



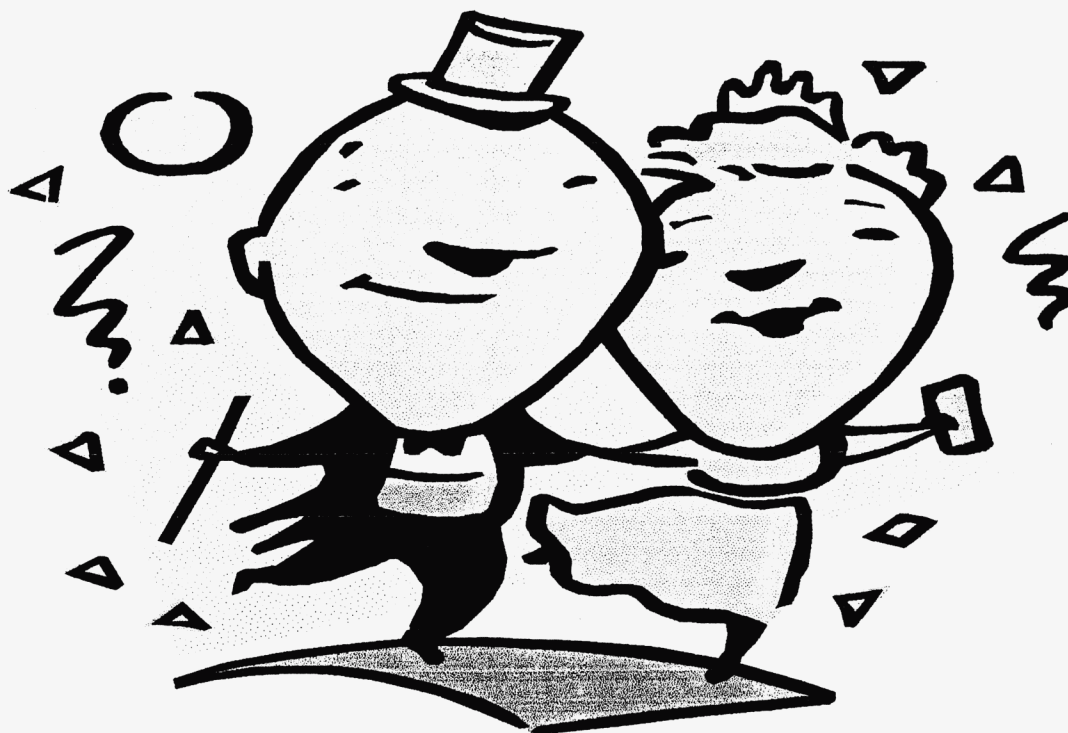
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WACCI

ISSUE 135

JANUARY 2001

THE MAGAZINE FOR CPC USERS
AND A MEMBERS SUPPORT
CLUB



A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL
MEMBERS.

WACCI

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Watch this space for other help Line
members names.

Why not include your name here ?

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Dave....

Thanx & Stuff

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ley.

Copy Date : JANUARY 2001

If life was only
this simple as a
Wacci Editor



Welcome everyone.

Let me start off by wishing you all a very Happy New Year. I do hope you didn't over indulge too much over the festive season. As for me I was working quite a bit over the Christmas including Christmas day, Boxing day, New years eve and New Years day. Hopefully next year I will escape that duty.

You may be wondering as to why you didn't receive any issue during the month of December, the reason was that my work load was so grate during the month that I just didn't have time to sit down and type away. In fact I hardly used the computer as by the time I got home ,wrote up the daily reports it was time for bed.

So this is a kind of an apology for the late delivery. However, I have two volunteers to ensure that this will not happen again if I

did this last December.

So to the two volunteers, may I formally thank you and I'm sure the members will want to know that John Bowley and Ron Izett are the two volunteers that I have mentioned.

I hope you find the replies to the questionnaires of interest, Frank went to a lot of trouble collating all the information for you all to read and I for one wish to thank Frank for his hard work.

Any publication of the magazine needs input from it's members, so I'm asking you once again to give it some thought on how you could subscribe to it.

Jonty sent in an interesting little article on how he fixed his AMX mouse and Printer problems instead of throwing them away at the local tip. You to may have some thing that could be of interest on how you fixed the problem with a piece of hardware or software.

typing away, like me you rather be sat next to the fire watching the telly with perhaps a glass of something, but I must stress that without material to publish, then there is no magazine for you to read.

With regards to the matter of the duration between issue's this will of course depends on the above statement so once again I ask you to put pen to paper or get typing away.

Well that's enough winging from me for this issue so I would just once again like to wish you all a Happy New Year and let us keep this great little club going for a long time.

As one of the committee members who is committed to do our very best to keep WACCI going, I wish to remind members that it is their club.

Dave...

FAIR COMMENT

By Dave Stitson



This is the page where you have your say,
providing it's printable.

Hello once again readers. I thought that I would start of this issue of the Fair Comments with a little bit from myself.

Firstly I would like to thank of the members who has offered to help out the club by taking on certain rolls within by offering their help or by taking part in producing the magazine.

Ron Izett has kindly offered to help me by laying out articles in column mode in order for me to insert directly onto a page within Publisher. Ron was a very active member doing this very same task when Paul was the Editor. Believe you and me when I say it can cut down my time spent putting an article together by over 75%. So to Ron I would through these pages offer my greatest thanks.

Here is what Ron does for me. I send all articles to him, he then loads them into Protext if they are in the Amsdos format, save them by using SANKO and then Doscopies them over to a 720K PC format disc. He then plays around with the text and formulates the text in columns using a WACCI template. They are then posted to me to load up and make any adjustments or add clip art and finally I add a page number. When I stated that this saves me at least 75% of my time I'm not joking so Ron is a great asset to me.

To double check the spellings etc., our Chairman Frank cast his eyes over copies of the pages and on their return I can then finally print out the pages. So to both of the two members I must say once again a big thank you

again a big thank you. Oh I must not forget Jonty who has also helped out by sending his articles to me in RTF format on a 720 K PC formatted disc.

I would also like to thank those of you who have phoned me to say that how pleased you are with the clarity of the text in the magazine. It's down to me using a different font and size that's all.

Now to mention all the other members who have offered their services in one way or the other.

Roger Graves Games reviews.

Sean McManus Book reviews and Basic.

John Hudson User Support.

Frank Frost User Support.

Ron Izlett Editors Assistant.

Ray Powell PD Librarian.

WACCI WEB SITE.

There are a few nominees and the committee feels that it would be a good idea for this to be a joint effort as we would like to think that WACCI's Web Site will be around for some time yet. Me I have No Idea how to put one together, but I'm sure the members putting it together will do us proud.

Dear Dave.

I purchased my CPC 6128 brand new from Comet on the 28th February 1986. (still got the receipt but I think the guarantee may have run out ?) It has been used most days until just recent years,, I have used it at all times without any problems until now.

It would appear that I have succumbed to the dreaded drive belt problem of yore, even my spare machine which hardly ever got used has the same problem. I know the drive belt issue has been covered in the past on more than one occasion and in great debth. Can I suggest that those in the know, send in information to WACCI on where and if these are still available for you to publish in the magazine.

I suspect that many CPC owners like my self do not use their machines as often as they use to and may benefit from updated information on the drive belt issue. I use my CPC to access the large amounts of data that I have accumulated over the years. I could of course transfer it onto a PC but I find it easier and quicker to just access it on the CPC (when it's working).

Regards

Andrew Solomon
22 Holm Garth Drive.
Bellfield Avenue.
Kingston upon Hull.
HU8 9DU.

After typing this letter sent to

me by email from Andrew, I received another email from Andrew stating that he had just received his WACCI and found the answer to his drive belt problems.

I QUOTE....

That's quick service as I only sent you an email three days ago. Regards Andrew.

Glad to have assisted you with your problem Andrew.
Dave>>>

<< Andrews request for help reminds me that there is always someone out there wanting information or updating on where and how to get hardware or software. Never assume that NO ONE WANT'S TO KNOW or that WE ALL KNOW EVERYTHING.
Dave >>

Dear Dave

Could you please alter the email address as shown on the inside cover.
frank@fneatherway.free-online.co.uk
No problem Frank it will be done but just in case I forget, here it is for all to see.
Dave>>

Dear Dave

Jonty has asked me to remind members that if they are in need of help with art work for a game etc, please contact him either by disc or on paper.

Jonty can supply Letter heads, Fonts and if you have a design that needs tidying up or finishing then he is your man. He will respond to your request if you enclose a S.A.S.E.

