CURSOR

NEWSLETTER of the COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.

CONTENTS

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DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

Group meeting on Tuesday, 4th February 1986, at 7.30 pm in our Club Rooms in Love St. (near Water St.) Spring Hill.

AN EXPLANATION OF OUR NEW DISK CATALOGUE SYSTEM

CP/M ON THE COMMODORE C-128

Beginners Corner will be conducted by John Benson

Workshop meeting on Sunday, 16th February 1986, from 1 pm till 5pm in the Guidance Officers Training Centre, Bayswater Street, Milton.
Bring your programming- or hardware problems, as well as your own computer equipment!
Opportunity to copy the group's Public Domain Disks.
dontact Philip Parkin (Ph.378 5383 - a.h.) for further details.

PLEASE NOTE: Workshop Meetings are for MEMBERS ONLY!

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REGIONAL MEETINGS

Cannon Hill meets on the 4th Saturday of the month (7.30pm) in the Cannon Hill State School.
Contacts: Barry Wilson - Ph.399 6204 a.h. / Aug Norman - Ph.399 2080 a.h.

Pine Rivers meets on the 2nd Sunday of the month (1pm - 5pm) in the Strathpine High School (rear entrance).
Contact: Hugh Gane - Ph.205 1196 a.h.

Redcliffe Peninsula meets on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month (7pm) in the Redcliffe High School.
Contact: Paul Janek - Ph.283 1663 a.h.

Sherwood meets on the 2nd Friday of the month (7.30pm) in the Graceville State School.
Contact: Leigh Winsor - Ph.379 2405 a.h. / Philip Parkin - Ph.378 5383 a.h.

Springwood has gone into recess till February, due to lack of interest in the last couple of months.
Contact: Terry Steer - Ph.808 2424 a.h.

The Gap meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (7.30pm) in The Gap State School.
Contact: Julianne Fallen - Ph.300 2982 a.h.

Wavell Heights meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (7.30pm) in the Wavell Heights High School (library), Brae St.
Contact: Robert Adamson - Ph.266 8353 a.h.

Killarney meets on the 2nd Monday of the month in the Killarney State School.
Contact: Roger Frazer - Ph.(076) 64 1370.

Maryborough/Hervey Bay meets on the 3rd Monday in Hervey Bay.
Contact: Terry Baade (16 Mouquet Lane, M'borough, 4650) at 21 2271 (w) or
21 5059 a.h.

Are you interested in joining a new sub-group in Kallangur?
Contact Vince Lofaro - Ph.269 4573 a.h. or Paul Kelly - Ph.204 6805 a.h.
for more details.

Would you like to start a sub-group in your local suburb or district? If
so, give Terry Steer, our Sub-Group coordinator, a ring on 808 2424 (a.h.)
for more information.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Primary Education Sub-Group meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month (7.30pm)
in the Aspley State School.
Contact: Bill Weeks - Ph. 208 8620 (work) or 341 2823, a.h.

Adventure Games Sub-Group meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month, (during
main meeting - in our club rooms).
Contact: Trevor Mancktelow - Ph. 262 4602, a.h.

Programming Sub-Group meets on the 1st Tuesday of the month, (during main
meeting - in our club rooms).
Contact: Jim Vick - Ph. 282 1377, or Tom Kelly - Ph. 277 9900

Superbase Support Group:
                    Coordinator: Ces Seymour - Ph. 359 9774, a.h.
         Programming Advisor: Hank Deucker - Ph. (075) 66 1317, a.h.

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We have been given to understand that there is a new Bulletin Board System
for Amateur Radio Enthusiasts in Brisbane.

The BBS phone number is 263 7070.

For further information ring our member Ron Rich at 359 2623 (a.h.)

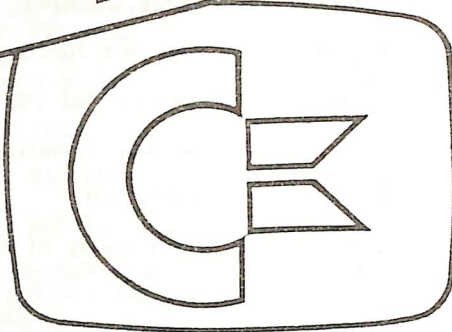==

If all of a sudden your copy of "CURSOR" fails to arrive there could be
several reasons for this, such as Australia Post losing your copy or, more
likely, your membership running out!

This is most likely to happen to those members who joined sometime during
the middle of our financial year.

If you have any queries ring Norm Chambers for details of your membership.

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EDITORIAL

A happy, healthy, and prosperous 1986 to all our members and friends.

Some of our dealers have reported that Commodore sales for X-mas 1985 have been a lot better than for the corresponding period of the previous year, so this will probably mean many more new faces during our 1986 meetings. Add to this the fact that the C-128 is now starting to move, plus later in the year the official release of the Amiga, and we have potentially the best year for our group coming up.

Following is a list of my New Year's Wishes for the Group:

A: I am hoping for more members to become involved with programming rather than playing games. The game players eventually lose interest and are lost to the group.

B: New premises for the group in a central location, preferably consisting of a main hall, with half a dozen smaller rooms for library, disk and tape services, and to serve as ancillary lecture rooms. From past experiences we know that schools are not the answer, because of problems with school furniture etc.

C: We need more members to act as assistants to the Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, Chief Librarian etc. We love what we are doing, but the time will come when we are either unable to do the job (holidays or sickness), or want to give it up to let somebody else have a crack at the whip.

D: Last year has been the best year yet for members' contribution to "Cursor", but I am eager to receive more contributions from members. We are very keen to know how our country groups are going, and also would like to hear about problems peculiar to their localities.

E: With the new C-128 coming on full stream this year, plus the arrival of the Amiga, I hope that our Business Sub-group can be successfully resurrected.

F: A broad program for our Suburban Sub-groups, to include aspects of programming, hardware interfacing, demo's etc. This harks back to my first wish on the list, namely to get away from playing games; this can be done at home.

G: Following from the above to have regular meetings between Sub-group Coordinators to decide on the above topics.

H: More advertisers in "CURSOR". Current circulation at 600 copies and still growing, and only $30.00 per full page advert. This must surely represent the best value for money in advertising terms these days.

I: To own one of the new EPSON laser printers, and supposed to sell for $400.00, as reported in a recent issue of A.P.C. magazine. Hard to believe, particularly the price aspect. Would not it be nice though to have daisywheel quality, combined with the high speed of a dot-matrix printer, plus graphics as well!

