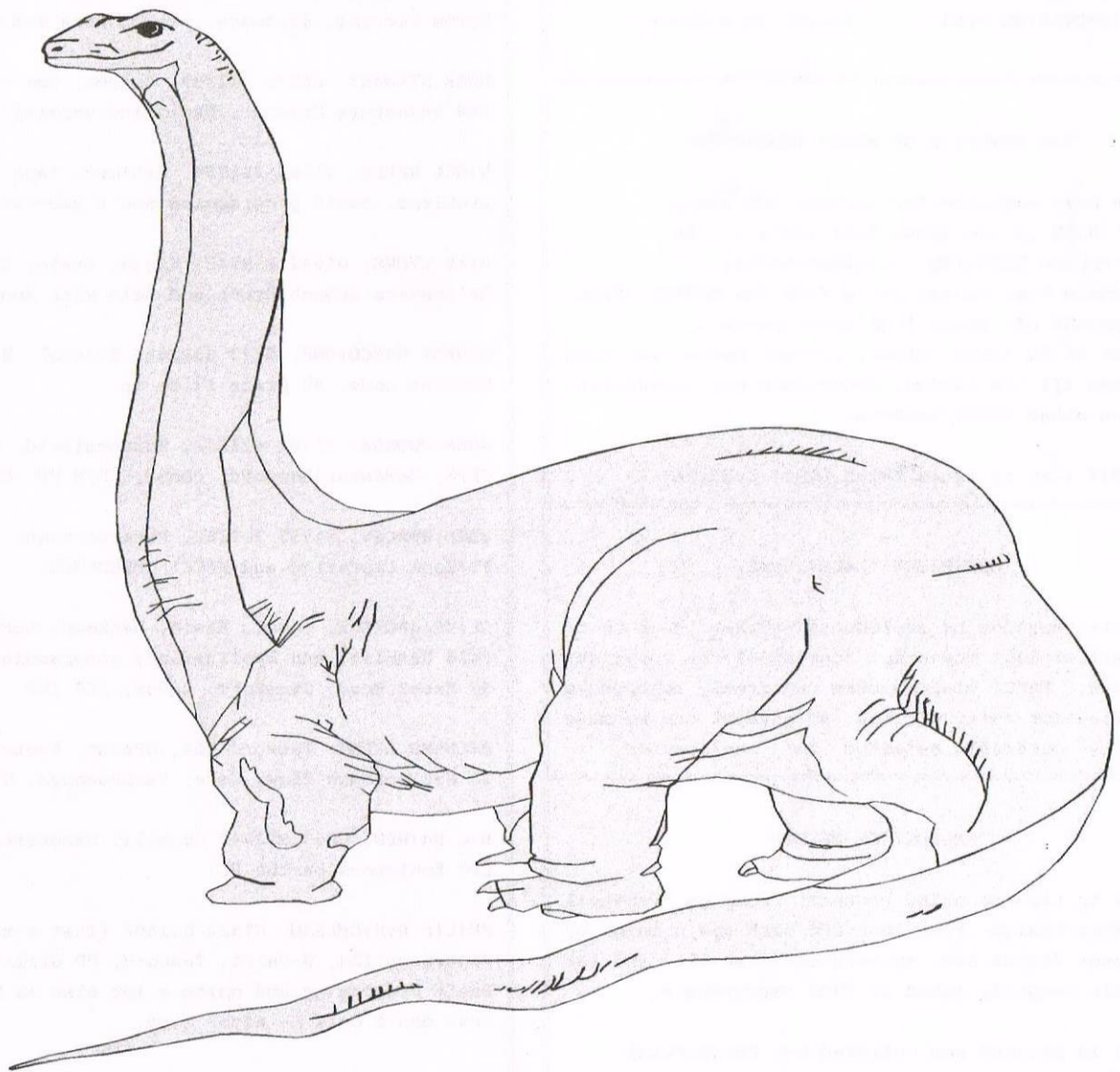


WACCI

THE WORLDS BEST CPC MAGAZINE
AND PREMIER CPC USER GROUP

ISSUE 102 £2.00
JULY 1996



**THE EIGHT BIT
DINOSAUR LIVES
ON AND ON AND ON AND ON...**

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THE BENEFITS OF WACCI MEMBERSHIP

- * The best magazine for serious CPC users.
- * An INDEX of the above from issue 1 - 96.
- * Telephone HELPLINE (indispensable).
- * Bargain buys/wanted lists from the MARKET STALL.
- * Discount off goods from advertisers.
- * List of PD discs, tapes, library books, services.
- * Above all the advice, assistance and friendship from other WACCI members.

BENEFIT list by Ernie (Wish List) Ruddick

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PRODUCTION METHOD

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WACCI is distributed by the Dwerryhouse family who could describe the 157 different tastes in stamps.

WACCI: The club for Amstrad CPC computer owners.

FRONT COVER: <<I admit nothing -Philip>>

THE TELEPHONE HELP-LINE



BOB MOFFATT, 01454 329875
Weekends only please.
Masterfile III, Mastercalc
Qualitas and Prottext.

FRANK FROST, 01983 882197
Isle of Wight, 4pm to 10pm
VDE, CP/M, Prottext and
WACCI Services.

MALCOLM BRABBIN, 01502 716344, Suffolk
8pm to 11pm but not Saturdays. Basic programming.

IAN NEILL, 01926 337708, 6pm to 10pm, Warwickshire
Eprom blowing, Hardware, Electronics and more.

MARK STEWART, 01773 822599, Belper, 8pm to 10pm,
PAW Adventure Creator, Basic and general help.

NIGEL MELLS, 01784 211734, Ashford, tape to disc
problems, Basic programming and a general natter.

MIKE LYONS, 01942 259942, Wigan, Basic, Stop Press
Dk'tronics Speech Synth and help with Sunset.

STUART GASCOIGNE, 0272 831361, Bristol, Basic,
Machine code, PD Discs 19 to 36.

JOHN HUDSON, 01484 423252, Huddersfield. MOII,
CP/M, Wordstar/Newword, dBASE, CP/M PD, CPC-PCW-PC

JOHN BOWLEY, 01733 702158, Peterborough.
PD/Book Libraries and WACCI OMBUDSMAN.

CLIVE JACKSON, Cobol, Basic, Bankman, Sorting,
File Handling and Applications programming.
37 Essex Road, Stamford, Lincs, PE9 1LG

RICHARD AVERY, Tasword 464, GPaint, Another World.
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NIC RAYNER, 0850 992747 (mobile) Manchester
CPC Emulators on the PC.

PHILIP DIRICHLEAU, 01522 511608 (That's me)
Powerpage 128, G-Paint, Tasword, PD Utilities,
Basic Programing and quite a lot else as well.
Just don't call me after 11pm.

- - Anyone Want This Space - Call the Editor - -

NB :

This help-line is provided on a voluntary basis by club members to assist other members. Please call between 7pm and 9pm (unless stated otherwise.)

WACCI

Edited By: Philip DiRichleau
Owned By: The Club Members
Chairman: John Bowley

Conceived and Founded
By: Jeff Walker
In: October 1986

Developed and Expanded
By: Steve Williams
And: Clive Bellaby
And: Paul Dwerryhouse

Telephone: 01522 511608

Copy Date: 16 July 1996



THANX & STUFF

What a month it has been. I know I was geared up to take over the editorship, but that hasn't stopped it from being a very interesting time. I've had to repair three computers (including 'Mother'), lay a carpet in a large sized lounge, fix a freezer, paint a young ladies bedroom black (I kid thee not), survive four weekends with my children (they take after their father) and produce my first copy of WACCI. I've managed them all, though the children did look like they were going to win the battle of the computers for a while.

A CROSS WORD WITH COMSOFT

I bet that header has made a few eyebrows raise slightly. I've been informed by Peter Campbell that Comsoft will now be releasing the Times and Sun Crossword Discs. Indeed, Peter has been kind enough to send a review copy down which, as I type, is in the process of being reviewed.

These crosswords head back into ancient times, like back to the 1930's and are guaranteed to drive even the most ardent of crossword fanatics to distraction. I've looked at the couple Peter sent down and, even with a classical education, it took me a while to pick up on some of the clues. These look like good things.

Talking of classics, Peter also let me know that Comsoft are soon to release Classical Literature on disc in an ASCII format. That does interest me and I look forward to seeing what become available. Prices should hover around the £5.00 mark (if I recall correctly).

SO WHY THE NEW COVER

Ah, I thought you might have noticed that. It's all down to the method I use to produce WACCI. Paul did the cover on a PC; I don't have a PC viz I

cannot do the cover as before. I have to do it on a CPC, which is why the cover has been more than slightly altered. Besides that, I like this style of cover design. You may notice a couple of other changes within the pages of the magazine this month, all of which are in response to the new editorship and to make my life easier. If you don't like it, let me know, I can take it. Incidentally, this month's Thanx and Stuff goes over to two pages only in response to the fact that there is more news than normal to bring to your attention. It's not going to happen often.

SO WHAT'S HAPPENING

We're still in the process of streamlining the production method at the moment. I think it's going to take a little time to get it sorted out properly, but at least this Issue of WACCI should land on your doorsteps right on time.

All the layouts you see in here are mine, start to finish (except the compo page which John always does). Most of them have been checked by Frank to make sure I haven't let too many errors slip by and then checked again when they've come back here.

After all this, it's then sent off to Paul to have the final graphics added and then to be printed. Errors are liable to slip in, for which I make no apology. Until now, I didn't believe how much work goes into each Issue.

ANY OTHER NEWS

Does anyone out there use the internet? There is a reason for this, because I've been told that an awful lot of software has been put into P.D. which we're not aware of. This includes a lot of high quality commercial games. One of the names that I've been informed of is Design Design, who released classics such as Tank Busters and Dark Star.

I've also been informed that some companies are openly stating that they will now turn a blind eye to the copying of CPC software by user groups so long as no one makes a profit on it, only I don't know which companies have said this. I'm not talking about small companies either. So, if anyone can find the Internet files and run up a printout of what it says so that we can check it out, I'd be very grateful. Remember though, as yet I have no confirmation on this, so to be safe, I'll assume that all commercial software is still commercial until I have proof positive otherwise.

If this all turns out to be true, then WACCI may well end up with a software base that going to start expanding rapidly. Also, depending on the truth of the matter, it may well sent a very interesting precedent.

THANK STEVE

I wonder how many WACCI member know the name Steve Williams. For the benefit of new members, he was the second editor of WACCI, after Jeff Walker and before Clive Bellaby. Why am I telling you this, because if I don't, the next bit isn't going to make very much sense.

Steve has just presented WACCI with a whole load of stuff which was left at WACCI Towers when he handed over to Clive. This has now landed back with WACCI and contains a whole goldmine of very interest bits.

To start with there are some past WACCI. I'm not talking about second hand here, I'm talking amount mint condition, original copies going back to the 'teen issues. These will be available from Frank Neatherway as soon as possible. He also handed over some original, camera-ready copies of WACCI which are now very carefully stored away here. I'll be bringing some up to the convention for member to have a (careful) look through. This is pure WACCI history.

He also sent up a set of original Arnor roms, complete with boxes, which are now attached to Schniedie, my back-up 6128, a ROM Blower with several blank roms (which aren't blank anymore), disc labels, books for the library and a huge number of discs containing the text files for WACCI issues #18 upto the high #40's. These, along with all the other text-file discs, will be made available to members as soon as we've had a chance to go through them all.

There was also a large number of tape based software, several discs, including Pro-Type and enough work to keep John and Myself busy for several months to come. I've also been told that Steve may well have some more stuff which he's willing to let WACCI have, at no expense.

What can I say? A very big Thanks Steve does not really say enough, considering that we're talking near on £1000 worth of assets here (and I'm not joking either).

MORE WACCI HISTORY?

Steve set me wondering. How much WACCI history is lurking out there, hidden away in draws which no one ever thinks about? Could it be that there is more around than even I suspect?

What am I saying here? Well, to be honest, I'm after it. It seems a good idea, at least to me, to try and get as much original stuff together, in one place, as is possible. I've retained all my Fair Comment letters, in fact, I keep everything. To start with, this was because I'm a data squirrel of the worst order, but recently I've found another reason.

I have a friend who works in the Library Service and, when she was around here a couple of weeks ago, I proudly showed off WACCI to her. To quote her exact words, 'Libraries would kill to get hold of something like this'. That also got me thinking.

WACCI, one distant day, is going to fold, that inevitable. The question is, what happens to WACCI when it occurs. Vanish away, never to be heard of again? I don't like that idea at all, so, taking the plunge, I called the British Library and had a long talk with a chap there. The result of the conversation was that they'd be delighted to take everything to do with WACCI, when we do close down and store it for future prosperity. It would appear that most people seem to think that they're only there for professional publications, which is totally wrong.

What do you think? Have you got anything which may be a part of WACCI history. It doesn't matter how small or insignificant it may appear, it all adds to the big picture of how WACCI is run and how it evolved. If you do have anything and could bear to part with it, how about sending it to the WACCI Dungeon, where it will be kept safe until such time as it gets handed over to the care of the British Library. I like the idea.

THE REVENGE OF TIGGER

I've had a very interesting postbag over the past month. I know where one of them has come from, but not the other. The first is a plastic Tigger, which I know the source of. Thanks a lot Jonty, it's now sitting in front of my printer with the Darkside Software belt intact. I think it's quite cute really.

The second is a T-shirt, a very large T-shirt with an equily large Tigger emblazoned on the front. I have to admit that I can't see myself wearing it in public (maybe at the

convention) but my children think it's brilliant (they haven't see the other Tigger yet, it only arrived this morning). I would like to thank who ever it was who sent it to me.

This is nothing new I might add. Ever since I got attached to the name of 'Tigger', I've had letters sent to him, parcels, fan-mail (yup, it's true) and even a postcard from Winnie-the-Pooh (now who sent that?). I've even managed to aquire some Tigger Notelets, envelopes, writing paper and postcards, which I'm loath to use because I don't know how to replace them. Oh well, that's the price of fame I suppose.

AND FINALLY

It's dark outside. The air is cool and refreshing after a long, hot day. A little while ago, I could hear what sounded like an owl hooting away in the background. Now it just quiet and very relaxing. The only noise I can hear is coming from the computer itself. I have a mug of fresh Earl Grey tea to one side of me and a cigarette resting in the ashtray on the other side.

As I've been typing in this final page, it's dawned on me that I'm finally putting my first Issue of WACCI to bed (to use a publishing buzzword). After this there is nothing else to do for this issue other that to print out Johns compo page (when it arrives, which had better be tomorrow morning) and then send the whole lot off to Paul to be printed. The only problem I have now is that there are still a few lines left down there and nothing to do with them... oh well, the story of this month I suppose, a few lines left and nothing to put in them. See you next month....I'm going to bed.



Fair Comment

Philip "Tigger" DiRichleau
and Frank Neatherway
3 Glebe Close
Rayleigh
Essex SS6 9HL

ANY PORT IN A STORM

Dear Philip, first of all, thank you (and Paul) for sorting-out my missing issue three of WACCI.

Whilst reading Ben Watt's letter in issue 101 (about controlling robots etc from the tape socket), I thought to myself "what he needs is a proper Input/Output port" and that got me started on designing one. Now, the question is, would you like to have the design to publish in WACCI?

I haven't had time to build the I/O port myself (as I tend to have very little spare time these days) but the design is fairly straight forward and shouldn't cause any problems. It allows for upto 48 lines, each one individually programmable as an input or output. Anyway Philip, if you want it I'll redraw it in a Micro Design format (along with a Protext-file article for it) if that's okay and send it to you.

