CURSOR

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

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MEETINGS — WHERE & WHEN

MAIN MEETING: on Tuesday 7th June 1988, in the Bardon Prof. Development Centre, 390 Simpsons Rd. Bardon. Entrance is through the Centre's Car Park in Carwoola Street. The lending Library opens at 7 pm.
Main Meeting starts at 8 pm sharp and finishes at 10 pm.

=======> TONY MAY will talk about maintenance and servicing of C64/128 computer equipment. <=======

C-64/128 WORKSHOP: on Sunday 12th June (1 pm - 5 pm) in the Guidance Officers Training Ctr., Bayswater St. Milton. Bring your own computer equipment. Public Domain Disks are available for copying.
NOTE: FOR MEMBERS ONLY! Ph. Colin Shipley - 366 2511 a.h.

AMIGA WORKSHOP: Sunday 8th May 1988 (1pm - 5pm) in the Ithaca R.S.L. Hall, cnr. Nash & Elizabeth Sts., Rosalie. NOTE: FOR MEMBERS ONLY!
Ph. Bruce Wylie - t.b.a.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

CANNON HILL: Last Sat. of the month (12 noon - 12 midnight) in the Cannon Hill State School. Ph. Don Friswell - 343 1735 a.h.
CAPALABA: 3rd Saturday of the month (1pm - 5pm) in the Capalaba State Primary School (Redl. Educ. Centre). Ph. David Adams - 396 8501 a.h.
KINGSTON: 2nd Friday of the month (7pm - 10pm) in the Kingston State School. Ph. Peter Martin - 290 1537 a.h.
PINE RIVERS: 1st Sunday of the month (1pm - 5pm) in the Strathpine State High School. Ph. Barry Bean - 269 7390 a.h.
SHERWOOD: 2nd Friday of the month (7.30pm) in the Graceville State School. Ph. Leigh Winsor - 3792405 a.h. / Philip Parkin - 8181172 a.h.
WAVELL HEIGHTS: 2nd Tuesday of the month (7.15pm - 9.45pm) in the Wavell State High School, Childers St. Entrance. Ph. Cor Geels - 263 2839
SUNSHINE COAST meets regularly. For meeting times, dates, places:
Ph. Harvey Riddle - 071 / 421036 or Ph. Vic Mobbs - 071 / 941330
MARYBOROUGH/HERVEY BAY: 4th Monday of the month (7pm - 10 pm) in the Sunbury St.School, Alice St. Ph. Terry Baade - 071 / 215059 a.h.

Copying of Commercial Software is NOT allowed at any of our Meetings!

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

PRIMARY EDUCATION SUB-GROUP: meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month (7.30pm) in the Aspley State School. Ph. Bill Weeks - 3412823 a.h.
PLUS/4 SUPPORT GROUP: - Clarence Stock is acting as support coordinator for Plus/4 owners. Ph. 397 8894 a.h.

Are you interested in forming a Sub-Group or Special Interest Group? Contact our Sub-Group Coordinator, Terry Steer, for details.

GOODS & SERVICES

PUB. DOM. DISKS (C-64/128): $3.00 ea (+ $2.00 Postage up to 5 Disks)
PUB. DOM. TAPES (C-64): $2.00 ea (+ $1.00 Postage Per Order)
BLANK DISKS 5,25" (DS/DD): $10.00 per 10 (+ $2.00 Postage)
PUB. DOM. DISKS AMIGA : $6.00 ea (+ $2.00 Post. - up to 5 Disks)
BLANK DISKS 3,5" (DS/DD): $30.00 per 10 (+ $2.00 Postage)
DISK BOXES for 3,5" disks (40 disks) - $15.00 ea (+ $5.00 Postage)
DISK BOXES for 3,5" disks (80 disks) - $20.00 ea (+ $5.00 Postage)
1541 DISK DRIVE COVERS: $10.00 ea (+$1.00 Postage)
"PUBLIC DOMAIN INSTRUCTION BOOK" (C64): $5.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
"STARTING WITH DISK DRIVES" (1541) : $2.00 (+$1.00 Postage)
"B.B.S. 64 INSTRUCTION BOOK": $3.00 (+$1.00 Postage)
"C-128 MEMORY MAP": $2.00 (+$1.00 Postage)
"AMIGA DOS SUMMARY": $3.00 ($1.00 Postage)
"AMIGA BEGINNERS GUIDE" (CLI etc.): $3.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
"AMIGA EDITION of CURSOR": $10.00 annually (to financial members only.)
TURBO-ROM for C-64 or C-128: Members Price: $40.00 (+ $2.00 Postage), or Customised Version (Choice of Screen Colours + Your Name on Screen): $45.00 (+ $2.00 Postage)
AMIGA PRINTER CABLE (A500 / A2000): $25.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
USER PORT PLUG (EDGE CONNECTOR): $8.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
USER PORT PLUG BACKSHELL: $3.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
USER PORT to CENTRONICS CABLE: $35.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
ADDRESS LABELS (23 x 89 mm): $14.00 per 1000 (+ $2.00 Postage)
DISK NOTCHERS (for 5,25" disks): $8.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
RIBBONS for MPS-1000, GX/LX-80 PRINTERS: $9.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
RIBBONS for MPS-1200/50, Citizen 120-D PRINTERS: $12.00 (+ $1 Postage)
RIBBONS for RITEMAN C or F PRINTERS: $13.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)

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

For Hire to Members only: 1526 Commodore Printer
For details contact John Van Staveren on 372 3651 (a.h)

COMPUTER ADDITIONS

by Gary MacMinn (Ph. 848 2271 a.h.) and Philip Van Der Vliet (Ph. 848 5753 a.h.), at the Milton Workshop (see page 2).

SERVICES OFFERED:

RESET BUTTONS: $6.00 DEVICE NUMBER CHANGE: $6.00
RESET RE-ENABLE: $6.00 C-64/128 COMPUTER SELECTION SWITCH: $6.00
40/80 COLUMN SELECTION SWITCH for C-128 $10.00, C-128D $15.00
TURBO ROM INSTALLATION: C-64 with Socket or C-128.....$6.00
C-64 without Socket or C-128D.....$10.00
WRITE PROTECT SWITCHES: $6.00 WRITE ENABLE SWITCHES: $6.00

The Following Items made up to Special Order Only:

SERIAL SWITCHING BOX: $14.00 SERIAL PORT DOUBLER: $14.00
EXPANSION PORT PLUG: $7.00 CAPACITANCE METER BOARDS: $14.00

C. C. U. G. (Q.) INC. MEMBERSHIP FEES

	Joining Fee:	Annual Membership:
Ordinary*	$10.00	$25.00
Country/Associate	$10.00	$15.00
Student/Pensioner	$10.00	$15.00
Family/Business	$10.00	$35.00

(*Within the B'ne Metropolitan Phone District)

Direct all membership enquiries to: *The Secretary, C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc.*
P.O. Box 274, Springwood, Q'ld, 4127

COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING RATE:

$30.00 per full page (A-5 size), per issue.
[All artwork etc. to be supplied by advertiser.]

PARCOM PTY. LTD.

