

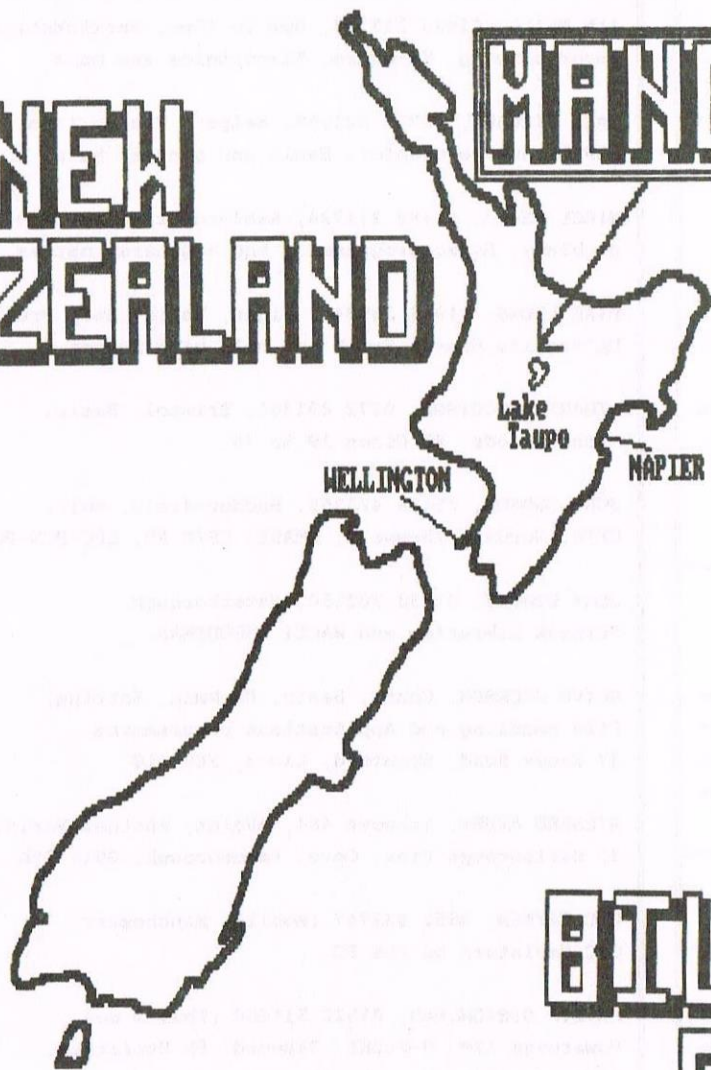
WACCI

THE WORLDS BEST CPC MAGAZINE
AND PREMIER CPC USER GROUP

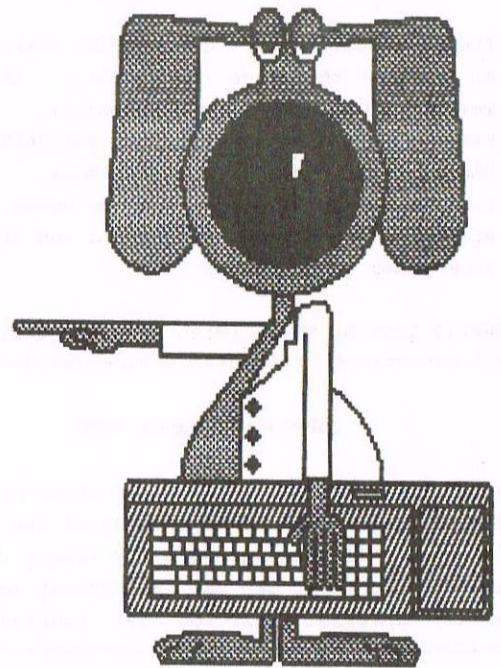
ISSUE 104
SEPTEMBER

£2.00
1996

NEW
ZEALAND



HANGAKINDO



BILL NOBLE
FOUND
ALIVE AND WELL

(BUT ONLY BECAUSE HE SENT ME A MAP)

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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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WACCI is distributed by the Dwerryhouse family who really have been on holiday, making us late again.

WACCI: The club for Amstrad CPC computer owners.

FRONT COVER: <<Alright, so it was me -Philip>>

THE TELEPHONE HELP-LINE



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

FRANK FROST, 01983 882197
Isle of Wight, 4pm to 10pm
VDE, CP/M, Protex 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.
35 Marlborough View, Cove, Farnborough, GU14 9YA

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.

ARTHUR/ANGELA COOK, 01903 206739, Sussex
Tape Library, Repairs, General CPC and Natter
All day till 10pm

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.)

W A C C I

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 Willaims who?
Clive Bellaby
Paul Dwerryhouse

Telephone 01522 511608

Copydate : 16 September 1996



It's four in the morning, it's Sunday the 1st of September and you lot are expecting your WACCI's to drop through the door on Tuesday (there's going to be a postal strike this Monday). Guess what, they didn't arrive, did they. I suppose I'd better start by explaining myself (which I don't do very often).

SO WHY IS WACCI LATE THIS TIME

Paul went on Holiday. He didn't come back until this morning so I had an extra week to work with. However, Paul was expecting WACCI to be on his doorstep when he arrived home. Oh well, I've disappointed everyone this month it would seem. Have you ever noticed how the workload expands to fit every increase in time. Anyway, that my explanation, which should leave most of you utterly confused and wondering what Tigger is playing around at this time (hopefully).

THE THANX BEFORE THE STUFF

What a month it has been, yet again. I've had everything coming at me from every angle at the same time. Without the help of my editorial team, I would not have survived. So, my deepest thanx go to Frank Neatherway, John Bowley and Angela Cook, for a variety of reasons, no least of all, having to suffer a Tigger when he gets into one of his more strange moods.

I would also like to say a massive thanx to all those members who sent in articles in response to last month's rather shocking plea. As you can see, there is a WACCI this month (only just though), but I still need lots more, so get writing and send them in so that they can appear in a WACCI near you very soon.

THE EPSON LQ300 HAS ARRIVED

You may notice something slightly different about WACCI, which also helped to delay this issue. The vast majority of the graphics and headers have been done on the CPC, using an EPSON LQ300 which is sitting attached to my Schneider. I'm only a couple of steps clear of my objective of getting WACCI produced fully on the CPC.

I can't take all the credit for the graphics and headers though, as much as I would like to. You see, I'm in the process of training Clare to assist in the production of the magazine and the graphics are one of the parts I hope to off-load as quickly as I possibly can.

Clare was also responsible for making an awful lot of tea, giving me quite a few useful ideas and generally making my life a lot easier this month, so a massive thanx goes in her general direction.

Just a second, I suddenly hear a large number of WACCI members cry out in a general state of confusion, just who is this Clare that Tigger has suddenly started to ramble on about in his normal, somewhat erratic manner. Is there something going on that we don't know about? Is the Editor keeping something from us?

- - - - You bet he is - - - -

COMSOFT AT IT AGAIN

I had a call from Peter Campbell this month. Comsoft are interested in software to be released commercially, so if you think you've got something interesting, let Peter know. He's also interested in any M/C programmers who might like to do a little creativity on the CPC. Think you might be up to it? Give Peter a bell.

I also owe a huge thanx to Peter this month. MicroDesign didn't like my printer, I suspect the ESC P2 codes for the conflict, so I was having a serious problem getting decent printouts for graphics. Peter sent me down Page Printer at a speed beyond imagination and, as you can see, the program works a treat. Thanx Sir Comsoft, much appreciated.

MERLINE-SERVE BIT

How many of you use Merline-Serve to get lots of bits and pieces for your machine? Well, they'll be up at this year's WACCI convention and Angela has just told me that if you place an order before then and you're going to the convention yourself, then she can take the stuff up there and you can collect. This saved you money because there's no postal costs involved. It's worth a thought.

THE LAST BIT

The Convention coming up. There won't be a WACCI before then, so I hope to see many of you there. You'll recognise me easily, I look nothing like the chap on the top of this page.

COMPETITION SPOT

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

We are very sorry that you missed out on your monthly fix of brainteasers, the reason for this was all Carol's fault since she is not here at present to defend herself, I put the blame totally on her because I'm the Chairman and she just sets the compo's each month. I've got to blame someone ain't I? Nevermind I've given her a telling off and she won't do it again. Now on with the show.

TRIPLE THE FUN

Three great compos for you this month, enter one or all the choice is yours.

So sharpen your pencils and put your brain in gear and away you go.

QUIZ ONE - UP THE WORKERS

With one exception the occupations listed below have been hidden along straight lines in the grid. Which one has gone missing?

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| L | M | A | S | O | N | T | O | L | I | P |
| A | C | L | O | U | R | R | O | I | S | C |
| W | A | I | T | R | E | S | S | C | H | Y |
| Y | O | B | I | B | H | O | L | E | T | N |
| E | N | B | R | B | C | O | F | N | I | A |
| R | N | A | M | X | A | T | U | S | P | I |
| E | B | I | L | R | E | K | R | E | L | C |
| S | O | L | M | E | T | R | E | E | N | I |
| R | O | I | L | P | D | W | N | R | A | T |
| U | L | F | A | T | S | O | I | L | E | P |
| N | E | F | I | W | D | I | M | V | Y | O |

| | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| BAILIFF | MASON | REP |
| BAKER | MIDWIFE | SWEET |
| BARBER | MINER | TAILOR |
| CHEF | MODEL | TAXMAN |
| CLERK | NURSE | TEACHER |
| LAWYER | OPTICIAN | VET |
| LICENSEE | PILOT | WAITRESS |

QUIZ TWO - SQUARE WORD

Starting with the given letter at the top of the grid (K = 1) and writing the numbers in clockwise sequence, enter the solutions to the clues into the square so that each one overlaps its neighbours by one, two or three letters - each one is a different amount of overlap.

The last answer ends with the letter (K) at the top of the grid.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | K | 2 | | 3 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | 4 |
| 8 | | | | |
| | 7 | | 6 | 5 |

- Booth
- Captain
- Danger
- Depart
- Get even
- Affable
- Sheen
- Tendency
- Twilight

TAKE A BREATHER

PHEW! So how do you like it so far? I thought it might make a pleasant change for you to have a full page of puzzles - well almost a full page.

We would like to know if this is the sort of thing you would prefer each month. A mega page of different and exciting (exciting?) puzzles or a load of waffle from us. Let us know NOW!!

UNRECEIVED PRIZES

If you have not received your prizes then please get in contact with me and I'll give John a swift kick in the jacksie or better still I'll take all of his money and spend it!

QUIZ THREE - QUESTION TIME

Most of the answers to this quiz can be found in issue 102.

- Who is the Wish List manager?
- Who is Tigger DiRichleau's Fair Comment colleague?
- What invasion was written about by Richard Fairhurst?
- Who's birthday was it on 4th August and he is setting this compo page?
- How much is a 3" head cleaner from Capri Marketing Limited?
- On what date is the second great Wacci convention?
- Have you got your ticket yet? If not send £2.00p to Paul to book your place.
- Who's good hands are you in on the Market Stall?
- What is the E-mail address for Wacco?
- What was being described within No Beer Mats Included?

PRIZES ON OFFER

Should you decide to enter all three puzzles then the first correct entry out of the hat will receive a £10 Merline-Serve voucher kindly donated by the very lovely and kind Angela Cook. The voucher comes complete with a catalogue of their products for you to choose from.

Also you will win yourself a free subscription for 5 issues of 8 Bit Mart kindly donated by our good friend Brian (8 BIT Kid) Watson.

Many thanks to you both. <<CB & JB>>

If you decide that three is too many for your little grey cells then your singular correct entry will receive the 8 Bit subscription.

PD discs awarded as usual but PLEASE remember to give me the FULL details of disc size etc. Entries need to be with us by the end of October.

** Seezya next month **

FAIR COMMENT

PHILIP 'TIBBER' DIRICHLEAU
FRANK HEATHERWAY
3 BLEBE CLOSE
ROYLEIGH
ESSEX
SS6 9HL

RICHARD AND THE BUNNYMEN

Dear Philip, whilst I may not agree with Richard Fairhurst review of WACCI or even some of the articles in BTL I do feel that Paul's letter in response was excessively harsh on BTL. It's not meant to be taken seriously but within the silly articles there are a few technically informative ones the likes of which WACCI never has. BTL and WACCI are worlds apart, not through the quality but the content. They are aimed at different people. For its members WACCI runs an ideal service and its content is excellent, however these are not the same people that will choose to read BTL.

What I do take objection to however is Paul saying that "Richard and the Bunnymen" have no relevance in the CPC scene today. By "Richard and the Bunnymen" I take it that Paul is referring to the people that contribute to BTL. In which case if he feels that they have no relevance in the CPC today I'm sure that Paul will agree that he and other CPC users don't use Xexor, Parados, Routeplanner, Powerpage, Pro-Ext, Softlok, Turbo Imager, Soundhacker Pro, TUSS, Destext, BooTracker, S-DOS, SDA and countless PD programs and demos that BTL contributors are responsible for. Nor will they ever look back through an old issue of WACCI, Artificial Intelligence, AA or CPC Attack to find a piece of technical information or one of the many articles by Angela Cook, Tim Blackbond or Simon Forrester. Or perhaps use a piece of software that has come from Robot PD, Presto PD, Sheepsoft PD, Radical Software, Sentinel Software, Merlin Serve and then used it on fixed or upgraded CPC that had come from STS.

You may not like what you read in BTL, you may even be offended by it, but you can not deny that "Richard and the Bunnymen" have furnished the CPC

with the majority of the more recent software and done their fair share in keeping the CPC alive and keeping them running. So next time you flick your ABBA switch or use an extended format with Parados think about who designed them and perhaps the amount of time it takes. Where would the CPC be without "Richard and the Bunnymen" ?

Regards
Richard Wildey
London

<<Well responded Richard. I think this has got to be the best worded response that I've ever received if not the best letter I've ever had for Fair Comment. It's also left me with the problem of responding myself, which I can't do, so I won't.

I will say one thing, 'Richard and the Bunnymen' seems to be in danger of sticking (I do hope so because I think the term is wonderful) -Philip>>

SPIKE PROTECTORS AND ROM CHIPS

Dear Philip, in reply to your suggestion of testing Varistors (the devices in mains surge suppressors, remember?); I've had a look through the manufacturers' data books at work, and there doesn't seem to be any way of determining how far gone the devices are. This is because of the way they work. The Varistor is made from metal oxide particles, which under normal conditions are insulated from each other and therefore pass no current; but when a high voltage "spike" reaches it, the insulation breaks down creating a conductive "path" through the device. This path shorts-out the spike thus preventing it from reaching the protected equipment. The path is also destroyed in the process, so future spikes find another path through the device. Eventually all of the oxide particles will be used, and so no more paths can be found, and the device is "used-up".

