CURSOR

COMMODORE COMPUTER USERS GROUP (QLD) INC.

Our Next Main Meeting will take place on **Tuesday,
6th March 1990,** at 8 pm (Libraries & Sales at 7 pm)
at the Bardon Professional Development Centre

CONTENTS

C.C.U.G. (Q) - INFORMATION

MAIN MEETING

The Main Meeting is usually held on the 1st Tuesday of the Month at the Bardon Professional Development Centre, 390 Simpsons Road, Bardon, starting at 8 pm.
Library: 7pm - 8pm & 9pm - 9.30pm.
Sales: 7pm - 8pm.

Entrance through the Centre's Car-park in Carwoola Street. **Parking is not allowed in Centre's grounds!**

The dates for upcoming meetings are

Tuesday, 6th March, at 8pm.
Tuesday, 10th April, at 8pm.
Tuesday, 1st May, at 8pm.

Details of this month's topic can be found in the relevant section of this newsletter.

WORKSHOP MEETINGS

Amiga Workshop is held on the 2nd Sunday of the Month (1pm - 4pm) in the Ithaca RSL Hall, cnr. Nash and Elizabeth St, Rosalie.
Disk & Accessory Sales: 1pm - 3pm
Bring your own Amiga equipment.
For information ring 300 3477.

Details of this month's activities can be found in the relevant section of this newsletter.

C64/128 Workshop is also held at the same time and place as above.

5¼" Disks can be purchased at this meeting as well and the Public Domain disks are available for copying. Bring your own equipment.

Contact Leigh Winsor for details (Ph. 379 2405)

REGIONAL MEETINGS

CANNON HILL: Last Saturday of the month (Noon - 12pm) in the Cannon Hill State School. Ph. Don Friswell - 343 1735 a.h.

KINGSTON: 2nd Saturday of the month (1pm - 12pm) in the Kingston High School. Phone Alan Hill - 290 0264 a.h.

PINE RIVERS: 1st Sunday of the month (1pm - 5pm) in the Strathpine State High School. Ph. Barry Bean - 269 7390 a.h.

REDCLIFFE: 3rd Sunday of the month (1pm - 5pm) in the Masonic Hall, Sutton St. Ph. Dennis Underwood - 283 2175 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 Street. Ph. Cor Geels - 263 2839

PLUS/4 SUPPORT: - Clarence Stock is acting as support coordinator for Plus/4 owners. Ph. 397 8894 a.h.

GOODS & SERVICES

(At Main Meeting or by Mail)

AMIGA SPECIFIC:

Public Domain Disks 3½" (Amiga - *Mail Order Only*): $5.00 ea (+$2.00 P & P for up to 5 Disks)
Commercial Library Catalogue Disk: $4.00 (+ $2.00 P & P)
5¼" Blank Disks: $9.00 per 10 (+ $2.00 P & P)
3½" Disks: $25.00 per 10 (RPS brand) *or* $20.00 per 10 (Mark II) (+ $2.00 P & P)
3½" Disk Boxes (80 disks): $20.00 (+ $5.00 P & P)
3½" Disk Labels (68x68mm) 4 sheets (= 48 labels): $1.00 (+ $2.00 P&P)
A500 Dust Covers: $16.00 (+ $2.00 P & P)
Amiga Beginners Guide: $3.00
Amiga Dos Summary: $3.00
(+ $1.00 P & P, either item)

C64/128 SPECIFIC:

Public Domain Disks (C-64): $3.00 ea (+ $2.00 P & P up to 5 Disks)
Public Dom. Cassette Tapes (C-64): $2.00 ea (+ $1.00 P & P Per Order)
Commercial Library Catalogue Disk: $3.00 (+ $2.00 P & P)
5¼" Blank Disks: $9.00 per 10 (+ $2.00 P & P)
1541 'Drive & Disks Testing' Disk: $2.00 (+ $2.00 P & P)
1541 Drive Dust Covers: $10.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)
Disk Notchers: $8.00 (+ $1.00 P&P)
User Port Plug (Edge Connector): $8.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)
User Port Plug Backshell: $3.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)
User Port to Centronics cable: $35.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)
36-Pin Centronics Male Plug w. Backshell $10.00 (+$1.00 P & P)
Public Domain Instruction Book (C64): $5.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)
Starting With Disk Drives : $2.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)
C-128 Mem. Map: $2.00 (+ $1.00 P&P)
Macro Assembler Book: $5.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)
64 Sound & Graphics (by G.Perry): $10.00 (+ $2.00 P & P)
The Write Stuff (64 Word Processor), with Manual: $18.00
BB Speller (for Write Stuff):$12.00
BB Talker (for Write Stuff): $12.00
(The above 3: each $3.00 P. & P.)

GENERAL:

Back Issues of *CURSOR* : $1.50 each

Address Labels (23 x 89 mm): $14.00 per 1000 (+ $2.00 P & P)
Ribbons for MPS-1000, GX/LX-80 Printers: $7.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)
Ribbons for MPS-1200/1250, Citizen 120-D Printers: $10.00 (+ $1 P & P)
Ribbons for Riteman C or F Printers: $12.00 (+ $1.00 P & P)

---> *NOTE: Copying of Commercial Software is ILLEGAL, and is NOT ALLOWED at our Meetings.* <---

FOR HIRE

AMIGA Pocket Modem (300, 1200, 1200/75 Baud) with Software: $10.00 per week.

Contact John Van Staveren on: (07) 372 3651

MAILING ADDRESS

Please address all mail which is not related to *CURSOR*, including orders to:

C.C.U.G.(Q) Inc.
P.O. Box 274
SPRINGWOOD QLD 4127

Cheques to: C.C.U.G. (Q) Inc.

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

Please advice our Secretary and *not* the Editor of *CURSOR!*

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Fees are as follows:

Joining Fee: $10.00

Annual Membership Fee:

Ordinary* Membership: $25.00
Country/Associate M'ship: $15.00
Pensioner Membership: $15.00
Family/Business M'ship: $35.00

(* Within the B'ne Metropolitan Telephone District)

Library Fee: $5.00

LENDING LIBRARY

It is a condition of use of our Book, Magazine & Software Lending Library that materials can only be borrowed for a period of 1 Month.

If unable to attend the next meeting, members can either mail the borrowed material to the Group's P.O. Box (see above), or they may leave this material with their nearest Management Committee member (but please ring first!).

By following these simple rules, you assist your fellow members who may want to borrow the books or software which you are returning.

YOUR NEWSLETTER

CURSOR appears 11 times annually and is dependant on members' contributions for its content.

Address all Newsletter Mail to:

The Editor "CURSOR"
P O Box 384
ASHGROVE QLD 4060

Deadline for the April Issue is:

FRIDAY 2nd MARCH!

Short articles (less than a page) and adverts for the *BYTE* column can be submitted in written or printed form, but we prefer to receive your articles on disk.

Please use *minimum* formatting in your articles. Do *not* indent paragraphs and use a *single* space after a full stop.

If a specific page layout is required, include a printout in the desired format. Disks will be returned promptly and we pay return postage.

AMIGA Specific:

Supply your articles on 3½" disk in the form of an ASCII file or a WordPerfect file with *minimum* formatting.

C64/128 Specific:

Supply your articles on a (1541) 5¼" disk in the following format (in order of preference):

SEQ ASCII file, SEQ PET ASCII file, SuperScript/EasyScript, PaperClip/-PocketWriter files in the SEQ save option, SpeedScript files saved with the SS converter program, option 2, (SEQ Standard ASCII file). Sorry, but we **cannot read 1571 formatted disks, and are unable to convert** GeoWrite, FontMaster or Bank Street Writer Files.

Alternatively, if you own a modem, you can upload articles, news, gossip, etc. to the Group's BBS (Ph.808 7694 - File Area 8)

Commercial Advertising

Rate is $30.00 per full page, per issue. This rate is for A-5 size camera-ready copy only.

Production Credits

WordPerfect 4.1.9 - PageStream - The 64 Emulator II - GP Term - Easy Ledgers - Epson SQ-850 Printer

Opinions expressed in *CURSOR* are those of the Author(s), and thus not necessarily those of the C.C.U.G.(QLD) Inc. or the Editor.

Permission for reprinting by other Commodore & Amiga Computer Users Groups is granted, *provided* that both the source and author are acknowledged.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT:
Greg Perry - Ph. 366 3295
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Mike Williams - Ph. 209 9084
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John Van Staveren - Ph. 372 3651
CHIEF LIBRARIAN:
Phil Guerney - Ph. 378 9756
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:
Ralph De Vries - Ph. 300 3477
SUBGROUP LIAISON:
Alan Hill (S.Side)- Ph. 290 0264
Steve Hovelroud (N.S)- Ph. 298 5128

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

C-64/128 COORDINATOR:
Leigh Winsor - Ph. 379 2405
AMIGA COORDINATOR:
Steve McNamee - Ph. 260 5827

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C64/128 PUBL. DOM. DISKS AND TAPES:
Doug Maclurkin - Ph. 358 4442
AMIGA DISKS & ACCESSORIES:
Ken Clem - Ph. 287 3698
AMIGA PUBLIC DOMAIN DISKS:
Mark Eckert - Ph. 891 5268

BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEM: (07) 8087694

SYSOP:
Graeme Darroch - Ph. 209 1999
ASSISTANT SYSOP - AMIGA:
Tom Yallowley - Ph. 251 5845
ASSISTANT SYSOP - C64/128:
Craig Rawlins - Ph. 379 8957

Our BBS is part of the Fido Network (Node No. 3: 640/304), and can be accessed by our members at 300, 1200/75, 1200 and 2400 bps, using 8 data bits, 1 stop bit and no parity

EDITOR'S NOTES

Hello Folks, I'm back! After eight weeks of living it up in Western Europe, it's tough to go back to WordPerfect and pick up the threads again. Elsewhere in this issue I will give you some of my impressions of this holiday.

But first I would like to thank Leigh Winsor for getting the February *Cursor* in your letterbox on time. Leigh, of course, has the advantage that, when a page isn't quite full, he just knocks off another illustration to fill the gaps - wish I had his talent! I loved his picture of Doug Maclurkin; a real gem. Now, if Leigh were only to master animation we might then all have a 'living' Doug on our Amigas! (Perhaps *that* would make Doug trade in his 128 on an Amy...)

