8BIT

THE MAGAZINE FOR ALL 8-BIT COMPUTER USERS

ISSUE 8 Sept/Oct 1995

Harrowden, 39 High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, ELY, Cambs. CB6 2RA

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EDITOR'S COLUMN - ISSUE 8

Wow! What a great couple of months this has been....

The survey forms from last issue have been pouring in and the results will be summarised as soon as I have time to collate them. In the meantime you should see some of the changes you asked for including a new masthead, no more outline fonts, and a lot less BT stuff. See, I do listen (..even if they don't).

One more 8-bit computer magazine from Format has bitten the dust, leaving just **PCW Plus** flying the flag with about 10,000 readers, or so the rumour has it. I'm just waiting for the shock when *they* find out what the new writer on **PCW Plus** *really* looks like. Believe me, that little cartoon doesn't do him justice. His name, for those who may have heard of him, is Simon Forrester. Hang on in there, Simon!

Let's hope all their readers go over to **Commodore World** from Electric Boys, as well as a couple of the C64 fanzines.

The IEBA is thriving and the 8-bit directory will be sent out by the end of the year. The draft copy looks great.

Protext and its related programs will be back within two months thanks to a rescue by a couple of heroes.

Now all we need is a nice new 8-bit computer from Amstrad, just in time for Christmas. I can dream. Pip! Pip!

Brian Watson

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Also, as loose sheets:

More adverts than you'll ever need.

THE BIG STORY -The Return of Protext

...and now the good news.

The demise of Arnor, the company who published the superb word processor Protext for the PCW and CPC among many other fine programs, was announced in the last 8BIT. Well, Protext, Protype, Maxam, Utopia and the rest will be back within a short time with a full customer support service and upgrade offers.

The CPC user group **WACCI** and Brian Watson, editor of 8BIT, have managed to buy the Z80 source code, master copies, manuals and all worldwide rights to all Arnor's software in tape, disc and ROM versions from the official receiver. This includes Amsdos and CP/M Protext, Promerge, Prospell, the Utopia utility, Maxam (all versions), Protext Office, Protext Filer, etc etc. In short, they now own everything that comprised **Arnor**'s 8-bit range.

It has taken a lot of persistence, including attendance at the winding-up at Croydon court, staying in touch with the various agencies at every stage of the process, and liason between all the interested parties to bring it off, but eventually it worked.

Once the details are finalised, Peter Campbell's **Campursoft** in Glasgow will be appointed distributors of the range, as well as selling their own new program 'Proprint PCW' to further enhance Protext's capabilities on the PCW.

In addition, several of the software developers have expressed an interest in writing add-on programs, and the possibility exists for conversion of any and all programs to the other 8-bit computers if the demand is found to be there.

Even people who are currently using pirated copies of Arnor's versions will be catered for; the new owners do live in the real world!

What may happen, and details have yet to be agreed, is an amnesty period during which current users (regardless of where their programs came from) may be allowed to register for a small fee with the new company and so become legitimate users, as well as obtaining the latest version of the program and a manual. They would then also be able to use the new on-going support service.

At this point it would be as well to clarify the legal position. The new company handling the Protext family etc now hold the copyright to all the Z80 versions of Arnor's software and may take legal action against any and all users or suppliers of their pirated software, regardless of whether it has Arnor's name on or ours.

If this sounds a little harsh put that way let me explain and justify the position. The success of this project, and what may derive from it in other areas, relies on the new owners not being greedy with their new assets and the users not cheating the system for the sake of a few pounds. One copy sold and ten copies distributed is no way to keep resources available for marketing the reissued software to new users and publicising the many benefits of 8-bit computing to potential new users of it.

This acquisition operation has taken quite a a wad of money from WACCI and I, so may keep us out of the market for a little while, but the IEBA is in a position to look at similar acquisitions of 8-bit software, hardware, or other development possibilities. It certainly sets a good precedent of what can be obtained provided prospective buyers set about things in a businesslike way and are prepared to be persistant when neccesary.

OJ Software, Trading Post, and many others who buy up stocks of 8-bit products for clearance at low prices are not undermined by this, rather it complements their worthy activities by keeping users of 8-bit computer equipment and software supported rather than moving on to other machines.

If you would like to be kept informed on updated information as further details of the re-launch project are announced over the next few weeks, send an A4 SAE to Brian Watson at **8BIT** Magazine, *"Harrowden"*, 39, High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA.

IEBA NEWS

The demanding task of compiling and editing the **IEBA Directory of 8-bit services** has been taken on by John Walker, 23, Weir Close, Mainstone, PLYMOUTH, Devon, PL6 8SD. He is well-connected with PCW matters and is being supported in the work by Leon Bebbington as the C64 co-ordinator, Andy Davis as the SAM/Spectrum co-ordinator, and Brian Watson who is the CPC and other machines collator, as well as receiving information for forwarding to John.

If any **8BIT** readers are able to offer help by supplying up to date information on 8-bit computer suppliers, repairers, magazines, clubs, PD suppliers, 'net sites or whatever for inclusion in the **IEBA Directory**, please send it ON PAPER to Brian Watson, secretary of the IEBA at **8BIT** magazine.

The information which has come in so far is most encouraging, and there have been several requests from abroad for a 'rest of the world' supplement.

The proposed publication date has been put back to just after Christmas to ensure as much useful information as possible is included and it will be free to **IEBA** members.

The *draft* copy of the Directory already runs to over 30 pages of A4, so goodness knows how big it will be by Christmas. Did anyone say there was no support now for 8-bit computers?

* * * *

M Surridge writes that Commodore estimate they sold 2 million C64s in this country and when he talking to Trading Post and DTBS (who?) there is still evident enthusiasm. They seem to believe that up to 1 million C64s may still be active in the UK. Even if that is a little high (and who knows for sure) what with PCWs, CPCs, SAMs and Spectrums etc we must be talking about a lot of people who are not aware how much support there is still available for their allegedly 'outdated' computers.

He goes on to make the suggestion that user groups might consider exhibitions in libraries, leaflets in computer shops, and using mainstream (ie not 8-bit) magazines through small **adverts. He has already had some success** through Micro Mart (PC Mart are now running an 8-bit page-BW) and points out that new members are the lifeblood of user groups but wonders if perhaps there is a concern in user groups about the risk of being inundated by any response to such a 'marketing thrust'. I would think that's not a major worry for them at the moment and frankly, I'm with him all the way.

I know the idea of leaflets in computer shops (and mail-order outlets) has been pursued (including by me), but I can confirm it takes a lot of monitoring on a regular basis to keep up the momentum and thereby get the best from it. For maximum effectiveness old scruffy leaflets need to be replaced and a steady and appropriate supply of leaflets kept coming.

Regrettably, I am as guilty as anyone and have not allocated the time and attention I should to those who have been kind enough to offer the facility of an **8BIT** leaflet distribution to their customers. Odd, perhaps, since much of my work background is marketing.

I like the idea of a travelling, easily portable, display for libraries a lot. Perhaps a few of the members might like to give the idea further thought with a view to a trial somewhere one Saturday. In my experience there is not a likelihood of a problem with damage or loss if the display is just pictures, but a demonstrating display needs a little more forethought and the certainty of a reliable rota of people in attendance throughout the day including the get-in and get-out. However they need not be experts.

I hope this is something the IEBA can address before long with the *active* support of, 8-bit users. With a more positive attitude, we can get the most out of our hobby, and have an enjoyable time doing it. And that means people who profess to be concerned about the situation getting off their backsides and doing their share. No more, no less, but their share. Here endeth the lesson.

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CP/M AND MALLARD BASIC ON THE SPECTRUM:

CP/M is the most widely used operating system after MS-DOS and is available now for the Spectrum +3 from BG Services or Locomotive Software.

The Amstrad PCW and Amstrad CPC both use CP/M and it lets me run PCW and CPC Programs on my +3. But that's not all. You can use an 80 column virtual screen, copy discs quickly, configure printers and the serial port, and reconfigure the keyboard to your own needs.

