



CURSOR

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

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MAY 1986

VOL.2 NO.10

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CLUB ROOMS: Playgr. & Recr. Assn. H.Q. Bldg. Love St. Spring Hill, Brisbane

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DIARY FOR JUNE

Group meeting on Tuesday, 3rd June 1986, at 7.30 pm in our Club Rooms in Love St. (near Water St.) Spring Hill.

How the Q1 disk works - An explanation

Demonstration of new C-128 Software

Question & Answer (hopefully!) Session

Workshop meeting on Sunday, 15th June 1986, from 1pm till 5pm in the Guidance Officers Training Centre, Bayswater Street, Milton.
Bring your programming- or hardware problems, as well as your own computer equipment! SPECIAL SESSION: COMMUNICATION & MODEM PROBLEMS!
Opportunity to copy the group's Public Domain Disks.
contact 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.

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 4th Monday of the month (7-10pm) in the Sunbury School in Alice St.

Contact: Terry Baade (16 Mouquet Lane, M'borough, 4650) at 21 2271 (w) or 21 5059 a.h.

If you would like to start a sub-group in your suburb or district contact Terry Steer, Sub-Group coordinator for the C.C.U.G. (Q.) INC. for further details and advice.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

AMIGA Sub-Group will be meeting in the Guidance Officers Training Centre - Bayswater Rd. - Milton : Details to follow
Contact Norm Chambers on 341 5651 (a.h.)

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.

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: Stan Seymour - Ph. 263 7210, a.h.
Programming Advisor: Hank Deucker - Ph. (075) 66 1317, a.h.

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LIBRARIAN'S REPORT - 7th May 1986

by Maurie Hawkyard

My thanks go out to the majority of borrowers who noted our requirement in the last report for all items on loan to be returned by the last meeting in order to facilitate the changeover to the new card system, and a smack on the wrist to those that I must telephone in the next day or so due to non-return of borrowed items.

I also express gratitude to the forbearance and good humour of members who have tolerated the bottlenecks, frustrations and standing in line during last night's meeting while the new method was installed. From here on it can only improve.

Additional items are added to each library section each month and listings of the software and books will continue to be displayed at meetings, but the sheer volume of the magazine listing precludes our continuing to display listings of this section. However, a copy will be available for perusal on request should it be needed.

In the Public Domain disk arena you will have noted seen listings in the April Cursor for disks UE & UF. These will have catalogue numbers of 020 and 021 respectively instead of the 019 & 020 shown in the listing as we already had a 019 number in use.

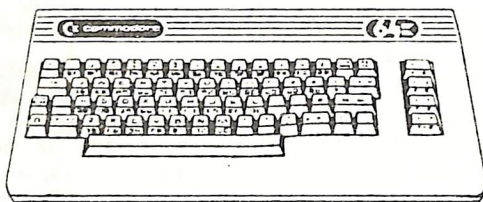
Bill Bohlen tells me that another disk, 022 (UH) will be ready by the next Milton workshop on 18.5.86 and Lester Bennett has provided three disks, 023 (UI) Terminal Progs, 024 (UJ) BBS Progs, and 025 (UK) Kermit Pack, all for our modem users, while Cliff Pottinger has compiled what I have been told is an impressive 128 disk, 026 (UL) 128 Mediocrity (a misleading choice of title, I suspect), which is listed elsewhere in this issue.

The disk library also has 027 (UM) RTTY for radio teletype etc., which will be of interest to amateur radio enthusiasts, and lastly, for the time being, there is 028 (UN) VIC20 CCUGQ INC which has a selection of Vic20 programs from Compute's Gazette. Quite a smorgasbord of new programs.

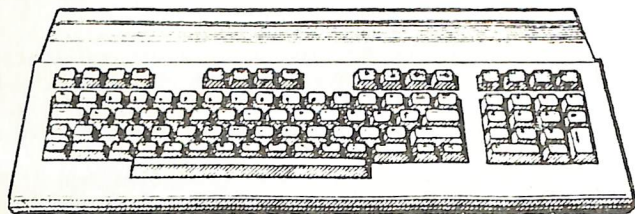
commodore COMPUTER

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EDITORIAL

Since our group was founded in 1981 our members have gone through a variety of Commodore computers, starting with the different models of the PET, followed by the VIC-20, the C-64 and now the C-128. Despite the differences in the computers they have a substantial family resemblance, and we all know (more or less) what the other members are talking about.

It is probably difficult to comprehend, but, after the official unveiling of the Amiga during our main May meeting, our group will never be the same again, because the Amiga does not bear any family resemblance to existing Commodore computers.

Not only is the resemblance lost, but basically the new computer is targeted at a different class of user.

The Amiga is potentially a computer for designers, lay-out artists in advertising and related fields, movie- and TV producers, engineers and draftsmen, sound engineers, musicians, rock bands etc etc, and with the right business programs it will also find a home in the office.

For this reason the Management Committee has decided to form a separate Amiga Sub-Group which will operate (within our present group structure) as a semi-independent unit, with its own sub-committee and its own (separate) meetings. This does not mean that it will be an "exclusive" group - in fact it will be open to all our members - but rather a group of users who have their own programming and interfacing problems to solve. They will have different computer languages, different operating systems, different screen editing facilities - in fact just about everything about the Amiga is different from previous Commodore systems. Thus it follows that present Commodore users will derive very little benefit from discussing their problems with an Amiga owner and vice versa.

It is of course quite feasible that in the not too distant future we will all be owning Amigas or their equivalents. In the meantime however we feel that our present plans are in the best interest of all members.

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On behalf of the management committee I would like to offer a special word of thanks to Carol and Royce Jones of Computer View in Bundamba for presenting the Amiga demonstration during our main May meeting.

It is a refreshing change to see a relatively new dealer come along and offer quite spontaneously to put on this demonstration, and one might quite legitimately ask "why didn't or offer to do the same?"

Consider the following:- if out of approximately two hundred members attending the May meeting some 10% decide to buy an Amiga in the near future, (and I don't think that that figure is an over-estimation) and only half of these decide to buy from Computer View, - then putting on this demonstration was a worthwhile exercise.

With a membership in excess of 600 and likely to grow even more with the Amiga on the scene, there is a potentially captive market here that progressive Commodore dealers just cannot afford to ignore.

Ralph De Vries

--oo0oo--

NOTES & GOSSIP

MAY MEETING

A very well attended meeting. Our secretary was unable to be present, and your newsletter editor was able to wrap up the secretarial business in five seconds flat! Even our president had less to say than usual! After all, most of us had come to see the Amiga demo which was presented by Computer View of Bundamba, who arrived with a total of four (!) Amiga outfits. Thus the staff of Computer View, as well as our very own Peter Wharton who has been busy assessing the graphics capabilities of this machine, manned the four outfits to demonstrate graphics packages, word processors, music programs, speech synthesis etc. Prospective Amiga owners have started to give up smoking, drinking, and assorted other vices, just to lay their hands on these lovely machines.

AMIGA SUB-GROUP

As from this month we will have a new and separate Amiga Sub-Group. See this month's editorial for the reasoning behind this decision. Further details are still to be worked out, but if any of our existing members have purchased an Amiga recently it would be appreciated if they can pass this information on to our secretary.

