stars which she launches at you from time to time and they can cause some nasty problems if you don't stay alert. Walk to the right towards her and she will throw a star at leg height. As it reaches you, jump diagonally to the right and over the star. As you land next to her launch a rising kick to the head by moving the joystick left and pressing fire. If you score a successful strike she will immediately start walking away to the left of the screen. Leaving a small gap between you, follow her along and answer her attempts to kick out at you with another rising kick which will force her to continue moving to the left. When she is trapped at the left hand edge of the screen, continually attack her with rising kicks until she falls and you score another K.O.

Continued on Page 26

FEATURE

ASSEMBLER STACKPOINTER MNEMONICS PROGRAM SOURCECODE HIGHLEVEL LOWLEVEL
CRTC CHIP INCREMENT DISASSEMBLER WYSIWYG PROCESSOR COMPILED INCREMENT
ASSEM **Jargon** SOURCECODE HIGHLEVEL LOWLEVEL
CRTC **Jargon** INCREMENT
LOWLEVEL CRTC CHIP INCR. /ASSEMBLER WYSIWYG PROCESSOR COMPILED
INCREMENT ASSEMBLER STACKPOINTER MNEMONICS PROGRAM SOURCECODE ASSEMBL

LIVING WITH JARGON

By ANDREW SHARP

In our last issue we looked at how jargon is used to confuse and impress, this time we continue with the analysis of the dialogue and go on to explore some other commonly used terms to arm ourselves against people who would try to do this to us. In case you can't remember the dialogue here it is again:

Bill: You coming down the pub tonight.

Fred: No, 'fraid not. I've got some programming to do before tomorrow morning.

Bill: [slightly impressed] Programming?

Fred: Yes. I'm working on a Z80 co-processor running in a WYSIWYG environment which disassembles directly to 6502 source code.

Bill: [Very impressed, trying to sound as if he understands every word] Really?

Fred: Hm, but every time I try to assemble the 80386 mnemonics the CRTC chip corrupts the AY-3-8912's RAM and the stack-pointer is decremented.

Bill: [overawed, but sounding sympathetic] Oh dear!

Fred: [Pause, then sudden exclamation] Of course! I've got it! It must be the firmware call I've implemented in the XOR routine in the lower ROM. I see now! All I need to do is to store the HL register in the second bank of random access memory. I must implement that before I forget...er...I'll see you sometime...maybe at the pub. Bye. [Exits rapidly towards his house].

After an explanation of the first two paragraphs in the last issue, here is an explanation of the terms used in the last one:

"It must be the firmware call I've implemented in the XOR routine in the lower ROM. I see now! All I need to do is to store the HL register in the second bank of random access memory. I must implement that before I forget".

FIRMWARE CALL

A firmware call is an instruction you give to the computer to execute a pre-defined task which has been programmed in by the makers of the machine. These calls are usually quite simple in their result. An example of a firmware call might be to print the letter 'A' or to display the contents of a disk or tape. Firmware simply means a

cross between hardware (the actual electronics) and the software (the programs). We will see more of this when we look at 'chips'.

XOR is a term used to describe a certain mathematical or logical operation. It is short for eXclusive-OR and works by saying "If either of two numbers (but not both) is 1 then the result is 1. If neither or both of the numbers is 1 then the output will be 0. I will be devoting a whole article to logic in part four.

ROM OR RAM?

The lower ROM is a chip inside the computer which stores the necessary information for the CPU to carry out the instructions it's given. ROM stands for read-only memory. This is like RAM but in this case you cannot replace the data in the ROM. Once it has been put there it is impossible to change it.

REGISTERS

The HL register is a small area of memory which the computer uses to remember a piece of data it is working on. It is rather like variables in Basic. It can hold any integer (whole number) from 0 to 65535. HL isn't the only register. There are also the BC, DE, IX, IY, SP (stack pointer) and AF registers as well as the 'alternative' registers which are a sort of 'shadow' set. The AF register is rather special because it is split up and the A part used for most of the maths which is done, and the F part for giving signals or flags to the program. The A part is called the Accumulator and the F part, logically, is called the Flags register. The second bank of random access memory. The CPC6128 has 128 little blocks of memory (called kilobytes, or k for short, meaning 1024 numbers). The Z80 CPU can only cope with 64 of these at a time, so there are two sets of 64 blocks of memory. The second of these is called the second bank. I haven't lost you yet, have I? Good.