Ralph De Vries

NOTES & GOSSIP

DECEMBER MEETING

Our last meeting for 1985 was again very well attended. After the necessary words of wisdom from the management committee it was the turn of Bill Weeks and members of his Primary Education Sub-Group to talk on - and demonstrate Primary Education software for the C-64. As Bill pointed out there has been a notable improvement in educational software in the last year or so. Even teachers who are usually scared of computers gradually lose their fear of these devices and, as Bill pointed out, have learned that computers are no more scary than video recorders! Some software that came in for a special mention included:

    Computer awareness programs like "Kids on Keys"
    "LOGO" the main teaching language for kids.
    "Stickey Bear" programs for the early grades.
    Social Studies programs from Jacaranda in conjunction with their text
    books.
    "Koala Pad" and "Print Shop" in the graphics area.

The mathematics area is the only area where Bill would like to see a better type of program. Generally he is not in favour of "drill" type programs, but prefers the problem solving types.

After his introductory talk Bill and his fellow teachers manned their 6 computers and demonstrated a wide range of programs made available by Pencom Education Software, which were very well received by our members.

GOING UP IN THE WORLD

On the 20th December our president Greg Perry moved house. From Bardon he has moved to Ashgrove and he is now the proud owner of 2 computer rooms and a swimming pool! His phone number has not changed (38 3295), and he still does not like to be rung up before 11 am!

EXPANDING

If you have read the adverts of C.W. Electronics lately you may have noticed that they have moved to new premises in Toowoomba (5 Bell Street), and have also opened up a new shop on the corner of Croydon Street & Station Road in Woodridge. Danny Arthur looks after the Woodridge shop and Lance Farrell is your Commodore man in Stones Corner.

SHOCKING LOSS

Saw Terry Steer just before Christmas and had a terrible shock. His fabulous beard has disappeared! We hope that this is not the beginning of a new trend. Can you imagine Cliff Pottinger, Ray King, and Greg Perry without face fungus?
STOP PRESS: He is re-growing it again!!!

DPS 1101 PRINTER USERS

Previously I have paid $29.80 for a replacement daisy wheel from Triumph-Adler. Recently I purchased another daisy wheel from Wilsons Stationery Supplies in Paddington for $24.57. Can any Commodore daisy wheel owner beat this price?

LIBRARY CATALOGUES

It has been the practice of this club to publish details of the public domain software in our magazine "Cursor" as those disks have been prepared and made available to members. Information about other library sections has been similarly dissemminated.

For quite some time there has been the escalating problem of providing all members (recent joiners do not have earlier editions of Cursor) with details of what your club has available in the libraries, including public domain software. It is not practicable to provide every member with a new printed catalogue every time an addition is made to one or other sections of our libraries.

With the recent aquisition of 50 more public domain disks, mainly from Canada, containing over 1000 programs, the difficulty has become more acute so it seems to be an appropriate time to introduce a different system in an endeavour to make details of the club's various and extensive libraries,(public domain software on both disk and tape - educational software - commercial software - books & magazines), available to all members with provision in the system to supplement the information as further additions become available. All this information to be available via any or all of the following sources - Cursor, Bulletin Board, Workshops and Meetings, Mail.

It will take a while to completely implement the proposed method, but the part concerning existing public domain software on disk comprising the existing club disks and the 50 recently aquired disks is now available.

A catalogue disk called GRATIS/CLUB-WARE can be obtained in the usual way one obtains club disks, i.e. purchasing by mail from the Disk Librarian or making a copy on your own disk with your own equipment at any workshop at no cost.

The disk has SPEEDSCRIPT 3.0 heading the catalogue files as the subsequent files are intended to be accessed to either screen or printer with Speedscript of which several versions are available and have been published on club disks, but the 3.0 version is the most up-to-date having some additional features which have been used in the new catalogue system. Comprehensive details of the 3.0 version can be found in the March 1985 issue of COMPUTE starting on page 123.

The 50 recently aquired disks are listed in two files called GRATISWARE 1 and 2 as there is too much material to fit into one file. There is also a single page file named GRATISWARE INST which is worth viewing on the screen or printing out if you have a printer.

The catalogue files are primarily intended to be printed by a printer and will produce quite a nice book of 39 pages if printed on standard pin-feed fan-fold paper, (load speedscript and run, then load gratisware 1, then CTRL/P to print), but can be also be read on the screen by using SHIFT/CTRL/P and following the prompts.

When the end of Gratisware 1 is reached (after DISK 24 on page 19), your computer will automatically load Gratisware 2 and continue printing right up to DISK 50 on page 39. Then it will search for Gratisware 3 which is not on the disk. Not finding such a file the program will default back to Speedscript. Future additions of Gratisware need only be saved to the disk

to be automatically linked to the existing files.

A similar method has been used regarding the existing club disks under the name CLUBWARE. There is a CLUBWARE INST file followed by CLUBWARE 1 which contains a catalogue of the club disks already released. Future additions will link in the same way as any additions to the GRATISWARE group.

A catalogue up-dating service for postal users where they can send their GRATIS/CLUB-WARE disk to the Disk Librarian or some other nominated person, to be up-dated with newly released library files for a nominal fee in order to avoid members incurring a $6 charge each time for new material is being considered to assist those members who are not able to attend workshops where they can do this free of charge.

Maurice Hawkyard

A further and more detailed explanation of our new cataloguing system will be given during our main February meeting.

Editor

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS!

For quite some time now the Group has been offering a series of services and sales to members (see following page).

It has been the policy of the Group to indemnify members in case of dissatisfaction or damage in the case of those sales or services.

Recently it has come to our notice that certain services have been performed by members who were not authorized by the Group to perform these services.

In future these services and sales are only to be performed by members nominated by the Management Committee. Their names are normally listed in our price list.

In case of these services/sales being performed by non-authorized members the group will not accept responsibility, and the offending member will be barred from attending group meetings.

It is also pointed out to members that sales and services offered at workshop meetings are occasionally conducted by members on their own behalf.
We therefore advice members to check carefully if these sales and services are approved by the Management Committee, as again the group will not be responsible for non-approved sales and services.

The Management Committee

PRICE LIST [Members Only]

PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS $ 6.00 ea (Postage Paid)
PUBLIC DOMAIN TAPES $ 2.00 ea (+ $1.00 Postage Per Order)
BLANK DISKS $20.00 per box of 10 (+ Postage $2.00)
DISK BOXES (hold 60 disks) $15.00 ea (+ $5.00 Postage)
RESET SWITCHES (Plugs into Serial Port) $ 4.00 ea
RESET SWITCHES (Permanent Fitting) $ 5.00 ea
TURBO-ROM for C-64: Members price - $40.00
Customised version (your choice of screen start-up colours + your name on
the start-up screen): $45.00
SERIAL SWITCHING BOX (Allows switching between two computers and the
in/out switching of other serial devices (printers - drives). $14.00
"PUBLIC DOMAIN BOOK" $5.00 ea (+$1.00 Postage)
"STARTING WITH DISK DRIVES" $2.00 (+$1.00 Postage)
USER PORT PLUG (with Key Way) &8.00 (+$1.00 postage)

CLUB MODEM (300 baud) Demo Model $135.00

Address all orders to P.O. Box 274 - Springwood - QLD - 4127
Cheques to be made out to: C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc.