AMIGA SOFTWARE & LITERATURE

Amiga owners can look forward to being flooded with new software during the next few months. After an initial shaky start the American software houses are starting to pour out software in substantial quantities now. Both graphics (including Computer Aided Design packages) as well as sound packages are strongly represented, but business software such as accounting packages as well as D-Base III have been, or are about to be released. Compute! books have released seven titles for the Amiga. They are "AMIGA DOS", "AMIGA PROGRAMMER'S GUIDE", "BEGINNERS GUIDE TO THE AMIGA", "ELEMENTARY AMIGA BASIC", "ADVANCED AMIGA BASIC", "INSIDE AMIGA GRAPHICS", and "KIDS AND THE AMIGA". That's not bad for a new computer!

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A battle of words is raging in the USA about the merits or otherwise of Commodore's Amiga versus Atari's ST. (Not much of a contest here in Australia as current Atari ST pricing does not make it very competitive.) This is all very childish, but consider the following:

- A.- The Amiga custom chips have been largely designed by Jay Miner, who designed the graphics chips for Atari's 2600 and eight-bit computers.
- B.- The Atari ST is the product of Jack Tramiel and Sons and various other ex-Commodore designers.

Thus effectively the Amiga is an Atari design and the Atari ST derives from the Commodore stable!

--ooo--

The following quote comes from the USA magazine "INFO 64":

"The Atari is a very good computer at a terrific price,
while the Amiga is a terrific computer at a very good price!"

NEW SERVICE FACILITIES

Elsewhere in this issue you will find an advert for Don's Computer Repair Centre. The first thing you will notice that Don has moved - he is now located at Shop 10 in the Whites Hill Shopping Village in Samuel Street, Camp Hill. His new phone number is 395 2211.

The second thing that you will notice is that Don has been appointed by Commodore as the Official Warranty Repair Agent, which means that Don, who previously worked as a technician for Commodore in Sydney and Brisbane, will be doing the guarantee repairs on all C-64 and C-128 equipment. Congratulations Don!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It has been tentatively decided by the Management Committee to hold the A.G.M. during our August meeting (Tuesday 5th August 1986). Further details will be in the June issue of this newsletter.

FOR C-128 OWNERS ONLY

Type in: SYS 32800,123,45,6 - press RETURN and presto!

BASIC PROGRAMMING COURSES

Greg Perry is again running Basic Programming Courses at the Ithaca TAFE. There is a Basic 1 Course which runs for 17 weeks and you can choose between Monday or Thursday Nights. Duration is 3 hours per night. Cost for the course is only \$5.00!

For those who have completed the Basic 1 course, or have a reasonable knowledge of Basic programming there is a Basic 2 Course which is held on Wednesday nights - same duration, same costs. Phone Greg Perry on 38 3295, between 10am - 4pm for further details.

HARDWARE PROJECTS

Our group has successfully designed and produced a modem. We would like to suggest three more ideas for possible development by the group. These items are in most cases manufactured in the USA and cost a small fortune in Australia. The three items are:

A 3-slot Cartridge Expansion Port (w. built in reset?) for C-64's.

A Printer Interface with all the best features of existing interfaces for Non-Commodore printers.

A Printer Buffer (8K or more)

If any of our members have any ideas about the above, how about contacting Roger Haigh, our Technical Coordinator?

SPEEDSCRIPT VERSION 3.0 & 3.2 MODIFICATION

To convert the above version of Speedscript to default to disk, three pokes are needed.

Load Speedscript into memory then type in direct mode, without running the program (!):

POKE 4904,234: POKE 4905,169: POKE 4906,68

and press RETURN. Be very careful when you enter this line!

Now re-save Speedscript with a different filename to distinguish it from the original. The program no longer prints the usual DISK OR TAPE? prompt before loading or saving a document.

[Submitted by Rob Adamson from a reader's letter in 'Compute!' magazine.]

ATTENTION SUPERBASE USERS

Precision Software of the UK has just released "SUPERBASE: THE BOOK" by Dr. Bruce Hunt. The UK price is £11.95. No details of an Australian release yet, nor local price, but we'll keep you informed as details come to hand.

NEW ADVERTISERS

We would like to welcome the following new advertisers:

Computer View of 21 Brisbane Road, Bundamba (For those of you who attended the May meeting there's no introduction required.)

Tully Compu-Print of 150 Graceville Ave. Graceville, for Disks and Printing accessories.

Sundown Computer Centre of Kippa-Ring, but shortly moving to Chermside. Most of our older members know Les Van Tavier quite well.

Don's Computer Repair Centre (well he is not really a new advertiser, but he has moved to new premises!)

Please members, do support our advertisers!!!

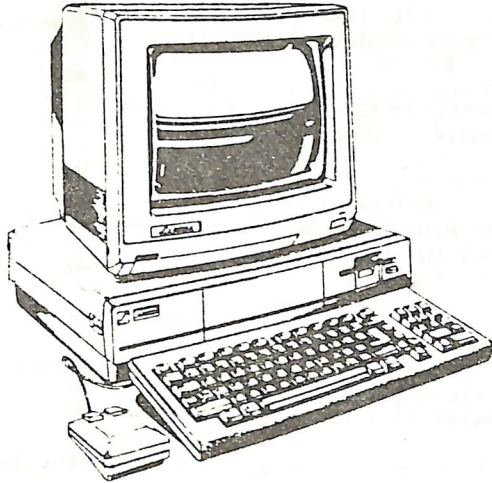
128 MEDIOCRITY , UL

```
C/128 DEMO #1      :Demo of 128 in both 40 and 80 column modes concurrently.
C128.DEMO.2       :Loaded by the above program.
C128.DEMO.6       :      "
SPRITES & SOUNDS  :      "
SPRITE.SHAPES    :      "
C/128 DEMO #2     :      "
AD                :Hi-res screens loaded by the above program.
AD2               :      "
SUE               :      "
KAREN            :      "
MICROMETER       :      "
DIP              :      "
BESSEL           :      "
HOPALONG         :      "
TEX              :      "
PALS             :      "
WINSTON          :      "
SQUEEZE         :      "
128ASM           :Machine code assembler.
128EDT           :Machine code editor.
EDTASM.DOC       :Sequential file of instructions for editor and assembler.
TACOTERM.128    :Terminal Program for 128 and Modem.
ULTRA HIRES BOOT :Boots ULTRA HIRES - an 80 column graphics aid from RUN
                  :Magazine Feb 86. You will need the magazine to use this.
ULTRA HIRES      :The 80 column hi-res graphics aid.
UHR TEXT DEMO    :Demo of 80 column text sizes. Run ULTRA HIRES BOOT first.
UHR 3D BAR DEMO  : " " " bar graphs. "
UHR 3D ANIMATION : " " " 3D graphics. "
UHR CIRCLE DEMO  : " " " graphics. "
UHR PGM SETUP    :Set up program to allow you to use ULTRA HIRES.
ART80C           :Another 80 column hires graphics demo.(Sloooooow)
FAB              :A faster version of 80 column graphics demo.
LINES8           :Loaded by the above two programs.
ART40C           :A 40 column hi-res demo.
AUTO BOOT MAKER  :Creates auto boot disks.
```

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IMPORTANT NOTICE!

As from the 1st of June
we will be moving to:
744 Gympie Road - Chermside

Contact Les Van Tavier or Phil Stafford

REMEMBER — WE ARE COMPUTER SPECIALISTS!