The currents that these devices can handle is quite large, but for only very short periods of time. Small ones (about 1p piece in size) are rated at about 400A (yes, you did read that right, four hundred amps!) for 20uS (20 microseconds); with slightly larger ones (50p size) rated in the region of 2000 Amps for 20uS.

I don't know if any of that was of interest to you, but this next bit might be. It's just a slight modification I did to my Rombo Rombox. I wanted the DIL switches in a more convenient position, so, I de-soldered them, and then soldered a wire-wrap I.C. socket in their place. I then plugged the DIL switches into the socket and cut a rectangular hole in the Rombox lid for them to poke-out through. A wire-wrap socket has long, strong (square-section) legs, which puts the switches just slightly proud of the lid surface. With the socket legs being square, and the PCB holes being round, the socket is a slightly tight fit in the board, and needs to be gently tapped into position with the aid of a hammer.

It's a simple modification, but it makes it so easy now to switch-off individual Roms.

By the way, I did enjoy the EPROM guide series from Ian Neill. I've got a couple of programs of my own that I use frequently, and these would be ideal if blown onto an EPROM, so I might have a go at that now. I'll look forward to any other projects Ian has planned (such as the Ramrom; or how about a PIC Programmer, Ian?)

....TTFN....

Martin Bela
Derby

<<Welcome back to the pages of WACCI once again Martin. The second part of your 32 Bit Output Port Article is in this months issue. Well done on that. It's impressive.

I'm going to be fitting a DIL Socket to my own Rombo very soon (Like when I run out of sockets), so I'll let you know how that goes on.

Talking about ROMS. Does anyone know if there's a halfway decent art package on ROM, or if it's possible to put either the Advanced Art Studio or G-Paint (for a 6128), on a ROM (or probably two). It would make my life a lot easier if it could be done. Any answer please -Philip>>

MOST SILLY DOS SECTORS

Dear Philip, I have a few questions so bear with me. Firstly, how do I access the last 9 sectors of a MS-DOS 720k disc? I figured that there are 80 tracks numbered 0 to 79 and 18 sectors (each sector is 512 bytes, or 200 bytes), but I can only get 9 sectors numbered 1-9. Why is this? There must be 18 sectors per track, because if there are only 9 sectors per track then the capacity is 360k, yet I formatted it 720k with DOScopy. I use the AA Toolkit to read the sectors. Please help! Also, I was wondering if you would do an article on DES applications, where to get them etc., because I can't find any! You make an excellent editor so far, so keep up the good work!

Yours sincerely
Conn O Griofa
Donnycarney
Ireland

<<Good question Conn. Whenever I need to read a 720k MS-DOS disc, I use DOS-copy anyway, so I have no idea how the format works or even how it's laid out on the disc. Saying that, is there anyone out there who does know? If so, let me in on the secret.

Thanks for the vote of confidence in my editorship. All of us, occasionally, need to be told we're doing a good job of something -Philip>>

FAIRWELL NORMAN

Dear Paul, I have to cancel my subscription to WACCI.

This has been brought about by a number of circumstances including old age and failing eyesight (I am 83 years of age). There is no need to refund any balance of cash. Best wishes to everyone, you are all doing a smashing job. I have enjoyed the pleasure of your company over the past

few years and and thoroughly enjoyed it. Once again best wishes to all the staff.

Yours sincerely
Norman Shatford
Goxhill

<<Fairwell Norman. It's always a sad moment when I read letters like this one. It leaves me totally blank and not knowing what to say.

I and all the WACCI staff which you all the best for the future -Philip>>

BEYOND WIT AND WISDOM

Dear WACCI, I do not use the CPC6128 for word processing and, in fact, have never used a printer with it. The colour display was the major attraction over the PCW9256 but I would like to use these as a complimentary pair.

As the 3" drive A is a potential source of future problems, has anybody incorporated a switch which can permit use of either the in-built 3" or an external 3.5" drive? I already have a Pinboard 3.5" drive B with in-built power supply but a request to them on this matter has produced an overwhelming silence. At present it is beyond my wit or wisdom to use drive B as the default drive in case of emergency to utilise the 3.5" copies of the original discs supplied when purchased. Incidentally, it is possible to "stack" more than one 3" program on the 720K available on a 3.5"?

Any suggestions would be gratefully received.

Yours sincerely
Keith J Bull
Westcliff-on-Sea

<<Hi Keith. The device you're after is called an ABBA switch (yup, it's being mentioned again), many designs for which have appeared in issues of WACCI over the last few years. If you haven't got the issue that tells you how to make this quick and easy mod to your computer, contact Great Uncle Frank Neatherway. The address and phone number are on the inside back page of this very magazine.

I'm not quite sure what you mean by being able to 'Stack' more than one three inch program on a 720k disk. You can put as many programs on the disc as you like: until it's full that is.

The size of the disc is almost irrelevant to the working of the program itself (except when someone starts to use some very strange formats) -Philip>>

MR INSPIRATION

Hi Paul, I would like to renew my subscription for six months and a cheque for £12.00 is enclosed.

The new WACCI team are doing a very good job of keeping WACCI alive. Wish I could contribute more but demands at work and Open University studies take up most of my spare time.

In fact I haven't touched the Amstrad for ages now, the work that I do requires a PC, and if it were not for sentimental reasons I would have thrown the CPC away. I have quite a collection of programs and manuals. If you know of someone who wants a well used CPC plus 3.5" drive, lots of programs and manuals, even an old 300 baud modem, if I can find it amidst the junk in the garage, I'd be willing to part with the lot for a mere £25.00, buyer collects etc.

Regards
George Ho-Yow
Machine Code Heaven

P.S. I had to replace the drive belt on the 3" drive with a rubber band, but it works well enough.

<<Hello there George. Quick question, if you don't use your CPC anymore, just what do you eat for breakfast these days. I mean, Windows can't be as filling as Machine Code Routines.

I'm sure you'll get someone interested in your bits and pieces. I would be myself, except I haven't got £25 lying around at the moment (well I have, but the Water Board will be very unhappy if I don't give it them).

It's great to hear from you again, keep in touch -Philip>>

TELETEXT AND THE REST

Dear WACCI, regarding the letter by Peter Robson on the Teletext small ads, I have found something else that might be of interest to Amstrad users. On page 470 of Teletext, there are game reviews for PCs, Amigas etc, and a special section called OLD GAME. The last time I saw it, they were reviewing a 48K Spectrum game, called 'Empire' (They were devoting three

pages to it). Maybe us Amstrad users could send in reviews of various games, and perhaps include an address where you could purchase them? (i.e WACCI).

On another note, can anyone tell me how to print bigger from the Grafpad 2 Art utility? Perhaps a listing in BASIC to import the graphics into Advanced Art Studio (Save the .PIC files onto .SCR files?)

One last thing, why don't you print the membership numbers any more? Best Wishes,

Simon Lucas
Hampton Court

P.S - Does anyone have a ROM BOX for a fair price (about £15?)

<<Hello Simon. If anyone wants to have a try at Teletext, then go for it. If you wish to use the WACCI name for a little added push, then be my guest, I have no objection at all. I just don't have the time myself.

I've never used GrafPad 2, so I have no idea about it, but most Art Packages do save out screens in a standard format. Try renaming the screen file from .PIC to .SCR and you may find that AAS will load it without any further modification.

Printing bigger? No problem. Use a dump utility that creates a bigger screen dump (once you've saved the picture as a standard file if I'm totally wrong and .PIC is not what we could call normal).

No longer printing the membership figures? Well, if you want me to, I will, but it'll mean shifting around the header for Thanx and Stuff again, which is why it was dropped in the first place (if you believe any of that, can I interest you in a ZX-Spectrum) -Philip>>

NO MORE POKES NEEDED

Dear Philip, Many thanks for printing my previous letter in issue 100 and thanks also to the many fellow members who replied.

I have now impressed my daughter by giving Dizzy infinite lives. I won't ask for any more cheats, honest I won't. I am now able to use Discology with tapes. Never thought of using left and right arrows rather than up and down. I have solved the problem of the disc drive and so will be

AMSTRAD 464/6128

| | |
|--|--------|
| Amstrad GT65 Green Screen Monitors..... | £35.00 |
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| Switch Blade..... | £7.99 |
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| Pro Tennis Tour..... | £7.99 |
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| Robocop II..... | £7.99 |
| Klax..... | £7.99 |
| Pang..... | £7.99 |

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contacting Nigel soon on that subject. My 3.5ins drive is not always reading as it should either but the garden has rather taken over for the moment so it will have to wait a little while before it is attended to.

I have tried to install a side switch but it doesn't respond so I must experiment further.

I would like the address of David O'Shea please, Philip, and I will then contact him later on.

I have successfully put Tasword onto 3.5" disc. Does anyone know how to programme it to 80 columns? I find it a nuisance having to alter it each time it is loaded and if you forget when editing saved text it makes such a mess that you sometimes have to start again from scratch.

Hope everyone enjoys the Convention which I am again unable to attend.

Sorry I couldn't send disc. I keep getting "Directory Full" when I try to save.

Regards
Alan Sims
London

<<Hi Alan, I'm glad you've managed to impress your daughter. I have the same problem at times with my two (I love them very much but they are both so very 6 years old and 4 years old). If I don't do something magical at least once a day, they seem to think I'm losing my touch.

Side switch not working? Oh dear. There doesn't seem to be a polite way of saying this but, urm, start again because I think you made a mistake somewhere,

Tasword into 80 Columns. Just a minute, Tasword is in 80 Columns. Try going to the customise Options, find Change Program and you'll find the Right and Left Margin setting in there. When you've corrected it, get a fresh disc and use the SAVE TASWORD option. That'll solve that problem very quickly.

Directory Full when saving. Erase any .BAK files with 'ERA,".BAK" and that might free a few entries. Remember, we can only put 64 directory entries on a disc at a time. Either that, or you've developed something of a strange problem with your disc drive that defies any of the normal explanations I can think of (at least to me anyway) -Philip>>*

FISHING THE INTERNET

Dear Philip, Congratulations on your first issue of WACCI - you've certainly kept up the high standards set by Paul.

You asked about commercial software on the Internet. Although it is being treated as if it were PD (or, more accurately, freeware), the owners of the vast majority of commercial software have not given their permission for this. The following companies have given their permission for non-commercial distribution:

- .Vortex (all games for CPC as well as C64, Spectrum and ZX81)
- .Design Design
- .Radical Software (Fluff and Smart Plus - both CPC+ only)

There is a huge amount of software available on the Internet from other authors - most of which is no longer available, and the owners seem to not bother themselves about it. However, to protect what is left of the CPC industry, the maintainers of the software archives have tried to ensure that we do not keep anything which is still available commercially - so for instance there is no online copy of Protex or Routeplanner. If anyone is thinking of making a copy of something like Protex available they can be assured that WACCO's crack team of killer copyright lawyers would know about it very quickly. Addresses are:

<ftp://ftp.nvg.unit.no/pub/cpc>
(main site, very slow, in Norway, most up-to-date.)

<ftp://sunshine.informatik.uni-wuerzburg.de/pub/joscho/cpcemu>
(Germany, copy of Norwegian site, faster for UK users, but not so up-to-date.)

<ftp://adams.eimages.co.uk/users/davidc/cpc/>

(UK, please use between 6pm and 9am or weekends. Copy of German site with couple of alterations, updated once per month. Also hosts the UAUG pages,

<http://adams.eimages.co.uk/users/davidc/uaug/>).

I don't think it would be appropriate for WACCI to distribute the software which does not have permission but the Design Design, Vortex and Radical stuff should be OK.

And now for something completely different ... I'll be coming to the convention again this year, and may be able to demo my Forth compiler by then. But in any case, if there's anyone going up from the Chelmsford or London area by car, perhaps they could give me a lift?

Yours, bravely clinging to the trailing edge of technology,

David Cantrell
Chelmsford

<<Thanks David. The information about the three companies appears to be quite accurate. It does seem that it's more a matter, at least with the rest of the companies that have been mentioned in all this, of not caring so long as no one makes a profit. I'll come back to this next month.

I hope you get a lift up to the convention. I hope I get a lift up to the convention as well -Philip>>

IS IAN A 'ROM'ULAN

Dear Philip, Reading with great interest Ian Neill's third instalment on EPROMS in Issue 103, in which he described how he put a specific BASIC program with machine code into an EPROM, prompts me to put pen to paper (or should that be fingers to keys?) on this matter.

The background to this is that in July last year I phoned Ian explaining that I had two utility programs that I used frequently and asking him whether he could put both of them on to an EPROM for me. He very readily agreed and I sent him the two programs on a 3" disc together with a blank 16K EPROM which I had obtained from Maplins on his advice.

He duly returned the EPROM fully operational, and it's been sitting in one of my romboxes ever since, giving me immediate access to both programs 'at the touch of a button'. I knew from our telephone conversation that it wasn't just a simple matter of copying the programs on to an EPROM, but until I read Ian's article I had no idea or appreciation of the technical expertise required to undertake such an operation.

The technical expertise available to the members of WACCI and the kindness and interest shown by those who possess it to help those of us who do not, never ceases to amaze me and

makes one proud to belong to such a unique club. Once again, very many thanks, Ian.

Yours Sincerely
Dick Hornsby
London

<<It's very nice when someone make the effort to say Thanks. I enjoyed the ROM articles myself (once I'd laid them out that is). I'm often amazed by how much work goes on behind the scenes of WACCI for which a lot of people never really get any recognition -Philip>>

SURFS UP GENTLEMAN (AND LADIES)

Dear Philip, Great news! I have been doing a bit more "net surfing" recently and have found out some information about which formerly commercial games are now PD. First of all, as you stated in issue 102, all games from Design Design such as Tank Busters, Dark Star, Forbidden Planet, etc, are now public domain.

Also, all games from Vortex Software are now PD. The text also said something about all their games for all formats being released on a compilation called the "Vortex Emulation Package" although this is not made very clear.

Finally, the most interesting thing I found was that the Jon Ritman/Ocean games Batman, Head Over Heels and Matchday I and II can now be copied freely as Ocean no longer see these games as being available.

All this information can be found on the Amstrad CPC FAQ situated at the Usenet news group

com.sys.amstrad.8bit.

I also found a web site where you can download some CPC games. I can't remember exactly what was on there, although I do remember "Into The Eagle's Nest" being amongst them. I'm afraid I didn't make a note of the URL but you can find it elsewhere on com.sys.amstrad.8bit.

If I find out any more information I will let you know. 'Bye for now,
Matthew Merriman
Norwich

<<Hi Matthew. This whole situation is starting to get very complicated. Apart from the Design Design and

Vortex Software (which is Public Domain) I still can't verify these rumours and the software companies aren't responding to my letters. I'll see if I can come up with a full explanation in time for next months magazine -Philip>>

TURNING BLUE WITH IMPATIENCE

Dear Philip, I'm almost holding my breath in anticipation of more news about former commercial CPC software being available as P.D.. The software producers that 'left town after the gold rush' and are not really on our CPC 'round table' any more are a P.D. grey area issue we should address sooner rather than too late....

