CURSOR

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

MENU

MEETINGS WHERE & WHEN

MAIN MEETING Tuesday 6th December 1988, in the Bardon Professional Development Centre, 390 Simpsons Road, Bardon. Entrance is through the Centre's Car Park in Carwoola Street. Library: 7pm – 8pm and 9pm – 9.30pm. Shop: 7pm – 8pm. Main Meeting times: 8pm – 10pm.

John Condon: *"SPRITES"*
Ron Rich & Eddie Brook: *"R.T.T.Y. and all that"*

C-64/128 WORKSHOP (MEMBERS ONLY): Sunday 11th December (1pm – 5pm) in the Guidance Officers Training Centre, Bayswater St. Milton. Bring your own computer equipment. Public Domain Disks available for copying. Ph. Colin Shipley – 366 2511 a.h.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

CANNON HILL: Last Saturday of the month (12 noon – 12 midnight) in the Cannon Hill State School. Ph. Don Priswell – 343 1735 a.h.
KINGSTON: 1st 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 – 379 2405 a.h. / Philip Parkin – 818 1172 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 / 421 036 or Ph. Vic Mobbs – 071 / 941 330
MARYBOROUGH/HERVEY BAY: 4th Monday of the month (7pm – 10pm) in the Sunbury State School, Alice St. Ph. Terry Baade – 071 / 215 069 a.h.

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. Clarence Stock on 397 8894 a.h.

Copying of Commercial Software is NOT allowed at our Meetings!

GOODS & SERVICES

(THESE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT OUR MAIN MEETING OR BY MAIL)

PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS (C-64/128): $3.00 ea (+ $2.00 Postage up to 5 Disks)
PUBLIC DOMAIN TAPES (C-64): $2.00 ea (+ $1.00 Postage Per Order)
BLANK DISKS 5.25" (DS/DD): $10.00 per 10 (+ $2.00 Postage)
PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS for AMIGA (*by Mail only*): $5.00 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 (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)
"C-128 MEMORY MAP": $2.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
"MACRO ASSEMBLER BOOK": $5.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
"64 SOUND & GRAPHICS" (by G.Perry): $10.00 (+ $2.00 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 C64 or C128: Members Price: $40.00 (+ $2.00 Postage), or Customised Version
(Choice of Screen Colours + Your Name on Screen): $46.00 (+ $2.00 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)
36-PIN CENTRONICS MALE PLUG w. BACKSHELL $10.00 (+$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: $15.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)
RIBBONS for DPS-1101 PRINTER: $4.00 (+ $1.00 Postage)

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

The Group has FOR HIRE (to Members only) a 1526 (MPS 802) Commodore Printer
For details contact John Van Staveren on 372 3651 (a.h)

COMPUTER ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS

are being carried out at our Milton Workshop Meeting by Murray Hungerford,
(Ph. 848 2363 a.h.) and Philip Van Der Vliet (Ph. 848 5753 a.h.)

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 - for C-128D...$15.00
TURBO ROM INSTALLATION: C-64 with Socket or C-128...$6.00
TURBO ROM INSTALLATION: 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
64K VIDEO RAM UPGRADE: for C-128....$40.00, for C-128D....$45.00

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

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (PLUS $10.00 JOINING FEE):

Ordinary* Membership...$25.00 - Country/Associate Membership...$15.00
Student/Pensioner Membership...$15.00 - Family/Business Membership...$35.00

(*Within the B'ne Metropolitan Phone District)

Direct all membership enquiries to:

The Secretary, C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc.
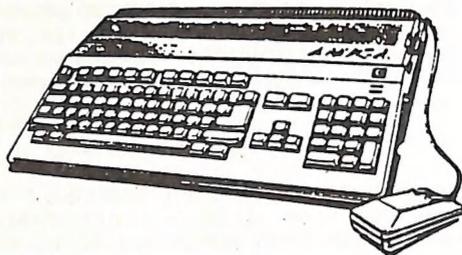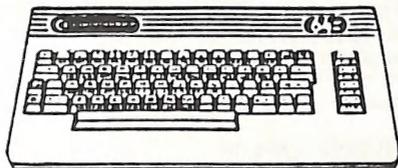*P.O. Box 274, Springwood, Q'ld, 4127*

EDITOR'S NOTES

Here is your last newsletter for 1988. As *Cursor* appears 11 times annually, the next issue (February 1989) should reach you late in January. Also note that there will be no main meeting at Bardon in January, nor is there a Workshop in Milton during January. Sub-groups may or may not have a meeting in January – check with the local coordinator for details.

Despite pleas and protestations by Doug MacLurkin, 1988 has been the year of substantial desertions from C-64 users (and to a lesser extent C-128 users) to the Amiga camp. (I don't want to mention desertion to PCs – not a pleasant subject!)
On the other hand of course we have those new members who have just purchased their first computer (mostly C-64s), and they will keep our C64/128 membership going for some years yet.

Elsewhere in this issue I have written an article about the major differences between Amy and the other Commodore computers. This was not done with the intent of converting 8-bit users; but rather show them *how* they differ and how much conversion will really cost you.

Ultimately the only thing that matters is how much enjoyment you get out of your computer system. Those amongst us who always long for the latest and greatest are usually the ones who are never satisfied and contribute least to the healthy progress of the home computer community.

I would like to thank all those members who have contributed to *Cursor* in 1988. I look forward to all your contributions in 1989.

Have a merry and safe Christmas and a very good New Year.

Ralph De Vries

PRODUCTION CREDITS:

WordPerfect 4.1

Superbase
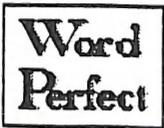
NEC P2200 PINWRITER

THE 64 EMULATOR 2

Butcher

GRABBiT

DeluxePaint II

RANDOM BITS

NOVEMBER MAIN MEETING

During the opening stages of this meeting several speakers voiced their concern about the ongoing support for C64/128 membership of our group. Although the bulk of these remarks wer addressed to the management committee (mainly Amiga owners), it was pointed out to those who had expressed this concern (all of them very active C64/128 users), that in the last resort the ongoing success of our group depends on the *active* participation of 64 and 128 users themselves.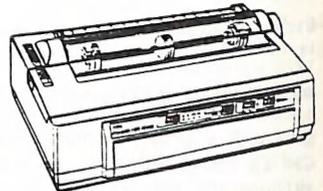 The newsletter editor said in fact the same thing about the future of the 64/128 edition of CURSOR. If the flow of articles dries up, the newsletter will have to revert to a single (mainly Amiga based) edition by mid 1989. Obviously the solution is in the hands of our C64/128 users.

Gordon Keir and John Van Staveren gave a talk on the 64 and 128 versions of Superbase which was very well received by the appreciative audience.

Some new additions to our book library were distributed by Greg Perry to members, on condition that they supply a review for this newsletter.

MILTON WORKSHOP – COMPUTER ADDITIONS

A new face has appeared in our very own 'repair department'. Murray Hungerford has taken over from Gary MacMinn, who is trying his luck in the wide world of commerce. At this stage we are not certain if Gary will return (he isn't either!), so we thank him for services rendered and extend a warm welcome to Murray.

BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEM

Up till recently our new BBS system was decidedly 'unfriendly' towards modem owners who tried to access the board at 300 or 1200/75 baud rates; the result was usually a screen full of 'garbage' characters. Our technical experts were tearing their hair out, trying to find a solution to the problem. Well, the good news is that the problems have been solved. Apparently there was a 'bug' in recent batches of the BBS modem which has now been acknowledged and fixed by the manufacturers, so we hope that our teething troubles are now over.

Richard Carde is our new assistant sysop who will upload C64/128 material to the board, so it is now time to dust off all those old modems and get 'on line' again.