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 (+ \$2.00 Postage)
COLOURED DISKS (Red, Blue, Green, a.o.) - \$3.00 ea (+\$1.00 Postage)
DISK BOXES (hold 90 disks) - \$20.00 ea (+ \$5.00 Postage)
DISK NOTCHER - \$8.00 (+ \$1.00 Postage)
"PUBLIC DOMAIN BOOK" - \$5.00 ea (+\$1.00 Postage)
"STARTING WITH DISK DRIVES" - \$2.00 (+\$1.00 Postage)
TURBO-ROM for C-64 or C-128: Members price - \$40.00
Customised version (your choice of screen start-up colours + your name on the start-up screen): \$45.00
USER PORT PLUG (with Key Way) - \$8.00 (+\$1.00 postage)
USER PORT PLUG BACK SHELL - \$3.00 (+\$1.00 postage)
COMPUTER DESKS (2 shelves - steel frame) - \$60.00

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

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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
UPGRADE EPROM to convert 1526 Printer to 802 Printer - \$20.00

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

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AVAILABLE FOR HIRE TO MEMBERS ONLY: 1526 COMMODORE PRINTER

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

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EQUIPMENT MODIFICATIONS performed by Anthony Thyssen and Terry Arnott during main (Milton) workshop- and Graceville Sub-Group meetings.
For further details contact Anthony Thyssen on 870 1862 (a.h.).

SERVICES OFFERED:

RESET SWITCHES: Plug in	\$6.00	RESET RESTORER: Plug In	\$4.00
Built in	\$6.00	Built In	\$6.00
[On some 64's the plug in reset switch does not work. In this case you may return switch for a full refund or swap it for a built in switch.]		[Tap reset switch while pushing this button. This will reset any protected memory program.]	
DEVICE NUMBER CHANGE: Printer/Plotter 4-6	\$6.00	Disk Drive 8-9	\$6.00
TURBO ROM INSTALLED: Computer with Socket	\$5.00	Socket required	\$7.00
DISK DRIVE ALIGNED, CLEANED, and OILED	\$6.00		
[If time permits a free alignment check will be performed]			
SERIAL SWITCHING BOX (Order Only)	\$14.00		
SERIAL PORT DOUBLER (Order Only)	\$14.00		

ABOUT RESET SWITCHES IN THE C-64

by Anthony Thyssen

Recently I received a letter from one of my clients in Bathurst (NSW) who had purchased a plug in reset switch which would not work with his C-64, although it worked perfectly well in his dealer's C-64. Here is a precis of my reply:

Thank you for your letter. The Reset Button which you have purchased does work properly, as you found out when you tried it on your local dealer's computers.

Your own machine is obviously a later model C-64, as in these Commodore has decided to add a transistor to the circuitry. This transistor will only allow the reset signal out of the computer's serial port but not in, as the reset button was intended to do. This is very annoying to both myself and my customers. The only simple solution is either to have the button built in (something which is not of much use to you, because of the distance involved), or return the switch to me for a refund, or if you do want one at all cost, return the button and I'll send you a cartridge port reset button.

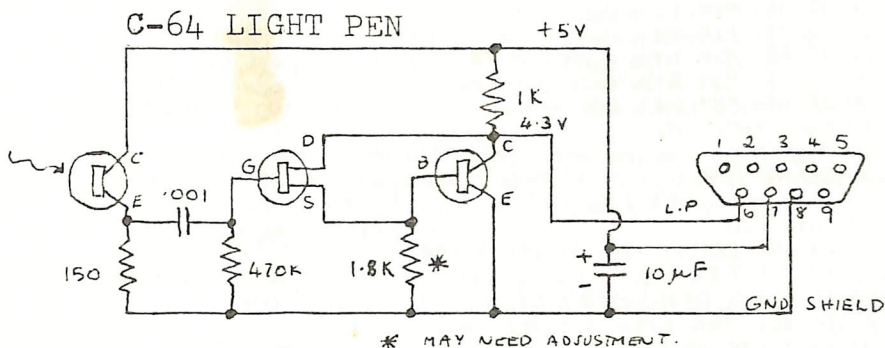
This new button has three drawbacks, namely it ties up the cartridge port, it doesn't look as nice, and most importantly doesn't allow you use the new-fangled - wait for it! - Reset Restorer. This is a new device which acts like a shift key to the Reset Button, and thus nullifies any protection used to stop the Reset Button. I'll leave the final choice up to you.

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MAKE YOUR OWN LIGHT PEN FOR THE C-64


by Graham Mackay (Point Vernon)


If you are handy with a soldering iron, here's an easy inexpensive light pen to build for a few dollars.



FLAT

 T1L414
 (TANDY)


 2N5484


 BC549C

PORT 1 PLUG
SOLDER SIDE

While experimenting with this project I tried several integrated circuits, all of which were susceptible to static from the monitor and mis-handling etc. This circuit seems rugged, as I have been using the light pen by holding the bare board while making adjustments.

You could make a very small printed circuit to mount the components, but I used a piece of matrix board 15mm x 72 mm with a few pc pins at each end to terminate the cables. Solder 1 - 2 metres of shielded stereo cable to a 9 pin 'D' plug, using a 5 mm I.D. sleeve and back shell clamp for security. Before plugging in your light pen, check with a multimeter that pins 6 and 7 are not grounded - in fact they should read 2 - 3 K.Ohms to ground. Plug in, apply power, and measure the voltage at the collector of the BC549C - this should be 4.2 - 4.6 volts. If not, adjust the values of the BC549C base resistor - it might be in the range of 820 - 2.2 K.

An alternative method is to mount the circuitry inside the backshell of a 9 pin D-plug. It should be plastic though, such as the Tandy Cat. No. 276-1539.

A piece of matrix board, 6 x 5 holes will just fit. Then the pen part need only contain the photo transistor and the 150 Ohm load resistor. Now type in:

```
5 PRINT CHR$(144): POKE 53281,1
10 X = 53267
20 PRINT PEEK (X);: PRINT PEEK (X+1)
30 GOTO 20
```

This will give you a range of X-Y values for the coordinates of the light pen. Take a note of the readings in the top left hand corner with the pen, as you may need to change those -24 and -48 values in line 160 of the following program.

Using 'Simon's Basic' at this stage for simplicity, type in Autol0,10 then:

```
10 COLOUR 5,1
20 HIRES 5,1: MULTI 5,7,10
30 TEXT 0,1, "0 = RUB 1 = GREEN 2 = YEL 3 = RED", 1,1,6
40 TEXT 0,190, "N = NEW SCREEN E = ELLIPSE", 1,1,7
50 GET A$
60 IF A$= "0" THEN C=0
70 IF A$= "1" THEN C=1
80 IF A$= "2" THEN C=2
90 IF A$= "3" THEN C=3
100 IF A$= "N" THEN 10
110 X=0: Y=0: K=0
120 A= PEN X
130 X=X+A: K=K+1
140 IF K = 16 THEN 160
150 GOTO 120
160 X= INT (X/16) -24: Y= PEN Y -48
170 IF X<1 THEN X=1
180 IF X>159 THEN X=159
190 IF Y<1 THEN Y=1
200 IF Y>199 THEN Y=199
210 PLOT X,Y,C
220 IF A$= "E" THEN CIRCLE X,Y,30,15,C
230 GOTO 30
```

This program will give you some idea of what's possible from BASIC, and perhaps wet your appetite to write in more complex functions such as BOX, RAY, PAINT etc.

It uses 16 readings to give better accuracy by averaging, but would be done better and quicker using machine language, as used in the "TECH - SKETCH" program. Any machine language experts out there?