UPGRADE CHARACTER EPROM for 801/1525 Printers.
(Gives Descenders on p,q,g,y, and j. Also requires exchange of a ROM chip)
Price (supplied & fitted) $30.00

For further information on the above contact Lester Bennett on 800 1243
before 8 pm on weekdays.

AVAILABLE FOR HIRE TO MEMBERS ONLY: 1526 COMMODORE PRINTER

For details contact Roger Haigh on 399 8037 (after hours).

EQUIPMENT MODIFICATIONS performed by Anthony Thyssen during main (Milton)
workshop.
If this is not suitable contact Anthony (weekends only) at 075 451 717.

SERVICES OFFERED:

RESET SWITCHES	Serial Port	$4.00
	Built in	$5.00
DEVICE NUMBER	Printer/Plotter 4-6	$5.00
	Disk Drive 8-9	$5.00
TURBO ROM FITTING	Computer w. socket	$5.00
	Socket required	$7.00
DRIVE ALIGNMENT	(Works in most cases)	$2.00

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PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS

C.C.U.G.Q.   ,UD

LOADME	Auto loader
DISK SPIN	Causes drive motor to turn. Use with cleaning disk.
DISK COMPARE	Program examines two disks, one in device 8 the other in device 9, and tells you where the two disks differ.
DISK SEARCH	This program examines a disk and reports the track and sector on which your search string appears.
FILE COMPARE	Compares two files, one on a disk in device 8 the other on a disk in device 9, and report any differences.
PLOTTER DIR	Prints disk directory to 1520 printer plotter
DISK UTILITY	Wedge type disk utility that's got the lot.
DISK UTIL INST	SpeedScript file of instructions for DISK UTILITY.8 Pages
SIMONSBER	Corrected version of SIMONSBER that appeared on Disk U9. (Simons Basic required)
SIMONSTYPE	A typing tutor written by Angus Norrie (CCUGQ Club member) Simons Basic required.
ZOUNDS	Sound effects from Computes Gazette July 85
ZOUNDS 2	" " " " " Aug. 85
ZOUNDS 3	" " " " " Sep. 85
FLEXY MORTGAGE	Calculates mortgage payments.
BOWLING LEDGER	Program to assist 10 Pin bowling leagues to keep their books in order.
POOLS.38	Selects Pools numbers
LOTTO.45	" " "
CREEPS	Space Invaders
CREEPS.O	Loaded by CREEPS
ARTILLERY	Two player shootem game.
DILEMMA	Diplomats Dilemma. An adventure game. LOAD "DILEMMA",8,1
ADILEMMA	Loaded by DILEMMA.
BDILEMMA	" " "

Some of the programs on this disk come from TPUG Disks
March and April 1985.

Cliff Pottinger

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AMATEUR RADIO ENTHUSIASTS AND THE C-64

In the dim and distant past the Group tried to organize a Sub-Group of
VIC-20 Amateur Radio Hobbyists, without a great deal of success.

With the poor VIC-20 being relegated to the back burner, there now has been
a shift of emphasis to the C-64 which is now used quite extensively by
amateur radio hobbyists.   There also has been an increase in supplies of
the appropriate interfaces used by these radio hobbyists.

The Group hopes to have an expert in this field available for our March
meeting to give a talk (maybe even a demo) on the subject of Amateur Radio
and Computers.

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SUPERBASE

The response from our members to start a special Superbase Interest Group has been rather dismal; a total of five member names received, plus a letter from W.A., which has been dealt with in our "Letters" column.

We don't have any Superbase users within our committee structure, thus we are unable to assist existing users. The idea of a special Superbase Interest Group was that it should become a **self-help group**. The names, addresses, and phone numbers of those members which have been submitted to us follow herewith, plus appropriate comments where necessary.

Ces Seymour, who had some very harsh words to say about Superbase and its author (with reason I feel!), is prepared to act as coordinator, collator of information, etc., so any information can be passed on to Ces, whose address follows below.

Editor

SUPERBASE USERS

Ces Seymour - 27 Gibum St. - Chermside West - 4032 - Ph. 07/359 9774
(would like to act as a clearing house for Superbase inquiries, programs, applications, helpful tips etc.)

Vic Mobbs - P.O.Box 342 - Caloundra - 4551 - Ph. 071/921206
(has problems with 'Total & Sub-Total' Programs)

Gordon Keir - 27 Fox St. - Booval - 4304 - Ph. 07/2813929
(not much success to date)

Warren Kerswill - 15 Carlton Court - Birkdale - 4159
(some success, but still confused by certain functions)

Mike Levine - 28 Enever St. - Rainworth - 4065 - Ph. 07/3709598
(limited success - problems with sorting & print formatting)

If any other Superbase users would like to join this group they may submit their name & address, plus details of their problems to Ces Seymour at the above address.

Just when I was ready to finalize this page of the newsletter I received a very substantial epistle of our member

Hank Deucker of 38 Railway Street - Grantham - 4347,

which you will find in the "Letters to the Editor" column.

I have been waiting to hear from Hank, as I know from previous correspondence that he has widespread knowledge of the Superbase program, and it just the type of user that this new sub-group needs.

As he has offered his assistance, I am sure that the Superbase users will want to make use of his services in the future.

Editor

COMPUTER DESK

Some months ago the Editor put forward a request for a computer table under $100. I would like to submit my answer to the problem. The cost is about $60 (even less if you have some bits and pieces in your workshop) and the finished result is functional and pleasing to the eye.

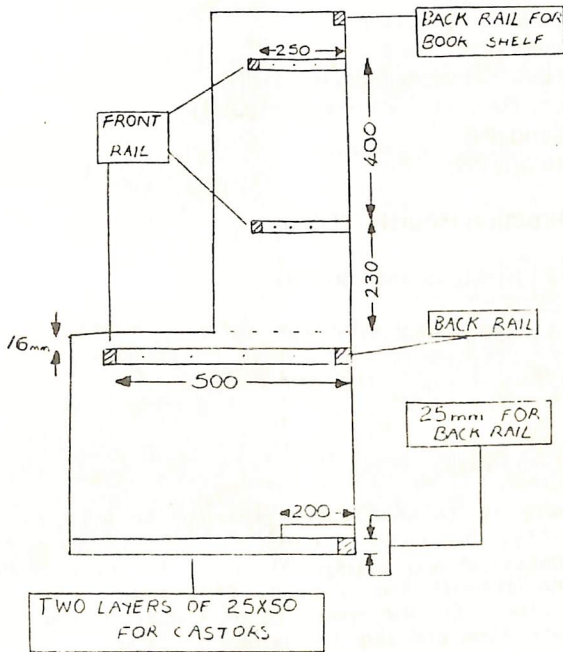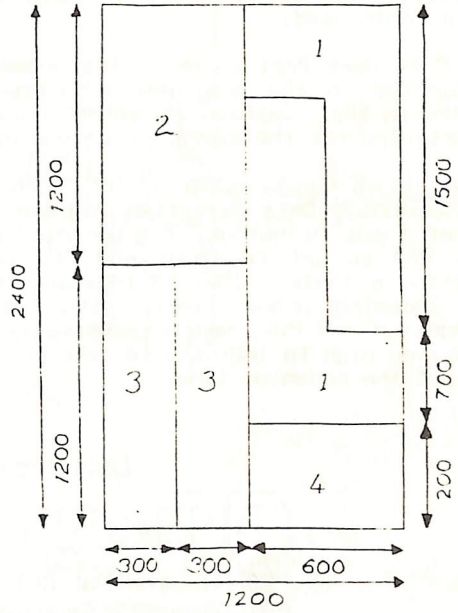| Materials List	Cost
1 sheet of 2 sided white overlay particle board 2400 X 1200 — 16 MM THICK	$25.00
6 lengths dressed meranti 50mm X 25mm X 2400mm	10.00
4 castors	10.00
2 rolls of iron on white trim strip	10.00
3 dozen P.K. screws 25mm	2.00
White gloss paint and undercoat	-
Total say :	$60.00