NEWSLETTER MATERIAL

No doubt you will all be writing articles for *Cursor* during that 'boring' holiday period. As we use an Amiga to produce this newsletter we have a few restrictions on the type of C64/128 submissions we are able to handle.

Short articles (less than a page) and adverts for the *Byte* column can be submitted in written or printed form. Longer articles should be supplied on disk in the following formats (in order of preference): Standard SEQ ASCII files – Standard SEQ PET ASCII files – SuperScript or Easy Script files – PaperClip files in the SEQ save option (the same goes for Pocket Writer files which use a similar format) – SpeedScript (preferably saved with the SS Converter program, option 2, which converts a SS file to a SEQ standard ASCII file.)
We are unable to convert files saved out with GEOS (GeoWrite etc.), Bank Street Writer, Font Master and some other esoteric word processors.

In general we prefer to see simple straight forward Sequential files in either standard ASCII or PET ASCII format, without fancy formatting commands such as underlining, centring etc., as these don't survive our conversion programs. If you want to see your article printed in a

specific format, it is suggested that you include a printout with your disk.
Program listings should preferably be prepared with Greg Perry's program *Nice Lister*, which converts all those 'funny' control characters into text strings. The program listing should then be converted to a SEQ file. These conversion programs are available amongst our P.D. disks.

GAZETTE SURVEY

In a recent issue of *Compute's! Gazette* partial results of a readers survey were published relating to upgrading. It was claimed that only a relatively small percentage were interested in upgrading. Roughly 33% wanted to upgrade to a C-128, 33% to a PC and 33% to the Amiga.

1571 CLONE

The EXCEL 2001 drive, a clone of the 1571 disk drive, has been very well reviewed in the USA. Because of ongoing supply problems with the 1571 (in the UK the 1571 drive is being discontinued), a local importer for this drive may well have a potential winner on his hand.

GEOS

In the USA Geos Version 2.0 is now given away with the purchase of a 1541 disk drive.

MORE SPEED SCRIPT ENHANCEMENTS

The *GAZETTE* has now published a program called Speed Print, which gives the 1525, 801 and 803 printers some extra capabilities when using Speed Script, such as descenders on q,y,p etc. as well as underlining, sub & super scripts and foreign language characters.
Another Speed Script utility program is called Speed Columns, which allows you to print out your Speed Script document in columnar format.

128 PUBLICATION

Our library has received the first copy of *TWIN CITIES 128*, a very good, but quite technical 128-only newsletter.

FROM THE C64/128 COORDINATOR

PAPERCLIP PUBLISHER

Readers may observe the Main Demo notice elsewhere in this issue which was assembled with *Paper Clip Publisher*, which is now part of our Group's Software Library. My impression is that it is a worthy and more flexible alternative to *Newsroom*, but perhaps not the ultimate Desk Top Publisher for the C64. In particular, it may be slower than the work of a Medieval Illuminator – not in assembling the page, but in waiting for the disk to update the screen after every change.
Alas, also, if anyone knows how to get the MPS 1000 printer file to work in IBM mode, I would love to know!

BEGINNERS CORNER

There is a growing awareness that we should try to give more encouragement to beginners. Rather than create another separation in the Group, at the suggestion of Angus Norrie, we will try to have a Beginner's Session as a prelude to the Demo or Talk, where both old and new members can pool their scraps of knowledge or recognise their mutual ignorance.

Leigh Winsor

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THE COMMERCIAL LIBRARY

by Allan & Doreen Horne

Greg Perry and Ralph De Vries went shopping recently and we now have the following books to add to our collection:-

PROGRAMMING THE C64 - THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE - a revised edition of an old favourite with a GEOS section added.

PEEKS AND POKES FOR THE C64 - learn the "inside" tricks to get the most out of your C64

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FOR THE C64 - use your C64 for serious science and engineering applications; astronomy, biology, physics, mathematics and others.

PRINTER BOOK FOR THE C64 and VIC20 - a comprehensive coverage in the use of printers - screen dumps, word processors, 3-D graphics and more.

THE GRAPHICS BOOK FOR THE C64 - graphic displays, sprite animation, lightpen techniques, computer aided design.

GEOS TRICKS AND TIPS - a companion volume to GEOS INSIDE AND OUT which we already have.

1541 USER'S GUIDE - a complete guide to the 1541 disk drive. It covers everything from setting up and operating to diagnosing and solving disk-related problems. (We tried to ignore the new books parked in their box, waiting for cataloguing and transporting to the November meeting. Made the mistake of dipping into this one and now have no option but to order our own copy. Fortunately BCF state that it is still obtainable. There are some books one hates to return to a Library!)

1001 THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR C128 - practical ideas and programs - forecast the weather, improve school grades, calculate camera settings, better business profits, technical applications and more.

This purchase has practically exhausted the variety of available supplies at BCF. For the C64 particularly we are advised that new books are in short supply. After being distributed for review at our November meeting, the above mentioned books should be in the Library for general borrowing by Members from December.

The GRAPHICS PIRATE program (see review by Phil Guerney in CURSOR October 1987) has now come to rest in the Library. It is great fun if you enjoy obtaining print-outs of high resolution screens or creating a picture show. Also, we have now obtained a replacement for POCKET PLANNER V2.0 for C64/128. If you recall, our original arrived from Canada in a corrupted state and the manufacturers refused to recopy it for us. This program, like V2.0 of POCKET WRITER for the C64, also has an 80-column mode. On the C64 side of the disk (C128 users please note) is a File Conversion program which converts files from Multiplan, Swiftcalc and other commercial spreadsheets for use with Pocket Planner.

The BASIC 8 program (which includes PAINT, PRINT, WRITE & CALC) now has its BEGINNER'S GUIDE with demo disk and our first edition of the TWIN CITIES 128 magazine has arrived. It is also anticipated that the Library will have a copy of MULTIPLAN for the C128 in the near future.

The Magazine Disks have started to arrive. In case you are wondering what they are all about, a short explanation may be in order. To save the need for typing programs appearing in magazines, some publishers supply disks with these programs "ready to run". We now have subscriptions to some and will record on a magazine if a related disk is available. Choose your magazine and obtain the disk from the SOFTWARE ISSUED section of the Library. It will have the same number as the Magazine.

We note that disks seem to arrive in advance of magazines. We already have the RUN disk for September/October. The RUN (RERUN) disks come complete with an explanatory booklet so the magazines are not essential. The BEST OF LOADSTAR DISKS are complimentary disks unrelated to any magazines but their 'read it' files explain the related programs. These disks are attractively presented and well worth borrowing.

COMMODORE MAGAZINES (ordinary LOADSTAR disks) and TRANSACTOR MAGAZINES will bear labels indicating the availability of related disks, as will COMPUTE!'S GAZETTE when our disk subscription is implemented. Please consult the software lists for information about magazine disks available for borrowing at each meeting.

Happy holidays to all Members from the staff of the Commercial Library!

AMIGA — WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

by Ralph De Vries

Like it or not, but a steady stream of 64 and 128 users are buying Amigas. As I have now owned my Amiga for two years, I would like to describe some of the major differences between the Amiga and previous models of Commodore computers.

Beginning with the PET range and than progressing via the Vic-20 and C-64 to the C-128 (plus the C-16 and Plus/4 thrown in for good measure), we can describe this as Commodore's 8-bit *family* of computers. If you own(ed) one of these you will have very few problems upgrading to another model in the range because they have so many characteristics in common. They all incorporate a version of Microsoft Basic, which means that when you power up your computer you are greeted by a screen that tells you which version of Basic you have and how many bytes of memory are available. If you have never owned another brand of computer, you may be surprised to know that a built-in computer language such as Basic is rather an exception than the rule. If, for example, you owned an 8-bit Atari computer you would have to load Basic in from disk or a cartridge, because it's not built into ROM as it is in the Commodore machines. But an even greater difference applies to disk drives. To my knowledge Commodore is the only manufacturer who puts the *D*isk *O*perating *S*ystem (DOS) in ROM, which means it's available the moment you power up. In virtually all other computer systems the DOS has to be loaded in from disk. The advantages of a built-in DOS are obvious; it does not consume any precious memory, and it's available the moment you turn on the computer and drive. The disadvantage is less obvious, but very real nevertheless; it is very difficult to modify or upgrade a ROM based operating system.

