

8BIT

THE MAGAZINE FOR ALL 8-BIT COMPUTER USERS

Issue 18

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EDITOR'S COLUMN - ISSUE 18

Well, it's showtime again.

The Autumn Northern SAM and Spectrum Show in Wetherby and the annual WACCI show for CPC users at Walsall have already passed, and on the 25th October the Spectrum and SAM show organised by Bob Brenchley of Format takes place in Quedgeley near Gloucester. The AMS show takes place in November.

All of these are for users of *our* computers, putting the lie to the fact that there are only enough supporters of (fill in computer name according to prejudice) left to fill a phone box.

Also the all-formats shows usually have some items of interest for us among the trays of PC PD utility and shareware game disks.

Of course it *would* be very convenient if they were in the next town to you, but the fact is they probably are not.

One correspondent said he couldn't *possibly* afford to travel from Sheffield to Walsall, despite logging on to a newsgroup at least four times a week with a computer which probably cost an amount approaching the national debt of a third world country. Who's a tightwad?

Keen-eyed readers will notice that this issue is denuded: it has no **Shorts**. Apart from the fact that an English Autumn is no time for shorts, a surplus of articles left no room. Fairly normal service will be resumed next issue.

Oh, by the way, have a very Happy Christmas, all.

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Introduction

This article was inspired by a brainstorming writers' weekend I attended about six months ago with eleven other writers. It was a fairly intense affair at times but also very stimulating, enlightening, and inspirational. We were a real mixed bunch, from newcomer to old hand, but we all obtained at least some of our living from writing and found we could all bring something worthwhile to the sessions.

One of our principal conclusions at the end of the two and a half days was that, from our collective experiences, there is no one 'right' way to ensure one's work turns into money. However, there are some worthwhile common guidelines and short cuts which can improve your chances. I have the notes of the weekend by my elbow and will re-present them here in a way which I hope is useful to 8BIT readers who are also potential new writers and want to know whether their present computer set-up disqualifies them.

Before you Start

There are some basic things which must be in place if the whole venture is not to be a waste of your, and other people's, time.

It will sound obvious but to succeed you must be a writer; that is to say, like any vocation you must really have a *need* to do it. The only other similar example I know well is the need to perform which drives actors, but I can see that the same spirit which compels sportsmen and women is much the same force of nature at work.

Without 'the need' you may still write and obtain much personal satisfaction from it, but perhaps you should lower your sights in terms of throwing a lot of time and expense at it as a viable career option. As a couple of examples, the fan and computer club magazines are good for liaising with editors and practising writing a specified number of words within a deadline. If fiction is your preferred category, look out for opportunities in parish or other local magazines. You probably will not be paid for these early efforts but the experience will be priceless.

You should also have an ability to communicate. If you find that when you talk at parties and other social events more people tend to stay to listen rather than drift away from you this is a good early indicator that what you write will hold an audience because you are putting your words over in a way they like. Assuming you don't have a boring voice (and how self-critical can you be?) if people drift, it may be that your life skills lie in other areas than writing.

Part of having control of an ability to communicate is having a good command of your vocabulary and style. Depending on your chosen subject, this may be quite general or can be very specialist in nature: **The Times** as compared to **The Sun**, for example. The most important thing is that you write appropriately to the job.

I don't get many complaints about the writing style of 8BIT but this may be because I think I know when I am breaking the 'rules' and I do not do it unless it is to make a point. The word 'rules' is in quotes because part of English's richness as a world language is that it is constantly developing, and the conventions of its grammar are therefore open to change too. While this can infuriate those of us who were on the receiving end of a 'classical' education it is the case (and always has been) that the language is in constant flux. The old grammatical mainstays are now only as true as people find them effective in communication with their peers.

As an example, take the famous old chestnut about not splitting infinitives; 'to go boldly' supposedly being preferable to 'to boldly go'. Using the former when writing for a group of Trekkers would be completely inappropriate to your audience.

Surprisingly, spelling now seems far less of a barrier to acceptance by an editor. You *may* not know the difference between 'assure' and 'insure' but if you use a good spelling checker to keep 'asure' and 'inssure' at bay, the editor will generally pick up and correct the odd wrong usage without complaint, as long as there are not too many of them and the piece is worthwhile otherwise. However, you really must proof-read your own work before you submit it; stupid mistakes can easily be put right to improve the impression your work creates. If you find this a problem, ask someone else to read it for you.

Regardless of your chosen subject, the old typewriter is now largely a relic as far as writers are concerned. At my recent writers' forum, we found that the only authors still getting away with using one were the most successful ones! Only *they* had the clout to make demands on their editors. Otherwise, it is a PC and Mac world.

What this means in practice is that you can use *any* computer (this means that it can be your favourite 8-bit, of course) to produce the text, but it should be capable of being transferred as plain, reformattable, ASCII to a 3½" PC format disk before you send it off. Fancy fonts are definitely not what a publisher wants from you and getting rid of them would be wasting his time. As a program suite for your professional writing you will need a fast, efficient, 'text grinder' word processor, a spelling checker with an expandable dictionary to use with it, and a utility to transfer your 8-bit text to a 3½" PC disk. At the time of writing, DD 720k or HD 1.44Meg disks are both generally acceptable.

Once accepted, the publisher will enhance your text file appropriately so as to conform to their house style as required for printing. As a matter of courtesy, I always send a paper copy of the piece with the disk too. Some publishers still have all submissions retyped, but that is for them to decide; I give them the option. I personally prefer to have a hard copy by me when editing a piece on screen to fit a column or a page in 8BIT.

All the various standard ways for laying the text out (margins, line spacing, etc), depending whether it is a play, film script, article or whatever, are covered in the standard writers' reference works. The shelves of better bookshops and the larger libraries are well stocked with books on writing and there are a couple of publications which support the budding writer (see reading list at the end).

I have mixed feelings about participation in writers' circles. The best of them are really *led* by professional writers who can teach and manage a class as well as knowing how to write. The worst of them (and I have attended a few of these too) are critical only in the negative sense, with ill-informed self promoters knocking others' efforts rather than constructively providing support based on experience.

However, attending even the worst type of group can incidentally be informative (and occasionally very funny) as you will find yourself among a number of diverse characters for close observation and later incorporation into your fiction writing!

Despite all this apparent help, it can still be very difficult to actually break through and get paid for one's work. If you are to book long periods of isolation with just the computer, a cup of your chosen brew, and your muse for company, you will need a campaign plan for the battle to become a paid writer.

Picking your Subject

Writing poetry for reward is outside my experience and, I hear from colleagues, presents its own challenges in terms of getting into print. As a general statement, it appears that many editors assume that the compulsion to write is strongest in poets and therefore they can manage on a lower payment rate per page (if any). I shall therefore restrict my principal suggestions here to the broad categories of 'factual', 'general fiction' and 'plays' prose.

1) Factual articles

These *always* need to be well researched, even it is a topic you think you know well. You need to ensure the facts match your opinions. Before you start it would be as well to see who will be prepared to pay you for the time you are to invest in the project. This, then, is the real crunch point of 'breaking in' to writing for money.

One thing all the writers at the forum agreed upon was that *who* you know counts *at least as much* as *what* you know. Consequently, much of the trick of being a successful writer is getting to know these 'right people' without becoming a pest. Often this 'right person' will be called 'the editor' or the 'features editor', but in the case of some publishers it may be the 'commissioning editor'. Phone the front desk to get the appropriate person's name then send a letter proposing a feature.

When contacting potential new outlets I always start the letter with the phrase "Dear (Mr or Mrs whoever), I am a writer..", as I reckon that if I don't believe it enough to begin a letter with it there is no reason why he or she should fall for it. If you are not yet a published writer in a professional sense, there is no need to lie. Keep to my chosen phrase and reconcile it with your conscience by the knowledge that you write, so you are a writer. By the time you come to offer work for money you should have some amateur work under your belt to which you can refer.

Go on to mention *briefly* any previous work which has been as closely relevant as possible to that of the target publication. The whole sentence might read "I am a writer whose work on ??? has been widely published".

As you see, if the place(s) where it was published is not sufficiently prestigious, I suggest you simply leave the title(s) out. Next, offer the piece with the words, "I have considerable knowledge of/experience with ??? and would like to offer you a piece on it for publication in (title of magazine). If you are interested, please contact me with your requirements on (phone number)." Do not mention page or word rate at this stage, but get a target figure in mind from your reference books. **The Writers and Artists Yearbook** is particularly good for this. Post the letter with a first class stamp and mark the calendar five working days later with a note to follow up the letter with a phone call if, or rather when, you have not had a response.

This follow up contact is the first 'big one'; your brief chance to establish a relationship with someone who may give you continuing (and increasing) amounts of money for your words. So, prepare. Have a printed copy of the letter by you and notes to ask about (1) the number of words wanted (2) the deadline, which you will better by at least two weeks, of course, (3) whether copy on paper and/or PC disk is required, and (4) "how much am I going to get paid?".

Don't even *ask* whether they can work from an 8-bit computer's disk if you want to be taken seriously. You and I know may they are the mutt's nuts but don't expect an editor to share your viewpoint. And the last thing you want at this stage of your potentially blossoming relationship is an argument with him about it.

Once you know how many words are required you can raise the big topic with, "What is your rate per hundred words?" The likely response is an offer of a flat fee for the article. Some people are better negotiators than others, but unless you are confident to handle this and risk losing the first job you should take the offer and be grateful. You can negotiate for better next time once you have proved your worth.