About HD discs; I've not had any trouble with unformatted discs, but when I've tried to re-format a PC formatted disk as a (say) D20 format, it always seems to throw up an error on the first track when I verify it. The only thing that then works is to format the disc as a standard DATA format disc. At least they're okay for sending letters on!

Best wishes
Martin Bela
Derby

<<Hiya Martin. I'd love to see the I/O Port designs and, if I can build one myself, I'll publish the details in WACCI. I think that this is going to be the standard bench test for all Techno-Rat Articles from now on. If I can manufacture them, or modify one of my machines according to the instructions that will be given in the magazine, then I'll publish the project. I hope to hear from you soon on that score.

I still don't seem to have any trouble with H.D. Discs at my end and, no matter how hard I try, I can't get my drive to mis-read them. I have a feeling it might come down to the drive, rather than the disc -Philip>>

MORE TUTORIAL QUESTION

Dear Philip, will you kindly put this letter in Fair Comment.

I have got the CP/M Protext Wordprocessor with Mail Merge, Spell Checker and Disc Utilities.

There is a Tutorial Disc for it that Arnor had for a small charge and I meant to get it from them, but in the meantime Arnor closed down.

I wonder, would any of the WacCI Club members who have that Tutorial Disc be kind enough to give me a copy of it? I would send a disc for them to copy the Tutorial Files onto and I would send enough postage for the disc to be returned to me.

Thanks very much Philip, you are doing a fine job in writing Fair Comment, so all the best for now.

Yours sincerely
J.P.Jordan
Lanesboro

<<Hello J.P. WACCI do have a tutorial disc in the library somewhere. Just a moment and I'll go and look it up. It's on Public Domain Disc 101. This might just be the very disc you're after, unless there's a second one that I'm not yet aware of -Philip>>

POTTY QUESTIONS

Dear WacCI, hello all you lucky people, just think of all those thousands of people who have Amstrads but have not discovered, the support, the services and the friendship WACCI provides. You are lucky. Why not give them a quick nudge in the right direction? If we have 400 members and I believe over 4 million Amstrads were sold including PCWs there must be lots

of un-lucky people who think they are the only ones who have one and think there are no suppliers of kit.

Some of you who have made contact with me may know I hate writing and have developed a style of writing more akin to disc compressing but Philip says even if it's three lines go for it, so here goes.

1. To avoid burning out the producers of WACCI how about going metric and produce 10 issues per year? (Don't boo all at once, it's only an idea). This would give a Christmas and a summer holiday to avoid wear and tear on the staff. *<<This end of the staff doesn't wear and tear that easily -Philip>>*

2. Does anyone want a 40meg hard drive (don't all shout at once)? As I use CPC and PCW Amstrads I notice an odd thing. CP/M was made to use hard drives but these were very rare and the main suppliers were both in a place that rings a bell. "WORTHING": perhaps some detective work is in order. I have dug out two addresses:

SCA Products, 61 Ferringham Lane,
Worthing, Sussex. BN12 5LW; and also

Primal Computing, 7 Chapel Road,
Worthing, Sussex. BN11 1EG.

These are for the PCW but as the two M/cs are both on CP/M there should be no major problem to over-come. There is another still available from Scotland:

Cirtech, Monksford Stables, Newton St
Boswel, Melrose. TD6 ORU :

the latter don't sound interested in looking at the possibility.

3. Help..... has any one got a STAR LC 24 200 printer as my print head is dead; it doesn't matter if black or colour.

4. Some of you may know I have EINSTEIN computers and have been appointed as outside events person for the Einstein user group. The Einstein is a 3" disc drive Z80 M/c that runs CP/M and the PD is available to you provided you have WACCI PD 82. Send a stamped addressed envelope to me for a list. Note, some will require configuration by a M/c code alteration as the screen memory is in a different address.

5. A disczine "EDI" eddy is just starting and the text is ascii so you can access it with WACCI PD82. To receive this, at present, free disczine send a disc and return postage x2 to A Dunipace, Burnhouse Cottage, Milton road, Lennox Town, Glasgow. G65 7NH.

6. I have the odd article written but the Einstein club has first shout on them, such as my side select switch with LEDs green for A red for B. I will try to write an article on the Einstein as it is a very close relative to Arnold and Joyce but don't hold your breath. <<If I hold my breath for more than 30 seconds I have a habit of going blue, so I don't think it's a good idea -Philip>>

7. To PHILIP, please don't gripe about CP/M, it really was a major development as the first Industry Standard DOS for use on many different makes of computer. This means that with a little configuration any CP/M software can run on any M/c with CP/M available. We got it free with the Amstrads but some other makes had to pay over 500 pounds per master disc (usually 5.25").

If we look at America CP/M was massive and held the position Windows has today. So there is a mine of CP/M on the other side of the Atlantic as all university-produced software is compulsory PD by law. Most universities hold a bank on bulletin boards or the internet. Remember we have CP/M 80 not CP/M 86 or DR DOS as these are for the PC, spit spit....

Yours sincerely
Stephen Potts
85, Thorold Avenue
Cranwell Village
Lincolnshire
NG34 8DS

<<Hello Steve. Me, gripe about the Crazily Programmed Mess, no, I would never do anything like that. I admit quite happily that there is a huge amount of very interesting software out there for CP/M, but you need to be a rampent techno-rat to get a lot of it to work. Now if we could get it pre installed for the CPC, that might be different matter.

Worthing, Worthing, now who do I know in Worthing who might be able to look into that little matter for me. Sorry, totally escapes me for a moment, but I am quite sure I know someone in WORTHING who might be able to look into it.

Sending WACCI Metric? I don't think so, but what does the membership think? I know that Paul nearly got himself lynched last year by taking a holiday. He only just missed a group of rampent WACCIites out to lynch him (led by a certain Fair Comment Editor). I would look very silly trying to lynch myself -Philip>>

A BIT OF A PORT PROBLEM

Dear Philip, HELP!! I rang you a little while ago to try and straighten me out over PRINT#8, but I haven't really got much further. It all started at the last WACCI convention, when that nice Ian Neill volunteered to send me an article from AMSTRAD USER (August 1989!) on how to make an 8-bit printer port. Well, I thought I was doing well when I managed to butcher the inside of my 6128+ and fit it there rather than on yet another dangly bit outside. As far as I can tell, it works fine from BASIC: setting my printer (STAR LC-100) to IBM mode (by sending &1B &74 &01) enables me to get the lovely graphics from &B0 onwards.

But I can't get the darned thing to work from within PROTEXT (with PROMERGE+). Has anyone out there experience of this darling little donglette? Have they managed to get it to work from within PROTEXT? Which of the printer calls do I need to patch?

In playing around with this, I came upon another mystery (isn't life just full of them?). Putting my printer into hex dump mode by holding pitch + paperfeed down on powerup allowed me to see the effect of printing to #8 chr\$(i), for i to 255. Invariably, after a while, an extra &0D &0A

(carriage return, line feed) is inserted into the stream. Is there any way of suppressing these? I ask, because one of the original ideas behind my making the 8-bit port was to make a simple graphics dump (colour, even) that could be tested by using print #8 rather than delving into the machine pack. (BTW, the extra CR/LF are in no way connected with the 8-bit port: the same effect happened on my spare 6128, and with a different printer).

Hoping some wise person can sort me out!

Dave Teague
24, Ballinode Close
Wyman's Brook
Cheltenham
Glos.
GL50 4SQ
(tel: 01242 573661)

<<Hello Dave. Problem solving, I'm good at that, especially when I know what the problem is. Unfortunately, in this case, I don't know what the problem is. I don't know the project you're talking about here since there were several hardware modification going around. I've done one on mine, which revolves around one wire, a single cut track and a small patch which works perfectly. If you send me the project and the patch program, I can let you know what the conflict is.

The CR and LF signals are being sent to your computer to mark the end of a line (ie, where ever you've set the WIDTH to). Set it to WIDTH 255 and you'll get rid of it, sort of. To be honest, however, there's no point in it since it does serve a purpose. Look under WIDTH in the CPC Manual for a better explanation -Philip>>

POWER TO THE PAGE

Dear Philip, as promised please find the Tandy DMP 900 printer manual. As I explained over the phone this is a Citizen 120D in all respects except the name on the front of it. I've had this for several years now and when I bought it it was actually cheaper then if it had had a Citizen label on it (I'm not sure that that is grammatically correct to have two ITs, HADs and THATs side by side in the same paragraph). Please excuse the condition of the manual. It has had a lot of use over the years and it has

had more than its fair share of tea, coffee and beer spilled over it. <<This I have noticed -Philip>>

Following our phone conversation I have decided to rewrite the PowerPage Tutorial making it 6128 specific rather than trying to rehash the text files I have already written as I feel this would be easier. Perhaps if anyone particularly requires a 64k version tutor you could let them have photocopy of the one that should be with you. If not, I could soon print out another one for them.

I wonder if I am not a file short on the disc you sent me. The PowerPage 6128 instructions state that the programme holds an 8x8 font and 16x16 font in memory at the same time. However, whenever I try to use HEADLINE LAYOUT nothing appears on the screen but the cursor moves down. Obviously something has been imported but it remains invisible. I have solved the mystery of why the printout is all in Uppercase letters with Capitals larger than the rest. This is obviously the inbuilt font 'DEFAULT.CHAR'. I think I will probably erase this from the disc and instead put on 'AMSTRAD.CHR' and rename it to become the default font.

I enclose with the manual an A4 printout of what I have written so far in the PP tutorial. Please excuse the strange looking font. To get it on the page I used 'SMALL.CHR' and reduced the line spacing. In the A5 printout I tried first, it was practically unreadable without a magnifying glass.

I also include the Scouts AGM report which I produced using PowerPage just to show what can be done with the programme (and this was before I got the 6128 version). You will notice that on the Chairman's page there is a piece of clip art of a policeman because that is what he does for a living. I work for the same 'FIRM' as he but I have not included a picture of a traffic warden on my, the Secretary's, page. WHOOPS!!!

I notice a bit of rivalry in the pages of WACCI between Protex and Brunword. <<Only a bit? -Philip>> While I use Protex for most of my work, up until now I used Tasword 6128 for my PowerPage files as the 64k version would not import a Protex file. Here is a hint for other Tasword 6128 users. I found that I often got a

W A C C O

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Press/Club Release Date: 24th May 1996

MAXAM 2, C, AND BCPL RE-RELEASED FOR A LIMITED PERIOD

As a result of a better than expected reaction to the relaunch of Protex Office last month, WACCO are now able to re-release the last three items from the range which was rescued when Arnor Ltd went out of business last year. The following programs will be available from 15th June 1996 (subject to the arrival of the manuals on time!):

1) Maxam 2 is the full CP/M version of Arnor's Z80 Editor, Assembler, and Monitor. With many more features than the CPC disc and Rom versions, this program, supplied on 3" or 3.5" disc for CPCs or PCWs, is THE quintessential developer's tool for Z80 programmers. Maxam 2 is supplied with a fully comprehensive 158 page ring-bound (lie-flat) manual and costs £25.

2) Arnor C. This is a full implementation of the C standard as defined by Kernighan and Ritchie in the book "The C Programming Language". The compiler produces compact, fast, intermediate code which runs under an interpreter written in Z80 machine code, designed specifically to run C on 8-bit computers. It is recommended that a potential user become familiar with the concepts and use of C and a list of recommended books is supplied. The program is supplied on 3" or 3.5" disc for CPC or PCW computers, is supplied with a 162 page ring-bound (lie-flat) manual, and costs £25.

3) BCPL. Often described as "The Systems Programming Language", BCPL is also an excellent general purpose programming language. This implementation is supplied to run under CP/M versions 2.2 or Plus (for PCW or CPC users) or Amsdos (for CPC users only). Both are supplied on the disc version. Alternatively, BCPL can be supplied on rom (for CPC users only) at £5 extra. In all cases a disc of useful routines is supplied on disc, and the language comes with a comprehensive A5 manual. BCPL is £15 when supplied on disc (PCW + CPC versions), or £20 when supplied on rom (CPC only) with the routines library supplied on disc.

All prices include free registration for WUSS, The WACCO User Support Service.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Because of their more specialist technical nature, and hence limited appeal, we are only publishing a limited edition of 10 copies of each of the programs at this time. If sales are as few as we expect, we may not reissue them again. So if you have been waiting for their re-release, or want to get one while they're there, get your orders in to ComSoft now. Their address is ComSoft, 10, McIntosh Court, Wellpark, GLASGOW G31 2HW. Telephone orders may be placed through 0141 554 4735, and payment can be made by Visa or Mastercard - please have your card with you when you phone as details from it will be required. Please confirm your computer model and drive A: size at the time of ordering.

For further information, or to receive the above information on disc, contact Brian Watson on 01353 777006.

DRIVE A read fail when loading the programme and thought that the disc had become corrupted. However, I then found that a 'ROMON7' command followed by a soft reset cured the problem and the programme loaded every time. If you are not using ROMDOS skip the soft reset.

Well that's enough waffling, all the best,

Malcolm Brabbin
Beccles

<<Thanks for the letter Malcolm and the manual. Now all I have to do is read last months Fair Comment to remember why it was that I wished to borrow the manual in the first place. Oh yes! That was it.

I'm really looking forward to the PowerPage Tutorial arriving on my doorstep. Being a user of the said program myself (There are the odd WACCI Graphics that are done on PowerPage), I know just how extensive it can be, though I have no idea who you're getting such an odd effect from the Headline since I sent you a direct copy of my working disc. The scouts report is a very good example of the effects you can get with the 64k version, let alone the advanced capacity of the upgraded V1.2.

I'll make no comments about Brunword, it wouldn't be fair since Patrick Hanlan hasn't sent in his monthly Brunword Support letter. Poor old Brunword does so need it's First Knight -Philip>>

WACCI WEB SITE REPORT

Dear Paul, Sorry I've taken so long to get back to you with the address of WACCI on WWW. The URL changed recently anyway, so it's a good job I hesitated....

The URL is : 'http://users.ox.ac.uk/~chri0264/wowww.html' no spaces, all lower case, and the ~ can be got with CTRL-2 on the CPC. It should fit on the back page all right.

I haven't done anything about the graphics yet, because until this week I had no filestore left on my account. Now that the address has changed we have a dedicated WWW server, so everyone has been given extra filestore, so I now have another 4megabytes to play with. However I am rather busy at work at the moment, so it may have to wait until the summer.

In order to promote the magazine a bit more and keep a high profile on the Internet, I may be putting brief details of the contents of the latest mag on the pages. Still, we'll see. I don't really want to devote so much time to it that my CPC programming gets behind. I have started work on the next Family Tree version, just about. Have you seen my AMSPLAY prog. yet? *<<I Have -Philip>>*

Thanks for a brilliant Issue 100 - packed with lots of articles that I'm sure I'll re-read many times.

Yours
Matthew Phillips
Oxford

<<Dear Matthew. Yes. Ok. Fine. I'm going to be sending you an open letter soon which, if you could, would you please spread as far and wide through the internet (like anywhere that a CPC User might read). Let me know about that one will you -Philip>>

THE PROTTEXT PROGRAMMERS

Dear Philip and WACCI readers all, Amazing news! Yesterday, Saturday 18th of May, Mark Tilley and Gavin Every (original programmers/creators of Prottext) and original owners of Arnor Ltd came here for a meeting. The outcome is the best news for the CPC for ages.