As some of you may have noticed, I sometimes use this column to pass on messages from your management committee. Here are some more:

We are pleased to welcome Steve Hovelroud as our Subgroup liaison man for the North Side subgroups (Pine Rivers, Redcliffe and Wavell Heights), while Alan Hill continues to look after the welfare of our South Side subgroups (Cannon Hill, Kingston and Sherwood).

Our BBS has been outfitted with a new terminal program (Lynx) which, it is hoped, will improve the performance of same. Hopefully Graeme Darroch will inform us all about the advantages (and disadvantages!) of the new program.

We are now offering *For Hire* an Amiga Netcomm Pocket modem with a Terminal program for $10.00 per week. John Van Staveren, our Treasurer, has all the details.

In the near future we hope to make available a similar modem package for C64/128 users; a cheap way to find out if modeming is for you.

We can now offer our Amiga members *two* brands of 3½" disks. Our premium quality RPS disks at $25.00 per box and our budget Mark II disks at $20.00 per box.

THIS IS IMPORTANT

Mail Orders for Disks, Accessories and Public Domain Software should **only be addressed to:**

C.C.U.G.(Q.) Inc.
P O Box 274
Springwood Qld 4127

and **NOT** to the individual operator. Please make your cheque payable to: C.C.U.G.(Q.) Inc.

UNUSUAL

Did you notice the fact that there were more 8 bit articles than Amy articles in the February issue?

Of course we are pleased to see the sudden influx of 64/128 articles after the prolonged drought, but what have our Amiga owners been doing during December and January?

Hopefully all my regular Amy contributors will get off their butts and start doing their bit (or should that be 'bits'?), and new Amiga contributors are of course equally welcome!

Special thanks to Lindsay Vardy and Will Erdmann for their 8 bit contributions, and to Ron Chernich for some excellent Amiga articles - we love you all!

Ralph De Vries

LIBRARY NEWS

by Phil Guerney

A Reminder of the Trial of "Unlimited" Magazine and Book Borrowing

Old magazines contain a huge amount of fascinating material. In fact you can produce half the contents of new issues by duplicating the articles in the old ones (isn't that what the publishers do anyway?). If you enjoy gleaning useful programming hints, reading program reviews, or just wondering in amazement at the prices us earlier members paid for computers, then now is the time to select a half dozen, or several dozen, magazines for a month of solid browsing. As I said last month, the "unlimited" (but not unreasonable) magazine and book borrowing rights will continue for a three-month trial. The February meeting hasn't happened at the time of writing but I've just counted 310 magazines and books borrowed in December at a very reasonable average of about 5 items per multiple loan. (There was one young impetuous member who carted away 51 items relating to the C64 who then got an Amiga for Xmas so I guess he didn't read many of them!)

"Magazine Disks"

We subscribe to several "magazines on disk" for both the C64/128 and Amiga. These range from just files of the programs contained in the magazine (no CCUG member should EVER waste time typing in a magazine listing - check with the PD and commercial libraries first!) to a full range of reviews, demos, articles and programs. They are not heavily borrowed and we will not continue the subscriptions just out of habit. In case you don't realise what they offer, here is a summary:

LOADSTAR (for the C64 and C128), originally tied in with Commodore Magazine (recently sold by Commodore to the publishers of RUN), is in true magazine format with a well-programmed menu interface. Each month (from Oct 1988) consists of FOUR disk sides (two 1541 format flippies) and contains applications utilities, reviews, games, puzzles and graphics and sound demos. A particularly good program was included in one of the latest issues (No. 67) called SID Oscilloscope which displays a real-time sampled graph of the output of the SID sound chip while changing any of the 24 parameters - novel and very instructive indeed. All instructions are on the disk. [C128 coverage was good until early last year when a specialist C128 Loadstar disk was introduced to which we do not subscribe because of the cost and limited interest.]

ReRUN (C64/128) gives us one disk side each two months and contains the program files in the corresponding two issues of RUN magazine along with several "bonuses". It is increasingly emphasising C128 material. Some of the listings in RUN are very long indeed (which must increase disk sales I suppose). Each issue comes with a booklet giving full instructions and the magazines themselves are not required. (Issues since Sep/Oct 1988 available.)

Gazette Disk (for the C64/128) is simply a monthly disk (we have from Feb 1989 in stock) with listings from the Compute!'s Gazette for the Commodore 64 and 128 magazine. No instructions on the disk so you must borrow the corresponding magazine at the same time which is why

this set is kept at the Books/Magazines OUT counter.

Transactor (for the C64/128) and Transactor for the Amiga disks. A disk relates to each issue of the Transactor with full listings. In the case of this fairly technical journal, many longer listings are not even published in the printed version as they don't imagine any readers would want to type them in. No instructions at all on the disk, so again find the magazine on the table and the corresponding disk will be issued at the Book/Magazines OUT counter (and we have ALL of them!).

COMPUTE!'S AMIGA RESOURCE is the latest disk starting with our new subscription which started with the December 1989 issue. Disks at the Magazines/Book counter.

JUMPDISK for the Amiga is monthly from the USA with programs, articles, tutorials. July 1987 onwards.

MEGADISC for the Amiga is Australian and is also "tutorials, articles, reviews, hints and tips, useful software and much more". We have all the Disks 1-13 to date which appear about every two months.

PALETTE for the Amiga is a graphics magazine disc. Reviews, articles, letters, hints plus graphics. A three (and sometimes four) disk set every couple of months and we have all 8 out so far.

We also have AMIGAZINE (for the Amiga of course) but only the first 11 issues published over 1987/88. (This one, like several other disk magazines. has disappeared. Ed}

You may certainly borrow more than one magazine disk on one library card, but we will restrict you to one recent issue each (last 6

months) until after the main meeting when any left may then be borrowed.

Goodbye Compute!

Last year I decided to renew our subscription to Compute! magazine, after all, it was only $A40 for 12 issues and it was a sentimental favourite. When I first started my own subscription in 1983 (before joining the CCUG of course!), the issues were around 300 pages thick and full of excellent articles, including some quite technical ones of the type seen now in Transactor.

The first word processor for many C64 users was Speedscript which first appeared as a Compute! type-in. The Turbo Tape utility was another gem which allowed me to delay purchase of a disk drive for quite a while (it loaded from C64 tapes as fast a bare 1541 disk drive loaded programs). I well remember watching the letter box for the erratic surface-mail deliveries in those times when it was the only source I had of new and useful information. No longer. The magazine prides itself on being the only "general" home computing mag left, but it has become almost entirely PC directed. The November 1989 issue for instance has about 150 pages with just one-half a page each specifically on the C64 and Amiga. Almost all the advertising is directed at PC users. The subscription renewal just went into the rubbish bin.

New C64/128 Arrivals

1351-Compatible Mouse (2 of): I encourage all users of GEOS who haven't a mouse to try one for a month. It sure makes moving the pointer around much easier compared to a joystick. It also works as a joystick or paddles. An accompanying disk contains a driver and

instructions on using the mouse in your own programs.

Screen F/X with Grafix-Link: This is a program that creates presentations (for advertising, teaching aids, video titling etc) on a C64 involving graphics created with popular C64 programs combined with fancy transitions (wipes, weaves, snakes, lightning and 14 more), each in specified directions, speed, colours, sizes and positions. Text lines can be added and the whole presentation is recorded as a "script" that can contain conditional branches and loops, subroutines, menus and file handling. A script executor includes a fast-load routine for the graphics files. Show disks can be made to "autorun".

Digitalker 128: add digitised speech to your C128 programs. It is a set of machine language routines that plays digitised sound samples within either BASIC 7 or BASIC 8.

Many more sound files can be held in memory if you have a REU for your C128 and is highly recommended

for this program. Not as flexible as SAM (Software Automated Mouth) as you have to stick to the words and phrases provided, but definitely more human.

Maverick V4 Upgrade is in with Parameter Modules 2-7. Many improvements, including a sector map editor which quickly scans a disk and displays which tracks have normal data, the usual DOS errors and (by Jove) tracks which have V-MAX!, Rapid-Lok, Full Sync, or fat track type copy protection. When used to find where on the disk a given series of bytes is to be found, it works fast! Everything supports 1571 and 1581 drives now, including a relative file copier and a file tracer which shows how your files are laid out on the disk and a PRG and SEQ file viewer. Many more features described in a 50-page closely-written manual.

Here's hoping that the new layout and procedures at the February meeting went fairly smoothly. Regards.

-ooOoo-

IT HAD TO HAPPEN!

"Always Make a Backup!" How often don't you read that phrase?

I always make backups - we'll my program WordPerfect does it for me automatically. However when I was looking for the *Games Column* which I received several weeks ago from Reuben Phillips and which I incorporated in my newsletter file, I discovered that it had gone missing. I quickly loaded up the backup copy and found that is was missing there as well.

Now, if I only had kept my copy of the original file, all would have been well, but I had deleted that! I had resigned myself to do without Reub's column, when I suddenly discovered a file called 'GC' on my data disk - yes it was our *Games Column*, which I had transfered temporarily and had promptly forgotten I'd done it! Makes you extra careful though....

Editor

BYTES

FOR SALE

Mostly IBM related items in working-to-perfect condition:

HYPERTECH HyperRam card (IBM PC/XT or compat.) Intel "above-board" compatible extended memory multifunction card, 1.75 Mbytes installed. 2 x Serial Port. Battery backed RTC. Inc Software. - $500.00

BOB Board (IBM PC/XT/AT or compat.) Combined EGA/Mono (hence Best Of Both worlds) display board. Needs Multi-sync monitor. - $95.00

ZUCKER 1/2 slot CGA + parallel board (IBM PC/XT/AT or compat) Just like a "big" CGA, but will fit in the "short" slots of an XT/Portable. - $35.00

WYSE High-Definition Mono Monitor -788x1024 pixel high persistance monitor ONLY (driver card not included). - $250.00

IBM PC/XT/AT serial board (Genuine IBM) Single asynchronous serial port. - $25.00

IBM Portable. (aka Luggable) - Single floppy, 20MB hard disk. Built-in 9" amber monitor and CGA display. NEC V-20 CPU with Maths co-processor, 640Kbyte,Battery-backed Real Time Clock, 2 serial, 1 parallel ports (AST Multi-IO). All original manuals including DOS 3.0, 3.3 and AST board. Complete with the highly prized, IBM blue denim carry case. - $2750.00

AMIGA Hardware Reference Manual, First release. in pristine condition - $40.00

5¼" External drive and adaptor for IBM PS2 Model 30 - $120.00

Also have a couple of tea-chests of EARLY micro magazines (BYTE from Volume 1, issue 7 (I think) .. like before there was such a thing as an APPLE, a PET, or a DISK DRIVE, even. One issue has a review of the Apple I kit (yes, ONE). "KILOBAUD" from Volume #1, Issue #1. Spans about 5 years or so from 1976. I'm not prepared to split. They go as a job lot. Historians, Make a three figure offer (no decimal points!)). All are in GOOD to MINT condition.