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Graham MacKay will be very grateful if there could be some follow-ups to his article on light pens. He feels that there is plenty of room for improvement, particularly in respect of the program to drive the pen. There are still problems with the 'Jitters' which need straightening out. So, present and future light pen builders and programmers let us have your ideas, programs, and suggestions.

Editor

--oo0oo--

SHIPWRECK AND MY COMPUTER

By Graham Robinson

My wife and I were unlucky enough to be passengers on the M.V. "MIKHAIL LERMONTOV", the Russian Cruise Liner which sank in Port Gore near the entrance to Queen Charlotte Sound (at the Northern end of the South Island of New Zealand) on the night of 16th February this year.

Can you imagine abandoning ship in pitch darkness with rain pouring down and a 25 knot wind blowing? We were amongst the last passengers off the ship (we were among the younger ones aboard!). By the time we abandoned ship it was listing at a 25 degree angle to Starboard, and we had to climb down a rope ladder on the Port side to get to the lifeboats which were about 20 feet below us. It was quite an experience I can tell you. I don't like heights, and there is no way you would get me to climb down that ladder in normal circumstances. Looking back, it was a miracle that they were able to save all the passengers, particularly in view of their age group.

Whilst the actual shipwreck was a traumatic experience, I think that we only realised the impact of all that had happened when we got home and started to assess our losses. We got off the ship with only the clothes we stood up in, all the rest of our things went down with it.

No! I didn't have my computer with me on the ship, and just as well as it turned out.

Well, what has all this got to do with computers you may well ask?

Have you ever had to make an insurance claim? I'll bet that if you ever do need to, you surely will appreciate the assistance you can get from a good, easy to use program on your computer.

First of all you will find that you will need to list out all of the items that you have lost, and this process could take you several days as you gradually remember what they were. Then when you want to lodge your claim, you will find that the insurance company will ask you to give particulars of the date of purchase of each item, its purchase price, and its present value. The insurers will also ask you to provide documentation to substantiate the values of all items claimed.

In my case the insurance claim was further complicated by the fact that I had to submit separate claims to three different bodies, one to the travel

insurance firm for baggage insurance, one to our household insurers for personal items (e.g. photographic equipment, wife's jewellery etc.), and another claim to the Shipping Company for the balance of any loss not covered by the two insurance policies.

Well, you can see that things were starting to get rather complicated, and early in the piece I decided that the best way to go about the job would be to use a Data Base Program. However the program chosen would have to have a fair degree of flexibility in its reporting function, but shouldn't take an age to program to give the results needed. (Superbase users might just like complications, but I prefer to get in and get the job done in the minimum time).

After looking through the various Data Base Programs I had used on the Commodore previously, e.g. Superbase, The Manager, Data Manager 11, Research Assistant, and Totl.Infomaster, I decided that Infomaster had the flexibility and "user friendliness" that I wanted. It is not the fastest program in the world by a long shot, especially when printing out a report with a sort that is three fields deep, but it is reasonably "crashproof" and does the job. An essential requirement in any program chosen was the ability to restructure the file by adding or deleting fields to provide the different reports required for the three separate claims, and this is relatively easy with Infomaster. I also needed to categorise items, and to provide sub-totals for each category, as well as a total for each claim, and again this is easy using the report function of Infomaster.

After deciding on the program to use, the next thing I had to do was to make a list of all the things we could remember that we had lost, so I set up a simple file with fields for ITEM, NAME OF OWNER (wife or self), VALUE, and CATEGORY (e.g. clothing, jewellery etc.). I then entered everything we could remember into this file, and printed out a report which was sorted into order of NAME, CATEGORY, and ITEM). Then, over a period of a week or so, as we remembered other items I added them to the file.

Until you have a loss such as this, you don't realise just how hard it is to remember all of the items you have lost, and you will find that long after the event you will remember something else that you had forgotten to list.

Anyhow, to cut a long story short, I was then able to restructure the file and add further fields for DATE OF PURCHASE, and PURCHASE PRICE, and then print out the individual reports for the various claims, with the Program doing all of the sorting and summing the totals for each claim for me.

I am convinced that I could not have done as thorough a job of submitting these claims without a computer, and in fact I feel sure that the computer has partially paid for itself because of the more comprehensive claims I was able to lodge with its assistance. It also enabled me to submit professional looking documents.

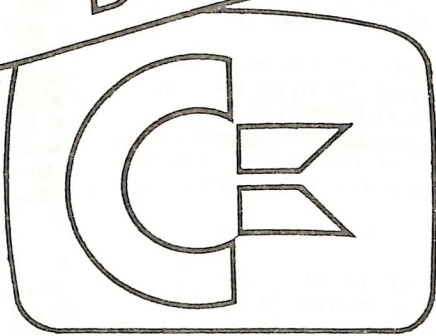
After this experience, I have compiled an inventory file which includes all our household items, should I ever need to make a claim in that area.

I would strongly urge all Club Members who have a Data Base Program for their Commodore to do the same thing as you will find that it will be invaluable should you be unfortunate to suffer a loss requiring an insurance claim. Leave a hard copy printout of your household inventory with a friend or relative, as it won't be of any use to you if the only copy is destroyed when the house burns down.

--oo0oo--

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ABOUT PRINTERS

by Ralph De Vries

In the previous issue of this newsletter I gave a short overview of Commodore's new MPS 1000 printer. You may recall that in general I liked this printer, particularly because no separate interface is required. Regrettably the printer samples in the newsletter did not look very good. The reason for this is quite simple; Greg Perry had just about worn out the ribbon and we didn't have a spare one, and as I was under time pressure we had to settle for the rather pale looking sample! With a new ribbon results are quite good indeed.

As mentioned in the review we set up the printer in IBM mode, chose the Epson printer file with Superscript and thus were able to access most of the printer features which couldn't be obtained in the Commodore mode; you may recall that in Commodore mode the printer seems to act like an 802/803. However when we tried to print out some graphics programs such as Doodle, Koalaprinter, etc. we discovered that in the Epson mode the printer just sat there and would not print at all. We then changed back to the Commodore 1525/801 mode, and had no problems at all printing out hi-res graphics pictures.

It seems that the so-called IBM mode does not quite emulate the standard Epson mode when it comes to printing out hi-res graphics. This seems a pity as, conceivably, printing out graphics could be faster in this mode. I do feel though, given time and experimentation, this IBM mode could be made to work with this hi-res graphics mode. In the meantime we will have to use the Commodore mode for these graphics programs.

--000--

We received a sample of print styles produced on a Brother M-1109 dot matrix printer from our member W.W. Schafer of Tewantin, for which our thanks. He uses this printer with a Super Graphics interface, and by and large is quite happy with the combination. However he does not like the lower case 'l', 'i' and 'j' which this printer produces. As the brochure of the M-1109 printer showed these particular letters to have a different appearance, he wondered if his interface could be the culprit. Well, I can assure you that your interface is not at fault. It appears that your printer has a different character ROM chip which produces a different style of letter compared with the style illustrated in the brochure. Whether your printer is a newer type or an older type is something we are unable to assess. Possibly the Australian distributor may be able to shed more light on this. Rest assured that your printer as such is not at fault.

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Another letter was received from Jimmy Fang from Forest Hill (V.). Again, our thanks.

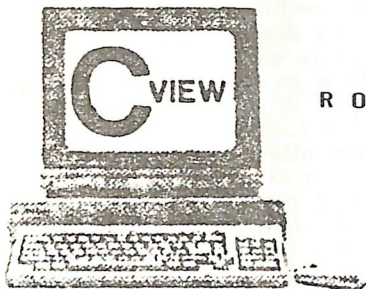
Jim tells us that he recently purchased a RITEMAN C+ printer which now also offers Near Letter Quality mode. Late last year the Q'ld distributor of this printer promised us a sample for evaluation, but this never materialised.