If the response to the request is something like, "I'm sorry, we don't have a freelancers' budget", don't give up. I have had success with, "I appreciate that, but I *am* a professional writer and I am sure you would find the article an asset. How about £100 per page, payable on publication, for *this* piece if you use it, then we can talk about it again if you want a follow up piece?"

If he counters with an offer of, say, £75 I suggest you accept it. This 'Pay on publication' is standard practice. You should issue a printed invoice and send it to the editor (or wherever else they request) the day your work appears in print.

Having got your first commission and started to build a business relationship with one publication, do the research, complete the article in good time and send the disk and paper copy in with a letter confirming the terms in a reasonably conversational way, but be brief and to the point. *Keep a copy of each yourself.* You may or may not get the disk back but make sure you clearly label it with your name, address, and phone number, the title of the article, and the relevant file name.

When you issue the invoice is a good time to include a brief letter suggesting a follow-up piece, thus restarting the round of contact with your publisher.

If you have not been paid by the end of the month during which the article appears, send a statement and a letter referring to your previous offer of a follow-up. A phone call five working days later, regardless of whether you have been paid, is the best way to keep the ball rolling. *Depending* whether you have been paid, you should open the conversation with (1) the proposed article or (2) reference to the payment. Either "thank you for the cheque for the piece I did for you on ???" as appropriate or "I don't seem to have received the cheque for the piece I did for you on ???".

In either case, don't forget to try and get acceptance of the next job. I *never* submit a new piece until I have been paid for the previous one, it's just throwing good work (and money) after bad.

2) General fiction

The general process of getting fiction into print for money is much the same as for factual pieces, except that you will usually already have the work, the fruits of your imagination, virtually complete when you open negotiations.

For this reason you will have an actual product for sale rather than offering yourself as a 'pen' for hire and may include a synopsis with your letter. I would never bid for a series to start with, the gamble for the editor is too great. Rather go for an approach with a short story and make your reputation with that. You will find reputable editors more inclined to prefer a short submission as an assessment piece too. Otherwise the technique is much the same as for non-fiction.

3) Plays

This is another case where you will generally have to do most of the donkey work before 'making the pitch' to someone who will give you money for your work. Whether it is intended for the stage, radio or TV, I would strongly recommend that you try to persuade a local amateur drama group to take on your play and work on it with you before you submit it for publication. This gives you a chance to get the bugs out and local groups are usually quite flattered to be asked to help with the process.

A play reading, with the cast sitting in a circle, is a useful preliminary. If you can get suitable ages and voices this is a plus, but not essential. This should be followed by a walk through, guided by the group's director (who should have some 'vision' for interpreting the written word) in an area which approximates to the preferred performance area.

Personally, I always arrange one of these with someone else at hand to follow the script and make the amendments according to what comes out of this rudimentary performance as I watch what the director brings out. Rarely, there may be no errors to correct, just improvements to note. But usually things will be found which can be put right at this stage.

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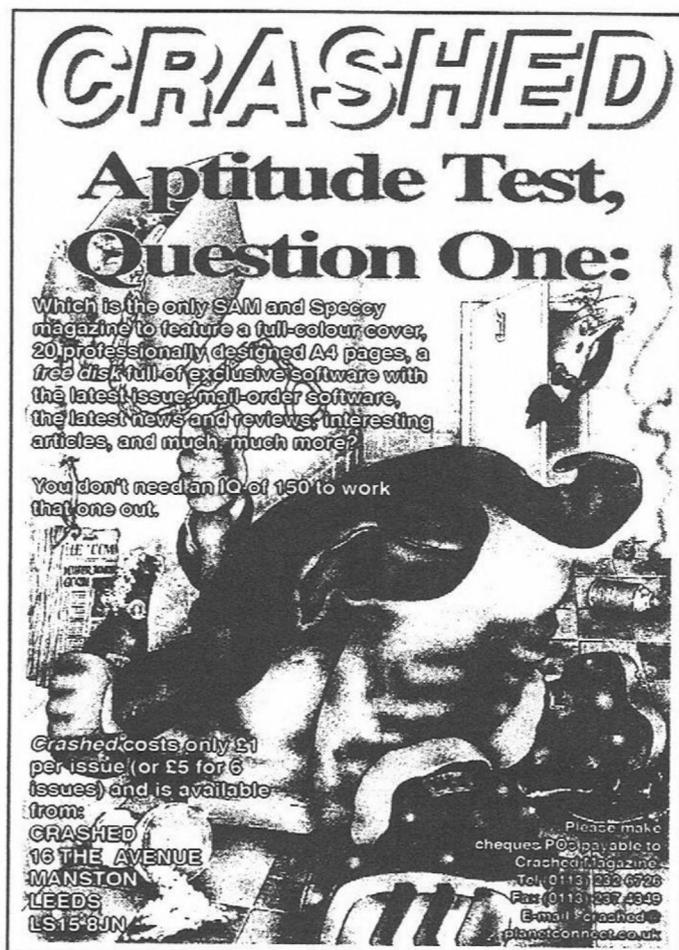
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The next step is to move to a full production. Directors, me included, generally welcome the presence of the writer to modify passages as required in ways which are consistent with the style of the rest of the play. However, do not be too intrusive as the production of a play takes place in the Director's domain, for good or ill. You may finish up with two quite different versions of the play; the director's (for this performance) and yours (for later publication). This happened to Shakespeare so don't get too bothered about it! All I would say is, try to keep each of the two versions well documented as you go and you will know what the standard published version should contain by the time you reach the final night of the run.

The next step towards publication is to try for a run of the play in a provincial professional theatre. This will probably involve a mixture of amateur and some professional players and technicians, all working with a director who will be working for a relatively small fee. Again, building a good relationship is a useful preliminary and in this case I would phone up during the day and ask for an appointment with the theatre's director.

These people are key to the process and are generally pleased to discuss the chance of putting on a play from an original script as long as it will put bums on seats and pay its way. So don't be greedy, and accept any amount over £100 gracefully. Remember, you are building a career towards greater rewards. Assuming this production goes well, and take every chance to see it rehearsed and performed, you can then prepare it for submission to an appropriate publisher of plays. This is well covered in the standard literature.

The different style requirements of writing for radio (which in nearly all cases means the BBC) are also covered well in the literature and are generally handled best through specialist writers' agents. They will have the personal relationships to get through the Corporation's front door on your behalf, but will expect a fee for doing this.

As far as television and film scripts go, the creation of a shooting script is a quite different technique to that for theatre performance. My strong suggestion, based on conversations with a couple of successful screen writers, would be to stick with writing for the stage until you need an agent to handle all your work and are confident to let him or her put your script in the appropriate hands and handle all the negotiations over rights etc.

Once you've 'made it' by being published once

Once you have been accepted by a publisher you need to keep up the momentum with your first publisher and start working on new ones. You can now refer to your previous work when canvassing for more, and gently try to tease the price up. As a matter of pride, I *never* take a drop. It has only come close to happening to me once, and I decided then that I would rather move to another similar publisher who would pay a reasonable rate for the same job with a slightly different slant.

Writing for a living on a semi-professional basis is certainly no joyride, but if you feel that irresistible compulsion you might as well be properly paid for it.

Further reading:

Writers and Artists Year Book, Writers News and virtually any guide will help you. If you are on the verge of buying an annual reference book it is a good idea to ask whether a new edition is due within a few weeks. If it is; wait until it is published. Your library will carry many guides and let you borrow them before you decide whether to add them to your bookshelves. As a rule, I suggest you avoid those which appear as part of a series of "How To.." books on a wide variety of subjects.

Brian Watson

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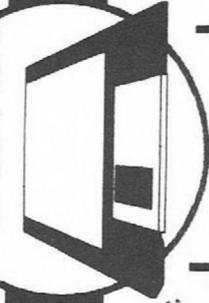
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All the News That Fits, And Some That

RoutePlanner PCW ready to ship

Yes it is and, to prove it, it's here! After several unfortunate false announcements subsequently frustrated by the finding of first one bug then another, then another, programmer Richard Fairhurst advises us at *just* at press time that **RoutePlanner PCW** will be available from Monday 20th October (1997!).

There is already a working copy of the new program in the **8BIT** office and it's a real cracker, with many enhancements over the previous CPC version. Due to already-passed deadlines and space constraints, we must leave it to another magazine to claim the first comprehensive review but, as has been said before in these pages, it's worth buying a PCW for. Even a little 8256 runs it at full speed with all features active.

The program comes on a 3" or 3½" disc and buyers should specify which is required when ordering. The cost of **Routeplanner PCW** is £24.95. See the display advertisement elsewhere for fuller ordering details.

Still Awaited for the PcW16

Inventory Master is still 'in testing' (although it seems to work fine here at **8BIT**), as is the BASIC Compiler. A CP/M emulator is still strongly rumoured too, but no actual evidence has come to hand.

No reviews have been seen yet of the **Home Accounts** package from **Creative Technology** and two programs are now definitely *not* going ahead in the foreseeable future. These are **RoutePlanner '16** and the PcW16 version of **Protext**.

8BIT strikes the motherlode

Just as **8BIT 18** goes to press, we have received a call from someone with at least 20,000 pieces of software on cassette for all the 8-bit formats to dispose of. Could **8BIT** find a home for them, he would like to know.

Apparently our caller used to be an agent for all the principal games software publishers and bought the stock from them before selling it on. As the 8-bit market shrank he moved into selling audio tapes, and now that he's approaching retirement he wants to clear his garage, Nissen hut, and barn of his old stock.

Fuller details of this treasure trove are on the way, and will be published in the next **8BIT**. Under the circumstances, it may be renamed **8-Bit Bargains 'R Us**.