Firstly, and apparently on a different subject of no interest to CPC users, Peter Campbell and I are now appointed the main distributors of the PC version of Prottext (of which Mark and Gavin still hold the copyright). Supplies of the current version of the program go on hold from now until 1st July, when a new version, v6.7, will go on sale through us. The price remains to be confirmed, but will probably be just £39.95 (incl VAT and free user support). This was the usual price of CP/M Prottext for the CPC and PCW until we rescued it and reissued it last year at 25 quid. When first released, Prottext PC was sold for about £150, so we think a 73.37% reduction is pretty cool! This new version (it comes on 5 discs and includes a thesaurus which requires very little feeding) needs a minimum specification of a 386 chip and, preferably, some sort of hard drive. Version 4.3 of the program worked fine with the small brains and low specs of

the Amstrad 1512s and 1640s, and we intend to re-release that version as soon as finances allow.

So much for the PC version. As I was saying, there are also many implications for CPC users:

1) Because we are back in touch and working with Prottext's programmers further upgrades to the Prottext suite are now possible. Suggestions for a wish list will be invited and welcomed later (see item 3).

2) The help files and Prottext-related programs produced by their former sales manager, Douglas Thompson, under the name Thompson Computing are a little closer now to being re-released as Mark and Gavin are still in touch with him.

3) There will shortly be a Prottext Users Club established for all users of Prottext on all formats; Amiga, CPC, PC, PCW, and ST - apparently the Archimedes version was not finished and, for now, is on hold. It is intended to start a web site AND bulletin board (the latter, of course, will be accessible by a CPC user).

4) Arnor's newsletter EXFILE will shortly be restarted by WACCO from number 15 where it ended around 1988. The originals, which carried all sorts of good Prottext stuff, will be re-published.

5) The remaining CPC/PCW languages and program C, BCPL, and Maxam 2 (the full blown CP/M version) will shortly be re-released by WACCO and sold through ComSoft.

6) There was a very helpful book, now out of print for some time, on the CP/M version of Prottext called 'Prottext - a PCW Users Guide' by Rob Ainsley. We are looking into the possibility of re-publishing it, updated by Rob Ainsley to cover ALL versions of the program. This idea is still at a VERY early stage so don't put it on your Christmas list. *<<I've read the book myself and found it helpful -Philip>>*

7) Other wholly new CPC, PCW, and PCW16 programs are in development for release later this year.

I hope you and other WACCI readers are as excited by this as Peter and I are. The original rescue was done with the involvement and support of Paul Dwerryhouse and WACCI and I am very gratified to see that now the process can get into a higher gear.

Just a last small cloud to skip across this undoubtedly blue sky. We are in the process of (legally) leaping on a Protext PC pirate from a great height. There are two reasons for this; 1) I don't like being taken for a mug, having invested my 'hard-earned' in a rescue I believe worthwhile; and 2) it sets a precedent for anyone else who feels like undermining what we are doing and/or making a few illegal bob out of someone else's hard work and may think we might not have the resolve to do it.

And on that cheery note....

Best Regards
Brian Watson
ELY

<<Hello Mr WACCO. I've published the Press Release you sent me (in a slightly modified form, which should be somewhere on these pages, urm, somewhere.

I look forward to any further updates on the Protext Family with baited breath, especially if any such updates are ROM based, which are the love of my life at the moment.

MMMMM, do I detect a word of warning in that last paragraph. I do think so and probably quite timely as well. I might also add that Piracy of active software, especially with the CPC Scene at the level it's now at, is not only a crime, it cannot be justified by ANY argument -Philip>>

IT'S THAT GIRL AGAIN

Dear WACCI, that's it, confuse me. I go away for a few days and my num tidies my room (dangerous), my dad re-arranges our books and WACCI gets a new Editor. You won't make me go round the bend, really you won't ...

Well done on a great centenary, I bet nobody thought they would ever see that issue. With regards to Bob Moffatt's Desert Island Discs article, my dad and I have a full set of WACCI (now with issue three) and I believe that Steve Williams, John Bowley and Frank Neatherway do also.

I'm just dropping a line to let you know that the King Arthur's Domain PD catalogue disc has just been updated. If anybody wants a copy please send a disc (3" or 3.5") and a SSAB to the address below.

One last thing, I have just been speaking to Rob Buckley about issue 100 and he said "Congratulations".

Regards, Angela
King Arthur's Domain
Brympton Cottage
Brunswick Road
Worthing
West Sussex
BN11 3NQ

<<Dearest Angela (don't read to much into that anyone, I'm just running out a ways of starting answers). Letter published, can think of no answer. Good night -Philip>>

LOST IN NEW ZEALAND (SOMEWHERE)

Dear WACCI, Renewal time again already! One lovely Bank Draft enclosed for a further ten issues.

Last time I wrote I enquired how many NZ subscribers there were and the answer (in Issue 93 with a weird heading) was five(!) - may I ask how many Aussie subscribers there are? To be nosey again. *<<One - Paul!>>* *<<Due to increase soon, hopefully -Philip>>*

I also mentioned drooling over your ads, to Philip's astonishment - but there is nothing like them here! And you are too far away for easy access to large items. Not that I need any hardware - I have two 464s and three 6128s with various disk drives, ROMs, screens, etc. In fact I am seriously thinking of hocking off a couple of them since space is limited where I live.

I should be able to contact you on the Internet in the near future - I'm still trying to configure a PC to that end. Isn't technology marvellous? Especially when it takes up hour after frustrating hour of your time!

All the best

Bill Noble
Mangakino
New Zealand

<<Hi there Bill. I've just looked up where Mangakino is in my atlas and I can't find you anywhere. Were you aware that you were lost? Where are you anyway?>>

Glad to see that you've decided to stay with us for another ten issues at least. However, I'm not happy. You've got more 6128's than I have (but I have more 464's than you have).

Anyway, hope that this Issue of WACCI finds you both well and happy (which I can't because I can't find you anywhere -Philip>>

WISH UPON A WISH-LIST

Dear Team, Please find enclosed cheque for the next twelve issues. Even after the price increase I find WACCI extremely good value for money. In my short time as a member I have found everyone I had contact with very friendly and helpful.

The PD librarians I have requested discs from have been very prompt in fulfilling my requests (return of post isn't an exaggeration). I recently queried a file missing from PD 57 (ZDE Word Processor) with Ian Parker and he very quickly solved my problem, producing the missing file and explaining how it may have got missing. During our correspondence I mentioned, in passing, that I was one of the three people in the survey without a printer. Along with the missing file came the offer of an old 9-pin printer he had no use for at postage cost only. I gratefully accepted the kind offer, thanks again Ian. the slight problem was, no manual; I have been able to get it going fairly well with the codes Ian sent me and some trial and error. But if anyone has a manual for an OKI Microline 182 that I could buy or borrow please contact me as it would be useful to get the machine working to its full potential, making the tea and toast, etc.

Paul, my thanks for all your hard work as Editor, you have done a wonderful job. Welcome Philip, you have a lot to live up to but I am sure Paul is right in sharing the load and made a wise choice judging by your skill as FC Ed. *<<Thank you -Philip>>*

As I browsed through Teletext small ads (ITV Page 396) I noticed ads for Amigo PD, Atari PD and PC Shareware clubs and thought it may be worth our club trying to reach the ever dwindling band of Anstrad owners through this medium. It appears to be regional, though where the lines are drawn I don't know, Granada ITV

carries ads from Sheffield to Edinburgh. ITV Page 388 has the details on how to advertise. So would whoever is wearing the recruitment hat like to consider the suggestion?

Just a small point with regard to Ron Boreham's letter in Issue 100 FC on ZDE16. I don't know about CP/M 2.2 but with CP/M Plus it is only necessary to install the macros contained in SAMPKEY.ZDK once, so adding the SAMPKEY.ZDK file to PROFILE.SUB won't work. On your working disc, assuming all the necessary files are present, type 'CPM at the A> prompt type ZDENST16 ZDE16 SAMPKEY.ZDK then exit ZDENST16 with the (S)ave option and your working copy of ZDE will have the macros permanently installed. I found MACRO 1 (softens hard CRS thus allowing reformatting of text written by other word processors) and MACRO 4 (reformats from current cursor position to end of paragraph and returns to the original position) particularly useful.

On the continuing WP debate may I add ZDE to the fray? I fully concur with Ron Boreham's excellent review (WACCI 99), especially the main advantage over the others, cost, as I have to do everything on a shoestring. It certainly meets my limited needs.

I came to the world of computing, on my early retirement a few years ago, with the second-hand purchase of a 6128 Plus. It had a few games and the CP/M Plus disc with it. After getting fed up with Burning Rubber and the other games I went through the manual, did all the type-ins etc., and would now describe myself as a competent novice at Basic.

Over the last few years I have picked up the odd snippet on the peculiarities of the Plus machines from AA, WACCI and experimenting, like how to cope with the odd PD program that needs to be run directly. The line in DISC.DOC files that checks that a printer is on-line has to be altered for my machine. I would like to know more, so if anyone fancies writing an article on the idiosyncrasies of the Plus you would have at least one very interested reader, especially if it included how to hack the games, with what I believe is called a "Plus incompatible key scan", into compatibility.

Continuing the wish list theme, the CP/M Plus disc has lots of files that are a mystery to me. <<CP/M has a lot of files that are a mystery to everyone -Philip>> Not all are mentioned in the manual and those on side two are merely listed as routines for machine code programmers. How about an in-depth rundown on the CP/M disc and all its utilities? Which leads me on to my next wish, prompted by the free issue 3 which had a couple of machine code articles. I would find a series perhaps titled Very Basic Machine Code very useful.

Finally Mr New Editor, sir, if I can be of any help to you and the club please let me know. My literary skills are poor, my equipment is very basic and my computing knowledge is mediocre but I can offer a small amount of time. All the Best

Peter Robson
Oldham

<<A very good day to you Peter. The team do try very hard at times to get things right (they can also be, at times, right hard trying as well), but from your letter I can see that we're getting something right at least.

Anyone fancy looking into the Teletext idea? Call me to let me know and it's all yours. The greater publicity that WACCI gets, the greater the membership and the longer we can stick around for.

If Mr Wish List is reading this bit, could you get your Wish-List people to look into Peter's requests please. I look forward to receiving them, especially the idea of a Very Basic Machine Code Tutorial -Philip>>

ABOUT FAIR COMMENT

Dear Philip, having heard (from John Bowley) that you're taking over as Editor of WacCI, I would like to say that, while it is a great shame Paul no longer wants to edit WacCI, it is great to see that there is a lot of support from people like you. I realise that you'll be a lot busier now, so if you want, I would love to help out with anything that you need done, or even help with your Fair Comment pages, just phone or write to me. <<Will do -Philip>>

As a matter of interest, there is a new permanent gallery at The Royal Museum Of Scotland called 'Art and

Industry Since 1850' which has a CPC 6128 (with a Protext disc on top of the disc drive) and a CPC 464! Is the ever-brilliant CPC so old that it's in a museum?

Yours sincerely
Ben Watt
Penicuik

P.S. Did you get my last letter that I sent to you on the 10th of April?

<<Hello Ben. Your last letter? Urm, did it appear in last months WACCI? There was one there.

Talking about Fair Comment. For the moment, I'm staying on as Editor of Fair Comment, mostly because I'm so proud of it that I don't want to hand it over. However, if my workload should increase dramatically so that I can't continue it even with the able assistant of Sir Frank, then I'll hand it over to someone else. If that time comes, I'll announce it very boldly for all to know.

A CPC in a museum? Is the CPC old enough to be in a museum? I think I'll stop at this point before I make the obvious quip about that -Philip>>

DON'T TOUCH - BUT WHY?

Dear Philip/Frank/Everyone at WACCI, I have two questions that I would like to ask.

1, Why do I lose text from within a Protext document when I access a Basic program to 'OPENIN' data from disc and send it via PRINT#8 CHR\$(n) to the printer as a user defined graphic? The Basic program works fine on its own, and Protext (not CP/M) works fine after the Basic has run - it just loses the text!

Does anyone know why this happens, or a way round it?

2, Does anyone know what DIP switches DS2-9 and DS2-10 on the DMP2000 are for - other than 'DO NOT USE'? The reason I ask is that my old DMP2000 started playing up. It started ignoring some control codes, sometimes it would refuse a self-test. Eventually it would only print in draft mode, ignoring all control codes. I pulled it to bits and gave it a good clean to no avail but when I started fiddling with the DIP switches, I got some response from it

and now it is working OK again. Was it dirt or damp in the DIP switches, and what do 'DO NOT USB' DIP switches actually do?

Cheers for now - sorry it's not on disc.

Paul Harrison
Keighley

<<Good day Paul. Answer to question one, I have no idea what so ever, but it does the same on my 6128. Not much help there am I. Sorry. I'm sure someone will be able to supply an answer by next month.

Isn't it awful when someone tells you not to touch but doesn't tell you why? That still doesn't answer the question as to what it's for though. Urm, I have no idea about that either. I think I'm going to have a bad month this issue -Philip>>

STRIKE A CHORD

Dear WACCI, delayed congratulations to all concerned on WACCI's 100th issue. I am very happy to put my GUITAR-CHORD-FINDER program into WACCI PD to celebrate this.

I have already sent version one to John Bowley whose encouragement has enthused me enough to add a further 300 chords as well as make the improvements needed.

As soon as John sends me the discs he kindly offered to loan me I will send him the latest version which is ready now. I remember him persuading me that my RUBICK's program needed instructions at the beginning but I have no room to fit a proper instruction page in this latest version of GUITAR-CHORD-FINDER simply because after endless hours of debugging and modifying - there is just no room. So can I give instructions/description here & ask has any WACCI member heard of anything like this on any computer?

A mode 2 screen announces the program at the beginning with the bottom three lines reserved for little messages that I thought would suffice for instructions - call it the SILLY-MESSAGE-window? Directly above this, to the left, is the Chord-LIST-window with no chords in it yet but with space for 6 chord names. To the right of the Chord-LIST-window is the SELECTED-CHORD-window which also has no chord in it - yet. Above all of

this is the question "Normal or one octave Higher (N/H) ?" which must be answered before the program will go any further. My reason for including this is that I think it sounds better to have the CPC sound-chip playing an octave the standard tuning and tune each string to the note rather than the octave giving standard tuning on the guitar while it is still "in tune" with the CPC.

After choosing that option and waiting for the appropriate data to load, use the cursor to move through the chord-list and the Enter key to select whichever chord happens to be highlighted in the chord-list at that time. "Selecting" the chord copies it into the SELECTED CHORD window, displays the fingering for that chord while simultaneously playing each note.

The spacebar swaps to a mode 2 screen which is basically just a bigger window on the massive list of 685 chords. You can still hear the chords as before by pressing [enter] or [return] but this screen does not display the fingering. Pressing spacebar again will get you back to the mode 0 screen to show the fingering of whatever chord is highlighted at that time.

Get it. Show it to any guitarists you can. Continue to support WACCI. When I recover from these endless data statements (and shouting at my own mistakes) I may re-write the whole thing if enough interest is shown. If there is a version 3 it will not contain the data within the program but load it from separate data files which, as well as giving room for 2000 chords, will allow use of the same program to load data for different tunings. It will probably all be in mode 1 showing the fretboard up to the 18th fret, with a CHORD-LIST-window of 7 high and 3 (chords) wide. Or maybe all in mode 2 with the fretboard drawn vertically and the fret spacing done to correct scale? Excuse me, I've got to go now, back into AMSDOS, to experiment with the idea I just had.