Contact Ron Chernich (07) 262-8075 (After Hours)

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BYTES are computer-related adverts
which are *free* to all financial
members of the C.C.U.G.(Q.).

8 BITS & PIECES

I was intrigued to read Doug Mac-
lurkin's article in last month's
Cursor, in which he described his
fruitless search for C64/128 soft-
ware (Journey to Erehwon). My own
wanderings through Western Europe
fully confirm Doug's findings. Sim-
ply put, unless you are looking for
games, the dealers really don't
want to know. And despite what the
dealers told Doug, the range of
Amiga software generally on sale
isn't so wonderful either.

It's hard to know the reasons why.
Software Piracy? Surely games are
more likely to be pirated than
other forms of software, so that
cannot be the reason. Redundancy
with, as a result, non-saleable
software? Perhaps. If dead stock is
a problem the computer industry is
obviously in need of a similar
scheme which is in use in the re-
cord industry - twice a year record
retailers are allowed to return for
credit a percentage of their pur-
chases which are not selling.

I don't know how many C64 or C128
software packages are currently out
there in the market place, but I do
know that there are at least 1500
Amiga packages available. Yet, I
very much doubt if you would find
more than 300 in the largest Amiga
outlets in Brisbane. Not a very
impressive figure is it? By com-
parison, however, this is a lot
better than what you can expect to
see stocked in C64/128 software.

The only obvious solution is to
order via mail order outlets, both
here and overseas. Not a very sa-
tisfactory solution, I grant you,
but I am prepared to listen to your
suggestions.

Editor

COMPUTER ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS

Because of ongoing compatibility
problems with the fitting of Turbo
Roms it has been decided to dis-
continue the C64/128 workshop modi-
fication service. Minor services
such as the fitting of reset swit-
ches will still be done at the
Kingston subgroup (see page 3 for
meeting times).

We would suggest to those members
who wish to have a Turbo Rom fitted
to contact Cockroach Software at
Southport for further details.

CP/M 128 USERS

If you need more support for CP/M,
we would like to suggest that you
contact the **OSBORNE USERS GROUP**,
which meets on the second Thursday
of the month in room 202 of the
Psychology Building at the Univer-
sity of Queensland. Apparently they
have a large library of software
which will run on the 128 in CP/M
mode. For more details ring John
Murray on 351 2761.

MORE DESERTERS

We hear that Matt James has also
deserted his faithful C-64 for the
delights of our Spanish Girlfriend
(that's Amiga to you non-Spanish
speaking members!). Shame on you,
Matt!

OUR BBS

Usage of our Bulletin Board by C64
and C128 users is at an all-time
low. If you have problems accessing
our board, don't just give up but
give our Sysop a ring. He is really
a very approachable fellow and will
offer help or advise if needed.

C-64 MACHINE LANGUAGE - Part 2

by Will Erdmann

In my second article I would like to stress the importance of writing your program correctly. I hope that by now you know how to edit using the cursor keys and the SPACE BAR. You will remember also to press RETURN at the end of each line.

Here are some computer terms used so far in programs introduced in the last and this article-:

LDA	stands for	load a with
STA	-"-	store a
LDY	-"-	load y
LDX	-"-	load x
DEX	-"-	decrease x by 1 (x - 1)
DEY	-"-	decrease y by 1 (y - 1)
INX	-"-	increase x by 1 (x + 1)
INY	-"-	increase y by 1 (y + 1)
BNE	-"-	goto line specified until x or y is equal zero..
JMP	-"-	goto line specified
BRK	-"-	stop

In last month's program 'Rainbow' five concepts have been introduced-:

1. The first two lines clear the screen.
2. On the third line the value of 1 is stored in the locations which control the background and border colours of the screen.
3. Two delay loops are set up using X and Y.
4. The contents of A are increased by 1.
5. By the use of the Jump instruction (JMP $1007) steps 2,3,4 and 5 are repeated. However because the contents of A are continually being changed, (it is increased by 1 every time the instruction ADC #$01 is executed) the variable stored at D020 and D021 (locations which control background and border colour) is changed. Each time the variable stored in these locations is changed the colour of the screen is changed. To stop the program press the reset key.

When machine language programs are run they appear to be executed instantaneously. Because of this, different effects can be arrived at by using delay loops. Without these delay loops you would not be able to see spaceships, aeroplanes or birds move across the screen when you play arcade games. They would move too quickly for you to see what's happening.

In 'Rainbow' the delay loops start at line 100D. Y is loaded with 1 (LDY#$01) and x is loaded with the hexadecimal equivalent of 224 at line 100F (LDX#$E0). Use your calculator to check this. X is decremented by 1 (DEX). Put simply 1 is subtracted from 224 or 224 - 1.
BNE$1011 is a new instruction I have not explained fully yet. It means branch if not equal to zero at the line specified, or go back and repeat line 1011 until x is equal 0 then follow the next instruction.

DEY means the same as DEX except y is decremented by 1 in this case. BNE $100F means repeat that part of the program starting from 100F until y is equal to zero. However because y was only equal to 1 in the first place (see line 100D) and has been decremented (DEY) by now, it is equal zero. 1-1 = 0. This instruction (BNE $100F) is ignored. I will explain why I put it there later. Steps 4 and 5 are repeated as outlined above.

Now for explanations on how the first two lines of the program work. LDA#$93 means load A with the hexadecimal equivalent of a character that clears the screen when printed.
JSR $FFD2 means jump to the subroutine at the location of FFD2. FFD2 is the start of a routine written in the Read Only Memory (ROM) which prints characters on the screen. Because of the JSR instruction, the routine returns the computer to the following line (1005), after it has printed the character. If you were to type JMP$FFD2 instead of JSR$FFD2 the computer would clear the screen; "READY" would appear and the cursor would be flashing underneath. The rest of the program would not be executed.

```
1000 A9 93    LDA #$93
1002 20 D2 FF JSR $FFD2
1005 A9 01    LDA #$01
1007 8D 20 D0 STA $D020
100A 8D 21 D0 STA $D021
100D A0 01    LDY #$01
100F A2 E0    LDX #$E0
1011 CA       DEX
1012 D0 FD    BNE $1011
1014 88       DEY
1015 D0 FB    BNE $100F
1017 69 01    ADC #$01
1019 4C 07 10 JMP $1007
101C 00       BRK
101D 00       BRK
```

This is a copy of "Rainbow" in last month's article. I put it here so that you can follow what I've said and just in case there were any typing mistakes last time. (There were! - Ed)

Before I go onto something else I would like to say that if you changed line 100D to LDY #$FF there will be a flashing of colours on the screen instead of the rainbow.

If you want to save the program press Return until you reach the bottom of the screen and are out of assembly mode and type-:

    S"Simple Flash",08,1000,101D and press Return

If your disk drive is switched on the program will be saved to disk.

Change line 100D back to what it was before and type-:

    S"Rainbow",08,1000,101D and press Return
I want you to keep these programs on disk for future reference.

If you want to load these programs from disk type-:

L"Rainbow",08

These special commands will only work if you use MON.

Now for those of you who are interested in something completely different here is a program that moves a blob across the screen. As the same with "Rainbow" last month this program has a few concepts I have not explained yet.

There's a completely new idea in line 102E so when you have typed the program and saved it under the heading of "Simple Blob". Type S"Simple Blob",08,1000,1040. To run the program type G 1000. One of the keys on the keyboard will stop the program when pressed. I wonder if you can find out which one it is ?

```
1000 A9 93      LDA #$93
1002 20 D2 FF   JSR $FFD2
1005 A2 00      LDX #$00
1007 A9 FF      LDA #$FF
1009 9D 00 30   STA $3000,X
100C E8         INX
100D D0 FA      BNE $1009
100F A9 C0      LDA #$C0
1011 8D F8 07   STA $07F8
1014 A9 10      LDA #$10
1016 8D 00 D0   STA $D000
1019 A9 4C      LDA #$40
101B 8D 01 D0   STA $D001
101E A9 01      LDA #$01
1020 8D 15 D0   STA $D015
1023 EE 00 D0   INC $D000
1026 A0 09      LDY #$09
1028 A2 FF      LDX #$FF
102A CA         DEX
102B D0 FD      BNE $102A
102D 88         DEY
102E D0 F8      BNE $1028
1030 20 E1 FF   JSR $FFE1
1033 F0 D1      BEQ $1006
1035 4C 23 10   JMP $1023
1038 00         BRK
1039 00         BRK
```

As always if you have any suggestions or contributions to make in this field please write to "CURSOR" or to me. My address is-:

Will Erdmann, Western Avenue, MONTVILLE QLD 4560
PHONE (071) 429226 10am - 8pm.

STOP PRESS: A special Public Domain Disk (No.47) has been made available with several Machine Code Monitors and other useful programs. (Refer to Page 3 of this Newsletter)

FONTMASTER 128

by Lindsay Vardy

Some years ago, Fontmaster 64, an unique word processor, gave users 32 NLQ fonts, allowing the characters to be printed with a double pass of the print head. A constantly changing multi-purpose display at the top of the screen showed the status of the text at the cursor position, plus most of the enhancements being used.

Previously I had used Speedscript, free from C/Gazette, but later on FM 64 combined with Epson RX 80 printer and Exetec interface allowed a better printout with access to many fonts and easier operation.

Fontmaster 128 provides the same facilities, plus more, for the C128. The program comes on three disks with an excellent spiral bound manual and is not copy protected, instead a pass through dongle supplied must be used in the cassette port. 80 column monitor is required, colour cycling protects the monitor from "burn-in" after 5 min of keyboard inactivity.

All first rate WP facilities are provided. As well as the multi purpose status display, all enhancements, disk access etc are achieved with CONTROL, SHIFT and COMMODORE keys.