Cut out as below :

    1. = Sides

    2. = Table Top

    3. = Shelves

    4. = Lower shelf

Cut particle board as shown (allow for width of saw cuts to get both sides the same dimensions). Cut timber and drill undersize holes for screws. Counter sink for screw heads. Use a little silastic as a glue and screw timber to sides as shown. Iron on all white edge trim. Cut off excess with SHARP stanley knife. Drill holes for castors. Screw and glue all cross bracing timber in place. Fill screw holes with plastic wood. Sand off when hard. Undercoat and paint all timber in white gloss. Using silastic, glue tabletop, upper and lower shelves into place. Screw your four plug power pack onto side opposite lower paper shelf. Fit castors. Place disk drive on left hand side with C64 (or Vic). Place printer on right hand side. Books and disks on top shelf. Monitor on lower shelf. Paper box on bottom shelf and off you go.

Check the dimensions of your monitor against those shown - you may have to change the dimensions to suit.

John Shea

DRAWING NOT TO SCALE

NB. All Dimensions in Millimeters.

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The modem designed by Roger Haigh uses the aM7911 (or aM7910) World Modem Chip, which accepts instructions to give 300/300 or 1200/75 baud rates. However, there are a number of other possibilities because of the features of the chip used.

The C-64 User Port to which the modem connects also has some features not documented in the Programmers Reference Guide but used by Commodore and others in their modems. My intention is to make this the first of a number of articles for the experimenter who wishes to develop their modem further.

Below is a table (fig 1) of connections for the User Port and its corresponding Data Direction Register which sets the individual lines to either input or output. The two pins not explained in the PRG are PB3 and PB5. PB3 is set to input and is, therefore, normally at logic 1 (+5v) awaiting a logic 0 (0v) to indicate that a Ring Tone has been detected on the incoming phone line. With suitable software this indication is recognised and PB5, which is normally at logic 0 because it is an output, is driven high to indicate to external circuitry to take the phone off line and put the modem on line.

Data Register (Dr)

7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	location 56577

PB0 - Received Data (IN)
PB1 - Request To Send (OUT)
PB2 - Data Terminal Ready (OUT)
PB3 - Ring Indicator (IN)
PB4 - Received Line Signal (Carrier Detect) (IN)
PB5 - Phone Hook Relay (1 = ON / 0 = OFF) (OUT)
PB6 - Clear To Send (IN)
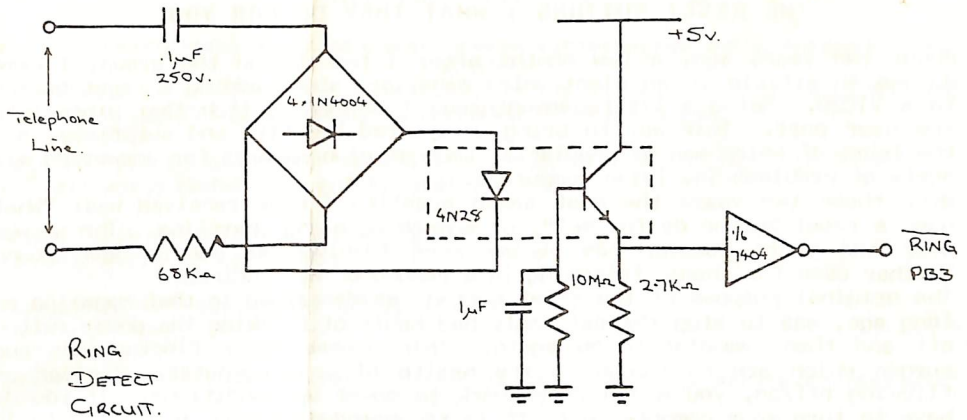PB7 - Data Set Ready (IN)

Data Direction Register (DDr)

7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	location 56579

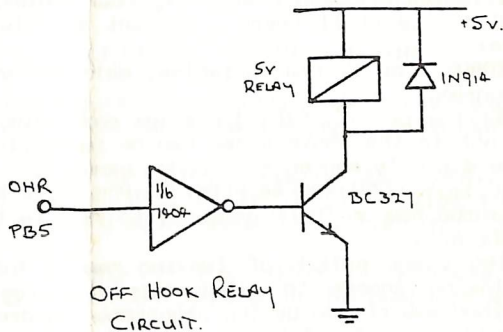| 0	0	1	0	0	1	:	0	location 56579

1 = Data Out
0 = Data In

FIG 1

Now we have the necessary connections to enable the computer to auto answer except for the external circuitry. The circuit diagram in fig.2 shows how an incomming ring tone can be detected and a logic 0 passed to the computer to indicate this. Fig.3 is the circuit for a relay to operate from the logic 1 on the Off Hook Relay line PB5. The contacts of the relay can then be used to take the telephone off line and put the modem on line.

RING
DETECT
CIRCUIT.

FIG 2

OFF HOOK RELAY
CIRCUIT.

FIG 3

At present I do not have any public domain software to use this feature but I can recommend a commercial program, "VIP XL Terminal" which has the facility to accept incomming EMAIL and store it to disk while the receiving end is unattended.

In future articles I will describe how to use some of the other features of the World Modem Chip in particular how to obtain 1200 half duplex with automatic change-over from transmit to receive, hence, giving a pseudo 1200 full duplex operation.

Lester Bennett

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THE RESET BUTTONS : WHAT THEY DO FOR YOU

About two years ago, a few months after I had joined the group, I came across an article in an electronics magazine, about adding a reset button to a VIC20. Being a little adventurous I built a switch that plugs into the user port. This was to bring unexpected benefits and surprises, not the least of which was my popularity amongst club members for answering all sorts of problems involving computers.

