

cpc user

the international magazine of

The United Amstrad User Group.



by
cpc users
for
cpc users

DECEMBER 1993

The UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP was founded in 1986 by a handful of dedicated CPC enthusiasts. Membership now extends throughout Britain and overseas. The bi-monthly magazine CPC USER is written BY CPC users FOR CPC users and contains authoritative reviews and articles, and other regular features specific to CPC computers including 'MAILBOX', for general correspondence, and 'CONTACT', for member-to-member contact. The magazine also carries trade and members' advertisements. The BOOK LIBRARY is operated by post and is open to ALL members. The books may be hired by the month for a nominal fee. The PD SOFTWARE LIBRARY (Discs AND Tapes) contains many programs covering such topics as Games, Business, Educational, Language and Utility programs. Again, it is open to ALL members and is free of charge. The Editor welcomes the submission of articles for publication. Material should be submitted on tape/disc or typed. Hand-written articles are accepted but they MUST be legible. Contributions accepted for publication by CPC USER will be on an all-rights basis unless otherwise agreed and MUST be the senders own original work. No material may be reproduced in whole or in part without prior written permission of the Editor. Whilst every care is taken, neither the UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP nor its officers can be held legally responsible for any errors or omissions in articles, listings or advertisements. Material published does not necessarily represent the views of the UNITED AMSTRAD USER GROUP or its officers.

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Editorial

Well here we are again in the midst of the festive season. Just think of all that lovely turkey you can look forward to...(ARRGGHH!).

First of all, many thanks to those of you who decided to come along to the October convention. It was nice to see some familiar faces, and also to see a few new ones. Hopefully by now, many of you will have read the convention report in Amstrad Action written by none other than Simon Forrester. It was good to meet you Simon, even if you did spend your time chatting up the young talent....by the way, is it true you missed your train home? I wonder why that could have been?

Special thanks also go to Jane Neal for the donation of more books to the library. I've also been told that Gary Carter has donated some books. YES I did say Gary Carter. For those of you who didn't know, he's the one responsible for starting the UAUG many moons ago. It's nice to know you're still about Gary.

If you read Gordon's article on page 17, you will see that he is hoping to organise a convention in the Leeds area next year. I'm sure this will be welcome news for our northern members. Also, Ron Tye has offered to organise one in the Surrey area, so keep an eye on CPC User for further info...

Our Disc PD Librarian Richard Sergeant has now moved house, and he informs me that the library is now up and running again after a short break, so if you want any PD, then please remember he has a new address. It can be found on the opposite page.

You will probably have noticed that this issue is a bit thinner than normal. This is due to the lack of articles being sent in. Although I still have some articles to print, they are for future issues and CPC User desperately requires more input. So, no matter how small or large your article is, please send it to me (Big Ed..) now, otherwise I shall be unemployed. So, until I hear from you, ta ta for now....

CONTENTS

Editorial.....	1
Chairman's Bit.....	2
Member's Profile.....	2
File Rescue.....	3
Game Review.....	4
A Description of the NC100.....	5
Disc PD Library.....	7
Competition.....	9
La French Scene.....	10
The Firmware Guide.....	12
Beginners Machine Code.....	13
Database Type-In.....	15
The Plus Page.....	16
Gordon Speaks.....	17
The Protext Page.....	18
Tape PD Library.....	19
Wide text Type-In.....	20
Contact.....	21

CPC USER IS SHORT
OF MATERIAL
SO WRITE TO THE EDITOR
NOW ON ANY CPC RELATED
TOPIC AND HAVE THE
PLEASURE OF SEEING YOUR
NAME IN BIG BOLD PRINT.
PLEASE...WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Chairman's Bit

Dear Members,

Welcome to the Christmas issue of CPC USER. If you are thinking of treating yourself to a CPC upgrade, I suggest you contact Techno-Trade of Fareham who are offering 10% discount off all second hand 464's and 6128's to UAUG members. Their address is 167 West Street, Fareham, Hants PO16 0EF and the telephone number is 0329 234199. Their prices seem very reasonable even before the discount. 464's cost £79 for mono and £115 for colour, while 6128's cost £110 for mono and £149 for colour. Please phone first to check availability and carriage costs (Ask for Mr Gaines). All computers are sent by carrier and charged at cost. Brand new colour monitors are also available for the 6128 at £99 but no discount on these. Techno-Trade also wish to buy hardware, including disc drives & printers, and original disc software so contact them if you have items to sell.

I was pleased to see that we had four mentions in the October issue of Amstrad Action. In the Amscene Directory we were described as the 'AA recommended group', then in the Small Ads, Gordon had an advert in the Services section. Finally on the Public Image page we had entries for the Tape Library and the Disc Library. Many thanks to Gordon and the two Richards getting these mentions.

I am writing this back in early October and on Sunday I look forward to attending the UAUG Convention and hope to meet as many members as possible. For those who live too far away to attend we hope to include a full report in this issue. All that now remains is to wish all of you a Happy Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year. Tony Baker.



MEMBERS PROFILE



My name is Stuart John McNaughton, and I was born on the 14th of April 1977 in Holloway, North London. At the mere age of 15 months, my parents were convinced I had meningitis, but doctors never found anything wrong with me. Following this incident, I sustained a hearing loss for reasons unknown to this day.

I lived in Holloway until 1981 when we moved to Edmonton which was closer to the family. In 1985, we moved again, this time to Islington where my dad purchased and managed the first of many Public Houses. In 1988, we moved to Harlow in Essex where I began my Secondary education, but 7 months later we moved back to Edmonton.

I received my Amstrad CPC464 in 1986 at the young age of nine. At first I played games non stop, but then began to drift away onto the more serious side of things. Then, in 1991 I upgraded (so I thought!) to a 464 Plus. Though I must admit, it looked a lot more modern and tidier than the older CPC machine. Since then, I have bought a printer and a disc drive and my machine does everything I need it to do.

Then in April 1992, I had my appendix removed, which was not a very comfortable experience especially when a flight to Tenerife followed four weeks later (we were emigrating to the Canary Islands). Naturally (don't laugh!), I wrapped up my 464, printer and disc drive and took them with me. For six months I lived in Tenerife working nights at my Dad's bar. I really enjoyed it, but due to the inability to settle down, we returned to England in October 1992.

Having left school in the middle of my GCSE's, I found it very hard to catch up with my school work, but in June 1993, I managed to obtain four passes (1 B and 3 C's) which I am lucky to have achieved. Since returning to England, I have spent every spare moment on my Amstrad playing games, using word processors and databases and even swapping PD through the post with various friends.

I'm currently looking for some more PD contacts to swap PD on tape and 3.5" disc with, so if you are interested then my address is....

75 Nightingale Road, Edmonton, London, N9 8PX.

Rescuing Files for beginners

by Brian Watson

You must have read the good advice about always backing-up your files? Do you do it? Of course not! Never enough of the precious discs free.

Now, I like to think I'm not bad at some simple games, and I can do some interesting things with Protext, but a qualified, or even slightly experienced, disc doctor I am not. So what to do?

Well, the first thing to do was save the short file I was working on to a three inch disc in drive A. I always use three inch discs for back-ups; that way I have some protection if (when!) the three and a half inch drive conks out. This worked as usual and solved the first part of the problem, but I still had three hours' work spread across fifteen files on the other disc which I couldn't even find the names of, let alone copy off to another disc. Some of the file names I did know, or could find out by referring to the back-up disc. I knew I had a "BATMAN." on there somewhere. But where?

From articles I had read over the years and a conversation with Clive Bellaby about a month ago I knew that on each disc there is a directory area where the list of names of all the files which you can see on the screen is stored together with additional information about, say, whether the file is protected, where the actual contents of the file are stored on the disc, and so on and so forth. I urgently needed a quick rescue job so I sat down with a sandwich and had a good think.

