

John Hancock



The Dispatch Disk

Southern Districts
Commodore Users Club inc.
News Paper.

April 87

COMMITTEE - 1986/87

President :	Ken Pilkington	16 Anselm St.	Christie Downs.
	PH: 382 7119		
Secretary :	John Hancock	2 Pat Cresc.	Morphett Vale.
	PH: 381 7973		
Treasurer :	Julie Collins	12 Resolute Cresc.	Hallet Cove.
	PH: 381 7202		
Assisting :	Austen Evans	10 Galatea St.	Hallet Cove.
	PH: 387 0249		
	Mike Griffin	11 Dudley Cresc.	Marino.
	PH: 216 9193 (work)		
	Sam Hancock	4 Else St.	Christie Downs.
	PH: 384 4231		

Librarian : John Hancock - Secretary.
Library open 7:00 pm - 7:30 pm each general meeting.
Newsletter: See back page.

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Next meeting : MONDAY 26th May at 7:30 pm.

Location : Salvation Army Hall Elizabeth Rd. Morphett Vale.
Subject : Apple Macintosh

June - Magic Desk.

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JANE - AN INTEGRATED WORD PROCESSOR, SPREADSHEET,
AND DATA BASE - A PERSONAL VIEW

If you are not sure what a word processor / spreadsheet / data base is, then JANE is a good programme. All the features are integrated into the one package which has to be one of the easiest to use systems I have seen. The system is controlled by ICONS, and extensive use is made of windows (dialogue boxes as GEOS calls them).

Because of its simplicity, its capabilities as a spreadsheet or data base are best described as average, but the word processor is not that bad.... It does most things that a word processor is expected to do, the most glaring omissions are :

- i. No footer.
- ii. The header is limited to twenty characters.

The main strength of JANE is the fact that it is a very user friendly system, with a separate disk full of help (some of the help is in the form of a canned demonstration of how to carry out a task). Other nice features are :

- i. Able to reformat the document with any number of characters per line, say 40 to 132.
- ii. Choice of 3 on screen text sizes 40, 64 or 80.
- iii. Has two different modes of operation, as a beginner you can select commands by moving the cursor around with a joystick and the 'fire' button. When you are experienced and find the joystick mode too slow, you use the keyboard to select the commands.

As your confidence grows on the word processor, you may be tempted to look at the spreadsheet and data base.

Some definitions :

DATA BASE = An information system e.g. address book.

RECORD = An individual item about which you will keep information e.g. 'Pilkington' in the address book.

FIELD = An entry within a record e.g. phone number.

VARIABLE LENGTH FIELD = A field which expands to whatever size is necessary to hold the information in that field (sometimes called the 'freetext' system).

The data base allows the usual searching, sorting, printing and label printing as well as the easy transfer of information from the data base to the word processor. It is so easy that it makes a great training tool and in summation :

- It is an excellent data base for recipes, your record library etc. because of the variable length fields.
- It is a good data base for addresses.
- It is limited for any serious data base application by
 - a. Limit of 15 fields per data base.
 - b. No mathematical capability.
 - c. No programming capability.

For mathematical capability, you have to look at the SPREADSHEET, it is here that the limitations are most obvious, it is very small as a quick comparison with a good spreadsheet will show :

JANE	MULTIPLAN
26 columns	63 columns
50 rows	255 rows

The spreadsheet does all of the normal calculations, add, subtract, multiply, divide, sum of rows or columns, average of rows or columns, find the minimum or maximum value in a row or column. With a limit of 26 x 50, it can only handle the simplest of calculations.

Overall, Jane is a really good program to be used as a training system - to introduce the concepts of data bases and spreadsheets, but any serious application would see you looking around for a more powerful system. The best part of JANE is the word processor, which is a lot easier to use than some I have seen. One drawback I forgot to mention is that you need a Commodore 128 to run the program, so I guess you easyscript users will have to keep rummaging through your instruction books (just the sort of thing I hate).

K. P. April 1987

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80 COLUMN WORDPROCESSORS ON THE COMMODORE 64

The following is a few brief notes on various 80 column wordprocessors for the Commodore 64 written by Greg Dodd.