Up to 9 fonts may be loaded at one time. Text may be saved or loaded as FM type PRG or SEQ files, or written to disk in SEQ format.

Paste buffer may be up to 32K. Proportional print, character spacing and underlining are micro-adjustable, complex overlays may be made, up to 4 column printout of text.

Form letters are supported. Greek, Russian, Arabic, Hebrew etc languages may be typed forward or backwards or mixed, English and foreign language displayed together. 64K text memory. All enhancements are saved to disk with the files.

Fast rough draft printout can be made, and quick Text View to preview tables, charts etc. The Video Preview is WYSIWYG and shows all text enhancements in use, the double pass forming the characters can be clearly observed as well as any graphics in use.

On power-up a SYSTEM MENU displays System Setup, where more than 100 printers are supported plus charts showing each printer's ability to handle graphics etc. and switch settings for interfaces, plus a special printer customiser if needed. Font and Character set creators to make your own, Text translator to translate files from all popular WPs and Graphics converter to convert PrintShop or Hi-res screens to be used in FM 128 pages. Graphics may be manipulated horizontally or vertically before conversion. Only one graphic, of any size, can be printed with text in the horizontal plane, more than one is allowed per page.

Unlike Pen Pal on the Amiga, fonts may be changed in mid-line, or any enhancement used to adjust the text while printing a mixture of text and graphic on the same line.

Any of 41 borders may be used with the graphic. Because the text is butted against the graphic (it may be written over it) it is more

pleasing to leave a 1 or 2 charac-
ter white border when preparing the
graphic.

Alternately a blank area may be
specified to take a paste-up. The
current version, FM 128 vers 1.4,
comes with Spellmaster 128. 2 dic-
tionaries, one with more than 100,-
000 words, and another user dictio-
nary to which may be added specific
words. FM 128 supports the 17XX RAM

Expanders and the 1581 disk drive
and with their use it is claimed
will spellcheck over 7,000 words a
second, the file is checked in me-
mory while FM 128 is still running.
Statistics displayed are, number of
words, unique words, average word
length and average sentence length.

Current cost of the program with
Spellmaster 128 and disk with ad-
ditional fonts is about $79.

-ooOoo-

PROGRAM ENCRYPTION

KEEPING HACKERS OUT OF YOUR VALUABLE BASIC PROGRAMS.

by Alastair Jeremy

(from *Sydcom Gazette*, Oct '89)

Would you like to be able to
protect your programs so that even
the best disk copiers (sorry -
'backup makers') are rendered
completely useless? A system of
encryption where absolutely NOBODY
can get into your precious programs
other than yourself? Well here it
is.

This routine will encode your
priceless BASIC programs so that
only those who know the correct
security code can use them.

Once encoded, there is NO WAY any-
one can 'hack' the program. There
is no record of the correct securi-
ty code within the program. If you
get the wrong code the program is
simply scrambled further.

Most program encoders are very li-
mited. The most common way to code
a program is to EOR every byte in
the program with a common number.
Then, because of the way EOR works,
to get the program back all you

have to do is EOR the coded version
with the same security code.

However, since on the Commodore 64
one byte can only hold numbers be-
tween 0 and 255, almost all program
encryption methods are limited to
these 256 possible different num-
bers to use for encryption. But
this routine is different. It asks
for a whole sentence, or line of up
to 80 characters, and uses ALL of
these individually on the program
so that the program will be encryp-
ted absolutely beyond recognition.
Not even an experienced hacker
could crack this protection.

The simple reason for the incre-
dible amount of protection this
routine provides is the amount of
possible combinations of code
words. Programs using only a single
value to code an entire program
have only 256 possible combi-
nations, so the correct value can
be found fairly easily.

However, this program allows for an incomprehensible amount of possible combinations. The amount of easily accessible combinations is over 200 to the power of 80. This comes out to well over 1E200 combinations! To put this into perspective, the Commodore 64 itself can only hold numbers up to around 1E33, and pocket calculators can hold numbers up to 9E99, which is still far less than the total amount of combinations! Just make sure that you don't forget the combination, because there is ABSOLUTELY NO WAY of working out what it is.

To get this amount of combinations without needing huge amounts of code, the EOR coding system was used. However, it was not used in the same way as conventional systems.

Instead of using a single value to code whole program, this routine asks for up to 80 characters as a security code, and uses their ASCII values. It divides the program up into little blocks, each being the length of the security code. Then it goes through and EORs each byte in the security code with the corresponding byte in each subdivided section of the program to be coded.

Then, if the program was to be decoded, it ends with the decoded program in memory. If the program is to be encoded, it finishes with a one line program consisting of a SYS to the ML coder routine.

To use the program, type in listing 1 and save it as "MAKE CODER". Then RUN it. If all the DATA is correct, it will ask you whether to save the actual machine code to tape or disk. When you press T or D, a program called "CODER" will be saves to whatever device you picked. The coding program is now ready to use.

Whenever you wish to encrypt a program, LOAD "CODER",8 (for tape use ,1 instead of ,8), and type POKE 44,9 and press RETURN. Now you can use the computer just like you normally would in BASIC, using all the normal commands to get the program you wish to encode into memory.

To encode the program, type SYS2061 and press RETURN, or type POKE 44,8:RUN and press RETURN. The screen will clear, and you will be asked whether you wish to (E)ncode or (D)ecode the program. Since we want to encode the program, press E (don't press return).

Now you will be prompted to ENTER CODE. Type in the security code you wish to use for your program, and press RETURN. The program will then be encoded, and 'FINISHED.' will appear on the screen before control is returned to BASIC.

Now SAVE the encrypted program. Then type LIST and press RETURN. You will see the one line program '0 SYS2061'. This calls up the coding program so that you can decode the program again. It is not necessary to load "CODER" to decode an encrypted program, as the routine is saved at the start of the program when it is encrypted.

To decode the program, type RUN and press RETURN. This time press D to decode the program. You will again be prompted for the security code. Type in whatever you put as the security code when you encoded the program. Then 'FINISHED.' will appear, and you are left with your original program in memory.

But what happens if you type the WRONG code back in? To see for yourself the result of an incorrect code, turn the computer off and on again, and load the encrypted program again. Then follow the previous instructions, but type in an

incorrect security code. When you list the program, almost anything can happen. Sometimes the computer will crash, but usually strange characters will appear all over the screen before the READY prompt re--appears.

The security code can be absolutely anything you can type in. Use quotes to get cursor movement characters withing the security code,

and reverse characters for even more possible combinations.

So hackers, beware. Personal programs can now be encoded with so many possible combinations that to decode them, even trying 1 billion combinations per second, would take many trillions of years!

Here is the program 'MAKE CODER'. Note that spaces are not needed unless they are inside quotes:

```
10 gosub 800
20 print "qsave to (t)ape or (d)isk?"
30 get d$:if d$<>"t" and d$<>"d" then 30
40 poke 251,1:if d$="d" then poke 251,8
50 poke 43,1:poke 44,64:poke 45,4:poke 46,65:save "coder",peek(251)
60 end

800 s=16385:n=258:print "qinstalling code..."
810 for i=s to s+n step 16:a=0:for j=0 to 15:read p:if p<0 or p>255 then
    c=0:a=1:goto 830
820 poke i+j,p:a=a+p:next:read c
830 if c<>a then print "data error in line";(i-s)/16*10+1000:end
840 next:print "data entry complete"
850 return

1000 data 11,8,0,0,158,50,48,54,49,0,0,0,169,149,160,8,864
1010 data 32,30,171,169,0,133,198,165,198,240,252,173,119,2,201,69,2152
1020 data 208,11,169,8,133,44,169,1,133,43,76,58,8,201,68,208,1538
1030 data 226,169,9,133,44,169,1,133,43,169,176,160,8,32,30,171,1673
1040 data 160,0,132,198,32,207,255,201,13,240,7,153,60,3,200,76,1937
1050 data 69,8,136,140,208,8,169,0,133,253,169,9,133,254,172,208,2069
1060 data 8,177,253,89,60,3,145,253,136,16,246,165,46,56,229,254,2136
1070 data 16,3,76,141,8,238,208,8,24,165,253,109,208,8,133,253,1851
1080 data 165,254,105,0,133,254,206,208,8,76,95,8,169,194,160,8,2043
1090 data 32,30,171,96,147,17,17,29,40,69,41,78,67,79,68,69,1050
1100 data 32,79,82,32,40,68,41,69,67,79,68,69,32,63,0,13,834
1110 data 17,17,29,69,78,84,69,82,32,67,79,68,69,29,62,29,880
1120 data 0,13,17,17,29,70,73,78,73,83,72,69,68,46,0,0,708
1130 data 0,0,140,62,144,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,346
1140 data 0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
1150 data 0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
1160 data 0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
```

-ooOoo-

FAST LOADING

by Lindsay Vardy

"Patience is a virtue, find it if you can, never in a woman, seldom in a man." I wonder, is that the way it goes? Please send all sexual discrimination writs to the Editor. he published it.

Patience is probably one of the most prevalent weaknesses of the human spirit, witness the impatient tapping of fingers or feet, the behaviour of some motorists, time that could be spent on contemplation or enjoying the scene around us; a successful artist told me that he always carried a sketch pad and would practice sketching the world round him at every opportunity.

We can't carry our C64 around with us, but we can do something to take the tedium out of waiting for our programs to load. One of the most endearing features of the C64 is the fact it is ready to go at switch on, sitting there with it's little eye blinking, like a faithful dog awaiting the command of it's beloved master, but if you only have a Datasette to load your program beware that impatience does not cause your enthusiasm for computing to become dulled.

Some tapes display a graphic work of art or play wonderful musical items to alleviate boredom whilst loading. Many newcomers are unaware that their tape programs can be saved with C/Gazette's Turbotape and will reload at speed comparable to a 1541 disk drive. The full benefit of a computer system cannot be realised without a disk drive, and for a while that sure beats a Datasette. But alas, it's not long before the 1541 drive seems to get s l o w e r and s l o w e r and your impatience gets greater and greater. This is when you may wish to install a fastload device such as Turbo Rom (now available in cartridge form) which offers a loading and saving speed increase of up to 5 times, or Epyx Fastload among others. Other functions provided are monitor, disk formatting, basic file copy, and most of the commands of the Dos Wedge, a directory listing and program loads are achieved with a couple of key presses, depending on the unit used.