There are two ways (at least) of getting at the files and other information on a disc. One, the usual way, is via the keyboard. You type in RUN "filename" to start a program, or CAT @RETURN> to find out what's on the disc, for example. The other main way to access the stuff on a disc is with a disc editor. The difference in the second method is that instead of the computer loading up the directory area discussed in the last paragraph and acting on the information it finds there, the editor enables you to look DIRECTLY at the information on a disc. All of it, directory and all. You can then, if you're very knowledgeable, brave or daft, change it. If there was a chance to get out of my predicament a disc editor might do the job.

The editor I used came free on an Amstrad Action

cover-tape a couple of years ago, but if you have another one and want to have a go try that. The dodgy disc was a big-format, three and a half inch one which had been formatted using ROMDOS or RAMDOS; I forget which, and it seems it doesn't matter. If your editor doesn't want to load, you may have to disconnect ROM boards, and multifaces etc, first. If you follow the loading instructions for your editor and put the offending disc in when necessary you will at last, like me, be faced with a display on your screen which comprises a lot of two digit "numbers" (e.g. AD 00 D3 C1) probably arranged in a grid pattern and also, with any luck, some information in "real letters" in another part of your screen.

Imagine an orange for a minute (believe me there is a point to this). If you slice an orange in half across the segments rather than from end to end the pattern revealed is like the sectors in which the information is stored on a disc. Once I found which sector I was looking at from the display in the border I found I could also choose which track to look at. A track is a band round the disc, rather like the separate songs on a LP record. Remember them?! So my editor let me look at any combination of sectors and tracks. I pressed a few keys but did not try to save any changes I found I could make to the two parts of the display reference.

The only clue I had to go on was that in my attempts to get at the disc before trying the editor I had tried the program called NSWP.COM. This had failed to "log on" the dodgy disc but at least it had the decency to tell me a sector/track reference WHERE it failed. After a while, and a full plate of sandwiches, I had found the areas, and there were several, on the disc where some of the familiar file names were found as well as some weird ones from previous uses of the disc and .BAK versions of the comics files. One of these areas was where NSWP.COM had reported an error. Aha!

I decided that if the fault was in there somewhere at least I could reduce the visible size of the problem by rubbing out anything that looked irrelevant. This may not be technically sound or even sensible in a general way but at least I approached it methodically! The reasoning went that somewhere in the directory was a bit (or byte) of information which was driving my CPC insane. The poor old thing just couldn't understand it. Get rid of the incorrect information by selective editing and what was left might make sense. If not I was no worse off.

CONTINUED ON PAGE...6

A look at Prehistorik 2

by Andy Gibbons

I first saw Prehistorik 2 at this years UAUG convention when Rob Watson, son of our very own Brian, asked me if I'd like to have a look at it. I seemed to remember reading a review of it in AA a few months ago which mentioned that there was a Plus specific version on the disc, as well as a normal CPC version, so I was keen to see what use had been made of the Pluses extra features.

Before the game can be played it is necessary to first of all negotiate three preliminary steps which centre the picture on the screen, configure any special monitor setup and finally, choose between the normal 128K game and the Plus version. Fortunately this does not take more than 2 seconds before you are presented with the title screen.

And what a title screen! The CPC version is quite impressive as it uses overscan, the method by which the entire screen is used. I believe that this requires some 33K of screen memory as opposed to more usual 17K not to mention some pretty neat machine coding. The title screen for the Plus version though, is something else! It too uses overscan, but the extended palette is also very much in evidence with the picture containing some very subtle hues of green and brown. It is very impressive, as is the sound.

I was only recently made aware of the fact that the Plus hardware contained a different sound chip (DMA) to its' older brother, and it is very much better, and that's before you take the monitors' inbuilt stereo speakers into consideration.

But, as they rightly say, a book should not be judged by its cover and nor should a game be judged by it's loading screen or music no matter how fancy. Gameplay is what is needed.

As luck would have it, Prehistorik 2 has got plenty of that too. You play the part of a caveman whose life, perhaps not unsurprisingly, revolves around his quest for gastronomic fulfilment - quantity as opposed to quality though! This search leads our man through a variety of neanderthal landscapes containing lots of baddies of the prehistoric kind. There are Bears, Giant Tortoises, Sabre toothed Tigers, Pterodactyls and Spiders all of who will try to make a meal of you.

This is a platform game where you have to pick up every piece of food that you can, before hunger gets the better of you. You must avoid these baddies though, who will drain your energy if they come into contact with you. You have a variety of weapons with which to sort them out in true caveman style, these being the Club, Big Hammer, Axe and Swing Axe. These are increasingly powerful but this is inversely proportional to their speed of use, and in any case you have to find all but the club first. Should you be unfortunate to be touched by one of these beasts you can regain the energy you have just lost by clubbing the beast to death and touching all of the six flying bones which result from the creatures sudden demise.

I really ought to emphasize the wonderful cartoon style graphics which are a joy to behold. The caveman is beautifully drawn and animated as are the creatures and the food which on the Plus version is so detailed that you could almost reach out and put it into your mouth. There is also a hang glider at his disposal which enables him to fly up to high platforms where extra nosh may be hidden, but I or my daughter have yet to discover this. In addition there are also a number of secret caves which contain a veritable banquet for our man as long as he can avoid the giant killer spiders.

The difficulty of the game itself is pitched at just about the right level and it is easy to get into. It is a really good example of a game that has excellent graphics and playability in the right quantities.

However, CPC 6128 owners should not think that the CPC version has just been cobbled together any old how as an afterthought because it hasn't. The graphics are identical apart from the scrolling and just having 16 colours to work with and the sound is still very good. The gameplay is still the same and at only £12.95 this has got to be the game of the year as far as the Amstrad is concerned.

No doubt about it. 10/10.

The NC100

A description by ?

In 1992 Amstrad released the first of their entry-level, laptop computers. The NC100 (Notepad) computer was, according to the information supplied at the front of the instruction manual, the brain child of the chairman of Amstrad, Mr Alan Sugar. It tells us that he was computer illiterate and wanted a computer that was so easy to use even he could work it!

What Amstrad came up with was a reasonably priced, easy to use for the beginner, (but still with enough thought gone into it to make it interesting to use for the more experienced computer user), 64k memory, laptop computer.

This series of articles will look closely at the functions of the NC100 describing its good features and its bad features. If you have been thinking of getting one these articles may help you to make up your mind. If you have one already and have some information you would like to impart to others about it then write to me (my address can be found on the inside front cover) and I will include it in future articles. Now on with the show!

Nearly everyone must have seen an NC100 by now, either "in the flesh" or on the telly during the extensive advertising campaign when it was first launched. When you buy one you get the computer, a black carrying pouch to keep it in, batteries, mains adapter and an easy to follow manual.

The computer itself is back (matching the CPC range). There is an 80 column by 8 line screen above a full qwerty keyboard. There are four coloured keys. These are the ones that are used to enter the different menus available on the Notepad. Just below the screen is a helpful reminder of the different functions that can be used through the function and control keys.

For those that have not used the Notepad before, I will briefly, for now, describe the software supplied with it. We will go into more detail later on. When you first switch the Notepad on you are faced with the choice of three menus. You can either enter the word processor, calculator or go into the address book/diary/time zone menu. The choice is simply made by pressing the function key (yellow key) followed by the coloured key indicated on the the screen. Red for

word processor, green for calculator or blue for diary. We will take a brief look at each of these options in turn, starting with the calculator.