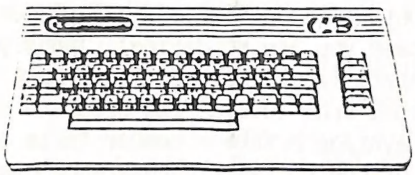
WHITES HILL SHOPPING VILLAGE.
SAMUEL STREET
CAMPHILL - Q'ld - 4152
Ph. (07) - 395 2211

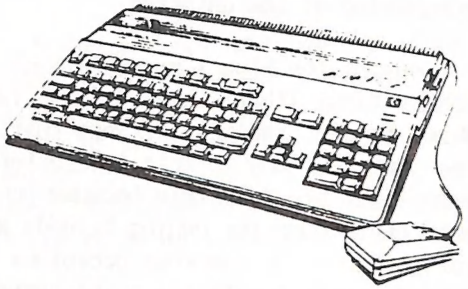
369 BAYSWATER ROAD
GARBUTT
TOWNSVILLE - Q'ld - 4814
Ph. (077) - 794 888

commcare

AUTHORISED INDEPENDENT COMMODORE SERVICE CENTRES

Proffessional Repairs and Product Support
All Work Carries Our 90 - Day Warranty
See Us For Efficient And Courteous Service
Fast Turnaround





NOW AVAILABLE: Amiga Disk Drive Alignments - $50.00

Replacement Circuit Board Service:

For C-64 - $89.00 + Your Old Board

For Vic 20 - $69.00 + Your old Board

(all boards must be in a servicable condition)

Special Rates for User Group Members!

EDITOR'S NOTES

Reading through a recent issue of an American computer magazine, it struck me once more how obsessed the American software industry is with the theme of war. Look at titles such as Gulf Strike, Up Periscope, Destroyer, Gunship, Stealth Fighter, Wargame Construction etc. etc. What causes this American paranoia with killing and war? Of course US television is full of it too. And because of the American influence in the western world we see that the games software industries of countries like England and West Germany are producing the same type of junk. Just imagine if the Russians produced games with titles like Destroy Detroit or Flatten Philadelphia. Wouldn't there be a tremendous outcry about those dirty commies? Yet we cheerfully accept American software with titles such as Raid on Moscow!

Yes, there's a real sickness in the American software industry with titles such as the ones above, and in case my readers accuse me of an anti-American bias, I'm only too willing to admit that the USA also produces quite a bit of very fine software, including games, and (yes) some very nice hardware too! Perhaps it's time that the American games software industry starts to produce a more life-enhancing type of game, rather than pursue this negative obsession with war, killing and the conquering of the universe.

Out of the blue I received some contributions from, of all places, Edward River (that's near Cairns, in case you are wondering). Thank you, **Errol Kepper**. Isn't it strange that, apart from a few regulars, most of the contributions to this newsletter come from outside the Brisbane metropolitan area? Is this because your average Brisbane member tells or asks their computer owning friends about new software/hardware or computer problems? On numerous occasions members have told me about that fantastic piece of software or hardware that they just bought, but when I suggested that they do a review for their fellow members they are all of a sudden too busy or couldn't be bothered.

Well, Errol Kepper, Denis Wright, Paul Blair, Fred Hawley and many other contributors from outside Brisbane - you keep this newsletter going and for that you deserve our thanks. As for our non-contributing Brisbane members.....

Ralph De Vries

RANDOM BITS

MAY MAIN MEETING

At this belated May meeting our Secretary, Norm Chambers, announced that he would retire from this position after July '88 - he will be sorely missed by all of us. This month it was the turn of the C64/128 members to move to room S1, where Norm Chambers chaired a panel consisting of some of our sub-group coordinators to answer members' questions. Peter Cotterell gave an interesting demonstration of robotics using Commodore computers.

WEST END COMPUTERS

We have been advised that the recently opened West End Computer Centre (Elizabeth St. level of the Myer Centre) is prepared to give our members a 10% discount on software purchases, provided that members produce their membership card. Their phone number is (07) 221 0055.

COMPUTER CLOSING SALUTATIONS

Errol Kepper wrote: *What does a computer freak use as a closing salutation for a letter? Fishermen tend to say "Tight Lines", clerics often use "Your brother in Christ". "Regards" sort of pales out. "May the DOS be with you", or "Yours sequentially, relatively and randomly'?*

Your editor thought of "Basic-ally Yours" or "C you soon" (although these last two couldn't be used for Pascal programmers!).

How about it, Doug MacLurkin; surely you should be able to improve on these feeble efforts? And what about all those other 800 odd members? Between the lot of us we may be able to build up a nice range of computer-related closing salutations!

1520 PRINTER/PLOTTER OWNERS

Barry Wilson tells us not to throw your 1520 plotter away when the small drive gear splits. The gears are available from Northside Business Equipment in Ann St. (Cnr. Chester St.), Fortitude Valley,Ph. 852 1588. The price is less than $2.00 each.

-ooOoo-

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

The recently concluded survey of our members in the greater Brisbane metropolitan area was primarily conducted to find out what members think of their group, and particularly to find out their views about the conduct of our meetings.

Several committee members expressed doubt about the value of such a survey; after all a group which has steadily grown in membership since its inception must be doing something right! However with the arrival of the 'interloper' in our midst (i.e. the Amiga) it was felt that the time was ripe for some soul searching.

It was decided not to include the survey form in our newsletter, as past surveys of this kind hardly attracted any response. Instead it was decided to distribute the survey form at our main meeting, work shops and suburban sub-groups. Some 300 forms were distributed, but only 115 forms were returned. Does that indicate that those 200 odd members who didn't bother to fill in the form were quite satisfied with the status-quo of their group?

Following are some of the results of the survey:

Some 70 8-bit (C64/C128 etc.) owners responded to the survey, as well as 45 Amiga owners. Practically a third of these (36) also owned or used IBM compatibles. Of these surveyed 40% had been members for less than a year, 40% had been members for 1 - 3 years, and the remaining 20% were members of more than 3 years standing.

8-Bit owners spent an average of 13,5 hours per week at their computer and Amiga owners averaged out at 16.8 hours per week.

Their interests were as follows:

	Programming	Graphics	Business	Games	Other
8-Bit:	39	27	28	20	7
Amiga:	22	23	24	13	

Of the 8-Bit owners surveyed some 24% (17) are thinking of upgrading to a better(?)/dearer(?) system.

Well, those are the factual parts of the survey, but what about the suggestions for improving the group itself? This is where the whole thing becomes very vague indeed, with a lot of contradictions in the

suggestions. Take as an example our lending library - an overwhelming number of replies expressed satisfaction with the way our library is run, but some complained about overcrowding, and everybody always wants the latest issue of every magazine! (We have in fact doubled our subscriptions of the more popular magazines.) Recent re-siting of the tables will result in a smoother passage for all members. "More books for the Amiga" has been another cry. Well, we have most of the currently available Amiga books in our library, but at an average price of some $50 per book we are unlikely to double up on these!

As for the main meeting, most members surveyed want the official 'business part' to be kept to a minimum, and they want to see more demonstrations, and a continuing beginners corner.