You can contact him on mobile

07901 722316 or write to him at

Jonty Jones
17 Beechway.
North Seaton.
Ashington.
Northumberland.
NE63 9TD.

<< Sorry Jonty I couldn't use you advert for this service, my scanner is playing up Dave>>

Hi Dave

Is issue 135 out yet ? < well no not really this is it >> I haven't found time to renew my subscription yet but expect a postal order soon.

Keep up the good work - the only grumble I have is the inclusion of the space filling AKTIV advert!! << As AKTIV hadn't sent their new advert and they are one of our major advertisers, what better than some nice publicity. AKTIV, I'm still awaiting your new advert but for this issue I have used you Christmas one Dave.. >>

I was thinking that now things are up and running again would you like me to continue writing an article for each 'News Desk' asks Simon, <<only to pleased to hear that you are re-subscribing and willing to send more articles >>.

I will make an effort to try and write a few more articles for you and send you some clip art CPC related as a Winzip file. If I haven't sent you any articles by the end of the month then send me a quick e-mail reminder and I'll write one (my memory is not the best).

<< Thanks to Simon Lucas for his support and for sending me some clip art by e-mail >>

Dear All

To those who have sent in any clip art or adverts for e to scan over into the pages, please except my apology for them not appearing, my computer is playing up something rotten and the scanner just wont work. Hopefully it will be looked at very soon by a friend who knows a bit about them. I'm told that my problems could be caused when I deleted the A.O.L Internet free trail from the hard drive, since then this darn machine has gone crazy.

Christine Raisin gave me some instructions over the phone but I wasn't able to sort the problem, but thanks for trying Christine.
Dave..

Dear Dave

Here is my second effort at editing and layout of the pages for the magazine. After a little re-jigging of the templates I think I've just about there. Any complaints, feel free to bend my ear Ron Izett.

<< Ron what you produced was fine except the version that you are using is not compatible to my Publisher 97. but as you will see in the magazine that I have left the Paul Wass hard copy of his article just as you sent it. As you don't seem to have the required fonts, I will send you a copy of them on disc.
Dave >>

Well that's finally it for the Fair Comment pages for this issue, I would like to see more members writing in or you can e-mail me.

Dave>>>

Dear Dave.

I'm not sure whether to congratulate you or offer my commiserations on taken the editors job, cos it's an awful lot of hard work. You certainly my thanks for helping to ensure that WACCI lives on.

In response to Conn O'Griofa's letter in issue 134, I'd like to point out that I distribute a CD of CPC loveliness which I have put together.

The contents is the same as the CPC software library I run online, and amalgamates the contents of the two primary Internet sites in Norway and France, along with a few odds and ends.

It comes to nigh-on exactly the same amount of stuff as the one from Epic (perhaps someone's distributing copies of my archive - I don't know and I don't mind anyway) *but* mines cheaper, in fact it's FREE although I would appreciate donations of £1=50 per disc to cover the costs, anyone outside of the UK have to pay postage.

I have another CD which members may be interested in. Many moons ago, Walnut Creek in the US did a CD of CP/M Software, I have that and can supply copies. Also included will be nearly 60MB of material from DRI (the folks who wrote CP/M in the first place) including source code for many of their products. Again the disc is FREE but I would be grateful if people would make a donation to cover any costs if they can afford it. And YES, if your wondering, I'm pretty certain that the disc is legal and available on my WEB SITE.

The Web Address is

<http://www.cantrell.org.uk/mirrors>.

If you or any member know of other useful CPC software which they think that I should include, then please let me know and I'll add 'em.

Anyone wanting copies of the CD's can email me on.
david@cantrell.org.uk

<< Thanks David for the information. Please remember members, David would appreciate a donation to cover his cost's. >>

Dear Dave

I just wanted to write to tell you how pleased I was to read your review of my game " The Further Adventures Of Fred " in the October 2000 issue of WACCI.

The game very close to commercial release a couple of times but was several years too late really. Although it was far better than a lot of the commercial stuff that had been released. Marketable games were much more sophisticated by the time I have finished writing it, In the end, Amstrad Action bought the rights to use it on a covertape, which to the best of my knowledge they never did. I still got paid though.

"Fred" was released as freeware in 1994 and now it's available from my Web Site at www.sean.co.uk I have two disks there as emulator disk files: the first disc includes The Further Adventures Of Fred, and all the type in games and utilities that I wrote for ACU and AA including Gribbet, Wallbuster, Fishtank and Paclone. This disc also includes

all the demonstration files and utilities for my book

" The Basic Idea " which now on the site in full.

The Sprite routines I developed for FRED were spun off into the Easi-Sprite driver and Sprite Definer packages that appeared on a AA tape and are also on the first disc. The second disc contains a three part adventure game for Children called "BUGS". If anyone's got Robot's CD Rom, the disc is already on there as number 10001 and I think it may be in the WACCI library as well.

If you haven't used an emulator before there is a tutorial on using one from the Web Site too, although the games don't work perfectly on the emulator I've chosen the one that's the easiest to set up. Don't worry if the game appears to freeze when you die, it usually comes back after a few seconds.

If anyone wants a copy of the disk file for the emulator but doesn't have access to the Internet, send me a 3.5" PC Disc and a SAE and I'll copy it for them. I know it's probably a crime to say this but I can't copy a native CPC version at the moment. I use to love programming the Amstrad, I wasn't the best programmer by any stretch of the imagination but I'm delighted and touched that people played my games and remember them today.

Sean McManus.

94 Harrow Court.

Silam Road.

Stevenage.

Herts. SG1 1JT

sean@liquidizer.demon.co.uk

<< Thanks Sean for the information and I'm sure there are

members out there who would be interested in getting hold of the CD's>>

Dear Dave

Re: WACCI 134 page 6.
"Amstrad PC 2086"
James Price.

In answer to James's enquiries. I would be very careful about removing the battery to "wipe" the BIOS and start the machine again!

From the model number stated I would guess that it is a 286 processor, and may have a MFM hard drive control.

Unless one has the Master disc it may be impossible to set this machine up. Not having a Master disc or a Manual, but if James would like to try this by holding down the Control/Alt/S keys when starting up it may reveal the set-up screen. (This is the combination for my Viglen 386 - a product of A M Sugar-Enterprises).

If James looks at the motherboard to check what the processor is he should be able to determine what the next step is. The combination of BIOS and processor may dictate what hardware and the software that can be used. The good news is that older machines and the software that they use are now very cheap!

BJ (cPCw)
PO. BOX 23.
Cromer.
NR27 9RZ.

RE: WACCI 134. page 6.
Re: File Transfer.
Frank Cosgrove.

It sounds as if Frank no longer has use of his 6128. If so then SANKO will not help. I use 2-in1 with a PCW to transfer

files from a 3" floppies to PC 3.5" and I'm offering to help out here. If Frank does not have access to his CPC. I can transfer the files if he supplies the floppies and return postage.

Rather than use Word etc, why not use Protext for the PC ? It will not be necessary to edit out any extraneous characters from the files then.

<< I think you will find that Frank has now hopefully sorted out his CPC. But I wanted to publish this little offer as it is what the spirit of CPC members is all about. Thanks BJ >> Dave...

RE: WACCI 133 . Page 5
CPC Printers.

Ron Hobday.

I agree with Ron that getting a printer for an 8-bit is a problem. Some modern printers can only print from Windows ! I have used a Kyocera LED printer with my CPC (Epson Emulation) and a Star SJ144 (Colour) now obsolete.

I currently use an Epson LQ100 and a canon BJ10 with my PCW. They both should work OK with the CPC although the 7-bit printer port may cut out the graphics and symbols. (I notice Jonty uses an LQ100 as well).

One source that may be worth while is PC owners upgrading their printers. I bought and one can get lots of printers etc. from "Micro Mart", the exchange and mart for Micro-computers. Most of the sellers know the machines they are selling and what it is capable of and can be quite helpful.

PS... If you don't want telephone calls if advertising for such equipment, just put your First Name and address in the wanted section. (BJ)

<< Dave would like to come in

here...

I have a Canon BJ-20 Bubble Jet printer that I used on the CPC for quite some time. No problems with graphics or symbols either. What I liked about the Canon BJ-20 is that its mainly for a PC but it has fitted the DIP SWITCHES that one can use it as a Epson Compatible printer. Mine cost £30=00 some two years ago from our local Evening Herald, someone was upgrading.