One of our Brisbane members, Lindsay Whipp, has just purchased one of these printers, and his review follows herewith. It does offer Italics, which the Commodore MPS 1000 does not, but than the MPS 1000 offers 12 characters per inch, the so-called 'Elite' mode, which is not obtainable on the Riteman!

--oo0oo--

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REVIEWS

RITEMAN C+ PRINTER

by Lindsay Whipp

After the recent article appearing in the "Cursor" about the merits of the Commodore MPS 1000 printers, I confess I joined the hordes of people beating a path to Chandler's door. I had been wanting to buy a printer for yonks, but, as I have a small business, was not prepared to settle for any printer that could not offer NLQ mode with bells and whistles - all for a very reasonable price, of course! However, true to form, Commodore seem to have "missed the boat" again, and, at the time of writing, stocks of the MPS 1000 are still not available.

However, for those interested in an alternative other than the Epson (which requires an interface...), consider the Riteman C+, by C.Itoh. Myers at Brookside carry them at \$480 and the printer can also be demonstrated there, as I took the precaution of testing it thoroughly before I bought mine, and copied a "Demo" file for them so they could demonstrate the NLQ potential in-store.

After two weeks of experimentation, I can now report that I'm happy with my choice!

The Riteman connects via a serial cable in the same way as a Commodore printer - a built-in interface - so Ralph's phobia about extra wires may be accommodated. So far as dipswitches are concerned, they are factory-set to CBM emulation, and, after trying every combination I can dream up, I've finally set them back to this combination for various reasons:

1. Most CBM users need a printer compatible with programs such as "Print Shop" or "Sky Travel", which assume a CBM output format. The proposition has been put to me that it's a fault of the programs in question that "Epson"-style printers are not accommodated, but the fact remains that these popular programs will be around for a good while yet. By changing dipswitches I set up the Riteman in it's "Plus" mode... or, more descriptively, in it's "Epson" mode... and it performed perfectly with Easy Script and OmniWriter. But when my kids wanted to use "Print Shop" I had to fiddle with switches! And then remember which mode it was in!
2. I've discovered that the common obsessive rejection of "Escape Codes" is unreasonable! They're not hard to understand, and the use of them allows me to "tell" my printer to "be" an Epson-type or to "be" a CBM-type by embedding a simple command in text output via a word processor. If I'm not using a word processor for correspondence or invoices or what-have-you, then I don't really care if the print quality is traditional CBM-limited.

The Riteman has two basic modes, each of which has sub-modes, and include: CBM Mode. When you power on, this is what you're in! Actually, in CBM Graphic Mode (Upper case Letters plus graphics symbols). CBM Business Mode is Upper/Lower case & no graphics symbols, and in this sub-mode there is yet another sub-mode (sub-sub-mode? Ultra-sub-mode?) which is CBM Business NLQ Mode. Different font. The problem with this mode is that, although it offers very attractive features, I don't have a word processor which can access these without defining Escape Codes for every feature. I'm keen, but not that keen!

It's much easier to access these features from within the second major mode, which is:

Plus Mode. In this mode, you can effectively call the printer an Epson, and most word processors, spreadsheets and the like have built-in formatting for many features when "talking Epson". This article was written with the ever-popular Easy Script, which has, wearing it's Epson

Hat, built-in format commands for every feature except Italics, for which Escape Codes were easily defined. The "Plus" sub-modes are simply Draft and NLQ. Some examples:

This is NORMAL Draft!
This is EXPANDED Draft!
This is EMBOLDENED Draft!
This is DOUBLE-STRIKE Draft!
This is COMPRESSED Draft!
To print $e=mc^2$ use Superscript Draft!
To print H_2O use Subscript Draft!
This is UNDERLINED Draft!
This is ITALIC Draft!

This is NORMAL NLQ!
This is EXPANDED NLQ!
To print $e=mc^2$ use Superscript NLQ!
To print H_2O use Subscript NLQ!
This is UNDERLINED NLQ!
This is ITALIC NLQ!

Most word processors support multiple commands so that is quite easy to achieve something like Underlined Expanded Italics, or, even in the middle of a sentence, toggle between modes to access something like draft, emboldened, underlined Italics, and then jump back to NLQ... it's not difficult!

My only gripe is the manual which is supplied with the printer. C.Itoh are a Japanese outfit, and the manual is written entirely in Jinglish. All the information is there, like "To set the position of page top, align the position of 2/3" from perforation to matchmark on the film of print scale by turn on manual knob."... it just takes a little while to interpret!

--ooo--

Greg Perry and your editor were fortunate enough to be given a demo by Lindsay of his new printer. The first thing that strikes you is how small it is! With its set of legs it does rather resemble a moon lander, but full marks to C-Itoh for its innovative and clever design!

We did some comparison printouts between the Riteman and the MPS 1000 and cannot make up our mind! Print quality is on a par, though there are differences - thus it comes back to individual preferences. A few facts:

MPS 1000: Good instruction book - only 3 months guarantee - no italics - subscript & superscript don't seem to work in NLQ mode - external dip switches - 1k (1024 char) Buffer.

Riteman C+: Instruction book for Printer experts only! - 12 months guarantee (hurray!) - no Elite mode (12 char. per inch) - needs less desk space (bulk paper supply stores underneath the printer, between the legs) - capable of printing single sheets and even on card board - internal dipswitches - 1 line (80 char) buffer.

STOP PRESS: The Riteman C+ printer can also be purchased by our members from SOFTWARE 80 (a 'proper' computer dealer!) in Milton at the discounted price of \$480.00 on production of their membership card.

HOW CRITICAL SHOULD WE BE?

by Ralph De Vries

Quite a lot of computer software has received extravagant praise, both in the computer press as well as in this newsletter, usually because of some innovative design features, and only much later the failings of the software are becoming apparent.

I hope to illustrate this with a few examples which come to mind. Remember "Multiplan"? Wasn't it marvellous to see this fantastic spreadsheet program available on the C-64? All the features of the original program were retained in the C-64 version - greatest spreadsheet around. What they did not tell you was that, because of the sheer size of the program, it was as slow as the proverbial wet wick, and one's patience was stretched to breaking point.

A second example is "The Newsroom", again rapturously reviewed. Another program written originally I believe for the IBM computer and now available for the C-64. Sure, it is a very nice program indeed, but again oh so slow, with disk swapping every few minutes. If I had to produce this newsletter, using The Newsroom, you would be lucky to get three issues annually!

My third example is a recent newcomer in the C-64 software stakes, namely "Side Ways". You will probably have seen the adverts in the American magazines for this program. It allows you to print a spreadsheet sideways across the paper (on dot matrix printers only) so that you are no longer limited to a printing width of 80 characters, or whatever the limit of your printer is. So, if you have a spreadsheet which is equivalent in width to 240 columns this program will print all 240 columns across the paper. Very nice indeed but, because dot matrix printers are unable to print their characters sideways or upside down, the program has to define every character in hi-res mode. Now, any one of our members who has used Doodle, Printshop or other graphics programs know that printing out hi-res pictures is often not very fast - in fact, depending on printers, interfaces, buffers etc, it usually is extremely slow. Well, I have just seen the new Commodore MPS 1000 printer in action with Side Ways, and it was absolute agony to see it grind away slowly, defining line after line of characters. In fact if you had a really wide spreadsheet it would be good policy to switch the printer on before going to work, and with a little bit of luck your printout might be ready when you come home! After having seen this combination in action I suddenly realize how fast the Commodore daisy wheel printer is!