This Life *not* That's Life

Possibly off topic here, but fans of this excellent drama series can keep up with news on whether a third series will be made by logging on to <http://calafia.com/thislife> or <http://coollist.com> sites.

Enter "this life" (without the quotes) and your e-mail address at the bottom to be kept informed.

By the way, in the mean time, the CPC Disczine **BTL4** carries the TL theme faithfully reproduced in all its block-rockin' glory.

There: on topic, after all.

The New Sinclair Spectrum

What?! Believe it or not, and we are a long way off the 1st of April remember, there are a group of Spectrum fans who are seriously discussing bringing out a special commemorative anniversary edition of the Sinclair Spectrum.

The man from Amstrad/Betacom, he says, "totally uneconomic", but the dream goes on. Gold case, etc, etc..

Incidentally, as to the much rumoured super-8-bit computer allegedly in development, "over my dead body" said a spokesman who would know about these things.

Comprehensive 8-bit Piracy?

If you have a PC and want a 10Mb CD of 15, 000 8-bit computers' games

for £22 to run under emulators on your PC or Mac, the person to contact *may* be N McIntosh of 4, Brock Street, Bath, BA1 2LN or e-mail to rocketship@dial.pipex.com. I say *may* because he admits the copyright situation might be a bit "dodgy", but justifies it by claiming the formats are dead. Hmm.

To say this release has generated heated responses in the Sinclair newsgroup is something of an understatement. Of course, the fact that their own co-operative CD effort is nearly ready too may not be an unconnected issue.

Alchnews World Takeover Bid

In a bid to make **Alchnews** the only multi-format Spectrum magazine, the content from issue 25, which is also the 11th birthday of **Alchemist Research**, will cover Sinclair Spectrum, ZX81, Cambridge Z88, Spectrum emulators, Sinclair QL.

And it won't just be just an occasional article per issue either. but will feature articles on all of them all in every issue. **AlchNews** is a self-declared SAM-free zone.

Incidentally **Markt**, **Alchnews's** e-mail provider until now, has gone out of business. All e-mail for Andy should now go to alchemist@clara.net in future.

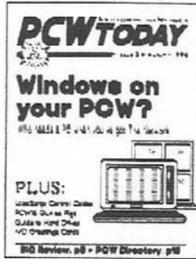
Oric News

Apparently there is a thriving Oric users support network including a magazine; **Oric User Monthly**. The contact name I have is Dave Dick, who may be contacted via his e-mail address dave@oum.softnet.com. For those who are getting fed up with e-mail addresses in these columns, the postal address will follow in the next **8BIT**.

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of the other. As it's a PD program it is particularly worth looking out for if you might ever have need of such a program.

"At least it's still there" dept

Hans-Christof Tuchen, our German correspondent and editor of **Mumpitz** magazine, writes that 8-bit matters are "quietening down" in Germany with the last commercial C64/128 magazine becoming a mere appendix of a PC magazine.

On a similar topic, grumbles still continue to arrive following the recent announcement that **8BIT** will not continue beyond issue 25. The tone of most seems to be more in the vein of regret rather than anger, but there have been several "how could you?" and "how DARE you!" letters.

Another magazine found themselves perplexed by the announcement coming so far in advance of the actual close, failing to realise that when people subscribe up to three years in advance it is only fair not to take more of their money once it is known there will not be a magazine then. Ah, The price of honesty!

The bottom line is that the **8BIT** editor has a life to lead and a living to make. There is no plan to drop out of 8-bit computing and support, but times change and the support needs to change accordingly. The editor's trailed "new venture" is concerned with the uses of "appropriate technology" including 8-bit computers. More on that soon.

Inky Suppliers

Catalogues have recently been received from **Dunning Computer Services** (01258 480660) and **Inkwell Printing Supplies** (01873 854913). Both offer a very wide range of ribbons and labels (etc) at very good prices. **8BIT** uses one of them regularly. Which one? 'Not saying!' **Inkwell** can also now supply for **Creative Technology** products too.

Barbara Gibb, last mentioned in these columns as the publisher of **Adventure Probe** magazine which already serves the adventuring community very well, has taken over **Wow Software** following the recent death of Joan Pancott.

For many years Joan championed adventure gaming on all formats of computer through **Wow Software**.

Her husband Maurice, who had been running the business on Joan's behalf for a couple of years, has decided that now he cannot continue with it so he has transferred the **Wow** catalogue to Barbara to ensure it continues to be available.

I am sure that those who knew Joan will appreciate all that she did for our hobby, and thank Maurice too for making such good provision for the **Wow** range.

Barbara's address is 52, Burford Road, LIVERPOOL L16 6AQ and if adventuring is your thing, you should contact her (enclosing an A4 SAE) for her full catalogue of adventures for all formats.

VAT regulations

8BIT used to carry pieces from VAT regulation updates. For fans of this lapsed feature, it returns for one issue with the news that **Business Brief 5/97** explains the liability of incontinence products when supplied to NHS patients under home delivery arrangements (Seals On Wheels?), and also when supplied to non-charitable residential and nursing homes. Get yours now.

From an unknown source..

8BIT recently received a handy diagnostic sheet. Although designed for the C64, most of it applies to other computers too. For a free copy send an SAE to **8BIT** (Diagnostics) at the usual address. The name of the kind soul who donated the sheet has become separated from it. But thanks, anyway, whoever you are.

Mr R Tranter reports that **Bull Electrical** (01273 203500) are offering **Quick Data** high speed cassette drives for C64s at just £10 for 5, or 20 for £19.95. Rather like a PC zip drive, it appears. And apparently they can be daisy-chained together too.

More on the C64

The well known C64 and Spectrum programmer Jon Wells is still very much involved in supplying his Supportware and other software to users of these computers. He has sent **8BIT** a huge catalogue for each, a copy of which can be obtained for an A4 SAE to 9, De Grey Road, KINGS LYNN, Norfolk PE30 4PH. Please quote "Spectrum" or "C64" when you write.

The Disk Famine Problem (again)

I am advised by a reliable computer professional that 5.25" and 3.5" HD discs can safely be formatted as DDs as long as they have never been formatted to High Density first. Pre-formatted ones are a "no-no" for this treatment.

The shortage of 3.5" (and 5.25") discs trailed in an earlier issue is escalating, the prices certainly are, so this advice seems to offer an acceptable, if not ideal, option.

QUANTA

QL support is still available for £14 a year through **QUANTA**, c/o 213, Manor Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 4JD. This includes the club magazine. Apparently the QL is something of a hybrid; being 8-bit in some respects and 16-bit in others. Clarification from someone who knows about these things would be appreciated.

Fancy going Dutch?

Holland Numerics Ltd of 94, Green Drift, ROYSTON, Herts DG8 5BT (e-mail phil.holland@bcs.org.uk, Tel: 01763 244497) offer PCW/PC file conversion services. That's one more for the list.

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Speaking of Europeans..

The first issue of **EuroWACCI** is just out as a "special edition" for all those CPC enthusiasts on the mainland of Europe who (allegedly) prefer the disczine format. Philip DiRichleau is the editor of the disc and free copies are available from **8BIT** for a disc plus return postage.

Free ~~Willy~~ WACCI

There is a CPC user group called **WACCI** which publishes a magazine with the same name. See advert elsewhere for fuller details.

The group run an *extremely* comprehensive PD library which includes a lot of generic CP/M items which would work on computers other than just a CPC, but that's not the best bit.

For a free copy of **WACCI** the magazine, just send your name and address to editor John Bowley, 97, Tirington, Bretton, PETERBOROUGH, Cambs PE3 9XT with a note saying "Brian says I can have a free one!"

And Yet *Another* File Converter

In his own words, "I specialise in converting work from the PCW to either PC's or MAC's. You will not lose any of the document formatting, (bolds, underlines, italics, etc.) as you would if using ASCII.

"Converting from **Locoscript PCW** to **Word for Windows** or other popular PC wordprocessors is no problem. From PC back to PCW is OK too.

"Disk transfer from a 3" PCW disk to a 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " or 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " DOS disk costs £5.99. File Conversion from **LocoScript PCW** to **Word for Windows**, **Works**, **WordPerfect v5.1**, or most other PC word processors costs 25p per file.

"Postage and Packing is £1.50 extra per job. The address is Tony Gill, **Rowansoft**, *Rowancraig*, Ardfern, by Lochgilphead, ARGYLL, PA31 8QN. Tel. 01852 500257. Turnround is usually within 5

working days. Hope I'm some help. Tony Gill."

8BIT never seems to receive information on people offering a similar file and/or disk service to users of any computers other than the PCW/PcW series. Do they exist, we wonder. If so, speak up and be publicised!

FRED goes to Saturn

Saturn Software have taken over **FRED Publishing** and all things SAM-related from Colin MacDonald. The address is now 5, Ivanhoe Drive, Westfields, Ashby-de-la-Zouche, Leics LE65 2LT, otherwise everything continues as before.

One in the Eye

8BIT keeps receiving very "graphically-enhanced" publicity fliers from **Commodore Scene**. Unfortunately, they do not photocopy well enough to use here. To get your own send an SAE to Richard Bowen at 35, Nottingham Road, Nuthall, NOTTINGHAM, NG16 1AP.

X Maniacs

Alec Carswell publishes a SAM triple-disczine called **X** which costs just £2 per issue. In a recent issue they claimed that a SAM can do any/everything a new 8-bit machine could offer: a brave boast!