Having learned a few words of computing jargon from the above dialogue, here are a few more to complete your vocabulary. These are some of the more common terms used in computing:

Program, in case you've forgotten is the the name for the series of instructions given to the computer to tell it how to perform a certain task. Note the spelling - no 'me' on the end. This has been the subject of much discussion amongst grammarians, but the spelling has stuck.

User-friendly is a term you frequently come across in adverts for software (programs etc). It means that a program will either show you where you have gone wrong or simply not allow you to make the mistake in the first place. This means that the program is easy to learn to use and doesn't blunder on when you make a mistake.

CAD or Computer Aided Design is another word for an art program for drawing pictures on the screen and subsequently printing them on paper. Almost all acronyms which begin with CA mean computer aided something, whether it be design, education (CAE), learning (CAL), or instruction (CAI).

A chip is a commonly used term referring to a little box with lots of metal legs sticking out of the sides called an Integrated Circuit (IC for short). This little box often contains a program which is always present in the computer unless it is switched off or disconnected. These are called ROM's (Read-Only Memory), PROM's (Programmable ROM), EPROM's (Erasable PROM), and a number of other, similar prefixes. Sometimes, however, the circuit is not used for storing data, but for processing it. An IC is just a normal circuit consisting of the normal array of wires and components, but it has all been squeezed into the little box. This makes electronic products much more compact. The word 'chip' comes from the fact that the material the components are put on is a tiny sliver (or chip) of silicon (often called a 'silicon wafer'). 'Chip' is hardly the best word for it since it is manufactured to incredible accuracy, but the name was given it, and the name has stuck.

Next month I'll be explaining all about Ascii, Binary and Hex, and a few more things besides. Until then keep your ears and eyes open for the words we've learned in everyday use. If you have any comments or questions on this or any other article in the series, please contact either one of the team, or myself at this address:

Andrew Sharp, 2 Meadow Close
Farmoor, Oxfordshire, OX2 9NZ

Time for the quick quiz. Try to work out what I am describing using jargon...

This is a program, some of which are very user-friendly, others are not. Many use WYSIWYG and a few use WIMP. While most can be used to create Z80 source code mnemonics, I know of none that will assemble them to machine language. Mine is stored on ROM to decrease the loading time and to increase the amount of available RAM, but this thing can be obtained on magnetic disc or on cassette. What is it?

You may not know all the terms I have used here, but if you cannot guess what the item is, the next article will be very helpful - even if you don't look at the answer, which will be printed at the end. Speaking of which, here are the answers to the last quick quiz:

THE ANSWERS

1. pp = pages; very soft (pianissimo); by proxy (per procuracionem)
2. TCP = Trichlorophenylmethyliodos alicyl
3. AM = before noon (ante meridian); Master of Arts (Artium Magister)
4. RIP = may he/she rest in peace (Requiescat in pace)
5. DC = District of Columbia; to the start (Da Capo); Direct Current
6. PAYE = Pay As You Earn
7. Cantab. = Cambridge (Cantabrigiensis)
8. AKC = Associate of King's College, London
9. CID = Criminal Investigation Department
10. QC = Queen's Counsel, Queen's College
11. NIV = New International Version (of the Bible)
12. USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

There are, undoubtedly, other meanings to some of these - AM, for example, has a couple more, but the ones given are the most common. ■

Jargon II
the update . . .

Having read the title "Jargon" at the top of the page last issue, you may have prepared yourself for some difficult reading. I doubt, however, that you were prepared for one of the lines on page 18, which read something like this: "the This is a bit like RAM but this you can time only take out the piece of data iswhich indicated by the stack-pointer." Unfortunately there was a slight hic-cough in the reformatting and editing needed to get the text to fit onto the magazine page. What it should have read was: "This is a bit like RAM, but this

time you can only take out the piece of data which is indicated by the stack-pointer." Another, minor mistake was in the quick quiz: For those of you wondering how on earth 'am' could mean 'pianissimo', question 1 should read 'pp' not 'am'.

In the last issue, Angela Macaulay wrote in suggesting a "Jargon" page to answer members questions on the subject. The series itself was started last issue completely by coincidence, but Angela's idea isn't such a bad one. In fact, since it is the language which is the

FEATURE

barrier for most people trying to learn, I think its an excellent idea. When I started computing four Christmasses ago, this was certainly the case for me. If you have ANY questions regarding Jargon, either connected with the series or anything else, even if it's just one computing term that puzzles you, write to me, Andrew Sharp, 2 Meadow Close, Farmoor, Oxfordshire, OX2 9NZ.