The most damning comments relate to work shops and sub-groups. Members have given up going to these meetings because they are dominated by games players and no attempt is made to remedy the situation. Some commented on the fact that, because there are so many sub-groups, the more experienced members are hard to find at these meetings.

Well, where to from here? Obviously the good things (library, newsletter etc.) will remain. Hopefully with the arrival of some new blood on the C64/C128 scene we will be able to inject some get-up-and-go in this aspect of our group. The Beginners Corner will be an ongoing project in both 8-Bit and Amiga areas. We are very much on the look out for members to give short talks and/or demos at the C64/C128 meetings. Offer your services to Jon Kalkman, the coordinator. (Yes, we have now 'tagged' all our committee members - they shouldn't be hard to find!)

Because of continuing requests we have already started to re-structure our Amiga work shop. Every other monthly meeting will be devoted to lectures and demos for beginners, programming etc. The other monthly meetings will allow members to copy our range of Public Domain disks. It is hoped that something similar can be arranged for our 8-bit work shop.

We are also looking into the possible re-structuring of our suburban sub-groups. Further details of this aspect will be following.

If you, our members, have any further ideas for improving your group we of the management committee are always ready to listen.

THE SURVEY & THE LIBRARY

by Allan and Doreen Horne

The recent Survey raised several queries regarding the commercial Library, and some facts and also, where applicable, figures, are provided in this respect.

INFORMATION DESK Just over a year ago this was provided in the Library area. It seems however that at that time members did not require any information and as the services of the Member manning the desk were of value elsewhere, the INFORMATION desk project was cancelled. Should any member require information regarding any aspect of the Group's activities, please speak to any person operating an IN or OUT desk in the Library or one of the Librarians. If we don't know the answer we'll find someone who does.

SOFTWARE LENDING This area is always a hive of activity and the fact that it operates efficiently is a tribute to those who cope with the frantic needs of many borrowers. To make required programs easier to acquire without actually waiting for them, a system of reservations was introduced recently. Please see the February CURSOR in this respect. It really is a case of first come, first served, and more lists have been provided - the most recent additions in alphabetical order, games separated, which may make it easier to find information about the particular program required.

BOOK LIBRARY To lighten the storage boxes which have to be rolled to the Library area and then returned to storage after a meeting, 97 books have been removed from the items which were available for borrowing. Of these 13 Vic20 books can now be borrowed by Group Members from the Cannon Hill Sub-Group, 25 PET Books are at present in storage and will be available for sale in the near future plus a further 59 books which are no longer relevant. Two 'in depth' books for the PET and two for the VIC20 have been retained in the Main Library collection for future possible reference need. It is also mentioned with regret that 22 irreplaceable books for the C64 have been stolen from the Library.

MAGAZINE LIBRARY To lighten the load as mentioned before, some 320 of the older magazines have been removed. Despite the fact that many of

these have articles and programs which are still of interest, they have spent many months being transferred from storage to Library tables and back to storage once more. They too will be included in the forthcoming sale. As magazines are popular items for borrowing the Management Committee has arranged new subscriptions to Zzapp!, Ahoy, Your Commodore (U.K.), Commodore Computing International, Info, ICPUG Newsletter, and the Australian Commodore Review. This was done in December and some of the new subscriptions have yet to commence arriving. Second subscriptions have also been arranged for Run, Transactor and the Australian Commodore Review. As a matter of interest it is mentioned that during the last five meetings 46 new magazines have been added to the Library collection.

NEW SOFTWARE It would be appreciated if Members would advise the Library of any specific new software which they consider would be a useful addition to our present collection.

We hope you will continue to enjoy using the Library.

TIPS

CALENDAR MAKER

by Fred Hawley (Bathurst)

I thought that Cursor readers may be interested in an unusual project I'm doing. On P.D. disk no. UX there's a program ex "Compute!", called Calendar Maker. I belong to a community day centre for senior folks, who hold regular fetes - a very popular seller (50c.) is the "MY VERY OWN BICENTENNIAL CALENDAR". People leave their names with me, I print and hold them till the next fete.

To make this unique calendar I make the heading (see the sample on the next page) by using GEOS's Dwinella Font. Then I load the Calendar Maker program from disk UX and print the rather distinctive calendar. Be sure to use foolscap sized paper - A4 or standard computer continuous paper is too short to print this calendar.

A (reduced) sample produced with a Star NX-10C can be found on the following page.

my very own bicentennial calendar

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       EDIT        LPH*CURSOR EDIT  OR RALPH*CURSOR   EDITOR RALPH*C
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      DITOR        H*CURSOR EDITOR   RALPH*CURSOR E   DITOR RALPH*CUR
OR EDITOR          *CURS      ITOR  RALPH      OR ED  ITOR       *CURS
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 EDITOR RA         URSOR      OR RA LPH*C       EDIT  OR RA      URSOR
EDITOR RAL         RSOR       R RAL PH*CU       EDITO R RAL      RSOR
      RALP         SOR EDITOR RALP  H*CURSOR EDITOR   RALPH*CURSOR E
      RALPH        OR EDITOR RALPH  *CURSOR EDITOR    RALPH*CURSOR ED
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      LPH*C         EDITOR RALPH*C  URSOR EDITOR RA   LPH*CURSOR EDIT
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JANUARY

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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A BUG In SPEEDSCRIPT?

by Angus Norrie

The first word processor I used was SpeedScript, as it is available on the Group's Public Domain tape no. 2 (utilities). I still use the latest version (3.2) for some jobs, but recently ran into trouble.

The job involved several complicated formulae and equations using subscripts, so I defined some print keys to suit my printer (Riteman Super C+) including [4]=1[5]=0[7]=83[8]=84.

To get subscript, I entered [1][7][4] and to return to normal printing, [1][8]. It worked beautifully for a while, and then, while printing an equation, the printer skipped part of the equation. At the next subscript it wouldn't return to normal print. In the end I had to finish the job with another slower word processor.

Some days later, while fiddling, I discovered the bug. I had entered: -r[1][7][4]cm[1][8]=(dX/dt)/(1-X).

When I changed this to:

-r[1][7][4]cm[1][8] = (dX/dt)/(1-X)

everything printed OK.

Apparently SpeedScript interpreted [8]= as redefining the print key, so from then on the wrong signal was sent to the printer.

(NOTE: [4] means press CTRL and the Pound key, then the 4 key. It appears on screen as a reversed 4.)

THE EPSON 8164 (CO64) COMMODORE INTERFACE

by George Freiberg

Use of the Lock Mode: One of the primary uses of the lock mode is to prevent software from selecting any other mode when it tries to OPEN a channel with some unknown secondary address. A key example of this is a word processor. The word processor may OPEN communications with the secondary address of zero, even though you wish to use the Epson print mode. So, by executing the following sequence, the printer may be locked into Epson mode:

OPEN 4,4,24 (or 4,4,25 if no LF or CR) - PRINT #4 - CLOSE 4

Now, once the word processor is started up, any printing which is done will be forced into the Epson print mode, no matter what secondary address was actually used in opening the communications channel.

I load the LOCK MODE and set-up printer before loading Geos C128 - Printer used is the Epson LX-800.