Owners of 128 computers who have tried to use the CP/M operating system have discovered some of these major differences in operating systems. CP/M (based on the Z80 (8-bit) processor) became something of an industry standard, but in due course it was followed by the (16-bit based) MS DOS (also known as PC DOS) system, which was first introduced by IBM and is in many respect very similar to the CP/M system. Thanks to the clone market it has by now become *the* operating system of the business world. When you power up your IBM or clone you are greeted by a screen which requests you to insert the PC or MS DOS systems disk. This disk contains all of the commands required to operate your disks such as formatting and copying commands etc. It does NOT contain Basic or any other computer language. If you want to use one of these you will have to load them in as a separate task.

Some five odd years ago Apple introduced the LISA computer, which in turn was followed by the Macintosh. This computer makes extensive use of the *W*indows, *I*cons, *M*ouse and *P*ull down menus (WIMP) environment. (Note: contrary to a widespread belief this system was NOT invented by Apple.) If you have never seen a Macintosh in use have a look at the GEOS operating system and you will get a fair idea of what the WIMP environment is all about.

Enter the Amiga and the Atari ST. *If* Jack Tramiel hadn't left Commodore some years ago to head the Atari company we would now be using the Atari ST and Atari would probably now sell the Amiga! When Tramiel left Commodore, he took with him some of the Commodore engineers who at the time were designing the Atari ST. After he had left, Commodore bought out the financially floundering Amiga company, where one of the main designers was Jay Miner, who, some years previously, had designed the very successful Atari 2600 games console. So, to put it in a nutshell, the Atari ST was a Commodore design and the Amiga was Atari designed!

Assuming that you have just bought, or are about to buy an Amiga, what *are* the main differences between this computer and the earlier 8-bit Commodore computers? When you power up an Amiga you are greeted by a screen with a message to insert the *WORKBENCH* disk. Built into your Amiga is something called *KICKSTART*. This can best be described as a low level

operating system. The first model of the Amiga (the A1000) didn't even have Kickstart built into ROM; it had to be loaded in from disk into a reserved area of memory (256 Kbytes of RAM). The first version of this operating system was no.1. When the Amiga came to Australia it came with version 1.1 of the operating system, which was replaced last year by version 1.2, and hopefully we should see version 1.3 by the end of this year (Commodore are already at work on version 1.41). Every version has added some improvements or enhancements to the system. When the Amiga 500 and 2000 were released the decision was made to put the Kickstart system in ROM, because it was cheaper to manufacture than the version with 256K RAM chips.

So you have powered up and the Workbench insertion message appears. Now, what if you don't want to insert a Workbench disk? How about starting to type in some commands? Well, you can try it, but you won't get very far because there's as yet no Basic or DOS loaded. By loading the Workbench disk you activate both the DOS *and* the WIMP environment, which is called the Workbench. The manual that comes with the A500 (it's quite a good manual) gives a good introduction on how to operate the windows, mouse etc. Read the manual properly; you will soon feel quite comfortable with the WIMP environment.

The Workbench, or at least part of the Workbench is also incorporated on *most* of the commercial software you buy. However occasionally a program does not have the Workbench built in (sometimes because there's no room on the disk), and this means that you first load in your own Workbench disk and then the program which is looking for it.

This brings me to Amiga disks. Each 3½" disk holds 880K of data, which is roughly 5 times as much as a 1541. Because the amount of file entries is virtually limitless, you will normally find a series of Directories and sometimes directories within directories (sub-directories). If this system was not employed you would have great difficulty locating a file. When you first load a standard Workbench disk (supplied with your computer) and double-click on the *Disk Icon*, it will open a window with a series of icons on it. Some of these are very obvious like the Clock icon. Double-click on the left mouse button and in a few seconds the clock will appear on the screen and tick merrily away. There are also some icons which resemble *drawers*. When you click on these they will open another window and usually some more icons appear. What you have done, in fact, is opened another directory and looked at the contents of this directory. If there was another drawer on this screen you would call this one a sub-directory.

Well, so far so good. You may well be quite happy to work within the Window, Icon, Mouse and Pull down menu environment, but I can guarantee you that sooner or later something will happen that will force you to have a look at the DOS (or rather AmigaDOS) environment. To partially by-pass the normal Workbench environment, you double-click on an icon called the *CLI*. This stands for Command Line Interface, and is the means to allow you to communicate with the Disk Operating System. Another window opens with a single prompt like this: >1. You can now start typing in commands such as dir, list, copy, etc. By means of the dir, list and info commands you can see exactly what is on your disk and, surprisingly, you will discover that there's a lot more on your disk than you can see on the Workbench screen. The reason for this is that the only files or directories which you can see on the Workbench are those which have an underline icon attached to them. No icon means that no information is visible on the Workbench screen. There are reasons for this, but I won't go into the details on this occasion.

When the first Amiga was released it came with 256K of memory and a separate 256K module could be purchased to bring it up to 512K. Here in Australia the A1000 was always sold in the 512K configuration. The A500 comes with 512K as standard, but most owners purchase the extra 512K module which also has a battery driven clock module, thus giving them a 1 Megabyte computer. The A2000 comes with 1 Megabyte as standard, and up to another 8 Megabyte can be added to this. My own Amiga 1000 has 512K built in and I have an external 1 Megabyte module attached. Users of the C-64 may well ask why you need all that memory. Perhaps, if I tell you that a high resolution picture on the Amiga can be over 100K in size, you will than realise that computers like the Amiga gobble up memory in large chunks. When you load

up the standard Workbench disk on a 512K computer you will find that you have about 400K left – that is before you actually start *using* the Workbench! Most of the early Amiga software would run in 512K of memory, but currently more and more application programs require a *minimum* of 1 Megabyte and 2 Megabytes for comfort.

The advantage of a substantial amount of memory means that you can set a portion of this memory aside as a *RAM DISK*. When earlier on I mentioned the AmigaDOS system I failed to mention that commands like List, Dir, Copy etc. are not in memory, but have to be loaded in from disk. Now this means a tremendous amount of disk swapping if you have only one drive. If you want to copy a file from one disk to another, you will find that this is a major operation with only one drive. That is why most new Amiga owners save up first for a second disk drive to avoid this eternal disk swapping. The other alternative is to use any spare memory you have lying around to create a RAM Disk, which acts virtually identically to a 'real' disk. You can now load some or all of your DOS commands into RAM, and thus avoid a lot of the disk swapping. Ideally you need two drives plus the extra memory to make the Amiga a comfortable system to work with.

Currently shops sell the A500 in a pack with a TV modulator and a TV set. If you can afford it, buy Commodore's own 1084S monitor, because a TV set is a very poor substitute for a proper RGB monitor. Remember Amigas work normally in 80 columns and you need the better resolution offered by the 1084 monitor. (The 1084 works very well with a video recorder too!)

Your C64 printer will not work with an Amiga, unless it has a *Centronics* printer port. If you own an MPS 1000 or 1250 you have a printer which you can use on your 64/128 or on the Amiga. However if your printer has a standard Commodore serial port you may as well sell it because conversion is not a feasible proposition.