Anyway, version 2 is a reality and I think I ought to leave it for a while and get some feed-back before I change anything else. Feed-back in every sense of the word! Every little change I made since the version I sent to John, gave me problems. I seem to

average out at around 10 bugs per modification.

If I do get round to doing a third version the only instructions will be "use the cursor keys, and enter key."

See you at the convention!

Patrick Park
16 Union Street
Darwen
Lancs
BB3 0DA

<<Thanks muchly Patrick. It's always pleasing to see a P.D. Program go through several incarnations and improve with each change. I haven't actually seen it yet, so I can't make any comments, though the above instructions do seem to be quite comprehensive enough -Philip>>

BOARDING SCHOOL IS IN

Dear Philip, I am writing for the first time with regard to Mr A.F.Sims' letter in WACCI 99 about the Phil Craven rombox in ACU Dec 1988. Basically, I can confirm that it works well on the CPC 464/6128 and I can't see any reason why it shouldn't work with the plus machines too.

However, the main reason for this letter is that this project was used as the basis for the Ratz SuperTurboSpecial romboard deluxe (as endorsed by Richard Fairhurst in the hallowed pages of WACCI). This includes dip switch on/off for each socket as well as a total "kill" switch, reset button and LED display.

At present I am sorting out an article for Kevin Thacker's WWW CPC resource on how to build one and wondered if you could either use it as a hardware project -hopefully I should also have some information on 3.5" disc drives and the like in the not too distant future (curses, B.Sc finals just around the corner).

Anyway, that's enough waffle for now. I would be grateful if you would consider this as a possible hardware project and I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely
Simon Matthews
London

<<Excellent idea Simon. Send me the designs when finished and I'll see if they're within the scope of being published in WACCI -Philip>>

COMPETITION SPOT

With: John and Carol Bowley
97 Tarrington, Bretton
Peterborough PE3 9XT
Tel: 01733 702158

Welcome fellow WACCIites to another all singing all dancing issue of your favourite magazine. As you will already have noticed, we have a new editor. John and I wish the Supreme Being all the best and lots of luck - he'll need it!! Our sincere thanks go to Paul for the wonderful job he did for us. We know that you will continue to do great things for Wacci in other areas Paul so we are pleased not to be saying a tearful goodbye while we wave our silken hankies as you disappear into the distance. Enough of this frivolity I musn't get carried away or I'll sound like I'm writing for Mills and Boon. Anyway lets get on with the real reason why you all subscribe to Wacci, the Competition Page!

WACCI 99 COMPETITION

Yes folks it's been a long time a'comin' but here are the long awaited answers to the competition. To jog those memories that need jogging I had given you a selection of anagrams which when rearranged gave you the names of some well known people acquainted with WACCI.

The names were:

1. Dave Stitson
2. Richard Avery
3. Arthur Cook
4. Ian Parker
5. Mike Lyons
6. Angie Hardwick (What about me -JB>>
7. Stuart Gascoigne
8. Angela Cook
9. Mark Stewart
10. David Crooks
11. Carol Bowley

As you may remember I gave out the winners names last month. So well done to all who entered and to the winners.

WACCI 100 COMPETITION

As you all know the results for this competition will be published as soon as possible. Everything hinges on Peter and Pauls decision although Mary hasn't got a say in it at all! All the entries have been sent so now its a case of the waiting game.

I must say at this point that I was surprised not to get entries from some of my regular compers. Also I know that there are a lot more of you out there who could have entered but didn't. I suppose the reason for this is that either you may already have a

superb rombox just like the one we were offering or else you had other things on your mind. Oh well the chances are improved for those that did enter and believe me I don't envy the judges at all with the amount of entries that they will have to plough through. Thank you to you all for entering and we both wish you the very best of luck.

COMPETITION 102

Yes here it is the reason you buy your monthly WACCI. This competition has been set by Owen Brown who has earned himself the reward of two PD disc for his efforts. <<Thanks Owen>>

The object of the competition is to find the name of an animal that has a well known link with a certain word. For instance if the word was PLAY then the animal would be a HORSE making it HORSE PLAY. You will note that as most of you are computer orientated Owen has included one animal link just for you.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Share | 9. Race |
| 2. Jacket | 10. Derby |
| 3. Eared | 11. Hug |
| 4. Mat | 12. Gut |
| 5. Business | 13. Moth |
| 6. Whistle | 14. Shank |
| 7. Glove | 15. Leather |
| 8. Car | 16. Play |

There you are, not too difficult I hope so let entering begin, lets keep the postman busy!!

CLOSING DATE

Rules are the same as usual and your entry needs to with me by the end of July. Oh yes - the prize on offer is: Page Printer from Comsoft. <Ta peter>

CAN YOU HELP?

This is a request to any Queen fans out there. If you are a fan of Queen and have seen the series Highlander on Sky 1, could you please tell me what is the name of the track that is used for the theme tune of the programme?

I am not an ardent Queen fan myself but those folks round here who are don't seem to know as they haven't seen the series. My son Chris really likes it and I would like to buy him the music. I thought I would save my legs traipsing round the shops by asking my Wacci friends. Plus the fact all this writing is filling up the page nicely!

Thanks for your indulgence, I look forward to hearing from you.

P.S. The first member correctly identifying the track wins 1 PD disc for their trouble. <<Please help>>

CHEAP CABLE?

The person who conned John and me by telling us that Cable would be cheaper than BT should be sharply slapped across the legs.

Our phone bills have been just as high if not higher than when we were with BT. <<Its good to talk -JB>>

IT'S HARD TO DO

Sob! Sob! I soon will have to say a sad farewell to the superb Rombox that I had the greatest of pleasure playing with for a while. Nevermind! Back to my Rombo I suppose. <<John>>

So now its time to me to go,
I've waffled on a bit, I know,
Now get your fingers on those keys,
And send your entries in to me.

A POTTED HISTORY

by
John Hudson

The CPC6128 (or Big Idiot) was intended to launch Amstrad in the States while Joyce entered the UK market alongside Arnold. But rumours began to break that Commodore would be putting out a 128K machine and Alan Sugar knew that Arnold - which, although a 64K machine, was clearly superior to the C64 - could be seriously damaged by competition from the C128. So the CPC6128 was hurriedly launched on the UK market almost alongside Joyce (and the CPC 664 was ditched only months after its launch).

AND CP/M AS WELL

Arnold's DOS and the DOS built into Locoscript were both based on CP/M 2.2 and so the CPC664 (or Idiot 'Includes Disc Instead Of Tape') came with CP/M 2.2 to give it a start in the serious market. However, MEJ had opted for graphics rather than text-based video RAM which took up so much of the 64K that only 43K was left for CP/M programs and data.

As most CP/M programs needed 48K, they opted for the newer CP/M Plus for the US market. CP/M Plus came with bank switching allowing it to use the extra RAM in a 128K or 256K machine for the operating system and leaving a massive 61K for programs and data. Up 'til then, most CP/M machines had struggled to make 56K available for programs by using a text based screen; 61K and graphics was a real breakthrough.

Instead of redesigning Arnold's operating system for use with Big Idiot, Locomotive Software threw in BANKMAN to enable data from programs rather than the operating system to be switched in and out of the banked RAM. As the banks come in handy 16K chunks, the same size as the video RAM, programs like Advanced Art Studio use the banked RAM to hold complete screens. Saving the previous screen in the banked RAM allows the UNDO facility, the saved screen being copied back into video RAM when the user chooses UNDO.

Though Digital Research and others supported both the PCW and CPC6128 from the outset since they both came with CP/M Plus, Amstrad UK decided to

market them as quite different machines - Big Idiot was to be a superior games machine and Joyce was to be a business machine.

IN SPITE OF ALL THAT

Yet Big Idiot was better than virtually all the standard micro-computers of three years earlier and could run every important business program of the day - WordStar, dBASE, Supercalc. By insisting that it was a games machine Amstrad (and Future Publishing) alienated many potential users who would have been very happy to buy an all-round machine.

Big Idiot's software developers were short-sighted too. I bought Big Idiot so that I could take work home and I can still transfer files from the latest versions of WordStar, dBASE and Supercalc on the most powerful PCs to my CPC6128 and, apart from losing some fancy fonts, carry on using those files. I could never do this with Protext since Protext files from a PC cannot be read by Protext on the CPC.

At the same time, most of the strengths of Arnold's design were ignored. Arnor produced several ROMs but it took Peter Brunning to show what could be done with Big Idiot's ability to use sideways ROMs *<<A touch biased aren't we? -Philip>>*. The Germans produced a hard disk but no one in this country took it seriously.

In the end, by marketing Big Idiot as a games machine and ignoring its potential as the serious user's home machine, there were so few serious users when the games market collapsed that the machine's whole future

collapsed. Yet, as the story of the PCW and the Notepads has shown, there was no reason to doubt a serious future for Big Idiot.

VISUAL BENCHTESTING

It is interesting to compare Arnold with the Mac and PC; when Arnold came out, it shared with the Mac a graphics screen and almost the slowest screen updating of any computer because most of its rivals, including PCs, used text-based screens. The Amstrad screen is still slow but, even with a typing speed of up to 60 words a minute, I find it difficult to outpace the screen updating in RAM based programs like Mini-Office or VDE, something it is fairly easy to do with a lot of Mac and Windows programs because, as computers have got faster, programmers have used the extra speed to demand more of them, thus slowing down screen updating.

Its 3" disc drives are still faster than a PC's floppy drive - something I can prove by running the same dBASE program on Big Idiot and from a PC's floppy drive at the same time. A hard disk would make disk based programs fly as it does on a PC.

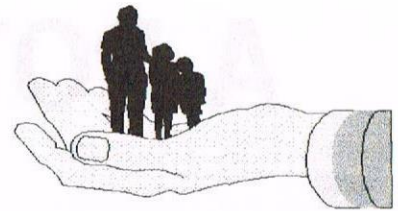
It can send data to a printer at eight pages a minute; to put it another way, as long as the program does not drive the printer directly - as Advanced Art Studio and Stop Press do - Big Idiot can keep a standard Laser printer occupied.

TO END IT ALL

In the end my son got a Sega because, in spite of Prehistorik and Super Cauldron, there just weren't enough games to satisfy him. I still use the same Big Idiot for work - it's had a new disc drive, but that's all; as my main needs have not changed, why change the system I use?

John Hudson

THE MARKET STALL



Your are in the hands of:
Angie Hardwick
 23 Station Place, Bloxwich,
 Walsall, West Midlands WS3 2PH
 Telephone: 01922 449730

Well another month has passed, another month nearer the Convention. Thank you to those of you who have offered your help, by now you should have received my letter. Just to clear things up, you book your ticket with Paul Dwerryhouse and your meal, if you want one, with me. You pay for your meal on the day when you've had it.

FOR SALE:

CPC6128 c/w colour monitor and manuals.(Buyer must collect) £40.00
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 Multiface II with instructions £15.00
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 Soft 158: CPC 464 F/W guide £10.00
 The Firmware Guide £ 5.00
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 Data sheets for FDC765A FDC £ 2.00
 Printer cable £ 2.00
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 or £ 1.00 each

Amstrad Actions 7,32,47 and 49-117 with covertapes.

ACU Feb 86, Sept-Oct 86, Jul 87, Dec 87, Oct 89, Dec 89, Jan-Mar 90, May 90, Jul 90, Oct 90, Dec 90, Jan 91, Mar-Dec 91, Jan-May 92. £ 15.00 Buyer to collect.

CwtA, May 86, Jun 86, Aug-Oct 86, Feb-Mar 87, Jul 87. £ 7.50
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UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED POSTAGE AND PACKING INCLUDED.Offers for individual items or the whole lot accepted.

PLEASE CONTACT: DAVID LONG, 42,Overton Close, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 9NA
 TEL: 0121-744-8481

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 One CTM 644 Monitor £40.00
 464 Manual condition OK £ 1.00
 6128 Manual £ 5.00

Books as follows:

Structured programming On the Amstrad Computer by Stephen Raven £ 2.00
 Amstrad Computing by Ian Sinclair FREE
 Programming The Amstrad 464 by R. Meadows £ 2.00

Magazines all FREE as follows:

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 A.A. Mar-May 89, July-Aug 89, Sept 89, Dec 89, Nov-Dec 86, July 87.
 Wacci's Dec 95, Jan-May 96, Dec 86, Nov-Dec 93, June 92.
 Wacci Mag Index 1-87 (June 95)
 Library Supplement Edition 4 Feb 96.

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Simon Lucas wants Issues 1to 9 of ACU, please contact Simon at 73, Palace Road, Hampton Court, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 9DN TEL: 0181-979-5250

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 Wacci's Issues 33,34,36,37,38,39
 and buy or borrow an early version of Multiface with side switch!!

PLEASE CONTACT Peter at The Hollyar, Bay Road, Trevone Bay, Nr Padstow, Cornwall. PL28 8QZ

PD EXTRA REVIEW

by
Dave Stitson

Now that the "BONZO" programs have been released into the Public Domain, I thought I would do an article on the PD Extra over the next few issues for those members who have not got this suite of programs in their library as yet. These are, without a doubt, some of the best programs ever to enter the WACCI P.D. Library and are well worth adding to any collection.

CPC PROCOPY

Back in the early days of 1989, NEMESIS released CPC PROCOPY and it would have cost you quite a few bob. About £12-00 I believe. At that time, it was considered to be the only program that would get by any Disc Copy Protection and it did just that. It still only fails on a few of the modern day protection methods and has quite a few useful utilities. Here are just a few of them.

After you run Procopy, you have a screen that allows you to select the source and destination between "A" or "B" drives or "TAPE", GAP #3, COPIER, DISC MAPPER, DISC DIRECTORY and you can even select different tape speeds.

You can copy a whole disc or any files from the source disc/tape to a disc/tape. You can select which tracks to copy from and to: ideal if you wanted to copy two 3" discs to a 3.5" disc prior to the present day copiers. It has a snag though, it will copy any corrupt tracks and it won't verify the disc during copying. <<Which can be helpful when trying to rescue files from a corrupt disc -Philip>>

The mapping facility is somewhat different from other mapping programs have seen or used. It allows you to select which track you want to look at and then it will display all the technical information about that track, such as the number of sectors used, sector headers and the gap of each byte. You can do this exercise one track at a time or for all of the tracks on the disc.

Another good utility goes under the title of "ARCHIVER". What is that used for?. Well, you can 'archive' a whole disc or any files to a tape and

copy them back again later. These days, if you only use a 3" disc set up, a look at the cost of 3" discs and a quick comparison with the cost of a TAPE, gives food for thought for you members who haven't got a large format set up to keep your back-ups on. Archive to tape has a certain attraction. They do have their uses after all.

THERE'S ALWAYS A DOWN SIDE

On the down side is that Procopy does not like ROMs attached. You have either to switch them off if your set up has a ROM-off switch, or type 'ROMON,7' to get it to work properly.

Is it worth having? Yes, I would say it's ideal as a disc copier, together with the flip side of the disc, which contains "MAXIDOS".

A BLOWN UP VERSION OF MINIDOS?

Maxidos was once quoted as being an early version of the ParaDos operating System. After running Maxidos, you are presented with something that looks like this.

- (1) MAXIDOS
- (2) OPTIMIZER
- (3) EDITOR
- (4) ARCHIVER
- <5) A: SLOW
- (6) B: SLOW

Select MAXIDOS and your first impression is that you are looking at CP/M because it has the very familiar A> prompt. Type "HELP" and you will be presented with a load of options for both drives. According to this list, you can CAT, PCAT, DISPLAY, R/O, SYSTEM, USER from the "A" drive. The "B" drive lets you CLS, ERASE, IDENTIFY FORMAT, QUIT, R/W, TYPE, VERIFY, BACKUP, COPY, FORMAT, KILL, SET USER AREA and UN-ERASE.