Fastload menu programs are available which are loaded as the first file on a disk, just press RUN/STOP and COMMODORE keys together, the Menu will load and the directory is displayed, cursor up or down to the required file and press RETURN. These are a joy to use in conjunction with a fastload cartridge. Even faster speeds can be attained with the use of a cartridge such as "The Freeze Machine". This cartridge will save and load at FAST speed, these files will reload without the cartridge in place. Even faster saves and loads can be made using the LAZER mode, however LAZER files are saved as USR files and need the cartridge in place to load them unless the BOOT program supplied is saved as the first file on the disk. An added bonus is a FREEZE option which will copy most any disk or tape, generally all banging and hammering of the disk drive head caused by copy protection is eliminated. It must be stressed that these units are supplied for personal use only, allowing backup copies of your valuable programs to be made. A 15 second disk format can be made and a compression feature is included which will convert in one instance a 223 block file to 69 blocks, used together with FAST or LAZER load this turns the 1541 or 1571 (in 64 mode) into a real speed demon.

Speed Comparisons using 128D in 64 mode:

PROGRAM:	BASIC	EPYX F.LOAD	F.FRAME FAST	F.FRAME LAZER
Speedscript	26 sec	11 sec	5 sec	4 sec
Speedcalc	22 sec	12 sec	6 sec	4 sec
Ultrabasic	60 sec	19 sec	7 sec	7 sec
Beach Head	155 sec	50 sec	21 sec	17 sec

It will be noted that LAZER mode is hardly worth the inconvenience of using it. Although not cheap (a matter of opinion) at prices ranging from around $35-$89, more elaborate systems cost more, the many features of these units further enhance the ease of use and friendly environment that has made the C64 the leader in introduction to the world of computing, offering powerful facilities in all fields at rock bottom prices.

-ooOoo-

HELP! COLUMN

This is the *HELP!* column for users of C-64, C-128 and other 8-Bit computers. If you would like to share your experience in the fields of programming, software, hardware etc. with your fellow members, submit your name with your area of expertise to the editor. Remember: the more names, the more knowledge can be disseminated amongst our members.

NAME	Help offered with:	PHONE NUMBER
Terry Baade	Contact for M'borough/Hervey Bay Members	071 215 059
Kerry De Baar	Basic, Assembly Language	379 5617
Eddie Brook	Amateur Radio Fax & Weather Programs	349 4394
Cor Geels	SuperScript, EasyScript, PaperClip, GEOS	263 2839
Cor Geels	C-64 Newcomers, Printers & Interfacing	263 2839
Ross Horn	CP/M Family Tree Program (P.A.T.)	395 0618
Matthew James	Basic, Logo, GEOS, WriteStuff, Games Tips	300 5443
Ron Long	SuperScript, Label Maker, Mailing Lists	075 357 139
Ivor Laggan	GEOS	273 4212
Doug MacLurkin	MicroSwift Spreadsheet, Basic	358 4442
Peter Meharg	Basic, Machine Language	376 1621
Angus Norrie	Simon's Basic	371 2945
Vic Mobbs	Contact for Sunshine Coast Members	071 941 330
Vic Mobbs	Superscript/Superbase 128	071 941 330
George Nelson	EasyScript, HAM Radio	848 2456
Craig Rawlins	Pascal, C, Machine Language, Modula-2	379 8957
Ron Rich	H'ware Interfacing for Amat. Radio Prgms	355 2623
Greg Shea	C-64 Hardware Modifications etc., Basic	345 2799
Fred Turnidge	Family Roots (genealogy), Write Stuff	063 37 1124
Denis Wright	Easy/SuperScript, CBM & Epson Printers	067 751 793
Denis Wright	C64 <---> Non-Commodore File Transfer	067 751 793

AMIGA MONITOR

As most of you are aware by now, I've been holidaying in Western Europe for eight weeks, and have only come back recently.

When I read how cheap computer gear was in West Germany, I made up my mind to buy an Amiga 2000 in West Germany for about $1400.00. However when some days before our departure the Australian price dropped to just below $2000.00, I decided to buy the unit in Oz - a lot less hassle for everybody concerned. I bought extra memory and a second drive in Germany though (see elsewhere in this issue), because these items were considerably cheaper than in Australia (beside they were easy to carry!).

Having cast jealous glances on Steve McNamee's Multiscanning monitor, I decided to go the whole hog and buy one of these beauties. I am now ready for the new hi-res non-interlaced production mode which has been promised us with the forthcoming arrival of the 1.4 version of the operating system (1991 or 1992?), and which will only work on a multiscanning monitor.

Now for that SCSI hard drive and interface and we'll be really humming along. I hope that my wife won't read this....

Editor

TRAVELLERS

No sooner has your editor returned from his overseas jaunt, and Greg Perry and Steve McNamee have taken off for the Commodore-Amiga Developers Conference which will be held in Paris in the early part of February over a period of three days. After the French leg of their trip they hope to visit Commodore's West German Headquarters in Frankfurt and then go on to the U.K. We hope that they will give us a full report on the latest Amiga news during our March Main Meeting.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE

Two recent public domain utilities are worth mentioning here. Ever booted up your computer and found that you were in NTSC mode rather than in PAL mode? (NTSC mode means that you cannot use the bottom part of your screen.) There is, or rather was, only one way to fix it, namely a re-boot with Ctrl-A-A. However the dynamic duo of McNamee & Perry have written a little routine called *ChkPal*, which you put in your C: directory. Now add to your startup-sequence (on about the third line) the word chkpal (runback not required) and the system will automatically re-boot if the computer decides to come up in the wrong mode; you even get a little message on the screen!

Thanks to Brendan Pratt (Brendan runs his own BBS and spends a fortune downloading goodies from the American Compuserve network) we now have a copy of VirusX, Version 4 on our BBS. Although there are more fanciful virus checkers around, most of us prefer to have VirusX on our Workbench disk, because it sits quietly in the background and only makes its presence felt when something isn't quite right. Well worth having.

GOODBYE PAGESTREAM?

Having seen the vastly improved dot matrix output (both 9 and 24 pin) which can be achieved with the new Professional Page version 1.3 (the one that uses the Agfa Compugraphic

Font Technology), there is no doubt in our minds that this one will put paid to the buggy PageStream program (although we have just heard that there's a Version 1.8 of this program on the way).

The currently available version seems to have some problems with PAL output, so better wait till Gold Disk gives the all clear.

As Pro Page is a very large program, it is not really suitable for Amigas with less than 2 Meg of Ram, but there is help on the way. Gold Disk is also releasing PageSetter version 2, which also incorporates the Compugraphic technology, but without the laser printing capabilities. This program should be less memory hungry than its big brother.

MEMORY

When the first Amiga was released (A1000) it came with 256K of Ram. In Australia the additional 256K Ram was sold as standard with the computer, as 256K was really pretty useless. With the arrival of the A500 512K became standard but, as many users soon discovered, a lot of software required the additional 512K, as found in the A501 expander, to be able to use it.

The A2000 came with 1 Meg of Ram on board, but professional users added usually a minimum of 2 Meg to be able to run the more memory hungry programs.

We were quite surprised then to see amongst one of the latest batches of Fish disks (no. 263/264) that the program that won the *Badge Killer* graphics competition requires 3 Meg or more to run! We wonder where this is going to end.... will next year's winner require a 9 Meg computer with a 68030 processor???

MS-DOS ON THE A500.

No, it is *not* a rumour. The Dutch company KCS (maker of a well known brand of utility cartridge for the C64) is about to released a cartridge for the A500 which will fit underneath the computer where one now fits the A501 memory expander. The unit comes with an NEC V30 processor, running at 8MHz and is capable of addressing both 3½" and 5¼" MS-Dos drives. It will still contain the 512K of Amiga expansion memory, thus giving you the best of both worlds. Your editor has read a review of this unit, based on a pre-release version, and the unit sounds promising. Expect to pay between $600 - $900 for this one.

AUSTRALIAN SOFTWARE PRICING

At long last somebody else besides user groups has discovered that we are being ripped off when it comes to computer software.

In *The Australian* of Tuesday 23rd January they treat this touchy subject in a reasonably intelligent manner. One of the reasons given is the fact that there's a law on the Federal statute books which says in fact that "if a software (or book) distributor has a marketing agreement with the (overseas) software supplier, nobody else is allowed to (legally) distribute this software (or books) in Australia".

The question than arises: "if this law was scrapped, would we see cheaper software?"

Another interesting aspect, raised in the article, was that American software distributors will offer their US retail outlets discounts up to 65% off the retail price, but they only offer up to 45% to foreign distributors!

THE INVISIBLE COMPANY

by Ralph De Vries

It was the 24th November '89 when my wife and I boarded our plane for an eight week West European holiday. Think of it, missing out on two months of Brisbane's summer heat and darting around in the snow for a change!

Also on board, apart from our winter woollies, I had a letter from the Dutch branch of Commodore. They included a list of Commodore Users Groups in Holland. As Holland was going to be the "base camp" of our holiday (cheap accommodation with friends and relatives!), this would possibly give me the opportunity to visit one or two users group in this country.

Shortly after our arrival I decided to pay a visit to that nice gentleman at Commodore who had written me that letter. We took the train to the capital Amsterdam, and after consulting a map we found that their new head office was in the suburbs. So we took another train to a suburban station and there, after a brisk walk of several kilometres, we found their HO on a new industrial estate. I introduced myself and asked to see the PR gent who had written me the letter, to be told that the gentleman in question had only been a 'temp' and had left long ago! When I then asked to see their current public relations man I was told that he was busy and wouldn't have time to see me. Could I than see somebody else? "No, sorry, but everybody is busy... but here's a name of a contact at one of the largest users groups in Holland - try him. Goodbye."

To say that I was flabbergasted does scant justice to my feelings at that moment. We have all heard stories about the Australian Commodore company, such as not replying to letters or being kept waiting for half an hour at the phone, but to get a similar treatment in 'civilised' Europe does give you a bit of a shock, to say the least.

During the following week I rang about four names on the users group list given me by Commodore, to be told in each case that the particular list was about three years old and they were no longer involved with users groups! After that I gave up my attempts to find Commodore users groups in Holland.