What did happen to me, with this printer was about 4 months ago, I went to print out something using the CPC. Nothing, the printer seemed dead. I obviously checked the 5 volt charger first, and as Ron stated one can't get to the inside to see if there is a fuse, I should imagine that if one knows where the clips are placed then yes one could get inside. However, the printer was put away with my intentions to really bust it open to see if there was a fuse that I could replace. Eventually last week I decided to have a look at this printer before dumping it. I just connected the charger, switched on and to my astonishment, it worked and has been ever since. I'm not saying Ron that this might work with your printer that went dead, but it's worth a try.

If I hadn't plugged in the charger and switched it on it would have been crushed by now or buried under tons of rubble at the Tip.

To this day, I have NO idea as to why it packed up in the first place but I'm very pleased that it's working once again as I rate it very highly as a printer.

Dave >>>

MARKET STALL

WITH ANGIE

Dave's Disk Doctor Service is Closing Down and here are some of the goodies on offer.
I suggest that you give him a phone call, write or e-mail to see if the item that you are interested in is still available and what other items are for sale.

HARDWARE.

V21 / V23 Modems (2 off - price for each)	£10=00.
PCW Battery back up pack.	£10=00.
Spike protector plug.	£ 5=00.
Japanese high quality 3" disks - unused per 10.	£25=00. Inc P & P.
Japanese high quality 3" disks - used/reformatted per 10	£10=00. Inc P & P.
5.25" HD Floppy Disks - unused (3M branded) per 10	£ 5=00. Inc P & P.
Dust cover for 8000 machines (3 piece)	£ 6=00. Inc P & P.
Dust cover for 9000 machines (2 piece)	£ 5=00. Inc P & P.
DIY Replacement drive band for 3" drives + instructions	£ 5=00. Inc P & P.
DIY Replacement armature for 9512 printer + instructions	£ 5=00. Inc P & P.
Tape streamer for PC including 8X40 Mbytes tapes	£ 20=00.

SOFTWARE

Locoscript 1. & CP/M for 8000	£ 5=00.
CP/M Utilities / Dr. Logo for 8000	£ 5=00.
Locoscript 2.Loco File.Loco Spell,Loco Mail, + manuals	£15=00.
Loco Font set 1. for 8000	£ 5=00.
Locoscript 3 upgrade (3.06).	£10=00.
Money Manager	£10=00.
Sage Accounts	£10=00.
Sage Accounts Plus (includes invoicing)	£15=00.
Sage retrieve (database)	£10=00.
New Word	£10=00.
Mini Office Professional (including Planit!)	£10=00.
Pyradev-Development pack for assembler progs. CPC/PCW	£10=00.
Microsoft Word 2 (on 5.25" floppies)	£ 5=00.

BOOKS

Computer hobbyists handbook	£ 5=00.
Get to grips with basic	£ 5=00.

Further discounts on unused Japanese Disks for quantities of 100 +.

Postage and Packing extra unless stated.

More books and items for sale that is not listed. FOR DETAILS CONTACT

DAVE'S DISK DOCTOR SERVICE LTD.

41 TUTSHAM WAY
PADDOCK WOOD.
KENT . TN12 6UA

E-MAIL : daves@diskdoctor.co.uk.

WEB : [://www.diskdoctor.co.uk](http://www.diskdoctor.co.uk)

Tel : 01892 - 835974

Fax : 0870 - 055 - 2959.

HARDWARE HORRORS

BY JONTY JONES

It has been a part of the CPC's history and it will remain a part of our fundamental love hate relationship with the machine even after we swop to the something PC related.

Hardware Horrors that's what, simple little things that can go wrong and have often plagued us all some time or the other, you now things like, Printer paper jam up's to monitor burn. I have no doubt that we have all had problems of some sorts but have never let on, but why keep it to ourselves I ask ?.

Here is a good idea for articles, tell the other members of what problems you have experienced with hardware and how you overcome them, now I'm no Technical expert or wizard at fixing things but I have been able to prevent throwing away hard to get hardware by just simply sorting it out on my own and here are a few examples to start this series off.

AN AMX MOUSE.

Some years ago I got me a mouse for my DTP packages, the old wrist was suffering from those mind numbing key presses that you have to endure. Early last year for some reason or the other I stopped using the mouse but recently I picked it up again as my wrist troubles started all over again. To my horror the mouse was causing some kind of feed back and was

locking everything out.

Assuming the worse I threw it in the draw meaning to throw it away at some time but I totally forgot all about it until a few months later on I came across it once again. Having nothing better to do at the time I decided to investigate the darn thing by taking it apart to check it out.

The moment I opened it, a small but chunky spring fell out and there was another attached to one of the keys, a return spring for the key I thought, so I replaced it by pushing it back until it clicked in to place .

Screwing the who thing together and feeling very pleased with my self that was until I found it did just the same as before I thought that I had fixed it. the machine just locked out and did nothing. Not being someone to give up easily I set about stripping it down again but this time I removed the other spring so quickly rebuild the mouse and try again.

To my amazement it worked and a lot smoother with the key return actions too so now my little mouse sits happily in it's little holder dangling from the side of my GT644 monitor and being used once again and my wrist is very thankful that I didn't throw it away . Useful things these little devils.

You Don't Turn Me On
Any more is the statement by my LQ-800 printer.

Amongst my many printer past and present I have this LQ-800 a chunky but great printer all round.

One day it would not switch on, assuming the worse, I decided to strip it down and give it a good clean, it was worth I try I thought, this was a total waste of time so being totally stumped, once again I pulled it apart and located the ON/OFF switch and gently pulled it free. From the plastic flip switch I freed the two wires that were the same colour and connected them together. Securing them with insulation tape and re-assembling the printer I switched on and hey presto it worked, the little print head purred away like a kitten and after a trial run connected to the computer it still works today.

Of course my only ON / OFF switch now is at the mains and one day I will figure out how to get the internal ON / OFF switch working again.

These two examples on sorting out hardware problems could trigger someone out there reading this to write in to say how they got over a problem without throwing the piece of equipment away.

Jonty Jones.

Thanks Jonty

GAME FOR A GAME

Paul Wass gets hooked on Gameplay!

EARLY DAYS

I would say my first attempts at playing any sort of game on any machine, was on a Atari 2600 games console. Having three sons at the time started off the games challenge. You know, "Whats your highest score on such and such?" "Bet I can thrash you" "Bet you can't beat my score" "Come on then Dad if you think you're good enough". So initially that threw down the gauntlet and put a purpose in the game play, to beat what ever or who ever had the highest score on a game. But it didn't stop there. Soon they were bringing their friends round, and family relations were keen enough on some games (not all) to join in as well.

The first game was't space invaders as you might have guessed but Decathlon. If you had one of these consoles you will remember it was a joystick hell, and nearly always gave you blisters to match. As we called it a "wriggly, wriggly" It was a game for four players, which made life a little easier. Having three sons, they could all play without that dreaded moaning and falling out as kids do. You know "I'm going first, dad, mum, tell him its my turn, its not fair he's had two goes". If you have children you'll probably know what I'm on about, for you without these "luxuries" what bliss. Anyway back to the game, as I mentioned it was a game where the joystick movement from left to right moved your character in which ever event was on, the faster

you wiggled the faster he went, hence the blisters. At times it actually felt as if you had competed in all ten events, so much sweat, and them blisters, but as kids go, they wanted to go again straight after the game had finished {no chance!}.

This started me off writing all the scores down, from every game comparing it each time to see if their scores had been broken. Eventually I sorted it all out, made little cards out, bought the file boxes and kept everybodys top scores only. If nothing else it gave an added interest in the actual playing of a game, and the kids had something they could get their teeth into. From here on I started to give the games numbers as well, for easier filing. This system I still use today, games without scores became my b games, and if you had a copy of my database it would be self explanatory. So I'll stop boring everyone now and continue. Oh! I still do the scoring too.

I still own an Atari 2600, and I have 60+ game. It doesn't get used a great deal these days, but when it does all those memories come flooding back. Thank goodness for nostalgia!

YEARS LATER.

On veiwing a 464 in my local BOOTS I was hooked. I had to have one, at every shop window that had a machine in sight I had to stop and gloat. They had only just come onto the market but I HAD TO HAVE ONE. I eventually bought one, but having said that I actually sent for some

games first, which I received before I'd bought my computer. Among the those games, yes, you've guessed it, was Decathlon, although different to the Atari version, it was still as addictive. Another one of the games purchased was an all time favourite, and still is. Chuckle Egg, a great little game, which I use as a starter when we get visits from my nephews and neices. It's simple enough for a four year old, after of course you select the joystick controls for them, and also its very addictive. I get asked as soon as they walk through the door, "Uncle Paul, put me Chuckle EGG on", keeps them quiet for a while I must admit.