THE COMMODORE PLUS/4

by Clarence Stock

The Commodore Plus/4 and C-16 suffer from an acute shortage of software compared with its more successful predecessor, the Commodore 64. The hardware options seem to have a lot of people confused including salespersons. PLEASE NOTE **C-16 OWNERS** your computer is very similar to the Plus/4. Some programs on disk or tape can work in the C-16 provided they do not exceed the memory capacity. The C-16 has a 16K operating system whereas the Plus/4 has a 64K operating system. The C-16 does not have the built-in word processor, spreadsheet or file manager ROM. The keyboard operation should be identical as they both use BASIC Level 3.5 although the layout of some keys are different.

When we acquired our Plus/4 we found in the box a RF cable, users manual, built-in software manual, power supply and a warranty card. Working with the users manual I proceeded to get to know the Plus/4. The Reset Button is a feature that was missed on the C64; I have had to use it many times. Normal depression of the button returns the computer to its state as just turned on. If one would like to retain the Basic program then hold the Run/Stop key while pressing the Reset Button; this puts the computer in the Built-in Machine Language Monitor. Type an X and press Return key to get back to Basic. Your program remains intact in the Plus/4 memory.

The connection of the RF lead is to the UHF co-ax input of the TV. The manual states 'Select an unused channel'. Actually you must adjust the UHF tuning. It should be approximately channel 36. If you are using a monitor, the monitor should come with a cable to connect to the Plus/4 Video Socket.

With your Plus/4 attached to a TV/Monitor and Power Supply connected you are ready for another advantage over the C64. When turned on the message reads 'COMMODORE BASIC 3.5 60671 BYTES FREE'. A notice mentioned in the manual indicates 'Some TV sets cannot display the entire Plus/4 screen'. To deal with the problem they suggest pressing the ESCape key followed by the 'R' key.

Peripherals — 1541 Disk Drive - Printer: Standard Commodore MPS-803 MPS-1101 etc. - Cassette: special Plus/4 Commodore 1531 - Joystick: special Plus/4 Commodore 1341. The usage of the C64 cassette and joysticks is possible with an adaptor available on request to C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc. The current cost is $20.00 for the cassette adaptor and $12.00 for the

joystick adaptor. Be careful because the later C64C was being sold with the 1531 cassette and an adaptor to suit the C64C. If in doubt, ask before you buy.

As you work your way through the users manual, getting to know the special keys, note the function of holding the shift key down and depressing the Run/Stop. The Plus/4 loads and runs the first program on a disk in the disk drive, (The C128 also has this feature). This may seem to be a handy and time saving function BUT it also can be costly as I had the misfortune to accidentally hit those keys and my basic program I had been typing in, over the last hour, was overwritten with the first program on the disk in the disk drive. I have since made sure that the disk in the drive has as its first program a sequential file. It is simple to go to the built-in Word Processor, type a line, then save it to a disk in the first position.

The following items, which are specifically for the plus/4, have been seen at Chandlers and/or K-Mart Stores: Jack Attack Cartridge (apr. $17.98) - Cassette Unit (apr. $55.00) - Joy Stick (apr. $17.95).

Publications which I have seen available at B.C.F. P/L include: Programmer Reference Guide for the Plus 4 ($43.90), C-16 Machine Language ($20.95), C-16 Games Book ($17.95), C-16 Exposed (apr. $25.95).

C.C.U.G.(Q). Plus/4 Pub. Dom. Disks are available at the Milton Workshop or the Cannon Hill monthly meeting. I have a complete set at my home (Holland Park) for any member who may wish to drop off blank disks with their requirement and I would copy them when time permits. To help other members who are not able to obtain the disks as above, they may send their order, with their blank disks, to P.O. Box 274 - Springwood - QLD - 4127. Cheques to be made out to: C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc. The cost per disk to club members is $2.00 which covers postage & packing.

PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS AVAILABLE:

Typing Tutor
Plug Fun & Games
Spelling Games
Math Games
747 +4 User GP
Plug Library PH
Plug Library 3
Plug Library 4
Plug Library 5
Plug Library 6
Plug Library 7
Plus4 Lib/Games
Plus4 Lib/Other
Plus4 Lib.Util

That is all for now, more to follow as time permits. If any member has noted a particular problem or time saving solution send me the information via the C.C.U.G. (Q) and we will share it with all members.

SUPERBASE : DIRECT DATA READING : PART I

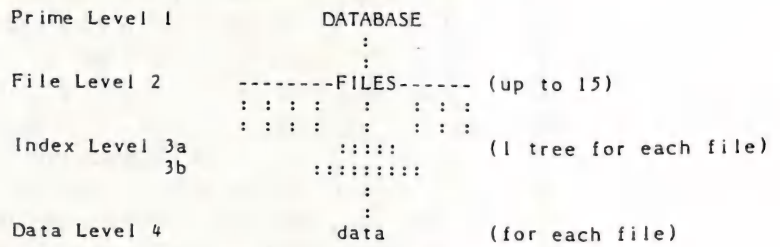
Paul Blair

Being habitually curious, I have long pondered just how SUPERBASE (SB) works, and whether it is possible to access data without going into SB itself. Yes, we know how to EXPORT and DETAIL stuff from SB, but sometimes that may not be what we want to do. Besides, there is the challenge of it all....

What follows is a program with some explanations drawn from my delving into a database created with SB V2.07 on a C=128 with a 1571 disk drive. The techniques used can be altered to work on a C=64/1541 combination, but there is a speed sacrifice - the machine code insert would have to be replaced by more conventional disk reading commands, and the Basic 7 routines changed to Basic 2.

To set the scene, a (very!) brief introduction or recap on the structure of SB. The term 'database' is used to encapsulate and control up to 15 files, each file having its own indices and data. Files can be cross-linked, allowing broad flexibility for data manipulation.

We can represent the structure quite simply with a diagram:



To read SB data directly, we have to follow this structure to get to the good bits. The overall SB plan takes the shape of a 'tree', speading downwards from the database (Level 1) through the files (Level 2) to the indices (Level 3) and eventually the data at Level 4. Level 3 is actually another 'tree', a binary tree in fact, if you are a student of data structures. In this article, I will ignore the second tree, because the idea is to show you how to read a file end to end. The main use of the second tree is for inserting, finding and deleting items, and I don't plan to cover that topic this time.

So let's set up some parameters, and get cracking. I'll explain as we go along.