Most of the above utilities are self explanatory but let me give you a little warning. When you erase a file, it alters the disc directory and places all erased files in user area 229. You can use the 'un-erase' to retrieve them. However, if you use the KILL command, you can kiss the file goodbye, gone for ever, so be very careful when using the KILL option.

The EDITOR is good but for those who are not used to using a disc editor, I would advise you to leave well alone or you could do serious harm to your discs. At the very least, practice on a back-up copy.

What does the 'optimizer' do? I have not used it very much myself, but it is supposed to give you a lot of information about your disc and to sort out your files, I can't really comment on this utility. <<It orders the files sequentially. It's faster to copy all the files from one disc to another using a file copier. They both do the same trick -Philip>>

AND FINALLY

A good point about MAXIDOS is that it will recognise RAMDOS and all of the large ROMDOS formats. It will also copy a large range of funny formats and it will even format and verify the discs for you. So if you do a lot of file transferring to and from large format discs, here is a good utility to have in your collection.

A Guide to EPROMs on the CPC

With Ian Neill

In this article I will be discussing what goes into an EPROM, and how the CPC accesses it via software. I will also be describing the different types of EPROM programs, but will concentrate mostly on background types, including how the CPC initialises them at power-up or reset, and how to program them.

EPROM STRUCTURE

We know that an expansion EPROM can be up to 16Kb long, and is memory mapped from &C000 onwards. Generally they can contain anything you like - there is no standard that must be followed. This is true for all but the first few locations in the EPROM which must have the following form:

| Address | Contents |
|-------------------|---|
| &C000 | ROM type (note 1) |
| &C001 | ROM mark number |
| &C002 | ROM version number |
| &C003 | ROM modification number |
| &C001-&C003 | are information only and can be any value required. |
| &C004 | Command Name Table Address (Low Byte) |
| &C005 | Command Name Table Address (High Byte) |
| &C006/7/8 | Jump to INIT_ROM routine |
| &C009/A/B | Jump to 1st command program |
| &C00C/D/E | Jump to 2nd command program |
| | More commands, etc |
| End of commands | - Command Name Table Start (notes 2 and 3) |
| End of Name Table | - Commands Start |

Note 1: The ROM type can be one of the following values:

- a. External Foreground &00
- b. Background &01
- c. Extension Foreground &02
- d. Internal (i.e. BASIC) &80

The Extension Foreground type is useful for linking up to 4 foreground ROMs, allowing them to be treated as a single very large ROM. The Firmware

allows easy access between them via the Extended Instruction "SIDCALL" (RST 2). Fig. 4 is an example program that can scan every ROM from slot 0 to 15 and display its type.

FIGURE 4

```

10 'ROM expansion board test prog
20 DEFINT a,b
30 MODE 1
40 b=0
50 MEMORY &3FFF
60 FOR a=&BF00 TO &BF10
70 READ b$:POKE a,VAL("&"+b$)
80 NEXT
90 PRINT"Expansion ROM test program"
:PRINT
100 FOR a=0 TO 15
110 CALL &BF00,@b,a
120 PRINT a;:IF b=0 THEN PRINT"....
Foreground" ELSE IF b=1 THEN
PRINT"....Background" ELSE IF
b<>&80 THEN PRINT"....Empty"
ELSE PRINT"....BASIC ROM Respond
ed"
130 NEXT
140 END
150 DATA dd,4e,0,cd,15,b9,dd,6e,2,dd
,66,3,77,23,36,0,c9

```

Note 2: The command name table is a list of command names. Each name can be up to 16 characters long, but cannot contain spaces or punctuation marks, etc. Each name must have the top bit (bit 7) of the last letter set - this "marks" the last letter for the CPC.

Note 3: The end of the command name table is signified by a zero.

This month's "DOSCOPY" example shows an example of this structure. (Fig 6)

EPROM INITIALISATION

When the CPC is switched on or reset the firmware (the lower ROM) is entered at address &0000. All sorts of things are set up, including system variables and the firmware jumpblock. The message "Amstrad 128K Micro-computer (v3)" (or whatever) is also displayed. An attempt is then made to jump into an External ROM at position 0 (entry address = &C006). If that fails, the internal ROM (BASIC) is entered at address &C006. BASIC, or whatever foreground ROM at position 0, is now in complete control and must attempt to initialise whatever background ROMs are attached.

BASIC initialises background ROMs (using the Firmware command KL ROM WALK) in reverse order starting at position 15 (7 for the 464), and working down towards position 1. Gaps and foreground ROMs are ignored. Note that when BASIC is searching for a taker for an RSX (whatever) it searches in the order 0,1,2,.....,etc.

BASIC's part in initialising background ROMs is simply entering them at address &C006 - the first entry in the ROM's jumpblock. Note that this routine often has a space in its name, making it impossible for it to be called by a user. From this point on it is the ROM itself that does the initialising.

ROM initialising routines generally perform the following tasks:

1. Reserve some RAM. When a ROM's initialisation routine is entered, DE contains the address of the lowest byte of available RAM, and HL contains the address of the highest byte of available RAM. To reserve some RAM the ROM's initialisation routine modifies the appropriate register before returning. The returned address in HL+1 is stored by the Firmware, and passed to the ROM in IY whenever the ROM is called.

2. Print some sort of log-on message. It is normal to start this message with a space, and end it with a CR + LF.

3. Set the Carry Flag if the initialisation is successful. This flag is ignored by the CPC464 Firmware.

4. RETURN. A background ROM ALWAYS returns control after initialisation. Note that if you were to put an ordinary background ROM at position 0 the CPC would never boot up because every time the background ROM RETURNed the CPC would reset and re-enter it. Its background ROM would once again RETURN and the CPC would reset and re-enter it. And so on forever....

Figure 6, the ROM based "DOSCOPY" figure shows an example of an initialisation routine.

SOFTWARE TO ACCESS EPROMS

There are two steps required to access EPROMs: 1. Select the ROM. This required ROM position must be written out to I/O address &DF00.

This can be written directly like:

```
LD A,5           ;ROM position 5
LD BC,&DF00      ;ROM select latch I/O
                 ;address
OUT (C),A       ;Output "A" to I/O
                 ;address "BC"
```

Or it can be written using the Firmware like:

```
LD C,5           ;ROM position 5
CALL &B90F       ;KL ROM SELECT
```

NB. This Firmware command also Enables the ROM, so skip step 2.

2. Enable the selected ROM. This will cause all subsequent "reads" in the region &C000 to &FFFF to return the contents of the ROM.

This is done using the Firmware like:

```
CALL &B900       ;KL U ROM ENABLE
```

Once you are finished with the ROM you can Disable it using the Firmware call like:

```
CALL &B903       ;KL U ROM DISABLE
```

Note that if you select a ROM position that has no external ROM installed, then the internal BASIC ROM will respond.

Figure 5 is an example program that shows how easy it is to access external EPROMs. This program enables each ROM slot, from 0 to 15, in turn. It then checks the ROM type using the Firmware call KL PROBE ROM (&B915). If it finds a ROM slot that is not number 7 (assumed to be AMSDOS), and does not respond as the internal BASIC ROM (type &80), then it enables, copies its contents to RAM, and then saves the "image" in RAM to disc. The images are saved with the following names:

```
ROM slot 0 - "IMAGEA.ROM"
ROM slot 1 - "IMAGEB.ROM"
ROM slot 2 - "IMAGEC.ROM"
.... Etc.
```

This is a useful program to back-up your expansion EPROMs in case something happens to them, e.g. a leg falls off due to the ROM being pulled out of a ROM box wrongly! With an image of your ROM you will be able (or at least I will) to program a new EPROM.

EXAMPLE BACKGROUND EPROM SOFTWARE

Figure 6 is the assembler code I wrote to transform successfully the PD disc program into a ROM program, accessed via the bar commands '!DC' or '!DOSCOPY'.

One thing to remember is this program (and others like it) is "transformed" and NOT converted. I did not change a single byte of the original DOSCOPY program. What I did was to write a routine that copied it from ROM to RAM and then "call" it. Essentially this is a "ROM loader" as opposed to a "disc loader". It is important to remember that many RAM destined programs reference changeable variable locations within themselves. Obviously this type of program cannot be transferred, without modification, to ROM (ignoring any absolute addressing problems) because these "embedded" variables would reference a ROM or screen location and could not be used. The technique (what I call "transformation") I used for "DOSCOPY" avoids this problem by putting the RAM based program back into RAM and running it from there.

FIGURE 5

```
10 'Rom Dump Program
20 'by Ian Neill
30 'Copies ROMs from 0 - 15 to disc
40 'Omits BASIC ROM and DISC ROM 7
50 MEMORY &3FFF
60 MODE 1
70 FOR x=&9000 TO &9117:READ x$:
   POKE x,VAL("&"+x$):NEXT
80 CALL &9000
90 DATA 21,7C,90,CD,73,90,CD,18,BB
100 DATA 21,C1,90,CD,73,90,0E,00,C5
110 DATA CD,15,B9,FE,80,C4,2C,90,21
120 DATA 10,91,34,C1,0C,79,FE,10,20
130 DATA EC,21,D1,90,CD,73,90,C9,79
140 DATA FE,07,C8,01,00,DF,ED,79,CD
150 DATA 00,B9,21,00,C0,11,00,40,01
160 DATA 00,40,ED,B0,CD,03,B9,06,0A
170 DATA 21,0B,91,11,15,91,CD,8C,BC
180 DATA 30,16,3E,02,01,00,00,11,00
190 DATA 40,21,00,40,CD,98,BC,30,06
200 DATA CD,8F,BC,30,01,C9,21,85,90
210 DATA CD,73,90,CD,18,BB,C9,7E,B7
220 DATA C8,CD,5A,BB,23,18,F7,0A,0A
230 DATA 0D,45,58,54,45,52,4E,41,4C
240 DATA 20,52,4F,4D,20,44,55,4D,50
250 DATA 20,52,4F,55,54,49,4E,45,0A
260 DATA 0A,0D,62,79,20,49,41,4E,20
270 DATA 4E,45,49,4C,4C,0A,0A,0D,50
280 DATA 52,45,53,53,20,41,4E,59,20
290 DATA 4B,45,59,20,54,4F,20,53,54
300 DATA 41,52,54,00,0A,0A,0D,43,4F
310 DATA 50,59,49,4E,47,2E,2E,2E,2E
320 DATA 2E,00,0A,0A,0D,2E,2E,2E,2E
330 DATA 2E,46,49,4E,49,53,48,45,44
340 DATA 0A,0A,0D,00,0A,0A,0D,53,41
350 DATA 56,49,4E,47,20,45,52,52,4F
360 DATA 52,20,2D,20,41,4E,59,20,4B
370 DATA 45,59,20,54,4F,20,43,4F,4E
380 DATA 54,49,4E,55,45,00,49,4D,41
390 DATA 47,45,41,2E,52,4F,4D,00,00
400 DATA 00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00
```

One final complication of the "DOSCOPY" ROM loader arises from the fact that "DOSCOPY" expects only the AMSDOS external ROM to be initialised. Any other ROMs, including "DOSCOPY", cause "DOSCOPY" problems. Thus I had to write a routine that made sure that, after "DOSCOPY" was copied from ROM to RAM, only AMSDOS was enabled, before "DOSCOPY" was called. Obviously this routine had to be copied to RAM first, otherwise it would kill itself!

The "DOSCOPY" background ROM is a good example of the EPROM structure and initialisation that I have already talked about.

FIRMWARE HELP

The Firmware contains a lot of useful functions for both initialising and accessing external ROMs. The following is only a brief list of some of them, see "The Firmware Guide" for a complete list and a fuller description.

1. SIDE CALL (RST 2 &0010) - Calls a routine in ROM, in a group of up to 4 foreground ROMs.
2. FAR CALL (RST 3 &0018) - Calls a routine anywhere in RAM or ROM.
3. KL FAR CALL (&0023) - Calls a routine anywhere in RAM or ROM.
4. KL U ROM ENABLE (&B900) - Enables the current upper ROM.
5. KL U ROM DISABLE (&B903) - Disables the upper ROM.
6. KL ROM SELECT (&B90F) - Selects an upper ROM and also Enables it.
7. KL ROM DESELECT (&B918) - Selects the previous upper ROM and sets it's state.
8. KL ROM WALK (&BCCB) - Finds and initialises all background ROMs.
9. KL INIT BACK (&BCCE) - Finds and initialises a specific background ROM.

As usual, if you want to contact me, my address is:

Ian Neill
11 Millway Drive
Bishops Tachbrook
Leamington Spa
Warwickshire
CV33 9SE

My telephone No is: (01926) 337708

WHAT'S NEXT?

Next issue I will show you how to put a BASIC program into an EPROM. This is a simple technique, but it does have a few traps that must be thought about. However, once the technique is mastered, it can be used with virtually any BASIC program that will fit into an EPROM.

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| 250 | £2.00 |
| 100 | £1.00 |

Send PO's or CASH to:

John Jones, 41 Westmorland Avenue,
Newbiggin-by-the-sea, Northumberland NE64

```

;DOSCOPY ROM LOADER
;ILN 29/07/94
;DISABLE ALL ROMS EXCEPT AMSDOS
;
TXTOUT EQU #BB5A
INITBK EQU #BCCE
STPROG EQU #BD16
;
RESRUN EQU #BF08 ;RESET & RUN AMSDOS
DCBEG EQU #7000 ;DOSCOPY RUN ADDR
ASMBLE EQU 40500 ;ASSEMBLY ADDRESS
;
        ORG #C000
        DISP ASMBLE
;
START  DEFB 1      ;BACKGROUND ROM
        DEFB 1,0,0 ;VERSION REFS
        DEFW NMETAB ;POINT RSX NAMES
        JP INIT     ;ROM INITIALISE
        JP DOSCOPY ;LOAD VIA {DOSCOPY
        JP DOSCOPY ;LOADER VIA {DC
;
NMETAB DEFM "DOSCOPY RO"
        DEFB #CD
        DEFM "DOSCOP"
        DEFB #D9
        DEFM "D"
        DEFB #C3
        DEFB 0
;
INIT   PUSH DE ;STORE 1st MEM LOC
        PUSH HL ;STORE LAST MEM LOC
        LD HL,LOGMES
        CALL STROUT
        POP HL ;RESTORE 1st MEM LOC
        POP DE ;RESTORE LAST MEM LOC
        SCF
        ;LOGON OK
        RET
;
;COPY CODE FROM ROM TO RAM AND JUMP
;
DOSCOPY LD HL,DOSDAT ;COPY DOS INIT
        ; ROUTINE
        LD DE,RESRUN ;DEST ADDR
        LD BC,DOSLEN ;ROUTINE LENGTH
        LDIR
;
        LD HL,DCDAT ;COPY D-COPY CODE
        LD DE,DCBEG ;D-COPY DEST
        LD BC,DCLLEN ;D-COPY LENGTH
        LDIR
;
        LD C,#FF ;ROM SEL DISABLE
        ; U & L ROMS
        LD HL,INITAM ;POINT TO AMSDOS
        ;INIT ROUTINE
        CALL STPROG ;INIT CPC AND
        ;JP TO A-DOS INIT ROUT
;
;ASSEMBLER INFO FOR AMSDOS INIT CODE
;DOSDAT EQU $ ;CURR ASSEM
; ADDRESS
LSP1 EQU DOSDAT-START ;CODE LEN
; SO FAR
        ORG RESRUN ;DEST ADDR
; OF AMSDOS INIT CODE
        DISP ASMBLE+LSP1 ;MAKE SURE
; ASSEMBLY IS CONSECUTIVE
;
;INIT A-DOS & JP TO DCOPY START ADDR
;
INITAM LD HL,#ABFF ;MEMORY MAX
        LD DE,#40 ;MEMORY MIN
        LD C,7 ;AMSDOS POSITION
        CALL INITBK
;
        JP DCBEG ;DOSCOPY SA
;
;ASSEMBLER INFO FOR AMSDOS INIT CODE
;
ASOFAR EQU $ ;ASSEM ADDR SO FAR
DOSLEN EQU ASOFAR-INITAM ;LEN SO FAR
;
;ASSEMBLER INFO FOR REST OF CODE
;
ORG DOSDAT+DOSLEN ;ASSEM ADDR
; BACK INTO ROM RANGE
DISP ASMBLE+LSP1+DOSLEN ;ENSUR ASSEM
; IS CONSECUTIVE
;
;STRING PRINTING ROUTINE
;
STROUT LD A,(HL) ;GET CHARACTER
        OR A ;SET FLAGS
        RET Z ;RETURN IF ZERO
        CALL TXTOUT ;PRINT CHARACTER
        INC HL ;POINT TO NEXT CHR
JR STROUT ;DO IT ALL AGAIN
;
LOGMES DEFM " DOSCOPY ROM v1.0"
        DEFB #0A,#0D,#0A,0
;
HACKER DEFM "ALL CODE (Ex DOSCOPY)
        COPYRIGHT IAN NEILL 1994 "
        DEFM "FOR OTHER INFO CONTACT"
        DEFM "IAN NEILL, "
        DEFM "11 MILLWAY DRIVE, "
        DEFM "BISHOPS TACHBROOK, "
        DEFM "LEAMINGTON SPA. "
        DEFM "CV33 9SE"
;DOSCOPY CODE IN HERE.....
;
DCDAT EQU $
DCLLEN EQU #1EAE
;
;END OF DOSCOPY ROM PROGRAM
END EQU $
LENGTH EQU END-START
ROMLEN EQU LENGTH+DCLLEN