Despite the British Library idea, I would like to think of WACCI as being here to stay. Is it the way it puts publishing into 'conference mode' that is so special?. Or is it because it is so 'small'?. Perhaps the 'NET will make the effort you and the others put into it seem pointless but I like the feeling of 'Xmas' I get every time my WACCI arrives. (And I don't have a telephone line anyway !)

As I read about the WIZZARD 8-bit port in WACCI 101, the big question I had in my mind was; Does it make graphics-mode printouts the same shape as the image on the screen?. but you didn't answer it for me in that review.

I've been using Power-Page 128 v1.0 for a while. I've mastered it well enough to move around it's functions quickly and get stuff onto the page more or less as I want it. The TEXT LAYOUT mode is very troublesome though. Some times the cursor in the bottom line 'buffer box' vanishes permanently. I have to ESC and RUN to get out of this jam. That resets all the controls to default settings and causes a lot of grief.

An even more serious problem occurs when I'm importing text from an ASCII file. The line buffer contents are lost after resetting the left/right margins and moving the pointer back to the top of the page. This usually means that the text at the top of the next column doesn't start exactly from where the last column finished. This is a quite unreasonable problem and I need to know how to stop it happening before I can take Power-Page seriously.

It would be helpful too if there was a way of putting a break in an open ASCII file at the end of a page so that I could start a new page from the next word in the file. - I don't know how to make an ASCII file exactly the right number of words to fit a page. How do I do that?.

Perhaps you would be a friend and send me a copy of your later version of Power-Page to try.

I've got two UTOPIA ROMs, version 2.3 and version 2.5 . I can't see anything obviously different about them. Can you (or anyone) tell me what difference there is between these two ROMs.

I have a ROMDOS ROM which signs-on but won't respond at all in any slot. Does it need a disc full of complimentary software to make it function?, or is it just dead inside?, I wonder.

Also a 256K SILICON DISK which is really meant for a 664 or a 464 so it doesn't fit my 6128 unless I jack it up on a couple of books. As that doesn't suite my normal set-up I've only experimented with it, but it seems quite useful if I could get it into proper service. Anyone fancy a swap for a 6128 version?.

Now for the reason why I'm writing to you (the rest is really just fishing in the WACCI ether). After fretting about whether to try doing it myself or not, I've just fitted an AB-BA switch to the 6128. It seems so simple now that I've done it and got my head around the matter. However, I've looked through all my WACCI's and can't see a mention of the fact that the AB-BA switch article on page 29, WACCI No 91, (July 95) is wrong. So, I think I should mention it myself.

If you follow all the instructions 'to the letter' you'll get a switch which allows the A & B drives to work normally in the original way while in one position but when you switch it to the other position it isolates the two disc drives and connects Arny's DSO to his DS1 !.

As I'd already done the soldering and cutting before I discovered this, I decided to stick with the colours I'd used, with their connections to Arny's various delicate parts, and do the mod' to the connections at the switch. This meant swapping over the BROWN and the BLUE wires while leaving

the link wire in the same position. The important points being that the two MIDDLE positions at the switch have to be connected to the two LEG positions (DS0 and DS1) on the 'CHIP', and the two ENDS of the switch have to be connected to the DRIVES-SIDE of the CUTS in the original routs, with the two little link wires criss-crossing the switch ends to do the inverting.

In the article mentioned, both the diagram and the review text have errors in them. The article on page 14 issue 89 seems to be correct to the best of my knowledge but as it seemed a bit too technical when I started the project I decided to go for the simpler looking article and followed it 'to the letter'. Hm!

Best wishes, lots of letters, facts and unconditional sanity to all at WACCI.

Norman Davies
Tros Y Bryn
Powys

<<Hi Norman. First of all, the ABBA switch. I've used one version several times (Issue 89, page 14) and it has always worked for me. There is a slight error in the text, which was corrected the next month. Thanks for the corrections to the other version of the switch.

A swap of a 464/664 Silly Disc, for a 6128 version. I don't see why not, since the only difference with the 256k Version is the box. Lets hope someone grabs the offer.

ROMDOS doesn't need any support software, it works on its own, but it does need to be in a slot below the AMSDOS ROM. The best place is SLOT 6. If you already have it there and it still isn't working, then I suspect that there may be a rather major problem with the ROM itself. There is a technical term for this but I don't think I'm allowed to use it on the pages of WACCI.

The differences between the two UTOPIA roms. I didn't even know that there were different versions of the Utopia ROM, so I have no idea about them what so ever.

There's a PowerPage Tutorial coming up very soon (in fact there's a Special WACCI on DTP, Graphics and Artwork coming up very soon), which could well answer your questions on that score.

Nope, the 8-bit port won't stretch the graphics on the paper, that's down to the printer dump routine itself. Try using different ones until you find one that gives you a good copy of what you're looking at. I wrote my own to do it correctly, but then I would, wouldn't I?

WACCI is in no danger of closing, I assure you. I was just letting everyone know about the idea, though the response has not been quite as good as I expected it to be. Oh well, that's life I suppose.

I'm going finally to clarify the PD on the Internet next month so everyone will know the score -Philip>>

CURSURING THE JOYSTICK PORT

Dear Philip, firstly, congratulations and thanks to all those who keep WACCI going and in particular to all those who contributed in such entertaining and informative ways to Issue 100. It always makes interesting reading and the variety of articles seems to be increasing.

I sent a reply to a query a while back which I haven't yet seen. It may have been one of those you mentioned you had lost in the June issue. So here is the relevant part of it together with answers to a couple of other queries that have cropped up.

In response to the questions about mice, the middle button on the AMX mouse is there for the Stop Press 'move' command; as far as I am aware, no other CPC program uses such a command. Advanced Art Studio requires only one button while DR Draw requires two. These two drawing programs, the various Desktop Publishing programs and the Desktop front ends such as DES are the only programs intended to use mice. However, since most mice use the joystick port which can be programmed to respond in various ways, it is possible to get a mouse to move the cursor around Protext and the buttons to, say, mark the start and end of a block.

Re speeding up STOP PRESS printing, apart from getting X-press, you can try an inkjet printer in draft mode. As STOP PRESS gets its high quality output by overprinting, anything BUT draft mode with an inkjet leaves the paper sodden. A cheaper approach is to use a new ribbon in standard mode and then photocopy the page on a darkish

setting which will often give a similar result to STOP PRESS in NLQ.

Stephen Potts' idea about using a PCW hard disc with a CPC isn't as simple as he may think because (a) the expansion ports are different and (b) the hardware is different; the great thing about CP/M was that it offered an identical interface to software but each manufacturer was free to fix the hardware side as they chose. As the CPC and PCW hardware is different, fitting a PCW hard disk is unlikely to be a trivial exercise - but I'd love to be proved wrong!

Ron Hobday's problem - getting the French a-grave instead of @ - probably relates to the 8-bit printer port as both the a-grave and the pound sign are found between ASCII 128 and 255. With a 7 bit port, there is no conflict as the a-grave is only available in LANGUAGE 1 and the pound sign in LANGUAGE 3 when they replace @ and the # sign respectively. Since so many pieces of 8-bit software and hardware use a different arrangement of ASCII 128-255, the solution probably lies in Protext - or reverting to 7-bit printing in LANGUAGE 3 whenever he needs both @ and the pound sign. <<I think you mean that Ron should look at the SETPRINT option within Protext -Philip>>

Finally, I enclose a couple more articles which I have been getting together on and off to add to your dwindling stock. I hadn't rushed to finish them because of the impression in previous issues that there was a stock of articles to fall back on.

Yours sincerely
John R. Hudson

<<Hi John. Yup, it's quite possible to use a mouse within Protext on a CPC, but I'd have to ask why you'd want to, the keys are quite fast enough, if not faster than the mouse.

You'll have to redefine the keys so that the Joystick inputs mimic the cursor cluster. Alright, I'll be nice to you and work it. Where did I put my manuals this time?

Run the little program which is on the top of the next page (Inside a pretty box) before you enter Protext using 'P and it should do the trick (I haven't got a mouse that works at the moment so I can't test it but the theory is fine).

JOYSTICK MIMICS THE CURSOR KEYS

10 KEY DEF 72,1,240,244,248
20 KEY DEF 73,1,241,245,249
30 KEY DEF 74,1,242,246,250
40 KEY DEF 75,1,243,247,251
50 KEY DEF 76,1,233,233,233
60 KEY DEF 77,1,234,234,234
70 KEY DEF 78,1,238,238,238

That should do it. 72-75 are the directions and 76-78 are the three buttons (but I don't know in which order they are). As set, they should put a block marker, copy a block and move a block (I hope). If they do work, can someone let me know because, as I said, I don't have a working AMX Mouse that I can test it on (which is a subtle hint to anyone who has one that they'd want to give away to WACCI).

A Hard-Drive on the CPC? I know it's possible, because I've seen it done, but I have the same suspicion as you have about the PCW Version. However, like you, I'd love to be proved wrong on that score.

Thanks for the articles. I'm afraid I haven't had time to look at them yet, it's been one of those months, but they should appear in a WACCI near you very soon -Philip>>

ANOTHER PLUG FOR ITGA COMING UP

Dear Paul, I have a CPC6128 and I am trying to obtain a manual or any other information for the 6128. Can you help?

Yours sincerely
Carl Glover
Hasingden

<<Dear Carl. All WACCI Members should be able to shout out my answer in a giant roar. Try, urn, now, what's that company called, the one down in Worthing. Oh yes, that was it, Merline Serve (same phone number as Angela and Arthur Cook appearing on numourous WACCI pages -Philip>>

IT DRIVE YOU BONKERS

Dear Philip, Welcome as Editor of WACCI August Issue, you have done a fine job on writing it and the layout is very good.

I would want help with a New Citizen Printer that I purchased from CPC Components, Faraday Drive, Preston. It is the Projet 11c Model with Black and White Ink Jet, and Colour Ink Jet, and I don't know how to work it properly. So would some Club Member have one of those printers and be familiar with the workings of it? If so I would be grateful for some help with it to know how to get it to work to its full potential. The manual that came with it is very basic, it really does not give very much information about how to work the printer. There is a 3.5" disc in with it with printer drivers on it but I can't load any of the printer drivers off my 3.5" drive because the disc that came with the printer is a different format to my disc drive and it won't load the programs, I get Read Fail. So could one copy the programs onto a double density disc formatted to 178k as Data format and will the programs load into the computer then?

I have Amstrad CPC6128 computer and 3.5" disc drive, with side switch, as second drive for the computer, it is the 1.44Mb one.

Will high density discs work on the 1.44Mb drive and will they do any harm to the disc drive?

Will the high density disc drive work with the Amstrad CPC6128, I think it is the 2.2Mb high density disc drive? Will double density discs work in the high density disc drive?

I hope you will be able to get information on the printer and the disc drives.

Will you tell me also has any alteration to be done to the ribbon cable between the computer and the printer? Have any of the ribbon wires to be cut going to the printer port 36-way?

Yours sincerely
J.P.Jordon
Lanesboro
Ireland

<<Where to start. Ribbon Cable to the Printer. Cut line 14 if you're getting a double line space. That's the only mod you may need, the rest should work fine as is.

I have no idea about the printer you're using, but I hope someone else out there might have. I'd suggest playing with different codes to see

what happens (it can't damage the printer and it can be a lot of fun at the same time).

Almost any 3.5" drive can be used with the CPC, but, at the moment only with 720K discs (That's double density to you and me). It is possible to read 1.44 Meg discs on the CPC (I love it when I drop a bombshell like that, the Techno-Rats out there are now going loopy wondering how I've managed it), but it isn't easy to do.

You can do no damage to the Drive, or the CPC, regardless of what disc you put in the drive. You may get a lot of read-fails, but you can do no damage. I'll get an article set up for next month, or maybe the month after, fully to clarify the Drive situation as it stands at the moment -Philip>>

ALL THE WAY FROM SPAIN

Dear WACCI, about your Discology review from your last WACCI, it's a very good article but I must tell you that the only version that is compatible with all CPC and CPC Pluses is v6.0+ and it's the last version of Discology. The rest of versions including the version 6.0 are not compatible with the CPC Pluses, for example you can't copy files.

Reading your past WACCI issue 42, I read that exists a program called WINDOWS OF MIRCOSOFT. Can you tell me about this program, how can I get it or buy it because it seems a good program.

Can you tell me how many Spanish readers you have?

Thank you very much for all

Yours sincerely
Rafael Delgado Peiro
Madrid Spain

<<Good day to you Rafael. I have a feeling that there was another version of Discology with a high number, but I can't recall where I saw it (I may even have it here but I don't have as much time as I used to for playing around with software). Thanks for your comments about the PLUS machine compatability with earlier version.

The MICROSOFT WINDOWS thing again. Well, Paul Dwerryhouse is going to be chuckling now, since he's the man to blame for this story, in fact, I might suggest you examine the cover a little more closely (Look at the name MICROSOFT for instance) -Philip>>

PROJECT MILLENNIUM

BRIAN WATSON REVEALS ALL

Suppose you could set your own requirements for a computer? What would you expect? What would you request? Next year I am intending to launch a new computer. Now stop laughing and get that heap of scorn off my front lawn. I am serious. It seems to me there is a great big hole in the computer market and I intend to fill it with a successful new computer. The reason that this is not all going on behind locked doors is that I don't think anyone else would be daft/inspired enough to do it.

THE PCW 16 AND BEYOND

How this all came about was as a result of being involved in the pre-launch testing of Amstrad's new PCW16. It is a very good computer for its target market, and I am sure will sell very well to new computer users. Amstrad have proved themselves to be very good at this end of the market and the '16 is the latest in a long line which includes both the CPC/CPC+ and PCW/PCW/ PCW+ series. As far as the company is concerned, this will probably be the end of that line. The consumer electronics side of the company is being wound down and, if things had gone to plan, would have been sold off to Psion in July. The chairman is reported to be disenchanted, especially with the bunch of 'suits' who now have his creativity bound and restrained by boardroom accountability and the short-termism of the stockmarket.

But back in the real world there will still be a beginners' market; a 'straight out of the box and switch on' market; an "I don't care what you call it, I just want something I can actually USE" market. To sum it up - an enormous number of people want an affordable desktop machine which is EASY. The PCW16 seems to have started out to fill this brief.