Meanwhile the numbering and the score cards were growing, and the number of players too, who actually played on the different machines. Over the years it's gone on and on. There are now 1300 games on the AMSTRAD score sheets so to speak, and over 2000 games in total. I think all of these facts has added to my efforts in trying to collect every game for our little machine, whether it be on tape or disc. There has been a total of 130 people over the years played on my little Amy, all of whom have their piece of input on the score sheets. As I said before, it gave it and still does give it, a bit more of an interest, and I think thats why it

still has its number one placing in my house, and why its been an attraction with the kids, not being or getting bored with it.

I should also add at this time I didn't pick up the 6128 until 2 years ago, at the WACCI convention, which drastically changed my collection to discs. That doesn't mean I've stopped collecting the tapes, but I've started transferring my tape games to disc, which is a full scale task in itself. I also fitted a ABBA switch, something I knew nothing about, as well as a 3.5" drive, something else which was completely new to me. Long gone are the days of my 464, which now remains in its box collecting dust. My 6128 has taken over, fitted as well with a tape recorder, with just the odd game which is still 464 based only and won't run on it.

MACHINE SENSE

I guess I have none, other than loyalty to my 6128 which has its permanent place, and to those machines which I also have in my collection. I had better say our collection (sorry dear). They consist of the following:

ATARI 2600 {60+ games}

ATARI 800 XE {30 games}

VIC 20 {not tried since I had it given to me}

COMMODORE 64 {900 games or so}

COMMODORE AMIGA 500 & 500+ {650 games} {1 each}

SPECTRUM +2 & 3 {never tried 200+ games}

AMSTRAD 1640 2 OFF {WIFES'}

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM & GAMES {WIFES'}

SEGA MEGA & GAMES {WIFES'}

At the time I was writing this, two were winging their way to us:

AMSTRAD 9512

AMSTRAD 8256

All of which will take up one bedroom space and will have their own place of rest.

COLLECTING

I think, all in all, these maybe the reasons for collecting all the games, for all the different machines. When they're gone they're gone forever. Possibly to that great keyboard in the sky, and I think they are reasons enough.

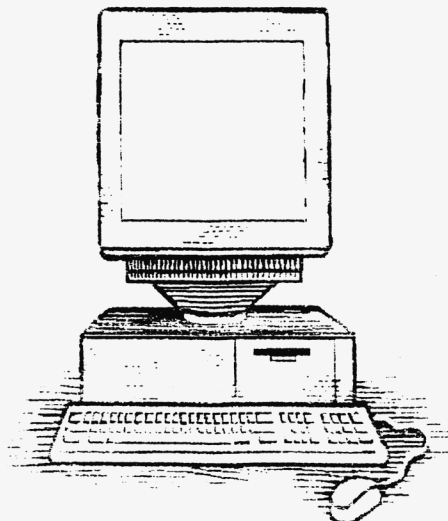
WHERE DOES IT END?

NEVER I hope, but with the days of the PC the life expectancy of our little machine is inevitable. It's a dying breed, it's had its crowning moment, all its pomp and glory, and the dawn of a new era is upon us. Only the faithful shall remain until the bitter end and beyond.

LAST THOUGHTS

If you posses a few games and you think you can help, please contact me at the address below.

Paul Wass
86 Jenford St.
Mansfield
NOTTS.
NG18 5QZ



My Favourite Games.

Believe it or not but I'm not a Game Player, but with Grandchildren, sometimes one is forced into being shown up at the key board. This frequently happens in my case when they arrive with their CD's ready to challenge Grand dad with the PC game.

Ok! they win this time, remember they have had a lot of practise but when I boot up the CPC 6128, load "Paper Boy" and throw the challenge open to them, Granddad comes out as the champion every time.

It's the same with the game "Chucky Egg" I come out on top each time that they challenge me. Hence I do not get challenged very much these days with games on the CPC.

I know that if they lived nearer than miles away in Germany, they sure would get a lot of practice in as they don't like being beaten by their grand dad on his own ground on a machine that I'm more familiar with and with games I think are easily mastered.

Dave ...

DES on ROM

By ?????

DES. A ROM-based WIMP front-end introduced some years ago by Comsoft. . The long-defunct Amstrad Action raved about it, demanding that we all invest in it, but do we need it ?.

So let's look at it. It comes on two Roms, so to start with you will need two spare slots in your Rom Box.

On boot up, DES takes over from Amsdos. We are presented with a brilliant white screen which made me screw my eyes up a little and blinked rapidly until I became accustomed to it. Our eyes are then captivated by the options open to us plus the copyright notice.

File. Disc. Options.

Down the right hand side there are four more each with an icon which represents its functions. So DRIVE A and DRIVE B have little images of a three inch disc. A shape of folder represents the USER X and a centipede represents the ROMS, further down the page is a DUSTBIN entitled WASTE.

Under each option the first letter is underlined I.E.: F - for File. D - Disc. O- Options. A for Drive A. B for Drive B. U for User. R for Roms and finally W for waste. Why is that I asked my self ?. I soon discovered that by pressing the underlined letter which is a short cut to operating the function, saves having to use the cursor keys or a mouse.

There is a pointer that needs moving about, but by using the short cut's it is easier than using a mouse, I know because I found out that it takes a fair bit

of time getting the pointer from one point to another, that's when I discovered by pressing the underlined letter, things moved faster.

OK, let's slip a disc in Drive A or B whatever takes your fancy, and press the relevant letter, your disc is then catalogued showing all the files on the disc. All the files on that disc will be represented on the screen with a different icon. So a BASIC file will be called Basic, a BINARY file will be represented by a load of digital numbers and a DATA file will be a scrolling thingy. The mouse or it's alternatives can be moved from file to file and one or all of them highlighted. Let's leave them highlighted it's what you're suppose to do if you want to run a program.

Now lets see what the three options along the top do and just to remind you they are.

FILE DISC OPTIONS

FILE

Tap the (F) and you will find yourself with a whole host of options in a vertical box and for sake of clarity I'll list them for you
HORIZONTALLY.

Run. Rename. Copy. Display. Print. Set User. Attributes. Info. Select all. Select type. Deselect all.

Most of these options are straight forward. Run will obviously Run the program that you have highlighted. With the Copy option and you only have one disc drive, be prepared to a great deal of disc swapping. With a program of about 60K in length, it will take at least 5 or more disc swaps to copy that program having just one drive.

DISPLAY

It does what it says, displays text files.

ATTRIBUTES

This may be useful if your the type who wants to know more about the programs, I'm not so I cant really comment on this option.

SELECT ALL

If you have two drives and want to copy the files from one disc to another or make a back up disc, then this option is quite good for that but I wouldn't advise use of it if you only have the one drive.

DISC

Tap the (D) and guess what, yes there is another selection of options which I will list once again.

Format. Verify. Copy. Copy.B. Archive to tape. Archive from tape. Run CP/M.

The format routine is very fast but limited, initially, Data, Vendor b if you have Romdos or one of it's ROM based chums it incorporates those for the "B" drive. But not the MSDOS format routine like Doscopy which is a shame.

VERIFY

Is quite useful but there hasn't been any new 3" disc's since Noah parked his ark above the high tide mark. Yes 3 disc's do develop faults, these can be formatted with BD04 or a program named CORFORM. What these two programs does is to gather the poor sectors in a dummy file in order to prevent them from being over written, what is strange is that a disc with these dummy files can't be Verified and that's a crying shame. The disc drive grinds away and we are informed that there is a read fail. It's much the same if the disc has any one of the odd format games houses used to favour. "Read Fail" See what I mean about huge stinking minuses bearing in min that DES was about the last serious development for the CPC.

COPY.

This routine isn't so bad if you're copying Data-format files, but like the verify routine it doesn't like anything out of the ordinary. The copy B using a buffer feature is rather good. It copies drive B to drive A, suggests that you change discs in B, then copies the files back again. Very useful indeed and relatively speedy. I haven't tested the archiving feature because I lack a suitable tape recorder, but such procedures are fairly common and can't be much different

The third option choice merely lets us change the screen display (It's a pity the default isn't better than it is - Black on Brilliant White not the best selection so far as optical health is concerned). And from it we can now run CP/M programs. Hurrah!

Now for the other choices, the ROMs selector is a third instance of a huge minus. Look if I want to Protext from ROM, the program I'm using, I don't want to select the ROM from a icon, then Protext from a list of my ROMs, then the CP instruction from the options available to me under that and finally tell the thing to run.

I just want to type |CP, and be off on the wings of a fairy Instantly, like you do and it's much the same with other ROM programs. They all have one or more RSX calls and in my opinion, they can't be bettered least of all by a graphical interface like DES.