N.B. If possible, please send in the terms in the context you saw them in. It makes an explanation much easier. If individual replies are wanted, please enclose an s.a.e..

Here are the terms Angela Macaulay sent in:

LCD stands for Liquid Crystal Display. It's the type of display used in digital watches to give a readout of the time. More recently, they have been used in tiny TV's and portable computers. The reason for their popularity is two-fold: Firstly, they use very little power - extremely important if you're using batteries, and secondly they have a very clear readout. The one draw back with these is that since they don't actually emit light, the screen must be illuminated by other means. If you're interested, LCD's work on a principle known as 'polarisation' (and even if you're not, they still do). If the molecules are all lined up in one direction they let light through, if one layer of molecules is twisted slightly, they let less light through. The more layers twist, and the more that they twist, the less light is allowed through. In the normal liquid state, these molecules are all lined up in one direction (just like normal crystals), but when a voltage is applied across the layers of crystals they twist, appearing opaque. The one draw back with this is that since they don't actually emit light, the screen must be illuminated by other means.

MCA stands for Micro Channel Architecture. This is the system used by very fast micros like IBM's Personal System/2. It allows very high speed transfer of data within the machine. I'm not absolutely certain how it does it, but I think it works along similar lines to a motorway - bypassing unnecessary circuits that would slow down the signal.

I had never heard of the next three, so I asked a friend who works in computers and electronics. While not understanding everything he said (GCSE Physics hardly makes one an expert on the subject), I think I managed to get the basic idea, which is as follows:

CCD As far as I can see CCD's have little or nothing to do with computers (I'm open to correction), more to do with video cameras. CCD stands for Charged Couple Device. To put a picture onto magnetic tape the image must be converted into a number of electrical signals. To do this, light from the lens is shone onto a vast number of CCD's (each one representing a coloured dot on a TV screen), which conduct electricity when shown light. These generate the signals that go to make up a television picture.

TTL - Now, were delving right into the heart of the machine! TTL stands for Transistor-Transistor Logic. This simply refers to the type of circuitry which goes to make up the computer's in'ards (a transistor is an electronic switch). I'll be going into more detail about logic in part 4, but until then TTL is the a standard by which logic circuits operate. It says that if the voltage coming into a circuit is less than a certain value then it is treated as off, otherwise it is treated as on.

ECL - Emitted Coupled Logic is very similar in effect to TTL, but works in a slightly different way. (I think it uses the transistors differently, or something. Is there anyone out there who knows much about this sort of thing?)

HP - At last! One I've heard of. HP, when not associated with brown sauce or biscuits, are simply the initials of the business machine company Hewlett-Packard.

For the definition of 'CAD' see this issue's 'Jargon'.

I am always open to correction, in any of the definitions I give. If my definition sounds somewhat different to your understanding of a word (or if you know about CCD's, TTL's or ECL's) please write and tell me at the above address.

Good luck, to everyone taking GCSE's or A levels this year. I start mocks tomorrow, so I'd better get on with some more revision. Bye for now! - Andrew.

EDITORIAL NOTE: Sorry about the "glitch" in your article. This probably happened during the conversion from Prottext format to Tasword, but don't worry, we now use Prottext and Tasword!

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BOOK REVIEW

by **BRIAN McKIDDIE**

CATALOGUE NO. B1024P : TITLE - INTRODUCING LOGO

The computer language Logo is becoming ever more popular. It is very clear and straightforward with very many powerful features, and is being used increasingly in schools. Many parents, for example, are finding that their children are using Turtle Graphics at school, and want to find out more. Others will have read about Logo: computer magazines have had a spate of articles about Logo, at a very superficial level. There will be computer hobbyists who may want to try out Logo on their own computer; they will want to know what Logo is and how to evaluate commercial offerings. They will need an annotated guide to the various versions for the more common types of computer.

This book explains the philosophy behind Logo and why it is different from many other languages such as Basic. It shows you how to program in Logo, with many useful examples and explains Turtle Graphics and other applications in detail. You are also shown what versions of Logo are available and what to look for in making a suitable choice.