THE COLOUR OF COMPUTING

There are colour-coded buttons along the top of the keyboard to launch the six basic applications (word processor, spreadsheet, address book, diary/alarm, calculator, and file manager) from the front-end screen

with a touch. Provision is built-in for third party software, as is the ability to read PCW/PCW files and a compatibility with PC-format (720 or 1.44) discs. LocoScript Software (formerly Locomotive) were asked to do the software design but said they couldn't do it in the time required. Ironic when it is now over eight months late <<*This is the 20th century, what else do you expect, functionable technology -Philip*>>. In fact, Creative Technology took on the software design task but now (August '96) it is a case of 'all hands on board to finish it' at Amstrad.

Along the way, and I'm not sure what was in the FIRST specification, some pretty weird and disadvantageous features were incorporated. A graphics, rather than text, basis for the screen display was chosen. This made the operating system, which clocked the Z80 chip at four times the speed of an old PCW and SHOULD have had it nipping along like a rocket, slow to snail-on-valium pace. I wonder who said, "but PCs use a graphics-based system" and I wonder who he is working for now.

AMSTRAD 'TYPICAL' AMSTRAD

Someone else came up with the idea of having the key programs, templates files, and work-in-hand blown onto a 'flash-ram' block of memory; a fine idea in principle, but a real pain when that memory requires a periodic time-consuming 'flush and optimise' and the Z80 cannot multi-task while it does it. "Put the kettle on, Mother, we've time for a cup of tea!"

The manual, like the pop-up on-screen help files, is a masterpiece of brevity. I assume the intention is that the programs are so user-friendly that one doesn't need one. All I can say to that is "HA! HA!" And where is any sort of programming language, such as BASIC? (In preparation, actually, but you didn't hear that from me..)

THE LIGHT DAWNS

Anyway, so much for the '16. It will sell well to a lot of people who don't know any better. But the more I used it, the more I got to thinking what it COULD have been. I started drawing up a 'what if?' specification and at last came to the point where I realised it was possible, using existing technology and at an economic price, to produce a successor to the PCW16. And the result would be a cheap, fast, EASY desktop machine.

That's twice in this piece I've side-stepped the expression 'desktop computer'. I believe most people don't actually WANT a computer - computers come with the intellectual preconception of being something that is cleverer than its owner.

SO WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT?

What people DO want is one cardboard box (containing just a keyboard, a monitor plus perhaps a printer with an output to be proud of) that does some useful things for them, such as be a typewriter and keep their home accounts in a form they can understand. If it has some additional features, such as a basic DTP program to create A4 posters for the school fete, an address book with large pages, a simple diary, a calculator sufficient to do secondary school maths, also perhaps an alarm clock, so much the better. Games capability? Certainly, why not? And a coloured screen is much easier on the eye than a mono or two-colour one.

The discs should be able to be used without hassle on the computer at work, and the ability to use information from other computers' discs would be handy.

E-mail is no longer a techies' preserve; it's a cheap and simple alternative to post, the phone, telex, or a fax. You will note that I say 'alternative'; it's not going to REPLACE anything, anymore than phone or fax replaced postal communication, or couriers come to that. E-mail just adds to the options and it is not without its snags. I now find it as hard to let an e-mail go unanswered as I can let a phone go on ringing without picking it up. But e-mail IS here to stay.

The same cannot be said of the Internet, World Wide Web, and all the other currently-fashionable time-wasters. They will appeal to many, be indispensable for some, but irrelevant to most people in their homes once the novelty wears off. I have a piece on the French Minitel system in the next 8BIT which proves the point.

But I'm rambling on here and the purpose of this piece is to get you involved, because one of my alternative ways to proceed is to approach Amstrad for permission to produce a development of the CPC/PCW series under licence. If that does not prove negotiable, Plan B is to design a new Z80 computer, virtually from the bottom up. This is the way the American market has developed since the early 1980s; small producers putting out niche machines which are targetted at particular groups of users. I'm just designing for two fairly large groups - (1) beginners who are scared of the high cost, high complexity, computers currently sold and who just want something easy that 'does the job' for them, and (2) satisfied 8-bit users who want a more powerful machine to move on to, but which will have some backward compatibility with their old files/programs.

Let me offer you MY hypothetical wish list as it stands now. <<It's in the box-out Brian -Philip>>

BEAUTY IN THE EYES OF THE BEHOLDER

If the computer can be produced economically it could be a world-beater, as welcome in the developing

and newly-independent countries as England and the rest of Europe. America? Probably not, they'd never accept it if they didn't think of it.

The beauty of it is that the technology is all well-known and tested. It works. What is new is pulling it all together in one machine; the components and features which have been PCW-only or CPC-only before working together to complement each other.

The MILLENIUM, as I am calling the new machine is now in development. The name is chosen for several very good reasons, but principally that it's appropriate for the timing and therefore extremely marketable. It also looks good in silver!

I am contacting the people who's permissions or other involvement I need and I hope to have a mocked up demonstration model (say, 12 months before release?) at the WACCI convention this year.

WACCI TO THE RESCUE (SORT OF)

But the point of this article is that I am still very open to your suggestions. The WACCI readership have considerable experience which informs your opinions. In this issue you will find a pre-addressed postcard. I would be very obliged if you would use it to send me your comments; positive, negative, or mixed.

The reason for it being a postcard is to encourage brevity. While the purpose of this survey is to be a form of consultation, at this stage I don't want pages and pages of detailed analysis. What I WOULD like you to send me are only those things you feel strongest about. I may wish to contact some of you to discuss your suggestions further so please include an address or phone number as well as your name. Oh, and I would appreciate it too if you could put a second class stamp on the postcard before you post it to me!

Thank you in anticipation. I will keep you informed on the progress of the MILLENIUM.

<<I'd like to wish Brian all the best with the Millenium Project. If anyone else has said it, I'd have laughed, but Mr Spheroid Demon has a habit of doing just what he says he's going to do -Philip>>

THE MILLENIUM

Basic machine to be the basis of the project: CPC6128+

RAM Memory: 1 meg

Chip: Z80B clocked at 16Mhz

Operating systems: CPC Basic and CP/M+ (with date-stamping) using Parados-type multi-format, auto-detect, capability

Monitor: colour

Bundled software supplied on (removable) rom/cartridge: 'Mini-office'-type package including word processor, DTP, spreadsheet, database, comms, utilities/file manager with templates for letters, labels, home accounts, and address book, screen saver.

Accessories power line: 12v

Other rom provision: 16 slots (expandable)

Disc drive: 3.5" 1.44 industry-standard unit

Second Disc Drive: Port provided

Mouse port: Industry Standard Three Button Mouse

Joystick port: one analogue with splitter provision

Hard drive: Industry-standard hard drive compatibility

Printer port: 8-bit parallel

Printer: Basic inkjet model optional. Discount Voucher scheme?

Modem/expansion port: Industry-standard serial

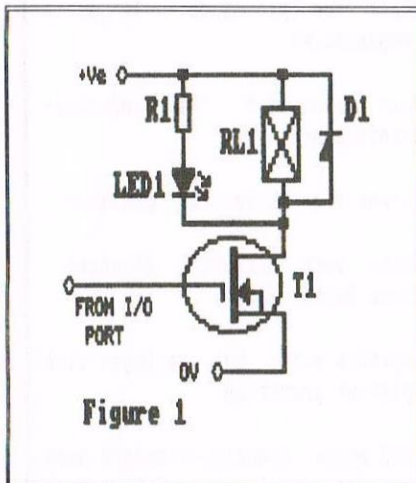
32 BIT I/O-PORT

MARTIN BELA PART TWO

If you've built the I/O Port from last month you'll no-doubt be eager to try it out, so without further ado, dig out that soldering iron again (and be careful which end you hold)...

OUT AND ABOUT

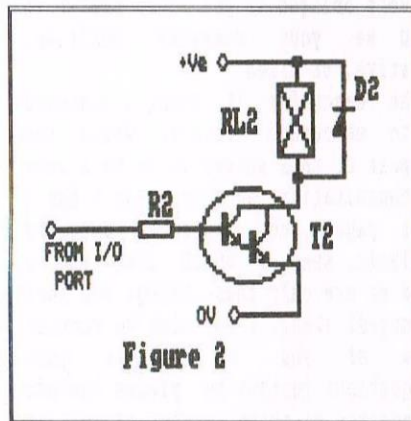
To start with, we'll have a look at a few output circuits. Figure 1 shows a VMOS Power-MOSFET being used to drive a relay and an LED. The MOSFET (T1) will be turned on when the I/O port output goes high (about 5 volts), this in turn will energize the relay coil and cause LED1 to illuminate. You can use any of the I/O port terminals to control T1, just connect it directly to the terminal block that you wish to use as an output (see diagram from last month). The 0V to T1 connects to the 0V power rail, and the +Ve (DC) supply is whatever you decide to use to drive the relay. Diode D1 (1N4001 etc) is needed to absorb the reverse voltage generated by the relay coil as it de-energizes.



relay (and D1) and connect the +Ve terminal to the port's 5V power rail, as the CPC won't object to supplying a few milliamps for the LED. R1 will of course need to be 200 Ohms or so.

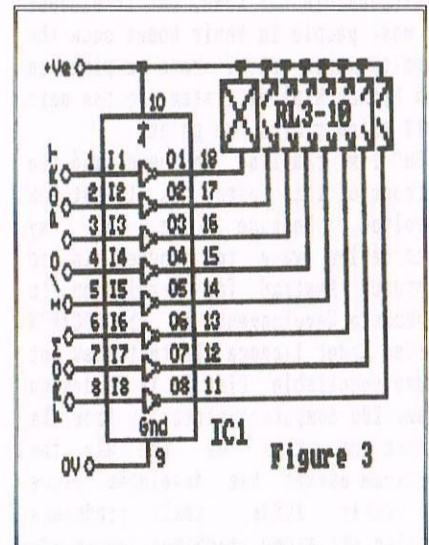
PIO LIMITED

Normal (bipolar) transistors aren't really suitable in place of T1, as the PIO outputs have a very limited current capability; the exception being the ports PB (0 to 7). These outputs can drive Darlington (super-alpha pair) transistors; as shown in Figure 2. The value of R2 will depend upon the transistor used, but would typically be around 2K0 for an MPSA14 or a TIP122.



can be left unconnected. The protection diodes (D1, D2) are already built into the IC, with the cathodes brought out to pin 10. Connect this pin to the supply side of the relay coils, or leave unconnected if you are driving non-inductive loads (lamps, LED's etc.)

A more readily obtainable device, the ULN2003 is almost the same; the only difference being that it has seven Darlington drivers instead of eight.



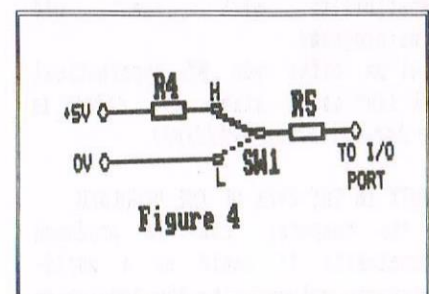
Any port inputs or outputs can instead go directly to other logic IC's without the need for any of these interface circuits; provided that they are also operating from a 5V supply.

PORT AND AFTER EIGHTS

To use all eight pins of a port as outputs would of course need eight circuits like fig.1 or fig.2. Fortunately this has already been done in the form of a chip, the ULN2803 (see Figure 3). IC1 contains eight Darlington transistors, with a 2K7 resistor in series with each input. Each output can drive a 500mA load although you should derated this as more outputs are used (down to about 100mA per output if all outputs are used). Unused IC1 inputs or outputs

THE IN CROWD

Figure 4 shows a simple way to connect a switch to a port input.



Resistor R5 (1K0) is there to protect the PIO just in case you program that pin as an output.

The switch should preferably be a break-before-make type, but if you do happen to use a make-before-break type then resistor R4 (1K0) will prevent you from shorting-out the power rails.

To experiment with then, I would suggest you use the input circuit of fig.4 and the output circuit of fig.1 (without the relay) as these can both be conveniently powered from the I/O port power rails.

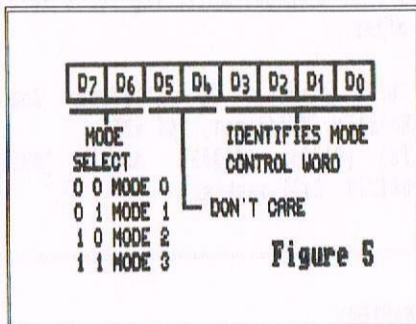
MODUS OPERANDI

Each port has a Control Register, the contents of which determine how the port operates. A port can operate in one of four modes; Input, Output, Bidirectional, or Bit Control. We will be using the Bit Control mode (Mode 3) being the only mode which allows us to set-up each I/O line individually as an input or output. So, the first thing to do is to select a port and tell it to operate in Mode 3.

PB OR NOT PB

Each PIO chip (IC3 & IC4) has two ports, called PA and PB. PORT 0 is therefore port PA of IC3. The addresses required were listed last month, so we can see from the list that we need to select address &FAEC for the control register of port PA of IC3, which is the control register for our PORT 0.

So, we now know which address we want, but what data do we send to it? Figure 5 shows the data that needs to be sent to select the different Modes.



D0 to D3 need to be set to 1, this tells the IC that you are setting the Mode. D4 and D5 can be set to 0 or 1, it doesn't matter which. D6 and D7 select the Mode to be used. In our case we want Mode 3, so these two bits need to be set to 1. If we set D4 and D5 to 1, then this gives us a nice

easy number to remember:

11111111

This is of course in binary, so on the CPC we should type it as &X11111111 (&X denotes a binary number). This can be written in hexadecimal as &FF or in denary (decimal) as 255.

If you want to use the CPC to convert from binary to decimal then you can use PRINT &X11111111

This will display the decimal number 255. If you want to convert the other way around, from decimal to binary, then use PRINT BIN\$(255,8)

This will convert 255 into the binary equivalent, displayed as an eight bit number; ie. 11111111

From now on I shall show all binary numbers with the &X prefix.

To access an address, we need to use the OUT command. To send 255 to I/O address &FAEC we can use this command:-

OUT &FAEC,255

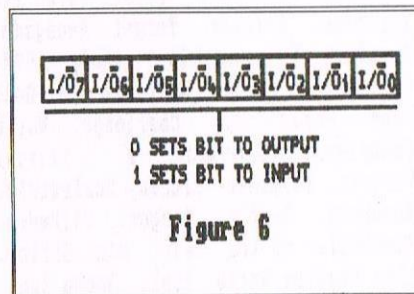
If you prefer not to convert to decimal, then you can use:-

OUT &FAEC,&X11111111

IN, OUT, AND SHAKE IT ALL ABOUT

Once you've sent the Mode Control Word (which we've just done) the PIO will expect us to send something called the I/O Register Control Word. This is the word which tells the port which lines to set to inputs and outputs, and must be sent next.