Programming on the Amiga is the last remaining major aspect I have not covered yet. With your Amiga you get a disk called *Extras*. Amongst other things you will find on this disk a copy of *AmigaBASIC*. After loading your Workbench you can load up AmigaBASIC (only 100K!), and you are now presented by a split screen which tells you that you have 25000 bytes free for Basic programming. "What", I hear you say, "only twenty five thousand bytes free for Basic? I have more on my 64!" Fortunately it's not as bad as all that. The system has set aside 25000 bytes for Basic, but you can increase this limit quite substantially, depending on the amount of memory available. Microsoft's AmigaBASIC is very similar to Basic on the Mac and very dissimilar to earlier Commodore Basics. For one thing line numbers are optional and as a rule are not used. The most frustrating aspect is entering code in the crummy editor. No more overstrike mode, it's all insert mode. At first it drives you mad, but gradually you get used to it. Yet, by comparison, the editing functions on 8-bit Commodore machines are a lot more flexible. Spacing between commands and arguments also tends to be more critical. Yet it is probably one of the best dialects of Basic around, and some of our members have written some very impressive programs with AmigaBASIC. If you are wealthy you may decide to try another flavour of Basic like *True Basic*. However most people would probably spend their $250.00 plus somewhere else.

As a part of the Amiga operating system was written in *C*, it stands to reason that this language has become the default 'standard' language for professional programmers. The two C compilers sold for the Amiga are made by Lattice and Manx, and both have their adherents. Another popular language is *Modula-2*, of which there are at least three versions available.

Based on my own experiences, I would say that the 'average' C64/128 owner will find that it will take him/her a good six months to really feel comfortable with Amy. And although one can try to run an Amiga on a shoestring budget, you will find that a 'usable' Amiga system (1 Meg of memory, two disk drives and 1084S monitor) will consume at least 2000 of your hard earned dollars, and I have not even taken software into account!
I hope that this potted introduction will be of some assistance to prospective Amiga owners, but if I have only succeeded in changing your mind (i.e. *not* to buy an Amiga), you can thank me for saving you a fair bit of money!

REVIEW

EPSON LQ500 PRINTER

by Ted McNally

The Epson LQ500 is a 24 pin dot matrix letter quality printer at the price of better 9 pin printers. Prices vary, but mine cost $690.00. I have connected it to a C-128 with a Cardco G-Whiz interface.

The LQ500 has three built in fonts - Roman, Sans Serif and Draft. These fonts can handle expanded, condensed, pica, elite, bold, italics, reversed, underlined, super/sub scripts and graphics. Optional fonts, similar to those available for other Epson letter quality printers, are available. The price is about $100.00 tax paid. A simple button setup at the front of the printer controls self test, data dump, form feed, line feed, auto feed (for single sheets) and font type.

The speed of printing is quite good at 180 cps in draft and 60 cps in superb letter quality. The draft is quite good. On many printers in the $500.00 or about price range the NLQ is around 30cps and the draft 100-120 cps. However the draft is usually so bad it is hardly used.

Pull tractors come standard on the printer as well as guides for feeding single sheets. Having experienced paper handling difficulties on push tractors, I was happy to have the pull tractors on this printer. Paper can be wasted on pull tractors, but, with the single sheet feed, these sheets can be put aside and used at a later time. The LQ500 does not have a paper park facility that is available on some newer printers (Ed: like the Epson LQ850), but the tractors can be quickly and easily removed.

The LQ500 will print superb graphics. In 24 pin mode it has 5 densities. In triple-density for example:-

180 dots per inch. As the print head moves across the paper, at every 1/180th of an inch it must receive an instruction about which of its 24 pins to fire.

At this stage there are not too many programs to take full advantage of 24 pin graphics however the LQ500 honours Epson FX codes, (Epson Esc/P), so it is compatible with many programs such as written for Epson FX/RX series. In this case the LQ500 has an 8 pin mode with up to 6 densities. Although this mode uses only a third of the pins it produces good quality graphics. A good quality manual is supplied.

A parallel port is standard on the printer and there are a number of optional interfaces that can be installed. A default font and other settings can be set by using dip switches, which are easily accessible. As said before, the printer uses Esc/P commands, but has additional commands to allow outline and shadow printing. The extended graphics set is supported.

The quality and price of this printer shows that good computer equipment is in reach of home users.

[Ed: Most of our readers will be aware that this newsletter is produced with a 24 pin printer (the NEC P2200). The original is set up in A4 size which is reduced by our printer to A5 size. Text output of 24 pin printers is definitely superior to that produced by a 9 pin printer and *potentially* graphics can be substantially better than those produced by a 9 pin printer. However most graphics programs are designed to get the best out of 9 pin printers and often the

quality produced on 24 pin printers is not much better than that produced by the more conventional printers. As an example most 9 pin printers move paper vertically by 1/216", whereas 24 pin printers move paper 1/180". This may seem insignificant, but it does mean in practice that the proportions of a graphics dump could be altered quite substantially. Up till recently the Amiga didn't support 24 pin printers either, but the latest version of the operating system provides us with several 24 pin printer drivers. However most commercial graphics software is targeted towards 9 pin printer users and needs upgrading to get the best out of 24 pin printers. Similarly most graphics programs for the C64/128 need upgrading to make the most of the improved graphics capabilities of the 24 pin printers.|

Following is a sample of the of some of the print styles available on the LQ500:-

PRINT STYLES

Draft.

Expanded Print   *Expanded I*

Normal Draft Print. *Normal Italics, Underlined, Bold*

Condensed Print *Condensed Italics* Condensed Bold Condensed Underlined

Sans Serif.

Expanded Print   *Expanded I*

Normal Draft Print. *Normal Italics, Underlined, Bold*

Condensed Print *Condensed Italics* Condensed Bold Condensed Underlined

Roman.

Expanded Print   *Expanded I*

Normal Draft Print. *Normal Italics, Underlined, Bold*

Condensed Print *Condensed Italics* Condensed Bold Condensed Underlined

MAIN MEETING DEMO
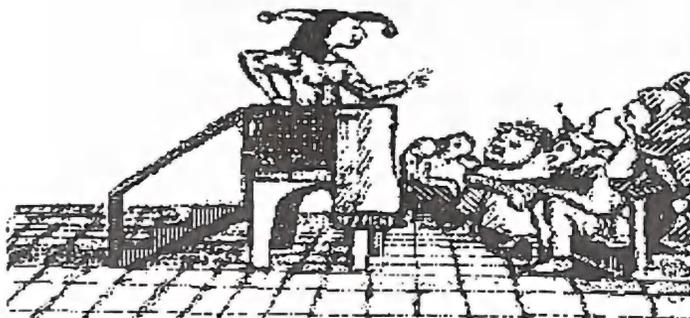
Theme:
The Praise of Folly –getting involved with your computer.

On Sprites

Lecture-tutorial Demo by John Condon
John Condon aims to introduce beginners and non beginners to the use of Sprites. Using Perry's **Sound and Graphics** as a basis, he aims to patiently explore the topic step by step. **Sound and Graphics** and its accompanying PD disk contain enough matter for a whole course on the 64, but it needs patient exploration. John's demo is the first step in a journey I hope others will be encouraged to take.