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No.	Book Title.	
B1001P	The Colour Coded Guide to Micro-Computers	B1030P 100 Programs for the Amstrad 464, 664 & 6128
B1002P	Computer Programing In Basic	B1031P The Amstrad Disc Companion for the Amstrad 464, 664 & 6128 (2)
B1005P	Writing Adventure Games On The Amstrad	B1032P Amstrad Machine Language for the Absolute Beginner (2)
B1006P	60 Programs For The Amstrad 464	B1033P Amstrad CPC Whole Memory Guide
B1008P	Machine Code For Beginners	B1034P Illustrating Basic (basic tutor)
B1009P	Using Your Amstrad 464-Made Easy	B1035P Simple Applications of the Amstrad CPCs for the Writer
B1010P	Computer Challenges For The Amstrad	B1036P An Introduction to Programming for the Amstrad 464
B1011P	Advanced Amstrad Basic	B1037P How to write Word Games on the Amstrad 464, 664, & 6128
B1012P	Introducing Amstrad CP/M Assembly Language (3 copies)	B1038P Using your Amstrad CPC Disc Drives
B1013P	Subroutines For The Amstrad 464 & 664	B1039P The Amstrad 464, 664 & 6128
B1014P	Sensational Games For The 464	B1040P Amstrad CPC 464 User Instructions
B1015P	Applications For The 464 & 664	B1041P Amstrad Graphics-Advanced User Guide
B1016P	The Working Amstrad (2 copies)	B1042P The Amstrad CPC 464 Disc System including CP/M & Printers
B1017P	Filing Systems & databases For The Amstrad CPC 464	B1043P Basic Programming on Amstad 464,664, & 6128
B1018P	Amstrad Advanced Users Guide	B1044P The Punters Revenge (Gambling & Computers)
B1019P	Using Dr. Logo On The Amstrad	B1045P The Amstrad CPC 464-Advanced Users Guide
B1020P	The Amstrad Pentacle Adventure Creator	B1046P Amstrad Computing with the CPC 464
B1021P	Write Your Own Adventure Games For Your Micro-Computer	B1047P Graphic Progammig Techniques on the Amstrad 464
B1022P	Understanding Computer Graphics	B1048P The Amstrads Programmer's Guide
B1023P	Amstrad CPC 664 Computing *	B1049P The Amstrad Games Book **
B1024P	Introducing Logo *	B1050P Easy Add-on projects for the Amstrad 464, 664, 6128 **
B1025P	Mysterious Adventures for your Amstrad	B1051P A Z80 Workshop Manual **
B1026P	The Amazing Amstrad Omnibus *	B1052P Computer Engineers Pocket Book **
B1027P	The CP/M Bus *	
B1028P	Master Machine Code on your Amstrad 464, & 664	
B1029P	Assembly Language Programming for the Amstrad 464, 664 & 6128	

Note: Books Marked ** are the latest addition to the library.
 Books Marked * are on loan to the library.

THE WAITING GAME! - - - - -

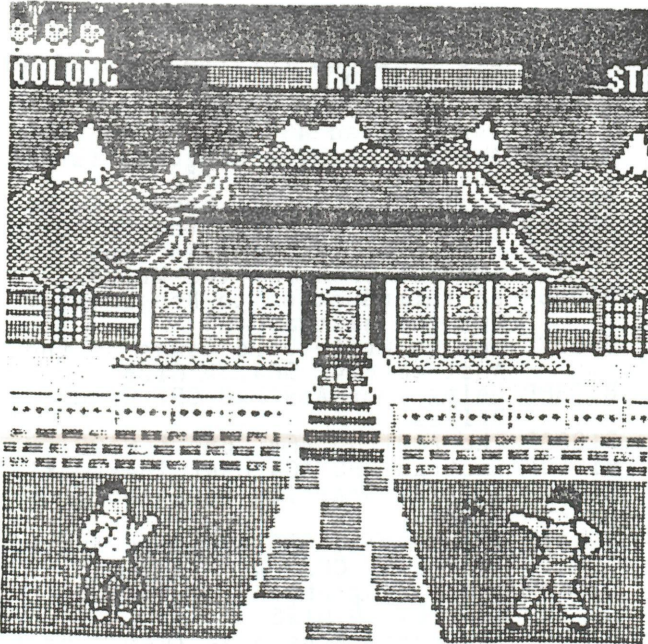
This short type-in by DAVE CUTTS can be included in any of your own programs where a wait is required. It gives a neat flashing "PLEASE WAIT" sign in the middle of the screen.

```

1 REM *****
2 ' * This subroutine will give you *
3 ' * a nice flashing "Please Wait" *
4 REM *****
5 REM ***      FLSHWAIT      ***
6 REM * by D.J.Cutts (C) (0787-476706)*
10 MODE LINK 1,26
20 '
30 REM Program from here on ...
40 '
1000 '
1010 REM Now require a "Please Wait"
1020 '
1030 GOSUB 65030

1040 '
1050 REM Program continues...
1060 '
1070 END
1080 '
65000 '
65010 REM "Please Wait" subroutine
65020 '
65030 WINDOW#7,15,25,11,12
65040 INK 2,24,6:INK 3,6,24
65050 PAPER#7,3:PEN#7,2
65060 PRINT#7,"Please Wait"
65070 RETURN
    
```