You also get two basic text editors, basic disc utilities (erase, type, dir, copy [PIP] and rename), a program to produce a hex dump of a file, a colour utility, one to give you the ability to put passwords on your files etc. and that's just one side of the disc.

Side 2 has a date utility and things that are not explained very well in the manual. The manual says of some programs "This utility is outside the scope of this manual", which roughly translated means "Buy our other manual for £15 which covers this utility", and to add insult to injury, there is an advert in the box for the manual which explains the commands for £15, or a complete documentation of CP/M for £50. That aside, CP/M is a good buy.

MALLARD BASIC

This is the other half of the package. Mallard BASIC is what the PCWs use. Its emphasis is on fast arithmetic rather than user-friendliness. This is shown up by the fact that there is no CLS command and escape codes must be used instead. However this is still quite versatile, and there are couple of basic programs on the disc to look at.

There is a tape available from BG SERVICES (also at Alchemist Research - send blank disk and SAE) which has +3 and CP/M utilities on it. You load it up, and it decompresses all over the disc. The programs are then ready to use. One of these programs formats a disc to several different types, which is very useful if you have 3DCKIT (See end of review). These programs are very useful, but mostly undocumented. However, with a bit of trial and error, you will probably be able to use them within a few days.

Summary - A very good package, and well worth the money.

Plus points: plenty of programs, it is quick and there is a large user base.

Minus points: The manual is not brilliant, and there is a lack of important basic commands.

Rating: worth the money if you are a serious programmer (or have friends with PCWs or CPCs with whom you wish to exchange files)

3DCKIT TIP

If you bought this on tape and cannot save to +3 disk because you don't have the formatter follow these instructions to save it to disk. You will need CP/M and the Alchemist Research PD CP/M tape:

1. Load CP/M, then load DU49.
2. Select the FORMAT option.
3. Select disk type 1 (Amstrad Auto select)
4. Insert the disk you wish to be formatted.(ENSURE IT IS BLANK OR WHEN YOU FORMAT IT ALL DATA WILL BE LOST)
5. Press any key to format.
6. Make a note on the disk that is is 3DCKIT as there is no way to tell.
7. Use 3DCKIT as normal, but make sure that You write down what the files are called as you cannot CAT the files like a normal disk.
8. Don't forget to choose the Disk option on the load/save menu.

Some Useful Addresses:

Alchemist Research's Software Library is now at 126, Redfield Road, BRISTOL BS5 9QA (Trevor Mossman and Lloyd Garland)

BG Services are at 64 Roebuck Road, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 1JX

Locomotive Software are at Allen Court, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1YL

This article on CP/M and Mallard Basic for the Spectrum +3 was supplied by Alchemist Research. Thank you, Andy.

RELICS AND THE MATTER OF CENSORSHIP

In the corner of this page is an advertisement from Darren Randle for his new magazine **Relics**. As it is the first submission I have seriously considered censoring, apart from a few rather 'fruity' words in the recent CPC PD series, I thought my considerations might be of interest to readers.

Relics has been some while in the preparation and after much deliberation Darren has settled on an A5 magazine covering, as the advert says, old computers (especially the Spectrum) and world cinema. You may feel this to be an odd mix, but Darren explains in the first issue that he hopes this will be serve to introduce computer users to *his* other enthusiasm; the cinema side.

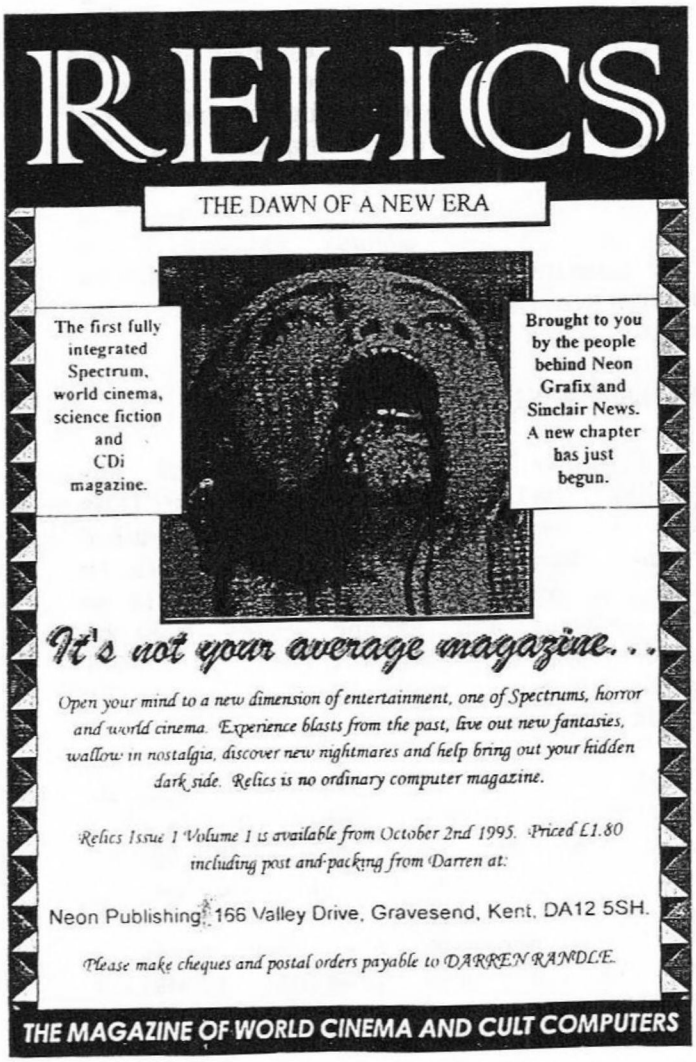
An aspect of films made abroad is that the rules of what can be said and shown are frequently a lot broader than in the UK. We may like to think we are a free people, but we have a Board of Film Censorsnip (oops) to cut the 'rudest' or goriest bits out according to the prejudices of the time.

As an adult, I find it disgraceful that I am not allowed to make up my mind what I choose to see at the cinema. In fact horror films scare me silly and I don't find films mainly devoted to sex a great turn-on, so I don't tend to seek either out in the cinema or on video, but that's *my* decision. I'm a bit more concerned about protection of young people from stuff which, unexplained, might upset them but that's another aspect of the matter which is not relevant here.

Then this advert for **Relics** turns up on my doorstep and my first thought was that I shouldn't print it as it was. Good grief, perhaps the old liberal is a prude after all? I considered just taking the middle out, and talked to Darren about doing that. Then I thought "no, it's only a digitised picture" and after all, it's taken from Blood for Dracula, which I saw at home (with the lights on) and it was quite a good film. So, accepting the responsibility being an editor requires, I'm running it and hope nobody finds it offensive.

The magazine? It's very good; the various elements make for an eclectic mix and I found most of it of interest to me. Darren expects it to evolve into a 'world cinema-only' publication as time goes by and that's the area where I feel he can go for a particular niche and be very successful.

With the demise of the various 8-bit computer magazines recently, there has been a sudden contagion of would-be publishers, producing self-regarding fanzines to a market which is already over-supplied by the many other similar publications. As ever, only the best will survive more than a couple of issues. In the last two months I have been sent three which have been scrapped or drastically revised before issue 2. By ploughing its own furrow, I rather think **Relics** will make it.



THE LAWYERS' PCW CLUB.

Regular readers of *8Bit* may wonder why my column is headed as above. The answer is that this column comes from the Lawyers' PCW Club, of which I am the Hon. Secretary. The Club supports members of the legal profession who use PCWs and also PCs, but especially Locoscript users.

Incidentally, our Club doesn't have a monopoly on *8Bit*'s PCW columns - I'm sure that Brian (*8Bit*'s Editor) would be happy to include more from other PCW clubs.

However, rather than simply telling you about the Club, I thought it would be useful to provide information on the PCW (users of other computers might also find some of my articles interesting too!) - but please do check everything for yourself, with your own experts where necessary.