GEOWRITE

Geowrite comes in an integrated package included with the GEOS operating system. The other main utility is Geopaint, a graphics program. This is the easiest wordprocessor to use. Its greatest advantage is its WYSIWIG screen display combined with the many fonts available, more than 24. Geowrite also has proportional spacing but there are only basic editing facilities.

TASWORD

There is a six page limit on the document size with no spelling checker. Changing between 80 and 40 column displays only requires CONTROL-0. It is possible to program the screen colour. In the finished document it is only possible to insert whole lines only, not words or letters.

PAPERCLIP 64 C

The maximum text size is 510 lines. The text may be seen in either 40 or 80 columns but editing can only be done in 40 column mode. Bold is seen in reverse and underline as underlined in 80 column mode. There are some number calculating functions. This wordprocessor is like Easyscript to drive.

PAPERBACK WRITER - POCKET WRITER

The main difference between these is that Pocket Writer allows the user to program the screen colours. The 80 or 40 column output is selected before the main program loads and cannot be changed without reloading. There are extensive help screens, a disk full (excluding the program and printer files) to be precise. Any type of file may be loaded and modified. This allows the user to load and edit any document created by another wordprocessor. It is even possible to load basic programmes! There is a three page maximum on the document, but this is offset by the powerful "Global" functions where documents may be linked. Different text features, for example bold, underline, italics, superscript and subscript are displayed on screen.

It has powerful block define, search and sort features. Features normally found on a data-base. There are also number calculating functions.

CONCLUSIONS

Paperback Writer seems to be the best overall wordprocessor.

WARNING

Always delete old files and do not use S@: and do not allow the wordprocessor to replace the old file. This may cause the classic S@: bug to destroy the file.

Greg Dodd.

WORDSTAR WORDPROCESSOR

This is a very powerfull wordprocessor. It has almost all of the featrures found on other wordprocessors with some that I have not seen elsewhere. This wordprocessor is also easy to use.

This wordprocessor is a CP/M programme and may only be used by Commodore 128 owners in CP/M mode. Because it is designed arround an eighty column display it becomes very awkward when trying to use the fourty column output.

Since there are so many CP/M computers this, as with most CP/M programmes, must first be installed. This is quite simple and is described in the Commodore 128 System Guide on pages 11-14 and 11-15. This sets such things as screen colours, screen size and screen control codes.

Two associated programes Spelstar, a spelling checker and Mailmerge for document merging are also available. Both of these are run from within Wordstar and together form an integrated package.

Wordstar can be as easy or as complex as the user wants. To produce a document the user simply types their document. The program sets the left and right margins, header and footer gaps, justification, paging and numbering automatically. Any of these may be changed at will.

There are a number of different display types. WYSWIG or what you see is what you get refers to programes such as GEOS or Jane where the screen displays the precise appearance of the printed output. On screen formatting is similar to WYSWIG but while the screen layout is presented while in edit mode the different type styles, headers and footers etc are indicated by commands which may or may not be displayed. Wordstar uses on screen formatting with displayed commands.

I have heard a number of criticisms of Wordstar. "It is too complicated." This is only true if the full powers of the program are required. If only a simple wordprocessor is required then it is very simple. "Dont you have to use the control keys to do everything?" There are over 120 keyboard commands. How many computers have 120 function keys? Comprehensive menus and help screens may be seen on any of these commands. Again, how many of these features are used all the time for simple operations and the additional features are there if required.

Life with Wordstar is not a bed of roses. The big drawback with it, particularly with CP/M on the Commodore 128, is its speed, or rather lack of speed. It is slow in moving around the document, and very slow with large documents. It is possible to speed this up in various ways but I am afraid that does not solve all the problems.

Finally; Who is Wordstar for? This program is designed for, and suites typists. The ease of editing and quick movement, the powerfull mailmerge option all suite this for the professional, not to mention the price. For the occasional user one of the menu controlled word processors may be more sutable.