```

THE BLT INVASION

by
Richard Fairhurst

Now you might think it a little odd for WACCI to be reviewed in WACCI. I'd agree with you, except that WACCI isn't being reviewed in WACCI, it's being reviewed in BTL, it just that the BTL review of WACCI is appearing in WACCI rather than in BTL. I was talking to Richard Fairhurst on the phone the other day and we got around to talking about BTL and WACCI and reviews. The end result is what you're going to read here. Remember though, this isn't WACCI, this is BTL.....

INTRODUCTION

Philip DiRichleau, WACCI letters editor, fiance of Angela Cook and all round mad blokey, asked me the other day whether WACCI could have an advert in BTL - after all, he and Angela had just written a favourable review for our 'disczine' in their 32-page paper publication. Quoth Charley, 'But we reviewed an issue of WACCI in BTL 2!'. Sure, replies Philip, but it wasn't quite as complimentary....

Apparently people have been listening. Strange idea, really, taking anything BTL prints remotely seriously - but the last few issues of WACCI have been getting better. Gone, for this issue at least, are those almost universally awful stories about 'Givers', 'WACCI-land' and 'Bill and Ben the Flowerpot Men', I shouldn't wonder. The reprints have been kept under control too, down to a one-and-a-half page feature on the somewhat neglected topic of accessing control codes from basic.

Indeed, if issue 96's factual content can be kept up, then WACCI's future should be looking remarkably bright. There are reviews, both old (Star LC-100 and Brunword) and new (Destext, BTL 2 and The Forthcoming); an interview; couple of well written BASIC tutorials and techy features on Bank Manager and side switches. This is an enormous amount for a monthly magazine, unparalleled elsewhere and clear improvement over the old days of 'anything goes, as long as its CP/M'.

NOT LIKE AMSTRAD ACTION

Of course, there's the inevitably large letters section, with which Philip seems to be getting to grips convincingly. Interestingly, issues 96 and 95 have both contained pleas for

WACCI to become more like A.A. Of course, this isn't going to happen 100% and that's good. There's no place in a fanzine for no-brain 'attention-grabbing' articles such as 'Software - is the price right?' 'How to start a fanzine', 'How to start a PD library', 'How to start another fanzine', 'how to start five PD libraries before breakfast and still have time to romance singers from leading female-fronted pop bands' and so on: the sort of articles which necessarily formed a staple of AA's features diet.

But I don't think this is what these correspondents mean and unless I'm making some incorrect assumptions, I'm right with them. A year of WACCI consists of 384 pages, which is a lot. A year of BTL consists of about 85 articles, which might equate to half of WACCI's page count. It's inevitable that BTL is going to be the more tightly edited of the two <<Is that what you call it? -Philip>>, but WACCI can't afford to slip too far behind.

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITISISM

So there needs to be a bit more structure, a bit more AA-like rigour in presentation especially. Group everything into coherent order, you'll notice that BTL starts with news, goes on to reviews and finishes up with features. Make more of the contents page and save yourself a lot of hassle, Paul, by furthering the welcome trend of using PC equipment and junking the CPC's role in production. A 6128 can be a very capable machine in many areas, but non-bitmap desktop publishing isn't one of them. The only style of DTP at which a CPC can excel is PowerPages highly graphical, layout centred approach adopted famously by

Artificial Intelligence, inherited by Potential Difference and currently undergoing a revival c/o CPC South-West. But then, I would say that! Using the default font of a 24-pin printer <<48 pin Ink-Jet -Philip>> doesn't exactly produce an easy-on-the-eye layout, which is essential in a text-centred fanzine like WACCI.

WHAT ABOUT THE COVER

Paradoxically, there's one current AA-like feature which could be dumped, the cover. WACCI isn't out on the newstands. It doesn't need clip art with a corny pun to attract attention. No, its a monthly fanzine, so make the most of it. A professionally produced news section, ordered into stories, would be a splendid start to the fanzine and an ideal home for short 'Editorial' items and the WACCI Helpline. If Paul understandably doesn't want to add to his editorial workload by taking this on, I hereby suggest gossip-hound Angela Cook as the ideal news editor. This would also mean that with Fair Comment following, each issue would start with eight pages of marital bliss, Aaaah, innit cute? <<News Flash - New WACCI Editor has heart attack -Philip>>

THE OUTRO BIT

As one correspondent to Fair Comment wrote, WACCI could be a superbly effective focal point for the CPC. Taking issue 96 as evidence, the actual contents are largely there already - nuf respect to Paul as I'm told young people say these days. Lets hope that issue 100 can be the professional monthly that it deserves to be, while maintaining the 'friendly' ethos Philip is cultivating in the Fair Comment, and we'll see you all again in BTL 4...

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Articles: | 88% |
| Presentation: | 70% |
| BTL rating | 85% |

PARADOS SWITCH

by
Paul Collins

ParaDos was designed to fit directly into SLOT 7 of the ROMBOX, even though it can be used in a lower slot. Ideally, it should be fitted instead of AMSDOS, giving the maximum use of its excellent functions. But it doesn't always go into SLOT 7 because of some 6128s inability to switch out the internal AMSDOS ROM. A clash occurs, unless you can find a way of manually switching between the two. Then you get the best of both worlds. You can now keep AMSDOS and have PARADOS as well, both available at a flick of a switch, both in SLOT 7.

WHAT WILL I NEED?

You will need one SPDT (Single Pole, Double Throw) switch, a few reasonably long strips of different coloured wire, a soldering iron and a sharp knife (something like a fine modeling knife would be perfect). Nothing could be easier now, could it?

WHAT TO DO?

Read the entire article before you do anything. Make sure you know what you're going to do before you actually do it. Take apart the 6128 so that you have access to the circuit board and find the area that fig-(1) represents. It's on the left hand side of the board. Look for the IC201 chip, it's easy enough to spot. Most of the work needs to be done on the underside of the board, so you'll need to take out the screws and turn the board over. It would be a good idea to remove the keyboard bit before you do and place it to one side. The board will happily and safely sit in the bottom of the CPC case

PREPARATION

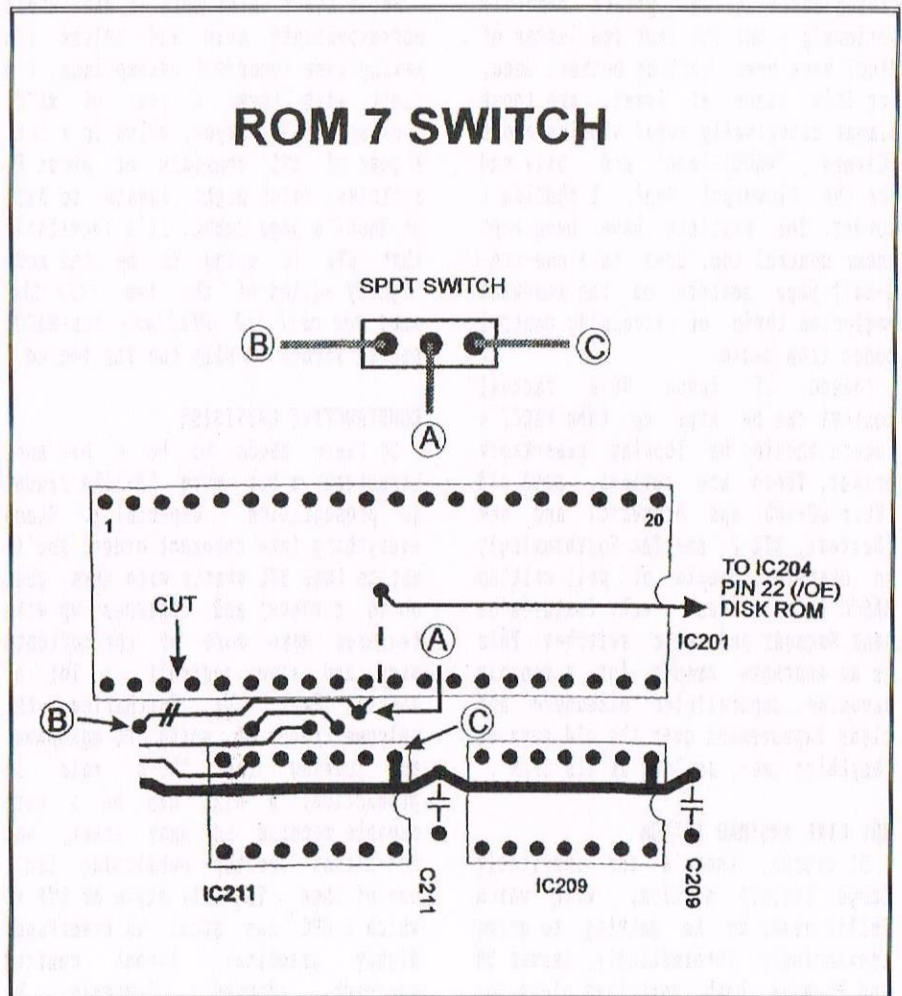
Look for the location once more. Gently scrape away the green solder resist from Solder Point (A) and Solder Point (B). Those two little holes are going to be ideal for shoving the wires into to aid soldering.

Cut the track where the two diagonal lines are. This is the track between Solder Point (A) and Solder Point (B). Solder the first cable to Point (A) and the second to Point (B). Make sure that the cable is going to be long

enough to reach the location where you intend to mount the switch (too much cable, at this point, will be far better than too little). Carefully examine Solder Point (C) on the board. It is possible to solder directly to the leg of IC211 if you know what you're doing, but there are other points along the line that it might be worth thinking about.

THE SWITCH

Time to consider the switch. You're going to need to make a hole to mount it through. Is the switch able to pass through the hole, because if it isn't then you're going to need to pass the wires through the hole before you solder them onto the switch? If this is the case (and it probably is), put the CPC 6128 back together, connecting all the bits you disconnected to get it apart in the first place. Many a project has fallen foul of this self induced problem when mounting a switch and even the most ardent techie makes such a basic error at times. Now we can do the switch part of this modification.



The (A) cable goes to the middle pin of the switch. This is vital or the whole thing will act in a very strange manner. The other two cables can go to whichever side you choose, depending on which way you want the switch to sign on PARADOS and which way you want it to sign on AMSDOS. When it's all soldered together, mount the switch and get ready to test it. Before you do, read the rest of this article again, especially the warning bit.

BUT DOES IT WORK

PARADOS should by now be fitted to SLOT 7 of the ROMBOX. I know it sounds obvious, but just make sure that it is. If you're doing this little mod, then PARADOS will have been in SLOT 6. Move it up to SLOT 7 right now if you haven't already done so (remembering that ROMs are highly sensitive little beasts). Done that? Switch on the computer. If there is no PARADOS sign on message, you must be in AMSDOS. Switch off the computer. If the screen crashed (or everything hangs up),

don't worry, just switch off the computer. Flick the new select switch. Now turn the computer on again. The PARADOS sign-on message should appear. No problems so far. About that crash a very few you may just have had in AMSDOS. Some CPC 6128s don't like the switch, sort of. AMSDOS just gives out and doesn't do anything, but PARADOS works fine. So, instead of having an AMSDOS/PARADOS switch, you lucky few (I'm trying to make things sound a little better here), have got an AMSDOS disable switch instead.

AND FINALLY

<<This modification has been tested by WACCI. 'Mother', the 6128 I use for Fair Comment, is one of those that won't permit PARADOS in SLOT 7 of the ROMBOX without this mod being done. She also doesn't like the switch in AMSDOS mode, whereas another 6128 I've done this to, loves it both ways. PARADOS is most happy though and all the programs that hadn't liked PARADOS (and I had quite a few), are now working with High Capacity Discs. I

really can't complain, can I? So, even if your CPC 6128 is one of the few that's not going to work in AMSDOS anymore, don't worry, PARADOS was designed to replaced it anyway. Having both is a Techie trait I think and just a little greedy. I'd rather have PARADOS working away for me anyday of the week -Philip>>

--- A WORD OF WARNING ---

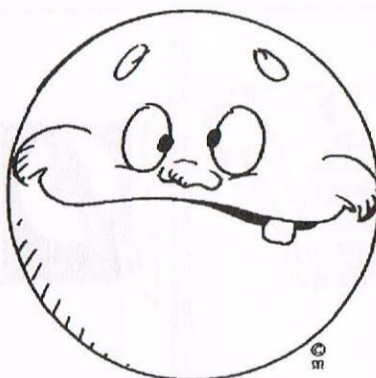
Do you like destroying ROMs and costing yourself a lot of money at the same time? If you do, then you can skip this bit. Don't adjust that new switch whilst the power is on. You could cause serious damage to either the PARADOS ROM, which you'll be able to replace thanks to Peter Campbell, or the AMSDOS ROM, which could prove a little more difficult, or you may even wipe out both.

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DISCOLOGY REVIEW

by
Ron Boreham

We all have our favourite copying program whether it be Diskit or PIP on the CP/M Master disc or one of the many programs available from the PD Libraries. There are also some excellent commercial programs that are still available from some stockists. One of these is a French program called DISCOLOGY. This program will copy anything, from PD programs to multi-load commercial programs. In fact, I have yet to find a program that DISCOLOGY couldn't copy.

INTRODUCTION

The producers of the program, Meridien, are so confident of its capabilities that they include a warning on the copying screen that copies should only be made for your own use because of the copyright laws. However, there is one drawback. All the instructions and on screen prompts are in French but most of them are self evident and soon become familiar. DISCOLOGY runs under CP/M so you will need to copy your CP/M tracks from your CP/M Master Disc.