So where were Commodore computers to be found in Holland? Looking through the yellow pages of several large cities was a futile effort; the words Commodore or Amiga were conspicuous by their absence. Yes, I did see an advert of a chainstore (à la Myers) for the A500 X-mas pack (same pack as in Australia), but that was about all. These shops also supplied a very limited range of software. But where were the big specialist computer shops with their professional Amiga supplies? Sorry, but I was unable to locate them. Some time later I discovered an interesting phenomenon; the combined Photo - Video - Computer stores, as exemplified by Dixons in the U.K. and Holland. This type of shop (I saw them also in West Germany and Austria) do sell Commodore C64s and Amigas. as well as MS-DOS machines, but hardly any software. However, the thought of a 'photographic or video expert' advising me on a computer purchase doesn't turn me on.

To the newsagent to find out what was available in Commodore computer magazines. I found *Commodore Info*, a magazine of similar size and appearance as our own *Australian Commodore & Amiga Review*. Than their was the *Amiga Magazine*, not much better than the previous one, as well as a Dutch edition of *Amiga World*, another poor imitation, but supposedly sponsored by the Dutch Commodore organisation.

The adverts didn't inspire a great deal of confidence. Software was mainly available through mail order houses. Prices appeared to be similar to Oz. The most appalling price I noticed was a Dutch version of WordPerfect - f1399.00, which is about $1000.00! Hardware was similarly priced as in Australia.

In Austria (Vienna) I found it equally hard to find a 'real' computer dealer. Again prices were high and they don't seem to have caught up with us, as they were still selling the C128 and 1571 disk drives; items which have been discontinued here and elsewhere. But than in Austria LP records still appear to be outselling CDs, so perhaps they are a bit slow on the uptake. Great country, though!

In West Germany, reputedly Commodore's best market, I found it equally difficult to see any signs of Commodore. However they have a wide range of Amiga magazines (I collected six different ones and there may be more) which carry a lot of advertisements. Through these magazines I found out that I could purchase an Eprom to upgrade my Epson LQ850 printer to the LQ860 model. I visited the Epson headquarters in Düsseldorf, who gave me a list of dealers who stocked the part. A quick taxi ride to one of these dealers and for DM125.00 (about $85.00) I've now an LQ860 printer. (Epson in Australia could

not or would not sell me this particular component!)

Thanks to one of these magazines I managed to locate an Amiga dealer in the suburbs of Cologne where I purchased a 4 Megabyte memory board for my A2000 for about $900.00. I also purchased an internal drive for my computer ($110.00), as well as a spare mouse (micro switched) for $60.00. Hardware is considerably cheaper in West Germany.

In the U.K. (London) the story was similar. The yellow pages had listings for IBM, Apple, Amstrad, yes even Atari, but no Commodore. I found Commodore computers in Selfridges and Harrods and the aforementioned Dixons, but I couldn't locate a single Commodore specialist computer dealer in the heart of London. Through *Amiga User International* magazine I managed to locate a Commodore dealer in Chadwell Heath, a London suburb, where I bought a few reasonably priced games for my son. This dealer stocked a lot of software (his shop was a pigsty), but my guess was that it was mainly a mail order business.

From the above it must be obvious that Commodore has an image problem worldwide. I would go so far as to say that without the many Amiga magazines and Commodore/Amiga Users groups Commodore wouldn't even be in existence.

An exaggeration? No, I don't think so. Ask yourself how most of us found out about Commodore computers; in most cases it's been through magazine articles or word of mouth, but seldom through Commodore's publicity department.

Perhaps the new top management is aware of this pressing problem, but will they have the answers....?

LET'S BUY AN ARGUMENT

by Ron Chernich

I could say something like "let's start the new decade off with a really good little argument" - but a statement like that is good for a punch-up all by itself. No, my subject is a little more relevant, and honestly, I would like for some one to be able to really shoot me down on this one:

For the most common commercial applications, the "IBM" hardware is infinitely superior to that of an AMIGA.

Blood bubbling nicely now? Okay, before you start reaching for the constitution regarding "actions un-befitting a financial member", I'll qualify. The display hardware commonly used in a DOS-type machine has always been oriented towards character display. It does quite a good job. The AMIGA display hardware has NO character display hardware. When used to create what the commercial world has come to regard as normal-minimal- acceptable, it is, at best, capable of a poor imitation.

Why make this scurrilous accusation? Simple. I've just spent six months on a product which is intended for commercial release and I've had a simply terrible time even coming close to what I would consider acceptable display quality for a comparable DOS package. I'm no amateur. I've had commercial products out before - even did a CP/M BIOS and Utilities for a Silicon Valley manufacturer, back in the '70s. The AMIGA display is graphic oriented. Its graphic mode is significantly superior to even an IBM VGA display in some areas, but the AMIGA lacks a character

mode and this is the mode used by most commercial software packages: word processors, spread-sheets, accounting software, data base managers.

The difference becomes highly noticeable because the AMIGA must use bit planes for multi-colour displays. The old, original IBM CGA provided eight colours of text with an attribute bit which could be set for dual intensity, or character blink. All display adaptors since then have maintained downward compatibility.

Put in AMIGA terms, this is a three bit-plane display, plus half-bright. But since you can't have half-bright with a three bit-plane display, we need four bit-planes to duplicate the colour range. Now this we can do and it all works well, until it comes time to scroll the display. Unfortunately, any text oriented display will need to scroll, a LOT.

On the DOS hardware, this is a simple matter. In text mode, a screen write simply places the ASCII character in display memory as a BYTE value. An adjacent byte will contain the characters foreground/-background/blink attributes. The display controller chip is told where in memory the display RAM begins and what size (with strict restrictions) it is. To scroll the display, all that is necessary is to change the start address. If the change is made during the vertical blanking period, the change will appear to be instantaneous. Appear? Hell, it IS instantaneous. As a by-product, this type of arrangement makes a hardcopy dump of the

screen a trivial exercise. So much so that the DOS hardware provides a key for it. I've watched business people who couldn't live without that key.

Not quite so simple in AMIGA land. The most popular (and easy) way to output to the display window(s) is through Intuition. Not blindingly fast because of the windowing and multi-tasking overheads coupled with the font look-up mechanism, but still quite acceptable and very flexible. When it comes time to scroll the display, there is an library function that will perform this operation.

Since all AMIGA display operations are pixel based, we specify the x-y ordinates of the top/left and bottom right pixels, together with the x-y delta values and away it goes. There is a furious amount of house-keeping re-quired. Finally, each bit plane will be moved: red, green and blue, in sequence. The complete move takes time, depending on the size of the area being scrolled, how many other windows are currently open and of course, how many colours (and hence, bit-planes) are being used. The colour of individual pixels is determined by taking a bit each, at corresponding offsets, from each bit-plane and using the value formed by these bits to index into an array of "registers" which contain the 12 bit RGB value to be fed to the CRT guns. Got that? Four bit-planes giving one bit each per pixel gives a range 0..15, so sixteen colours which we can specify for our "screen" to be eight primary colours and eight half-intensity colours. No problem - provided all those bit planes can be moved during the vertical blank period. They can't.

What happens is that some fraction only of the total bit planes will have been moved by the time the

scan circuitry decides to refresh the screen. The hardware will take the bits that HAVE been moved in say the Red plane and combine that with bits which still need to be moved in the Green and Blue planes, form palette register numbers which correspond to one desired colour plus two undesired colours, and display two text images, superimposed. A sort of rainbow double image. You've probably seen it. Shortly after, the move completes and the display stabilises, but during the scroll it looks primitive. Almost as bad as the original CGA PC's which didn't synchronise scroll with blank periods. A character based screen dump (ie: a fast screen print) is impossible with this kind of hardware arrangement.

There is NO practical cure (Please! Somebody, anybody, prove me wrong). An AMIGA software designer must accept the rainbow nasties, or reduce the number of colours and hence bit-planes involved. A one bit-plane (two colour) display can be made to scroll just fine. It's also possible to split the screen into a number of regions and scroll each individually. This does reduce the flashing, ghost-shimmer, but makes the scroll action jerky and the more windows that are open, the more pronounced the effect will be.

It's a kind of Catch-22, really. The MAC people are quite content with a two colour display, but the MAC's fine pixel size is then used to good advantage to produce a simulated gray-scale. The AMIGA has colour, so users expect software to be able to use it. Believe me, DOS users just love their colour displays, and a competing system which is known to have it, but not use it is really starting from behind.

So, there's the challenge. Can we

make our silk purse perform at least as well as the sow's ear, for text based applications? Should we produce displays that will be perceived as inferior through lack of colour or because of rainbow judder or should AMIGA software developers declare the machine to be an application niche environment and produce applications where the display hardware is an asset? Or can someone produce a text scrolling method which combines smooth action with acceptable speed? I can't see how. Prove me wrong, please.

-ooOoo-

HELP! COLUMN

This is the *HELP!* column for users of Amiga computers. If you would like to share your experience in the fields of programming, software, hardware etc. with your fellow members, submit your name with your area of expertise to the editor. Remember: the more names, the more knowledge can be disseminated amongst our members.

Name	Help offered with:	Phone Number
Dave Apelt	*Vector Graphics*	366 4761
Ellen Appleby	*Using Amigas in Education*	369 4629
Bob Devries	*OS9 Operating System*	372 7816
Ralph De Vries	*Dot Matrix printers - WordPerfect*	300 3477
Robert Googe	*Video & Audio Digitising*	288 8863
Steve Hovelroud	*Audio Digitising*	298 5128
Gary Lloyd	*C Programming (Beginners)*	269 7818
Brendan Pratt	*Modems, Telecommunications, Sidecar*	(075) 463 317
Grant Robinson	*AmigaBasic*	359 4315
Michael Thomas	*Forth, Prolog, C, and Modula-2 Programming*	800 4511
John Van Staveren	*Easy Ledgers Accounting Program*	372 3651
Mike Williams	*AmigaBasic (Beginners), Sound*	209 9084

Please be considerate - these are after hours numbers, so only ring our members between the hours of 6pm and 9pm during week nights. Thank you!

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WEDDING BELLS

January must have been a quiet month at S.E. Q'lnd Computer Repairs, as Tony May decided to get married during that month.

We wish Tony and his new bride all possible happiness for the future.

BASICS FOR LEARNERS — PART 5

by Mike Williams

In this article, we will explore the various programs that are hidden in the drawers of your Work-Bench 1.3 disk, and how they can help you.