In the programs listing, I have shown Commodore control characters in square brackets...[DN] represents CRSR DOWN and [WHT] means CONTROL WHITE, and so on.

```
100 rem: Poking around inside Superbase v2.0x storage
110 rem: Paul Blair Canberra Australia
120 rem: as at 26 Apr 87 / phase 2 / c128  80 col / 1571
130 rem: disk reference: 221-254 25
140 :
150 bank15:fast:poke251,0:poke252,13:sy=2816:sz=sy+768:ck=sy
160 za$='[17SPACE]':za$=za$+za$+za$+za$+za$:za$=za$+za$+za$
170 a=fre(1):mm$='JANFEBMARAPRMAYJUNJULAUGSEPOCTNOVDEC'
180 color5,4:color6,1:printchr$(14):z$=chr$(0)
190 print'[CLS]SUPERBASE READER[WHT] .. Version 1.7 at 02 May 87 // Paul Blair'
```

The program will use 1571 burst mode to read nearly all information from disk. We will use a small machine code routine to put the actual data into a string (ZA$), from where we can print it, or mess around with it if we like!

```
200 reada:ifa=-1then210:else poke ck,a:ck=ck+1:cs=cs+a:goto200
210 ifcs<>20140thenprint'[DN] Error in DATA statements...recheck':end
220 :
```

With the SB disk secured in the 1571 drive, we have to supply some information to get things rolling. The database name (in upper case!!), and the particular file are required, of course. Then we will be asked whether we want to read the file forwards or backwards. 'Forwards' means that index sectors will be read sequentially from first to last, showing the data indexed from each sector. 'Backwards' can be either the exact reverse of 'Forwards' (i.e., all key fields in reverse order), or in reverse index order. I'll explain later, and show you an example to clarify the difference.

```
230 print'[DN]Insert the [CYN]SUPERBASE[WHT] data disk .. press a key when
    ready':getkeya$
240 input'[DN]Which database  (upper case):';db$
250 input'[DN]Which file to read              :';fc$
260 input'[DN]Forwards / Backwards    [F/B]:';ww$
270 xm=instr('fb',ww$):ifxm=0 orxm>2thenprint'[2UP]'::goto260
280 ifxm=1then300:elseinput'[DN]Sequential/Index order [S/I]:';wo$
290 xn=instr('si',wo$):ifxn=0 orxn>2then print'[2UP]';:goto280
    :elseifxn=1thenxm=3
```

Some disk action, at last. The database file is opened (our Level 1), and (if you will refer to Figure 1) we can find our file name (Level 2) in Lines 330 and 340, and the information to take us to Level 3, the index level.

```
300 open7,8,7,fc$+',s,r':ifdsthen710
310 fora=1to35:get#7,g$:next:lr=asc(g$):close7:dime$(lr)
320 open7,8,7,db$+',s,r':ifdsthen710:elsefora=1to14:get#7,g$:next
330 nm$='':fora=1to10:get#7,g$:ifg$=''theng$=z$
340 nm$=nm$+g$:next:ifnm$='[10SPACE]'thenprint'[DN]File not found':close7:end
350 get#7,a$,b$,c$,d$,r$,s$:ifleft$(nm$,len(fc$))<>fc$goto330
```

The sample sector in Figure 1 contains a whole lot of useful items. I've translated some bytes to characters so you can see more clearly what it contains. The sector is arranged in 16 modules, each 16 bytes. The first module (the first line) is not much use in this example, so Line 310 above simply skips over it.

Each of the next 15 modules contains one file name from your database (you recall the SB limit of 15 files?). The first 10 bytes on each line are the assigned filename, padded with 00 bytes if the filename is less than 10 characters. The next 4 bytes are pointers, and the last 2 are the number of data records in the file. Lines 330-350 capture this.

```
TRACK tt   SECTOR ss
HEX   00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 0A 0B 0C 0D 0E 0F
-------------------------------------------------------
00:   19 05 11 00 01 02 0B 08 00 00 08 00 00 08 0C 00
10:   M  E  M  B  E  R  S  00 00 00 0E 04 02 0C 3E 02   (file 1)
20:   E  X  P  E  N  S  E  S  8  7  .. .. .. .. .. ..   (file 2)
30:   .. .. .. ..                                       (etc...)
```

FIGURE 1 at LEVEL 2

Bytes $1A and $1B (whose values are $0E and $04) are indirect pointers to the index sector for the last record in the file (Tr 14 Sec 4 in this example). Bytes $1C and $1D ($02 and $0C) point to the first index sector for the file (Tr 2 Sec 12). The last 2 bytes ($1E and $1F) are in reverse order (the CBM way, low

byte then high byte), so there are (2x256)+62 records in this file, which is 574. In program lines 360 and 370, TL, SL, TN and SN take on the corresponding track and sector values, while NR holds the number of records.

```
360 tn=asc(c$+z$):sn=asc(d$+z$):tl=asc(a$+z$):sl=asc(b$+z$)
370 nr=256*asc(s$)+asc(r$):close7:ifdsthen710:elseonxmgoto390,600,730
380 :
```

Assume you have chosen 'F' for Forwards. Let's follow along to see what happens.

Having opened the error channel (15) and logged in the disk (U0L) can start reading the index sectors (Level 3) for pointers into the fourth level, where the data itself is kept.

SB uses a simple format for each index sector, although the first index sector is slightly different from the rest. Essentially, the main index sectors (Level 3b) contain the key fields of the records, plus pointers to the sectors where the matching data is stored. The number of key fields stored in each index sector depends on their length. If they are short, there will be more than if they are long. Makes sense.

```
390 print'[CLS][CYN]Reading SUPERBASE file [WHT]<'fc$'>[LTRED] FORWARDS [CYN]'
    lr'fields/rec'nr'records[WHT]'
400 window0,2,79,24,1:open15,8,15,'u0l':ifdsthen710
410 rem: -- read the key index blocks --
420 x=x+1:ct=14:tv=tn:sv=sn:poke252,14:fg=1:gosub560:poke252,13:fg=0
    :ifx>1thenct=10
430 fx=0:tn=peek(sz+6):sn=peek(sz+7):eb=peek(sz+10)
```

Now, the record pointers. The GOSUB560 in Line 420 burst loads the first index sector into computer memory at $0D00, from whence we can simply PEEK at the index records. Figure 2 shows the first part of a standard index sector, again with some translations.

```
TRACK 2    SECTOR 12
      00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 0A 0B 0C 0D 0E 0F
-------------------------------------------------------
00:   02 0B 02 07 00 09 02 0F 00 09 38 A  D  A  M  S
10:   O  N* 03 04 00 B  R  O  W  N* 03 06 00 .. .. ..
20:   .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. ..
30:   W  I  L  S  O  N* 03 09 00 .....anything
40:
```

FIGURE 2 at LEVEL 3

Bytes $06 and $07 (Line 430) are the 'chain' bytes TN and SN to the next index sector. We will continually sample these bytes to get our 'forward' links, until they both read zero (00 and 00), which means we have reached the end of the index sectors. Bytes $02 and $03 are also of interest, as we shall see later.

Byte $0A holds the number (EB in Line 430) of the last byte used in the current sector. Then, at either Byte $0F (first index sector) or Byte $0B (all others), the first key field starts. Key fields are terminated by a character with the 'high bit set' (I have put a * to mark the place), which means it has an ASCII value greater than 128. Line 450 checks for this. Looking at Figure 2, we have a character at Byte $11 (N*) with the high bit set. The two bytes following N tell us that the ADAMSON data is stored at Track 3 Sector 4.

```
440 print'[LTRED][DN][RVSON] INDEX SECTOR FORWARDS [RVSOFF]'x
    '>> Current Tr/Sec'tv;sv'  Next Tr/Sec'tn;sn
450 ct=ct+1:rr=peek(sz+ct):ifrr>128thenfx=1:cu=cu+1
```

```
460 print'[RVSON][CYN]'chr$(rr and127or32);
470 rem: — if fx then read main data block--
480 iffxthenprint'[WHT]';:dy=sz+ct:tv=peek(dy+1):sv=peek(dy+2):j=peek(dy+3)
    :ct=ct+3:print'[RVSON] Tr/Sec'tv;sv:gosub560:fx=0
490 ifct<ebgoto450
500 ifbwthenreturn:elseiftn<>0goto420
510 :
```

Just to be safe 'CT' counts the bytes to make sure we don't shoot off past the end byte (EB), because as index sectors are updated, they can leave 'junk' on that sector that we don't want to know about. Line 460 prints each key field onto the screen to show how things are going.