Here is another minus, the WASTE BIN. Let us say that I want to delete five files, I have to highlight their icons and then take a trip to the waste bin. Then I have to confirm five times that I want to delete them. To delete file in Amsdos is a bit of a fiddle and this is better but not much. Surely one overall conformation that the five files need deleting would have been enough. Now before anyone takes me to task, I know Microsoft's Windows is almost as long winded over file deletion, I just wanted to point out that I think this method of deletion of files could have been thought out a bit better. I'm told this is a safety measure put into the program to prevent accident deletion. Oh well ..

So there you have it. DES and what do I think of it ? Well, the longer I have and use it I have found my self more frequently using a command that I have not mentioned yet and that is, by holding down the Space Bar on fire up in order to cut out the program all together, especially if the program I want to use is on ROM.

There are some benefits like the disc copying feature but it's no more flexible than JL-COPY that I like to use, it would have been nice had the copy routines been as excellent as XEXOR or DISCOLOGY.

Here is another minus, it takes up two precious ROM slots in your box which is a lot out of the eight slots available in mine.

I think a bit more in the way of features is required such as a sector editor, or a simple text editor kind of a notepad.

The idea at it's launch was that it might well become a software launch pad with other programs developed to work specifically with it and may be if that had happened, I would have given it a score well into the eighties. As it is I'm hard pushed to score the program in the sixties. This is my opinion of course and those of you out there may disagree with me.

<< Dave here. Thank you to whom ever it was who sent in this article. My self I could never get on with DES and like the writer, I found it to long winded at times. We all have our favourite programs to work with and it was interesting to hear that JL-COPY is still used or liked. >>

Dave...

FLOPPY DRIVE PROBLEMS

BY B. J.

Dave here is a compilation of stuff that I have garnered or made use of over a period of time that I'm sure will be of interest to others. I know you have just covered floppy drives in the last Issue. I did forward an article some time ago but it never got published. I would appreciate it if you only used the PO.BOX Number.

FDD Compilation

Adding or changing to a 3.5" or 5.25" Floppy Drive can present problems, but the following information may help to overcome most of them.

CONNECTORS

The chart shows the relation of 26 and 34 pin connections, all you need to do is to get the right connectors. 3.5" drives use a DIP like the FD1 drive does, while the 2.25" drives use an edge connector like the one on the back of the CPC.

POWER

The 3" and 3.5" drives use the same connector, but the wiring is different, as you can see from the diagram below, NEVER use an unmodified connector on a 3.5" drive. It is a costly experiment as I know.

Pins	4	3	2	1
(on PCB)				
3"	5v.	Gnd	Gnd	12v
3.5	12v*	Gnd	Gnd	5v
5.25	12v	Gnd	Gnd	5v.

* only older 3.5" drives use 12v

As a 3.5" only uses 5-600 milliamps it may be possible to power it from the monitor, but 5.25" cannot be powered this way as they need more power.

Your ABBA - dabba - doo!

To swap drives A and B a la "ABBA" switch- read on.

Various pins controlling drives are not connected on the 6128 main board, while the PCW has this done on the wiring harness. This lets Amstrad make identical single sided drives for A and B. By inserting an extra wire and a DPDT (Double Pull Double Throw) switch you create an ABBA switch, but 3.5"s are different !

The 3.5"s are physically set to A,B,C or D (DSO-4) with jumpers or switches. (The latest types use surface mounted jumpers and you have to decide if you are up to this work or use alternative wiring).

HD fiddle DD

HD is a nuisance ! Some HD drives can work perfectly well with the CPC, but discs and formats are something else. Anyone who has re-formatted discs from Rodos/Romdos/Parados high capacity to data format may find they have read errors on other machines.



This is because all the high density tracks have to be overwritten by the low density

format. Is the answer "degaussing" with a large magnet ?.

Using a HD drive can cause hardware problems as well, with an HD drive finding errors that do not actually exist when you use a HD floppy disc. It does seem to vary from manufacturer to manufacturer << I have found that I some times have to cover the extra hole on a HD disc to get it to work on the CPC. Dave>>

The TEAC drives that pin-board use for PCW's are modified to get over this problem. There are problems in transferring over work as well. The CPC may format on HD discs satisfactorily, but moronic

" high performance" machines with HD drives will not accept anything on a HD disc but an HD format! Add to this the difference of 1.44 MB PC HD, 1.76 MB Amiga HD and a rumoured 1.92MB Windows 95 format and you can see we are not the only ones with format compatibility problems. the simple answer is to always use Double Density discs only.

ARE YOU READY ?.

No ready signal on pin 34 presents a problem, but not an unsurmountable one. Advice in a past WACCI said to connect pin 34 to ground (Gnd). for the ready signal with a switch on line for ON/OFF.

A further refinement is to make a simple "normally closed" push button switch. This allows you to ignore switching until Diskit or a similar programme reminds you to remove / insert a disc, when a simple press of the button will keep the programme happy.

PIN OUT CHART.

		CPC			PCW	
Shugart I/F	PIN	A	B*	A	B	
Ground	1	-	34	-	-	
Not used	2	-	NC	-	-	
Ground	3	-	32	-	-	
Not used	4	-	NC	-	-	
Ground	5	-	30	-	-	
Not used	6	-	NC	-	-	
Ground	7	1	28	1	1	
Index	8	2	27	2	2	
Ground	9	3	26	3	3	
Drive 0						
(A) #	10	4	25	4	NC	
Ground	11	5	24	5	5	
Drive 1						
(B) #	12	6	23	NC	6	
Ground	13	-	22	-	-	
Motor						
On #	14	-	NC	-	-	
Ground	15	7	20	7	7	
Motor						
On #	16	8	19	8	8	
Ground	17	9	18	9	9	
Direction	18	10	17	10	10	
Ground	19	11	16	11	11	
Step	20	12	15	12	12	
Ground	21	13	14	13	13	
Write						
Data	22	14	13	14	14	
Ground	23	15	12	15	15	
Write						
Gate	24	16	11	16	16	
Ground	25	17	10	17	17	
Track 00	26	18	9	18	18	
Ground	27	19	8	19	19	
Write						
Protect	28	20	7	20	20	
Ground	29	21	6	21	21	
Read						
Data	30	22	5	22	22	

Keyway For CPC DRIVE (B)

Ground	31	23	4	23	23
Side					
Select	32	24	3	24	24
Ground	33	25	2	25	25
Ready #	34	26	1	26	26

* Numbers as shown in the manual

These may vary on different PC Drives/ Cables.

NOTE

The trace on a cable is Pin (1) at both ends. (Pins 1,34,2 and 33 are often indicated on drive Printed Circuit Boards).

Thanks BJ this was a very interesting article on the floppy drive problems. I must admit that I haven't had very much trouble with my drives since I have owned a CPC except recently with my 3.5" second-drive. About two years ago I did have to change the drive belt on my old 6128 machine, thankfully I had the instructions with the kit that gave me the warnings about that little pin that is capable of falling out if the drive is turned upside down while apart. So I suppose that I have been very lucky with my 3" drives.

The 3.5" second drive problem seems to be that I have fried it by the charger shooting up to 20 volts so I'm on the look out for another replacement as I'm totally lost without it.

Did anyone else experience any problems with there drives?. well why not write in and tell us about the problem and how you solved it.

Dave...

COMPETITION

FOR FUN

- Who did James Bond marry?
- What are the French Police called?
- What was the Wright brothers plane called?
- What are the 6 main vitamins?
- What gives the sea it's blue colour?
- Which country produces Gruyere Cheese?
- What is the largest weight category in boxing?
- Who is the American state of Virginia named after?
- In which century were the Wars of the Roses fought?
- Of which bird did Sinbad the Sailor discover the eggs?
- In which book did Humpty Dumpty first appear?
- Which is Britain's longest cycling race?
- In which ocean was the Mary Celeste found abandoned and adrift?

The winning entry will receive a voucher for Three selections of PD from the library.

All correct entries will be placed in a hat and drawn by me.

Closing date for sending in your entry will be Friday 23 February 2001.

Go on have a go, it's only for fun and you could win your self some FREE P.D. Software...

Dave...

GAME REVIEWS AND CHEATS BY ROGER GRAVES

Roger has kindly sent in some reviews and cheats on games, and asks that if you have any other cheats or hints on any of the games then please let Roger know.

STARQUKE. A REVIEW OF THE GAME

I find this a wonderful game to play. It has good graphics and is addictive so be warned as you find more teleports and can travel around easier. You can collect various items to help you to increase your energy levels, these gain you more bridging blocks increase your firepower and find the extra men along the way (the Joystick sprites). The music is OK but you will need to turn the volume down after awhile as it is quite repetitive.