Have you got your BACKUP COPY of the Workbench1.3 disk? If not make a copy now and boot up from the copied disk. (See part 1 of this series if you don't know how to copy a disk)

Now ... first, double-click on the Workbench1.3 disk icon to open its window. You should see 5 white rectangles which look vaguely like drawers, and a rubbish bin. These are all "drawers".

Think of your disk as a filing cabinet. A filing cabinet has drawers, and inside the drawers are kept files. Well, your Workbench1.3 disk is set up the same way; except that your disk is a far better filing system than a filing cabinet ... because you can even have drawers inside of drawers (inside of drawers, inside of drawers ...etc), a bit like Pandora's box.

To show you what I mean, make sure that your workbench disk is write-enabled and then grab the "System" drawer with the mouse arrow and put it into the "Empty" drawer. After a bit of disk activity it will disappear, but can be found again by opening the "Empty" drawer.

Now put the "Empty" drawer in the "Expansion" drawer ... then put the "Expansion" drawer into the "Utilities" drawer ... the "Utilities" drawer into to "Prefs" drawer and lets be daring and put the "Prefs" drawer into the "Trashcan". (Don't worry you won't lose all these drawers unless you "Empty the Trash".)

You should be left with a disk window with only two icons in it ... Trashcan and Shell. Note the "Fuel Gauge" on the left hand side ... it still reads near full because all the drawers and programs are still on the disk; they are just arranged a bit differently.

Now reverse the process by opening the Trashcan drawer (double-click on it) and pull out the Prefs drawer into the main disk window (the one headed up "Workbench1.3"). Close down the Trashcan window and open the Prefs window and do the same with the Utilities drawer; and so on until all six drawers are back in the disk window.

If you can't find one of the drawers click on the blue and white arrows at the bottom of the window until it comes into view.

Now lets have a look at what is inside the drawers.

EMPTY If you open this drawer you will find that, as the name implies, it is really "Empty". Now you might say: "What's the use of an empty drawer?"
Well it is very handy indeed, because when you want a new drawer all you have to do is copy the Empty drawer using the "Duplicate" command on the "Workbench" menu, and then rename it to anything you like.

EXPANSION This drawer is also empty and is only used for possible future system expansion. (Translation:- I wouldn't have a clue what it is for ... I have never yet seen it used!)

UTILITIES Open this drawer and you will find lots of little goodies. We'll go through them one at a time:

NOTEPAD This is a complete Word Processor. It is a little limited but is a perfect introduction to the mysteries of writing letters etc., and a lot of fun to use because it is quick and easy to learn and it can use different "Fonts" (the shape and style of the letters). I will only describe briefly some of the features of it, because a full explanation would be too lengthy for this article.

Double-Click on the Notepad icon to start it and a small window named "Notepad V2.2" will open. Use the resize button at the button right hand side of the window to enlarge this window to the size you want. Click anywhere inside the Notepad window with the left button to select it and then press the right button to see the menus.

A FEW POINTS TO REMEMBER WITH "NOTEPAD"
1. If you wish to have different fonts on the same page, go to "Format" menu and de-select "Global Fonts". You de-select something that has a check mark by selecting it again.
2. If you are printing out a letter, note etc. which has anything but the standard topaz font, you must select "Print As Graphics" from the "Project" menu, BEFORE you do the print-out.
3. If you want to change the font of a particular word of sentence, then place the cursor (the thin vertical line) at the beginning of the word by placing the arrow and clicking the left mouse button; then change the font by selecting the font and size from the fonts menu. Everything on the page after the cursor will change to the new font. change it back to Topaz 8

when you want to go back to the standard font. Use the same method to change the Style of the letters e.g. to add underline.
4. To select a whole section to cut or copy, first double-click at the beginning of the section, then hold down the shift key and double-click at the end of the section. The whole section will be highlighted in orange and can now be cut or copied.
Write out and save a short note now as a test, and also so that I can demonstrate the next program in the Utilities drawer. Call it "Test1". Then exit from Notepad by clicking on the quit box at the top left hand corner of the Notepad screen or by selecting "Quit" from the Project menu.

MORE This is the next program in the Utilities drawer. It is a text reader. First of all, lets look at the note that you wrote using Notepad and which was saved as Test1. An icon called "Test1" should now be in the Utilities drawer, however we can't see it yet because the Utilities window was open when we started the Notepad program. If we close the window and then re-open it again, the Test1 icon will appear. It will probably be off the screen, so you will have to use the arrows at the bottom of the Utilities screen to find it. To make sure it is your note, double-click on it. The computer will first load up the Notepad program and then your note, and display it on the screen. Exit from Notepad as before.
Now select your note Test1 again by clicking once on it with the LH mouse button. Then select "Info" from the Workbench menu. The Info screen will appear showing a Default Tool as "Workbench1.3:Utilities/Notepad". We can now change the tool which prints our note on the screen from "Notepad" to "More" as follows:-

1. Click on the letter "N" in "Notepad" to place the cursor in the correct position.
2. Press the delete key a few times to remove only the word "Notepad".
3. Type in the word "More". The Default Tool should now read "Work-bench1.3:Utilities/More".
4. Click on the SAVE button at the bottom RH side of the Info window. We have now permanently changed the file reader for our Test1 note from Notepad to More.
If we now double-click on the Test1 icon, the computer will now load up the More program and display your note using More instead of Notepad. Press the "H" key to see a help screen on the "More" commands, and press the return key to exit from your Test1 note.

The above method can be used to change the text reader on any text program to the one that you want. Sometime, a public domain disk will leave off the text reader program, and when you try to read it you will come up with an error message saying something like "Error while opening :More 205". This means that the computer can't find the Default Tool program. But you have now learnt how to change the Default Tool to "Workbench1.3/Utilities/-More" so that the computer can get the program it wants off your Work-bench1.3 disk.

Well, that's all for this month. Stay tuned for the next exciting episode...

-ooOoo-

AMIGA PUBLIC DOMAIN LIBRARY

Fish Disk 268

Doctor_A - This animation of Amiguy on the basketball court is Marvin's entry to the 1989 BADGE Killer Demo Contest. The animation source (for SculptAnimate-4D) is available from the author. Author: Marvin Landis
Klide - This line art demo is Jerry's entry to the 1989 BADGE Killer Demo Contest, where it won 4th place. Klide uses line mode blitter code which is capable of rendering short vectors at a rate up to 15,000 lines/second. Binary only. Author: Jerry Kallaus
OnlyAmiga - This demo is Rob's entry to the 1989 BADGE Killer Demo Contest, where it won 9th place. It demonstrates sound, multitasking, HAM colour, the blitter, and more. Binary only. Author: Rob Peck

Fish Disk 269

Calendar - A program that generates calendars in any one of 10 standard formats for any year after 1900. Binary only. Author: P. A du Parte
ChessTutor - Chess tutor is a program designed to introduce novice chess players to the basics of the game. Shareware, written in Amiga-BASIC. Author: William Jordan
PropGadget - Example code for using proportional gadgets, written in assembly code and C, that can be called from your own application. Inc. source. Author: Jerry Trantow
RadBoogie - This demo, which won 7th place in the 1989 BADGE Demo Contest, uses almost all features of the Amiga extensively, including the copper, blitter, sprite hardware, 68000 machine language, and preemptive prioritized multitasking. Inc. source. Author: D. Quick, Mark Riley, Tomas Rokicki

ShowDisk - A useful program that graphically shows the map of sectors used on floppy drives by one or more files. The mapping is colour coded so you can identify what sectors are used by the various directories and files. Inc. source. Author: Bernhard Meisner

SpinPointer - While going through some musty archives I found this little gem that got overlooked before. It is a short source module that provides a "busy" indicator replacement for the standard mouse pointer. Includes source. Author: Mark Rinfret

Fish Disk 270

ColumnSet - A text filter program that takes as input a file with one word per line and produces a file with these words laid out in the same order in even columns, as many as will fit across the output screen or page with at least one space between columns. Includes source in Modula-2. Author: Kent Paul Dolan

MRBackUp - A hard disk backup utility that does a file by file copy to standard AmigaDOS floppy disks. Includes an intuition interface and file compression. This is version 3.3d, an update to version 2.4 on disk 170. Binary only. Author: Mark Rinfret

TooMuch3D - This animation is Jim's entry to the 1989 BADGE Killer Demo Contest, where it won 10th place. It is a warning to those of you who spend too much time in front of

your computer monitors. Binary only. Author: Jim Robinson

Fish Disk 271

CPUStandoff - This cute "computer wars" animation is Bob's entry to the 1989 BADGE Killer Demo Contest. Lots of visual jokes in this one. Binary only. Author: Bob Janousek

LaserBoing - This ray-traced animation with sound is Mike's entry to the 1989 BADGE Killer Demo Contest. This "Amiga Boing" ball is just loaded with energy! Binary only. Author: Mike van der Sommen

Fish Disk 272

AmigaPunt - A program designed to predict the performance of horses in a race. The premise is that the factors affecting a horse's performance, and ultimately the result of the race, can be given a value. Binary only. Author: Pierre A. du Parte
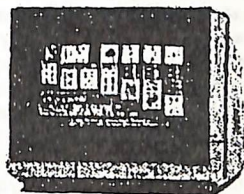
Balloon - This animation with sound effects is Dave's entry to the 1989 BADGE Killer Demo Contest. Binary only. Author: Dave Schreiber

Spigot - This ray-traced animation, using overscan HAM and sound effects, is Eric's entry to the 1989 BADGE Killer Demo Contest, where it won 6th place. Binary only. Author: Eric J. Fleischer (Dr Gandalf)

-ooOoo-

Harris Hi-Tek advert

AN AMIGA SELF-RUNNING DEMO

HOW TO PUT ONE TOGETHER

by Ron Chernich

Why would you ever want to do such a thing? Well, in my case, it was a need to quickly outline the purpose and features of a program which I've had under development for a while now. There are a lot of other reasons for creating an eye-catching demonstration. Things like Trade Show 'dems, pre-sales support, Exhibitions, Open Days, whatever. Situations where you have a message to put across to people who are in a receptive frame of mind. The only "right" way to produce a demonstration is the way that works for each particular case, so we come to the first essential: PLANNING.

Let's take my product demonstration as an example. Start by making a list of target objectives:

1. Tell what the program does.
2. Make it look easy and enjoyable.
3. Avoid too much operational detail.
4. Show only the main features.
5. Provide ordering information.