A Superbase fact now comes into play. There is a rule in Dr Hunt's book about SB, which roughly translates to this. SB allows 1 record to each sector for total record lengths over 123 bytes, or 2 records per sector if under 124 bytes per record. This is very critical, because the difference is 2 - twice (or half) as many records can fit onto one disk, depending on the magic number 123. Remember this when you are designing your next SB database.

Part II will follow next issue. A word of warning - I have used single quote marks in the program listing. If you plan to type in the program, please alter single quotes to the more conventional double quote marks wherever they occur.

REVIEWS

STOP PRESS

by Errol Kepper

One of the penalties of living in Crocodile Dundee country is that you're restricted to mail order purchasing. Not always a problem, but sometimes...

Recently, I bought a copy of Stop Press by accident. I'm a pushover for desktop publishing programs, and the entry in the catalogue made me think I was ordering Timework's Desktop Publisher. What I actually ended up with was a program from a U.K. firm.

Why rabbit on about how I got it? Well, I paid $69 and will concede that was probably fair enough in Oz dollars. But the same program is offered by another mail order house at $139. It certainly isn't worth that. Don't mistake price for quality here.

As a desktop publisher, some nice features, but some curious omissions. You can, for instance, justify text inside any sort of shape. Sloping lines, ellipses, and so on. But once you place text, the only way of removing it is to define a window, place it, and clear the contents. Try erasing text inside an ellipse with a rectangular window.

My main prejudice was the slowness of disk access. You can work on a third of a page without fuss, but when you want to scroll up or down, boredom sets in. Let's face it, Cockroach ROM and Geos have spoiled me for ever.

A good range of fonts, with ability to re-size them as to height, width, or spacing.

Not a lot of graphics, but a converter is supplied to tea-leaf them from Newsroom photos, PrintShop or hi-res screens. Hi-res screens? What on earth did they mean? I tried a Doodle, and got some extraneous lines that were easily removed.

Overall verdict as a desktop publisher? Some very nice features, but just misses the mark. I found a use for it, for some of it's novel ideas, but think I should have waited until version 2.

Curiously, they've arranged things so that you can load their mouse operating system (again, the device can be changed) as an extension to Basic. You get 30 commands, mostly to do with pointer positioning, icons, windows, pull down menus, and text on a hi-res screen. Yes, silly, one command is to go to the hi-res screen; no fools these blokes. Any with desire to develop their own Geos system will find brief details of the key locations in case they want to use those goodies from machine language. A number of icons are provided, along with an icon editor for those more demanding.

The manual is just reasonable, though without an index. Overall, I had the impression of a gaggle of boffins with some very good ideas, pleased to have put them in a package, but failing to get the average user (well, below average in my case) to make suggestions. 9 for innovation; 7 for execution; 7 for frustration.

GEOPUBLISH

by Errol Kepper

geoPublish, one of the latest of the applications designed to run under the Geos operating system, is a desktop publisher of quite impressive capabilities.

One point I'll explore later - impressive also means large. The sheer size of the main program file means the single disk user has to be very organised indeed to make good use of the program, and even then could strike frustrations.

First step is to make up work disks, as for other Geos applications, and the manual will guide you here.

In general, in geoPublish you work on a full page at a time (unlike say Newsroom where you work on a panel at a time, and assemble them into pages later). You can have a document of several pages, and print them all (or a selected group) in one run.

Another generality is that most text is best prepared as word processor files, and you allocate areas in your document where you want the text put. These areas may, if you wish, extend to more than one page. As you allocate an area, and designate the text file to be put there, the program automatically fills that area as far as it can go. If you've already put some of that text file in another area, the text is allocated starting from where the text in the previous area left off. Sensibly, Text Grabber is included to allow you to use files from several popular word processors, if you prefer to work in those rather than the geoWrite on your Geos disk.

In geoPublish, you work on three main screens. Let's take a look at each in turn.

Master Page mode is where you can enter guide lines across or down to help you layout your work. These won't be printed, and you aren't rigidly controlled by them. This is also where you can put those items that you want to appear on every page printed using that master page. Rule lines across or down, headers, footers, perhaps a bitmap (in geoPublish, the bitmap is whatever is currently in Photo Scrap), or a design of your own. You can have two master pages if you wish, to allow for different layouts for left and right pages. You can, at this point, arrange for automatic inclusion of the date found in the Preference Manager, or automatic sequential numbering of pages.

Your pages can be 8 inches wide by almost 10 1/2 inches deep (if you're using an 80 dots per inch printer; people with 60 d.p.i. printers will be restricted to about 6 inches wide).

The next screen you'll probably use is the Page Layout Mode. Here, you allocate areas on the page. In these, you'll either place text, or bitmaps (the Photo Scrap contents). Choosing what text file to place where (or to continue where) is easy, using the familiar dialogue boxes. You can select a text area, and use the editor on it. The editor is really a stripped down version of geoWrite 2.1 (as Writer's Workshop is now called by Berkeley Softworks), and good gear for the job. Areas can be moved or re-sized easily. Ah hah! What happens to text that's been chopped about by the editor, or had fonts changed, or had it's area size changed? You invoke a thing called rippling, which reworks the text. In fact, you can't leave this screen without the text being rippled, if it's needed.

Bitmaps can be placed in an area. You can center the graphic in the

area allotted, have it scaled up (or down) to the area size, or stretched to fill the area without scaling, which can give interesting effects, or can be used to compensate for any tendency for the printer to stretch graphics out, as a 60 d.p.i. printer may. You can also smooth the graphics if you wish, which removes some of the jagged look from enlargements of a bitmap, and seems to work well.

Areas can, of course, be emptied or completely removed, and can be given priority over one another. This means that you could have a rectangular area A jut into (or be included in) another area B, but specify that text has to be arranged in the odd shape of B without spilling into A.

One point to watch - text files are automatically converted to geoWrite 2.1 files. Make sure you have a backup, unless you have a copy of Writer's Workshop, or they'll be in a format that is no further use to you outside GeoPublish.

The next screen is Page Graphics Mode. Here you have a variety of drawing tools, like box, circle, ellipse, line(s), closed and open splines (no, I didn't know what they were, either. Basically, you define a number of points along a curve, and let the program draw a smooth curve through the points for you), and others. These can be drawn in a large selection of line widths, which can be patterned. The box and circle can be filled with a pattern.

Here, you can also enter text, in any font on your present disk, in any of the usual styles (plus smoothed), in a choice of justification, in a choice of orientation (up the page; down the page; across for the conservative), and in any font size from 4 to 192 (though some will look poor at too small or too big sizes).