They have just taken over rights to **Spellunker** and **Adventure Coder** (just for the SAM, we must assume). For your copy of **X**, or to send your own written contributions, contact them at 16, Montgomery Avenue, Beith, Ayrshire, KA15 1EL.

Computer World

Robert Nisbet is compiling a system in the pictorial HTML format which will be an information resource on all types of computers. It is not exactly clear whether this will be a disk or internet project, but if you can add to his magnum opus with information on *your* preferred format, write to him at 1,

Silver Birches, Stanton St John, OXFORD OX33 1HH.

Coming soon

1) Separated at Birth?

Hardly original, but it is hoped that from the next issue of **8BIT** a picture gallery will feature people involved in 8-bit computing who, by appearance or name, might appear to have been separated at birth from some celebrity or another.

Please note that contributors to this feature will need to accompany their suggestions with supporting photographic evidence.

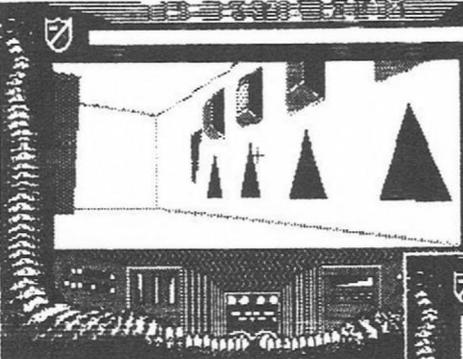
Already suggested are apparently close, but hitherto unknown, relatives of Andy Warhol, that brainy-looking person from *Viz* whose name the correspondent could not remember, and Barry Evans from *East Enders*. Other suggestions (with supporting photographic evidence only) are welcomed.

Photos suggesting a genetic link between the **8BIT** editor with Leonardo DiCaprio would make an old man very happy.

2) Currently sitting in the **8BIT** files awaiting publication are pieces on the computer-aided decoding centre at Bletchley by Stephen Potts, several lengthy pieces on aspects of computing and the law from James Waddington, a fascinating piece on the **CPMUKUG** by Rodney Honnis, and a Z88 article from Andy Davis. I also have a piece here on the **CPCSW** club, Jean-Claude Pretre's piece on the PCW's survival "sur le continong", and more, and more..

3) I have a copy of **Plus D Hacker/Toolkit/Filer** for the *Spectrum* which needs reviewing too; any volunteers?

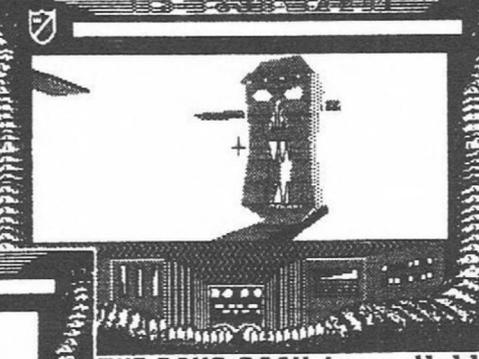
Also planned is an issue on emulators; what they are and what they mean for 8-bit computer users when most only run on PCs and Macs, but next issue, 8-bits for business seems the most likely topic.



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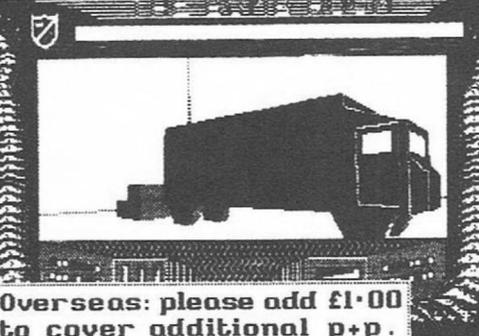


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THE PcW16 PAGES by Brian Watson

As a complement to the **Writers** feature in this issue, the PcW16 pages this time cover a related topic, that of handling large, and at times quite 'enriched' files on a computer with only a relatively small 'workspace' memory.

PAGE NUMBERING WHEN USING MULTIPLE FILES

A small tip I picked up some years ago from using a friend's very small-brained computer which often had heavy background demands on its memory use helps with the PcW16's limitations when handling very large files. It is a good tip too for Commodore 64/128s using **GEOS**, which *also* puts heavy demands on memory use or resorts to huge amounts of time-consuming disk-accessing. CPC users who opt for the CP/M version of **Protext** will also find it helpful with text files of over about 10/12K for the same reason.

I am assuming you have set up, and are working with, text in a template which already includes the required margin and page numbering settings. To edit growing files (say, over 10 pages or so) on the '16 you can usefully split the file into smaller parts of, say, 5 pages by the following:

- 1) Save a version of the whole text, as far as you've got, as TEMP. Keep your original in case of accidents.
- 2) Load TEMP and place the START marker at the start of its page 6 and the END marker at the end of the whole text. A bit of selective editing will ensure that the bottom of page 5's text will also be the end of a paragraph. This will preserve your text formatting, even if JUSTIFIED is set. CUT this block (page 6 on..) and re-save the remaining text (which will be the first five pages only, of course) as, say, MYTEXT PART 1 using the SAVE AS.. option.
- 3) Re-load TEMP, and use the markers to CUT the first five pages of text which you have just saved as MYTEXT PART 1. SAVE the *remaining* text, calling it TEMP2.
- 4) Load TEMP2, RE-PAGINATE it and, repeating the "end of paragraph" trimming, CUT the text from the start of *its* page 6 to the end. SAVE the five pages that remain of *this* file as MYTEXT PART 2.
- 5) REPEAT steps 2-4, using filenames TEMP3, TEMP4, MYTEXT3, MYTEXT4 etc until all your original text is split into sections, each five pages long. This lessens the load on your cabinet working space as you go.
- 6) LOAD your second MYTEXT file in the sequence, press RETURN to put a blank line at the top of the screen. It is important to have this blank line at the top of the screen or the '16 *may* lock up and lose your text. If you *do* forget and it happens, all is still not lost. See below for the LOCK-UP RESCUE SEQUENCE.
- 7) Now INSERT the same number of PAGE BREAKS from the INSERT menu at the top of the first page of this file as you have pages in the first part, that is five.
- 8) Check this has been successful by first saving the file, then reload it and move the cursor with the mouse to the top line of actual text. Read the page number at the bottom of the page to make sure you have inserted the right number of page breaks before your text.

IEBA

The Independent Eight Bit Association

The Independent Eight Bit Association, formerly solely a SAM and Spectrum group, now works to support and promote the use of *all* 8-bit computers, including the Amstrad CPCs, all PCW/PcWs, NC100/200 notepads, BBCs, Commodore C64/128s, Einsteins, Orics, SAMs, Sharps, Spectrums etc ... if it has an eight-bit processor, it is supported by the IEBA.

- The IEBA has already produced a very comprehensive **Directory of 8-bit Services**, a copy of which is free to members upon joining.
- When the IEBA has something to discuss among the membership, it publishes and distributes a free newsletter.
- The group's officers use a wide range of computer types themselves.
- The IEBA is seeking to set up a portable display module for use in libraries exhibitions.

Membership of the IEBA costs just £5. There is no annual subscription, and no renewal fee. For further details and a membership application form, write to the Membership Secretary, Brian Watson, at Harrowden, 39, High Street, Sutton, ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA.

Pipeline Software Tutorials

The Pipeline Software Tutorials, written for CPC computers and acting as a professional quality series of introductory guides to programming, are now available again exclusively from Brian Watson under licence from Sentinel Software. The copyright remains with the author of all parts of the series, Robin Gilbert.

● Pipeline Tutorials have long been respected as the definitive and comprehensive series for CPC users who wish to take their computer use beyond 'off the shelf' programs and into BASIC, assembler, and other programming techniques. All are printed on A4 paper with card covers and comb-bound to lie flat in use.

● Each Pipeline Tutorial costs £5, including the postage and packing, in the United Kingdom. Orders from *outside* the UK should include £3 extra per order towards postage and secure packaging, regardless of the quantity of Tutorials being ordered.

● There are associated disc files available for some Tutorials. When the series was first issued these files cost extra; now they are supplied *free* onto the purchaser's own discs.

● A catalogue of the Pipeline Tutorials series may be obtained in return for a stamped, addressed, A4 envelope to Brian Watson, Harrowden, 39, High Street, Sutton, ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA.

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All programs are available on 3" or 3.5" disc and it should be stated when ordering which is required and whether you have a side switch on your 3.5" drive.

RoutePlanner - 6128 Only - £14.95

The first navigation program for any 8-bit computer. RoutePlanner finds the best route between any two towns - quickly, easily and effectively. RoutePlanner includes a massive 3000 place database and version 1.21 has faster calculation speed and new 1997 data including all motorways and A-roads on the British mainland. An on-screen map, which can be viewed up to 16 times zoom level, displays roads and towns. RoutePlanner's coder, Richard Fairhurst, was Amstrad Action's technical guru and is now Fair Comment (letters) editor for the magazine and user group WACC1.

"RoutePlanner is a mighty ambitious piece of software...it's a pretty darned impressive piece of work...88%" AA 108

MegaBlasters - £10.99 on 3" disc - £9.99 on 3.5" disc

Arguably the biggest game ever produced for the CPC. This action packed bombing game originally spanned 30 discs and has now been crunched down to spread over just two. It blasted on to the CPC with over 900k of data. You can play against another player in all manner of weird and wonderful worlds, work together or have a match with up to four players.

"Whether you are playing along to beat the game creators best scores, or dodging the bombs planted by so-called friends, MegaBlasters is addictiveness taken to a new high...gets it's claws in straight away, whichever way you choose to play...94%" AA 111

Who Said That - 6128 Only - £13.95

Designed for somebody who doesn't want to bash the brains out of cute little teddy bears all the time. A well researched game in which you must answer to the quote. Loads of variety and great humour.