Over these two years the most asked question I have received was: "What does a reset button do for me?", or something along that line. The answer over the years however has become more involved as people have found further uses for them. Following is a resume of my findings:

The original purpose of the reset button, as described in that magazine so long ago, was to stop the extremely bad habit of flicking the power switch off and then immediately on again. This causes power fluctuations and surges which are hazardous to the health of your computer. Instead of flicking off/on, you did a reset back to power up conditions. If you do have to turn your computer off, it is recommended to wait at least 7 to 10 seconds before switching on again to allow the computer to settle and all capacitors to discharge.

At that time it was then found that, though a reset initializes the computer as if it was just turned on, it does NOT clear memory. This means that although your computer doesn't know it, your valuable program, be it BASIC or Machine Code, is still there. In fact only two areas of memory are lost, which are:

  a) $0000 to $0802 : or system variables, main screen and the start of your BASIC program.
  b) $D000 to $DFFF : or VIC, SID, I/O chips and color memory.

Thus machine code not in the above areas can be immediately re-used, while BASIC only requires a simple sequence of code, namely :-

          POKE2050,1:SYS42291:POKE46,PEEK(35):POKE45,PEEK(781)

or, if you have a Turbo Rom an "OLD" command, to restore the program to the place where you left off.

This feature of the reset switch of leaving memory intact, had further advantages of allowing access to other people's programs, either for examining which method was chosen by the programmer to create some sound or action you wish to know, or for taking pictures/sprites to use in your own program, or for copying the program - something frowned upon by the group, as well as being illegal, or one of the many other possibilities opened up to you by the switch.

Another feature found at a later time, was to have both an advantage as well as a disadvantage. This was caused by part of the power-up routines of the Kernal to test for a cartridge signature (a special bit of code telling the Kernal a cartridge is present, p.263 of Ref. Manual for more info.) in a certain place in memory. This meant that a cartridge can be saved to disk, then at a later date loaded ,8,1 and then use the reset button to start the program. However as the reset button starts the cartridge program, further presses just restart the program and so it can not be used to stop a cartridge program.

This inability of the reset button to reset when a cartridge signature is present means that high quality software can be made unresettable, by the program creating a signature, so that when a reset does occur, it is either ignored, restarts the program, crashes or give a rude message to the frustration of the user.

Well those are the advantages and disadvantages of the reset switch. How you are going to use it is up to you. I only build / install them.

Anthony Thyssen

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FOR SALE
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300/300 & 1200/75 Baud MODEMS As Designed By Roger Haigh

Printed Circuit Board with Assembly Instructions, Photograph etc $25.00
aM 7911 World Modem Chip and Crystal $33.00

Modem Fully Assembled & Tested $195.00
Postage extra on all items.

Contact Lester Bennett on 800 1243 before 8 pm.

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WANTED TO BUY
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Introduction to Basic: Part 2 Disk or Tape for C-64
Offers to Noel Valentine - 31 Kadina St. - The Gap - Ph.300 3119

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Recently we received a letter from Peter Browning of Kewdale in WA! Yes we
are read far and wide, just as we read their Vic-Ups newsletter.

Peter was interested in certain aspects of Superbase, for which I cannot
find an answer locally. Paul Blair is by now the recognised Superbase
wizard in Australia, and I have passed his letter on to Paul.

Peter also wanted to know if our (defunct) Business Sub-Group had any
experience with the Meridian Systems of NZ business software (Debtors &
Creditors).
I cannot recall having seen these packages, but I may well have missed
them.
Peter found that these programs had some severe shortcomings and wanted to
know if there was un upgraded version of these. According to Commodore in
Brisbane no updated versions have been made available up till now. Why
don't you write directly to Meridian Systems in New Zealand? In many cases
software writers aren't even aware of limitations in their programs until a
user points these out to them!

As for other Business packages for the C-64 I have had good reports of the
TOT'L Business Software, distributed in Australia by C.W. Electronics here
in Brisbane. I don't know if they have a distributor in WA, but failing
that, drop them a line at 416 Logan Road, Stones Corner for more
information.

With best wishes to the members of the Bull Creek chapter of the VIC-UPS
Computer Users Group.

Editor

Dear Sir,

A short note in reply to your request re SUPERBASE 64. I think I can help as I have used the software extensively and find only one real problem, it limits applications programs to 4 Kbytes. Unfortunately the newsletter once again lives up to its name 'CURSOR'; I have lost the cursed thing again and thus cannot reply directly to the article! Would love another copy of the newsletter if it is available, must be a Xmas problem as I have lost the Dec'84 issue as well.

The basic problem, and this is in common with all database software, is that of data analysis and data normalisation, and these need some understanding if one wants to use database software for other than addresses. If you would like a short article on a rather tedious subject I will try to oblige but beware as terms such as 'cannoical synthesis' etc. will abound! Further I think that the superset of the basic language included in the superbase makes a better basic (I cannot comment for games software) than V7.0 used on the C128. The manual for SUPERBASE 64 should be copied by other software houses eg. it is way ahead of the 'kurdish' use in the Dbase II manuals. I am only too willing to help anyone, or the group, if assistance is required.

I have included three programs, two that may help when your basic programs are giving problems, all are copied from magazines so there should be no problems with copyright etc. The first is a trace utility and was published in "Your Computer" Dec.'85 and helps to debug a program that runs but not the way you want it to run, I have found it invaluable! The other a program for listing basic programs, published in a UK mag about 18 month ago. Programs are listed with indented loops, and multi statements in a line are listed on separate lines, again invaluable when hunting for that really hidden bug. The program can be scrolled both forwards and backwards using the CRSR key once activated, and can be used to provide printer listings if necessary in the normal manner, ie. OPEN1,4:CMD4:*. The last was published in 'COMPUTE' quite some time ago, and may well have been issued as P.D. software, though I have not spotted it. It is ONE TOUCH KEYWORDS and when learned is very helpful, and may I add much better than what is available on the IBM-PC's.

All programs have the instructions as REM statements, and once run the first two will save machine code versions which load and work quickly, same as TURBO.

Further I have modified a previous CCUGQ program "DIRECTORY LIST" to suit my purposes better and have included two subroutines which may be of help to some members, one is a 'sort of' PRINT AT, where AT is equated to a number, the integer part of which is the screen ROW (must never exceed 24!) and the decimal part is the COLUMn (must never exceed .40) but beware Col 2 must be entered as .02 not .2 - means COL 20 to the machine, thus to print something at say ROW 6 and COL 7 equate AT=6.07 then GOSUB to position the cursor to your hearts desire, the GOSUB looks like this:

```
100:
110 REM     PRINT AT SUBROUTINE
120 :
130 POKE 781,AT:POKE 782,AT*100-INT(AT)*100:SYS65520:RETURN
140:
```

In case you think that I am clever see the CCUGQ newsletter of Nov'84, it is all explained there.