Commonest PCW Problems:

1. Mechanical problems - first check troubleshooting sections of manual. Are all cables corrected properly and relevant parts clean? Your dealer may be able to help. Dictaphone carry out on-site repairs (ad hoc, and service agreements) on 01926-429124, Park House, 10 Park Street, Leamington Spa, Warwicks. CV32 4XF.

2. Problems using Locoscript. Sometimes you can get "lost" in an obscure part of Locoscript - hopefully by pressing exit, enter, stop, can keys a few times each in different orders the screen will change (ignore bleeps) and you will be returned to a relevant place. If stuck, attempt to save your work on disc, then remove disc, then switch off. You can then restart the computer and hopefully simply edit and resume your work. Locoscript's publishers, Locomotive, will answer questions received by post. Or you could try ringing their telephone helpline (0891-515717 - 50p per minute, weekdays, 10-12 a.m., 2-4 p.m.)

3. Disc Problems. These are caused by heat, cold, damp, lighting, direct sunlight, removing discs at wrong time; and could indicate a faulty computer. If you have no back-up copy, attempt to copy relevant files from the disc using the f3 function. Copy to M first then to another disc on one disc drive PCWs; ignore errors if possible and safe. Do not rely on faulty discs. There may be methods of repairing discs if vital, and Dave Smith (Disc Doctor - phone 01892-835974) may be able to assist in aid of charity. Dave can also assist with a wide range of disc transfer problems, and users of the other 8Bit computers (or even PC users!) will be pleased to know that his services are not limited to PCWs. Dave suggests that you telephone him first so that he can discuss the problem with you and quote a fee. Although I have never needed a disc recovery, a number of Club members have, and have spoken of Dave's services very favourably. Sometimes a faulty disc will, mysteriously, work fine on a subsequent day - copy it, use the copy, and regard the first disc as faulty.

4. General. Sometimes a problem is a one-off fluke, and will not occur again. If you attempt to save your work, switch off the computer, and start from the beginning again (attempting to edit file or recover it from limbo in Locoscript), this will clear many urgent problems.

Club Enquiries to: Keith Simons, 10 Orrishmere Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire. SK8 5HP.

BT - Brian likes comments on our telephone system. Here's my comments. If you ring Antarctica Australian Territory, it costs £1.35 per minute during daytime. If you ring a UK number beginning 0331-, 0897- 09911-, or 09919-, it costs £1.50 per minute at any time. Freephone 0800 800 891 for more info!

PCW CLUB NEWS

South East Essex PCW Club meet at 7.30pm on the 1st Thursday each month at the Basildon Centre. Further details from Mike Elliston (Chairman) 01268 415255.

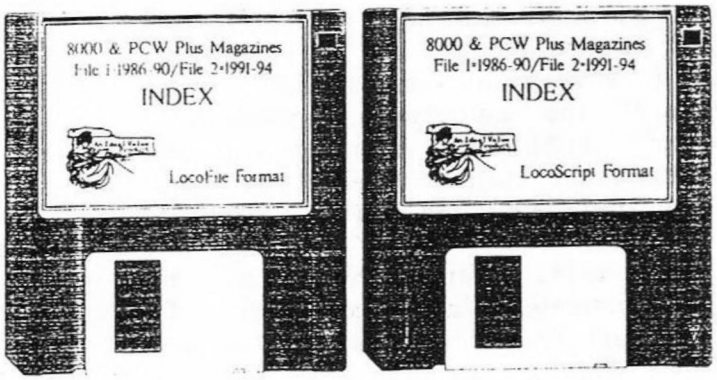
5th October Mike Elliston will be introducing Databases with practical demonstrations by Dorene Cox and Alec White using Locofile and Masterfile.

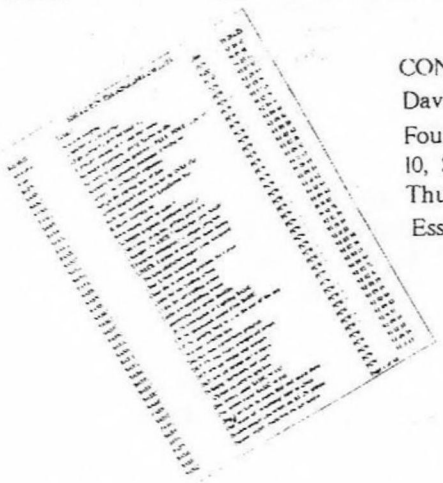
2nd November Tony Pearmain of Pinboard Computers will give a talk on 3½" drives and fib files (I could do will attending that one-BW)

7th December will be judging day for the artwork competition set in July.

Capital Computer Club (write c/o their Secretary Raymond Peterson, 21, Mapplebeck Street,Titahi Bay, Porirua, New Zealand). If you have problems with your Te Roro Hiko, these are the guys to contact. Supplies are hard to get down under and I'm sure they'd appreciate a contact from PCW-using Poms. And if you're ever in Wellington look them up.

Just under the deadline wire, Mrs Sybil Fox writes to appeal for people to form a PCW Club in South London. She has the room (full of PCWs and their software, apparently!) nearby and now just needs the people. Her address is 67, Alder Lodge, Stevenage Road, LONDON SW6 6NR





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During the afternoon there will be demonstrations of various PCW Programs together with facilities for purchases at club prices

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Further Details from

Secretary
KATE HADLEY
Telephone: 01208 872720

Chairman
JOHN WALKER
Telephone: 01752 706266

BONZO NEWSLETTERS - THE HISTORY Part 2

In the last issue of 8BIT, Dave Caleno recorded the early days of the newsletters relating to the Bonzo suite of backup/copying/tape-to-disc transfer programs for the CPC computers: Bonzo Super Meddler, the HackPack and Bonzo Blitz. They started publication in 1986, edited by the author of the programs, Colin Harris of the company called Nemesis.

The names of the suite of programs were originally called after the cats, Bonzo and Blitz, which supposedly sat with Colin as he was writing the programs.

Now read on...

The third outing of the Bonzo newsletters, in mid 1992, was edited by Martin Cossins, now having a name change to Bonzo's Scrap Yard for the first four issues. It then changed to Bonzo's Scrapyard, as it now remains. The format was a quarterly newsletter, still A4 in size, with varying numbers of pages, due mainly to the lack of new software being issued. At this time the 'new' software was predominantly re-issues of earlier games under various budget labels, with microscopic instructions and occasionally different copying requirements. The transfer type-ins for the Amstrad Action covertapes continued, along with the odd set of type-ins for individual programs.

Martin Cossins handed the reins over to me for issue 11 of Bonzo's Scrapyard. The name was kept the same, as during the time he was editing the newsletter a suite of programs called Bankraid had the distribution rights handed to Bonzo's Scrapyard and the now defunct Amstrad Contact, by its author Neil MacDougall. Neil still retains the copyright and the programs are not PD. If I had changed the name of the newsletter then this would have been another set of CPC programs that would have bitten the dust. (I think this *may* be changed quite legally, if you're interested-BW)

I would appreciate receiving any news of transfers accomplished with the aforementioned programs, as I am getting very short of the information needed to fill the newsletter. An addition being made in the new newsletter will cover disc-to-disc back-ups using the following four programs: Nirvana, Discology, CPC Procopy and XEXOR. Any information on this would be welcome, stating which program was used, what alterations were made using the program, eg Gap3 for Discology and Procopy, and whether the 6128 special CopyMod had been done to the keyboard for XEXOR. With Nirvana it is a straight backup; it either works or does not.

A database has been kept of the relevant transfer option for any reported transfers, which now amount to over 1450 transfers, and has been in the capable hands of Nigel Mells over the years, for which we must be eternally grateful.

PS by Brian Watson. I recently had the pleasure of meeting Dave at the WACCI user group's convention in Walsall and he tells me a major development has now taken place with Phil Craven who, you will remember from part one, was entrusted with the copyright of the programs, has granted permission for Dave Caleno (only) to supply the programs again.