THE CALCULATOR

To use the calculator the yellow and green keys are pressed simultaneously. You then use the keys with the green figures on them exactly the same way as a normal calculator. One disadvantage I find is the cluttered appearance of the calculator keys, having both green figures and white figures on. The display, however, is very clear with extra large numbers.

What more can you say about the calculator? Nothing, so let's move on.

THE ALARM CLOCK/DIARY/ADDRESS BOOK

1. ALARM CLOCK

The alarm is simply set by using the arrow keys to set the time needed. You can then have the alarm go off once only, every day or specify the date required for the alarm. There is also the option of having a message displayed on the screen when the alarm goes off.

2. THE CALENDAR/DIARY

When you enter this function you are presented with the current month displayed in the centre of the screen. On the left of the screen is various major city time differences (e.g. New York, Sydney etc.).

By pressing the arrow keys you can change days, months and the year displayed. The calendar goes from January 1920 to December 2099, which should be sufficient for most people! If a message is entered for a particular day it will be displayed on the screen when the Notepad is first switched on during that day.

THE WORD PROCESSOR

You are given the choice of three options when you enter the word processor, Start a new document, List the documents in memory or Print a document. The software used is a version of Protext by Arnor and although not identical to Protext on the CPC, it is very similar. We will look at the software in more detail in future articles.

SECRET MENU

Amstrad have provided the user of the Notepad with a 'secret screen' which is accessed using a 4 digit pin number. The user can then store delicate information which only he/she or someone with the correct code can get access to

BASIC PROGRAMMING

The Notepad has a built in basic interpreter that

allows BASIC programs to be written using BBC Basic. The manual contains enough information about BBC Basic for most application programs to be written, but the size of the screen limits the display that can be achieved. The manual also has some example programs to type in to help those that have not used Basic come to grips with it.

CONCLUSION

The NC100, although not perfect, is, in my opinion, a sound buy. The price of it has plummeted since it first came out and is now affordable to most people. If you are thinking of buying one there are several things that need to be taken into consideration. You will need the correct printer cable (this should be easy to get from any decent computer outlet) and a printer to produce a hard copy of your masterpieces. It would also be advisable to obtain an RS232 serial interface that would allow you to download documents to your CPC to avoid running out of memory on the Notepad (also to stop you losing any documents if the Notepad decides to reset itself, which has happened once or twice with mine!).

In the next article I shall look at the word processing software in greater detail and also some bugs that crop up during the use of the computer.

EDITORS NOTE:- Look elsewhere in the mag for an article on transferring files between the NC100 and the CPC.

WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT
CPC USER WILL BECOME
A LOT SMALLER
AND NONE OF US WOULD WANT
THAT TO HAPPEN!
WHETHER YOU'RE A NOVICE
OR TOTAL BIG HEAD ON THE
CPC, WE WANT TO HEAR
FROM YOU NOW. SO WRITE TO
THE EDITOR TODAY!

Continued from page 3.....

table which corresponded with the start of a file name "BATMAN.BAK" and typed 00 (zero zero) on the top row of my keyboard. "BATMAN.BAK" became "ATMAN.BAK". Very slowly and carefully I repeated this to replace the whole line with 00's. I had rubbed out BATMAN(BAK), or at least it's directory entry.

I repeated this with every line which had a .BAK file name or a name which I knew was not comic-related. Strictly speaking I suppose I could have tried to save the .BAK files but remember this was my first attempt and I could afford to be ruthless! When all the changes had been made in that track and sector I took a breath and pressed the key combination to save the changes to the disc. There was a strong smell of burning boats. I went through all the other directory track/sectors doing the same thing with file name information which seemed superfluous, saving the changes each time.

At last I had finished. I took out the disc, reset the CPC and loaded Protext with the dodgy disc in drive B. Good grief! The files were back, most of them anyway. I had lost two and so had to rely on my back-up disc and re-type the new information. But the biggest files with the most changes recovered completely as did the rest. To be on the safe side I used a spare disc to copy off the recovered files before I did the same to my back-up disc. I then threw the dodgy disc in the bin. I never want to go through that again and it seemed a false economy to risk that blighter letting me down again.

So there you are. Perhaps it was not what I should have done but it worked (almost). If there is someone reading this who really knows how to recover lost files from a corrupted disc, don't just sit there, tell us how it should be done.



DISC-LIBRARY UPDATE

This Disc PD section has now been split into AMSDOS and CP/M grouping. This has been necessary to reduce the amount of space used in the magazine. The two groups of PD will be published in alternate issues....

Also, because of the size, you are advised to send for the LIBINDEX which gives a fuller description of the library and only occupies 2 disc sides. It's certainly worth it.

This issue shows the *AMSDOS PD*.

- PD 2/5. Games, etc: Snooker, Blackjack, Horoscope...
- PD 3/1. Games utilities etc.
- PD 3/2. Comprehensive 'Masterfile' index for AMSMAGS
- PD 3/3. Like PD 3/2 but ASCII format
- PD 3/4. 2 part Adventure game. BLUE RAIDER
- PD 3/5. Font designer utilities disc menu etc.
- PD 4/2. Telephone exchanges in alphabetical order also see *PD 8/4 (better)
- PD 4/3. ASCII As PD 4/2 above but ASCII
- PD 6/1. Miscellany of mostly BASIC programs.
- PD 6/2. &&& UNIX SHELL (Centrox) LATEST VERSION
- PD 6/3. &&& Comprehensive & LATEST DOC for PD 6/2 above.
- PD 7/1. Random Database (2 DRIVES!) & Election forecasting.
- PD 7/2. Miscellany of BASIC files and utilities
- PD 7/3. PASCAL programs and demos.
- PD 8/1. Tourist guide of Wales.. plus others.
- PD 8/2. Most files need UTOPIA.
- PD 8/3. Graphical adventure.
- PD 8/4. PROTEXT STD codes in numerical order.
- PD 8/5. BASIC util's, includes calendar printer
- PD 9/1. Mostly word games. Some utilities.
- PD 9/2. Miscellany of games, utilities, novelties.
- PD 9/3. Assorted and varied BASIC programs.
- PD 9/4. A Mandelblot Generator
- PD 10/2. ASCII Documentation for FORTH 83 & CP/M+ HELP
- PD 12/1. Assorted BASIC utilities etc.
- PD 12/3. Assorted BASIC utilities etc.
- PD 12/4. A teaching aid (NEEDS PRINTER)
- PD 13/2. Most files are for ADV.ART STUDIO but some may be used from Basic.
- PD 13/3. Related to parts of PD 14/1. For Math buffs?
- PD 14/1. Mandelblot. Needs PD 13/3 to be of any use.