GENERAL

DISCOLOGY is a disc utility made up of three parts that can be selected from the main menu. These are: Editor, Explorer and Copier.

Editor. This function allows you to view and to modify the contents of all discs, whether they are protected or not.

Explorer. This function allows you to explore the structure of a disc either track by track or by individually selected sectors.

Both these functions require considerable expertise and are not for beginners. The final part of DISCOLOGY is the copier and this is the part that forms the basis of this article.

COPIER

When DISCOLOGY is loaded you are presented with a choice of options as shown in Fig.1. Select Copieur by means of the left and right arrow keys and press [COPY]. The copying program will load and you will be presented with a new set of options in the Header Band.

OPTIONS

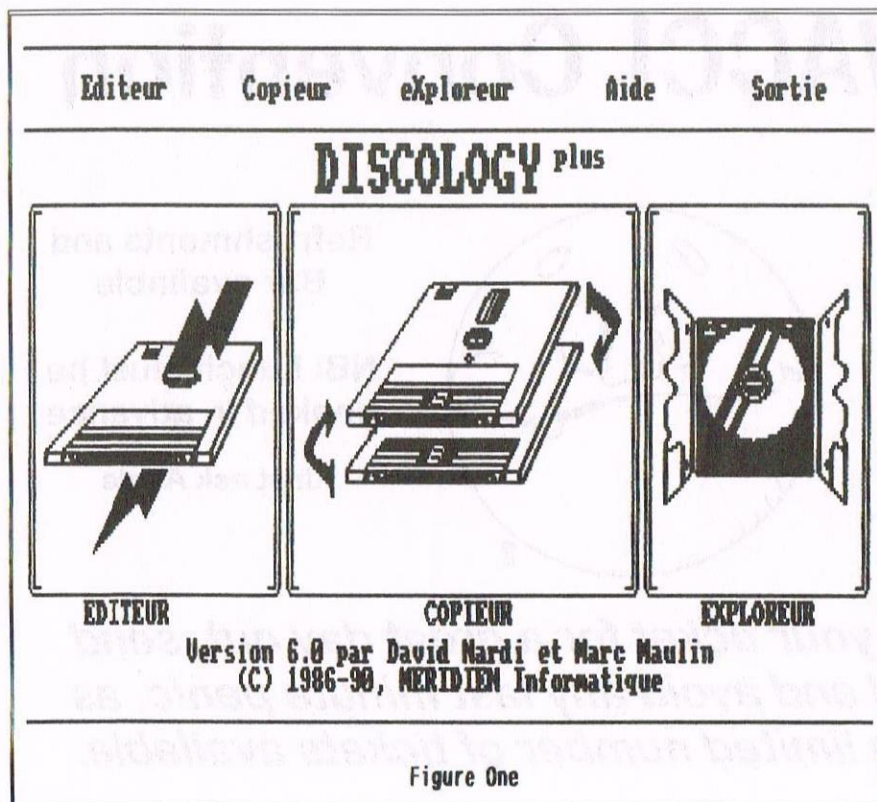


Figure One

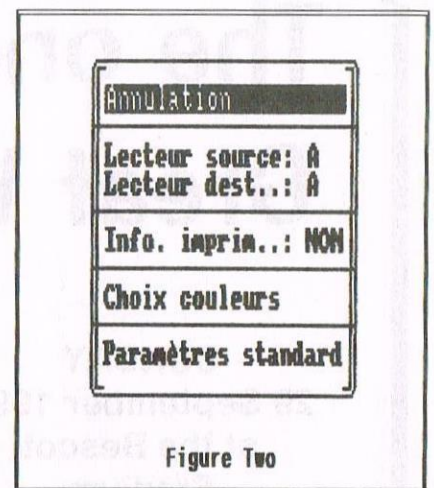


Figure Two

With the aid of the cursor keys select "Options" and press [COPY]. A drop-down menu will appear (Fig.2). The option can be selected by use of the up and down arrow keys and modified by use of the left and right arrow keys. The options available are:
Annulation.....Cancel
Lecteur source: A ...Drive source: A
Lecteur dest: ADrive dest: A
Info Imprim: NONPrint info: NO
Choix couleurs.....Choose colours
Param standard.....Standard param

Cancel: All the drop down menus have this as the first option. Selecting this and pressing [COPY] will return you to your main selection.

The next two options are self-evident and should be matched to your own set-up requirements.

Print info: During disc copying or mapping YES will echo the information to your printer.

Choose colours: This allows you to select the colours that you prefer for normal working. Select this option and press [COPY]. To change the paper press "P", the pen press "S" and for the border press "B". Press [COPY] to end.

Standard param: This function resets all the parameters to the following standard:

```
Source drive.....: A
Destination drive.....: A
Print info.....: NO
```

Having set the screen and drive to your requirements you now have a choice of copying the complete disc (Disquette), or of copying, renaming or erasing selected files (Fichier).

DISQUETTE



Figure Three

With the aid of the left and right arrow keys select "Disquette" and press [COPY]. A drop-down menu will appear as shown at Fig.3. The option

can be selected by means of the up and down arrow keys and modified by means of the left and right arrow keys. The options available are:

```
Annulation.....Cancel
Copie integrale .....Copy complete
Copie rapide .....Quick copy
Mapping .....Mapping
Formatage rapide .....Format

Piste debut: 00 .....Start track
Piste fin: 41 .....End track

Chercher densite:NON Check density:NO
Lire GAP#3: OUI .....Read GAP#3: YES
Recherche longue:NON Recheck length:N
Effacer piste:OUI ...Erase track:YES
Longueur piste: 6176 .Tracklength:6176
Gain: 20 .....Gain: 20
Securite: 1 .....Verification: 1

Parametres standard...Reset parameter
```

Cancel: As previously stated.

Copy complete: Will copy the complete disc whether it is protected or not. During copying, information about each sector and any error messages are displayed on the left of the screen. Also displayed is the following information:

```
Drive source and destination.
Track number currently being
copied (Between first and last
track).
Memory space available for
copying and memory space used.
```

This option should be used when copying commercial discs or any other disc that has been produced using a non-standard format.

Quick copy: For fast copying of non-protected discs (eg PD discs).

Mapping: Gives a visual representation of the contents of the disc with the physical characteristics of the sectors and displays any errors found during loading.

Format: Will format a disc in 17 seconds in either DATA or VENDOR format.

To interrupt or cancel any of these functions press [ESC]. During copying or mapping you can "Pause" between each track by pressing "P". Press "P" again to continue.

The following options can be modified by use of the left and right arrow keys.

Start track and End track: Will limit the actions of copying, mapping and formatting to the tracks between the selected first and last track.

The following variables are effective when the complete copying option is in use:

Check density: The option YES will monitor the density of the recorded information. Some tape programs are recorded with different levels of density.

Read GAP#3: The option YES will check the format of each track of the source disc as the disc is loaded and will reformat the tracks on the destination disc to match those on the source disc.

Recheck length: The option YES will verify the structure of the tracks when successive looks at the same track gives a different number of sectors. (Occurs sometimes where there is a corrupt sector).

Erase track: The option YES will reformat tracks on the destination disc where the corresponding track on the source disc is not formatted.

Track length: This parameter varies the physical clipping of the track expressed in "Bits". The default value is 6176 but is variable between 6050 and 6305.

Gain: This parameter represents the gain per sector and is variable between 0 and 80.

Verification: This parameter has three values and affects the verification of the source disc as it is loaded.

0 - signifies that DISCOLOGY will not effect any verification.

1 - DISCOLOGY will verify those tracks which might pose a problem with copying.

2 - DISCOLOGY will verify the integrity of all the sectors and all the tracks.

Standard parameters: This option will return all the variable parameters to the following default settings:

```

First track.....: 00
Last track.....: 41
Erase track.....: YES
Monitor density...: NO
Read GAP#3.....: YES
Track length.....: 6176
Gain.....: 20
Verification.....: 1
  
```

When you have decided on Complete copy or Fast copy select the appropriate option using the up and down arrow keys and press [COPY]. An on-screen prompt will then tell you to insert the source disc in Drive A and to press any key. DISCOLOGY uses an 83K Memory Buffer when copying and will copy most discs in two operations. On-screen prompts will then tell you when to change the source and destination discs and when copying is complete.

FICHIER



Figure Four

Using the left and right arrow keys select "Fichier" and press the [COPY] key afterwards. The drop-down menu which is shown at Fig.4 will appear and, as with the "disquette" menu, options are selected by means of the up and down arrow keys and modified by using the left and right arrow keys. The selection of options available through this menu are:

```

Annulation.....Cancel
Copier.....Copy
Effacer.....Erase
Renommer.....Rename
Catalogue.....Catalogue
  
```

```

Dest:disquette...Dest:disc
Source:disquette..Source:disc
  
```

```

Prot eff:tester...Prot erase:check
Prot char:laisser.Prot list:allow
  
```

```

Vit ecr:2000Bd...Write speed:2000Bd
Changer nom:NON...Change name:NO
Mess cassette:OUI.Tape message:YES
  
```

```

Param standard....Reset parameters
  
```

Cancel: As before.

Copier: Allows copying of selected files. All the files are displayed on the screen (Fig.8) and are selected with the arrow keys. Selected files are then validated by pressing [SPACE]. When validated a "<" symbol appears in front of the selected file. This can be cancelled by pressing [SPACE] again.

Erase: Will erase selected files and is similar in operation to copier.

Rename: Allows renaming of selected files. Files can also be rendered "invisible", protected against loading and have their "User" number changed.

Catalogue: Effects a complete catalogue of the disc including "invisible" files and displays their name, type (BAS, BIN etc), length and "User" number.

The following options can be varied by use of the left and right arrow keys.

Destination & Source: These can be either disc or tape but copying tape to tape is not possible.

Erase protected files: Protected files can be erased if "Ignorer" is selected. If "Tester" is selected protected files will not be erased.

List protected files: Some files are encrypted and protected against "Listing" after loading. During copying this protection will be maintained (Laisser), removed (Enlever) or initiated (Mettre).

Write speed: This variable modifies the speed of tape saving. You can choose between the 1000 and 2000 Baud standard speeds or you can select 3600 Baud, which is very fast.

Change name: During transfer of files from disc to tape the option YES allows the renaming of the files. The option NO will automatically transfer the current name.

Tape message: During the transfer of files from tape to disc the option YES will show on-screen messages informing you of the operation in progress.

Reset parametres: Returns all the variable parameters to the following default settings:

```

Source.....Disc
Destination.....Disc
Prot. erase.....Maintained
Prot. list.....Maintained
Write speed.....2000Bd
Change name.....NO
Tape message.....YES
  
```

Once copier, erase, rename or catalogue has been selected press [COPY] and an on-screen prompt will tell you to insert the work disc in the drive and to press any key. When the disc is catalogued each file is represented in the following manner:

Example: 0:PROG2 .BAS [SP]

```

0.....: This is the "User" number
          (between 0 and 15).
PROG2....This is the name of the file.
          (Max 8 characters)
BAS.....This is the type of file.
          (3 characters)
  
```

The letters enclosed in the brackets are the optional attributes.

"S" signifies that the file is invisible to the commands CAT and DIR. "P" signifies that the file is protected against erasure by the command ERA.

"SP" represents the characteristics of both "S" and "P".

If neither attribute is present the brackets are omitted and the file is visible and unprotected.

During copying the progress of the operation is displayed. This shows the User number, the name of the file and the type. Under each file the following information is also shown:

Start address, Length of file in HEX and the files execution address.

The final two options on the copier main heading are "Aide" and "Menu".

AIDE

This is the documentation for copier written in French. It contains all the instructions for using the copy

programs. I have included most of this information in this article which should enable you to use, effectively, both the disc and file copying programs.

MENU

Selecting this function and pressing [COPY] will return you to the main program and the display shown at Fig.1. There is one final option on this heading that is of interest. This is "Sortie" or "Exit".

SORTIE

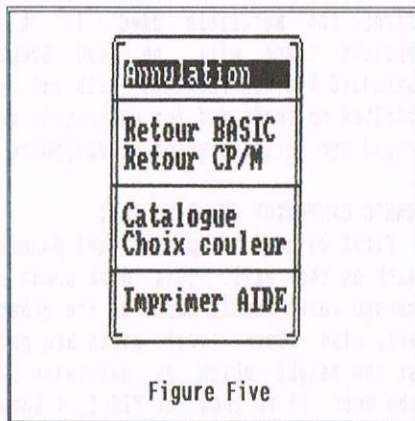


Figure Five

This is the exit function that allows you to return to CP/M or Basic without resetting the computer. It also allows you to change the working colours as described under OPTIONS and to catalogue a disc as described under the FICHER heading.

The final function will print out the complete documentation for DISCOLOGY which comprises some 30 pages.

FINALLY

DISCOLOGY is compatible with all CPCs and CPC Pluses. It is extremely easy to use once you get used to the French language prompts and is one of the most powerful commercial copiers available. It can be purchased from "O J Software" at a cost of £8.99 (less WACCI discount) and is well worth considering if you want one copier to fulfill all your requirements.

<<I was planning on splitting this article over two issues, since WACCI policy seems to be three pages max, per issue, per article. However, since it only over ran by a single column and because I enjoyed it so much, it's all here at once - Philip>>

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| Pang..... | £7.99 |

Above Cartridges are unboxed without instructions

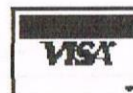
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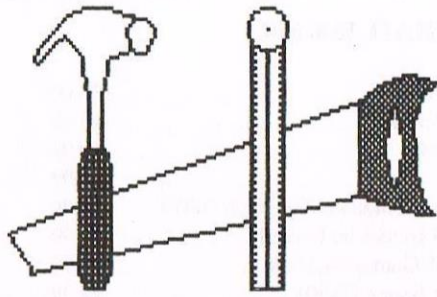
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Ask yourself, do I need a tailor made Computer Desk, Designed and Built by...er, you

I was reading WACCI the other day, issue 98 to be exact, all about a D.I.Y experience, which gave me an idea. Philip suggested that I should pass on my experience with Carpentry to all the members of WACCI. I bet everyone at some stage has done some D.I.Y, always being asked by the other half to do some work in the house. Well take it from me, my wife is always asking when I am going to do work in the house but for some reason it always takes me months to get around to it. Maybe because I do carpentry every day and can't be bothered to do when its for myself.

BASIC CARPENTRY

Carpentry can be really easy to do but we must have the tools to do the job. Tools are the most important thing before we can attempt any D.I.Y projects and the second most important thing is that they are sharp. No point using a saw if it's blunt, or screwdrivers that have sharpened tips (sorry Bob). It only make your life hell if you don't keep your tools sharp <<But you just told us all that the screwdrivers shouldn't have sharp tips -Philip>>

Ok we have the basic tools and they're sharp. What project are we going to do I ask you. What was that you said at the back? Renovate Philips Wardrobe. Sorry Philip, I couldn't resist that one. <<Just remember who the editor is -Philip>>

BASIC DESIGNS

If you are thinking of building your own Computer desk then maybe I can help. Ask yourself, do you need a computer desk, designed and built by...er, you. Ok the first thing that we need to do is make a design. Draw two or three version then pick the one that looks good, is simple to do and pleases you the most. Next there are a few things we must consider before we start on construction.