Demo 2 : Connecting the 64 to the world.
by Ron Rich and Eddie Brook
How to feed information from the world into the computer. Can the 64 be part of a control system for sprinklers, alarms, Robots, biofeedback etc? One special interest group who develop some of the technical skills for such matters is the Amateur Radio people. Their demo will include a simple system for producing current weather maps from radio signals and decoding RTTY messages.
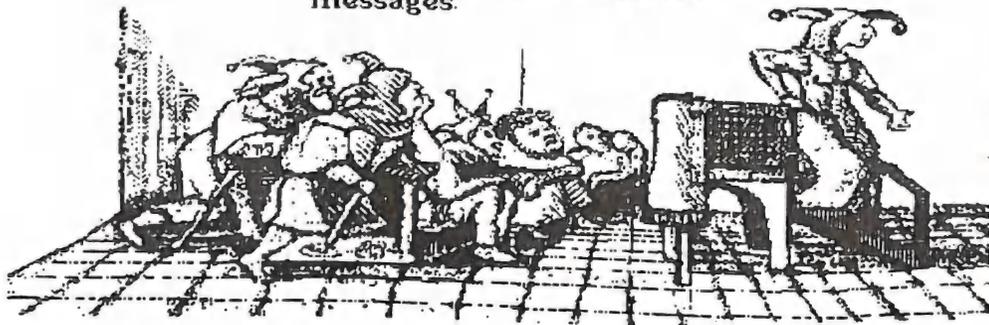
PRINTER CODES

by Len Heffernan

Here is a simple Basic Program I wrote to set various printing modes when using my CITIZEN 120D printer.

I use it mainly when printing lists of names and addresses or columns of money ––using programs such as P.F.S. FILE & P.F.S. REPORT (8 lines per inch; zero without a slash). I think lists look better this way. Other printing modes could be added to the menu or the existing ones changed to suit the user. I think it could be used with other printers, either 'as is' or with slight changes.

```
10 PRINT"␀"
20 POKE53280,0:POKE53281,0
30 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT:
40 PRINTTAB(07)"CHECK THAT PRINTER IS 'ON'"
50 FORT=1TO1500:NEXT
60 OPEN1,4:PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(64):CLOSE1
70 PRINT"␀"
80 OPEN1,4
90 PRINTTAB(05)"*****************************"
100 PRINTTAB(05)"* PRINTER CONTROL PROGRAM *"
110 PRINTTAB(05)"*****************************"
120 PRINT:PRINT
130 PRINTTAB(05)"(A)----SET LEFT MARGIN"
140 PRINTTAB(05)"(B)----8 LINES PER INCH"
150 PRINTTAB(05)"(C)----NEAR LETTER QUALITY"
160 PRINTTAB(05)"(D)----EMPHASIZED PRINT"
170 PRINTTAB(05)"(E)----COMPRESSED PRINT"
180 PRINTTAB(05)"(F)----VERTICALLY ENLARGED PRINT"
190 PRINTTAB(05)"(G)----SUBSCRIPT PRINT"
200 PRINTTAB(05)"(H)----EXPANDED PRINT"
210 PRINTTAB(05)"(I)----ITALIC PRINT"
220 PRINTTAB(05)"(J)----REMOVE / FROM ZERO"
225 PRINTTAB(05)"(K)----ABORT - START AGAIN"
230 PRINTTAB(05)"(L)----EXIT (AFTER SELECTING FROM"
235 PRINTTAB(05)"                    ABOVE)"
240 PRINT:PRINT
245 PRINT"TYPE A LETTER (A-L) THEN PRESS RETURN"
```

```
250 INPUTA$
260 A=ASC(A$)
270 IFA<65ORA>76THENGOTO245
280 C=A-64
290 ONCGOSUB400,500,600,700,800,900,1000,1100,1200,1300,1400,1500
400 PRINT"␘"
410 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT
420 PRINTTAB(06)"HOW MANY SPACES FROM THE LEFT"
430 INPUTA
440 IFA<0ORA>79THENPRINT"␘␛␛THAT'S OUTSIDE PRINTER LIMITS␛␛":GOTO420
450 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(108);CHR$(A):GOTO1600
500 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(48):GOTO1600
600 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(120);CHR$(49):GOTO1600
700 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(69):GOTO1600
800 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(15):GOTO1600
900 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(104):GOTO1600
1000 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(83);CHR$(49):GOTO1600
1100 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(87);CHR$(49):GOTO1600
1200 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(52):GOTO1600
1300 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(126);CHR$(52);CHR$(48):GOTO1600
1400 PRINT#1,CHR$(27);CHR$(64):GOTO1600
1500 PRINT"␘"
1510 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT
1515 PRINTTAB(08)"CHECK PRINTER PAPER"
1517 PRINT
1520 PRINTTAB(08)"LOAD YOUR PROGRAM WHEN"
1522 PRINT
1525 PRINTTAB(08)"COMMODORE SCREEN APPEARS"
1530 FORT=1TO4000:NEXT
1540 PRINT"␘":CLOSE1:SYS64738
1600 CLOSE1:GOTO70
```
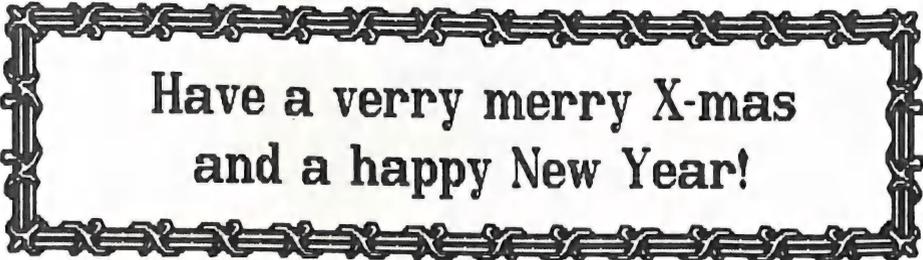
Have a verry merry X-mas and a happy New Year!

WHAT NEXT?

by Lindsay Vardy

Enclosed are a few notes to help fill those spaces in CURSOR.

Why did you buy a C64? Was it because you read or were told that your children would be disadvantaged if they did not have access to their own computer. Or was it because the Jones had one and you weren't about to miss the chance to keep up. Maybe you were like me and have a fascination for any electrical gizmo and the kids were a good excuse to convince the family that a computer was a real necessity.

Having acquired your 64 and become a bit bored of playing games, what next? Sell it or put it in the cupboard and forget it? Word processing is the next step but that invoves the purchase of a printer and many are not prepared to go that far.

So what is left to do? If you have a hobby or interest such as radio, photography, model railways, gardening or yachting, how do you use or interface your hobby to the 64? This aspect is not often covered. Let us not forget that the 64 is a highly sophisticated piece of equipment and there must be many fields where it can be put to use. It would be good to see some suggestions from members. Sadly, many senior members have gone on to the Amiga and their talents lost to the 64/128 world.

Recently I read that the 64 is considered to be the radio hams' computer in America, and there seems to be no reason why the computer should not be a great asset for radio operators and experimenters, to study audio circuits, filters and many similar uses. Let us share our experiences with others.

For instance, I have several Morse Code training programs, and I believe programs and hardware are available for converting Morse Code reception to text on a computer monitor. A book of programs is available from B.C.F bookstore on amateur radio antenna design and calculating radio circuit values. No doubt many such programs are circulating among radio operators here in Brisbane. Program for a world clock could be written for use by radio operators, but can any member tell me how to add or subtract hours and minutes from the TI$ display? I've wasted a lot of time fiddling with VAL and STR$ to no avail.

Another field for experimentation is Speech Synthesis, and a book How to Make your Computer Talk by Steven Veltri is now available again in Brisbane bookstores. The author is one of the leading experimenters in speech synthesis and voice recognition, and has worked with the Hearsay 1000 products. The book gives extensive information on speech synthesis and many detailed step by step instructions for building hardware, interfacing, and computer programs using the SPO256-AL2 speech synthesizer with Commodore 64, Vic 20, TRS-80, Sinclair ZX80 and Timex/Sinclair 1000. Adding speech to games or educational programs can be fun. Kmart and Bookworld sell a book How to make Computer Model Controllers for 64. Price about $1. Mainly deals with interfacing Model Railway relays to the 64, complete with diagrams and associated programs.