Here's a few tips and cheats to help you.

- * Always try to find the ACCESS CARD and the KEY a.s.a.p. this lets you travel around freely.

- * Visit the core first travel

(Travel to the teleport QUORE, go up using the ship at the bottom, drop your ship off and run to the right), to find which 9 items you need to collect and take back to it.

- * NEVER drop your ACCESS CARD or KEY once that you have them-you will never know when you'll need them.

- * Use the item Transfer Pyramids when needed (you must have the ACCESS CARD to use them). These allows you to swap items that you are carrying but don't need for the items that you will need.

- * What out for the killer

BOLTS. One touch from these and your dead.



THESE ARE ALL TELEPORTS.
VORTEX. TALIS. DULON.
ELIXA. INDOL. ASCIO.
ANGLE. UPAZZ. AMBOR
KRYZL RALIQ SNODY
OPITK QUORE.

And here is a handy little poke that gives you loads of lives

Address &0578. Poke &FF
(These can be poked from the initial menu screen of the game).

NOTE** When you used this poke your "lives left" will read 15, If you collect any extra men at this point it will change to "00" and then if you die it is game over!!!. I would advise on loading at least 20 men quickly and collecting more men throughout the game but keep an eye on your "lives left"; making sure it does not reach 15 again.

I hope the above information on this and other game reviews and cheats are of an interest to you and if you want a copy of this

game or any of the games that I have reviewed, then please send me a formatted disc and a S.S.A.E. and I'll return it to you with haste. (Please note that it will be in a Multiface Format).

CRYSMISS

A simple PD game by A.Stroiczsk.

You have to move your ship (A rotating ball)around the screen to collect the crystals avoiding deadly obstacles / enemies along the way. An easy game to play but not very exciting.

TETRIS

A brilliant Tetris game by Thomas Albert. and I don't remember as to where I got it from.

One or Two player option. Some new shaped blocks from the original and the screens don't always start 'Empty'.

I think this is a PD or a Shareware program, but there is nothing within the game defining its status.

However, if Tetris is your ilk, then this game is a must for you.

Should anyone out there want to see a review on a Game or any Utility. Please let me know through the magazine and I'll do my best for you.

Roger Graves.

Thanks Roger for the reviews and you offer of help.

Dave...

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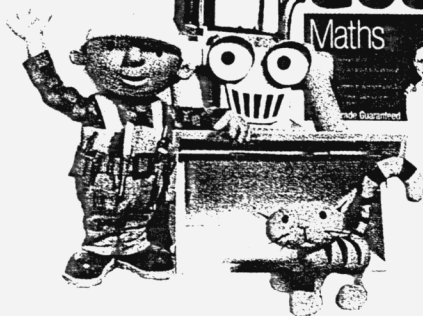
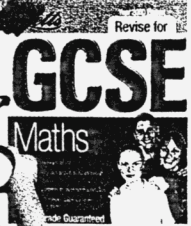
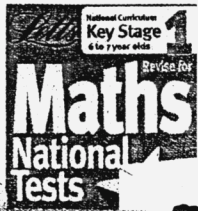
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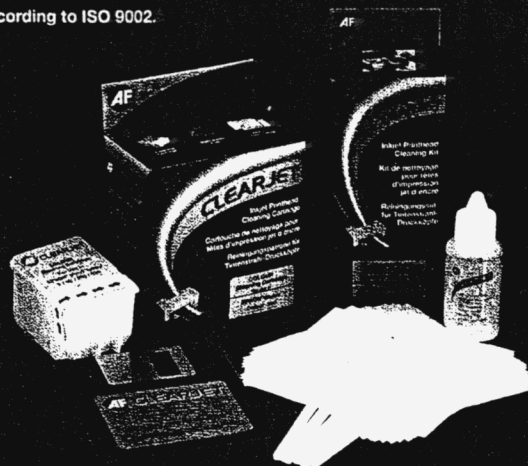
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PRESSURE GROUPS A ZILLION PLUS ONE

Peter Rogerson disapproves of Government and other plans to connect us all to the Internet.

SHOCK, HORROR!!

What's this, brothers and sisters of the Wacchhood? The return of the Saint? And why am I writing a PC-orientated article after having so vociferously defended the sacred pages of WACCI against those devices of the Devil? Read on, beloveds, and discover....

It's all to do with the Internet, really. Now before you hold up your hands in horror and exclaim that the Internet has no proper place in CPC literature because the CPC just can't cope with its intricacies let me put your minds at rest. I know all that, which is why I've got a PC as well as a set of CPCs. But we live in an age that the future may well end up referring to as something like the birth of the age of electronic communication and it behoves all of us to have opinions regarding it, especially if we like to consider ourselves being in some way Computer literate.

DOT.COM or DOT.CON?

The Government is going to make computers available to the financially distressed at a cheap price so that they don't get left behind in the world-wide dash to endless communication, if we're to believe what the sainted Chancellor of the Exchequer has to say. At the same time our beloved BBC seems to spend more time and energy creating web-sites than it does telly programmes. The whole atmosphere has to do with the miracle of the Internet and what it can offer us.

And as a regular user I know just how great that miracle is. It's like having access to the world's largest set of encyclopedias in the privacy of your own home without having piles of paper everywhere. And more. There are more resources at the Internet-user's fingertips than any man ever had before. Probably more than all of his ancestors had in their entire combined life-times, going back through the generations to the birth of everything. It really is that fantastic.

There's only one thing that makes this rosy garden turn a tad weedy and that's cost. Not the cost of the computer; you don't need a racy Pentium-3 machine running at god-knows how many hundred megahertz to have full access to the information superhighway. A much older machine will do, from a fastish 486 onwards. And such has been the volcanic explosion of PC technology that Internet-suitable elderly PCs can be picked up for not much more than a song. So our beloved Chancellor of the Exchequer is not being so generous if he tries to make out that by hiring elderly PCs to paupers he's doing them huge favours. Because the biggest cost is not the computer. It's Mr BT's telephone charges.

COST PLUS-

Various Internet providers have come along and free access is just about the standard these days. But still the whole business of using the Internet is costly if your income is

as modest as is mine. Most providers charge local call-rate for Internet calls, which ranges from about 3p per minute peak time to less than 1p per minute at weekends (there are other rates so don't write in to tell me - my ISP charges 1p per minute anytime, but it's all part of a complex package which includes cable television and line rental). At first glance this might not seem so bad. For a mere 10p you can have maybe twelve minutes on-line on Sunday morning, time to do all manner of things. But the experienced Internetter knows that is not necessarily the case.

LOOK IN-BUT WATCH OUT!

You may, for instance, feel driven to use the Internet to do some research, maybe helping the school-children in the family discover some obscure piece of information as part of their homework. So you turn to a search engine - there is an ever-growing army of such helpful devices. It's there that the red herrings get thrown at you and each little scarlet fishie takes time to explore. Worse: some of them are out-and-out porn sites disguised as the very thing you most want, and you find yourself ploughing through them keeping half an eye on the kids in case they're watching, and all at a time when the internet is under greatest strain because it's

early evening, rates are as low as they'll get and yours aren't the only kids home from school. And on top of it all you might have got connected via a poor line. And more: the entire universe seems to need the same information as yourself. The thing grinds mighty slowly and your 10p is soon eaten up, as is the next and the one after that. The phone bill hits the ceiling. Mr BT grins his fat-cat grin because you and countless thousands like you are paying him huge sums of money for the frustrating privilege of surfing the net at peak times. The kids homework gets done, of course it does because they see what's going on and pop to the library before it closes in order to borrow the first appropriate book they can find.

The system is letting us down. What we need is, maybe, a system like our American cousins enjoy in which the standing charge is higher but calls are free. But if we don't want the Internet or only rarely use it we might object at a doubling or more of the line rental, mightn't we? Yet there must be a system somewhere that allows for unimpeded use of the information super-highway whilst at the same time satisfying the telephone companies. Maybe the cable companies are in the best position to launch an attack on Internet telephone charges.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Here's an idea: maybe they might decide on a fixed-charge system, say 10p for each connection irrespective of how long that connection might last. So you'd lose out on a swift 25 seconds when you're checking

for e-mails but win hands down if you're on for an hour or more trying to dig out some obscure piece of information from a site in Timbuctoo.