You can also place a bitmap in this screen, with the same options as in the Page Layout Mode.

Any graphic object, including text, can be selected, re-sized, moved, and have it's characteristics altered. It can also be given priority over other overlapping objects, or made opaque or transparent for special effects. Text size is set by the point size, so re-sizing can crop the text, or alter the way it's laid out in a rectangular block, but doesn't alter physical size. You need to change its characteristics (font, or point size) for that.

In this mode there's a useful zoom, with scrolling.

I hope I've given you a little of the flavour of geoPublish, though I've skipped several features (like positioning aids for one). As in recent Geos applications, there are sensible keyboard shortcuts for many actions.

I found the most impressive thing to be the flexibility. Right up to printing, you can move, tinker, alter to your heart's content. The manual is quite good, and includes a tutorial section using files already on the disk. The index is a little light, but reasonable.

Bad points? There do seem to be the rare bugs. Use the update option now and then, just in case. Preview is not as "what you see is what you get" as geoWrite is, though this lack is only in those areas filled from word processing files. Graphics tools are not the same as those in geo-Paint, so don't expect to do any pixel editing on the geoPublish screens.

But these criticisms pale in the light of the overall utility of the program, which I'm still exploring.

Back to my cryptic comment about size of the files. The geoPublish program is 99k long (though the manual insists it's 95k). On your disk, you're going to also need the data files (your pages), any fonts (and the special fonts provided for good looking headlines are 19k), Photo Scrap, printer driver, etc., etc. And scrolling operations need some space. So you'll meet that "disk nearing full" message early.

While two-drive users can share the load between two disks, single-drive users like me have to pre-plan carefully, and be prepared for some economies, and a bit of disk-swapping. Actually, this application cries out for the 64 Ram Expansion Unit. If we ever see it.

Who will this program suit? First, you'd need to be interested enough in desk top publishing. Second, I'd say you'd need to have Geos already (if you haven't, this article was probably near incomprehensible, anyway), or be prepared to buy it. geoPublish itself seems to be fairly consistently priced at about $119. Even with some discounting, the total price if you have to buy Geos just to use it makes it quite an outlay. Non-Geos users might be better off waiting for Timework's Desktop Publisher, which seems from ads to be of similar capability, and probably about the same price, but without the cost of Geos as well.

Since you'll probably get very interested in graphics to use, look at the cost of graphic converters. You don't get Graphics Grabber with this program, and buying DeskPack just for that converter of graphics from Newsroom and PrintShop to my mind isn't economic. A general purpose converter that can handle Geos among others makes more sense as a buy.

If I can be of help to anyone with info on geoPublish, or anyone just wants to talk about desktop publishing generally (though I've more enthusiasm than expertise or knowledge), don't hesitate to write. It's "E. Kepper, c/- P.O., Edward River, 4871".

GEOS inside and out.

by ABACUS

Review by Douglas Maclurkin

There are more things in heaven and earth
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

And GEOS is out of this world in it's complexities and changes.

You need to have the intellect of an

and the perspicacity of a

together with the memory of an

in order to unravel the tangled skein of GEOS.

This book is of very little help.

To start with it uses GEOS 1.2.We all know that there is now a 1.3 version and this is where you could be confounded.However Doreen Horne advises me that Greg Perry has regularly updated our library versions.
There are now GEOwrite v2.0; GEOdex ;Graphics Grabber which copies files from Printmaster,Printshop &c.(vide the graphics in this review).
There is also an Edit Icon which allows you to convert your own programs into a GEOS format and design your own Icon.The last one third of the book is devoted to doing this and is now redundant.
As a beginner in GEOS I found I was mentally bound by Disk commands such as "save","load","scratch","copy" &c.The book did not explain that "closing" a file automatically created an Icon with the name of the file.I found that the easiest way to understand GEOS was to realise that the Icons represented the file

names on a disk.Loading involved making two quick clicks over the icon;Scratching was done by dumping the icon in the waste basket and copying was done by moving the icon below the border & so on.
I still don't know the difference between "cut" and "copy".Even"paste" seems to have different meanings in different situations.This particularly applies in the GEOpaint mode.Once again the book failed to clarify the issue.I found I had to go by trial and error(a long and tedious exercise).Surely the book should have helped!
However, for an initiation the book could prove useful.I used it to get started but I received a tremendous amount of

GENEROUS HELP

without complaint from GEORGE FREIBERG whose home I visited several times.It is this kind of assistance that is a very warm ethic of the Club and it's Members that makes one proud to belong.

If you have set your

on mastering GEOS and going

hunting

then GOOD LUCK

However my advice is

BFN

WHAT IS CONDENSED?

by Ralph De Vries

Perhaps it is because I am the newsletter editor, or because I have owned about half a dozen printers, that I have become known as some kind of printer expert. Well, I've got news for you all - I'm nothing of the sort! In fact, as time goes by, I'm starting to realise how little I do know about printers. Take as an example this business about condensed text. Once I thought that condensed printing simply meant that you could print at 15 characters per inch. Wish it were as simple as that! Take for example the NEC printer used to print this newsletter. I can tell it to print the text in the following sizes:

10 CHARACTERS PER INCH
12 CHARACTERS PER INCH
15 CHARACTERS PER INCH (The standard format of the newsletter)
17 CHARACTERS PER INCH (That's 10 c.p.i. condensed)
20 CHARACTERS PER INCH (That's 12 c.p.i. condensed)

It must be obvious from the above lines that the NEC printer people have decided that, to all intents and purposes, their printers have three different widths of characters (10, 12 and 15 characters per inch), of which 2 sizes (10 and 12 c.p.i.) can be condensed, to give us respectively 17 and 20 characters per inch. However, that's not the end of the story. Take a look at page 31 of this newsletter (Directory). Not only have I used a narrower line width (8 lines per inch), but I have used a different font as well (the NEC printer gives a choice of 5 fonts). But here comes the crunch - these other fonts don't come in 12 or 15 c.p.i., but I can condense them, which means that effectively I can use this font in the 17 c.p.i. mode!

So, on this printer condensed means the condensing of 10 or 12 pitch to give us 17 or 20 characters per inch, but on many other printers condensed print means 15 characters per inch! No wonder that many printer users get confused by these conflicting terms - and I haven't even touched upon ENLARGING condensed print, which can thus give us a range from 5 c.p.i. to 20 c.p.i.!

Who said that printers were easy to understand? Even Commodore don't know the difference between condensed and condensed!

VIRUS C-64

Well, it had to happen C-64 owners! No longer do you have to look up enviously to your Amiga and PC brethren who are plagued by those things called 'viruses' or 'worms' - you now have your very own C-64 virus!

We have culled the following information out of the March/April '88 edition of the ICPUG newsletter from an article written by David Miller:

A German user group named Bayerischen Hackerpost (BHP) has developed a virus for the C-64. It is not fatal but it is a nuisance. It comes in the form of a program, eight blocks long, which is perfectly harmless, until it is RUN. It will then print the message: Fatal Error in 1986. If LISTed you will get a single BASIC line with a command to PRINT the above message. When the virus has installed itself in the computer it will spread itself to other disks and other programs not only when SAVEd but also when LOADed.