The second subroutine is a date entry/validate subroutine and allows dates to be entered as most people do that is 1/1/86 or 30-12-86 or 30.1.86 etc. nothing very spectacular I admit but why re-invent the wheel.

Finally it was nice to see some people at the computer show who were only names previously, even managed to have a chat to the president for quite some time!

Hank Deucker.

Dear Hank,

It was great to hear from you again. I feel sure that the fledgling Superbase support group will be making use of your extensive knowledge of this program.

Our sincere thanks for the programs and sub-routines supplied. I have passed these on to Cliff Pottinger for incorporation in a future Public Domain Disk.
What a pity that you live in Grantham, rather than Brisbane! We would have you lecturing in no time!

Editor

Dear Sir,

        In CURSOR for Nov.85 you published the one-liner to prevent 1541 disk drive chatter:
    OPEN15,8,15:PRINT#15,"M-W" CHR$(106) CHR$(0) CHR$(1) CHR$(133)
My limited researches have revealed that normally this DOS location (106, $6A) contains the number 5. "Poking" it with 133 obviously sets bit 7 in addition to bits 0 and 2 (binary 10000101 instead of 00000101 on disk drive initialisation).
My question is, "WHY does it work?"

W. Peter Gadsby

Dear Peter,

As you say, setting the disk drive memory location $6a (decimal 106) to a $85 (decimal 133) does stop the head bumping in most cases for programs such as Easyscript. This location (REVCNT) counts the number of retries after an error or similar. It counts down, then forces a head bump to occur so as to reinitialize the alignment before trying to read the error again. By setting the high bit-7 to a 1, the drive is fooled into thinking that it has already done the bump and thus simply gives up on the error rather than retry after the bump.

Greg Perry.

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THE COMMODORE C-128 --- SOME VIEWS AND REVIEWS

As promised in the last issue of "CURSOR", we are trying to give you as complete a picture as possible, given the relatively short period of time this machine has been on the market.

I bought my C-128 because of it's 80 column facilities which are a tremendous advantage in Word Processing.

And yet I have advised quite a few members who asked me for my opinion regarding this new computer to take their time in purchasing a C-128. The reasons for this are twofold: **PRICE & SUPPLIES**

As mentioned in the last issue of this magazine I think that the C-128 and it's accessories are too expensive in relation to an Amstrad 6128. Curiously, I found exactly the same view expressed in the Nov.'85 issue of the West Australian VIC-UPS Newsletter. Surely a case of great minds thinking alike!

When, during our December meeting, which was attended by some 250 odd members, we asked how many had purchased a C-128, no more than 10 hands were raised. Hardly a staggering amount, but understandable nevertheless. The supply position relates of course to the non-availability of the 1571 drive. Alan Stuart, in the above mentioned WA newsletter, went as far as to suggest to his members not to buy the 1570 s/s drive, and I wholeheartedly agree with him. This is another case where we are treated as second class customers by Commodore International. Why should we have to put up with a single sided drive which retails for only $100 less than the 1571? Alan wrote that he hoped that Commodore would be forced to ship container loads of 1570 drives back to the factory, because, hopefully the Australian public wouldn't have a bar of them. I think that it would be better if the Australian retailers would refuse to stock this drive, unless the price was to be reduced to the level of the 1541 disk drive. Already we have heard of cases of uninformed 128 buyers who bought the 1570 drive, because they were unaware that the 1571 drive will be available in the future. If and when the 1571 drive does become available these selfsame retailers may have some very irate customers on their hands!

So here is my advice to intending purchasers of the C-128:

BUY YOUR 128 WHEN THE 1571 DRIVE IS AVAILABLE!
IF YOU FEEL THAT PRICES ARE TOO HIGH YOU WILL JUST HAVE TO WAIT TILL THEY COME DOWN. SORRY, BUT UNABLE TO GIVE YOU A TIME TABLE!

After all this you might be surprised to hear that I think that the C-128 is an absolutely marvellous computer! C-64 compatibility seems to be close on to 100%, and I think that the new Basic, Version 7 is very good indeed. I have typed in all the sample programs out of the Systems Guide, as well as all other odd programs I could lay my hands on. In my opinion this version of Basic is a programmer's dream. There are still a few restrictions here and there, but I leave those to Greg Perry and others to explore. At this stage technical information and data are extremely hard to come by, but I feel that within six months the real power of this computer will be revealed to all and sundry and, given sufficient commercial software support, we should see some marvellous new programs.

As an example of the power of Basic 7 here is a one-line program (from "RUN" magazine - Nov. '85) for the C-128/40 column mode that puts 8 sprites on your screen!:

```
10 FOR J=3584 TO 4095 : POKE J,204 : NEXT : FOR K=1 TO 8 : SPRITE K,1,K :
MOVSPR K,50*K#K : NEXT
```

I like the new 1901 monitor, made in Singapore (reputedly by Thomson - the French Computer and Monitor manufacturers), although Greg Perry has his

reservations.

The following bits of information are from the book "128 Internals", published by Abacus Software:

To go from the 128 mode to the 64 mode there is another way than the ones described in the systems guide, namely SYS 57931. This is faster than the command GO 64.

Also when you hold down the Run/Stop key when powering up, you go immediately to the inbuilt monitor. Maybe not very useful, but interesting!

In 80 column software we have as yet only seen Superscript 128 and Swift, a Spread Sheet. Superscript 128 is the logical successor to Easy Script (same author), has many improvements over Easy Script, and is very well documented (see separate review). Swift is a pretty good spread sheet but with documentation which is only comprehensible to an experienced user of spread sheets. There is certainly room for improvement here! We have also received (courtesy C.W. Electronics) copies of "JANE" (40 column) and "Hands on CP/M PLUS", a tutorial for budding CP/M users.

C-64 users may recall the so called 'Cheat Sheets', overlays with commands used in Basic, Wordprocessors etc. C-128 users can easily make up their own Cheat Sheet by cutting a strip of cardboard, plastic, or hardboard, size 428 mm x 62 mm, which fits between the keyboard and the cooling grilles of the computer.

I use one side for Basic Commands and the other side for Superscript Commands. Very handy if you are as forgetful as I am.

But enough from me at this stage. Following are some comments by Greg Perry and reviews by fellow 128 users.

Ralph De Vries

The First Of The New Machines for 1986.

General

The new 128s have finally arrived in quantity. Even though the RRP is $699, they would appear to be selling fairly well according to my sources. Interestingly, Myers in Brisbane are currently selling the C128 for $589 for a short period. The general suggestion is that we may see a drop in the official RRP by mid year (hopefully!). I have bought a C128, 1901 Colour monitor and 1571 (although i am using a 1570 till the release of the '71). However, despite sending in an order complete with money (!) a few months ago, I finally received my system after several STD calls, two weeks after they hit the shops. Thanks Commodore!