My computer, monitor and printer sit on the right hand side of an L shaped bench in the corner of the room. Above them are shelves for disks, manuals, clock, reading lamp etc. Below is a small cupboard for assorted paper. On the left side of the bench is a space for writing, disks for work in hand, and to the left end of the bench is a rack containing a CB radio, Communications radio, power supply, extension speakers, SWR meter, cassette recorder and telephone. Everything is within easy reach and details of a radio station or frequency can be recalled and displayed on the monitor with a few keystrokes. Beneath the rack is a cupboard for labels, staples and other accessories. A comfortable swivel chair completes the layout. Many visitors to EXPO admired the computer generated speech and music. Your Commodore 64 can do the same thing and very well. A child can copy sheet music using a program like MUSIC SHOP, and the 64 can belt out a disco beat or a sweet rendition of your favourite hymn with equal ease.

Which leads us to S.A.M. Although speech synthesizers are not perfect, S.A.M, the program recently reviewed in Cursor, is quite a surprise. S.A.M will read data statements in a program, read a program character by character after it has been written to disk, speak anything typed to screen after hitting RETURN, or speak in a program using the SAY command.

S.A.M needs phonemes to be typed in to attain maximum flexibility, but the companion text to speech translator, RECITER, will speak plain English words typed to screen, words may be tailored to change the pronunciation to suit.

RECITER will speak a foreign language like DUTCH taken from a travel booklet and compared to the same words spoken on the cassette supplied with the travel booklet, does quite a good job, only needing a little tuning here and there. Some keyboard characters are not in RECITER's text to speech conversion table but can be easily added to the reading program.

My daughter uses a touch typing tutor I wrote using RECITER. Letters and symbols are spoken as they are typed and errors are immediately noticed. S.A.M. has variable PITCH and SPEED and quite a good pace can be attained.

Recently on TV a quadriplegic was shown using a rod held in his mouth to operate a computer. A speechless paralysed person was shown with a wand strapped to a headband to operate a computer keyboard to communicate.

A program can be written for a person unable to speak using a menu of about 21 categories such as greetings, food, farewells etc. Then pages of phrases can be accessed with a single keystroke using GET, and RECITER will speak the phrases as they are selected. More pages can be added or revised by the handicapped person because RECITER will speak normal English words. A fairly good typist should be able to carry on a good conversation using RECITER without the use of such menus and pre-written phrases.

Many experienced 64 users have abandoned the 64 and gone on to the AMIGA, perhaps your 64 is sitting in a cupboard, forgotten in the euphoria of playing with your new toy, or waiting to be sold off like an old slave. Maybe you lie awake at night wondering how to meet the next mortgage payment after buying your Amiga?

Wouldn't it be nice to hear the mellow chimes of a Grandfather Clock marking off the hours till dawn breaks. But of course you couldn't afford something like that at a price of up to $2000. Wrong!. The SUPERDADDY CLOCK will make your day (and your nights).

Your 64 will make a beaut Grandfather Clock with chimes of your choice, or a melody at the quarter hours, and strike the hours in any tone you like to choose, at any volume.

It can be fitted with an alarm, selected or not, and if you have the talent may be built into a grand piece of furniture to stand in the hallway or the corner of the room.
A spare color portable TV will replace the traditional clock face and give a color display to match the decor of the room, and big print letters will give you the biggest digital clock in the neighbourhood.

Space may be a problem, if so the 64 will gladly sit in a wall unit and the disk drive or Datasette can be tucked away out of sight, a small amplifier (the audio end of a transistor radio will do) can be used for sound, or a 64 operated relay to turn on the hi-fi unit when audio is needed.

A monitor is not necessary as your SUPERDADDY CLOCK can be made to SPEAK the hours (using S.A.M.), as well as striking the hours. A touch of the SPACEBAR and S.A.M. will tell you the current time in his rich imported accent. The program can be loaded blind without a monitor, simply make a note of the prompts.

I hope these notes give some food for thought.

CHINESE CALENDAR

by Denis Wright.

Are you a pig? A snake? A goat? A tiger, maybe? No, I'm not getting personal, but if you want to find out the name of the Chinese year that someone was born in, then you might find this useful. It works for all years, BC and AD, to the limits of your computer's memory and the mathematical accuracy of the calendar.

The important lines are 8, 10, 12, 16-38. It will work with just those lines, but the rest dress it up a little.

May the Goddess of Fortune smile upon you!

```
2 REM ** CHINESE CALENDAR **
4 REM ** BY  DENIS WRIGHT **
6 POKE 53280,0:POKE 53281,0
8 A$="[GREEN]YEAR OF THE "
10 INPUT"[CLR][DOWN][DOWN]YEAR OF BIRTH";Y
12 X=Y/12:Z=INT(X):A=X-Z
14 PRINT"[YELLOW][DOWN][DOWN][DOWN]
[DOWN][DOWN][DOWN][DOWN]";
16 IFA=0THENPRINTA$"MONKEY"
18 IFA>.08ANDA<.09THENPRINTA$"ROOSTER"
20 IFA>.16ANDA<.17THENPRINTA$"DOG"
22 IFA>.24ANDA<.26THENPRINTA$"PIG"
24 IFA>.33ANDA<.34THENPRINTA$"RAT"
26 IFA>.41ANDA<.42THENPRINTA$"OX"
28 IFA>.49ANDA<.51THENPRINTA$"TIGER"
30 IFA>.58ANDA<.59THENPRINTA$"CAT"
32 IFA>.66ANDA<.67THENPRINTA$"DRAGON"
34 IFA>.74ANDA<.76THENPRINTA$"SNAKE"
36 IFA>.83ANDA<.84THENPRINTA$"HORSE"
38 IFA>.91ANDA<.92THENPRINTA$"GOAT"
40 FORZ=1TO999:NEXT
42 INPUT"[GREEN][DOWN][DOWN][DOWN][DOWN][DOWN]
[DOWN] [DOWN]ANOTHER DATE[SPACE][SPACE]Y
[LEFT][LEFT][LEFT]";Y$
44 IFY$<>"Y"THENEND
46 IFY$="Y"THENRUN
```

COMPUTER NOVICE GUIDE

by Cor Geels

COMPUTER NOVICE'S GUIDE NO.2

Following the publication of the first issue of this series in our CURSOR, I have received 2 calls from people who were glad to read about the strange characters that can come on the screen, as they had given up trying to program, because they got very frustrated, thinking the computer did things it was not supposed to do. They felt that the computer tried to run them.

We'll therefore go back to the first issue in this series to emphasize a few terms which may still have left some uncertainty with some newcomers.

I assume that any novice will have had a go at reading some of the material that came with the computer, so the operation of keys such as INSERT (INST) or CLR / HOME will be familiar. The graphic characters on the front of the keys will be ignored in this series.

REM statements in programs were discussed, and how we use them to read a REMark or explanation regarding that program. A REM may take the form of a line number, then the word REM and then wording stretching to the end of the next line on the screen.

But also, a statement or formula after a line number can be explained with a REM, provided a COLON separates the REM:

```
60 D=85:REM DEGREES CELSIUS IN TIIE OVEN
70 REM TEMPERATURE TO BE CONTROLLED BY TIIE FLOW OF COOLING WATER
80 T=D*Z
```

That introduces the subject of a : (COLON) in program lines. Whenever the computer reads a line with a colon in it, he must carry out what is in front of that colon before he can step over it and look to see what comes next.

But we can also use the same method to make programming a bit shorter and sometimes easier to read:

```
10 A=7:B=35:X=-4:Z=.364
```

Here we have used 1 line number to show values of 4 different NUMERIC VARIABLES, and this way we save effort and MEMORY, instead of:

```
10 A=7
20 B=35
etc.
```

MEMORY is of course the 'volume of the brain' of your computer, so to speak.