Since Phil's withdrawal from CPC computing a while back the programs have been unavailable unless you could find them second-hand, but this now allows CPC users to get hold of the suite quite legally and with all the back-up support service of the Bonzo's Scrapyard newsletters. In addition, Phil has granted Dave permission to supply Maxidos, CPC Procopy and the big-format program MS800, all of which were previously supplied by Phil's companies Microstyle, and later, Avatar.

For fuller details and prices of all these excellent utilities and the support services write to Dave Caleno at 29, Chapter Road, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 3PX enclosing an A4 sae. I understand he is nearly ready to supply them again.

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RADICAL SOFTWARE

This is the new address of Radical, from which we keep supporting the CPC. We now have a growing catalogue of exclusive games, and there are more on the way, such as the eagerly awaited Lethal Moves, and the improved Black Jack and Cribbage.
The latest additions are Megablasters (94% in AA), which comes on two discs, and the newly updated Routeplanner.

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Masters Of Space	£9.95
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6128 Plus with stereo colour monitor
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SD Microsystems 3.5" drive, PSU and various large format software, AMX Plus mouse and interface, Spectre RS232 Interface and Plus 'widgit'
Software: Stop Press, Advanced Art Studio, Protype, Pro-Ext, Fun School 2 - Under 5's, Fun School 3 - Under 5's, Fun School 3 - 5 to 7, Fun School 3 - 7 to 11, Fun School 4 - 5 to 7, The Hitch-hikers Guide to the Galaxy, Prehistorik 2, Sim City, PANG cartridge.
All of the above are original disks, boxed and with manuals or instructions where applicable.
In addition there is a 3 row lockable disc box containing dozens and dozens of 3" and 3.5" discs which contain hundreds of commercial and PD programs. I don't have the time to go through them but there is something for every taste. I also have a Genius Mouse and interface (£5) which is suitable only for normal CPC machines.
The price for the whole lot is £250 o.n.o.
Please telephone Andy Gibbons on 01733 700100 (Peterborough) between 2 pm and 6 pm during the week and anytime weekends.
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2) Please mention 8BIT when responding to advertisements.

3) Adverts for the next 8BIT must be received by 15th November 1995

* * * *

AMSTRAD PCW - FOR SALE

PCW Software and add-ons for sale: cut-price list sent free to any caller. 01704 (Burscough,ORMSKIRK) 895015. Owner is upgrading to PC. REF:J

12 brain-twisting games from SPARK Software for the PCW including Coconut Shy and Fishing. Send cheque for £5 to Mr C McKenzie, 20, Macclesfield Road, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1NR. Specify 3" or ½" disc Ref:P

AMX Stop Press, Caxton Condor 1, Caxton Scratchpad+/Smartkey - £15 ea. Tas-Sign, Lord f the Rings game 1 - £10 ea, Synergy Saremaster, MAP Initnon ledger sstem - £20 ea. SCA Pofessional + interface - £45. Cut cable 9pin female to 25pin female - free. AEG Olympia FCC 1D2 interface 36pin to 20pin ribbon - £30. JR Cross, *The Parciau*, Clyro, Hay-on-Wye, HEREFORD HR3 5SG REF:P

Amstrad PCW8256 with Printer, RS232, manual and several programs incl Word Processor. Ideal for home office £100 ono. Phone: John 01929 554109 REF:L

PCW DUPLICATE BRIDGE SCORER PROGRAMS for Mitchell movements at 3-18 tables and up to 36 boards, and for appendix Mitchell movements at 14-26 tables and 26 boards. On 3" or 3½" disc. Including programs to create files of players' names. £20 with full instructions. FW Manders, 4, Carral Close, LINCOLN LN5 9BD Tel: 01522 721512 for details. REF:J

* * * *

AMSTRAD PCW - WANTED

Creative Technology TRACKBALL key mouse wanted for Microdesign on PCW. Must be trackball version. Details price, to Mike Elliston, 96, Sparrows Herne, BASILDON, Essex SS16 5EX Ref:L

Issue 100 of **PCW Plus** to add to the South Essex PCW Clubs' reference library. Contact Mike Elliston on 01268 522484 Ref:L

AZ-330 Olympus Super zoom camera with infra-red remote unit, filters, soft case. £175. Would consider part exchange for PCW hardware. Ted 01275 (Bristol) 340565 REF:O

Wanted: any help or information concerning PCW9256 - Programs, games, Locoscript 3, upgrade memory with chips, 3½" disks. Mr WA Warren, 25, Milton Avenue, ANDOVER, Hants SP10 3DP REF:P

WANTED FOR A PCW: 'Grammatik' or any other program that checks Grammar on a PCW. Contact Jim French on 01268 415255. 14, Wheatfield Way, BASILDON, Essex SS16 6SN REF:K

I would appreciate details of any items for sale or exchange related to PCW8512. Hardware, printers, software, peripherals, programs, discs, manuals, books, etc. Require especially any items related to Protext or Basic, and manuals for Microdesign, Masterfile 8000, Dbase II, Frank Bohan, 13, New Road, Elsenham, BISHOPS STORTFORD, Herts. CM22 6HA REF:O

WANTED: Rombo Vidi set-up for a PCW, complete with instructions. Must be working! Please send details of price etc to: Mike Elliston, 96, Sparrows Herne, BASILDON, Essex SS16 5EX REF: L

PCW - MISCELLANEOUS

Berkshire Amstrad PCW Users Club offers you FREE telephone support, FREE magazine/book loan, FREE machine loan, FREE newsletter. FREE access to bulletin boards etc. FREE Special offers - eg 3" discs only £10 per 10. SAE for details to Ed Harris, 121, Bullbrook Drive, BRACKNELL, Berks RG12 2QR REF:P

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PCW - MISCELLANEOUS contd.....

HELP! I have a **Stop Press** program converted from the original 3" to a 3½" disc. Any ideas how I can make it auto-boot? It would be gratefully received. Keith Bull, 60, Hildaville Drive, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex Tel: 01702 (Southend) 339894. REF:J

CAPITAL COMPUTER CLUB, Box 1100, Wellington, New Zealand. For your info old title since 1988 was 'Amswell' at same address. We now have members with Amstrads, Amigas, Macs, Sanyos and PCs with DOS and CP/M. We subscribe to **PCW Plus** so are well up to date. We welcome UK enquiries. Write to: Mr Max Sturgess at: 1/109, Watt Street, Featherston, Wairarapa. NZ REF:K

The Cornwall PCW Club meets on the second Saturday of each month (July and August excepted) in St Austell. All those interested in PCWs are most welcome to join us. Details from John Walker on 01752 (Plymouth) 706266 REF:P

COMMODORE - FOR SALE

Ludicrous amount of C64 games titles for sale, all in original boxes and most with instructions. Both disks and tapes. £5 per disk and £3 per tape; offers considered. For a list, send an A5 SAE to Commodore Magic, 5, Crane Avenue, Yaxley, PETERBOROUGH, Cambs PE7 3JH. Ref:J

C64, Vic 20 Quick Data drive new, boxed with blank microwafer and OS microwafer. Ceap, offers? Blank microwafers also available. Contact: Duncan Tizzard, *Folly Farm* Cold Ashton CHIPPENHAM Wilts SN14 8JR. Tel: 01225 (BATH) 891014 between 7pm and 9pm REF:Q

RETROS is a brand new company producing software for the C64. For a copy of our first compilation, The Magnificent Six, send a cheque or PO for £1.99 made payable to Matthew Withers to: Matthew Withers, Retros, 209, Ruskin Road, CREWE, Cheshire CW2 7JY REF:J

"FONTS FOR GEOS/1" - 21 original fonts for use with Geos. Most have multiple point sizes with pound (£) signs. Includes a graphic font to help design special dividers in your documents. 1541 disk. £3.99 including p & p in UK. Michael D Pearson, 31, Saxon Close, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire CV37 7DX REF:P

C64 games for sale from £1 including Codemasters titles and many more. Interested? Contact Denise, 48, Eastern Avenue, CHIPPENHAM, Wilts. SN15 3LW. Send SSAE for lists REF:H