Despite the delay and price, the new machine appears to be quite good, especially the new sound and graphics commands in 40 column 128 mode. (Pity the PLAY command is out of key just as the note frequencies were on the C64!) I expect we will actually see many more users using high res., sprites, and sound since it is now wonderfully easy. Finally the limitation is in one's creativity and not in remembering what to POKE with what! In 40 column C128 mode one can now do some nice things such as directly load and display 'DOODLE' pictures with the command BLOAD "name",B0,P7168: GRAPHIC 1

The new sound and graphic commands are great fun. The 40 column mode of the

C128 in fact uses the same VIC and SID chips in the same way as did the C64 but now most of the POKEs are replaced with a specific BASIC command. In 80 Column mode a new chip (an 8563, a derivative of the 6545 which was used in the 80 column PETs) takes over and none of the usual high-res graphics are available. However all the character graphics are still there. Only three people in the world seem to know just how to drive the new chip to produce high-res plotting and they aren't telling anyone! 80 column high-res is however possible and we should expect to see some interesting software developments over the next year.

Basic 7.0 has finally re-implemented all the direct disk access commands such as HEADER, DLOAD, DOPEN, DS$, DIRECTORY, CATALOG and others, as was used on the BASIC 4.0 PETs in late '70s (!).

The BASIC itself also has a number of added commands for greater efficiency in programming. Such things as IF THEN ELSE, DO LOOP, UNTIL, BEGIN, BEND allow create structure in BASIC programs, although some programs I have seen use these new commands apparently for the sake of it and could be written better and would run faster if the 'old' structure was used. Don't use the new commands just because they are there. Like most BASIC commands there is a time and a place for them.

Other features such as RENUMBER, DELETE, etc and a built-in Monitor make the C128 a delightful programming machine.

The rumoured C64 compatibility of the C64 mode is indeed true (as far as I have ben able to check it's 99.9969% compatible), with the minor exception of location 1 (which reflects the status of the caps lock key in bit 6) and the MAJOR exception of memory location 53296 ($D030) which for safety must NEVER be poked. Try it now! POKE 53296,1. Very strange things happen! All C64 software I have tried including cartridges has run first time.

Although new number key pad is not directly available in C64 mode it is possible to write a machine code wedge which activates it. Leave it alone! At present it may do strange things with terminal programs and some others. Thanks to Lester Bennett and Brian Wendt from the AMPAK BBS, we have managed to download a number of Public Domain C128 programs from Compuserve in the US. I have rewritten one of the terminal programs and it works quite well in 80 column mode. (Only!)

Don't worry too much about the lack of software, just remember how long it took (two years) for good C64 software to appear. Besides now is the time to get in there and write some yourself!

CP/M.

One big problem for most of us dedicated Commodore users is exactly what do we do with the new CP/M mode? ['A> do something now!']

We have been making a collection of CP/M software for those who are interested. Anyone who has access to such should contact Lester or myself and we will build up a library for interested users.

By the way there is a new CP/M BIOS available and several terminal programs for those interested. The new BIOS implements the modem and a couple of other minor features which were left out of the original. Although not officially sanctioned and tested as yet it is available from Lester.

1570 Disk Drive.

I have also been using the 1570 drive for the last few months (until the 1571 is released at end of February- according to a source at Commodore) and the improved speed is very welcome. Loading wordpro documents, programs, high-res pictures and other things is about 5 times faster. When using CP/M the drive makes it fairly quick, unlike with the 1541. Overall the drive seems quite compatible with the 1541 for most things. Some copy

programs don't work properly but that is expected.

Monitors.

I have not had the opportunity to try out the b/w (actually amber) 1201
monitor but the 1901 PAL/RGB (means Red Green Blue) monitor is quite nice
considering the price. It is reasonable value for money. However, I am not
pleased that I can't plug in my video directly so that I can watch TV while
the computer is off doing things!
We have had a variety of opinions on the resolution in 80 column mode. It
is quite acceptable; however I would have liked it to be slightly better as
I find that after a long period in front of the screen it becomes a bit
annoying. Maybe its just me who's the blur and not the monitor after all.
Any comments?

Greg Perry

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REVIEWS

SUPERSCRIPT 128

by Precision Software Ltd   R.R.P. $149.95

Probably the most commonly used and useful program for home computers is
the word processor, and for those C128 owners contemplating the purchase of
such a program I can thoroughly recommend Superscript 128 (not just because
it's one of the only 128 programs currently available).
The program is an upgrade of earlier versions of Superscript and Easy
Script and users will have no problems converting files created with these
earlier versions. In most cases almost no conversion is required and old
files will load and print with minimum trouble. Superscript 128 is also
compatible with Superbase 128 and both programs can co-exist in memory and
exchange information with each other.
Superscript 128 is supplied on a single flippy disk with the word processor
on the front side and a dictionary creator, that will produce either a
British or American spelling checker, on the rear. The comprehensive Users
Manual contains a 43 page tutorial for first time users, a 97 page
reference guide plus much more. Beginners should start with the tutorial
section, while users who are familiar with earlier word processors may find
that they can follow their noses as the whole process is menu driven, with
the command lines displaying exactly what is happening at any time. Do not
completely disregard the manual, however, as it contains much additional
information.
Printer type, screen colours, key definitions and layout commands can be
pre-defined in a Default File which is automatically loaded when you use
the program. The Printer Definition part of the Default File ensures that
a document file containing printer features entered for your particular
printer will print out on any other printer that supports that particular
feature. This is much better than Easy Script where what was Underline on
your printer came out as Enhanced on another printer etc.
One of the most useful features that I have found is the ability to define
Command Keys and have them subsequently activated automatically whenever
the program is used. This allows the user to customise the program to suit
a particular need and also minimises the number of keystrokes required to
access certain features, for example;
the key strokes needed to underline and boldface one word in a sentence are

- CTRL V, Fl, F, U, S, Fl, F, B, S, CTRL E, CTRL H, Fl, F, U, E, Fl, F, B, E, CTRL V. By defining a command key this can all be entered using just two key strokes. Keys 0 to 9 are pre-defined in the defaults file supplied with the program but these may be altered to suit the user. With a little thought in setting up your defaults file a lot of effort can be saved later on.

Some other useful features of Superscript 128 are, a five function calculator which may be used interactively or from within your document and the ability to use two separate text areas. It also has all the usual features of home computer word processors. The only desirable feature that I would like to have seen included would be the ability to sort lists into columns, but most other word processors do not have this feature either. I also feel that the price (approx $150) will stop many people from purchasing this program, particularly as they could buy Easy Script for about $20 and run it on their Cl28 in 64 mode.

Cliff Pottinger

"JANE" - Wordprocessor/Spreadsheet/Database for C-128
By Commodore and Arktronics Corporation - R.R.P. $100.00

Our Review Copy by courtesy of C.W. Electronics

This program with the funny name (is "Tarzan" next?) is a direct translation of an Apple program. By means of symbols on the screen (known as 'Icons') we can pick the different options by pointing a joystick or a 'mouse' to the different symbols on the screen, and the program takes the necessary actions.