The second major failing of this program which has not been noticed is the fact that a spreadsheet hasn't only got width, but length as well. If your spreadsheet is 60 rows long Side Ways would be unable to cope with this length, and consequently you would be forced to print your sheet out in several sections, so you are well and truly back at square one!

My verdict: A clever program, but really rather useless. Save your money, and leave well alone.

Well fellow reviewers, here's our new slogan: "Let's get critical!"

--ooOoo--

Our copy from Batteries Included - Canada

by Ralph De Vries

As newsletter editor I demand a lot from my word processors - ease of use, flexibility, large file sizes etc. Compared with the occasional user my demands may seem excessive, but a good word processor does allow me to concentrate on the contents of the newsletter, and that's what matters.

My first W.P. was Easy Script for the C-64; this has become the default standard for this computer. Some years ago I replaced this one with Paperclip, a W.P. with quite a few extra features compared with Easy Script. It employs a key, also known as a 'dongle' which is inserted in joystick port 1. Without this dongle the program won't work. One big advantage is that it does allow you to make as many backup copies as you like, as the program disk is not protected.

The manufacturers, Batteries Included of Canada, are a first rate company. They have a policy of offering upgrades of their programs at very reasonable rates, and on every occasion that I have requested an upgrade of one of their programs they have arrived very promptly from overseas - top marks.

I will not go into details of comparing the above two W.P.'s feature for feature, but will just touch upon the most salient ones. Paperclip offered a wider variety of printer files, thus making it easier to customize your version for a particular Non-Commodore printer. It also offers an 80 column preview mode, which is not easy to read, but is a darned side better than not having 80 columns. Column handling is a dream on Paperclip. One can define information in columns, sort this information, and even move it around - all this is very useful.

However with all these extra features came also some disadvantages. All formatting commands etc have to be on a separate line, which often means wasted file space. In Easy Script it is often possible to include these commands either before or after a line of text, thus saving valuable text space. Paperclip also saves information out as PRG files, which occupy more disk space than SEQ files. Yes, I am aware that Paperclip can also save information as a SEQ file, but by doing this it becomes impossible to append a file with a SEQ file from disk, as the append command only recognizes PRG files. Last but not least the actual file size in terms of screen lines is considerably fewer in Paperclip than in Easy Script, which can be explained by the fact that the Paperclip program itself is about 50% larger than Easy Script, thus allowing less space in memory for files. Despite these disadvantages I found Paperclip the better of the two W.P.'s for my particular requirements, and I know that many fellow group members share my preference.

However, times don't stand still, and with the arrival of the C-128 things have changed rather rapidly.

In 1985 Precision Software, manufacturers of Easy Script, released "Superscript 64", a vastly improved version of the former and still not widely known in Australia - they followed this with an enhanced version of this W.P. for the C-128, which has been reviewed by Cliff Pottinger in the Jan.'86 issue of this news letter. It does have a few minor bugs in it, but hopefully these will be fully cured in future versions. It is this W.P. that I use to produce this news letter.

We have now received the latest version of Paperclip, complete with Spellpack. This copy has been placed in our Lending Library. On one disk there are separate versions for the C-64 and the C-128. For C-128 users there is a boot sector, thus facilitating loading of this program. Side two has the spelling checker as well as some utility programs for backups, printer defaults etc, but these work mainly in C-64 mode only - a pity.

As the differences between Easy Script and Superscript were very substantial indeed, I fully expected to see similar differences between Paperclip C-64 and C-128, however it turns out that the differences are only marginal, and have to admit to being rather disappointed.

But first some facts. The manual is basically the earlier C-64 manual with one additional page of information for the C-128 version. Thus all the good features of the C-64 have been retained, but very few additional ones have been added.

You can have as many as 160 characters on your RGB 80 column monitors in the document preview mode, but it is not easy to read. However for those users who do require printouts on extra wide paper, or use the condensed printing mode a lot, this can be a very valuable feature.

The biggest disappointment was the fact that total file size is limited once again to 498 screen lines in the 80 column mode, compared with 726 lines in Superscript 128. As an example this newsletter requires usually two files in Superscript 128, but would require a minimum of three files in Paperclip 128.

The spelling checker only holds 15000 words, compared with 30000 words in Superscript 128. However both can be expanded by the user, so I don't think that we have to make an issue out of this.

I could fill many pages detailing the different pro's and con's of both packages. My own preferences are for Superscript 128 at this stage, despite the 'bugs', because this package best suits my needs at this point in time. Existing Paperclip 64 users who intend to upgrade to a C-128 are probably better off with the new Paperclip 128, as everything about the program will be familiar.

Some of my readers may have seen W.P.'s on the Amiga or the Macintosh. These are generally known as "W.Y.S.I.W.Y.G.", which stands for 'what you see is what you get'. It means that there are no separate viewing and editing screens, but only one screen which shows your text lay-out exactly as it will be printed. Thus indented text will be indented, bold face or italics appear as such on the screen, in fact 'what you see is what you get'. To be able to implement these features on the C-64 or C-128 requires a lot of memory, because all screen information appears on a high resolution screen, which eats up an awful lot of memory, thus leaving very little memory space for text files. As an example, in the USA one can obtain 'Paperback Writer' in both C-64 and C-128 versions. This W.P. does offer the 'what you see is what you get' approach, but the C-64 version only leaves 7K of memory in 80 column mode or 15k in 40 column mode. The C-128 version has practically 64K available for file storage in the 80 column mode, so this version seems to be the only really useful one.

At this point in time then both Superscript 128 and Paperclip 128 appear to be the best packages around, but this could change overnight. There is certainly plenty of scope for further improvements.

--oo0oo--

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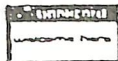
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C-128 VIEWS AND REVIEWS

by Ralph De Vries

The other day I typed in a short game from the Feb/Mar '86 issue of 'Power Play'. The game was not very good, but was a good example of the use of some of the many new Basic 7 commands. However it did use the 'old' (Basic 2) commands in the form of data statements to define eight sprites.

When I finished typing it in and tried out the game I discovered that there was an error in the printed data statements of one of the sprites, as it looked rather 'peculiar'. Rather than trying out different data statements to repair the weird looking sprite, I saved the block of sprites out with the 'BSAVE' command. Next I used the 'SPRDEF' command to re-load the eight sprites in question, and thus was able to look at the faulty sprite to repair the damage.

Then I re-saved the block of eight sprites under another name and now added another line to the remaining portion of the program to 'BLOAD' the block of sprites.

To my surprise I found that the original program with all the sprite data statements was 16 blocks long, but the new two-part program only occupies 13 blocks of disk space.

This means in effect that Basic 7 is not only easier to use but in the case of sound and graphics saves memory as well. It's a lovely computer!

ODDS AND ENDS

I have just purchased a copy of 'Compute!'s' book "128 Programmer's Guide" (R.R.P. \$29.95). We have also purchased some copies for our library.

This is NOT Commodore's official 128 Programmer's Reference Guide, which is about to be released in the USA by Bantam books and is written by Larry Greenly - but see "Letters to the Editor" for some interesting comments by Paul Blair!