COMMODORE - WANTED

WANTED: COMMODORE FORMAT 40 (Jan 1994) in mint condition with/without covertape. Also Wanted - C64 cassettes in mint condition of: Jet Set Willy 1, Dictator by Dk'Tronics, Graham Souness International Soccer and Multimixx 5. Good prices paid. S Ross, 3, Deanbank Street, DUNDEE DD2 2EA REF:L

Wanted Printshop 64, new or second hand - must be complete. Manual for MPS801 and help with Speedscript. Contact M Surridge, 99, Canterbury Road, COLCHESTER, Essex CO2 7RY. Tel: 01206 792155 REF:O

WANTED! Commodore Format issues 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 35, 37, 40, 41, and 47 - all in vgc with tapes please. Also wanted: any old Zzap 64s, Commodore Forces, Your Commodores, or Commodore Users. All vgc with tapes. Any reasonable offers considered. Call 01427 (Gainsborough) 610912. REF:O

Wanted: Commodore 64 contacts in Cheshire please. Tape or Disk. Leon 01606 861647. REF:J

Wanted! Vic 20 Software/Hardware etc. Contact: Leon, 348, Station Road, Winsford Cheshire CW7 3DG. Tel: 01606 861647. REF:J

COMMODORE - MISC

SIXTY-FOUR! Is an exciting new fanzine dedicated to Commodore 64 computers. It contains all sorts of C64-related material and even comes with a cover disk from issue 3 containing exclusive demos of upcoming games.

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AMSTRAD CPC - WANTED

Protext ROM, Multiface 2, Proprint ROM. Due to an accident mine are now unuseable. Please state price for each. Also help required to add tape facility to CPC6128+ (parts list and detailed instructions please). ABBBA and side switch already working well. JD Murray, 6, Riverside Drive, EGREMONT, Cumbria CA22 2EH REF:H

Games wanted for CPC, tape or disk please. Send your price list to Martin Bela, 11, Colwell Drive, Brookside, Alvaston, Derby DE24 0UP REF:J

DESPERATELY WANTED; an internal 3" drive for my 6128+ (5v). Also Amtix issue 1. Angela in Worthing: 01903 206739 REF:Z

Protext on ROM, and any other Protext series programs on ROM. Will respond to reasonable offers. Also Vidi wanted. Tel: 01502 (Lowestoft) 518773 and ask for Jonathan. REF:L

WANTED: Complete circuit board for 464 (Mk2 condensed version; IO/joystick ports on left side). Independant power supply (5v+12v output), for 6128 used without Amstrad monitor. Megamaths on tape or disc. Vgc daisywheels for Dyneer DW16. Write: Mr N Davies, Flat 1, 39, Broad Street, Newtown, Powys SY16 2BQ REF:N

Wanted **AMSTRAD ACTIONs**. Details of dates, cover tapes and price wanted for each to David Freeman, 24, Sandays Close, The Meadows, NOTTINGHAM NG2 2NP. Can collect within reasonable distance depending on quantity for sale. REF:I

WANTED: **ACU** for Nov '84 to Feb '85, Jun '86 to Oct '86, Sep '87 to Dec '87, April '90, Sep '90. Also **Amstrad Action** 1 and 2 and **Amtix** 1, 3 to 5, and 10 - 14. Also Pre-40 issues of **WACCI**, **CPC User** 1, any issues of **CPC Power**, **CPC Now** from 4 onwards, **Rundschlag** 1-8. Peter Curgenven, *The Hollyar*, Bay Road, Trevone Bay, Near Padstow, Cornwall PL28 8QZ. Tel: 01841 520875 REF:H

Wanted for the Amstrad CPC 6128: these adventures on disc - Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy (Infocom), Ingrid's Back (Level 9), Also wanted, these games on disc - Meltdown (Alligator), Knight Games (English Software), **Amstrad Action** magazines issues 1-7 inclusive. The cover prices offered. Jo Wood, 38, Stonehill Drive, Rooley Moor, ROCHDALE, Lancs OL12 7JN. Telephone: 01706 861185 REF:P

Amstrad Actions 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 - Reasonable price paid. Also the game "Quack-A-Jack" on Tape or Disc. Contact: Mrs. Christine Raisin, 117, Tilbury Rise, Cinderhill, NOTTINGHAM NG8 6DE. Tel: 0115 9765163. REF:N

WANTED: 8 slot ROMBOX for CPC6128. write to: Ray Neal at 56, Houldsworth Crescent, COVENTRY, CV6 4HJ or phone 01203 362063 REF:L

'ROMBO ROMBOX' wanted for original Amstrad CPC 6128. State the price wanted. Apply: Mr RE Hobday, 43, Cody Road, Clapham, BEDFORD, Beds. MK41 6ED REF:P

'DISC BASE' + a manual for CPC. £6 (incl p&p.) RE Hobday, 43, Cody Road, Clapham, BEDFORD, Beds MK41 6ED REF:P

CPC - MISCELLANEOUS

Help needed to repair a Multiface 2 which becomes hot in use and ceases to function. Please contact Matthew on 01684 (Tewkesbury) 274993. Cost to be discussed REF:O

Free PD to all readers of **8BIT**. Adventures, Games, Demos, Slide Shows, for the Amstrad CPC. PD supplied on 3" and 3½" discs. Send SSAE for details and PD list to PD Fun *Folly Farm* Cold Ashton CHIPPENHAM Wilts SN14 8JR. REF:Q

WACCI. If you have a CPC then you need us. Send a 29p stamp to: **WACCI**, 7, Brunswood Green, Hawarden, Deeside, CLWYD CH5 3JA to see what you are missing! REF:T

KING ARTHUR'S DOMAIN is a disc PD Library for the CPC. We have games, utilities, music, clip art, a large selection of CP/M programs and lots

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more. For a catalogue, send a 3" or 3½" disc + SSAE to: **KAD**, *Brympton Cottage*, Brunswick Road, WORTHING, Sussex BN11 3NQ. REF:Z

ARE YOU A FRUSTRATED AMSTRAD CPC USER seeking help and support? Then why not join the **United Amstrad User Group** for a bi-monthly magazine, PD material (small copy charge), concessions and support, all for £8 per annum. Send SSAE to Gordon Wooliscroft, 2, Wrenbeck Drive, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 2BR for details. REF:L

Bonzo's Scrapyard number 12a now available. The newsletter for CPC tape to disc transfers via the **Bonzo** suite of programs. Price - a large SSAE plus an extra 1st class stamp. From: **Bonzo's Scrapyard**, 29, Chapter Road, Strood, ROCHESTER, Kent. ME2 3PX REF:T

GD.PD: The ultimate in PD software at only 25p per disc side (copy charge) for your Amstrad CPC. For the GD.PD list send an SSAE to: Dave Stitson, 6, Connaught Avenue, Mutley, PLYMOUTH, Devon PL4 7BX REF:L

SINCLAIR SPECTRUM - FOR SALE

Spectrum +3 drive belts. £2.45 inc P&P from AJ Howard, 65, Altyre Way, BECKENHAM, Kent BR3 3ED REF:J

Your Spectrum 1-21 - £50; Your Sinclair 1-40 (not 35+38) - £60; Crash - 3,4, 6-56, 59, 60 63, 65, 67 - £85. All good condition incl supplements, posters, tapes etc. Prices incl p&p. Also 5 Comcon programmable joystick interfaces - £11 each incl p&p. Phone Terry 01489 (Southampton) 575319 REF:J 1

20 games inc Exolon, Predator, Rambo 3, Jet Pac, Green Beret. From 75p. SAE to St John Swainson, 7, Upper Hill Rise, RICKMANSWORTH, Herts WD3 2UU REF:I

Spectrum games for sale from 50p each. Send SAE for list to: Pauline Fuller, 4, *Whitehouse Cottages*, Sot's Hole Bank, Holbeach St Matthews, SPALDING, Lincs PE12 8EJ REF:P