- PD 14/2. Useful Basic Util's: Screen Dump, Passwords
- PD 15/1. Telephone codes. Similar to PD 8/4. PD
- 15/2. Databases mostly for 'music lovers'.
- PD 15/3. Miscellany of graphics childrens' games
- PD 15/4. More fractals.
- PD 15/5. Adventure game and drawing programs.
- PD 16/1. Adventure games and mazes.
- PD 16/2. Utilities Games and Quizzes.
- PD 16/3. A.A. Collection 'Public Domain Type-ins
- PD 16/4. A.A. Collection 'Public Domain Type-ins
- PD 16/5. Games:- Fruit machine Card & Yahtzee type-in
- PD 17/1. A.A. Collection- 'Games Reviews 88-91'
- PD 17/2. Citizen 120-D Printer Util's- Updated
- PD 17/3. Basic Language Programming Tutorial.
- PD 17/5. & CP/M Basic Data Base and CP/M Utils.
- PD 18/2. PROTEXT Cobol Document's - Booklet Demo See PD 17/2
- PD 18/5. Stop Press Clip Art & some new Fonts: Vol. 1
- PD 19/1. Compilation of Quilled Adventures - 1
- PD 19/2. Compilation of Quilled Adventures - 2
- PD 19/3. Beginners Basic Tutorial Program & Examples
- PD 19/4. Stop Press Clip Art - Vol. 2
- PD 19/5. Stop Press Clip Art - Vol. 3
- PD 20/1. Compilation of Adventures
- PD 20/2. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 1/A
- PD 20/3. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 1/B
- PD 20/4. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 2/A
- PD 20/5. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 2/B
- PD 21/1. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 3/A
- PD 21/2. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 3/B
- PD 21/3. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 4/A
- PD 21/4. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 4/B
- PD 22/1. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 5/A
- PD 22/2. Music Files for Advanced Music Sys. Disc 5/B
- PD 22/3. Graph and Database programs
- PD 22/4. Graphic and Music Demo files
- PD 22/5. More Demo's
- PD 23/1. Super Lotus 123 style Spreadsheet
- PD 23/2. More Clip Art for Stop Press Vol. 4
- PD 23/3. More Clip Art for Stop Press Vol. 5
- PD 23/4. Games and Utilities
- PD 24/1. TEARAWAY - (Cut Down Version)
- PD 24/2. Page Maker - Simple DTP
- PD 24/3. Comms Prog in Basic & Machine Code
- PD 25/1. Another selection of Clip Art from Scull PD
- PD 25/2. Games Poke Disc - originally Scull PD

- PD 25/3. View/Create Squeezed Grafix Screens:
Scul PD
- PD 25/4. Miscellaneous & Interesting Progs:
Scul PD
- PD 26/4. More Miscellaneous Scull PD programs
- PD 27/1. Animation DEMO progs - orig Scull PD
- PD 27/2. AMIGA GRAPHICS No.1 - orig PENGUIN PD
- PD 27/3. AMIGA GRAPHICS No.2 - orig PENGUIN PD
- PD 27/4. Good Word Handling Suite of Programs
- PD 28/4. Neural Network Part 1.
- PD 29/1. Neural Network Part 2.
- PD 29/4. Scull PD - Graphics Slide Show No. 2
- PD 30/1. Super Slide Show No. 3 - from Scull PD
- PD 30/2. Page Maker Clip Art Viewing (Scul PD)
- PD 30/3. Scull PD - More Pages of STOP PRESS
- PD 30/4. Rocky Horror Picture Slide Show (No.4)
- PD 31/1. Paula Abdul & Delite Slide Show (No.5)
- PD 31/2. Games Disc - Scull PD (GAM1)
- PD 31/3. Games Disc - Scull PD (GAM1 - Side 2)
- PD 31/4. Print-Shop (imported from Germany)PD
- 32/1. GPAINT - German Art Pack & Clip Art
- PD 32/2. A Sample of DARTSMA PD type-ins
- PD 32/3. Another selection of DARTSMA PD.
- PD 33/4. EASIDRAW - Drawing Package
- PD 34/1. A Large selection of BASIC type-ins.
- PD 34/2. More type-ins to compliment PD 34/1.
- PD 34/3. Paul Dwerryhouse's DWERRY-BASE
- PD 34/4. The Kirk Database (6128 Only)
- PD 35/1. Graphic Screens - Originated WACCI PD.
Needs to be unsqueezed - use NSWP.COM
- PD 35/2. More Grafix from WACCI Collection
- PD 35/3. The WACCI Homebrew Collection - 1
- PD 35/4. The WACCI Homebrew Collection - 2
- PD 36/1. ISPELL Version 5.00 Spell Checker (CPC
6128 Only)
- PD 36/2. Large Shadow Font (Stop Press Clip Art)
plus Page Maker Update
- PD 36/3. Clip Art in Stop Press Page Format - 1
- PD 36/4. Clip Art in Stop Press Page Format - 2
- PD 37/1. Clip Art in Stop Press Page Format - 3
- PD 37/2. Clip Art in Stop Press Page Format - 4
- PD 37/3. Clip Art in Stop Press Page Format - 5
- PD 37/4. Clip Art in Stop Press Page Format - 6
- PD 38/1. Smogware System's RSX-LIB. Enhance
BASIC Programs with 52 New Commands
- PD 38/2. Another lot that came from Scull PD
- PD 38/3. A Very useful ASCII file scanner with
plenty of information to read!
- PD 38/4. Telephone Searcher (Update of 15/1)
- PD 40/3. The Second AMIGA Graphics Disc
from the WACCI Library
- PD 40/4. The Second AMIGA Graphics Disc from the
WACCI Library
- PD 41/2. Donated by TUCK PD (Banner Program)
- PD 41/3. Donated by TUCK PD (Clip Art 1
Selection) Plus Stop Press Clip Art - Vol. 8
- PD 41/4. Donated by TUCK PD (DTP Selection)
- PD 42/1. Donated by TUCK PD (Clip Art 2
Selection)
- PD 42/2. Keith Mortimer's Board Games
- PD 42/3. The Second Part of Keith's Board Games
- PD 42/4. Mixed Bag of Useful Utilities
- PD 43/1. Another Disc Based Utilities Bag
- PD 43/2. More German PD - Requires translation
- PD 43/3. Stop Press Clip Art - Vol. 9
- PD 43/4. Stop Press Clip Art - Vol. 10
- PD 44/1. Francais - An English/French Education
Program written by Andy Gibbons
- PD 44/2. Logon Systems' B-BASIC, this is a prog
for PLUS owners to access the 4086 colours
- PD 44/3. Another selection of a variety of Basic
programs from TUCK PD.
- PD 44/4. More Basic programs from TUCK PD.
- PD 45/1. Alyssa v1.6 written by Julian Cassin A
database program imported from Australia
- PD 45/2. A demo of Parrotty Plus Graphics
package from Treasure Island Software
- PD 45/3. A screen squeezer and viewer from WACCI
- PD 45/4. Selection of various visual programs
- PD 46/1. Print Enhancer by Geoff Short
- PD 46/2. Print Enhancer Fonts. If you have a 'B'
drive have these files available in it.
- PD 46/3. Australian PD imported by GDPD
- PD 46/4. Australian PD imported by GDPD
- PD 47/1. Pro Script a Professional Publishing
Package by David Wilde.
- PD 47/2. Stop Press Clip Art - Vol.11
- PD 48/4. Sentinel's PD Version of Zap"TBalls
Demo
- PD 48/4. The Philip Jimenez Collection, the
author guarantees these will work on all CPC's.
- PD 49/1. Miscellaneous Programs
- PD 49/2. Paul Dwerryhouse's latest version of
ISPELL v7

*The above PD Disc programs will all run from
AMSDOS, and SHOULD therefore easily run from tape
systems.*

*When ordering, only send good quality branded
discs, and if using 3.5" discs, then please
verify them before sending them. You may send up
to three 3" discs (6 selections of PD), or one
3.5" disc (4 selections of PD) in RAMSDOS D20
format for copying in any one month.*

*If you don't have any spare discs, then I can
supply brand new MAXELL discs at £3.50 each
(cheques made payable to UAUG). The price
includes 2 selections of PD and postage &
packing. Please send your discs in a good quality
jiffy bag and include return postage.*

*Your cooperation is appreciated, and helps to
improve our service.*

COMPETITION TIME

Terry Wogan, from Radio 2, has donated a wake up to Wogan alarm clock! It carries the Radio 2 logo and is about 10 inch tall! - worth £20. So please all members have a go! Competition No.6 with the 10 very hard word clues, all of the answers are hidden some where in the wordsearch when you have found all of them either cut out the page or please write them down on a plain sheet of paper, thus saving cutting your magazine.