Figure 6 shows how the word represents the individual I/O lines of a port. In our case, we need to set port PA of IC3, so, figure 6 represents PA7 to PA0 (in other words, our PORT 0).



Let's have a go at setting bits 6 and 7 as outputs, and bits 0 to 5 as inputs (this will mean that the terminals T00 to T05 will be inputs, and T06 and T07 will be outputs).

Bits 6 and 7 need to be set to 1 (for inputs) and the rest to 0 (for outputs) to give:-

&X00111111

In decimal this is 63, so we now need to send 63 to address &FAEC like so:-

OUT &FAEC,63

Or, if you prefer, in binary:-

OUT &FAEC,&X00111111

Up to now then, we've managed to set PORT 0 to operate in Mode 3, with bits 6 and 7 (T06 & T07) as outputs, and bits 0 to 5 (T00 to T05) as inputs.

As another example, suppose we wanted to program PORT 3 as follows:

Inputs - T30, T31, T32, T35, T37

Outputs - T33, T34, T36

Again, from last month's WACCI we can see that PORT 3 is port PB of IC3, and it's Control Register is accessed from I/O address &FAFE.

First of all then, set the Control Register to operate in Mode 3:-

OUT &FAFE,&X11111111 (see fig.5)

Then send the I/O Register Control Word, remembering that the inputs will be bits 0,1,2,5,7 and the outputs will be bits 3,4, and 6:-

OUT &FAFE,&X10100111

Right then, that's the hard work over; the easy bit is to get data in and out of the ports.

As we've got the addresses for PORT 3 fresh in our minds (slapped wrists for anyone who's forgotten!) we'll attempt to set bits 3 and 4 low (logic zero) and bit 6 high (logic 1).

Looking at last month's address list again, we can see that the required address is &FAFA (because we want to send data out of port PB of IC4).

The data to be sent is:-

&Xx1x00xxx

Where x can be either 0 or 1, it doesn't matter. We have already told the PIO chip that bits 0,1,2,5, and 7 are inputs, so any OUTPUT data sent to these bits will be ignored. Replacing the x's with zeroes then, gives us:-

&X01000000

To set output bit 6 high then, we need to use:-

OUT &FAFA,&X01000000

To set it low again, just replace the 1 with 0, like so:-

OUT &FAFA,&X00000000

Let's set output bits 3 & 6 high with:

OUT &FAFA,&X01001000

Now, suppose we want to set bit 6 low but we want to leave bits 3 and 4 unchanged; the command would be:-

OUT &FAFA,&X00001000

This will set bit 6 low, bit 4 low, and bit 3 high, resulting in a change only in bit 6.

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SOFTWARE - DISCS.

CP/M 2.2. CP/M Plus (3 Original copies). 2 In 1 PC File Transfer. Nirvana. CP/M Protext (with spell checker & mail merge). Plan-It. Tasword. Rambase 2. PD Planner. Hisoft Devpac. Graphical Adventure Creator. Alternative Firmware Guide disc. Multiface Insider. 3D Construction Kit. RSX Lib. OCP Advanced Art Studio. Powerpage 64. Powerpage 128. Pagemaker Deluxe. Microdesign Plus. Microdesign Plus headline fonts (3 discs). Graph Master. Various PD utilities (AMSDOS and CP/M) Many of my own programs.

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GAMES - DISCS

Double Dragon 3 / Rodland. Virtual Worlds comp. Hydra. Lemmings. Prehistorik 2 Super Couldron. Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles. Amstrad Compilation Disc. Football Director 2.

GAMES - TAPES

Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles. Passing Shot. Hydra. G-Loc 360. Afterburner. The Games - Winter Edition. Italia 90. Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer. Blasteroids. Kick Off. Gremlin Chart Attack comp. The Ultimate Collection comp. The Dizzy Collection. The Tengen Trilogy comp. Joystick Thunder comp. 4 Soccer Simulators comp. Jack Nicklaus Golf. Robocop. Home Entertainment Centre comp. Dark Side. Supreme Challenge comp. Gazza 2. Pipemania. Nigel Mansell's World Championship. Hero Quest + data tape. Addams Family. WWF Wrestlemania. Smash TV. Hudson Hawk. Total Recall. Chase HQ. Extreme. Turrican. Thunder Jaws. Super Space Invaders. Gauntlet 3. Final Fight. Snowstrike. Robozone. Cisco Heat. Back to the Future 3. Metrocross. Chart Busters comp. Death Wish 3 Football Manager. Football Manager 2. Football Manager 3. Football Manager World Cup Edition. Arctic Fox. Sai Combat. Kick Off 2. Icon John. Microprose Soccer. Terror of the Deep. Swkeek. Sailing. Strike Force Cobra. Star Wars. Lazer Tag. Monty Pythons Flying Circus. Hostages. Tin Tin. Mystical. Weltris. Paperboy. F16 Combat Pilot. Turbo the Tortoise. Driller. Target Renegade. Turrican 2. Gunship. Italy 1990. California Games. Multimax 3 Golf comp. World Cup Challenge. World Champions. European 2. Trivial Pursuit. Scrabble. Cluedo. Scalextric. Monopoly. Double Dragon. Silkworm. Footballer of the Year. Mini Office. Alex Higgins World Pool. Speed Zone. Ninja Scooter Simulator. Desert Fox. TT Racing Simulator. Bump Set Spike. Alien 8. Hacker. American Turbo King. Beau Jolly comp. American Turbo King. F16 Fighting Falcon. Spy v Spy. Rugby Boss. Software House. Fiendish Freddy. CPC 464 Software pack (12 tapes).

All Amstrad Action covertapes to issue 102.

BOOKS

Soft 157 BASIC Specification. Soft 158 Firmware guide. Alternative Firmware guide. Computer Graphics. Fantasy Games. Creepy Computer Games. Computer Fun. Making music on the Amstrad CPC. Master machine code on the Amstrad CPC. Amstrad advanced programming techniques. Sensational games for the Amstrad CPC. Adventure games for the Amstrad CPC. Brainteasers for the Amstrad. Programming the Z80. Amstrad Action 4-102. Amstrad Computer User Mar 91-May 92. CPC Attack 1-6.

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<<I hate these blank lines -Philip>>

BRUNWORD REVISITED

**YOUR GUIDE:
RAY NEAL**

Here for your delectation are a few words about letterheads and other good things that can be yours at the touch of a button ('BW) or three. You can, as I mentioned last time, use graphics along with text at the same time of printing. I have printed my initials in a large shadow font (x6), with my name and address in a large font at the side, followed by my telephone number in normal size italics underneath, all finished with a full line in IBM box mode.

THERE ART NO PROBLEMS

First of all you need an art program to produce the graphics on. I use Stop Press to enlarge the letters that I need and after each move up in size I use the edit mode to smooth off the edges, then save it as a screen file with the Stop Press ext: .PMS. It is then RENamed with an .SCR ext: and loaded into the Advanced Art Studio. You then have to clear all unnecessary bits from the screen, because Stop Press saves all the menu board with the screen, and resave as an Art Studio File with the ext: .SCR. This can then be imported into Brunword and you have the option of saving it with the extension .C which means it has been saved as a compressed file, much smaller than a normal 17k screen file, for use only with Brunword. You can if you wish, leave it as a normal screen and still use it in Brunword. This can then be placed and printed out, say, at the left hand side of the page. (It can be positioned wherever you wish with the Margin command). To get your name and address alongside you will have to reverse the printer back up the page until the text prints in the position that you require, by using the reverse command. I believe that all 24-pin printers and most modern 9-pin printers, have the ability to reverse. You can then print a continuous line across the page to link up with the bottom of your initials. The reverse command is fully explained in the manual, and if your printer does not have a reverse command there is an option to stop the back to the start. The program will then move down the page to the correct position to print. I should have

mentioned this before but the Elite version of Brunword will only work with printers that are Epson compatible, that is printers that accept standard Epson codes. There are 6 fonts programmed into the ROM (which means no extra loading from disc AND no extra programs to buy). Two of these are supplied in 3 different sizes, and each one can be set from single width to 9 times width in steps of one and the height can be set to single, double or anything up to 8 times height. This effectively gives you 10 proportional fonts. I have an Epson LQ-100 24-pin printer which has 5 fonts plus draft and draft condensed. Two of these, Roman and Sans Serif, are scalable in points of 1 up to 32. So you can see that the combinations are almost infinite.

GET THIS CHAPS

Now, I have many times loaded another file into a word processor, only to find that it has overwritten the existing file before I had saved it. Fear no more! If I do this with Brunword it loads the new file into the programs memory, and you can then either delete the old file in the work area and then (GET) the new file from the program memory, or you can WEAVE (merge) the new file wherever you require it in your text.

A few words now about the System 2 printer control. This used in conjunction with the Pre-print codes of Z-Print, (which allows you to send up to nine printer codes before printing starts), can give you an enormous amount of printing conditions. Font selection, justification, micro justification, proportional and non-

proportional fonts for 9- and 24-pin printers are just a few. In proportional printing it will even fill the printed lines according to the character size, which means that lines with a lot of narrow letters such as i or l will contain more words than lines with wider letters such as w and m. All in all there are far too many sequences to explain here.

WHY SPOOL A GOOD DAY?

There is also a facility to print group files straight from a disc. All that needs to be done is to put three ampersands (&) at the top of the screen and list the files that you want to print underneath. It doesn't matter if they are on different discs as they can be changed whilst printing is taking place. If you were writing a book or a long article which runs over a number of pages, you could arrange the pages in odd numbers 1,3,5 etc. in one or more files and the even pages 2,4,6 etc in other files. Then all that needs doing is to load the paper and start printing. All the odd pages will be printed first, then if you turn the sheets over and restart, all the even numbered pages will be printed on the opposite sides. All this can be accomplished with only one disc load, if all the files are on the same disc.

AND THE FORMAT'S RIGHT TOO

There is also a format command. The program will format discs, either 3" or 3.5", in whichever drive has a disc in. 3" are formatted at 178k of course and the three and a half inch at D2-712k. This can be done even while you have text in the word processor and data in the database, without losing either. So when you write an article to WACCI and cannot find a formatted disc, you can format one and return to your article and save it. No more saving text, reset computer, load formatter, format disc, load word processor, reload text and save text.

UNDERSTANDING THE CPC PART 2

BY
JOHN
HUDSON

Welcome to the second instalment of Understanding Your CPC. This issue looks at different types of storage along with their pros and cons. Personally I think an air-tight container is best for those home-made chocolate biscuits.

WELCOME BACK

The CPC computers can use four types of storage - RAM, ROM, tape and disc. RAM is volatile; it can change its contents very quickly and its contents are lost when the machine is switched off. ROM holds its contents but they cannot be changed; tape and disc hold their contents which can be changed, quite quickly in the case of disc.

WHAM BAM THANK YOU RAM

The Z80 chip which is at the heart of the CPC computers is as much a 16 bit chip as the 8088 which was in the first IBM PC; it is able to address 2¹⁶ locations (or 64K of RAM) and the RAM is split into four 16K blocks.

When the machine is in AMSDOS mode, the top and bottom blocks operate differently from the middle two. If the computer saves some information to a location in the middle two blocks and then asks for it again, it will get the information it saved. If it saves some information to the top or bottom block, it may or may not get it back when it asks for it. If a ROM is switched on in the relevant block, it will get the information from the ROM, not from RAM. To get the information it saved in RAM, it has to switch off the ROM temporarily.

By switching ROMs in and out - up to 252 of them - programmers can in theory have access to over 4 Megabytes of storage even though the Z80 cannot recognise more than 65,536 addresses (or 64K).

The 6128 machines offer an alternative and, in the case of AMSDOS, additional approach - bank-switching. The extra 64K is also split into four banks and the most common use of the banks is to switch one of the four extra banks with one of the

middle two banks. This is so that, once again, the Z80 can use the same address for data in five different banks which are switched in and out depending on which one is wanted. This is handled by BANKMAN.

BANK SWITCHING

CP/M Plus had already been developed to use bank switching in a slightly different way; instead of switching data in and out, CP/M Plus switches almost the whole of itself in and out leaving 61K in total for programs and data.

Finally, RAM can be used - as it has from the start on the PCW - to store programs and data in a manner similar to a disc drive. The KDS Silicon Disc offers this facility; the 64K Memory Expansions are intended to extend a 64K machine to 128K; the larger memory expansions enable larger silicon discs to be used. Like all RAM, their contents are lost if power is lost.

ROM

The main function of ROM on the CPC machines is to extend the capacity of the machines. With programs in ROM you can still use the memory in the block under them for saving information; with the same program in RAM, you would lose that memory. But, for most people, the joy of having ROMs is the speed of the response since the information is always there ready to be read.

ROMs have one slight disadvantage; they all take up a few bytes of precious RAM to announce themselves. Some programs - Mini-Office being the main one - won't run unless they can have all the RAM they think they should have. In addition, some ROM programmers don't write well-behaved code, that is, code which will

relocate itself lower in memory if there in another program already occupying the space it thinks it needs.

Several ROM programs have a 'ROMON' command which can restrict the number of ROMs you allow to be on; 'ROMON,7' is usually enough to turn everything off except BASIC and the disc ROM.

TAPE

Tape storage is available on all machines except the 6128+ though you need to enter 'TAPE' before using it on a 664 or 6128. Tape storage is cheap and easy to use; you simply put the tape in and 'RUN' the tape which loads the program and data. With any program which loads itself and its data into the machine in one go and saves its data in one go, tape is almost the perfect medium.

Problems arise for tape when the program is too big to fit easily into the available RAM or the tape has to make use of repeated loading of more program or data. Another problem is if the amount of data you want to handle exceeds the 30K or so available on the 64K machines or the 90K or so available on the 128K machines. In these cases, disc is preferable if not essential.

DISC

The medium on which information is stored on disc is the same as tape except it comes in circular shapes which are encased in cardboard or plastic covers. All discs nowadays can take information on both sides of the disc (this is not the same as turning over a tape because the information on a tape is recorded offset from the centre of the tape so that, when the tape is turned over, the recording is made on a different part of the same side of the tape).

The Anstrad disc drives supplied for the CPC range all have a single recording/playback head and so the

disc has to be turned over in order to use the reverse of the disc. All 3.5" drives come with twin heads, one on each side, and the disc cannot be turned over. So some suppliers provide a side switch which directs the disc drive to use the top or bottom head to read from or write to the disc. This replaces the turning over which is needed in the Amstrad drives. It is ABSOLUTELY VITAL that you never change the position of this switch while the disc drive motor is running.

The main advantage of disc is cost per amount stored; in addition, disc has the advantage of RAM or ROM in that you can go to a relatively precise area of storage for what you want - not down to a single byte as in RAM or ROM but down to a particular 512 bytes in the case of the CPC. This is not really possible with tape.