RESET SWITCH

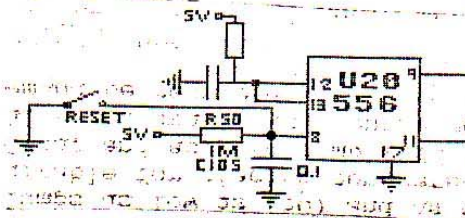
There is one feature sadly lacking on the Commodore 64, a reset switch. There are a number of ways to provide the reset facility.

1. Take a piece of wire and bridge pins 3 and 1 on the user port. DO NOT DO THIS. I know of two people who slipped and blew their computer.
2. Buy a cartridge with the reset facility.
3. Wire a switch internally to the RESET line.
4. Do it properly and reset the reset timer.

Option 1 is not even to be considered. Options 2 and 3 are possible but not preferred. Option 4 is described below.

The requirements for the fitting of the switch are; A beginners knowledge of electronics, a fine tipped soldering iron a few inches of fine solder, a #1 Phillips screwdriver, a small momentary push button switch, a drill, a 1kOhm 1/4W resistor, a length of hook up wire depending on the position of the switch and a pencil and paper.

1. Remove all cables from the computer and place it upsidedown on a cloth or piece of carpet. Near the front of the computer there are three philips head screws. Remove these screws and right the case being sure to catch the screws as they fall out. Carefully lift the front of the case and unplug the two cables from the printed circuit board being careful to make a note of their orientation.
2. Next find a suitable position for the switch. Make sure that the switch will not interfere with the top cover or the printed circuit board. Once a suitable position is found drill a hole and mount the switch.
3. One side of the switch is connected to pin 8 of U20. This point is connected to R50 and C105, see circuit. There have been many revisions of the C64 and not all models have these components labeled as R50 and C105. This point is usually found near the front left of the computer. Cut enough of the hook up wire to go from pin 8 of U20 to the reset switch. Solder one end to pin 8 of U20 and the other end to one side of the switch. Solder one end of the 1k resistor to the other side of the switch and connect the other end of the resistor to ground.
4. Carefully replace the two connectors removed from the printed circuit board. Place the lugs on the rear of the upper section in the rear of the lower section at an angle of 30 to 40 deg and slowly lower the upper section into place. Uprturn the computer and replace the screws replaced earlier.
5. Reconnect the cables to the computer and turn it on. Upon Pressing the reset switch the screen should shrink slightly for about one second then the opening screen should reappear. If this does not work then you have made a mistake and it will be necessary to check the wiring. One final hint, if you wish to measure voltages arround the circuit, use a hugh impedance meter, eg. a digital meter.



AUSTEN'S TRICKS AND TIPS

Well now that we know all about high-byte and low-byte numbers what good are they to us? Most house-keeping chores that the computer does use high-byte low byte VECTORS. What is a VECTOR? I'm glad you asked. When, for example you press the RESTORE key you generate a NON-MASKABLE INTERRUPT (N-MI). Don't worry what that is, all you need to know is that certain things happen for example if you are holding the stop key at the same time the program stops, the screen clears etc.

The N-MI routine starts at address 65095 BUT the restore key is "connected" to addresses 792-793. The reason for this is that the computer jumps to the address given at 792-793, in this case 65095, but by altering the address at 792-793 we can have the computer jump anywhere we need it to when we press the RESTORE key.

Last month I showed how we could make the computer COLD-START when we saved a program. What we did was change the VECTOR for the save command which is normally stored at 818-819 and points to 62941 and pointed it to 64738, the cold start routine.

Here are the addresses of some more vectors

808-809 STOP

816-817 LOAD

774-775 LIST

If you have any Hardware or Software problems that you need help with please ask me and if I don't know the answers I will try to find out for you.

FOR SALE / WANTED

FOR SALE: Disks, double sided double density. Members \$15 per ten, non members \$17 per ten. See John.

WANTED: Some one to edit the Despatch disk. Printer is necessary C128 and ability to spell preferred.

COMING UP

A social outing is planned for Saturday June 13th. The planned location is Loftia park. This is to be a family picnic BBQ with games for the children and a door prize. Admission is free and all visitors are welcome. More details next meeting.

NEXT MONTH

The first in a series of articles dealing with Print Shop and Print Master graphics. This series will include Print Shop to Print Master conversion programs and a print shop graphics printer program.