Brother HR5 9pin dot matrix printer (mains or battery) including transformer and spare ribbons. Uses FAX or plain paper. £35 or swap for Spectrum +3. Also many 3" disk games. Tel: 0181 427 9119 (Harrow, Middx.) REF:P

ZX81 with power unit, printer, Ram pack and manuals £18 inc p&p. ZX81 books - machine language, electronic projects, programming, pocket book, gateway guide and ZX companion £1.50 each inc p&p Derek 01745 (DENBIGH) 730498 REF:N

Alphacom 32 printer £15 + p&p. Multiface 3 £15. Datel Joystick interface £5. ZX81 16k Ram pack £5. Phone Eifion 01745 (Abergele) 832122 after 6pm. REF:L

The 'Soccer Mania' compilation by Addictive (Microprose/Empire) for +3 on 2 3" discs comprising Football Manager II, Football Manager World Cup Edition, Microprose Soccer and Gazza's Super Soccer. £5 from **8BIT**, *Harrowden*,39, High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA REF:K

SINCLAIR SPECTRUM - WANTED

WANTED: a manual for a Spectrum +3. Please send the price/expenses asked to: Mr D Williams, 32/34, Carfin Street, New Stevenston, MOTHERWELL, Scotland ML1 4JL or Tel: 01698 732403 REF:P

Wanted for Spectrum +3 Multiface3. Willing to pay a good price. Also a copy of Zulu Wars on tape or disc. Willing to buy or swap for any games I may have of interest. Please contact Peter Stevens, 41, Nelson Street, Rosyth, FIFE KY11 2JU. Phone: 01383 419075 REF:P

Wanted: Any back issues and/or the covertapes of **Sinclair User and** Your **Sinclair**. Write with prices required to Nicholas Campbell 24 Ballyminstragh Road, Killinchy, Newtownards, Co Down, N Ireland, BT23 6RE REF: J

Does anyone have a +D or Disciple interface for sale? Oh, and I'd still like a Sinclair flat screen TV. Phone Eifion 01745 (Abergele) 332122 after 6pm. REF:L

WANTED FOR SPECTRUM. Any old platform and ladder games. Also any second-hand SAM software. Write to: John Turner, 58, Burnside, PARBOLD, Lancs WN8 7PE REF:I

THE SOLE SURVIVING 8-BIT TOWN? By Leon Bebbington

The chances are that wherever there is an 8-bit computer which is, or seems to be, really popular, there is a stockist which caters for it, and such towns do exist - don't be fooled by what your friends say, 8-bits *are* out there (as is 'the truth', if **The X-Files** is to be believed-BW) . Such a town is close to me; Crewe seems to have a really big following for many 8-bit systems, mainly the Spectrum, C64, and Amstrad CPC464 and 6128; not surprising as they are the main 8-bit computers. But is there a good stockist nearby? Yes, indeed!

High Street Micros, which is located just outside Crewe town centre, is *the* 8-bit stockist. It has stock for CBM16/+4, Vic 20, Atari 2600, MSX, CBM 64/128 (yes, even 128 stuff, although it's limited), ZX81, Amstrad CPCs, Spectrums, SAM Coupés, and PCWs (have I left any out?). "OK," you may say, "I bet they have all their 8-bit stock hidden away, don't they?" Well, you'll be totally wrong. When entering the shop you'll be instantly hit by huge stock of C64 tapes, and next to that you'll see the CPC stuff. Look further along and you'll see some Amiga games, and directly across from that you'll see the Spectrum stock. The PCW stock is underneath the computers on show, as well as the Atari 2600 and CBM 16/+4 stuff. Also on display downstairs are C64 cartridge games. For the CPC and C64/128 disk stuff, you'll have to go upstairs, but again, there's simply loads of stuff up there.

The stock for the other computers I've mentioned is also upstairs, as well as hardware, new C128/64, Spectrums, SAM Coupé (yes, you can actually buy new SAMs there), Amstrads and much more. **High Street Micros** offer good prices on their stock, with games from £1 upwards. There is also hardware and support, and a repair service. The great thing about **High Street** is they've stuck with the 8-bits through thick and thin, and it's paid off. The C64 seems to be the 8-bit that is doing the best (in terms of stock sold per week) just behind it, and ahead of the Atari ST, is the 16-bit competitor the Amiga, with the Spectrum next best profitable 8-bit. Who in their right mind would give up the 8-bit market when it's still proving to be profitable?

So what's in it for you lot? A good quality, cheap and efficient service. They *may* also send you items through the mail. Try asking. Phone: 01270 58094. The shop is at: 18 High Street, CREWE, Cheshire and don't forget to mention **8Bit** when enquiring or visiting. 01270 - 580964

Thanks for that, Leon. I have found a shop called One Step Beyond, located behind Jarrold's department store in Norwich. They handle a lot of remaindered and second-hand computer gear, including a good range of 8-bit stuff.

While we're on the subject of good 8-bit stockists, have you discovered Cash Converters yet? This group have a rapidly growing chain of shops who buy and sell second-hand computers (among other things). I bought a disk drive for my C64 for £15 and recently bought a Spanish keyboard for a CPC464 (weird) which was sold with a CTM 644 colour monitor as supplied with a CPC6128 for just £20. There have been all sorts of 8-bit kit at almost boot sale prices. The down side is that they are probably not going to give you much if you have something to sell.

They are growing fast but so far have shops in Ashton-under-Lyne, Barking (Essex), Blackpool, Bournemouth, Bradford, Cambridge, Camden, Carlisle, Chatham, Colchester, Coventry, Dagenham, Dudley, Dunstable, Edmonton, Enfield, Erdington, Fenstanton (Cambs), Gants Hill, Harlow, Havant, High Wycombe, Holloway, Hove, Hull, KIlburn, Lewisham, Luton, Northampton, Peterborough, Slough, Stoke on Trent, Wallasey, Walthamstow, Worksop. That should be enough to be going on with until they open next door to you!

WoW SOFTWARE
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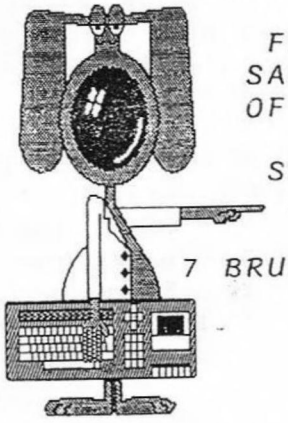

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All quotes from 8Bit.

For your copy send a 3" disc + £1 to: Brian Leahy, St.Mary's Road, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan, IRELAND.

HOME PUBLISHING - Part 2 The means of production.

Last time, in the first part of this series, I suggested you do research in the area in which you live for variations in what will be your production costs, including paper, envelopes, photocopying (or costs of other forms of duplicating), printer supplies. If you make notes in your style book, you will have information readily to hand on *your* production options.

If Home Publishing on any scale is to be a regular computer use for you, there are five principal elements to consider investing in:

1) The computer and its related hardware
2) The software
3) The medium in which the finished work will appear
4) The printer/duplicating equipment to make multiple copies

This is now getting into a potentially sensitive area. 8-bit computers simply cannot achieve the heights of sophistication of, say, an Apple Mac. It is self-evident that they have neither the software nor memory to achieve photographic-quality reproduction. However, by selecting appropriate elements is is possible to get a very acceptable finished item for most purposes. Let us consider these elements in turn.

1) The Computer and its related hardware.

I do not expect to change anybody's computer allegiance with this series. Start from where you are, with what you have, and see what you can do to improve your existing set-up. If you are going to do a lot of this kind of work, you will really need the speed of a disc drive, and preferably two (to minimise disc swaps when compiling page elements), and as much memory as you can afford - but only if the program you choose to use can take advantage of it. A virtual drive, such as the PCW's drive M will speed up the operation as will an accelerator such as Sprinter.