KEEP THE DISC IN THE DRIVE

Though, unlike ROM, everything on disc has to occupy space in RAM at some time to be useful, both games and business programmers had developed the practice of using overlays long before the CPC came along. In a game or a serious program like Supercalc, the program starts by loading only the core functions; when the user asks for a location or a level in the game or a function in Supercalc which has not been loaded so far, the program reads this from the disc, replacing a location, level or function that was

there before. If the user wants to go back to the previous location or level or wants to use the function that has been overwritten, it is read from the disc once again.

Some serious programmers use this technique in reverse for data; if your word-processed document or database becomes too big for the available RAM, parts of it - if not all of it - are saved to disc in a temporary file. If you then try to move suddenly from beginning to end of the file, you may find it takes half a minute as the program saves the beginning to disc and then reads the end from disc. Remember, it has to keep track of where this long file is stored on disc at the same time as it displays it in the way you want it on screen.

The main source of speed on a disc drive is how data is stored. The disc is divided into concentric tracks (or 'cylinders') which are themselves divided into sectors. An Amstrad disc has 40 concentric tracks and 9 sectors per track; each sector holds 512 bytes which means a total of 40 x 9 x 512 bytes (or 180K) can be held on one side of a disc. 2K of this is reserved for a directory which is usually stored in the outside tracks.

ON THE WRITE LINES

When loading a file, the operating system (AMSDOS or CP/M) reads the directory and finds the location of the file; it instructs the head to

move to the correct track and picks up the data as the sector passes under it. When saving a file, the operating system reads the directory for vacant space, moves the head to the position(s) on the disc where it is and writes the file in the space. If there is not enough space or something goes wrong, the operation is aborted. If it is successful, the operating system fills in the details of where the file is in the disc directory, checks for a file of the same name on the disc and changes it's ending to .BAK (if there is a .BAK file of that name already, it marks it as 'deleted'); finally, it gives the correct name to the file it has just saved.

Files are never erased physically from a disc - as some criminals have found to their cost - the space is simply marked as free for use. This saves a lot of time and energy. You can, however, erase everything on a disc by formatting it. Formatting is needed on a disc to lay down the tracks and sectors and to number them so that the disc drive can find its way quickly to the particular sector where a file is stored or where it is going to store a file.

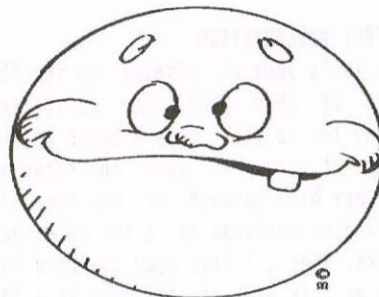
BACK AGAIN NEXT MONTH

In the third and final instalment next month I will look at peripherals including screen details and how different printer cables work.

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PD-EXTRA

WITH
DAVE
STITSON

Last issue Dave told us about CPC Procopy and Maxidos. This month he continues his trek into the wilds of the Bonzo suite, now available as PD from the WACCI library. Amongst others, Bonzo Doo Dah and Diverse are the natives.

EXTRA EXTRA READ ALL ABOUT IT

The first thing that I did was to CAT the disc to find out what is on it. Side A was Bonzo Doo Dah so this is where I decided to start. On it were the programs "READ-ME.BAS" and "OHDEARME.BAS". The Read-Me file gives you information about commercial disc copying and advice about the COPYV25 program for commercial programs.

I have used this one and found it helpful where there is a hold up in the loading screen. This program takes over where the other program would normally crash, overwrites it and completes the transfer.

"OHDEARME.BAS" is just another of those alphabetical listings (1000 programs in all) with the games and the program you must use to complete the transfer.

To access DOO DAH you RUN"DISC. What I like about this program is that each individual program has a separate menu. Also, you are always prompted for a YES/NO before a command is used. It is a good utility to have and I like the BONZO cat screens. The first menu you see is this.

- (1) BIGBONZY
- (2) BONZEDIT
- (3) BONZCOPY
- (4) BIG JOBS

(1) Press number 1 and you get another menu where you can select the Bonzo 203k formatter

(data, system, vendor or IBM), read directory, disc to disc copier and the facility to access drives A or B. Personally I have experienced problems using the 203K format, I have difficulty reading the discs but I don't know why.

- (2) For me the best program is No.2, BONZEDIT. Now this one is not for the fainthearted because it's playing around with the Track/Sector/Directory editor, so if experimenting, make a back up of the disc first prior to using either of the editors. I find the FILE LOCATIONS very useful and there is a good hardcopy printout from it.
- (3) BONZCOPY is basically a multi file copier but a bit slow for my liking.
- (4) BIG JOBS will do a lot of things that the other programs on the disc can do, but with the advantage of big formats on the "B" drive.

DEEPLY DIVERSIFYING

Now let's look at Diverse on the "B" side of this disc. The irritating thing for me with this program is the time it takes to load the screens. You may have guessed by now that all this disc contains is a lot of screen files. They all have good graphics but for me this part of the disc is a "NO NO" <<We'll cut those sectors out for you then- Philip>>.

I am not certain how many screens there are on this disc, as I said, it is irritating waiting for the screens

to change. Not very much to say about this program I am afraid, other than sit down with a cuppa or something stronger and enjoy the good graphic screen files.

DISC 4 - BONZO BLITZ & MS800

If you took the trouble to read my review on Bonzo Super Meddler (and if not, why not?), Bonzo Blitz is the same. It has various programs to transfer tape to disc and each file is self explanatory, with prompts such as "PRESS PLAY AND ANY KEY" to guide you.

With the Blitz programs, like the Meddler, there are good "READ-ME" files that give you some more information on different transfer programs, so I don't think I need to bore you again with a lot of reading.

On the "B" side is a program named MS800. "What is it?" I here you ask. You've all heard of RODOS, ROMDOS and so on. Well for me, MS800 (apart from the now famous ParaDos) is the best large format program made for the CPC. So how do I rate MS800 out of 100? I give it full marks. It was the first large format program I tried, I then tried ROMDOS but very quickly changed back to MS800. All my back up 3.5" discs are in the MS800 format and I never experience problems in transferring the programs back to data or system.

SUMMING UP

I could go on talking about this program forever, in fact I now have it on ROM, it's that good. So I say to those of you who haven't got ParaDos or a Rombox but do have a 3.5" drive, do yourself a favour, send me a cheque made payable to WACCI for £1-00 to receive the program on a brand new disc. If you have not been able to purchase a Rombox but use the 3.5" discs, then this one is a must for you. Need I say more?

WACCIFEST

A CONVENTIONAL IDEA
FROM ITGA

96

Amongst others, Angela Cook attended the WACCI Convention last year and promises (threatens) to attend this year too. We thought she was the ideal person to answer the question, "Why Should I Go To The WACCI Convention".

EARLY MORNING STARTS

Not everybody was able to attend the last year's "do". Those that did will tell you what a good time they had, even with all the hard work and the getting up early in the morning. For months after last year's gathering, Fair Comment was filled with letters singing praises about every aspect. If you want to really know what went on last year, you'll need issue 94 of WACCI for the report, photo's and comments about the convention.

THANKS TO DR. HARDWICK

Last year was really very experimental. A WACCI Convention had never been held before. Jeff Walker, Steve Williams and Uncle Clive Bellaby all had stalls at Computer Fairs in various parts of the country and there were also the numerous gatherings at friends houses, but nothing on the scale of the WACCI Convention before.

Angie Hardwick decided that talking just wasn't enough and she actually had to do something. Angie is also organising this year's convention. "We've learnt a lot from last year." She says. Improvements will be welcome, but don't let that make you think we all met in a stinking hole. The rooms were actually very nice, most people commented too hot and a little dark, but nicely furnished. There were two large rooms connected by an open bar along with various smaller rooms along the hallway.

Last year various people inhabited these rooms and one was for smokers as this was not aloud in the two main halls due to fire risks. This year one of the rooms is going to be a WACCI office that should be manned all day. You'll be able to pay up subs and get PD discs as and when you want them.

WACCI OFFICERS GRILLED

Last year there were a few demonstrations on different CPC related topics. Amongst others, Ian Neill showed people his Ron Blowing Kit and Richard Fairhurst talked to us all about the amount of work he put in to RoutePlanner. These demonstrations seemed to be a success and most of you have asked for some more this year.

So, more demonstrations are being organised this time round. Perhaps the most interesting will be Brian Watsons talk about the various elements of the Protext suite. Knowing Brians humour, there will also be chance for a bit of a giggle too.

There are more demos planned but not yet finalised, I would hate to tell you them now and then for you to be disappointed at the end of this month.

There will also be a question and answer session with the WACCI officers at some point, although this isn't expected to be a 100 per cent serious discussion. I warn you, WACCI Officers are preparing some witty responses to clever questions.

BAKING YOUR CAKE AND EATING IT

Any body who attends can have a piece of the huge 10th Birthday cake that's being made. Judging by the turn out last year, that is going to be a big cake. Will the Editor jump out of it and surprise us all? Beware, it's exactly the kind of thing he would do.

The only real problem last year was the money with which to hire the rooms. An anonymous donor saved the day, our thanks went to Mr. X last year, but they must also do so for this year's event. Without last September's convention WACCI would not have been able to raise the money to finance this years jaunt.

ALL CHANGE

The publicised times for the Convention was 10.00am until 4.00pm for members (opening a little earlier for those people setting up). This has been put back by half an hour for this year. Doors will open at 10.30 and we'll all be kicked out at 4.30 (although I don't think I left until gone 6.00pm last year). These adjusted timings enable people setting up their tables an extra half an hour to do their stuff.

The general consensus last year was that, for some, it was hard work, but still very enjoyable. It was great to meet old friends and make new. It was also great to have so many suppliers in one place. ComSoft and Merline-Serve will definitely be attending this year and the Trading Post are yet to confirm. Many of the items on sale at the convention are much cheaper than normal. This is partly because there will be no carriage charges and secondly, no one wants to carry everything back down the steps and through the stadium to go home with.

MOTHER INVADERS WACCI

My mum has just added "Anybody going will certainly meet Angela, Arthur and Philip." That's three very good reasons not to attend then. Mum has also just added that I was on a high for weeks after the event. Anybody who still needs convincing, call "Mother".

THE IMPORTANT BIT

Tickets for the convention are going quite fast, so please get them as soon as possible. Tickets are available from Paul Dwerryhouse at £2 a head. Cheques should be made payable to "WACCI" please and Pauls address is on the inside back cover.

If you would like to book a meal for the day, then please do so with Angie Hardwick. I am told that last year the meals were very generous and tasty.

PROTRACKER

REVIEWED BY

MARTIN CUSH

Protracker, on PD disc 91, is an Amstrad version of one of the most popular Amiga public domain trackers, and very good it is too. For the uninitiated, a tracker is a program which enables you to compose music on your computer, in the case of your CPC, using the three sound channels which are built into the machine.

MUSICAL MAKE-UP

Each piece of music is made up from patterns which are built up from three tracks, one for each of the three audio channels and are 64 lines long. Why 64 lines? Well there is a reason, the most popular timing for music is called 4/4 time, which in simple terms means there are four beats to each bar of music. The shortest commonly used note is a quarter of a beat. Each line equals a quarter of a beat, with four lines for each full beat, 16 lines for each bar and 64 lines for 4 bars, which is a very convenient number of bars from which to construct pieces of music. For those among you who feel the need to write in other time signatures it is possible to shorten the number of lines by inserting a code into the pattern to tell it to jump to the next pattern. These patterns are strung together to make the final piece of music.

However, there may be many of you out there who are not able to write your own tunes, but would like to

tinker about with someone else's. This is where Protracker comes into its own because it is able, after they have been converted by the program included on the disc, to load many of the thousands of modules which have been produced for the Amiga. There are three included on the disc for you to be going on with, I have converted a few, which I have sent to Philip for potential inclusion on a WACCI PD disc and can provide more if wanted.

THE PROGRAM ITSELF

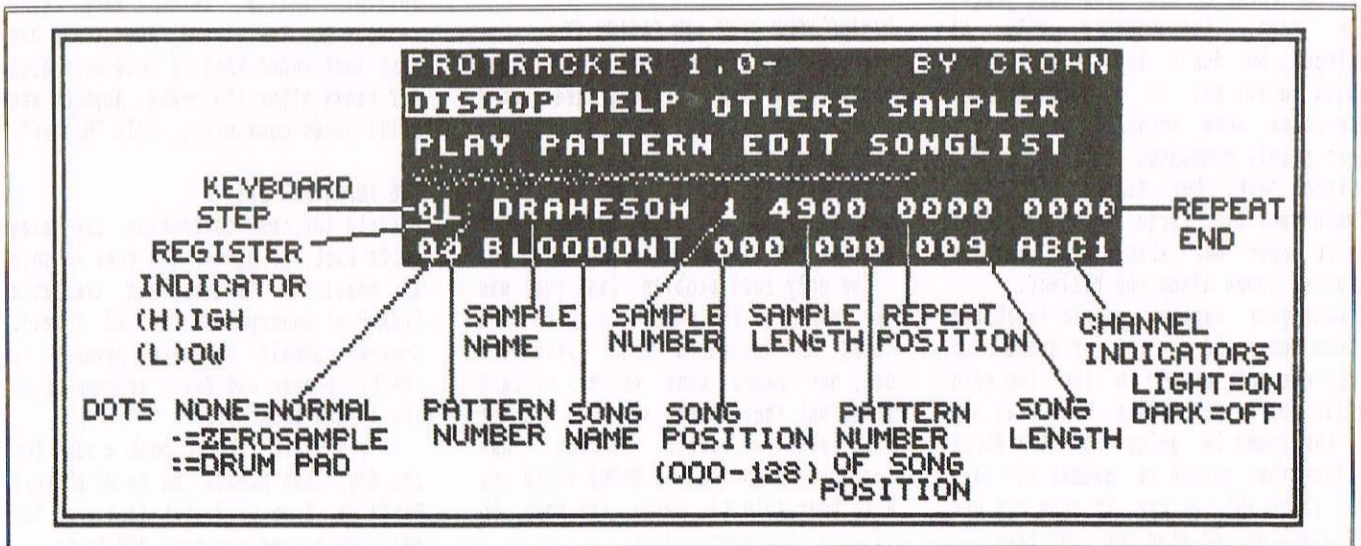
On loading the program you are presented with the main screen, shown in fig.1. Many of the operations are self explanatory, "play" will play the song from the current position, "pattern" will just play the current pattern, "discop" enables you to do all the usual disc operations. Loading, saving, deleting. "Edit" will put you into edit mode, which is where you are able to enter notes into the list and is dealt with in more detail below. "Sample" will take you to the

sample editor, also dealt with in more detail below. "Songlist" is where you decide in which order to play the various patterns. "Others", which leads to another menu of options and "help", which as its name suggests opens a very useful helpfile which details all the options available. If you are running the program from a B drive, remember to go to the discop menu and select drive B before trying to access the help file, otherwise it will only look at the A drive.