Send to me:-

Richard Duggan,
United Amstrad User Group
Tape Librarian,
Flat 15, Hughenden Court,
Mount Pleasant Road, HASTINGS,
East Sussex TN34 3ST.

Please don't forget to add your name and membership number. Please have a go, there is a mystery prize for the first person pulled out of the hat and it only costs you the price of a stamp.

COMPETITION 6

- 1) Red rob changes to become the edge (Anagram)
- 2) It has it's point!
- 3) One in the deck?
- 4) Take point off American coin to find 'low light'.
- 5) Mood lu art will change for the better when tuned in.(Anagram)
- 6) There are a lot of spaces for this.
- 7) Two points before the curved structure when you look for it.
- 8) A chip off the old one.
- 9) The union goes back to start the program.
- 10) Change the tide before publishing (Anagram)

E	S	P	W	T	T	B	Q	W	M	I	D
J	F	S	E	A	R	C	H	R	S	J	G
R	N	O	Z	D	S	F	O	I	H	W	N
E	S	R	G	L	E	T	U	J	B	P	Y
D	F	T	J	S	A	C	U	B	F	A	N
R	T	O	A	L	V	T	I	Q	D	B	T
O	F	X	U	E	I	Q	P	M	T	P	R
B	U	D	T	I	R	K	S	V	A	U	M
N	O	J	Q	I	C	A	F	M	N	L	S
M	J	F	T	O	D	S	D	I	B	J	O
Z	U	N	L	Z	I	E	Y	R	S	H	I
X	F	B	A	H	V	A	S	D	R	A	C

COMPETITION 5 WINNER

I had the biggest number of competition entries this week - its a shame there can only be one winner. The lucky winner is TONY SHEPHERD of (KENT). You win two tape games.

The French CPC scene

by Brian Watson

This year the Watson family went to la Belle France for our hols. The fact that this is reputed to be stuffed with CPC stockists and enthusiasts was at least part of the reason for choosing the place; that and the fact that I am reasonably competent at the language so was in with a chance of asking the right questions and understanding the answers once there. Amstrad Action did a piece on the French "Scene" a while back but on re-reading it the only pearl to come across was that their small team of visitors had not found much software but they felt that the Hypermarches (large supermarkets) were probably the best bet for the day tripper.

Despite recently reading that it had closed down, I found Amstrad Cent Pour Cent (CPC/100%) now reduced to bi-monthly, but quite easily in many newsagents (even in quite small towns) and also the most recent back number in one. The apparent quality of the content was very high, including fairly technical stuff on the Plus series by a member of LOGON SYSTEMS. Unfortunately, upon trying to contact either of their two published phone numbers to enquire about ordering some more back numbers and a subscription I got a recorded message declaring both to be lines no longer in service, so maybe they have just conked out. Not to be so easily put off, however, I wrote to the company who handle their back issue mailing and will keep you informed if I ever get a reply.

The CPC software hunt was a highlight of my holiday, although perhaps other members of the family might not agree. I was looking for the latest (v6.0) version of Discology, which Jessico, a mail order company in Nice, have for 350F plus 30F post and packing (within France); that is about £40 all in. Regrettably I couldn't find it in any shops. The country is awash with PC's, Segas and Nintendo's and my enquiries for CPC stuff elicited lots of helpful referrals but no stock at all until we found an Amstrad agent in Amiens with only about five programs in stock including Fire and Forget on cartridge. He had a huge list from which he would be pleased to order on our behalf but I don't know if that would include sending them here. I still had hopes of buying "off the shelf."

But then at the start of the second week I found two wonderful shops in Rouen, both

authorised Amstrad agents. As an example of how the two countries are treated differently these days by the publishers and retailers this is How It Was.

Robert and I found a good range of full-price games in both shops. Between them they had Tiny Skweeks and a collection of Skweek games by Loriciel, Bart Simpson vs the Space Mutants, Cyborg, Prehistorik 2, Super Cauldron, Jim Power, Nigel Mansell's World Championship, Indiana Jones IV-The Fate of Atlantis, and others (many not available in the UK). All were only on disc and mostly in big colourful boxes which really make the presentation attractive as well as protecting the discs and comprehensive instruction books.

For about £25 I bought a superb 2-disc suite of simulation games by Loriciel/Futura called D-Day with instructions only in French (so that will take a while to get to grips with) and Ocean's SpaceGun on disc which only works on a 6128+. According to Amstrad Action, this was to be the last cartridge game but was never finished. Still no Discology v6, in fact nothing but games apart from Advanced Art Studio and some educational programs. Not even Protexit. The prices were usually between £15 and £20 per disc game, and £20-£25 for the compilations, many of which were exclusive to France. And they accept English credit cards.

And that's the way it remained, until we hit the Hypermarches on the edges of the port towns on the way back. There we found some large Electronic Duplication Of Software machines, very much the same as John Menzies and others use here. These are generally used to run off tape games, selected from the display, for the required computer. These were mainly about £4 each. Printers etc were available at about the same price as in England, but I didn't find a CPC of any description during the whole fortnight. And still no Discology!

So it may be a case of mail-order from Jessico, the mail order company advertising in the last Amstrad Cent Pour Cent. The two Amstrad shops in Rouen said that due to customs regulations and difficulties of packing they could not handle this, and as they were otherwise very friendly and helpful they may be right on the legal point from the French end. However, I have checked with the Customs and Excise office in Northampton and they say there should be no problem with mail-order. If I send the payment in Francs they should return the game. All legal and above board. When I was the manager of a gift shop in Cambridge there used to be a scheme for tourists to claim back tax on goods bought abroad. Apparently this now only applies to non

EEC visitors to EEC countries.

IMPORTANT P.S.: MINITEL

There is a system in France called *Minitel*, accessible through home micros and a cheap dedicated modem, which I would like to get further details on. If I get anything substantial I'll do a follow-up piece for CPC User. Minitel appears to be very widespread, as most adverts include a Minitel number as well as phone and/or fax. They appear to have good quality downloadable CPC software generally, and legally, available. My address for anyone with further information on CPC's and/or Minitel is in the contact section.

NC100 to CPC File Transfer by Richard Duggan

It all began when Elaine my wife started writing stories for woman's magazines and needed a easy to use computer which was compatible to my CPC, I was watching TV one evening when an advert for the new Notepad NC100 appeared, just the ideal computer to do the job, but one question had to be answered first, was the NC100 compatible to my CPC. After a phone call to Peter Campbell of Campursoft my question was answered, yes it is compatible and he also helped me out by sending me a writeup by Paul Dwerryhouse in WACCI called Serial Killer which made us decide yes.

But not at the price tag of 199.99 that was more like 250 when you've bought your RS232 interface and a lead to connect the two computers to transfer files, so we decided to look else were like the Exchange & Mart, on day I came across AMTRAC LIMITED 081-965-4727 who sold reconditioned NC100 Notepad for just over 100 including Vat. we decided to buy one and when it arrived found it to be a brand new one still in its original packaging.

HOW IT WORKS

It is so simple! All details are on the screen and it takes you step by step through the procedures. However, if you wish can customise screen features and printing features etc. So you can taylor make your machine to suit your needs, you can use the notepad direct to a modem and also to interface to other computers such as PC/PCW/AMIGA/ST/ACORN.

FOR

It is a very good inexpensive PC capacity machine which is user friendly, for the cost it is very good when you compare simulair laptop computers that cost twice as much. The keyboard is light and soft to touch. it seems like a portable Protex and Prospell all rape into one with a diary and calculator.