When you are finished with a program, even a little sample like above, whether you have saved it or not, always type NEW and press RETURN to clear the MEMORY.

Whatever we type straight onto the screen gets there in the DIRECT MODE. That is useful as a calculator, or typing a message or something on the screen, but other than that it serves little purpose.

If we use LINE NUMBERS however, we create a program (PROGRAM MODE) which we can LIST and RUN and add to or change as needed until we are completely satisfied with it. If we

have saved it on tape or disk, then we can LOAD that program back into the system and use it again, or even modify it if conditions have changed. We can then save it again using a different title, or add a number.

Creating a program usually involves the use of STRINGS, which must be enclosed by QUOTES (PEGS to the younger ones).

You remember that plain letters A, B, C etc. mean NUMERIC VARIABLES to a computer in programming, if used with the = (equal) sign, and that for STRING VARIABLES we always have to use the $ (dollar) sign attached to a letter, e.g. A$="Icecream". A$ is a STRING VARIABLE because later on in the same program we might use A$="Steamtrain".

Even if you are a perfect typist you are still bound to make a mistake sometimes, and in QUOTE MODE this can be frustrating unless you understand what is really happening. That is because, after the opening quote mark, ("), whatever you type is considered as: THIS IS WHAT YOU TYPED AND ALTHOUGH NOT YET CONFIRMED BY RETURN, THIS IS WHAT YOU QUOTED!

Most of the time you will find it very convenient that you can make a program do something like CLEAR SCREEN by using a line number and then pressing 1 or 2 keys, like:

    5 PRINT "(quote) SHIFTed CLR/HOME (shows little heart) "(closing quote.)

Press RETURN to let the computer know that you are finished with that line. Your computer will CLEAR the SCREEN when he reads this statement when RUN.
In a minute we'll sort things out, and also make a little program actually using quoted cursor movements.

But first, let us set the little trap for ourselves, on purpose:

    10 PRINT"   If you try to 'CURSOR LEFT' you get funny characters going to the right instead. As a matter of fact, any CURSOR key gives a different stranger, and as cursor movements inside quotes are often used in games and special effects, you may as well see what they look like, on their own as well as in block:
To show them off, type after each " (opening quote) 1 cursor move, 2 x spacebar, 3 more moves, then close quote ", and press RETURN. Also the INSERT key plays up:

    10 PRINT"1 right 2 spaces 3 right" RETURN
    20 PRINT"1 left 2 spaces 3 left" RETURN
    30 PRINT"1 down 2 spaces 3 down" RETURN
    40 PRINT"1 up 2 spaces 4 INST 3 up" RETURN
    45 REM COLOURS CAN ALSO BE PROGRAMMED INSIDE QUOTES:
    50 REM EITHER CTRL OR C= KEY DEPRESSED AND THEN DIGIT KEYS 1-8 INCLUSIVE
    60 PRINT"   16 different symbols will show after the quote sign.

This program will not RUN, of course. It serves only to show.

Study those characters for a while because many books and magazines print those symbols as you have just created them. You can now recognise them.

But if the cursor movements are not intended in our program, if they just crept in, and occur on the last line of your program on the screen, hold down a SHIFT key and press RETURN. That ends the program line you were on and puts the cursor on a blank line below the program, so you just retype the line correctly.

If you were trying to change something in a program listing, and the listing leaves no blank space to retype a line in, do as above: SHIFTed RETURN anywhere on the faulty line. That terminates interference with that line.

Now you can clear the screen, type LIST 540 or whatever line number you were working on, and have another go at changing that line before you press RETURN.

Once you press RETURN, the line you RETURNed replaces the one you changed.
Now for our little program: NAME UP IN LIGHTS.

Lines 50 and 90 are time delays, which hold the screen for a while. More about this later.
Note: Pressing the SPACEBAR <u>deletes</u> the character under the cursor.
I have chosen CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS because the second name is the shorter.
We make up the difference in length of the names by typing: spaces,NAME,spaces, inside the quotes so that the length of the 2nd name always is equal or wider than the 1st, or s-p-r-e-a-d the 2nd with spaces between the letters.

The program is a LOOP, which means it READS and RUNs to the bottom line (GOTO 10) and then up and around again, until we RUN/STOP it or switch off.

```
10 PRINT CLR SC:REM CLEAR SCREEN
15 REM CHRISTOPHER IS 11 CHARACTERS WIDE:COLUMBUS IS 8 CHARACTERS WIDE
20 REM THE SCREEN IS 40 SPACES WIDE
25 REM THE SCREEN IS 25 LINES DOWN
30 REM STARTING POINT THUS: CRSR DOWN 10x AND HALF OF 40-15 (13x)TO THE RIGHT
35 REM CHRISTOPHER IN WHITE LETTERS
40 PRINT"(CRSR down 10x,CRSR right 13x,CTRLed2)CHRISTOPHER"
50 FOR T = 1 TO 500:NEXT T:REM TIME DELAY
55 REM COLUMBUS IF SPACED IS 15 WIDE
60 REM the return after CHRISTOPHER did put us one line down,so we must go 1 up
65 REM SECOND STARTING POINT THUS: CRSR RIGHT 11 OR 12x,CRSR UP 1x.
70 REM SURNAME IN YELLOW, SO CTRLed8
80 PRINT"(CRSR right 12x,CRSR up 1x,CTRLed8)C O L U M B U S"
90 FOR T = 1 TO 500:NEXT T
100 GOTO 10
```

Press RUN/STOP, type LIST and change one delay to 1 TO 1000. Don't forget RETURN.
Save this program for future reference to cursor movements, looping, time delay and inclusion of colour.

Type NEW and press RETURN.

We have put the strange characters to use, and the frustration to rest.

LOOPS can be fun, and spectacular effects can be created by making short simple programs, and the effects can be varied by using minor changes in a program.
E.g. your name on the left side of the screen, running out at the top and continuously feeding in at the bottom until you RUN/STOP it:

```
10 PRINT" (your name)"
20 GOTO 10
```

The action starts when you RUN it.

Or you can have your name running up, now not at the left side of your screen by typing a simple COMMA, or 2 or 3 comma's, straight after the PRINT statement. (Before the quote mark). This feature comes in handy when, in future, you want to enter columns:

```
10 PRINT,," (name)"
```

Now type the same program again, but this time type a semi-colon after the closing quotes.

```
10 PRINT" (your friend's name)";
20 GOTO 10
```

Next see what happens if you type and RUN the short 2 line program:

```
10 PRINT"OX";
20 GOTO 10
```

If you want to see what is happening in slow motion type an extra line:

```
15 FOR A = 1 TO 200:NEXT A
```

Type LIST to check that the line is in place and RUN it again.

TIME DELAY or what seems to be slow motion is caused by a two part statement like:

```
FOR X = 1 TO 250:NEXT X
```

This is actually a FOR/NEXT LOOP.

FOR/NEXT LOOPS are very useful TWINS, and some of its uses we'll discuss now. They are made up of part A: a NUMERIC VARIABLE, for which you set all the values at the start, say: T = 1 TO 12 (12 values), and part B: NEXT T.

As soon as the computer first reads this part A he starts counting: 1 and then moves on to find part B (NEXT), after which he can rush back to part A, count 2, and so on. If we make the loop:

```
10 FOR A = 1 to 15
20 NEXT A, then we made a very small time delay, because there is nothing else to do
```
but: count 1, find NEXT on the following line, rush back to line 10, count 2 etc. up to 15, but as it takes about 250 counts for 1/4 second to pass, 15 is too slow to notice. Therefore, if a visual delayed action on the screen is required a minimum count of 250 should be entered.