In the meantime the new Compute! book is fine for starters. A feature that I particularly like is that all Basic commands and functions are listed together alphabetically. In the 128 Systems Guide they are listed under separate headings of Basic Commands and Basic Functions and I always look in the wrong section first! Other chapters cover Graphics, Sound and Music, Peripherals, CP/M, Machine Language, and System Architecture. I found some very handy hints, but also some information which I feel is likely to be out of date before we are much older. The appendices don't seem to have the misprints which plague the systems guide.

Apart from some minor omissions I think the book is a worthwhile purchase for the new 128 owner, until such times when the 128 Programmers Reference Guide becomes available.

--ooo--

Our treasurer Lester Bennett has recently spent many hours typing in a series of programs from 'RUN' magazine which produce hi-res graphics in colour on the 80 column screen. They are now to be found on the group's new C-128 public domain disk. They are well worth studying.

--ooo--

Herewith a listing of the Pokes for the 128:

Disable LIST	POKE 775,139	Disable SAVE	POKE 818,180
Enable	POKE 775,81	Enable	POKE 818,78
Disable LOAD	POKE 816,0	Disable RUN/STOP	POKE 808,100
Enable	POKE 816,108	Enable	POKE 808,110
Disable RESTORE	POKE 792,125	Disable keyboard	POKE 2592,0
Enable	POKE 792,64	Enable	POKE 2592,10
No keys repeat	POKE 2594,64	All keys repeat	POKE 2594,255
Some keys repeat (Space bar - INST/DEL - Cursor keys)			POKE 2594,0
Clear keyboard buffer (before input)			POKE 208,0
Change character colour (numbers 0-15 correspond to colours 1-16)			POKE 241,x
Remove line numbers from LIST			POKE 24,37
Enable line numbers			POKE 24,27

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The 'HEADER' Command

Basic 7 users will have found out that the Header command is a lot easier to use than the Basic 2 command: OPEN 15,8,15: PRINT # 15, "NO: File Name, ID": CLOSE 15. However the other day I struck a little snag which is well known by old PET users who had the Header command available in Basic 4.

I tried the following: Header "File Name", IFL. (The use of the letter I is compulsory to indicate the ID number). Much to my surprise I kept on getting Syntax Error messages, but then I thought that possibly the ID number "FL" might be a reserved keyword - after all there are so many new commands these days. Unfortunately I struck a blank there, and as I was intent on using "FL" as my ID no. I resorted to the Basic 2 version to format my disk; no troubles this time!

Mentioning this to Greg Perry later (he is an old PET user), cleared up the mystery. I was on the right track, but only partially - as the letter 'I' after the comma is followed by the letter 'F' the computer interprets this as 'IF' which is a reserved word alright, and hence the syntax error! So, Basic 7 users, don't use the letter F as your first ID number - but if you must have the letter F as your first identifier use the Basic 2 command.

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RGB MONITORS

There are basically two types of RGB monitors on the market: Digital and Analog. The C-128 (as well as IBM PC, PCjr, Apple IIc and IIe - all with the appropriate graphics adaptor) use the digital type. The letter 'I' in RGBI stands for Intensity.

A digital monitor is capable of producing eight unique colours on the screen with two levels of intensity - hence most 80 column colours on the C-128 come in two shades.

An analogue monitor, as used on the Amiga and Atari ST, is capable of reproducing a much wider range of colours and is thus able to cope much better with the 4096 shades on the Amiga or the 512 shades of the Atari.

The Amiga colour monitor for sale in the USA has both digital and analog input, as has the model 1081 monitor currently being sold in Australia.

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New C-128 Software

The following software has been noticed as being available overseas:

Mach 128 - Upgraded version of Mach 5 cartridge. Switch between 64 & 128 mode. Fast loading on 1541 drive in both C-64 & C-128 mode, and "burst" mode loading with 1571 drive in C-128 mode. Built-in reset switch. Other features similar to the original Mach 5 cartridge.

Consultant 128 - New upgraded version of C-64 version. I like the comment in the manufacturers catalogue: "No need for courses, books, other software or knowledge of computer languages." I wonder who that may be aimed at! (From Batteries Included in Canada - at the time of writing not yet available in Australia.)

Multiplan - This spreadsheet is now distributed by Epyx. It comes in a combined (improved?) C-64 and C-128 package. If it is substantially faster than the original C-64 version it could still be a winner.

Vizastar 128 - This is a combined spreadsheet, database and graphics package. It has been received with rave reviews (also the C-64 version), and it is claimed that in certain respects it is better than Lotus 1-2-3, the very expensive package for the IBM PC's etc. Has anyone seen it? This one definitely needs investigating.

Vizawrite Classic 128 - The wordprocessor from the same company. Also appears to be extremely powerful. Again further details are required.

Perfect series - Apparently Perfect Writer, Perfect Calc, and Perfect Filer are now available in a C-128 version overseas. No other details at present.

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Word Processors

Superscript 128 - the on-going saga.

Have just tried out the Nov.85 version of this wordprocessor which has cured most of the bugs of the Sep.85 version, but has substituted another bug in its place! DO NOT USE THE 'CASE' COMMAND! Particularly Control F seems to be fatal.

My spies tell me that the very latest update (April '86) is virtually bug free. Wait for the next thrilling instalment!

Wordwriter 128

We have not reviewed this program, but quoting from Compute!'s Gazette review of Feb.86 we noted the following points: "The format command does not leave you with exactly what you get on the printed page - no ability to alphabetize lists or calculate numbers in rows or columns." Apart from these omissions/limitations the review was very favourable. How about a review from a 'local' owner?

--oo0oo--

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Doublesiding paper: the true facts

by Reggie Ramloose

*Reprinted from the newsletter of the
Nashville Commodore Users Group.*

The good news is that, due to the rising sales of computers, the price of diskettes is falling. The bad news is that the near future is likely to bring higher prices for paper supplies. However, if you still use the old No. 2 bonded lead word processor, I have some useful information: you can double-side your notebook paper!

Although paper manufactures only certify the 'front side' of a piece of paper, it is a little-known fact that the back side is capable of holding the same amount of written information. You, too, can use the back side of your paper, but before you do, I must inform you that there are mixed feelings about doing so.

Paper manufacturers are quick to warn that writing on the back side of the sheet can cause problems for the data on both

sides of the paper: they will not honour warranties if the back side has been used. The biggest problem is 'write-through'. This occurs if the wrong pencil or pen is used, or if too much pressure is applied during the writing process. There is a problem with standardization, also. Some users turn the paper upside-down when writing on the back, while others leave it right side up. (If the paper is held upside-down during the reading process, it will be in the wrong orientation to the 'head', and a read error will occur). Also, many public school teachers, publishers, and governmental offices frown upon the practice of using the back of the paper, and will not accept material if both sides of the paper have been used.

Students and other paper users, however, claim that they have used the backs of many thousands of pages with little or no loss of data. A few go so far as to claim that there is a conspiracy among paper manufacturers, merchan-

disers, and public officials to discourage the use of the backs.

You must yourself decide if you will use the backside of your paper. But if you decide to give it a go, here's how:

Look at a sheet of paper. You can tell the front by several methods. First, the row of alignment holes goes toward the left. Secondly, the watermark (if present) can be read if you hold the paper up to a light. To double-side a sheet, turn it over. Examine the back, looking especially for obvious flaws and defects. If the overall appearance is satisfactory, then with a ruler and pen mark locations on the right side. (You should try this initially with paper containing no valuable data). Use a regular hole-punch to make the holes. (You can purchase one at a department store, but I don't recommend that you tell them what you intend to use it for).