AGAINST

Memory expansion cards can be purchased from Argos but are extremely expensive for what they are (approx 48 - 200). I would not recommend these as you can tranfer to disk on your CPC to make back ups and only have a few files active on the Notepad, also the Basic isn't Amstrad its BBC but there is several programs already in the manual to wet your appetite.

TO CONNECT NOTEPAD TO CPC

All you need to do this from a CPC is an RS232 interface (Cirkit HS-S1) purchased from Avatar at 40 approx and a null modem cable from Dixon Express making sure you slow you serial terminal program down to 1200 baud rate and using the public domain version of MEX you can start to transfer files onto your CPC at the same baud rate, I could ramble on for pages but I don't think you, Mr Editor, would give me the space, so anyone wanting further details just contact me.

FINALLY....

We would not be without the notepad now. It is great to be able to take away from home and with the batteries I have even been able to use it on the train!



The Firmware Guide

This is the section of the magazine for all machine code addicts. As the Firmware Guide is no longer available, I have decided to provide you with all the necessary firmware jumpblock addresses, along with their relative entry and exit conditions. Most of the addresses can only be accessed via machine code, but some can also be CALLED via BASIC. In these cases, the address will be marked alongside with a (B). Some of these may not have obvious effects. Also, those routines which have NO entry conditions and are not marked, you could also try calling from BASIC, but the effects are unknown to me so try with care. If you have any questions about the routines, then please contact me. If a personal reply is wanted, then please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. I must tell you though, that I am no expert. I am merely taking the info straight from the guide.

108 SCR FILL BOX - &bc44

ACTION:-

Fills a rectangular area of the screen with a given ink, the boundaries of which are given in character coordinates.

ENTRY CONDITIONS:-

A contains the ink to fill with.
H contains the left column of area to fill.
D contains the right column of area to fill.
L contains the top row of area to fill.
E contains the bottom row of area to fill.

EXIT CONDITIONS:-

AF,BC,DE and HL are corrupt.

NOTES:-

The coordinates are physical coordinates where the top-left corner is 0,0.

109 SCR FLOOD BOX - &bc47

ACTION:-

Fill a rectangular area of the screen with an ink. The boundaries must lie on byte boundaries.

ENTRY CONDITIONS:-

C contains the ink to fill with.
HL contains the screen address of the top-left corner of the area to fill.

D contains the (unsigned) width of the area to fill in bytes.

E contains the (unsigned) height of the area to fill in screen lines.

EXIT CONDITIONS:-

AF,BC,DE and HL are corrupt.

110 SCR CHAR INVERT - &bc4a

ACTION:-

Invert the two colours at a given character position.

ENTRY CONDITIONS:-

B contains an encoded ink.
C contains another encoded ink.
H contains the character column.
L contains the character row.

EXIT CONDITIONS:-

AF,BC,DE and HL are corrupt.

111 SCR HW ROLL - &bc4d

ACTION:-

Roll the screen using hardware. The new line appearing is cleared.

ENTRY CONDITIONS:-

If the screen is to roll down...B is zero.
If the screen is to roll up...B is non-zero.
A contains the encoded ink to clear the new line.

EXIT CONDITIONS:-

AF,BC,DE and HL are corrupt.

112 SCR SW ROLL - &bc50

ACTION:-

Roll an area of the screen by copying. The area is specified in character positions.

ENTRY CONDITIONS:-

A contains the encoded ink to clear the new line to.
H contains the left column of area.
D contains the right column of area.
L contains the top row of area.
E contains the bottom row of area.
B contains zero for downward roll.
B contains non-zero for upward roll.

EXIT CONDITIONS:-

AF,BC,DE and HL are corrupt.

Thats it for this month. See you all next time.

Beginners Machine Code

by Ian Ward

Welcome to the all new machine code spot where machine code addicts new and old will get their fair share of the mag, I'll be trying to show both experienced and novice coders how to get the best out of their assembler. Boot up the assembler, load the accumulator, here we go! (If the terms used just now elude you, stop reading now, 'cos you ain't seen nothin' yet!).

I will start by clarifying the assembler I will be using. I use the version of HISOFT's DEVPAC that was given free with the AA71 covertape, if you have a different version, then the programs will probably work with minor alterations, but, if you have a completely different assembler, such as ARNOR's MAXAM, then you will probably need to alter them a little more.

OK, with that out of the way, for all the people who are new to assembly, I'll introduce the first and most important mnemonic (meaning a machine code command, pronounced NEMM-ON-IC), LD. LD stands for LoAD and loads the specified register with the specified value. A register is an area for storing values inside the CPU which is used like a variable in machine code programming. The registers are identified by a single letter, the registers available are A, B, C, D, E, F, H and L. F is slightly different from the others and you cannot store your own values in it like the others, for reasons which will follow in this or subsequent articles. Single registers can store numbers from #00 to #FF (decimal 0-255), However, when values greater than this are required, registers can be paired together to be able to hold values from #0000 to #FFFF (0-65535). But, these registers cannot be paired up willy-nilly, but only in set pairs. These are AF, BC, DE and HL.

Two registers are particularly important to the programmer more than the others. These are A and F, the Accumulator and Flag register. The flag register will be discussed in due course. The accumulator is the register used for addition, subtraction and other logical and arithmetic tasks, and also is the register used to pass parameters to firmware calls where only one value is needed (more about firmware calls later).

Where was I? Ah, yes, we were talking about LD weren't we, well nothing helps you learn more than practical experience, so load up your assembler and try this:-

```
10 ENT $
20 LD A,67
30 CALL #BB5A
40 RET
```

Type it in, assemble it, and run it. If you've done everything right, the letter 'C' should be printed.

Now then, you've got it to work, but you've got a few niggles haven't you? What does that hash (#) do? What's that CALL do? What on earth does ENT mean?

To answer your last question first, ENT is Devpac's way of letting you tell it where to store the program in memory, the \$ means the current location counter (I think, let me know if that's not the case). Another thing about Devpac is that you have to precede hex digits with a hash symbol (in this article and future ones, I'm assuming that you know about binary and hexadecimal, if you don't then read your CPC manual, even if it isn't very clear then!).

CALL is the second mnemonic you've met now. It simply calls a subroutine (a bit like GOSUB in BASIC) in memory or in your program. If you specify a memory address (like the example above) you are calling (this just means to invoke a small section of code) an internal subroutine. But, you can also specify a label, eg. CALL LOOP This invokes a sub-section of your program this starts with the word you specify (we call them LABELS).

I will now introduce the most fundamental thing you will need in m/c (Machine Code) programming. The Firmware Call. When the CPC was developed, our dear friends at Amstrad plc. decided to make it easy to program in m/c by having little building blocks built in. These 'building blocks' took the shape of bits of code that printed characters to the screen, waited for keypresses, etc. so the budding m/c programmer didn't have to re-invent the wheel and write custom routines to do it. This was all very well, and these Firmware calls as they are known are invoked by CALL #nnnn. Simultaneously with the release of the CPC, AMSOFT, Amstrad's software branch, released a book, detailing these CALLs, what they did, what info they needed, etc. Amstrad had been Ok so far, but then they made a little boo boo, they stopped making the Firmware Guide, as it had been called by its users and new coders were stuck on what to do.

Then, recently, those bod's who produced PRINT-OUT, Thomas Defoe and co. produced their own, but with things that the original did not have. What were we talking about before? Oh, yes, CALL, the call in the program we were talking about is out of the firmware guide, "TXT OUTPUT" #BB5A. It prints the character specified to the screen.

Well, we've covered a lot of ground today, and my fingers are killing me! Next time, I'll cover AND, OR, addition and subtraction and other things, unless I change my mind in the mean time of course! Happy assembling!