The usual, clearer way of writing a time delay instruction is on the one line:

```
10 FOR T = 1 TO 250:NEXT T
```

If we put some instructions between part A and part B, the computer has to carry out those instructions before he can jump back for further counting:

```
10 FOR C = 1 TO 12
20 PRINT C,"III"
30 NEXT C:PRINT"SEE YOU LATER"
```

This shows on the screen a print of the count, followed by the printed string "III" in the next column. (We used 1 COMMA).
Line 30 sends us back to 10, (NOTE: NO GOTO), to pick up the next count which is printed again etc.'till the 12 has been reached. Then, when there is nothing more to do for NEXT of line 30, we jump over the colon and find the instruction to PRINT the STRING "SEE YOU LATER". Your program stopped there. It ran out!

The GOTO statement which we used earlier in this series also returned the computer to a previous line number, but that created a NEVER ENDING LOOP, which we had to end with a break.
Practise with a few similar programs as described above, and soon you will find it fun to realize what you can do already.

MAIL BOX

Multicolumns on Pocket Writer II. (Sept.'88 CURSOR)

Congratulations on a very effective device for activating tardy correspondents! I was intrigued by the above article and thought how nice and confusing it would be for some of our local Bulletin Board readers to try to make sense of their on-screen files as they scrolled past in two or three columns.

With that unworthy scheme in mind, I typed in a little document, followed the instructions to the point where I hit the "Block Move" command, and to my disappointment found that the block didn't move as described. What's more, the screen locked and obviously the program had gone off to Never-Never Land! Some hours experimenting and I was no nearer success and I'm now curious to learn whether or not my lack of success has been experienced by other members. Knowing the fragility of Pocket Writer II, thanks to the odd density bit protection, I now wonder if my disk is OK. My disk is an original....Serial NOAC011274..Version 1.20..... and I'm running it in C128 mode, 80 columns. I've also tried the set-up in C64 mode (in 80 columns) with the same outcome.

Incidentally, there is plenty of life in the old 8 bit machines here in Broken Hill. As well as serving as workhorses for introductory classes in computer literacy, there are several 128s churning out the figures for a number of community organisations via Superscript, WordWriter and their respective spreadsheets and databases. Applications such as the man- (?person-) machine interface by Synapse Software for the humble 64, although used locally for more than three years in Stress Management courses, have yet to make an appearance on the 16 and 32 bit machines. Our sole local Bulletin Board is running the same CP/M program on a C128 that is used by Murdoch University (WA) for its external students in and around Perth. Our Local Adult Education Council is using it to trial distance-education and courses for hearing impaired students. Although they have IBM clones, the C128 set-up is great for the trial because the program is simple for newcomers to operate and very robust. This group would be delighted to welcome callers from Queensland during their trials and the number (24 Hours), is (080) 884107.

We have a growing trickle of Amiga users, but the 64/128 defectors amongst them still seem to use Superscript etc., on their old clunkers for most of their letters. By the time they've moved to their second drive and the extra half meg., they still tend to look wistfully at hard-disks as the best way to put their parcel of Word Perfect disks into everyday use.

Carl Holzberger...Broken Hill

In 1985 I decided to join the Commodore Computer Users Group (Qld.), mainly because I had recently bought a C64 with disk drive and all the other good gear ,so I thought that I might gain some more information about the big bad world of computers. To my surprise it was (or should I say is) big but not so bad and the help I received and still do receive when I get stuck is tremendous.

After I had attended a couple of meetings I realised that the group needed volunteers desperately ,especially in the area of the lending library. I work shifts and working out if I could help was a dilemma. While I was still thinking of how I could help, a notice appeared in the CURSOR that the group needed the services of a carpenter so that was the start I was looking for and the start of my association and many hours of pleasure helping the group.

I have however found a reluctance on the part of many members to come forward to assist in the running of the group. I found that the time I spent helping in the lending library was rewarding in many ways. Helping the group grow, helping fellow members to utilise the facilities to the full was, and still is, quite satisfying. (Although there are always some who will use and abuse no matter what you do for them).

Not too many people would realise the time put in just setting up the lending library. Maurice Hawkyard (former chief librarian) and the present chief librarian Allan Horne and his wife Doreen and myself would be in the rooms between 5.30 to 6.00pm setting up all the books and software to open for business at 7.00pm. The rooms would quite often have other people's equipment in there and this had to be moved first, so as to be able to put ours in place.

This letter is to show other members how much work goes into the group by only a hard working few (and thanks to those who do put in their valuable time). To all those members not already involved in the running of the group, please think hard about it - even if you can only spare one night a year to help or even an afternoon at your local sub group this would give someone else a relief from the pressure of having to be there every meeting.

I suppose I have raved on long enough, so thanks to all those members who turn up meeting after meeting to give their time and to help in various ways to make the group a more pleasant organisation to be part of. Oh, by the way, if I can find time from working 12 to 14 hours per day to write this to CURSOR, then come on all you others.... you must have something of interest to talk about!

Graham Barlow

-ooOoo-

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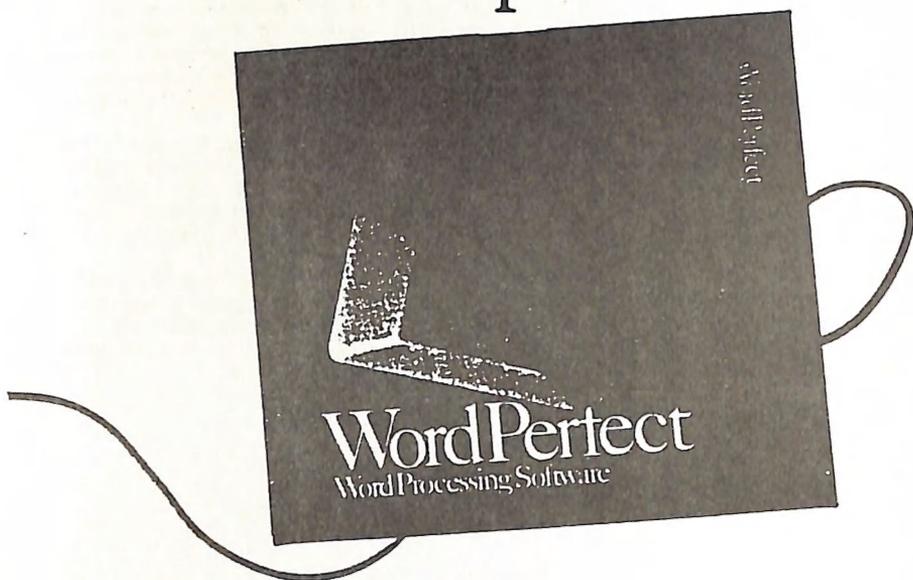Epyx fast load cartridge. -- C-64/128 Two slot Navarone cartridge expander.

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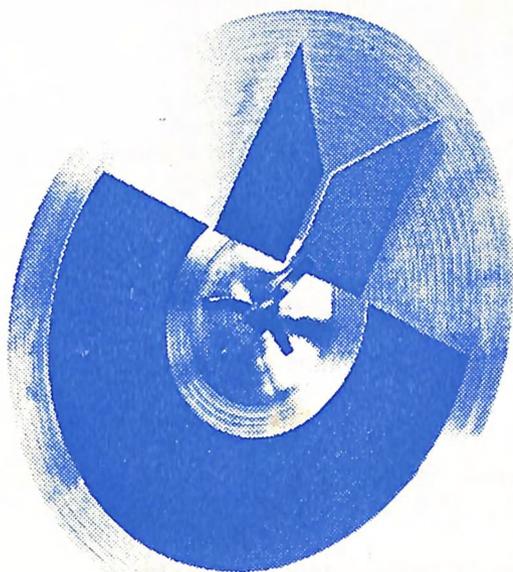
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