Continued from page 21



ABOVE:- STAR, THE LADY WHO LIKES A FLING, LAUNCHING ONE OF HER CHINESE STARS.

(3) NUNCHU - This gent is armed with a Nunchacs weapon which comprises two short sticks joined together with a chain (charming!). He is quite hard to defeat - but not impossible. Walk towards him and jump diagonally to the right so as to land near him. As soon as you land, make a vertical jump back into the air and when you land this time, lash out with round house kick followed

immediately by a flying kick. Make another vertical jump to prevent him getting at you, and as soon as you land repeat the round house and flying kick technique until you've scored another KO.

(4) POLE - This fellow fights with a long staff which can pose problems if you forget to allow for the reach of the pole. He is defeated by employing the same techniques as for Nunchu.

(5) CLUB - A club and a shield are the weapons that this lad uses and this time you must let him advance towards you until he is within range then perform a flying kick, by pushing the joystick up and pressing fire. If you strike successfully he will walk away from you. Resist the temptation to chase him and stay where you are because he soon advances towards you again. Use the same tactics as before and another KO will be yours.

(6) SWORD - Can be beaten by using the same procedure as either Nunchu or Pole.

(7) TUNFA - This lady uses a short stick to do her fighting. You can score another KO if you use the same method as for the other lady combatant Star.

(8) BLUES - And last, but not least, comes the most formidable opponent of all. This gent is unarmed but extremely quick and uses all the tricks in the book. I am still trying to find an answer to this one, so in the mean time you'll just have to find your own way round him. Good luck!

PUBLIC DOMAIN SECTION

By John Blessing

Welcome to the new look PD section. I had worried that just publishing updates to the library might mean that my section looked a bit empty. Not at all, you've obviously been scouring other PD libraries and slaving over a hot keyboard to judge from all the new programs this month.

Unfortunately I have had to delete some programs from the library this month, thanks to information from Layaqat Ali. He pointed out that the programs below are not PD - most appeared as type-ins in the commercial magazines. Please note that we cannot accept such programs as PD. If I receive a program which is said to be PD then I have to accept it as such. However, if any member spots that a program isn't then please let me know and I will delete it.

DELETED PROGRAMS

DEDIT	disc editor	DISCLIB	good disc library
CATPRINT	directory printer	DISCMAP	shows position offiles on disc
DIREEDIT	unerase etc	HOMEACCT	easy to use home accounts prog

NEW ADDITIONS

Now for the good news, lots of interesting new (and I hope PD!) software:

Andrew Cope sent in a revised version of CENTROX. I don't know if the next bit will mean much to you, (it certainly didn't to me), but Andrew has "succeeded in separating the Shell from the Kernel" - with a pair of nutcrackers no doubt. If you think UNIX is the operating system of the future (as many do) then this will probably make sense.

Layaqat Ali sent in two discs of very good CPM software covering a wide range of subjects. Particularly interesting will be the programs on patching 5 1/4 drives, to judge from the number of letters I have received on this subject. The software is:

PD 11/2 (CPM)

E86	Expert system shell
MFT	Multi-file transfer utility
NEWCCP	Add extra commands
SETCOLOR	Change colour of screen (CPM 2.2 only)
GREP	Unix style file searcher
HEXTOBAS	Creates data loader for .HEX files
QK20	Assign strings to key
FORM3	PCW format read/write
S/TREK	Star Trek game

PD 11/3 (CPM)

Programs and helpfiles for patching 5 1/4 drives (including 80 track) for use in CPM.	
ED.DOC	Help file on ED
MAKEASM	Convert Zmac files to JRT assembler format
MAXELCAT	Disc library utility
OPT	Optimiser for small C

KN Bond sent in a CPM adventure called "Island" which you can find on 11/4. Can't say I've played it yet but if you do, don't forget to take the sun-tan oil and beach-mats.