"...It's extremely addictive...really blow your mind, well researched and worth the money...85%" AA 110

Masters Of Space - £9.95

Great graphics, smooth animation and high speed action in this space game. You are the pilot on board a hi-tech space ship and have to destroy all manner of nasty baddies.

"...Masters of Space delivers the goods...providing high speed action and a few intriguing twists on the usual vertically scrolling shoot-em-up formula...75%" AA 107

Star Driver - £9.95

A colourful game by the same author of Masters Of Space. You race around asteroids in outer space. You can play against the clock, the computer or another opponent in many different worlds.

"The graphics are weird, certainly different and generally quite impressive..." AA 109

9) Repeat this for each file in your complete sequence adding sufficient page breaks, 10 in the second, 15 in the third etc, to ensure correct numbering is maintained. Once you *are* satisfied, you are ready to print out the text, section by section. The first file will be printed normally. When printing the second file, and any subsequent ones, you have two options. The second method requires less attention once the (almost) blank pages have finished going through, but uses more paper.

Either print just the the pages you want from the files, one at a time, using the 'Current Page' print option, or use a sheet of partly used paper to pass through the printer as many times as is necessary to absorb the unwanted page numbering which will be generated by the PAGE BREAKS - at the speed the PcW16 prints you will have plenty of time to re-position the same sheet for each pass in the interests of economy.

Watch the "Printing document page..." display and don't get it wrong as, if you have to do it again, each page (blank apart from the {Page Number} line) takes as long to compile in memory as one full of text.

Start feeding in your good paper in as the real text comes due and the numbering will come right, picking up from each previous file. Naturally, this can be repeated for as many text files as you have, but I must admit it is extremely tedious! It is also far from ideal, but it works, as I proved when printing a recent batch of **Pipeline Tutorials** master copies for photocopying.

A little 'PS' on handling large files: working on *any* file loaded into the cabinet may be quicker if you are doing a lot of cutting, pasting, and relaying but, if you are growing your files to beyond about 10 pages, working from the disk drive seems more reliable, possibly because there is then a larger workspace available. As you will gather, I find the memory management still a little unstable on the '16. As with any computer, the moral is definitely, "save often for safety"

PRODUCING TEXT FILES FOR PUBLISHERS

In many ways the PcW16 is an ideal writer's home computer. Although the word processor module is painfully slow in many functions, it will be a formidable typist who can beat it's speed of operation during normal text entry. Its in-built file compression system ensures efficient storage on your working disks, and it can easily produce PC-format ASCII or RTF text files by the 'Export' option which will suit all but the most eccentric publishers.

The options for the PcW16's disk format are DS/DD 720k or DS/HD 1.44Mb. 720k format disks are more readily accessible by other, earlier, computers using transfer utilities. The larger format disks are marginally more generally acceptable to put your 'Exported' text onto when submitting to publishers.

Obviously, any disks being sent away should be clearly labelled with the principal filenames and your name, address, and phone number. A README file with a list of the files and their contents can be helpful.

Incidentally, if you will be using an inkjet printer to print your disk labels, you *will* remember to protect the printing with a veneer of clear adhesive tape, won't you? Inkjet ink is almost always water soluble and sticky fingers can all too easily smudge them.

It is good practice anyway to split a large piece of work into logical chunks (chapters, say, or 1,000 word blocks) but do ensure that logical filenames are used to convey their order of use or your masterpiece may become a little garbled. You don't want the murderer unmasked before the crime is committed, do you?

WACCI

THE UK'S PREMIER CPC CLUB

WACCI: THE INSIDE INFO

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DON'T PANIC! - NO FIX, NO FEE!

We specialise in the salvage of data from all CP/M floppy disks, particularly those used on the Amstrad PCW, PcW and CPC ranges of computers and word processors, which often use the LocoScript word processing system. We also salvage floppy disks for PCs and MACs, but we no longer tackle hard disks.

We can transfer data between various disk sizes (3", 3½", 5¼" and even 8") and convert to various file formats. We can also provide a Web document authoring and image scanning service.

ALL PROFITS COVENANTED TO CHARITY

OTTO

Issue 3 - now incorporating
AFTER DARK!

For more information,
send an SAE or 3" disc to:

**Nicholas Campbell,
24 Ballyminstragh Rd.,
Killinchy, Newtownards,
Co. Down, Northern Ireland,
BT23 6RE.**

Remember - OTTO costs you nothing at all! Issues 1 and 2 available on 3" disc - please state when ordering. Issue 3 expected by late August 1996.



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 SAE, 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)
- 4 Bonzo's Big Batch (Database, Pools Predictor, Sprite/Screen Designer)
- 5 Maxidos and CPC Prococy

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.

HOW DO I (AND WHY DON'T YOU) MANAGE MULTI-COMPUTER USE? by Stephen Potts

There are several 8-bit computers that are perfectly serviceable for the jobs they were originally intended to do, and there are several clubs for the various types. I belong to the groups WACCI and UAUG, as well as the Einstein User Group.

In case you think I'm biased, let me tell you I have a PC 486 DX2 66 and any of my PCWs, CPCs, or Einsteins knock it into a cocked hat for word processing. When I want to write I use my PCW 9512 which uses 3" and 3½" disks in 720k format so I have much shuffling to get text across to, say, Einstein format. I'm dyslexic and have trouble spelling so, when finished writing, I press F7 and spell-check then press P to print. Good isn't it? On the 486, you have to first boot DOS, then Windows, launch applications, launch Word, then double click on start, then a bewildering array of options loses you before a character is typed. It's like pulling teeth!

The way I do things involves a lot of swapping around the various types of disk formats used on different models within the frame of CP/M. The transfer from one computer to another is possible due to Gary Kildall who was the head of Digital Research: he came up with CP/M. This operating system has its opponents but these can only be using it on one machine and comparing it to the operating system specifically designed for that model to which a compromised transportable standard must come second by all the laws of nature. ASCII is a plain text form that is truly also a Godsend when using different makes and models of computer.

The word processor I use and like best is LocoScript. I have used it for a long time and the various versions over the years through LocoScript 1, 2 and 3, now LocoScript 4 is out. All I have against it is that it isn't pure CP/M; it carries its own operating system. First, I write the piece, then spell-check, then print out all on my Amstrad 9512. I then SAVE to a 3" or 3½" 720k disk. Next, I use LocoScript 'MAKE ASCII' option; this makes the text OK for most word processors. I then take the 3" disk and put it into my PCW 8512 with two drives of different types; 720k B: drive and a 180k A: drive.

Then to my CPC 6128 and, using WACCI disk PD82 CP/M utilities, I alter the drive parameters to that of Einstein and save the file to the Einstein formatted 3" or 3½" disk to send it to the Einstein User Club magazine.

So there you have it; I support several 8-bit computers and CP/M. Don't follow MicroSoft blindly as you can achieve perfectly good work without Bill Gates having an open door to your bank account.

Be creative: it's not hard to to achieve. Get a book from the library on BASIC programming - it doesn't have to be specific to any computer, though it helps if it is - they all have the same core of commands or words. With very little practice you can create a question and answer program, then go on from there and you can do anything. Do let others see what you are doing, socialise with others in your area, or hold an evening of brain-storming with new friends. I wish clubs would encourage local area meetings or publish a distribution map. There is a wealth of information in club magazine back issues. I have ordered a set for reference and type ins.

Personally, I travel around the shows displaying my Einstein like a classic car and it costs me quite a bit. Recently I stood at a show and lots of people asked for me to send them things so I was well out of pocket. So if I ask for a donation towards expenses please don't be offended. Please do remember we all do this voluntarily and unpaid so do appreciate this is not a business therefore do treat us accordingly. If you require an answer or info do please include a SAE and an extra stamp, do be patient, we are here to help out but things can become a little demanding.

Stephen Potts

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR STARTING E-MAIL ON AN 8-BIT COMPUTER by Brian Watson

Yes, I'm afraid it is yet *another* piece in 8BIT on e-mail. It is by far the most popular topic in the 8BIT mail bag at the moment and a general 'plain English' guide seems to be what people want. So, "yes, it is possible, almost easy apparently". I say 'apparently' because, for reasons of my high business and personal usage and therefore time connected down the phone line, I don't actually use an 8-bit computer for my e-mail. I am beginning to wish I did, however, as the PC my son bought second-hand for me has proved to be a trifle temperamental (or is that just 'mental'?) from time to time.