EDITING THE MUSICAL MAYHEM

In edit mode, the keyboard is used to enter the notes, with two octaves being available, the higher octave using keys 23567 QWERTYU and the low octave using SDGHJ XCVBNM use caps lock to toggle between the two.

After entering a note the cursor will jump a specified number of steps which is also shown on the status bar, use tab/shift+tab to increase or decrease the amount. The cursor keys perform their usual functions in moving the cursor around, the function keys can also be used to move to specified positions in the track. Writing a song entails entering notes in appropriate positions in each of



the three tracks, load one of the modules and you will see what I mean. Each track can be turned on or off individually. A useful feature of the program is that an individual track or a complete pattern can be stored in a buffer and then pasted onto another pattern so, for example, if you have a rhythm track which is likely to be repeated throughout the song there is no need to enter all the data again when you start a new pattern.

A TOUCH OF NORMALITY

In normal mode pressing a key on the keyboard will enter a note and the samplenum, which will be the current sample indicated by the status bar. To change the sample use ctrl together with a key from the keypad or scroll through with the cursor keys. In samplezero mode, selected using clr, only the note is entered. Once the note has been entered, various effects can be assigned to it, for example arpeggio which is used to simulate chords and sample offset which plays from a chosen position in the sample not from the beginning. Each line is made up as shown below:
 <<Due to layout problems its now at the top of the next column -Philip>>

| | | | |
|----------|------|--------|---------|
| 01 | D-2 | 1 | OAC |
| / | / | \ | \ |
| POSITION | NOTE | SAMPLE | COMMAND |

Once you have entered all your patterns you then go to the songlist and decide in which order to play them, there are 128 positions and patterns can be repeated.

SAMPLE THIS / SAMPLE THAT

The program contains a very powerful sample editor. When a module is loaded or saved, the samples it uses are stored with it. It is not possible to sample sounds directly from the tape deck, the program is designed to use Amiga samples which have been converted using the program which is included. The Amiga uses 8- or 16-bit samples whereas the CPC is usually limited to 4-bit ones, however I consider the converted samples still to be much better than is usually heard on our machines. Once again I have converted a number of samples, both instruments and other sounds which I have sent to Philip for inclusion in the PD library. There are thousands of these samples available

in the Amiga PD scene so either make friends with an Amiga owner or get in touch with me if you want more.

Samples are loaded into the position indicated by the status bar, overwriting the sample currently occupying that position. Therefore if you already have a module loaded and you overwrite one of its samples in this way, it will then play with the sample you have loaded. The sample editor enables you to change a sample in numerous ways, for example, making it repeat, cutting parts out, merging it with another, and making it play backwards.

THE OUTRO BIT

Well, in brief, that's Protracker. I know it might sound quite complicated but it is a very user friendly program, and with its ability to load Amiga modules I would recommend anyone who is slightly interested in music to try it out, I'm sure you'll soon get to grips with it and then perhaps you could include your compositions in the PD library for us all to enjoy!

<<Thanks Martin. I'll send the samples off the John for inclusion in the Library -Philip>>

8BIT

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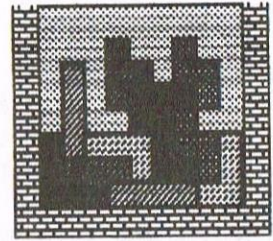
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We also run *King Arthur's Domain*, a disc based PD library containing over 200 discs. For a catalogue, end a disc (3" or 3.5") and an S.S.A.E. to the address above. Merline-Serve is now offering a standard 10% discount to all WACCI members. To get our latest catalogue, simply send an A5 S.S.A.E to the address above, and we'll get one on it's way.

TETRIS

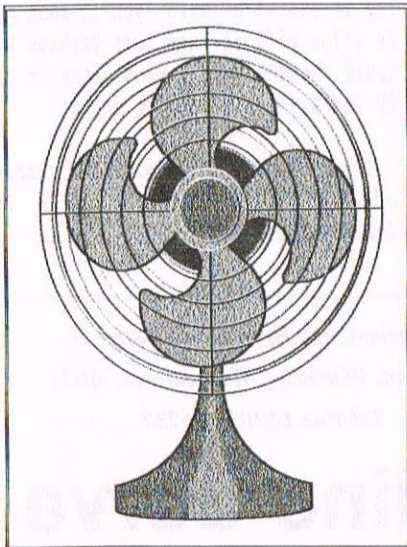
A WISHLIST REVIEW



It's currently 2:28 in the morning. I'm not usually up this late <<I wouldn't believe a word of it- Philip>>, but I have been tinkering with my CPC. I started earlier today listening to the rain pour and sorting through some discs and I have finished much later listening to the Kinks and playing Tetris.

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

I've been playing lots of different Tetris clones too. I now have on one disc, PowerTetris, Drehdriiss, Tetris95 and Tetris. They are all PD and I aim to have the top score on all of them before dawn breaks.



Tetris is a puzzle game that was developed in Russia. The idea of the game is to arrange the seven different shaped bricks that fall consecutively into the playing area until they fit together perfectly. As soon as you have a full horizontal line, that line will disappear and you will gain points or line numbers, dependant on how the game is interpreted.

The name Tetris comes from the prefix Tetra which means four. The seven different mouldings of the shapes that you play with can be made up with four blocks.

I rather like the concept of the game Tetris. I have played it on the Nintendo Gameboy in which it seemed to

become famous with the younger generation. Personally I prefer it on my trusty CPC. You can see the screen better, it's in colour and you don't have to worry about the batteries.

There are a few versions of Tetris that I have seen from commercial software houses, but I never did think much of them. I have concerned myself with programs from the Public Domain area because they are easy to get hold of and you don't have to worry about copying them.

TETRIS - J. CZECHOWSKI

This version was written in 1989 and in a way it shows. For some reason, the look of software goes in waves as fashion has over the years. When you load the program you are presented with a comprehensive set of options, including loading and saving the high score table (always nice to see your name up in lights) and defining your own keys which many of the other games don't allow you to do. You can choose which level of difficulty you start on and from here you go into the game proper. Initially to look at the playing screen is very neat and tidy. The outside details such as the score

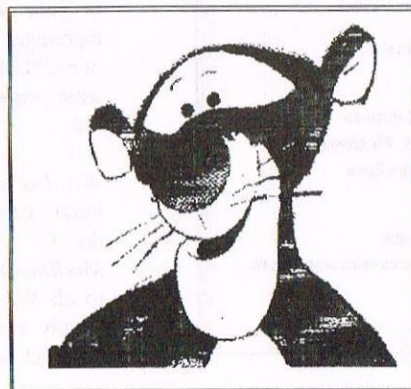


chart of all the different shaped pieces look very professional. You are told your score, the high score, level, lines and there is a "next" box showing the next piece to fall for extra help.

Alas it's when you get into the gameplaying that you are let down. Even the very clear and jolly tune won't keep your spirits up for long. The game is slow and the keys are 'sticky'. It's also annoying that if you push the brick down it does literally that, goes straight down. I personally prefer versions that just float down quickly whilst you are pressing that key.

Also the bricks change colour from the next box to what comes on screen, which can be rather confusing at times. The colours really are too close together in shade and could be a bit flashier.

Overall this isn't a bad version, I have seen worse. You just wait until you see the other ones though, I'm not going back to this version and I doubt you would too. The other bonus with this program is that the author has an almost as unpronounceable name as our editor.

DREHDRISS - SIEGBERT RIECKER

This is a type in from a German CPC, PCW and PC magazine called PC Amstrad International. It is from 1990 which is much more recent than I would have guessed. If you want to get in to the game quickly, the initialising screen can be a hold up, but it is the same with most programs. At first you are presented with a screen saying 'Drehdriiss', in almost a Russian type face with one R and the S back to front and mirrored at the bottom. This really is quite effective. You are asked if you want to load the highscores, which is another feature in its favour. If you are not sure the computer asks if you would like it

to decide. That part is quite comical to watch in itself. <<Only if you have a rather strange sense of humour and you can't make decisions for yourself easily, which is probably why I like it as well -Philip>>

A great advantage with this game is you can have two players side by side, so competing is great. You get different blocks from each other, whereas in other similar programs you usually get the same style blocks. This makes a welcome change from run of the mill games.

There are nine levels to try playing on, but I would start with level one. Once inside the game you are presented with coloured blocks which move relatively smoothly down the screen. You also have a 'next' box on screen as well as your lines, score and level. I would term this game 'friendly' by the way it lets you sometimes move the blocks once it appears to have 'landed'.

I didn't like this game when I first came across it some time ago. In fact I hated it with a vengeance. However with time and use it has grown on me. It still isn't my favourite game, but it's not bad to pass the time with.

POWERTETRIS - ANDREAS STROIZECK

This is a version of Tetris by the Facehugger, the man that created The Ultimate Megademo featuring the little Lemmings that you can let splat from the cliff edge. I have seen quite a few of Andreas' programs all which seem to be easy to use with simple concepts, including DosCopy. PowerTetris allows two players side by side or you can even link up two CPCs, if you have the correct leads, for a four player mode. I have never been able to test this, but perhaps somebody would make up the leads, would that be a good idea? <<I'd publish them as well, I would -Philip>>

As with most or all of Andreas' games, the graphics are very well designed. Many of the European games seem to have similar colourful graphics, and this one is no exception. The writing in the options section is very neat, as is the main game playing area. The bricks don't come down too fast or slow either. You have the standard information on screen such as lines done, score, 'next' box and so on that the other

games have offered. The head to head mode is very exciting, it seems better than on Drehdriss because of the better graphics and smooth scrolling.

Disappointingly, the zippy theme tune that features in the introduction sequence isn't present in the game. Usually, in two player mode, this doesn't matter because you are so busy shouting at each other.

This seems a very comprehensive version of Tetris and I would hesitate to say the best version I have seen. But then there's Tetris95...

TETRIS95 - CHRISTOPHE HASTRIOTTIS

On the initial loading of this program you are presented with a version of the theme tune used in the Gameboy version of the game. This is of Russian theme, to represent the Russian origins of the game. This is very clear and of very good quality. You can then choose to play the game or read the instructions. These instructions are in French, German and English - I'm afraid I can't vouch for the quality of those languages though.

The instructions give you a short introduction to how the game Tetris came about and then goes on to explain the controls and game modes. Tips to playing the game are also given, which are good for novices. It would be wise to read these before entering the game otherwise you might get a bit lost.

Once you have entered the game, the music starts again, in traditional style and rather slow, but then it hots up and you can hear where Christophe has had some fun with the music by bringing it up to date. This does not spoil the quality as some modern versions of music often do.

The main game screen shows you your best score for Mode 1 games and your best lines for Mode 2 scores. Not having read the instructions, when I was first presented with the Mode 1 and Mode 2 games I assumed it would be either Mode 1 or 2 graphics, one being blockier or smoother than the other. As I was soon to find out, Mode 1 games are those in which you must complete 200 lines and your best score goes on the Best Score table. I personally think that 200 lines is a bit steep, but for someone who plays for much longer than me and who was also a lot better than me would probably have very little difficulty

in reaching this target. Mode 2 is when you can play with the settings to stretch your own personal skills. You can select the fall rate of the blocks and how much time you have to complete the game. It is the amount of completed lines you have in this time that goes on to the Best Lines table. The games blocks are extremely well drawn and are similar in style to PowerTetris' pieces. They also have very smooth scrolling. One feature I especially like about this version, is that when you push the blocks down, they only go as long as you are pressing the key. This speeds up the game no end but doesn't induce so many silly mistakes. You can't pause this game, Christophe says that it stops cheating but I think it's annoying when I'm in the middle of a game and I have to answer the phone.

There is a two player mode on this game, but I would be inclined to forget it. The players take turns in competing with each other which is not really much fun when you compare it to Drehdriss or PowerTetris.

AND THE VERDICT IS...

I enjoyed playing all of these games. It has been a fun evening and I anticipate many more hours playing Tetris. It's a game that has a good excuse behind it too - it's somewhat taxing on the brain and sends those little grey cells buzzing.

My personal favourite would have to be either PowerTetris or Tetris95. They both have excellent graphics, are very colourful and easy to use and control. It's a pity that Tetris95 has some annoying little glitches, such as entering the instructions and not being able to leave again. You have to turn the machine off and start all over again. In an ideal world you would be able to mix the best elements of PowerTetris and Tetris95 to come up with something literally fantastic.

WHERE TO GO

I got these programs from King Arthur's Domain but they should be available in the WACCI PD Library too. The only one that I know isn't in there is Tetris95 because I don't think that it has been in this country that long. That's been sent of to John Bowley though and he says that he will announce when it is available.

FAMILY HISTORY 2

REVIEWED BY FRANK NEATHERWAY

Since the genealogical database Family History by Andrew Solomon was reviewed by Ron Izett and me in WACCI 89 in May 1995, Andrew has now produced his Family History suite version 2 and passed it to WACCI to be reviewed. As stated previously it is rather of a specialised nature and reflects the almost fantastic amount of work done by Andrew, not only in the programming but being able to cram it all into a 3" disk under the constraints of the CPC memory. Especially so when I realise that Andrew's magnum opus is the construction of the family tree of our Royal Family.

INTRO

Because this version is an enhancement of vers.1, most of the previous review comments hold true and in case you have not read them I make no apology for using some of them here.

Family History 2 is by its very name a descendant of Family History 1 and being a little younger has more energy than its forebear. I had believed the Family History programs to be so good that little could be done to improve them. I was wrong. Andrew's version two is more powerful and is capable of more than the original and, I am told, has yet more potential that Andrew is still investigating.

FAMILY HISTORY V.2

This version is much bigger than v.1 but still uses the same database to allow for upward compatibility, so there need be no hesitation in using the original data files. One thought, though, is that you would be well advised to use a copy of your data files for this version as some of the additional routines would give strange results if used with the version 1 programs.

The programs provide you with the capability to create and maintain data files which contain information about ancestors and relatives. To interrogate these files and obtain printouts of this information, the principal three types of information cover, ancestral, descendants and immediate family groupings. The information may be printed in a variety of formats including charts

and one-line summary reports. The charts and reports use the data stored in the Persons File, Marriages File, Parent/Child Index and the Marriage Index.

BASIC CONCEPTS

This FH2 suite of programs, indexes and data files is a genealogical database with a capacity for 500 records for individuals and 200 records for marriages.

The programs are written in MBASIC and run under CP/M 3.1 (plus), and because of licencing agreements for this system you must produce your own work disk. They are concerned only with direct relationships but the Manual includes an appendix (Appen. A) which does explain the indirect relationships and then also shews them graphically with the Chart of Consanguinity. Now you will be able to understand clearly why cousin Charlie Wheelbarrow is described, among other things, as your fourth cousin umpteen times removed!