Consider these in order. Obviously we need to inform the viewer what the program does and hopefully, make them want to own a copy. But there is a second requirement here.

If the viewer has already bought the product, the 'dem should provide some background material which will assist in understanding its use. There is a fine line between providing useful information and going into too much detail. It's better to omit detail than to risk loosing the audience by boring them to death. So keep it short.

Skip all the simple mechanical details. Make a full list of the program's features, then prune the list. Be brutal. A successful 'dem will run no longer than two minutes and be evenly paced in relation to delivery and content. You can't show everything. Finally, assume the show is going to be a success and provide information on how to obtain more information and/or the product itself. It is a good idea to allow the ordering information to be easily customisable. A dealer will be more inclined to run your demonstration if it can be easily changed to include the sweetest sound in the whole world - his own name.

The next step in preparation is to script or story-board the entire demonstration. Yes, you could do it on the fly, off the top of your head, so to speak, but this will take infinitely longer and the results will reflect the lack of planning. Now for some really good sacrilege. Do it on paper. Don't even turn the computer on until it's finished. Divide the page into a number of columns. We need to identify each individual step and exactly what is shown and said at each step. Use the "Features List" to sequence the story and remember to avoid too much detail. A small sketch will be a great help in visualising the script flow. It doesn't matter if you think you can't draw. This story board is only going to be used by you and you'll understand what your own sketch is meant to represent. Besides, you are going to write beside each different sketch exactly

what it will contain. Take a lot of time over the script. This will be presented to the viewer either as text screens or better, by the Amiga Narrator Device. Use small words and short sentences. The US Armed Forces require that all contractors preparing tech manuals target for a maximum comprehension age of 12. All jokes aside, their manuals are excellent examples of readability.

A little hint on style here. Listen to some good speakers. ABC Radio National has an un-ending supply of them for free. People like Bob Ansett, Dick Smith, SOME elder politicians. Generally, they don't use "Good English". Sentences will be started with prepositions, infinitives may be split, verbs missing. It may not be "correct", but it has life and enthusiasm. Be idiomatic, but avoid buzz-words. An old but accurate plan for any presentation says "Tell 'em what you're going to tell them. Tell them, then tell 'em what you've told them!" Okay, now let's look at some TOOLS. For my product 'dem, I only used four products, one of them public domain:

SCREENX (public domain, Fred Fish #158) Used to write IFF files to disk of screens from the target program.

DELUXE PAINT III (or II, by Electronics Arts) To tart-up the dumped screens and create custom text screens and incidental pointers and images.

(Any Editor) Use to create straight ASCII text files of our script for the Amiga to "narrate". Unnecessary if the script will not be spoken.

TV*SHOW (ZUMA Group) Create the actual demonstration by combining the screens and text files.

TV*TEXT (optional, ZUMA Group) A better tool than DP for making text foils if you are creating a "dumb" demo.

To capture details of our program in action, "RUN" (multi-task) it alongside SCREENX. Set up the display as pre-defined by the story-board, then switch to SCREENX to dump the image to disk. Use a RAM disk to speed this up, if you have the space. Create new files for each sketch of the script. Give each a simple, short name with an identifying numeric. Something like "S02.PIC", for instance. Record the file name against the script steps as you dump them. If you need to insert a scene later, it can become something like "S02a.PIC".

When all the screen dumps are complete, run then through Deluxe Paint. Two reasons for this. Our program's windows will not be "active" while we are using SCREENX to dump the images, so some titles will be "Ghosted". DP lets us correct this. Regardless, load and save the images through Deluxe Paint, 'cause TV*SHOW can't work with the direct output of SCREENX!

If you are going to use some animation, say little pointing hands, or an attention grabbing high-light box, prepare them now and save them as "brush" images. This method of screen capture will not permit a snap-shot to be made with an Intuition menu pulled down. On the downside, this prevents us showing the menu choices. The up-side is that we are prevented from going into too much detail.

Again from the story-board, prepare the text files and save them with simple names which are recorded on the script. Names like "F01.TXT" keeps them in sequence and tells us what they are. For an all singing, all dancing demo using the Amiga

narrator facility, some fine tuning of the text will be required. Certain words will not pronounce correctly when spelt correctly. As an example the word "device" will need to be entered as "dev vice" to have it sound acceptable. This is another good reason to script for Fogg Factor 12. Long, multi-syllable words ("incidentally" springs to mind) require considerable massaging for narration. Best to avoid them.

Finally, we are ready to create the demonstration. The written storyboard is the key. It not only tells us what the demo is to look like, it also tells us the file names to call for each step.

TV*SHOW has an editor to tie our screens and text files together and a companion player utility that can be legally re-distributed with our files, and the script created by the editor, to any third party. My copy came complete with the Byte Bandit virus from Computer View at Bundamba for about $150, I think. I may review this program another time, but for now; let's just say that you can combine you screens, animate the pointers and present the narration with minimum pain. Transfer all the screen and text files to a single sub-directory. It is also a good idea to multi-task the text editor (I use "Z" from the Manx C compiler - a Unix "VI" clone) with the TV*SHOW editor. This allows us to make changes to the individual text files so that they pronounce correctly, as we go, without having to exit and re-load ad infinitum.

Strange how many genuine reasons you can find for a multi-tasking operating system when you have one.

TV*SHOW has a wide range of wipes, scrolls and replacement transition effects. Generally, avoid them. Use a simple fade when you go from showing one "feature" to another. This re-inforces the fact that we are showing something new. Within a feature explanation, a simple cut works best. The presentation must never get in the way of the message. Keep this in mind as you run and re-run the script. Be you own worst critic, then show it to others and listen openly to their comments. Remember the 'dem is supposed to be a come-on, not a turn-off.

Well, that's about it. If you choose to create a "talking" demo, provide an opening screen which tells the user that speakers and specific device drivers and libraries are required. Include how long the demonstration will take to run. You'd be surprised how much of a favourable frame of mind it puts someone in, knowing how long they are committing themselves for. Give them an option to abort at this point. Consider providing an alternate demo that puts all your text on screen for those who do not have any audio capability. Place a time-out on the last screen (the one that the dealer can customise) so that the script will auto-repeat after 30 seconds or so, unless a key is pressed. To stress one last time: the important parts are the planning and the review/revise loop. While the Amiga provides the tools, you must provide the excitement.

-ooOoo-

GAMES COLUMN

by Reuben Phillips

Take your pick, repopulation or depopulation ...

REVIEWS (Out of Four Stars)

***½ MILLENNIUM 2.2

It's a tough job being a colony commander, a few days ago a HUGE asteroid smashed into the Earth and killed everyone, and now the colonists are complaining about having predigested-lentilburgers twice in this week, AND those Mars Base lunatics have just declared sovereignty ...

Your mission, should you drag yourself away from SILKWORM long enough is to recolonise and eventually repopulate the Earth. Try not to think about the implications of a gene pool extracted from a motley collection of 100 odd myopic scientists, petulant space heroes and hydroponics nuts. Just try to keep yourself busy, remember in space no-one can hear you yodel...
First and foremost of the threats to your well-being (not to mention your sanity) is the vacuum outside, don't let it in - simple. Not so easily dealt with are those Mars Base Flake-outs with their Megalomaniac commander, developing an adequate defence against their marauding fighters is a pressing need. Then there's the problem of recolonising Earth, too bad it's racked by volcanic eruptions and magnetic storms, added to that the moon is a pig of a mining planet (no copper for a start) which begs the question of where to obtain sufficient raw materials, not to mention the energy to actually do something with them. Manifold problems are the order of the day.
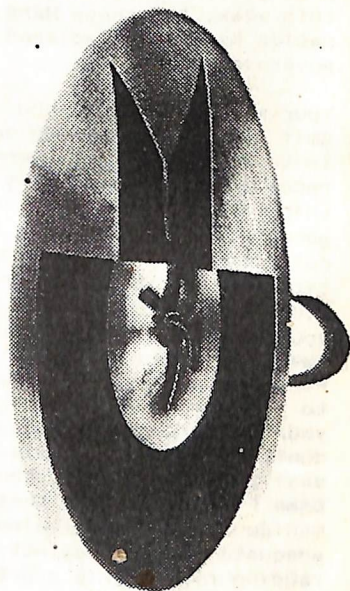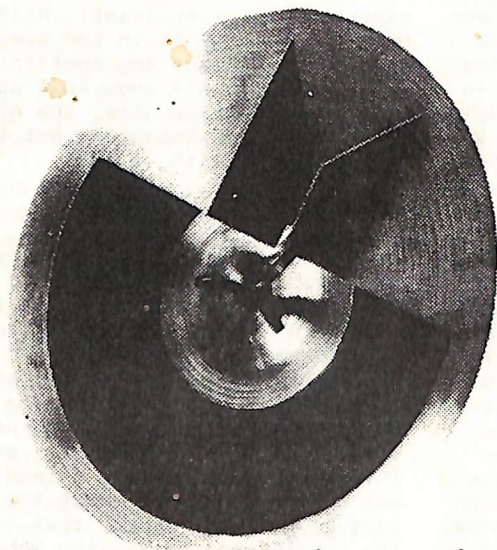
The excellent icon-based system makes things easy, although one particular operation could have been automated to save a monotonous chore (say any more and I'd be telling). Once finished you may not go back to it, but that's not the point, the enjoyment is in the once off nature of the game (20-30 concentrated hours at least). Millennium's challenge is in the ever changing, constant and conflicting pressures - it all adds to a complex and evocative game, the moon may be lacking atmosphere but this game is thick with it.

***½ SILKWORM

This is a direct arcade conversion, no guarantee of success in its own right, but this game is solid action with more blistering firepower than a rampant tank platoon in Smurfland. Playing either an assault helicopter or a pogo-ing jeep the objective is straight forward, viz. sally forth and destroy everything - there's nothing friendly out there. Who cares about the plot, suffice it to say that it's the traditional last-ditch lonewolf sortie against evil hordes of bad guys. Vast waves of enemy choppers (aliens don't follow patterns) stream towards you and it's all you can do to mow them down, let alone contend with the rockets, nukes, fighters and ground emplacements. The screen gets so packed with flak at times it's often complete chaos. Wipe out the Mothership and it's off to the next level (out of 11). Nothing groundbreaking, just lots of crunchy explosions and a pure adrenalin buzz.

Tips Bit: MILLENNIUM 2.2: C U at the asteroids.