What you will need to do the job is:

- 1) The 8-bit computer of your choice. It may be worth considering buying one which is set up *just* for e-mail. If you can get the remaining items in this list for it, it seems any model will do. In the interests of operating speed, get the biggest the memory you can so you have a reasonable amount of "working space". The general recommendation is that 128k is the *preferred* minimum. CP/M+ or its equivalent, under which much cheap/free software available can be used, *requires* 128k. I would also suggest you forget for now the idea of going on-line if you don't have *at least* one disc drive attached; tape loading and storage is just too slow for e-mail use unless you want those big phone bills which *should* be a thing of the past now.
- 2) An RS232 serial interface. So as not to get too technical, think of it as a universal cable connector to the outside world. It will either be integral to your computer already, or you will need to buy one designed for it; the outward connector is standard, but the inward connector needs to match your computer's expansion port. They are still fairly readily available second-hand for about £20 or less through adverts in 8BIT, Micro Mart, PC Mart, or the computer-specific fanzines, but it would be as well to read up on the best model for yours in *your* computer's specialist press before spending real money.
- 3) A modem. This will connect to the RS232 interface and translate your messages into a suitable form for transmission and reception through the phone line via a standard BT-type plug. You can get piggy-back Y-adaptors to make the connection to the phone line. Do not buy an 'internal card' version of any modem as these are almost all designed *only* to fit in PCs and similar beasts. The operating speed can be almost as slow as you like as the 8-bits are (allegedly) unreliable transmitting or receiving faster than 9,600 bits per second. 4,800 would do, or even slower if it's all you can get. Again, the same sources will be able to find you an appropriate model which should cost no more than £20.
- 4) Software appropriate to *your* computer. Ansiterm, Kermit, Xmodem, Zmodem or similar will do the job nicely and these are fairly easy to obtain, with a text file of documentation generally supplied on the disc. PD libraries or clubs are probably the best sources for this. Alternatively you can still find commercial programs which may offer more user support to the nervous. Frankly, for absolute beginners, my advice would be if you *can* get and afford software with support; choose that!
- 5) An account with CIX, Demon, Compuserve or a similar service provider. The **Chic Computer Club** include a free e-mail service as a benefit of membership of their club. See their advert elsewhere in 8BIT. Demon charge *just a flat fee* of £10 a month, plus VAT; £11.75 in all, and allow as many mailbox names as you want for that. If you later decide to add to your collection a PC or Mac computer, either of which can access the full graphics capabilities of the Internet, you will be able to continue to use the same account with different software and hardware to suit your new computer.
- 6) Phone costs for e-mail are now fairly low. 8BIT's e-mail facility is used *a lot* for business and family and still only costs about £8 per month for the calls to the

local Demon POP (Point Of Presence, or access point). Local call charges are now the norm throughout Britain, *regardless of where in the world the person you are sending to is*, and you could reduce them further by connecting only at weekends, and using your POP number as one of your 'friends and families' numbers. So e-mail is especially worth considering if you have friends and/or relations littered around the world who could get on-line too. Their local calls may be free. It is good practice to collect your incoming mails 'on-line' then disconnect and read them 'off-line'. You can pre-write your replies and other mails for uploading when you connect next time. Then, one minute of connection can handle all your 'ins' and 'outs'.

If I have a criticism of e-mail in practice, it is that some people seem to be "butterflies" in terms of moving from one service provider to another. This plays absolute havoc with keeping an e-mail directory up to date! I presume it is because the system is still expanding rapidly and the service providers are forced to be very competitive, so one or another always seems to have a special offer on a PC coverdisk/CD to tempt users over to using their service. Thank goodness most 8-bit users cannot use these trial versions! My advice would be to talk to other users, see which service provider works for them, then choose it *and stick to it* for at least a year. If you *do* move on, postings to your old address will *not* be forwarded and will be lost.

In conclusion, e-mail is now an established *additional* means of communication, alongside telephone and Fax, for sending messages over long and short distances at 'local call' rates. 8BIT is just one of the many magazines which carry further details and e-mail addresses of people known to be using the system.

CPC 464 LIMITATIONS by G Woolliscroft

Whilst a large proportion of new CPC users will have bought 6128s or upgraded 464 models with the 6128 chip, there are a few who find difficulty in getting their type-ins and other basic programs on tape and on disc to run, having bought a 464.

One reason for this on the unexpanded 464 with a disc drive is that the program one is trying to run was designed to use the additional 64K of memory available on the 6128 and expanded 464 models (the latter with 6128 chip + 64K add-on memory). As a result the program will not run.

The other reason for running problems which sometimes give rise to error messages is the fact that the program itself contains commands which are not available in the unexpanded 464 Read Only Memory and are therefore not recognised by the computer.

It may be possible in some cases to list the basic program and modify it so that it will run (e.g. when ' is used for the REM command), but in other cases one is not able to do this. As a result the program is of little use unless it can be modified by someone skilled in programming and in these instances you may want to put a HELP plea in 8BIT.

Following this paragraph is, as far as I know, a complete listing of those commands which the 464 does not recognise but the 6128 programmer may have used. If users have any further information about additional commands or about this article in general please do not hesitate to contact me through 8BIT.

CLEAR INPUT	COPY CHR\$	CURSOR	DEC\$	DERR
FILL	FRAME	GRAPHICS PEN	GRAPHICS PAPER	MASK
MIDS (when used to insert one string into another)			ON BREAK CONT	SPC

Gordon Woolliscroft

SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

The entries are grouped by the type of computer, followed by the two **Miscellaneous** and **Small Works** sections. These now include those non-specific small advertisements which are for open-ended offers of services or user support.

COMMODORE - FOR SALE

Commodore 64 with manual + many extras, free - just pay the p&p. Contact Brian Watson c/o **8BIT** REF:3

C64/128. Many items for sale; books, hardware, magazines (complete with their tapes/discs) and software (games and productivity), all in excellent condition. Lists, incl offers saving 33%, 5.25" discs DS\DD black/colours 25 for £5. Michael D Pearson, 31 Saxon Close, Stratford on Avon, Warks CV37 7DX. Tel: 01789 294978 (6.30-10pm) REF:2

C64 software. Tapes, disks and cartridges. SAE for massive list. Alan, 18 West Street, Gedington, Northants NN14 1BD REF:1

COMMODORE - WANTED

Zzap 64! magazines *urgently* wanted by Alessandro Defendi, Via Roggia Scagna 1, Cap 20127, Milano-Italy or e-mail mr27036@digibank.it. Or, if you prefer, send your reply c/o **8BIT** and it will be sent on REF:2

Help. Manual or photocopy for MP1270 printer - codes and DIP settings would help. Mark Surridge, COLCHESTER (01206) 792155 REF:1

COMMODORE 64/128 - MISC

If you own a C64/128, you need **COMMODORE SCENE**; the bi-monthly magazine packed with all the news and views from the Commodore world. For details send an A5 SAE to Richard Bowen 35, Nottingham Road, Nuthall, NOTTINGHAM NG16 1DN. Mention **8BIT** for a free disk of software with your first order. REF:C

* * *

AMSTRAD CPC - FOR SALE

Amstrad CPC 464 with green screen monitor and user manual, £40. Also Citizen 120D+ printer with manual, £45. CPC 6128 with external 3.5" disc drive, mouse, rombox, colour monitor, Multiface 2, manual, £175 ono. Many games on tape and disc, very cheap. Tel: (Stockport) 0161 439 7034 between 7 and 10pm REF:3

Amstrad CPC items for sale - books, Hardware, magazines, software and other items. Send an SAE to Mr T Davies, 8, Garden Suburbs, Trimsaran, Kidwelly, Dyfed SA17 4AB REF:3

I have two CPC 6128s with green screen monitors for sale. Included are about 100 3" discs, spare disc drive, serial port, tv modulator units, 2 silicon discs, manuals and bits. Patrick Beautelement is near Malvern, Worcs UK. Offers c/o **8BIT**, or e-mail patb-tbt.demon.co.uk REF:3

CPC 6128 with faulty disc drive, Multiface and Insider, discs, disc games (mostly adventures) £20. DMP 2000 £20. DD1-1 (faulty) £10. All with manuals. Post & packing extra or collect from BRACKNELL. Phone Angela on 01344 428053 REF:1

Amstrad CPC 464 with DD1 disc drive, Rom Robot Multiface, TV modulator, and massive amount of original software. Also years of Amstrad magazines including the first issue of **Amstrad User**. Monitor not included. All offers considered. Maidenhead, England area. Telephone: 01628 72462 Graham Naismith REF:1

Amstrad CPC 6128 computer. Lots of extras including romboxes, 3½" disc drive, datacorder, lots of discs. Tel: 018206 30189 or write to William Derrick Ervine, 7, Back Road, Rathfriland, Co Down, N Ireland BT34 5QF for list REF:1

CPC software. Tapes & discs. SAE for massive list. Alan, 18 West Street, Gedington, Northants NN14 1BD REF:1

Unusual CPC 464 keyboard with the Spanish layout, *now just* £5 + p&p or

possible free delivery. Also large list of 2nd hand CPC tape and disc software and hardware at sensible prices. Originals c/w instructions. Send 1st class stamp and return label for lists to **CPC lists**, c/o **8BIT** magazine REF:C

AMSTRAD CPC - WANTED

CPC games wanted. Brainstorm, BAT, Battle Command, Battle Stars, Gunboat, Iron Lord, Moon Blaster, PHM Pegasus, Pinball Magic, Red Scorpion, Roller Coaster, Taking Tiger Mountain, Americas' Cup Challenge, Clever and Smart, The Archon Collection, and others. Please send price list to: Martin J Bela, 11, Colwell Drive, Brookside, Alvaston, Derbs DE24 OUP REF:3

Amstrad Action 1-5, 21, 34, 35, 38, **ACU** Mar 86, May 86, May 87, Jun 87, Jul 87, Sep 87, **WACCI** 4-30, **CPC User** 1-4, 46-end, Video Master, Dart Scanner, Ram Music Machine, 256k ram expansion, Write to: Rafael Delgado Peiro, c/ cyea 3 - 1 DCHA, 28017 - MADRID, Spain REF:3

Wanted: EMR Amstrad CPC 6128 midi interface and miditrack performer software package. Good price offered. Contact Mark Chater, 58, Chesterwood Road, Kings Heath, BIRMINGHAM B13 0QE. Tel: 0121 444 2940 REF:3

Amstrad Action issue 2, **ACU** Sep '90, plus Dec '84 - Feb '85, **Antix** 1, 4, 5, 11 - 14. P Curgenven The Hollyar, Bay Road, Trevone Bay, Nr Padstow, Cornwall PL28 8QZ. 01841 520875 REF:3