TEARAWAY

The Informer



V 0.6 E

JAV '93

Tearaway is for any Amstrad CPC computer with at least 128k of Memory, one Disc Drive and a Multiface Two (printer optional)

Tearaway allows you to inspect and alter any programs at any time, at any point using Tearaway's powerful machine code routines.

All 64k games and programs are supported by Tearaway, even if they were saved using the Multiface or saved using any other method.

Tearaway offers you the following functions:

- Z80 Disassembler. • Unique Search Routine.
- Display System Information. • Graphic Image.
- Output from Screen can be sent to Printer.
 - View Memory as Text or Numbers .
- Cut & Paste Memory. • Memory Editor.

Tearaway is completely menu driven and your not limited to a small display window, as Tearaway uses the whole of a mode 2 screen for displaying all the menus and user information.

With Tearaway you'll love to hate similar programs you've used in the past with your Multiface, due to Tearaway's better design and ease of use. Full instructions supplied on disk. (output to screen or printer)

Also Available for the CPC: "Super Wimp", includes 4 programs and demo, Send S.A.E for more Info.

Don't take my word for it... Look at these few comments Tearaway has received...

"Great program", "Excellent Tearaway", "Good stuff it is", "Wins on user-friendliness", "Ultimate backing program", "I'm impressed with the presentation of Tearaway", "Very easy to use", "Everything Insider should have been", "Brilliant", "The whole Tearaway disc is so damned brilliant", "I've never used Insider since I bought Tearaway".

Here are a few of the many pokes found by using Tearaway:

Chase HQ (tape)	2074 00	inf time
*:	3872 00	inf turbo's
(disk)	2022 00	inf time
*:	3820 00	inf turbo's
Dizzy (Fantasy)	535a xx	no. of lives
	a063 00	inf lives
Mr. Heli (disk)	0f48 c8	200 lives
Strider (disk) *:	2be9 00	inf lives
*:	2bde 00	inv
Trantor	1614 00	inv

TEARAWAY PRICES

Tearaway (0.6e) is available on your disk at £7.50#

Tearaway (0.6e) is available on our disk at £11.50#

Upgrade Pirate copy to latest version, with official registration (without any further action) £5.00#

Apple Macintosh™ Owners:

PD, Shareware and Freeware is available from our extensive Library now...

Picture Scanning... Font conversion... Graphic conversion also available.

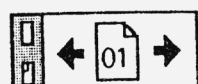
All Major Computer Graphics converted (IBM, Amiga, Atari ST, Unix)

Also free Apple Macintosh help and advice given.

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Database Type-In by John Packham

Welcome to the final instalment of this type-in. Although the program will now be complete, it is by no means perfect, so please feel free to alter it in any way you like. If you make any alterations or add other routines which you feel that other members would like to see, then please send them in to me, and I will include them in the magazine.

In the mean time, let's start this month with some slight alterations to previous lines....

```
2200 ON choice% GOSUB 6000,7000,8000,14000,10000,14000,12000
3020 INPUT#9,date$:INPUT#9,noofrec%
3060 FOR outerloop%-1 TO noofrec%:FOR innerloop%-1 TO 10
3070 INPUT#9,field$(innerloop%,outerloop%)
4030 WRITE#9,date$:WRITE#9,noofrec%
4070 FOR outerloop%-1 TO noofrec%:FOR innerloop%-1 TO 10
4080 WRITE#9,field$(innerloop%,outerloop%)
```

That takes care of the alterations. Now let's add a few lines to previous routines....

```
13115 LOCATE 9,25:PRINT"P to PRINT or E to ERASE";
13135 IF INKEY(27)=0 THEN GOSUB 9000
13136 IF INKEY(58)=0 AND noofrec%>0 THEN GOSUB 11000:GOTO 13030
14000 RETURN
```

Now we come to the final two routines to be included, and as you can see, they are the PRINT and CONDENSE routines. Although these options appear in the MAIN FILE OPTIONS menu, they are NOT actually available from there as I have now altered the program slightly. When you now VIEW each record, you are given the option there of printing it out. You can also choose to erase the record from the file, and if you do this, the file is automatically condense (closed up) to save space.

```
8999 REM *****PRINT RECORD/S*****
9000 PRINT#8,FILENAME:- ";filename$;" DATE:- ";date$
9010 PRINT#8,"Record No. ";rec%
9020 FOR loop%-1 TO 10
9030 PRINT#8,name$(loop%)
9040 PRINT#8,field$(loop%,rec%)
9050 NEXT loop%
9060 RETURN
9070 '
```

```
10999 REM *****CONDENSE FILE*****
11000 IF rec%-nootrec% THEN 11040 ELSE FOR outerloop%-rec% TO noofrec%
11010 FOR innerloop%-1 TO 10
11020 IF outerloop%#noofrec% THEN field$(innerloop%,outerloop%) - field$(innerloop%,outerloop%+1)
ELSE field$(innerloop%,outerloop%)=""
11030 NEXT innerloop%,outerloop%
11040 noofrec%-nootrec%-1
11050 RETURN
11060 '
```

Well have fun!

The Plus Page

By Brian Watson

Last time I covered my experiences of getting and setting up a 6128+ and this time I will cover part of what it's like to live with one, using commercial programs and equipment. Both the Pluses as supplied new can only load tapes or discs, not both, as well as the cartridge system common to both. Amstrad Action has published details on how to wire in whichever loading system you don't have, or if you are the cautious type there are companies advertising to do the work for you. I will be getting a tape socket added to mine soon and will report back when it has been done.

There appear to be very few compatibility problems with old programmes (cue sound of head going into noose.) The usual solution, as it was with the old machines, is to switch off or disconnect your Multiface, Silicon disc and/or Rom box. The Plus operating system, is very close to the original machines, but better. The joypads are completely interchangeable with an old-type joystick, but use a second fire button for some games.

The only disc game which defeats my Plus so far is "Elite" from the Supreme Challenge compilation disc. If you have Micro Design Plus, Campursoft will upgrade your disc free but make sure you enclose adequate postage for its return as well as your own address. Please let me know if you find other problems and I'll spread the word. I hear rumours of a type-in to enable the Pluses to emulate the older machines and I'll pass this on once someone sends it to me. I believe the few problems, such as they are, may involve the way the new machines scan the keyboard, or possibly memory usage. Technical experts, where are you?

Rom boards are another area where there may be a difficulty. Some of the cheaper boxes do not use high speed chips to control the switching. If in doubt, look for the letters LS in the middle of the code numbers on the chips. E.g. CD74LS???? This means they will work. Chips with HC might work too, but not necessarily. It's a fairly easy job to change them if you find your Rom programmes do not operate as expected. Romdos/Ramdor will not work on Pluses but discs formatted using it on an old machine will be recognised by CP/M if you type in the patch in the manual. Protext, Prospell and Promerge Roms all work, as do Maxam and Utopia.

If you want a large disc format on your Plus, MS800 works now and coming very shortly is the Parados Rom from Quantum Computing. This was on display at the convention and appears to be the one to wait for if you can as on demonstration it was very impressive indeed. It will create and recognise all Ramdos formats (D1-D80) as well as Data, System, S-DOS, Ultraform and MS800. It also doubles (triples?) as a file handling programme including copying from one format to a different one in the same drive, just swapping the discs in the middle when prompted. With a drive swapper switch you can have large formats on drive A. You can even trade in your old Rom. For further details contact Richard Wilson at Quantum Computing, 10, Lakin Drive, Barry, S.Glamorgan CF6 5AH or 0446 746920. I'll bring a full review once I've got one to test.

I will start my list of games which use the enhanced sound and colour capabilities to advantage with the very wonderful Prehistorik 2, an extremely satisfying platform game. The game comes with different versions for whichever machine you have and the Plus version is superb.