The package comes with three disks: the main program disk, a 'help' disk, and a so-called 'storage' disk (this one holds your files).

What surprised me more than anything else is the fact that the program only works in the 40-column mode, but on reflection it did make sense, because new C-128 owners may only have a TV set or monitor which will only give them 40 columns.

The other reason is that characters are re-defined throughout the three main programs and this is much easier to do on a 40 column screen than on an 80 column screen. As an example you can pick between large, medium and small characters. Large characters are the standard 40 characters per line, medium has 64 characters and small has 80 characters per line. The medium and small characters are quite legible on the 1901 monitor, but you may have problems with some TV sets.

I feel that this program is directly aimed at the beginner. An experienced user of programs such as 'Easy Script', 'Multiplan', etc would find these three programs rather limiting, but for the newcomer to wordprocessing and spreadsheets they may well be ideal. In fact anybody who only wants to do the occasional bit of wordprocessing or so will probably find the program completely adequate.

But now for a more detailed look at the different modules.

'JANE WRITE' is the wordprocessor. Once your initial screen appears you point the moving hand to the typewriter and than this module is loaded. You are requested to insert your storage disk which will give you a list of files on the disk. You are than requested to pick a file or start a new document. Rather unusually you have to specify the document's name before you have created the document, but no matter. Users of more conventional word processors may be rather surprised with it's main feature, namely "what you see on the screen is what you get". There are no formatting commands visible on the screen! Instead you go to the different icons for

Centering, Left - or Right Justification, Bold Face or Underlining etc, and than move the hand to the line you are working on - and hey presto! - there is your text on the screen; centered or underlined etc.

Margins are set on the top line with special markers which show you exactly where the left and right margins are. There is even a special marker for paragraph indentation. There are special symbols for Insertion of text, Deletion of text, Copying of text to another area etc. You can also have a title printed on each page of your document, as well as a page number, but these facilities are not quite as extensive as the normal Header and Footer commands. Text can be printed in 10, 12, or 15 characters per inch (if your printer is capable of printing in these sizes), as well as offering draft- or near letter quality printing (again depending on the printer). All Commodore printers are supported, as well as Epson, Star Gemini and Oki printers. If your printer is not amongst them you can create your own special printer file from a utility program on the disk.

These are some of the main features of 'Jane Write'. Probably not enough for the experienced processor of words, but these people may be better off with "Super Script". It is certainly more than adequate for the occasional user.

"JANE CALC" is the spreadsheet of the package, and in my humble opinion the least successful module of the three. Compared with some other spreadsheets there are fewer cells available, and putting values or formulae in the individual cells is clumsy compared with a more conventional spreadsheet. Information generated with this spreadsheet can be incorporated in letters written with "Jane Write".

"JANE LIST" is the data base element. It offers most of the standard features of a standard data base program. You can have up to 15 fields per record, and offers features for sorting by different fields and in different order etc. It can also be integrated with "Jane Write" for form letters etc.

The real surprise came when I read that every field could be as long as you like it to be! Most data base programs utilize relative files where you pre-determine the length of all the fields. After defining the maximum record length the program usually informs you how many records your disk will hold. No such information is supplied by "Jane List", so imagine my surprise when, on checking the directory of the storage disk, I found that all files generated by the three modules were program (PRG) files! This does not have to deter the newcomer at all, but it does mean that when you add or change information to the data base module the total file has to be re-written. On the strength of this I do feel that "Jane List" is fine for relatively small data files, but I could not imagine it being used for large customer- or stock control files.

All told I think the total package is fine for beginners. It gives them an insight in the use of three very important aspects of computing. For domestic usage they may never require anything more elaborate, but I can imagine a businessman/woman wanting something more sophisticated.

As an aside I would like to mention that during the Computer Expo held last November I had a good look at the "AMIGA", which makes extensive use of 'Icons', as does the "Mackintosh" and some other computers. My own feelings are that with familiarity these Icons could become more of a hindrance than a help, and direct keyboard entry would still be the preferred way for the more experienced user.
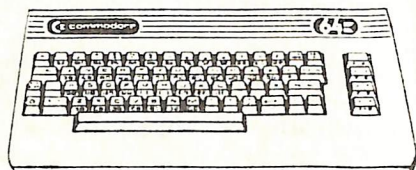
Ralph De Vries.

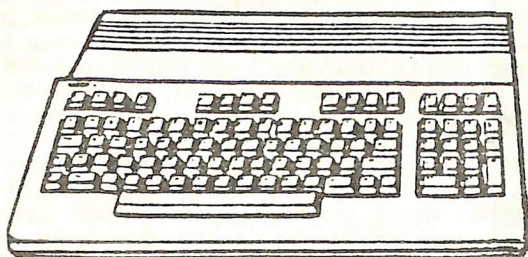# COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.

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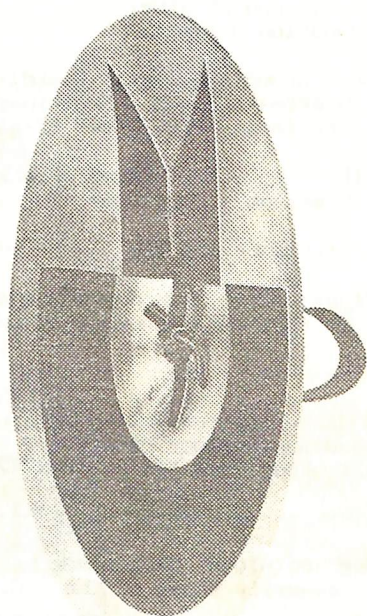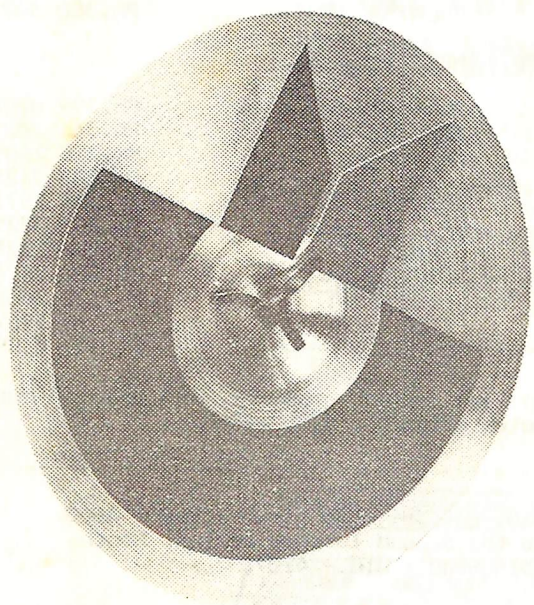
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