Printer for CPC 464 wanted. Must be quite cheap. Dot matrix colour or black only will do. I am also looking for a disk drive. Offers to: J Coley-Shaw, 8 Jerreys Lane, LICHFIELD, Staffs WS14 9QD. Telephone: 01543 432767 REF:2

VACCI 4-15, 19, 22. Also **CPC464 User** magazine issue 2 for October & November 1984. Telephone Christine on 0115 (NOTTINGHAM) 913 3181 REF:1

* * *

CPC - MISCELLANEOUS

User manual for CPC 6128. Mark Surridge, COLCHESTER (01206) 792155 REF:1

King Arthur's Domain is a disc PD library for the CPC. Utilities, games, music, clip art, a large selection of CP/M programs, and lots more. For catalogue, send 3"/3½" disc + SAE to: **KAD**, *Brympton Cottage*, Brunswick Road, WORTHING, Sussex BN11 3NQ REF:C

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

AMSTRAD PCW - FOR SALE

Huge list of PCW hardware, parts, and software. A4 SAE to Ian Studley, 44, Paynton Road, St Leonards on sea, East Sussex TN37 7DY REF:3

Phone for PCW hardware/software lists to Roy Martin. 01752 (Cornwall) 839430 REF:3

Amstrad PCW 8256/8512 printer and three brand new boxed ribbons. Price £20 plus post & packing. Tel: 01273 (PEACEHAVEN) 583050 REF:3

I'm having a PCW clearout! For my extensive lists send an SAE to Peter Johansson, 172, Old Bank Road, Earisheaton, DEWSBURY, W Yorks WF12 7AF REF:1

Original software LocoScript and CP/M on 3" disk to fit Amstrad PCW word processors, new, £10. keyboard to fit PcW 10/PcW 9256 £6. Dot matrix printer to fit PcW 10, excellent working order, £25. Ability integrated software for PC 1512/1640 inc manuals and 5¼" disks, sealed unopened £5. 01388 (BISHOP AUKLAND) 606744 REF:1

Sigma Press **Picture Processing** on the PCW book and disc with Drawmon program and manual. Masters on 3" discs but 3½" added on request, £20. Used 3" discs, 6 for £6. Plastic

cases for 3" discs, 9 for £2.50. Alan Kimber on 0181 866 (London) 1272 REF:1

AMSTRAD PCW - WANTED

Genealogical software with manual(s) for PCW 8512 on 3" disc wanted. Genny or whatever you prefer. Please write to Box No: 11 **8BIT** REF:3

Perfcalc spreadsheet PD program on 3.5" disc for 9512. Must include setkeys PC key file (it's missing on mine and therefore it won't work). Jim 019303 (SUNBURY ON THAMES) 784397 REF:3

Does anyone know of any published literature with specifications for the Amstrad PcW 10. Les Derrett 01482 (Hull) 782360 REF:2

SC2DATE.COM for PCW. Sets date on PCW's Supercalc for dates after 1999. (John Hudson, Huddersfield, PD). Also, IMPEXP program which downloads Cambridge Z88 files to (and from) PCW. (Tried the Z88 user group, Mike? - BW). Phone 01268 (Basildon, Essex) 522484 or Fax 01268 450432 REF:2

For Printmaster PD graphics files, particularly XLIB2, and any others not available through PD libraries. Write to Mr E Heron, PO Box 288, Morden, Surrey SM4 5SW REF:1

AMSTRAD PCW - MISCELLANEOUS

The German Joyce user group is a new private, non commercial, association for Amstrad/Schneider PCW users. They aim to appeal to all pcw users, regardless of skill or application. You may contact them by writing c/o Werner Neumeyer-Bubel, Liemecke 8a, D34466 Wolfhagen, Germany, phone 0049 5692 995146, fax 0049 5692 995148, or you can e-mail them on joyce-ag@t-online.de A WWW page is there now, but still growing.

For a low-cost public domain PCW/PcW clipart copying & scanning service. For full details send a SAE, a formatted 3.5" disc, and 50p to: PD Blake, 99, Normandy Avenue, Beverley, East Yorks HU17 8PR.

Crawley PCW Club meets on the first Thursday of each month except August. A Club helpline is available for members. For further details write to the Chairman/Secretary John Fisher at *Pradines*, Four Elms Road, EDENBRIDGE, TN8 6AF.

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

Globe-trotting, or just interested? Contact **Capital Computer Club**, c/o Ray C Petersen (the Secretary), 21, Mapplebeck Street, Titahi Bay, Porirua, New Zealand. The Club now has members with Amstrads (all sorts), Amigas, Macs, Sanyos and PCs with DOS and CP/M. They are well up to date with PCW news. New members are welcome at each monthly meeting.

TRACK is the name of the very useful free advertising feature section of **SCOTWEST.pcw**, the magazine of the PCW Club of the same name. For more details contact David Williams, 32/34, Carfin Street, New Stevenston, MOTHERWELL ML1 4JL Scotland. 01698 732403.

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.

SINCLAIR SPECTRUM - FOR SALE

Spectrum software. Tapes & discs. SAE for massive list. Alan, 18 West Street, Gedington, Northants NN14 1BD REF:1

Hundreds of software titles for sale. Send SAE to JA Waddington at 11, Finsbury Drive, Wrose, BRADFORD, West Yorks BD2 1QA. Also **Classix** fanzine for sale - See display advertisement for further details. REF:3.

contd

SINCLAIR SPECTRUM - FOR SALE contd

Sinclair Spectrum tapes, discs and roms for sale from 35p each. Send a large SSAE for my list to Mrs P Fuller, 4 Whitehouse Cottages, Sot's Hole Bank, Holbeach St Matthews, Lincs PE12 8EJ. REF:1

SINCLAIR SPECTRUM - WANTED

How do I get on the Internet with a 48k or +3 Spectrum? Which software, and where can I get a suitable modem? £40 or cheaper, hopefully. James Davis, 10, Prospect Row, CHATHAM, Kent ME4 4XL. REF:1

Wanted: Plus D interface (for disc drives) in gwo for 128k +2A (black case) pay up to £15 plus p & p. 01622 688201 eves. Mrs Butcher. REF:3

Can anyone help me out? I need to know voltage and advanced commands to run a +D interface and drive for Spectrum +2. Contact George Hudspith, 190, Wynyard Road, HARTLEPOOL, TS25 3LJ or Telephone 01429 294506 between 6 and 7pm weekdays. REF:2

For a Spectrum+3; a 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " B: disc drive and connecting cable (also large format software?). Details to David Williams, 24/24, Carfin Street, New Stevenston, Motherwell ML1 4JL. Tel: 01698 732403 REF:1

ALL FORMATS - MISCELLANEOUS

For CP/M Support, The PD Software Library, Winscombe House, Beacon Road, CROWBOROUGH, Sussex, 01892 663298, owns large volumes of CP/M software from all over the globe. Send A5 SSAE for their catalogue

The UK CP/M User Group (CPMUKUG) is now defunct, but the disc library is not. UK volumes are now up to number 130. For a catalogue, send a formatted disc to Rodney Hannis, 34 Falmouth Road, READING, RG2 8QR. 01734 876641. Please include return postage - no other charges

Loads of goodies for your CPC, PCW, Spectrum, Apricot, Games console:

Tapes, Discs, Roms, Books, Magazines and Hardware. For list send A5 SSAE to: *Brympton Cottage*, Brunswick Road, WORTHING, Sussex BN11 3NQ

Einstein Magazine and All Micro News is the magazine of the **Steam Computer Society - 10 years old** and still going strong! Write to AE (Tony) Adams, *Ivy Cottage*, Church Road, New Romney, Kent TN28 8TY, enclosing a large envelope and two first class stamps for more details

I'm trying to compile a collection of older computers for exhibition. Still need Acorn BBCs, Altair 8800, Apple Lisa and Plus, Casio PB-700, Memotech MTX500, Sharp MZ800, Vic20, ZX80 and ZX81, also peripherals and parts for Apple II and an example of a mechanical adding machine. E-mail: john.gaiger@dial.pipex.com or Tel: 01734 623258 (eves)

Did you know? The **IEBA** (The Independent Eight Bit Association) is a group active in promoting the use of 8-bit computers. The third edition of their **Directory of 8-bit Services** is now out and is free to members. Life Membership is £5. For further details send 2 1st class stamps to the membership secretary David Williams, 24/24, Carfin Street, New Stevenston, Motherwell ML1 4JL. Tel: 01698 732403.

Are you a user of an Amstrad NC100 or 200 notepad? If you believe there is some benefit to be gained by linking together such users please phone John Walker on 01752 (PLYMOUTH) 706266 and we will take it from there

Wanted: NC200 (or NC150) in good working order with manuals etc. Brian Watson c/o **8BIT**. REF:3

WANTED: Memory card(s), ideally 1 Meg size, for Amstrad NC200 notepad. Any reasonable price considered. Please call Gary on 01582 (LUTON) 483894 evenings or weekends or 0402 844369 anytime. REF:2

For SAM sales and support send SAE to: Bob Brenchley, **Format**, 34, Bourton Road, GLOUCESTER GL4 0LE.

Sharp Users Club. Write to Andrew Ferguson at 11, Harcourt Close, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 1UZ, or 01491 574850 for further details

TUG, the new user group and magazine for classic computers (all formats including Atari ST, Amstrad PCW & CPC, RM Link and PCs running emulators). Various benefits. £5 per annum. Call Robert on 01855 (Oxford) 351448

SMALL WORKS DEPT

The section for offers of help and repairs at fair prices. Please help those mentioned by enclosing return postage and a sensibly-sized SAE with each request for help.