Dave Cutts sent in another UTOPIA ROM utility for redefining the keyboard, it can be found on 8/2.

Gordon Wooliscroft - sent in a simple but useful file eraser called Filerid, you can find it on 8/5.

Colin Evans - sent in a number of games and utilities which run under AMSDOS and can be found on PD 9/1:

EDBUTT	a headbanger's game
UNERASE	guess!
PRINTCAT	another one
CODGECAT	He describes this as "Exactly the same as PRINTCAT but different"
DICK	"A rough cut adventure created on GAC. I never got round to finishing it off because I lost the work file"

Colin also sent in a CPM program call MFT - it's a very useful multiple file transfer utility on the lines of NSWP and can be found on 11/2.

P Nash sent in Forth 83 with lots of documentation - you can find this on 10/1 and 10/2.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SECTION CONT :-

K Hankin passed on some very well written programs, originally produced by Dave Williams. If I were to recommend any of the new additions it would be these:

PD 9/2 (AMSDOS)

AZERTY	Changes the keyboard layout to the AZERTY standard.
BODYTYPE	Outputs random latin words to the printer
FORMLIB	BASIC library that allows you to produce professional screen output & input screens.
GRAPHLIB	Business graphics library
HACKER'S	BASIC extensions - 17 new RSX commands for the hacker
PILOT	Interpreter for the educational language PILOT
PONTOON	Full-graphics version of the classic card game
THINCHAR	Produces a thin character set
WORDSEARCH	Generate your own wordsearches with ease
MINICAD	Experimental unfinished mini cad system
MENU MAKER	Disk menu program created with FORMLIB

PD 9/3 (AMSDOS)

EASYDOS DESKTOP	Amazing ST Style desktop
FORMAT	Fast formatter run from the desktop
OOPS!	Invaluable desktop file recovery program
KEYWORD	Utility that gives you fast single-key keyword entry
ERASE	Makes erasing files easy
EDITOR	Disk sector editor
BASIC+	Lots of new commands to BASIC
PEDIT	A program procedure editor
GDEM	Interesting graphics demo
MANDEL	Mandelbrot fractal generator
SIREN	Makes ambulance siren noise
CLOCK	Graphics analogue clock
FANCYCLS	Interesting way of clearing the screen
QUADPLOT	Plots any quadratic equation
MGP	Mathematical Graph Plotter

K C Tang passed on a variety of programs:

Small C compiler on PD 10/3 (CPM+ only)

EBASIC PD 11/1

Judge Dredd RPG PD 11/1
character generator.

Richard Sergeant passed on some demo screens showing a selection of Mandelbrot patterns - just think of the time you can save on not producing them yourself. You can find them on 9/4.

Stephen Gennard sent in the following programs which are on 11/1

CPMDOC	Text files explaining some CPM utilities	TIME	Gives time
BANNER	Prints large message	PCW	Patch drive to read PCW disc
PAPER	Selects paper length	RESET	Reverses PCW
PRINTER	Sends printer codes	BASIC	Integer basic interpreter

PROBLEMS! PROBLEMS!

Chris Eady has been using VDE and needs help in configuring it for the 6128 keyboard. If any one can help then please write to me and I'll pass it on.

Ken Bond also had some problems with the DIARY program on 6/1. The problem being how to enter the date. Eventually he solved the problem himself - the date must be in the following form: 19/02/89. His query also made me realise that this program is designed to work with UTOPIA and would need modifying if you don't own this ROM.

Don Snoad (our beloved ex-editor) also pointed out that the .DOC file for SECRETARY is a little(!) corrupted. I would appreciate it if anyone who owns a non-corrupted copy could send it to me. I'd also like to know if SECRETARY itself is any good (where's my favourite PD reviewer gone to?).

I also had a letter from Dennis Thorpe recently who was the second tape owner to try the new system. Dennis had some problems and I think it's worth repeating my answer to him here.

Firstly Dennis found that he couldn't LOAD the STD codes on tape 2, the problem being of course that these are not BASIC files, they are ASCII and must be loaded into a wordprocessor.