The virus is spread during a LOAD operation when a program is LOADed to the start of BASIC. When the virus infects a disk it will do so by attaching itself to the program that is being LOADed or SAVEd, and manipulate the disk directory so that any infected files have unchanged file lengths. If you calculate the blocks used by the files on the infected disk and add the numbers of blocks free you will notice that something is missing. If you LOAD and LIST an infected program you will see the following line:

```
1986 SYS PEEK(43)+PEEK(44)*256+48:VIRUS
```

When you run such an infected program the virus will install and activate itself. The main part of the virus can be found beneath the I/O area from $D000. It is, of course Reset proof and Run/Restore proof.

The German C64 periodical **64'er** has produced an anti-virus which they have published in both a compiled and an uncompiled version.

Well, so far the ICPUG newsletter. Apparently a virus killer program is available in the UK (through ICPUG), but we haven't seen it here yet.

In the meantime, keep away from copying programs which are copied (or should we say 'Pirated'?) by the Bayerischen Hackerpost. It's better to be safe now, rather than sorry later on.

GAMES COLUMN

by Dan & Reuben Phillips & Mark Walterfang

REVIEWS (out of four stars)

WARNING! All stunts performed in this column are done by trained professionals - please do NOT attempt them at home.

***1/2 IKARI WARRIORS (Elite)

It's taken awhile but Ikari Warriors is finally here. Based on the hit arcade game of the same name, Ikari Warriors is not a bad conversion at all. After crashing your plane (Ikari warriors don't fly too good), you battle you way through guerilla territory, swamps, and hordes of angry (but not too intelligent) bad-guys in an attempt to rescue General Alexander Bonn (fighting for truth, justice and the American way). This game is very much in the 'Commando' vein - run up a vertically scrolling screen lobbing grenades, destroying everything, and blowing away the enemy. Enemy tanks can be hijacked and used to good effect, two players can also team up and play simultaneously and at the same time as well even, but. The graphics are a bit muddy, the sound is okay, and there are a few minor bugs, but none of these detract too much from the wheelbarrows of playability. Lots and lots of glorified violence, large scale destruction, and questionable moral values - all good, clean, wholesome family fun.

As from next month I will be leaving this column in the capable hands of Reub and Mark and will be starting another column. The new column will be a general programming column, as yet I have no clear idea of what the it will be about - I'll just let it evolve. If you have any questions, or suggestions for articles, write to the address below.

Goodbye for this month, until next time we'll leave you with a quote - "Hedorah's only sludge. He can be dried!" (Godzilla versus the Smog Monster, 1972).

GAMES COLUMN - 11 Coultis Street, Sunnybank, Qld, 4109

-ooOoo-

As is my wont, whilst reading through back copies of Cursor looking for items read when I first received my copy, not relevant at the time, but may be now.

The Mail Box entry of Cor Geels (Oct'87) caught my attention with his reference to a 64's failed mainswitch.

When I first installed my 64, 1541 and printer I bought 3 H.P.M. 240V 10 Amp inline switches at $4.50 each. I modified the base by drilling a 5mm hole to allow them being screwed to a pine board in a line. Located in a convenient position, and numbered 1 (64), 2 (1541) and 3 (Star NX-10C). This setup, I believe, may have saved a problem such as the one experienced by Cor occurring.

Your Bathurst connection - Fred Hawley

VIC-20 OWNERS

I have been the coordinator for the Vic-20 owners for the last few years, and I would like to thank all those members who have rung me with their problems. I hope that I have been of some assistance at least.

The Vic-20 software library is now situated at the Cannon Hill sub-group. If the library is not used, it will be sold piece by piece to the highest bidding member at a main meeting before the end of the year. Users must be members and have paid a library bond.

I am calling for a volunteer to become the Vic-20 Coordinator, as I have recently purchased an IBM compatible and own several 64s. I use my Vic-20s rarely now and I receive very few enquiries, so the job is very easy one.

CANNON HILL SUB-GROUP

This sub-group was four years old on the 4th of May this year. The attendance has always been rewarding and every month the meetings have been held, come rain, hail or shine. During this time I have attended every meeting except one, when I was on a short holiday while recuperating from an operation.

I would now like to take this opportunity to thank all those members who have attended the meetings over the years and made the group so successful. We have had our problems with some members over this time. The sub-group has been held on the fourth Saturday night since July 1984,

yet some of the members from time to time still find counting to four a problem and turn up on the fifth Saturday!

The sub group is now in the hands of three new coordinators, Don Friswell who will run the evening session, David Knight who will open the meeting, and a special thank you to Ron Jarvis who has helped me for the past two years, and will continue as assistant coordinator during the afternoon and evenings.

The sub-group has been asked by the P & C at the Cannon Hill School to make a donation for the use of the room. We have had the use of the room for four years at no charge and the school has made tables and chairs and the room available all this time. It is true that the school cannot charge for the room but it may be hard for the group to find a room for 12 hours on a Saturday for 50 cents a head. The school has intimated that if another group is found who is willing to donate they will be given first preference.

One member at our last meeting was unwilling to part with 50 cents unless it could be proved that the school had asked for a donation and it could be proved that the school would get the money! It was quite reasonably to drive through some 12 suburbs to get to the meeting but does not trust the coordinators. So much for good will towards the sub-group. May be he could start his own sub-group and find out how hard it is to find a room suitable that is there month after month, but alas their is already one in his own suburb.

In wishing the new coordinators and the sub-group all the best in the future, I'm certain that the members attending will benefit by having three coordinators to call upon.

Barry Wilson.

BYTES

FOR SALE

Four **Sendata Modems for Viatel Connection.** Include power supply, handset, cables. Connect directly to C64 user port. $50.00 each.
Contact David Gillies on (07) 223 1792 (8.30 am - 5 pm).

Commodore 64, Datasette, 13 tapes, joystick - $250.00
Commodore 64 tape games, many titles - $5.00
Contact Barry Wilson on (07) 399 6204

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Address all other mail (including Library Material) to:
C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc., P.O. BOX 274, SPRINGWOOD, QLD, 4127
If unable to return library material before a meeting, members may also leave this with their nearest management committee member (but please ring first!).

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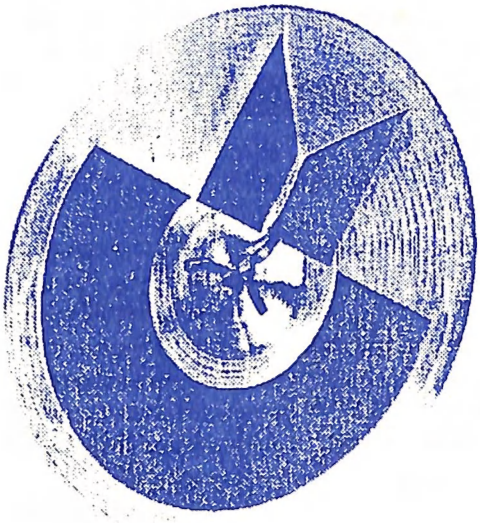

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