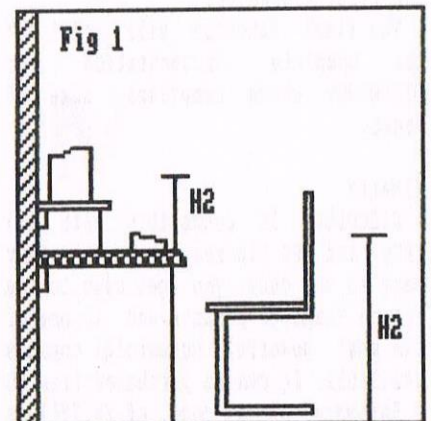
- 1- We must be sitting comfortably with our back straight.
- 2- Our arms must be at right angles to our bodies when using the keyboard.
- 3- The monitor must be at least 24" or 600mm away from the User.
- 4- The monitor must be as close to eye level as possible.

BASIC MATERIALS

Right, I will tell you how I would go about building a simple desk but first, the materials used. In this project there will be two 600mm standard kitchen worktops with 2x1 or 50x25mm upstands and for end panels we could use either plywood or chipboard.

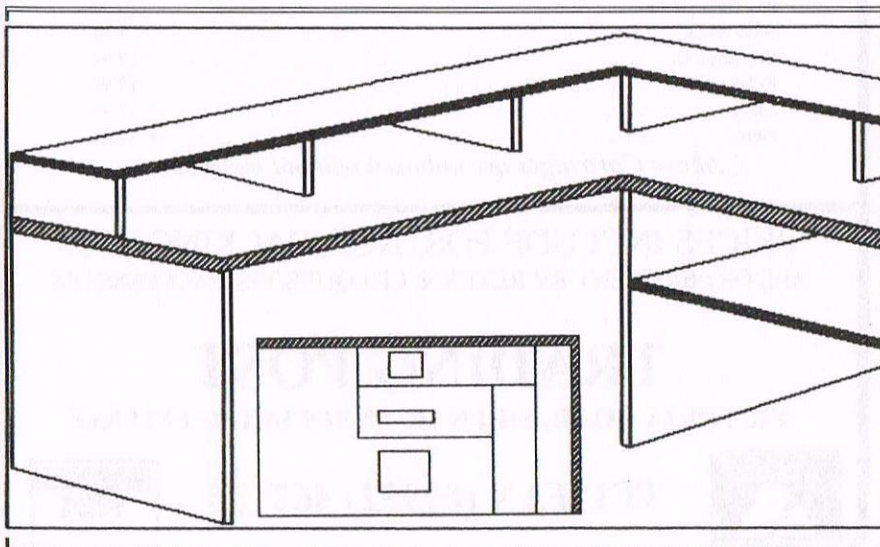
BASIC CARPENTRY (Marking out)

First we need to put a level pencil mark on the wall. This desk needs a second level pencil mark on the other wall also. These level marks are put at the height which is determine by the User. If we look at FIG 1, I have put in two height marks and called them H1 and H2. If we take H1 first, you will see that it is between the floor and the top of the keyboard, so the first marks on the two walls are level at H1, minus the keyboard and the thickness of the worktop.



MAIN DESK

Next we fix the 2x1 or 50x25 upstand to the wall, less the thickness of the worktop. The length of each worktop, we'll say, is 2 metres. The upstand is fixed to the wall less the thickness of the plywood for the end panels. Next we cut the worktops to the length required. If we take a height from the



floor to the top of the upstand, we have the height of our end panels. The minimum number of end panels that we need are two but if you want to, you can put more in; to give more support or if you want to have compartments with shelves to store hardware, software, books etc.

Take the worktops and rest them on the upstand and slide in the end panels to support them. Next, fix the panels to the floor and the underside of the worktop, either using 'L' shape brackets or plastic blocks which you can get at any D.I.Y store. Where the two worktops meet we should fit a coverplate and to the underside we fix a plywood plate to support the joints of the worktops. The basic desk should now be finished and happily fitted to the wall.

SHELVES

The second stage to this project are the shelves which sits above the worktops and done the same way as the

desk. If we look at FIG 1 and look at the H2 height, it is taken from the top of the worktop to the centre of the monitor, which is also determined by the User. Next we put another two level pencil marks on the two walls which is the top of the shelves. Now we fix the upstand to the wall, less the thickness of the shelves (the length of the upstand is also minus the thickness for any end panels). Again, we can put in more panels to support the shelves plus giving us more compartments for putting hardware or software etc.

AND FINALLY

This desk is a good strong design and also so easy to build that it can be altered to suit your own design. I hope I kept this project simple and maybe I managed to motivate some people to get hammering away at building their own desk. I hope you enjoyed this basic Carpentry, but please be very careful working on any

D.I.Y, we don't want any serious accidents so be careful and happy building.

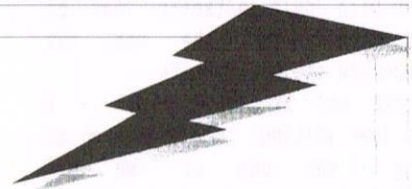
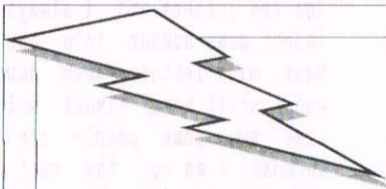
AND FINALLY <<AGAIN>>

If there is a good response to this article, maybe I'll do another so if anyone has any questions or want some advice on any type of Carpentry I do my best to help you. Either send a letter or give me a ring. Have fun.

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PS: Congratulations to everyone in WACCI on reaching the 100th issue and for being a brilliant magazine and a great club, and to everyone who has put in a lot of time and effort, a very big THANK YOU.

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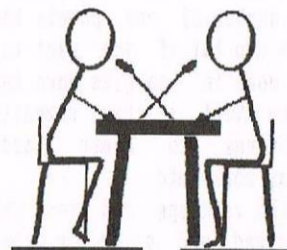
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THE ANGELA COOK INTERVIEW



Mike Lyons; humorous, knowledgeable chap and all round whip worthy gentleman. Fair Comment Editor for 35 issues, he had a very long run, acquired slightly fewer enemies than friends and made a great impression on WACCI. Here he spills the beans and doesn't cry over spilt milk.

WACCI) What was the attraction with the club and the magazine?

Mike) I'm ashamed to admit it now, but at first I thought WACCI was a daft idea! A Disc magazine? No way. However, eventually I bought a copy. By this time Jeff Walker had gone and Steve Williams was the Editor. It was a lot cheaper than the other mags and, always being of a serious turn of mind, I thought it might be a good idea to get a serious magazine. I fell in love with Joolz instantly. Then, of course, there was the sex, the violence and the kinky boots...

I wrote one or two letters - I almost love writing them as much as reading - and one or two were published. I even sent in an article or two and a program which never got into the PD library, (it was a spelling game designed to use the fairly recent AMX mouse and software). I haven't a clue where that is now.

W) Why volunteer for Fair Comment?

M) I was one of the last people that Uncle Clive got in touch with (or got in touch with Uncle Clive) after the collops. I read a piece about Clive in AA and decided it might be worth it to see if I could get my subs back - I'd only sent a cheque for a year just before the fall (typical musician's timing). Well, I thought, when I realised Clive needed helpers, let's give this worthy man any help he can stand. Besides, I always liked showing off. Clive foolishly agreed to let me

do the letters pages. He visited me at home to introduce me to the house style. He spent the entire day here at Chez Lyons, patiently explaining everything I needed to know. He drank several gallons of diet caffeine and wouldn't stop for food. Clive is the kind of person I admire - deeply interesting, totally monothematic and utterly unshakeable in his devotion. He's also one helluva teacher. I know I'm dense, but he made everything perfectly clear.

W) What sort of letters did you look forward to receiving most?

M) Now, here's a very good question. All of them is the short answer and I hated the empty summer months when there were very few letters. I enjoyed doing the techy letters when I could. I like delving into programming and stuff and making educated guesses (all right, lucky guesses) about people's problems. I also enjoyed reading about people's successes and other people's answers to questions. I suppose if I had to choose one type of letter I like it was the bolshy ones. I got very proprietorial about the magazine. No-one dared criticise it except me! I like a good argument, one where I win. If someone wants a fight I'll give it to them. Unfortunately, some people didn't like my tone and I know I terminally offended a few. C'est la vie

W) Did you do anything else other than Fair Comment; behind the scenes work, editing other pages, layout etc.?

M) No. I did very little other work than FC. I usually did my own page layouts, though Clive, of course, reserved the right to change the order of the letters if he felt it fitted better on the page. When it was in full swing, what with the occasional bit of teaching, eating, drinking, sleeping and sex, there were few enough hours in the day. People forget that you have to read their letters, research the problem or find the information, then figure out how to answer the question or whatever in a way which other people would find interesting and/or useful. That is probably the most difficult part. You also have to think of zappy headings for the letters and I always tried to inject some humour into the replies. Many, many letters were hand written and I still have almost all of them. Like me, some people are terribly verbose. I am not the sort of person who wants to delegate responsibility, so although I had several offers of help I usually did my own typing - even when it caused delays. I always felt a responsibility to give members as much help as I could (whether they wanted it or not) and treat them as friends wherever possible. I also wanted to have members' letters as unexpurgated as possible. Someone, somewhere may find an odd tid-bit of information useful. The only thing I usually altered was spelling (I didn't want anyone to embarrass themselves - that was part of my job), or abuse (with very few exceptions personal invective has no place in a club like ours). Some people have difficulty with spelling etc. so I also had to correct speelink mistooks on-the-fly, not to mention errors of the grammatical? Punctuational? and

plain and fancy, simple and compound tautology. I enjoyed every minute of it. I have written, now that I think back, a number of articles on getting the most out of a dot matrix printer. This was originally a one or two article bit of fun, but soon developed into a long series.

W) I noticed that you were trying to sell your CPC through the Market Stall. Did you think that you would always keep a CPC or knew you would upgrade eventually?

M) I bought my original 464 in 1982/3 and my 6128 in 1984 (I think). Until the last 18 months I had never had a second's problem with it and thought it would last forever. I firmly believed, right up until the last minute that I would NEVER buy a Plastic Computer. I was often vociferous in my comments about Incredibly Bothersome Machines, (and many others), in FC. In the end, unfortunately, I began to realise that a CPC was not adaptable enough for use with my school work. Although it was a sterling workhorse, with Protex et al and various other ROM programs, I began to realise that I would need something else to mesh in with school. It was only after I was ill last time and my friend bought himself a PC, (coincidence), that I began to realise that I would have to get one too. I used his machine a few times and found I could take a file from home to school or school to home without any complicated rigmarole and that settled it. I now have a 486DX266 with 24MB RAM and 1.5GB of hard drives. It still crashes regularly, there are IRQ conflicts, GPFs and all manner of viruses, yet I still find that I have fallen in lust with Word 6 and I now have a superb music Notation program.

W) Did you ever combine your interest and career in music with your passion for the CPC?

M) Of course. The CPC had so much going for it. I bought The Music System as soon as it came out, and upgraded to the Advanced Music System as soon after that as I could. Even though the print-outs, (looking back), were awful and the 3 channel sound hideous, I could create compositions

and arrangements of music for my bands or for myself, get a print out and generally enjoy the whole experience. The one thing I always wanted to get, but never managed, was a MIDI interface. I might have stayed with the CPC for longer if I had.

Ten years ago, when I first started teaching, I used to take my CPC into schools to demonstrate the musical abilities of the machine. I had a little stereo amp that I could connect up and the sound wasn't too bad. I showed how the computer could teach notation and even wrote a few programs myself in BASIC to help. One of my favourite programs was "Musical Mozart". This was a type in from a magazine (CwtA, I think) which composed endless Mozart minuets using Mozart's dice game. A very impressive piece of work. My colleagues were always astonished.

Of course, there is also a draw back of being a computer person. I now have IT (Information Technology), on my timetable at school. To be honest, I'd much rather not have to teach computing I want to keep enjoying it.

W) Where did your interest in WACCI and especially the CPC originate from?

M) I think I've mostly answered this one already. The sex, the violence and the kinky boots...

I was an impecunious student (having just gone through a messy divorce), but I wanted/needed/lusted after a computer. I bought my first CPC, (a 464) when I was still at college. It was my first, (and probably only), real computer. I've always loved gadgets, especially calculators, and when, at last, an affordable home computer came along I got one. After seeing and trying to use the PET's at college, which suffered from woodworm and only had 8k of memory, the CPC was state-of-the-art! I also had a printer. My handwriting has never been good and I thought I would need one for my thesis at college - rather than pay for someone to type it up for me. I fell in love, (again), of course. After my CPC464 was stolen by a burglar, I upgraded to a 6128 and used that for about ten years solid. I just loved the machine, (I still do), it

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was flexible, as fast as I needed it to be, had colour, needed only one plug, (you should see the raft of extension leads hovering at the back of my desk at the moment), and could play music. The really nice thing about it was the way you had to learn how to do things for yourself. If I wanted to change the font on my printer, I had to learn the control codes. If I wanted to write a program I had to learn the language thoroughly. These days, everything is one or more steps further out of control. I suppose people don't want to have to learn anything which requires thought. My PC does almost everything automatically - and often automatically wrong. Still, that's progress.

W) WACCI members have been very concerned about the well being of a past WACCI officer. How are you doing these days?

M) Who's this officer? I am learning to cope with a more-or-less permanent disability and a slowly failing memory. As I will be 40 this year, I suppose I should expect the latter. Now, what was I talking about? Oh, yes, I'm coping a little better with the lack of feeling, (some people might not have realised I had any), and I'm almost up to my old typing speed again. I still make more

spelling errors than I used to, but that's because I forgot to look at my fingers on the keyboard. The job is still very hard, and with an inspection coming up in October the head and most other staff have gone into headless chicken mode trying to make sure everything is perfect. Me, I don't actually care. I would much rather they saw us warts and all - then at least we might get some proper resourcing, (well, I did think I saw a pig fly past yesterday). Besides which, I came into the job to teach children, not to be a glorified secretary, filling in endless irrelevant (and very often inaccurate) paperwork, spending hours doing unnecessary and ultimately pointless exercises, making big noises about things which are just part of the job, and making huge explosions about things which don't have any relevance to the job, for no reason other than to make a huge (and therefore noticeable) noise about how wonderful we are. I also deeply resent being a "human resource" I was much happier as a "member of staff" or Personnel. (Sorry, soap box away).

W) Have you any funny WACCI anecdotes to bring some summer cheer to us all.

M) Oh God! I could be here all day. There was the letter I received, from a chap in Australia, that had been sent

by surface mail. It took nearly 3 months to arrive and he wouldn't get his WACCI for the next 3 months. By this time he'd moved on to a PC, which I found out after a year had passed.

Then there was the time I narrowly missed that man at one of the All Formats Fairs at Haydock part. I was so angry I choked on my own cigarette and had to go for a lie down.

Finally, I remember a long-running series of letters from a young WACCI member, sadly no longer with us. Al Cooper, (fondly remembered as the "L" plate), used to send me very long letters. What he also did, being Irish, was to print them in columns on paper of varying lengths, (and widths), and there was no guarantee that consecutive columns on the same page necessarily followed on. I had hours of hilarity trying to figure out where Al's next column went to. Usually just before the deadline for copy <<I know what you mean -Philip>>. I'm fairly sure that he once sent me a missive on toilet paper. I certainly have a few that were typed on hand towels! I loved that man.

<<The question we would all like to know at the moment, is just who is Angela going to victimise next month. Well, I'm the Editor and even I don't fully know the answer to that question. Who ever said the Editor was supposed to know anything -Philip>>

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