If a second, similar, machine becomes available this can be valuable as a 'try-out' platform to preview text or page layout in development or as a dumb dedicated printer driver; it is amazing how much time can be wasted waiting while the computer is frozen during a print-out session. For most 8-bit computers, this 'second machine' option is now generally cheaper than the purchase of a printer buffer, which soaks up the feed from the computer, then passes it on to the printer while the computer is freed up for another task, such as typing in more text. Some programs can emulate the presence of a printer buffer by doing background printing, that is - use part of the computer's memory or create temporary files to restore access to the keyboard quicker. This can give the impression that the computer is doing more than one thing at once. It isn't, but the effect is virtually the same. CP/M Protext on the PCW and CPC is an example of a word processor which uses temporary files to get you back to the keyboard sooner. Protext, through its Promerge component, can keep two files in memory at the same time. While preparing text this is invaluable for keeping notes in one file and the main work piece in the other.

Some DTP programs are most easily used with a mouse, but just as some games players prefer a joystick and others prefer keys, this is generally a matter of taste rather than necessity. If you do choose the rodent route, do research in your computer press to see which mouse is the right one for you and your chosen program. Also make sure you take care of the little rascal; there are few things more frustrating in computing terms than a gummy, fluffy, jerky mouse ball.

Scanners are a very useful accessory if you can buy, or get the use of, one for inputting your own choice of artwork. The hand-held versions, preferably steadied

in a guide tray, are also worth considering if your software can support one. I saw some images recently which were scanned onto a PC disc using a flatbed scanner, then converted to Microdesign format for use on a PCW. Very good, but the price of an office flatbed scanner? Don't ask! In terms of the quality which can be achieved, this is definitely an area for experimentation to find the optimum way of using the equipment you have available. Generally, line drawings scan in better than subtly shaded, coloured or intrically-patterned images and be aware you may get distortion in one direction or another, particularly at the print-out stage. If this is due to using a picture on a thin medium, consider using mounting spray to fix it to a stiffer piece of paper or card. Alternatively, temporarily hold it between sheets of glass if there is sufficient adjustment under the scanner head.

2) The software

You may not need a DTP program to achieve your objectives. A decent word processor will be able to send text to the printer in a wide range of sizes and styles, typically from subscript/superscript to about quad times (4 times higher by 4 times wider than) your largest standard typeface or font, even if it may not be able to reproduce it in the same way on the computer screen. Depending on your printer you may also be able to get other print styles, such as outline or shadow effects. Remember your first principles; too many fonts on a page can be overpowering and obscure the message you are trying to convey. I have just started to use a DTP program to produce the masthead for **8BIT**. The display adverts and the pictures in the Xmas '94 edition were produced separately then physically cut and pasted onto the page before photocopying.

Bear in mind too that word processors print out *a lot* faster than any DTP program's output. Printing out the supplementary, more disposable, sheets in **8BIT** is much cheaper than photocopying as the pages are pure print. I can get photocopying done for 7p per double-sided A3 sheet, the equivalent cost for two sheets of double-sided A4 is 3p + the ink - no contest if I can afford the time, *my printer's* time, to do the supplements myself.

If you *are* to use a DTP program, check around the home published magazines and look critically at their appearance. Then try to find out which program, or programs, brought them to the page. This is an area where a lot of money can be saved or wasted so be sure you know what the various options are. Can the software produce an A4 page (or larger) in one go? Do you need it to? What is the quality of definition and the availability of pictures in the formats it handles. Can it produce really large letters (and numbers) if this is a feature you will need? Can it produce an output to drive your colour, or wide-carriage, printer if you have one? Write a list of your requirements and be really critical, reading every review you can find and try to get all, or as much as you can of the information you will need for your purposes.

Once you feel you have the facts together get the best program you can afford which meets your requirement. Buying second-hand may save you money but many publishers offer a support service in terms of upgrades, clip-art discs, and a helpline to customers who buy their programs new. Again, something to check before parting with the money.

One last detail before finishing; some 3rd-party suppliers do add-on utilities to boost programs' basic functions. These can include improved printer drivers (for speed and/or quality), the importing of graphics into word processors, and enhanced format conversion capabilities for turning one type of picture into another. Some otherwise very good DTP programs need this. It is also possible to take text and images from one computer and convert them use them with another.

The next part will deal with the medium for your finished work, and printers.

RECENT READING

AFTER DARK Issue 1. This is a 64page A4 magazine, primarily for CPC users, but also having a go at being a multi-computer format publication. At times this idea runs away with itself; there is a review of 'Cosmic Carnage' where the format is given as "not known."

The binding is rather unusual. It appears the pages of the magazine have been compiled then the spine dipped in glue. While this works well at first I am concerned that it might not be durable in the longer term and there is a lot in the magazine to encourage keeping for later reference. The thought occurs to me that if the cover alone is wrapped around A3 with A4 inserted pages, the whole thing could suffer from a nasty case of fall-out. However it is one step up from **8BIT** where some of the inserts are *designed* to fall out.

Because of its use of a Star colour printer to give a variety of ink colours throughout, each magazine needs to be individually printed off, so I assume the editor Jonty Jones has a lot of time at his disposal and a bottomless pit of money for the ribbons. These cost about £4 each and require frequent replacement to maintain peak performance.

As to content, this comprises all the usual range: editorial and articles, type-ins, pokes and game help, reviews, letters, competitions, adverts, also long interviews with Angela Cook and others, Watchdog (a computing version of Lynn Ffolds-Paper's consumer programme) a page on printers, and even a piece of stream-of-conciousness poetry. Jonty has a couple of related projects on the go; there is an optional cover tape/disc, a handful of home-brew programs, an After Dark newsletter, and among many other projects a Di$k Zine described as "not for the faint-hearted."

The spelling is appalling in places, and Jonty knows that, but the overall quality and content is fine. If he can keep up the amount of work neded to fill 64 pages the future will be rosy. After Dark comes from 41, Westmoreland Avenue, Newbiggin by-the-sea, Northumberland, NE64 6RN. Send £1.50 plus a 29p A4 SAE for a copy.

BETTER THAN LIFE 2. Not reading in the usual, or indeed *any* at times, sense but I have been sent two copies of the 2nd issue of Better Than Life, the CPC disczine. One came from Angela Cook and the other from the BTL's editor, Richard Fairhurst. He is the genius who programmed the amazing RoutePlanner, so it comes as no surprise to find the coding of the disc results in a very professional presentation of it in all respects, even if I haven't figured out all the subtleties of the menu system yet. Just dim, I suppose.

BTL is irreverent and right on the nose in describing the current situation of the CPC and, by extension, most other 8-bit computers. Try this for a quote; "the CPC is no good for serious games-playing action, it's not powerful enough for decent word-processing, DTP, number-crunching, whatever. It is good for those stuck well behind the cutting edge of technology with only basic needs ..... and as a fun enthusiasts' machine, which is the market BTL caters for." Cruel but fair, I think.

The first copy was widely rubbished in the Amstrad press (professional and amateur) for its libellous comments, spiteful remarks and rude words. Do you know, I don't think they care very much?

They are quite unconstrained by unreasonable primness, and BTL has a good hard poke at some of the stuffier corners of the CPC-using community. I don't know if all their 'facts' are accurate, but anyone sticking their head up as a 'public figure' should not be surprised if they cop a custard pie from time to time. Just a custard pie, not a bullet. Actually, **8BIT** comes out rather well - I can't wait for the next issue.

As an antidote to most of the puerile twaddle which typifies most fanzines, I heartily commend BTL for its adult twaddle. It's still rude, but no more than you'd hear in most playgrounds. For a copy of BTL2 send a 3" disc, a label with your name and address on it, and the return postage, in a jiffy bag which has been stapled shut to ChaRleyTroniC, (aka Richard Fairhurst), 2, Trent Road, OAKHAM, Rutland LE15 6AF or you could try most good PD libraries. PS: Can I come to your next get-together? I'll bring an opinion.

EMULATOR HEAVEN (OR HELL?) By Mike Mee

Welcome to the first in a new series for 8BIT magazine. These articles are for those of you who have either bought up a PC and still hanker after the good-old days of the 8-bits, or have sold all their old equipment and want to get back into the swing of things on a machine they (often) knew like the back of their hand.