BENEFIT AND ADVANTAGES

The benefit is a cohesive set of programs to create and maintain your genealogical information. Advantages are that the user enters information once only in one place only and because the programs are interactive there is no chance of discrepancy between printed or screen reporting of the data. Every person is associated with every other one, both with the Parent/Child relationship and the Husband/Wife relationship.

Because only Father, Mother, Son and Daughter details are entered the programs use their relationship for extracting and reporting data in meaningful formats. Whenever new information is obtained it can now be added readily to files or used to amend data. The final results are a well organised set of data files and indexes so that Pedigree Charts, Family Group Sheets, Descendant Reports and Individuals' details, etc., are available upon demand either by screen or printer.

DRAWBACKS

There is no provision for printing either a comprehensive family tree or for the display of the results of relationship searches for distant (genealogically speaking) relatives. Both of these would be of value in avoiding the manual construction (mine extends to nine A3 sheets) and search even if the user was familiar with the rules of relationship shewn in the manual as Appendix A.

THE MANUAL

Usually this is included as a text file on the disk. In the case of Family History 2, this is not supplied as a file but because of its size, a massive 120 pages of A5 condensed print, it would be necessary to obtain it direct from Andrew Solomon.

It is well written, comprehensive in scope and easy to follow, whilst the Appendices contain a wealth of information both practical for use in the files and of direct interest, such as 'Degree of Kinship' not catered for in the program.

REQUIREMENTS

1) An Epson or Epson compatible dot-matrix printer capable of dealing with condensed print as this is required for Pedigree Charts, Ancestor and Descendant Reports, Family Group

Sheets and some Personal Reports. If you have only a daisy wheel type printer you may be in trouble.

2) Amstrad CPC6128 and 128k Memory and at least one disk drive.

For convenience and ease of use a second disk drive would be useful but not essential as the programs will function satisfactorily with only one drive. The use of a single drive will result in several disk changes having to be made during the programs' operations.

3) CP/M 3.1(Plus), CP/M 2.2 (optional) and the Family History 2 disk.

4) A supply of blank disks (already formatted to avoid inconvenience and bad temper) and continuous eleven inch listing paper (preferred) or suitable single sheet paper eleven inches or more in length. Tractor or loose sheet longer than the eleven inch paper can be used because you are given the option to pause at Page-break when printing to allow you to realign the next sheet.

PREPARING YOUR DATA DISK

You will need a 3" disk for the work disk (as CP/M + only works in the A: drive) and format one side as System disk and copy to it the FH2 Program files, C10CPM3.COM and SUBMIT.COM from your CP/M+ System disk. These are the DISPLAY & MAINTENANCE files.

Format the other side of the disk as DATA and copy to it the files on side 2 of the FH2 disk. These files are for REPORTS & CHARTS.

A second disk should be formatted as DATA and ready for FH2 program to use. Once you have started FH2 by keying 'CPM' and have run SETUP a menu is shown:

[A] Create a new (empty) Persons File;
[B] Create new (empty) Marriage File;
[C] Exit to CPM.

By selecting each option in turn the program will create 500 empty person records and 200 empty marriage records on the DATA disk, the [C] exits to CPM to allow you to request a Directory of the DATA disk to check that the Persons and Marriages files have been created.

PREPARING FOR HARD WORK

List of Persons.

Begin by making a numbered list which contains the names of the people who

will be in your Persons File; this may look something like Fig 1.

| Written List Of Persons | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------|-----------|--------|--------|
| No. | Surname | GivenName | Father | Mother |
| 1 | Ash | Ack | | |
| 2 | Oak | Holly | | |
| 3 | Ash | Beer | 1 | 2 |
| 4 | Beech | Bessie | | |

Figure 1

This is the master list of persons and will continue to grow as more names are added. Then go back and add the numbers representing each person's parents and as relatives are added the benefit of this list will become obvious later.

Now make a second numbered list and enter the record numbers of those persons who are married; this list may look like Fig 1a.

| Written List Of Marriages | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Marriage No. | Husbands Record No. | Wives Record No. |
| 1 | 1 | 2 |
| etc | etc | etc |

Figure 1a

This is the master list of marriages and will continue to grow as more names are added.

NOW THE HARD WORK BEGINS

When these preliminary lists have been written out, your DATA disk is ready and FH2 programs raring to go, this is when the fun starts.

Run FH2 by typing 'CPM' and key in the date when prompted to do so. The screen then shows the 'DISPLAY & MAINTENANCE' menu.

Select [B] 'Update Information in the Persons File' and you will then be prompted to key in the details (from the persons list previously written) into the screen display. Fig 2.

Similarly, select [C] 'Update Information in the Marriages File. Fig 3.

In all updates you have the option to save, amend or scrap the record: the program will deal with the file maintenance automatically and you are advised by screen messages just what

the program is doing and rolling numbers will keep you happy rather than watch a blank screen. All input is made at the bottom of the screen display where there are plain text prompts to enter details for each field in turn. The input field sizes are denoted by open and closed square brackets, the data being moved to the main display when the [ENTER] key is depressed. When inputs are completed select '0' as the next record and wait whilst the program opens and writes to the Persons, Marriages and Parent/Child files and indexes. Then selecting [G] will quit the FH2 program and you can then request a Directory of the DATA disk to check that the Persons and the Marriages files, Parent/Child and the Marriages indexes have been created. All files and indexes are updated automatically by the programs and thus there is now no need for the user to do so: screen messages show that this is being done.

The files and indexes form the data-base without which the programs can't operate and because lists of persons and marriages can now be printed as required from the Reports and Charts disk, the hand written lists are no longer required but it is a good idea to make a note of the next numbers available.

The Personal information input screen includes a field 'Code' which can be a positive or a negative number up to four characters. It is not used by any of the programs and is for the user's own personal use only to indicate, e.g., step-child, adopted child, etc.

The Marriage Record includes a field 'Marriage Code' and this also can be positive or negative up to four characters. It is not used by any of the programs and is for the user's personal use only, e.g., subsequent marriages, etc. There is also a 'Comments' area for notes relating to this marriage and is alphanumeric up to 45 characters.

Dates are checked to conform with 1-31 days, 1-12 months, year 1-2050. Should you wish to check the date for validity against Julian or Gregorian calendars then a calendar for the appropriate year should be printed using the program available under 'DISPLAYS & MAINTENANCE'. There is provision to cater for those months

with foreign spellings or with non-standard calendars e.g., Chinese calendars(?) which can have 13 months.

In such cases the user is required to confirm the detail and is warned that a non-standard month may affect the order of person listings. Such dates can be 'flagged'.

Surnames are converted to upper case and leading characters in given names, names of city, county, country etc., are converted to upper case and this includes initial letters separated by a full stop, e.g., U.K.

PRINTOUTS

At boot-up. It is essential at this stage to make sure that paper is loaded correctly, the printer is switched on and on-line before proceeding as if this is not done it may affect some of the printouts.

Be prepared to use a lot of paper depending on the file sizes because although I have only 400 records in my Persons File it took 8 pages of single line records to print them!

A calendar and three data-capture pro formae for Personal details, Marriage details and Worksheet can be printed from the 'DISPLAY & MAINTENANCE' menu and all other printouts available are as shown in the 'REPORTS & CHARTS' menu, selections being made by pressing the appropriate keys.

These prints are the proof that you have entered all known details correctly (or incorrectly, for you to amend) and bring together all your hard work entering the data to the Personal and Marriage files. They show the relationships that have been calculated by the programs and show more details than are usually given in the screen displays.

Briefly, the selections available from 'REPORTS & CHARTS' are:

- [A] Ahnentafel Numbers; these are a system of generation level numbering;
- [B] Ancestor Report gives prints as Lineage and Relationship using a selected record number as base and regresses to the earliest person. The program calculates and shows grandparent, great-grandparent etc.;
- [C] Descendants Report groups descendants by generations and shows the relationship of the descendants listed to the selected individual;

| Information for: Beer ASH | |
|--|---|
| Person: Record-Number: 3 Surname: ASH Given-names: Beer Sex: Male Code: 0 | Person's Birth Information Date: 02 Dec 1923 City: London County: Country: Person's Death Information Date: City: County: Country: |
| Person's Father: Father's Record-number: 1 | Person's Burial Information Date: City: County: Country: |
| Person's Mother: Mother's Record-number: 2 | |

[U] to update

[D] to delete

[A] to abort

Figure 2

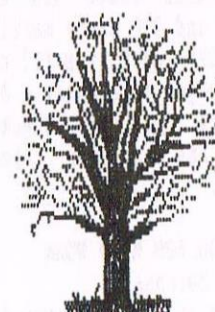
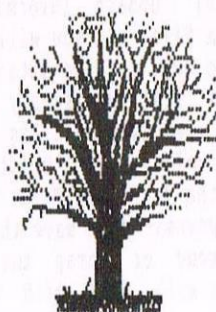
| Marriage Record | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Marriage Record-number: 1 | Marriage Code: 0 |
| Husband's Record-number: 1 | |
| Husband's Name: Ack ASH | |
| Wife's Record-number: 2 | |
| Wife's Name: Holly OAK | |
| Marriage Statistics: | |
| Marriage-date: | |
| Marriage-city: | |
| Marriage-county: | |
| Marriage-country: | |
| Comments: | |

[U] to update

[D] to delete

[A] to abort

Figure 3



[D] Family Group Sheet shows for a selected record number a group in three main sections, viz., all information from the Husband's record; all information from the Wife's record; information on up to eleven children of that marriage using a continuation sheet if necessary. (My great-grandfather had 16 children, probably because there was no television in those days!).

[E] Family Tree will print a Tree for a selected individual. This print comprises an eight-generation chart on four sheets of paper.

There is no provision for a comprehensive Family Tree.

[F] Marriage Information. Invokes sub-menu from which can be printed

- a) List of records in Marriages File;
- b) Information about Marriages:
Individual Marriage Records can be printed by selecting appropriate record number;
- c) Alphabetical List of Marriages;
- d) Search and List Selected Records using surname or part thereof and

includes a 'Wild-Card' facility;
[G] Pedigree Chart. This prints from selected individuals back through parents and grandparents as far back as there are records.

- [H] Persons File. Fig 6 This invokes sub-menus from which one can print
- a) List Records in the Persons File;
 - b) Alphabetical List of Persons;
 - c) Full Information about Persons at either 1,2,4 records per page;
 - d) List the Parent/Child Index;
 - e) Search and List Selective Records using name or part thereof and includes a 'Wild-Card' facility.

When printing, either individual or blocks of records can be printed.

None of the printed records are shown as screen displays but in doing this review for Family History 2 I have of necessity produced specimen printouts - all 23 of them - including relevant continuation sheets - using no less than 63 sheets of paper <<and that's a lot of paper in one go -Philip>>.

AND FINALLY

Whilst admittedly my familiarity with Family History v.1 was quite useful as I had already built my database and so used a copy of it for this review I found Family History 2 very easy to use once I had read the User Manual very carefully. And read it again very carefully.

The Manual is, in my opinion, absolutely explicit. I did not find any aspect left to me to puzzle out because the user is led gently by the hand from part to part in a logical progression with all steps subject to confirmation before proceeding. Apart from keying in the details I found that everything else was controlled by single-key depression and in my belief this virtually eliminated errors and made the programs as idiot-proof as could reasonably be expected.

I can recommend this highly commendable genealogical package.

*Have Fun,
Frank Weatherway*

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CPC SOUTH WEST

A WISHLIST REVIEW

I hadn't seen a copy of the CPC South West User's Group magazine until Ernie Ruddick sent me a copy with the request that I review it for WACCI. So here goes.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

First of all, what does it look like? Well, the magazine is A5 in size printed on 7 folded A4 sheets and, at first glance, looks very much like a cut-down WACCI in terms of content. It has the same mix of letters, serious reviews, competitions, articles, help-lines and PD news. A lot of the names are familiar, ITGA (Angela Cook) has an article in the copy I've got, February 1996, Dave Stitson edits it and other familiar names appear amongst the help-line list. It's published bi-monthly and costs 80p plus postage <<See Ernie Note 1>>.

It has a healthy section of short type-ins, reminiscent of the old ACU's ten-liners section but without the need to limit them to ten lines. In the days when I took AA for my sins I always found that typing in other people's work helped me in my constant battle with understanding the workings of my machine, so the inclusion of so many here is a double-plus.

THE OTHER HALF OF THE STORY

So CPC South West has all the right ingredients, but that's only half the story. What about general appearance, print-quality, that kind of thing?

The cover of the issue in my hands is clear, interesting but maybe a bit muddled. It does its job adequately, informing us what to expect inside, but maybe suffers a bit from the use of too many font styles <<See Ernie Note 2>>. It's only a minor point and maybe me being picky.

If that's a fault it's limited to the front cover. Inside, everything is set out clearly with very occasional bits of clip-art breaking the text up into digestible portions. The reviews are well written, as is a tutorial on computer music (Part 5 in this Issue).

As the magazine arrives bi-monthly, enthusiasts might find it a bit too long between parts. The top of both the editor's page and the letters pages has a WACCI-style picture of the ED. Imitation is a very sincere form of flattery, so that's okay.

AND OVERALL

Overall, then, CPC South West is better than just an acceptable little publication and I've no doubt it serves its membership very well indeed. If I was editing it (and I'm not so I'm in the position where it's easy to be critical) I would do something about the few occasions where the justification routine expands two short words to fill the width of a column <<See Ernie Note 3>>, but with the exception of that little cavil I can find little to blame and a great deal to praise in it. Which can't be bad.

I'm not going to give it any marks (percentage or otherwise). We're mature CPCers here <<The Editor is the exception -Philip>> and I'll content myself by giving it the thumbs up. And if you need to know any more about the User Group and it's mag, contact Dave Stitson. I'm sure he'll oblige.

Ernie (The Wish-List) Notes

1. Cost £1 plus postage from April issue.
2. Rectified in April's issue.
3. No occurrence of this nature in the April issue. Obviously Dave has been working very hard to get the structure of the mag as neat as possible.

Ernie Ruddick

CPC SOUTH WEST

The Amstrad Users Group

JUNE 1996 ISSUE

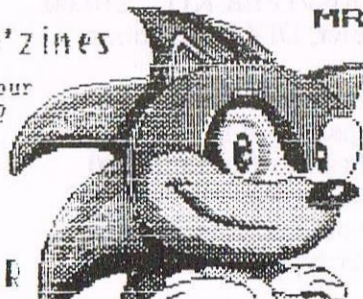
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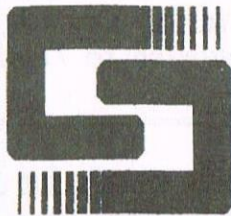
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