There must be dozens of different ways of rebalancing the load so that Mr & Mrs Low Paid can afford to not just use modern technology but benefit by using it for as long as it takes for them to complete their self-appointed tasks. We live in an age when BT and its chums have got to take a long hard look at their pricing policies because, and this is patently true, profits in their sector of industry are out of all proportion to those of many others.

PC's FOR ALL (A LA BLAIR)

Government ministers can pontificate all they like. There are thousands of defunct cheap PCs out there so hiring a few of them to single parents and their families isn't as generous as you might think. If they really want to make a difference they should address the real problem. If our society is going to stop the slide into increasing social inequality then the new technology must be embraced and the great masses enabled when it comes to using it. And the greater part of this enabling must surely be a financial one. It's no good those in high places, men and women who wouldn't so much as blink at a three figure monthly telephone demand, pontificating about the future if they're not prepared to gently push the telecom giants into accepting their roles in the Brave New World that's rapidly replacing the old less brave one.

SURFING FOR ALL

You see, I am of the opinion that anyone at all, the pensioner down the road, unemployed middle-aged bod round the corner, single mother (or father) on the next street, any single person should be able to enjoy and

experience the internet if that's what they choose to do. It makes a person feel bigger somehow, like being part of something so huge that nobody ever dreamed of it before. And it is simply wrong for finance or the lack of it to get in the way.

This is where there ought to be a zillion little pressure groups nudging the telecom gentry. After all, their charges originated in days when their lines were used solely for spoken communication, when three or four minutes was quite enough for most conversations. But times have changed and their equipment is now used for weightier things. And I'd like to think that WACCI was one of that zillion little groups, adding syllable by syllable to the Grand Message.

And me? Well, I dream of using my CPC to connect up to the great superhighway but am realistic enough to know that I can't. So I've got a PC as a sort of peripheral to my Amstrad, not connected to it but definitely its inferior in my own personal view of things. And I really want my PC access to be affordable in such a way that I can move from site to site at will, gleaning as much as I can about the odd little things that fascinate me. Things like 50s rock'n'roll music on 78s, CPC software, life in Taiwan, more CPC software, the history of recorded sound and ... and ... and everything!

Peter Rogerson.

The SCART Connection

Interconnecting Audio, Video and Audio-visual systems in Domestic Households.

By Terry Ward (Part 1.)

For some years manufacturers have been fitting 21 Pin sockets known as SCART connectors mainly on Television and Video recorders, for household use.

(At present confined to Europe)
The idea is to allow easier inter-connection of equipment's with manufactured multi core cables rather than the usual trailing individual cables found in most homes, in addition the possibility of making direct connections of the three primary colour signals between equipment, should give a clearer picture and using the audio output of a TV to drive a HIFI music system should also give better sound. TV's are not normally fitted with good quality amplifiers or speakers.

LAYOUT FUNCTIONS

The following diagram shows the layout of a connecting plug and the functions of the various flat shaped pins. In a later article we shall look at how we can connect the output of the Amstrad CPC directly to a colour Television.

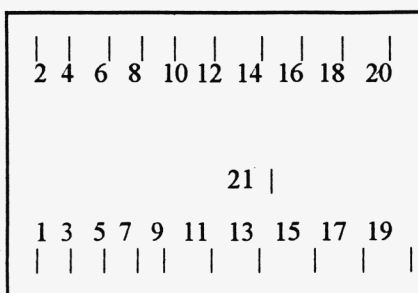


Fig . 1. (Male Pins) Plug

1. Audio channel B out
2. Audio channel B in
3. Audio channel A out
4. Audio channel A in

19. Video out
18. Video common
20. Video in
(composite video signals)

7. Blue primary colour
5. Blue return
11. Green primary colour
9. Green return
15. Red primary colour
13. Red return

8. Function switching
16. Blank signal
14. Blanking return
- No connection permitted to 10.
or 12, reserved for future use.

The external shield called 21. is to be used as a return for 8. and for general reference and shielding.

MATCH VALUES for AUDIO CIRCUITS.

Output impedance under 1K ohms . rated load resistance 10K ohms. rated output voltage 2.0 volts.

Input impedance under 10K ohms and between 20Hz and 20 KHz.

Rated source impedance 1 Kohms. Rated source e.m.f.m.f. 0.5 volts. Minimum source EMF to give rated output 0.2 volts.

The two separate channels can be used independently or for Stereo.

VIDEO CIRCUITS.

Composite video signals (pins 19 & 20), difference between peak white level and synchronising level 1.0 Volt + or - 3dB.

Impedance 75 ohms Superimposed d.c. component zero to + 2.0 volts. When the signal is used exclusively for synchronisation purpose, peak to peak voltage 0.3 volts- 3dB to + 10dB.

PRIMARY COLOUR INPUTS OR OUTPUTS.

The difference between peak value and blanking level 0.7 volts + or - 3dB. Input or output positive going signal.

For analogue monochrome signals the difference between any two primary colour signals shall not exceed 0.5 dB Impedance 75 ohms.

Superimposed d.c. component between zero and + 2.0 volts.

In all cases, signal voltages shall be measured under matched conditions. Each primary colour signal is provided with it's own adjacent return for connection of individually screened connectors.

We will continue this article in the next issue

Dave...

THE WACCI QUESTIONNAIRE REPLIES SUMMARY

and how I see them Frank Neatherway

In no way are my opinions reflected in this summary.

Only thirty-five questionnaires have been returned to WACCI in the four months since they were sent out and they represent approximately 29% of those that were sent out to the membership. The cynics may say that these members were the only ones to show enough interest to comment but the optimists might say that the other 71% were fully satisfied. Who can argue with the apparent majority?

However, let's see what useful lessons can be learned from these questionnaires: so I'll go through them question by question rather than take a global view.

As you may well imagine many replies were merely qualifying the answers without adding to them.

Q2. Are you pleased that the management functions of WACCI have now been distributed as they have?

A These must be satisfactory as only two members considered that

- 1) the committee members should be unbiased and represent members' views; or
- 2) WACCI must be run by people who use their CPCs and warn that there is no mechanism for the committee to be elected or people to stand for the committee.

Q3 Could you volunteer to be either a "reserve" for one of the posts or be a part of the User Support and/or Website development?

A This question has generated no less than eight offers to help covering User Support (2); Web site (3); general editing; tape-to-disk transfers and Book reviews.

Q4 How do you feel about the proposed mission statement 'WACCI is a club for Amstrad CPC users and enthusiasts'?

A These replies varied from just "OK" to "Excellent choice" with two members commenting:

- 1) that a regular committee with annual subscriptions would be a positive move away from the 'Old Boys' network; and
- 2) accepted in principal for emulated CPC users on PCs.

Q5 How do you feel about WACCI becoming a club, as proposed in the 'Thinking the Unthinkable' article, and moving to a system of annual (or 6-monthly) membership as described there?

A All replies were in agreement except five, these were an uncompromising 'No'; no reply at all; prefer the present system (2) or 'not very practical as the membership and magazine issues would soon get out of line'.

Other comments included:

There must be a 'regular' magazine publishing schedule;

Magazine period and club membership must match;

Membership charges should be paid by members at their own discretion;

Credibility needs restoring first;

Membership has been based on receiving a certain number of magazines.

But if membership benefits stop after a year issues would outstrip benefits.
Unworkable. Insist on subscriptions for a minimum of six issues.

Q6 How do you feel about WACCI's magazine adopting a regular bi-monthly publishing schedule in future?

A No less than twenty-nine members were happy with this, five would accept it if WACCI could not manage a monthly but only one said that a bi-monthly publication would give problems in dealing with serial articles and replies to Fair Comment.

One suggestion is for letters/urgent messages could be published on the website.

Q7 Should we assume that members' contact details can be included with each letter published in WACCI future, unless the person requests they be withheld?

A twenty-nine members agree that this could be accepted but six do not. The reasons given include:

One also needs to consider the security implications of publishing;

No. You could not assume. If the writer says it is alright there should not be anything wrong;

I foresee objections to this: perhaps the name and county/postal district only would be a compromise. If the writer wishes he could ask for full details to be given;

No problem with address being shown but I think telephone number should remain secret;

No - it may even break the Data Protection Act;

No way - name is sufficient.

Q8 Should we continue to publish the magazine in its present format?

A Thirty members agree with the present format, one does not know, one prefers A5 and three qualify with:

Yes - unless other formats are more economical;

Providing it is readable format is a matter for the Editor;

If printing and distribution costs are no longer viable, switch to disk or tape.

Q9 If not, please state your preferred format.

A Only eleven members answered this question and some of those did not, I fear, understand the question.

However, two members would accept A5 format;

Two would accept fewer pages;

One would accept A4 stapled at top or side;

Two would accept the magazine on disk.