Your paper is now double-sided. Good luck, if you decide to try it. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mea culpa! (I have been found out!) - Peter Gadsby has ticked me off, and rightly so, about my use (sorry, misuse) of "its" and "it's". Yes Peter, I stand corrected, despite the fact that Norm Chambers, our secretary (and former school teacher!), has already told me off on several previous occasions!

Yes, I do know the rules, but my spelling checker doesn't. What we really do need is a syntax checker!

Joking aside, your comments are justified, and I'll try extra hard to obey the rules in the future.

Editor

--000--

So Much for Truth in Advertising:....

Corgi Bantam Books have the rights to publish the C-128 Programmers Reference Guide. Twelve months after the release of the C-128, an advert appeared in a recent issue of Power Play, advising that the Guide was now on sale at book stores in the USA.

A telex to Corgi Bantam to order copies drew a response from Donna McIver in their New York office to the effect that the book is not yet available! Moreover, it would not be on sale in Australia before August. Presumably, that's August 1986.

First prize to Corgi Bantam for speed and accuracy. They should not be surprised if their potential market has been reduced as users trot out to buy other reference books, frustrated by the incredible delay in releasing the Reference Guide.

Paul Blair.

And "Amen" we say. However we are not surprised. Orders placed three months ago by the group for the new range of C-128 books published by ABACUS have, at the time of writing, only been supplied in part. Orders on Compute! books for new titles are often delayed because the adverts appear months before the books are ready for despatch.

This 'advance advertising' seems to be another American disease that hopefully will stay on their side of the Pacific.

--000--

Mr. Editor,

As a senior member of this group, I feel that it's about time I spoke out.

Despite the fact that Norm Chambers keeps on telling us at every meeting what a wonderful job you are doing, I can only say one thing: "Bulls..t!"

My argument is not with the appearance of the newsletter, which has improved of late, but with your wishy-washy attitude as editor. I have recently spoken to a few members who claim that you have watered down their articles, because you're afraid to offend your advertisers. What a load of c..p! If that is so, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. You are not the

editor of "Woman's Weekly" you know - b....r the advertisers, we don't need their money, or do we?

And then there's all that garbage about Commodore having turned over a new leaf. Who do you think you are kidding? They are as bad as ever.

So you see, it's no use asking members for articles or reviews, if you keep on "editing" them to suit your advertisers.

Maybe you need somebody like me to write a really hard hitting column, but than I don't expect that you will publish this letter, so I can safely forget about it!

Yours, in anger

"Stinger" (name and address supplied)

Dear "Stinger",

Well, as you can see, I am publishing your letter, warts and all! Yes, you are probably right - I may well be 'too soft' but, before shooting of your mouth, let's consider a few facts.

A:- Yes, I have edited letters of complaints about retailers and/or repair services. Practice has taught me that there are always two sides to a story of conflict. Without having the facts at my disposal from 'the other side', I refuse to name names. I just don't like the idea of being sued for slander.

B:- Yes, I have also edited reviews, usually for grammatical- or syntax reasons, and sometimes to fit the review in a certain amount of space, but I have not at any time 'toned down' anybody's review.

C:- Yes, we do need our advertisers, as much as they need us. Obviously you have no idea of the production costs of this newsletter, which is the single largest item of expenditure in our annual budget. Our treasurer will be only too glad to supply you with the facts. No, we don't have to pander to these advertisers, but nothing will be achieved by being critical for the sake of being critical.

D:- If Commodore are as bad as ever, you'd better back this up with facts. Based on my own experiences I sincerely feel that Commodore have improved lately, both from a service- and product point of view. Sure, there is still plenty of room for improvement, but that applies to us all, doesn't it?

I wrote the article 'How critical should we be' (see Reviews) before I received your letter. Perhaps that meets with your approval.

Yes, Mr. "Stinger", you can have your hard hitting column, but there are a few conditions.

1:- Keep the foul language out. English is too good a language to be debased.

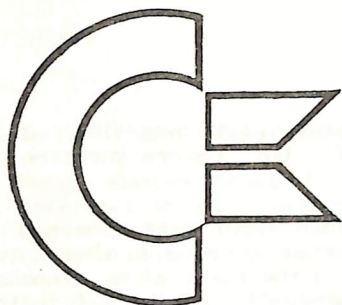
2:- If you do have to criticize we need facts and nothing but the facts - innuendoes are not welcome.

I am sure that we all look forward to your contributions!

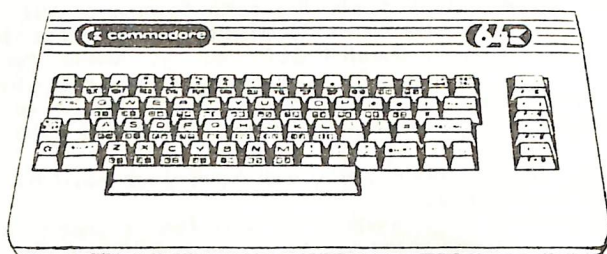
Editor

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Please Note: The above phone numbers are private numbers, and most of our committee members can only be contacted after hours!
Greg Perry can be reached only between 10 am and 4 pm, and Maurice Hawkyard can be contacted between 9 am and 5 pm.

Address for newsletter mail only: P.O. Box 384 - Ashgrove - QLD - 4060.
Deadline for any particular month is the First Tuesday of that Month.
All other mail to: P.O.Box 274 - Springwood - Qld - 4127.

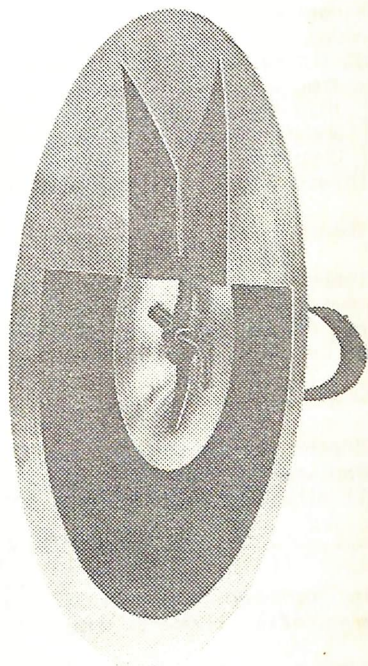
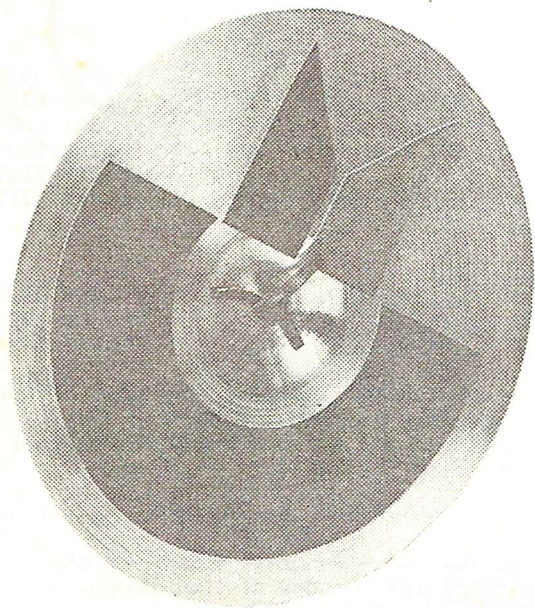
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