The more difficult problem is that Dennis kept getting the dreaded READ ERRORS. Audio tape has long been recognised as a poor medium for data storage. I don't have professional tape copying facilities, just my cheapo Woolies special. No doubt there is some mismatch between the tapehead on my machine and that of Dennis's. All I can say is that we are doing our best for the 464 owners, given the time available for other tasks. I have to say that, to the best of my knowledge, we are the ONLY PD library who provide any support at all for tape owners.

However I would like to offer a better service to tape owners, so if any member would like to become the tape PD librarian then I would be very happy to accept their help.

FINALLY

I would like to say a big thank you to all those who have contributed to the library, both with programs, requests and their kind comments.

Now where's that jiffy bag???

LAUG PD Software Review

* More Personal Views by Richard Sergeant *

Since writing my first review, I have bought a second disc drive, a 3.5 inch Mitsubishi mechanism plus RAMDOS (the operating system supplied by KDS Electronics) from Siren Software. Oh! the joys of Mail Order, the £5.00 discount I was offered by Simon Cobbs, was spent on phone calls nagging him about its non delivery. When it eventually arrived it would not work, a further two calls to Manchester and with my new drive in pieces on the hall carpet, the problem was diagnosed. A link had to be repositioned and 10 minutes later my first batch of nearly 800K capacity discs were being formatted. The Drive is far more noisy than the standard 3 inch unit, but I was assured that this was normal. The next problem involved the software, on the 6128, RAMDOS uses Bank 7 and so do a lot of other programs, in the case of Tasword 6128 a special loader is necessary, Tasword worked without a hitch and I was able to use the new drive B for text files. but a problem occurred when using QUALITAS PLUS. A phone call to KDS and a week or so later they had the solution: One line had to be added and another altered in the RAMDOST.BAS (Tasword loader) and a further line altered in QTW6128.BAS (the Qualitas Loader for Tasword). This set up does reduce the size of the text file Tasword can handle, and only two Qualitas fonts instead of three can be stored in memory. The whole set works very well indeed and with so much storage space for text, I am very impressed. Thanks to KDS for their support.

Get on with it!! I hear you cry....What has this to do with our PD software? Well another file on the RAMDOS disc is called RAMDOS+.COM which works in the CP/M Plus environment, and this is where NSW (PD 1/1) really comes into its own, I have set up the 3.5 inch discs so that the different USER areas are used. NSW manages these file very efficiently. From the original System discs I've used INITDIR.COM, SET.COM and DATE.COM for the first time, it sets up your Directory to allow time and date stamping. On PD 4/1 are two files called MDIR.COM and DS.COM although they work and map the directory of a disc, unfortunately they were originally intended for CP/M 2.2 and do not give an accurate output with regards to files used/remaining or disc space available; the program to use is SD.COM (PD 1/1). However with all that available space I can afford to have DIR.COM on each of the discs. The Library utility NULU.COM to be found on PD 4/1 and PD 7/4 has been used and I have created a library file of nearly 200K.

So much for a round up of the last few months, and so on with the new PD review. The first disc is PD 7/5 - MBASIC running under CPM+. Load CPM as normal put in your PD 7/5 disc and type (as an example) MBASIC MATH, this will load the basic operating system and MATH.BAS; to return to the CPM prompt type <CTRL> and the <C> key (this is the same as Break in ordinary basic), then type SYSTEM you are back at the prompt. On this disc, only MATH.BAS, SIMULAT.BAS, VOCAB.BAS (this uses WORDFIL.TXT), XMAS.BAS and KOLOSSUS.BAS are worth bothering about, the others will not work correctly. The basic program files mentioned when resaved in the ASCII option will port across and run under MALLARD BASIC.

Load WALESHP.BAS which is to be found on PD 8/1, the program highlighting the towns, rivers, mountains, national parks and counties of Wales is superb, well done Steven Fisk, it even includes a rendition of the Welsh Anthem. The other program on this disc is TAX.TAX, I played around with this one it writes lots of data files so have plenty of space available, I'm sure it will be very handy for someone who is self employed, in my case a "PAYE lemming" it has only limited appeal.