Q10 How do you feel about WACCI paying its contributors of magazine articles etc with free issues?

A The majority of members - twenty-three - agree with free issues, seven definitely not and five unsure.

The reasons for rejecting the use of free issues vary :

Definitely not;

Bribes should not be needed or offered;

The committee do their work free so club members should do the same;

Either contribute articles for free or not at all.

Another suggestion is to offer free issues to series writers only.

Q11 What, if anything, do you suggest should be done with WACCI's Book, Disc, Tape and ROM PD Libraries?

A Only seven members had no suggestions at all.

Of the remaining twenty-eight about the only general agreement is that the Book Library should have the

surplus books sold off and the rest retained but the other libraries were sometimes ignored. However, I shall deal with the libraries by type.

Book: sell off duplicate books and retain the rest.

Tape: Only one suggestion is for it to be disposed of but other suggestions are for it to be on the website.

Disk: Again, this should be kept and possibly put on the website

Rom PD: What is this library?

Another suggestion for the disk and tape libraries is for them to be transferred to a PC and have them copied off to CPC format disk/tape as they are ordered.

Q12 Should we offer the facilities of WACCI's various Libraries to non-members, perhaps at a higher price per item?

A This is the type of question that I like - it needed only a simple 'Yes' or 'No' - but there are the usual qualifications which make it interesting although many qualifications are similar.

No less than twenty-six members, many of whom suggested that the higher costs would help WACCI revenues, agreed to the offer, four didn't know and five gave an absolute 'NO'.

The reasons for rejecting the offer included:

Less chance of a non-member returning the item;

Just ask them to subscribe.

Some of the 'agreements' have comments such as:

Safeguards against pirate PD libraries;

Perhaps the extra charge being a payment towards eventual membership;

Need to protect the inventory - ask for a deposit;

What about sending a copy of the magazine to shew them what they are missing with a request to join.

Q13 How do you feel about WACCI exploring areas of common interest with other computers' user support groups?

A Another occasion when thirty members agree, three don't know and two are against the suggestion

The reasons against are

a blunt 'NO' and

'Pan-8bit is NOT viable, PC/PCW is done better by those specialist groups.

Q14 How do you feel about the proposal for WACCI to stage another Convention as time and funds allow?

A Twenty-one members agreed to the suggestion, twelve would not be able to attend for various reasons usually because of health/disability and two

would not attend anyway.

Among those who agreed there were varying comments such as:

Somewhere central to members;

At a reasonable cost - like Peterborough;

Good idea but would like to see more demos and demonstrations and not so much a market;

Maybe the format needs to be reviewed;

To keep costs down one member could offer a Scout Hut;

Especially if in conjunction with other groups;

Not at any expense to WACCI funds. Should be financed by ticket sales so venue is all important to attract sufficient people.

Q15 If *you* had compiled this survey, what question would you have added and what is your answer to it?

A If questions have been submitted without their specimen answers they have been ignored.

Although given the opportunity only twenty-two members took advantage of it. Some questions were, as may be expected, duplicated, so lets se what we have:

Q Do you enjoy WACCI?

A Yes

Q Should WACCI cater for PC users on PC topics?

A No.

Q How would you like more articles on the use of CP/M?

A With the problems members seem to have they would be very useful.

Q In the interest of image, machines of the WACCI era should be known as 'Classic Computers'.

A Agree/Disagree?

Q what do you look forward to reading in the magazine?

A Second-hand bargains, Program listings, User tips.

Q At what level of membership should WACCI fold?

A Forty members.

Q What are you willing to do for the Club?

A Anything within my ability.

Q If WACCI were to have a regular article listing topics/areas/programs etc that they wanted someone to investigate/analyse/review would you be prepared to volunteer for an assignment and write an article about it for WACCI?

A Yes.

Q To find out the average age of club members would you be prepared to give your age?

A Yes.

Q Do you want more CPC/PC related articles?

A Yes, provided a clear breakdown of actual costs of surfing the web downloads, etc. Very important to people like myself on a very limited income!

Q Should we embrace our PCW-using cousins?

A Yes.

Q Would a section on PCs be helpful?

A Only if covering compatibility between them and the CPC. The same applies to the Amstrad PCW/PcW range.

Q What type of articles do you wish to see in the magazine?
 A Hardware projects; possibly simple repairs and fault finding. As our CPCs get older they are prone to problems.
 Q Would you want non-CPC related articles in WACCI if there was a shortage of CPC articles?
 A No.
 Q What do you use your CPC for, and what else would you like to do with it?
 A Very rarely for writing occasional letters using CP/M Protext but would like to be able to draw maps.
 Q What is your main use for the CPC?
 A Programming.
 Q What sort of articles do people like?
 A Programming; networking; new developments like FutureOS. Not articles on PCs.
 Q Do you want WACCI to continue and will you remain a member?
 A Yes and Yes.

Although the questions have been dealt with as far as may be practicable there are always secondary details which whilst not linked directly to the questions have, nevertheless, many interesting features.
 So let's have a look at them.

One member would like to see articles with circuit diagrams, PCB layouts, component specifications, etc., made available so that members with technical ability themselves or access to that of others can effect repairs.
 So many equipments these days are sold without such information and then in time even professional repairers do not keep such information for very long as equipment goes out of production.

Another member foresees a revival of specialist historical interest and would not want WACCI's assets dissipated. Perhaps when he retires he might even write software to enable CPCs to use modern printers, etc.

Another suggests that it would be helpful if a review of article/program was to have a list of PD or other programs that relate to the subject.

A member asks if someone who understands RAMDOS will write a few good articles because in his opinion its Instruction Manual is not much use. Also someone will write an article on codes for colour printers and how to insert them in the word processor printer codes for the Protext word processor.

Another would like articles describing the Book Library books with a brief description of their contents.

Another thinks that WACCI, by limiting itself to the CPC, is like stagnant water. New ideas need to be drawn in. He would also like to see help and advice pages for all the old 8-bit machines: where to get spare parts and how to fix them. Briefly, he would like to see a column about modern computers. If the CPC is to

survive then both it and WACCI need rebuilding.

Well, I think that that is all and perhaps this analysis gives you food for thought. Oh yes, one member considers that the WACCI Committee get their magazine issues free. Let me assure that person that we do not get free issues but pay for them as do you all. Also, despite the verbosity of the questionnaires each and every one is actually read completely.

+++++

Thanks frank for your hard work gathering this information

THE " F " KEYS

BY MICHAEL SMITH.

Have you ever wanted to make more use of the 'F' keys ?. If so then read on as Michael has kindly sent in some programs on a 3.5" disc that allows you to alter the function 'f' keys to give you not 128 characters but a whopping 1,280 characters, so it is said.

Yes there has been articles in past WACCI's about the 'f' keys. What inspired him to write in was an article from Peter Rogerson's very interesting article on Protext under the heading of " Microing Around " by allotting his macros to all nine function keys stating that there wasn't a great deal of space in memory allotted to them, well he was right.

Putting his thinking cap on Michael remembered there was an article in 'Amstrad Action ' some years back on how the writer had Protext on ROM and that he had run in to the same limit of characters on the function keys. Delving deep into a box of 'AA's, he came across this article from Pat McDonald in AA number 48 on page 26 where Pat had written an article on how to increase the number of characters from 128 to a whopping 1,280.

Michael sent me the programs on disc and I'm looking for a volunteer to receive the disc from me to play around with and produce an article on your findings. Michael also sent me a hard copy of the type-ins of these programs, again if you want a photo-copy of them then please let me know.

Thanks Michael for going through the trouble of delving into the archives of 'AA' I wonder just how many other interesting CPC articles are lying in a pile of dust collecting magazines that members have not been fortunate to read.

Having had a look at the answers from the questionnaires I'm sure there are quite a few very interesting articles in such magazines that members have used to their advantage that would benefit other members.

FOR ALL OF YOUR PD
SOFTWARE ORDERS. CONTACT
RAY POWELL

FOR THE BOOK LIBRARY
CONTACT BRIAN WATSON

SUBSCRIPTION FORM 135.

UK.....ISSUES @ £2=00 EACH FROM ISSUE NO.....TO.....

EUROPE.....ISSUES @ £2-50 EACH.

WHAT MODEL CPC OR OTHER COMPUTERS DO YOU HAVE?

.....
.....

NAME..... Please send your cheques or
P/Orders to...

ADDRESS..... Angie Hardwick
23 Station Road
..... Bloxwich
..... Walsall
..... WS3 2PH.

POST CODE.....

PHONE..... Your Subscription includes your
Membership.

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