Wealden Supplies: a range of quality consumables at low prices. For example, range includes blank disks; 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " HD pack of 10 for £4.50 + 87p. CHEques payable to Richard Avery. Send orders or SSAE to 60, Pitreavie Drive, Knights Manor, HAILSHAM, East Sussex BN27 3XG. Tel: 01323 844371. E-mail: 106765.2102@compuserve.com

Drive belts for 3" mechanisms including CPCs, PCWs, PcWs, Spectrum +3s. Include easy to follow fitting instructions. £2.45 inc P&P from AJ Howard, 65, Altyre Way, BECKENHAM, Kent BR3 3ED REF:C

Disk conversions: Amstrad 3" to 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " to PC to Mac and back. Also high quality laser printing from any disk. For costs and details (charged by disk or time) contact Mike Harris at Disk Conversions, 9, Wootton Way, CAMBRIDGE, CB3 9LX. or telephone: 01223 363259. REF:1

For PCW help, you can try Anthony Hill, joint co-ordinator of the Heads of the Valleys PCW User Group, at 20, Velindre Place, Whitchurch, CARDIFF CF4 2AN. Please enclose an SAE and say which PCW you have if you write. He actually *prefers* phone calls which can be made to either 01222 618012 or 01829 271515, one of which should find him.

Nigel Calcutt offers accessories and low-cost repairs for any CPC. He may

also be able to help with other computers, so try him at 14, Blakeney Crescent, Melton Mowbray, Leics LE13 0QR.

Lloyd Garland, the proprietor of **Alchemist Software**, offers to assist with any Spectrum-related 'techy' queries and problems. His address is 126, Hayward Road, Redfield, BRISTOL BS5 9QA.

For help on Spectrum problems, or general hints, tips, and advice on 8-bit emulators, write or telephone Alchemist Research, 62, Tithe Barn Lane, Woodhouse, SHEFFIELD S13 7LN. Telephone: 0114 269 7644. No costs, but if you can send an SAE and (where necessary) relevant blank media, it will help process the query much faster.

Commodore 64 Technical advice. If you have a technical problem on a C64/128 write to Andrew Fisher, the former tech consultant to **Commodore Format** and **Commodore Force** at 30, Rawlyn Road, CAMBRIDGE CB5 8NL with a SSAE or an Intl Reply Coupon.

For CPC-related problems, try the ex-editor of **WACCI** magazine, Philip DiRichleau at 32, Arboretum Avenue, LINCOLN Lincs LN5 7NG. Write to him explaining your problem. If Philip cannot help he will find someone who can.

Amstrad PCW 8256/8512 parts for DIY repair: 3" drives, CPU boards, Power boards, Tubes, Keyboards, printers, etc. Also some books and software. Advice freely given. SAE for lists and info. Ron King, 19, Stancliffe Road, BEDFORD, Beds MK41 9AN REF:1

For those who need help, where better to look than world-wide chat lines? **8BIT** offers to access the internet newsgroups which carry conversations between enthusiasts of particular computers. Note this is for *help* only; your editor doesn't have time to post sales and wants.

Send your enquiry on paper with an SAE to **8BIT**. On receipt here, it is posted in the appropriate newsgroup. One week later, or as soon as it is

likely that no more replies are forthcoming, the answer(s) is/are transferred to paper and sent back to the enquirer. That's it; simple and effective.

We have already had some notable successes, and a couple of failures, but generally it appears to work.

COPY REQUIREMENTS

A recently revised printed copy of **8BIT**'s requirements for advertising copy and other articles which are to be submitted for publishing in the magazine is now available in return for for a large SAE to Brian Watson at the usual address.

LATE ENTRIES

None this time.

NEXT COPY DATE

The date for copy to be included in the next issue of **8BIT**, which will be published early in January 1998, is 15th December 1997.

PS

If any computer group, fan club, publisher, PD librarian, retail supplier, or whatever, would like to submit a statement of what they offer, I will be pleased to publish it here (possibly with additional comment), after the small adverts, as space allows.

The intention is to offer '8-bit computer activists' an open platform to speak in a way which stands midway between news and advertising.

From the aptly-initialled PD Blake

Many people, especially newcomers to PCWs may not fully understand what Public Domain is about and the vast range of subjects and programs it covers. Here is what I can offer:

1) A choice of almost 200 PD discs including very much MicroDesign clip art (most of which is unavailable elsewhere), fonts and shade sets. Public Domain games, utilities,

CP/M, BASIC, MBASIC, databases, accounts, small 'C', tutorials and much more from £1.50 £2.50 per disc. MAJIKA I & II (fantasy text adventures; MAJIKA 1 has graphics, II is a massive 30levels long) and both are available at £1.50 and £5 respectively, MAJIKA III is in the pipeline, as are some encyclopedia programs (the first, prehistoric life will be released soon.

I must stress that my copying service is very much MicroDesign orientated with the vast majority of discs being clip art and fonts. However, almost 40 discs are unrelated to MicroDesign and there will be more in the future, although these will tend to be large programs written entirely by me.

2) Collections of discs with related subjects are available at reduced rates from the single discs.

3) Also offered is a MicroDesign scanning service (25p/50p per image)

4) MicroDesign 3 font families are available (olde english, free-flowing script and quite a few others, more to come in the future)

5) Free help (an SAE is a must) is on offer for newcomers to the PCW. If I am unable to help I may be able to put you on to someone who can. There is no charge at all for this.

Well that's it, that is all I offer, though new items may come to light in the future. If LocoScript 4's graphics capability accepts MicroDesign format (ie MDA and CUT) then that will open up another line.

I would also like to remind you that there is no profit at all to be made from PD, just a lot of work. It's a dirty job but someone's got to do it, and no one should expect miracles.

I hope that I give as professional a service as possible.

PD Blake, 32, Sample Avenue, Beverley, E.Yorks HU17 9DW. Tel: (01482) 864230

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DISCLAIMER: All contents of **8BIT** are published on the basis that they are opinion or believed true at the time of publication. I'm doing my best, but no liability can be accepted by me or contributors for any loss or damage, distress or upset, however caused. 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 if I get something wrong, please tell me if/when it happens so that I can set the record straight." Brian Watson, Editor.

THE REAL WORLD: Pressures on my time of family, business, hobbies and deadlines mean individual replies to letters cannot be guaranteed, promptly or at all. I'm not (I hope) rude, I'm just a very busy person.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Details of **8BIT**'s subscribers will not be divulged without their express, or strongly implied, permission.

LOW-COST REPAIRS: There is now a thriving network of low-cost repairers for small jobs on older computers such as replacing drive belts or drives (keeping old parts for spares). With supplies of older kit (especially peripherals) dwindling, it can be cheaper to replace an item than have it repaired, resulting in *working* parts of the failed item being lost when it goes in the bin. To minimise costs, especially on larger items, I offer a **free courier service** from/to East Anglia, East Midlands, and London. **8BIT**, especially the **MISCELLANEOUS** and **SMALL WORKS** sections, are the best places for appeals for (or offers of) help finding a low-cost solution. I assume permission to publish is implied with any letter received unless otherwise stated.

COMING AT THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY: *Probably* a 'small business' special, with **The Big Feature** on using your computer to run an office at home in an efficient and professional way. Also, some of the stuff which I didn't have space for in this issue. Copy date for that **8BIT** is 15th December 1997, with publication at the beginning of January 1998. The publication date may be brought forward to avoid clashing with the editor's holiday dates, so please submit all copy sooner rather than later.

FURTHER ON UP THE ROAD: Future **Big Features** are in preparation, on Emulators, Computers and the Law, Spreadsheets, The Great Games, Genealogy, and more. Plus, it is hoped, someone will offer an article on the mighty Spectrum in the "I've got a ... now what can I do with it?" occasional series. It needs to be reasonably well-written, and cover the differences and range of possible uses of the various models in the series, together with software and peripherals a new owner really should consider looking out for.

The Great British Word Processor!

Protex is the fastest and most complete word processor on the Amstrad PCW. It also happens to be the best value word processor on the Amstrad CPC too. **Protex** is used to produce most of **8BIT**. On one disc, the program features include:

- logical keystrokes
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- free tutor file on disc
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- simple Network, MicroDesign and LocoScript compatibility
- mail-merging and spell-checking *at no extra cost*
- *free printer support for any printer*; use your printer's built-in fonts or colour capability without any additional expense
- *free* user support is included in the purchase price, and the **Protex** helpline operates at normal telephone rates
- **Protex** handles printing in columns and colour with ease
- simply configured for more advanced purposes
- **Protex** can easily produce ASCII files for transfer the text between computers, either by software or by e-mail
- the *free Protex Users' Club* is available to all **Protex** users for the open exchange of tips, templates, and information

Protex has had 12 years continuous development. Above all, **Protex** remains fast and very easy to use. The user-friendly 'look and feel' of the program has been maintained throughout it's development. It is impossible to cover everything here. For further information on **Protex and many other items for users of CPCs and PCWs**, send an A4 SAE to Harrowden, 39, High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA. **CP/M Protex**, the 'one-disc' word processing solution, costs just £25 (including p&p) from **ComSoft**, 10 McIntosh Court, Wellpark, GLASGOW G31 2HW. Orders may be placed by phone on 0141 554 4735 or 01353 777006 quoting credit card details, the computer model, and the drive A: size when ordering.