I got into emulators whilst I was doing a HND in Computing at college. In the second year, our college got proper Internet access (previously we were only allowed ASCII connections) and the world of FTP (File Transfer Protocol) and free downloading yielded emulators by the bucketful. By the end of my course I had amassed a fair amount of emulators, software for them and much more besides.

In February of this year, between myself and a friend, we released a CD-ROM for the PC, which contained the majority of the emulators listed in the table below. We are working on the next edition and welcome help from anyone who wishes to contribute to the CD-ROM. We are especially looking for PD libraries who can supply their disks for inclusion on the CD-ROM, and in return we shall give the PD library a nice big plug as well as a hefty discount on the CD-ROM when it is released (hopefully around Christmas 1995).

This first article will explain what emulators are (in a very general outline) and which machines they cover, which machines you can run them on, and finally, how complete they are. By this, I mean how complete in a software sense they are, there is no way that you can connect your Expert Cartridge to the back of a PC and expect the emulator to react to this intrusion - although your PC might complain a little.

The table should help explain things. I apologise on the outset for the PC-bias of the table, but I do not know exactly what other emulators exist for other machines, until I read more recent FAQs from various 'net sites around the world.

The reason for such high-spec machines are that these emulators are converting every single instruction your old machine used to perform and making them into PC-equivalents, and all this in the usual timeframe to allow perfect synchronisation. Some emulators refuse to work on lower spec machines, whereas some will, but the emulation is then slower than the speed of the original machine.

Emulator	8-Bit Machine(s)	Minimum PC req.
CPC Emulator v1.3a	Amstrad CPC464,664 & 6128	486SX-25 SB
X-Former v2.52 (a)	Atari 800,800XL,130XE	386DX-40
Z80 v3.03 (b)	Spectrum 48K & 128K	386DX-40 SB
Executor	Apple Macintosh	386DX-40
Psion Emulator	Psion Series 3	386DX-40
Apple Em	Apple IIe	386DX-40
MSX	MSX	386DX-40
PC Dragon	Dragon 32/64 & Coco.	386DX-40 SB
TI-Emu	Texas TI	386DX-40
PC-64	Commodore 64	486SX-25 SB
Euphoric	Oric-1 & Oric Atmos	486SX-25
Extender	ZX-81	386DX-40

SB = Soundblaster compatible card for music emulation
(a) = Commercial version available - includes sound and enhanced memory (£30)
(b) = Commercial version available - includes variable speed, +D/Disciple emulation and more (£20)

To be continued in the next issue of 8BIT.

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THE COMMODORE PAGE

As you may have seen elsewhere in **8BIT**, Russ Michaels' **Electric Boys** has moved to 2a, Woolaston Road, Harringay, LONDON N4 1JE. I had quite a long chat with Russ a few days ago and he seems very happy with the change.

Now he's settling in, why not test the new system by ordering a copy of **Commodore World** which he is importing from the States? It's much better than ... what was that magazine called? ... and should make you want to spend a bit *more* dosh with EBES. They certainly deserve it for continuing to support the C64 so well.

Commodore World costs £4.45 per copy including postage or £35 per year. You may think that's a lot, but for a quid over the price of ... oh, what *was* it called? ... you will be getting a much better magazine which doesn't blow away if you read it by an open window.

* * * *

Another new C64 magazine arrived just too late for coverage in the last issue of **8BIT**. It's called **Computer** Scene and it comes from Richard PA Bowen. 35, Nottingham Road, Nuthall, Nottingham, Notts N16 1DN.

Each one comes in a clear A4 plastic pocket which results in a rather unusual presentation, but is quite handy for storage in a ring binder, should you wish to. Or perhaps Richard is a plastic pocket salesman in his spare time?

The copy I was sent rather suffered from the dreaded 'issue 1' syndrome; rather a lot of white spaces and several promises of more real content next time as long as the readers come up with the contributions, of editorial that is. More on this later in the column.

Nevertheless, there are lots of useful C64 contact addresses, including some European ones for a change, as well as game reviews and a couple of puzzle pages, all tarted up with very clearly reproduced artwork. My only real criticisms of it are the font chosen for the words **Computer Scene** in the front and the fact that I think he should call it **C64 Computer Scene**, as that is what it is and nothing to be ashamed of.

In short, if Richard *can* motivate contributors, he has the basis for a good magazine.

From issue 2 the price of **Computer** Scene is £1 and you could do a lot worse than giving it a go.

* * * *

It is a strange phenomenon but the world is divided into two distinct types of people; do-ers and consumers.

The do-ers are the enthusiasts, the activists, and they stay up till all hours do-ing flower arranging, do-ing DIY, do-ing home publishing, do-ing *anything* to keep busy.

Then there are the consumers, never content until they have all there is to have on a particular topic. They may collect cacti, cheese rinds or back issues of that old Commodore magazine Future used to publish; .... erm ...., well anyway, you know the one. Not that they will read these back issues - they just have to *have* them for personal security.

Something life has taught me is that consumers do not become do-ers, nor vice versa very often. People either turn out to attend boot fairs or they have to be running a stall. You see the difference?

This month I have had a lot more than the usual ration of new magazines hoping to cut a swathe through the existing fanzine market, and most of their editor/publishers are looking for like-minded do-ers to write for them. The problem is that these hoped for writers all see themselves as would-be editors.

And if they don't they are consumers, and bless 'em, because without them the do-ers wouldn't have an audience, or market if that is the better way to think of them. But if the editors (do-ers all) expect there to be a queue of good and willing contributors experience shows that unfortunately they will be out of luck.

COMING SOON TO 8BIT

All the stuff from all the kind contributors who have not yet see their contributions in print. I'm sorry, even in the biggest 8BIT yet there wasn't room.

THE LEGAL STUFF

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The advertising section is the best place for appeals for (or offers of) help, and I assume that permission to publish is implied with any letter received unless otherwise stated.

All facts and information in 8BIT are published on the basis that they are believed true at the time of publication. No liability can be accepted by Brian Watson or other contributors for any loss or damage, however caused. So mind how y go, I'm doing my best! I am careful to try to supply a realistic value to any hunch, belief, opinion, rumour or fact but clangers can still happen. So, "Sorry, and please tell me if/when it happens so that I can set the record straight."

MUMPITZ

Informationen für Kleinrechner-Benutzer

Können Sie doitsch?

Then you might benefit from reading MUMPITZ, which covers most 8bit computers and their emulators on Amiga and PC. MUMPITZ (= nonsense or rubbish) tests new products developed by german tinkers and gives tips for data interchange between the different systems and hints for the conversion of graphic formats. You will also find circuit diagrams for (new) hardware expansions.

MUMPITZ is a monthly mag and gratis (a kind of *papër shareware* - international reply coupons are welcome). For a test copy write to

Hans-Christof Tuchen, Lotzestr.10, D-12205 Berlin

Bonzo's Scrapyard

The occasional newsletter for Amstrad CPC tape to disc transfers

29 Chapter Road, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3PX

Bonzo's Scrapyard, the tape to disc transfer information newsletter, using the Bonzo suite of programs, published quarterly, is available now from the above address. To receive a copy, send an A5 or A4 sized SSAE, plus an additional first class stamp.

The Bonzo programs are now on sale again

The following Bonzo related programs, which between them transfer over 1400 programs from tape to disc, are available exclusively from Bonzo's Scrapyard:

1 Bonzo Super Meddler and Hackpack

2 Bonzo Blitz (for Speedlock programs) and 4 adventure games written by Colin Harris

3 Bonzo's Flashpack (Flash Basic Utilities and Demos)

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5 Maxidos and CPC Procopy

All the above are on 3 inch disc and cost £8.50 per disc, including P&P.

Also available is the MS800 big format program, this is supplied on 3.5 inch disc and costs £6.50, including P&P.

All the above programs available from the end of September 1995, please make cheques etc. payable to Mr D. A. Caleno.