The Investment Portfolio program called PORTFOL.BAS is to be found on PD 6/1 is well done, you enter the current date, name and units held of the shares, when bought, price paid, current unit value and you have an up to date valuation of your investment. Using Option 2 of this program, a simple line graph of the rise and fall of each individual share price is shown, I wasn't too convinced about the scale used, but by my standard a very good effort. Another file to do with this program is PRICES.BAS but I haven't had any luck, it crashes the program searching for another non-existent file. ELECTBIL.BAS on this disc, is very easy so long as you can read your meter and know the correct unit price of electricity.

Centrox - the "UNIX" type operating system comes on PD 6/2, and the document files on PD 6/3, you must unsqueeze them to use on you friendly word processor, I printed out, the 68 sides of A4 using NSW, that way I did not have to unsqueeze. Using the System disc (PD 6/2), a back up if possible, and a freshly formatted data disc, I managed to LOGON, the CAT command would read a *.LIB file, LF would show me the current directory / user area, but I could not access any other. DATE Command worked but not TIME, the DO Command repeated the last ten lines and I could change the cursor / prompt, on the plus side I did like the Font style the 'operating' system generates. However after about three hours of trying and achieving less than modest progress, I gave up and went to bed. There is a mention of a Tutorial in the notes, I think I need that and to be gently shown what to do. I found the instructions confusing and would have liked some simple examples with a step by step guide. When I tried to load a game, there was much disc activity and then nothing. Please Mr. Cope, what am I doing wrong?

If you have the word processor PROTEXT you may find PD 8/4 of some interest it contains an update of the British Telecom STD Dialing Codes. The program incorporates eight files plus a README.PSE file. To use: for example load the file "03.TEL" into PROTEXT, go into command mode and use the FIND command, input the code you require ie. '0303' and up comes Folkestone and Hythe etc. I am sure that this easy to understand and use program will one day do sterling service.

In the past few weeks as I have got more involved with CPM, I have had a go and even copied a few *.ASM files on my trusty word processor, compiled them using MAC.COM and finally after a little HEXCOM.COM, a fledgling *.COM file is produced. Well, you may have guessed it I shall be sending off for the ZX80 Assembler and Disassembler programs on PD 1/3, PD 1/4 and PD 4/4 shortly, and that dear reader is fuel for another installment of the Public Domain Review in the months ahead.

On PD 7/1, the General Election program is very well done, the amount of work that went into compiling the data must have taken weeks, I did like the predictor / forecast option, it also runs under CPM+. I will have to try it out in 1991 and see how accurate it is, compared to the actual result. The other program on this disc is very dodgy, it is supposed to give random disc file access, all it did to my back ups (don't what ever you do use your master) was corrupt the directory. I think I will need help on that one. PD 8/5 has lots of very useful Amsdos programs, I was a little perturbed to find that some of them were straight type-ins or freebies from Amstrad Action and the now defunct CWTA, or as it ended its days, CPC Computing. I would not like the club to be 'done' for breach of someones copyright. I am not moralizing because if we are allowed to include programs from other magazines I can contribute dozens to the PD library. The Library Catalogue program I recommended last time is included on this disc, and it is worth getting for that alone. The other file I found of interest was INITCPM3.BAS; to use, you will also need a blank vendor formatted disc and a copy of your master system disc. It creates a system formatted disc without needing to enter CPM and load Disdkit3, just follow the directions, a very user friendly little program. A couple of years ago Amstrad Action included a freebie tape (Christmas 1986) I think. On side B of the tape was a program called FASTFORM, this allowed the user the choice of Five different formats, Data, Vendor, System, IBM and the 203K BigK (there was a bug in this that could be corrected, the details were published later). I have the updated version, and have eight disc full up using this BIGK format, and they have proved very reliable, mind you not everything can be saved or run from it, but used for some of the older programs you can get ten or more games on a disc.

CARNUM.BAS and CARNUM.DAT are also to be found on PD 8/5, this program finds the the name of the Town or City where a car was registered. I had some difficulty at first, you are asked for two letters of the registration, I assumed it meant the first two, it in fact requires the last two eg. E696BFG is the number of my car. The letters to enter are FG, this then gives the correct answer of Brighton, and thus explains why I got Stoke on Trent when I originally typed in the letters BF. A four page printout can be produced listing all the car registration lettering of the United Kingdom - Another handy little program.

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PUBLICATION DATES

CPC USER is published on the first day of February, April, June, August, October and December.

Contributions and other material for publication should be sent to the Editor by the first day of the month preceding publication.

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 OF THE
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