Now on to SpaceGun on disc. This was to have been the last cartridge game but Ocean decided against it and it has now been released (on disc only) in Europe. The sprites look like they were cut from cardboard and apparently Simon Forrester ran out of adversely critical adjectives when he reviewed the game for Your Spectrum. At the convention we agreed a game is probably past praying for when the best you can say is that the background's nice! I believe Super Cauldron is extremely good but, as yet, cannot speak from personal experience. If any software houses want a review of their carts, get 'em in to me quickly!

All the above concerns using the machines with commercial software but the Pluses are also as easy to programme yourself as the old machines. The GI AY-3-8912 3 voice, 8 octave, stereo sound chip and Application Specific Integrated Circuit (ASIC) chip which manages the colour capabilities have been accessed by a number of programmers and the PD programme B-ASIC initiates a number of bar commands for sprite handling which you can use to manipulate the full range of 4096 colours. There are a lot of demos available which show off the Plus features and I will cover these in more depth next time.

GORDON SPEAKS

Welcome to those who have joined us over the past few months. However although membership is increasing slowly there is always some members who fail to renew for a variety of reasons so we still need to continue to recruit new members. Whilst the Officers can do their bit in giving the Group publicity do remember that most of the new members come through you the Members who recommend the Group to others. So do please make an effort to recruit at least ONE other Member by passing on your enthusiasm and telling them of the benefits of joining the United Amstrad User Group and the reasonable price of the subscription.

We hope that you find membership of the group helpful and rewarding but do remember that the group is really the members so don't wait to hear from us or for some one else to write the letter or article - please let us know what you are doing, what you would like to hear about and any queries you may have or require help with. We are also prepared to publish free of charge request from members who would like contacts in their area or need help with their problems. Full details of how to send your article/s is on the outer back cover of the CPC User.

On then to some good news for those Members in the North of England - I am planning to run a Convention some time in May 1994 in the Leeds area and am at present looking into a suitable venue and planning the general format. Whilst some Officers may be present, many will not be able to attend due to the distances involved. However I would like to hear from anyone in the North who is prepared offer help in any way. I know it is early days but it would help me to obtain some idea of the support.

Now a little reminder about renewing your subscriptions - most people pay on time and everything runs smoothly. However some members renew well after the expiry date and after the address disc has been sent to Alan Stead for distribution of the Magazine. As a result it causes additional work for both myself and Alan as we live over 200+ miles apart so telephone calls and letters are required all at the expense of the Group. At the moment we are keeping the costs of joining/renewing unchanged but items like this may lead to increase and affect ALL members. So please check your renewal date today to ensure you send your cheque in good time.

Finally many thanks again to those members who have paid on time and thanked us for the new style of reminder (Yes you do get one on the label used to send out the CPC User ! so cut it out now and stick it on your disc box for although the year changes the date and month does not !).

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me either by phone most evenings (between 6pm and 7pm is best) or by letter if the matter is not urgent.

Gordon Woolliscroft
Membership Secretary



THE PROTEXT PAGE

By Brian Watson

In the last Protext Page, I started to cover Headers and Footers. These are pieces of text or numbers repeated at the top or bottom of one or more pages outside each main body of text. For example "Page whatever number>", a repeated chapter name at the top of each page or "continued....." at the foot only, obviously. I am sure you can think of many other examples.

Most of the ideas and principles can be applied to other word processors but the means described are Protext's and apply to all versions. The systems work best with continuous paper but can also work with single sheets if your paper feeding is very precise.

To use a footer or header you need to decide first how it is to be used throughout your work. This sounds obvious but I will use the recent example of a play I had written and wanted to prepare and print out for submission to a drama group to illustrate some of the things to be taken into account.

What I wanted was to print the title page of the piece, followed by a page with the cast list, two pages of stage instructions including technical cues and set suggestions, then sixty-four pages of the play text. As the play sets were to be submitted to the chairman and committee of the group paper-clipped together, rather than as a series of continuous zigzags straight out of the printer, I had to anticipate the possibility of the sheets falling from the clip to the floor and some poor soul having to get them back in order in a hurry.

Numbering of script sheets for the theatre is normally in the top right-hand corner of each page in the form "Page 1.2.12" for Act One, scene Two, page Twelve, but for the submission to the group's committee this was not necessary. All I needed was "Page number>" at the top right-hand corner of each page, starting with "Page 1" for the cover and so on, but not actually printed on the pages until the script section started. The first number printed would be page four.

For the sake of this example let's suppose we also want "continued overleaf....." at the foot of each page. This is not what is needed for a play script but it will teach us a bit about footers!

Except for messages at the very top of the first page, Protext will start working on your stored header and footer instructions from the start of the next page, so about half way down the second page of staging instructions (page 3) I inserted the following lines:-

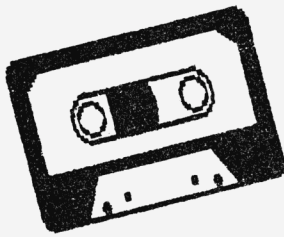
```
>HE ON
>HM 3
>PN 4
>HE                               Page %
>FO ON
>FM 4
>FO                               continued overleaf.....
```

The ">" symbols need to be in the extreme left-hand column of your screen to tell Protext that what follows on the line is an instruction and not to be printed out.

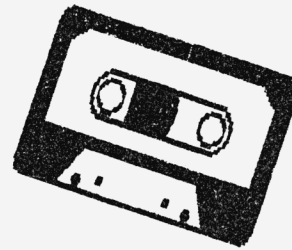
The "HE ON" tells Protext to switch on the header system, and "HM 3" sets the gap between your header and (in this case) the script text to three lines. "PN 4" says start counting pages from page four and "HE Page %" is the actual instruction of what to print. The percentage sign will automatically be replaced by the set page number then increased by one on each following page.

If you understood that last set of instructions the next three lines should be quite straightforward. "FO ON" switches on your footer system, "FM 4" sets the number of lines skipped between the bottom of your text and the footer message and "FO continued overleaf....." sets the message to be printed at the bottom of each page. Setting the margins between the top and bottom of the paper and the headers and footers was covered last time.

If you use headers and/or footers in your work I suggest you experiment using the above as a guide and use the "PS" (Print to the Screen) instruction in command mode to see how this will affect your work before committing it to paper. Any early clangers can then be corrected before you waste paper. When you print it to screen or paper you will see that clever old Protext will automatically adjust the length of your text blocks to fit within the set headers and footers.



TAPE
-PD-



Many thanks to Richard Lathaim for donating so much Public Domain which has swelled the Tape library to bursting point (cheers Richard), I have now also changed the procedure for getting PD to cope with the increase of new membership, from now on I will send you your requested tape for you to copy and when finished with, you send it back to me.

Due to so many request's for jiffy bags they will still be on offer after Christmas, so Protect your software with FREE bubble bags. Please send me an A4 SSAE with sufficient return postage (approx. 50p's worth of stamps), I will then cram in as many bags as I can and post same day, but please remember the bubblebags are the insides not whole envelopes.

With regard to Tape Programs themselves I feel that I should point out that almost ALL of these programs are present on our PD Disc library and therefore even if you have only one disc drive with your 464 it is to your advantage to use the PD Disc library with its ease and speed of loading and saving. The PD Tape library was created for those members who have the TAPE LOADING FACILITY ONLY, in order to be able to offer some of the PD programs already available to disc users.

ANYONE WISHING TO DONATE PD SOFTWARE ARE MORE THAN WELCOME, AS ALL TAPE USER'S WILL BENEFIT FROM YOUR DONATION.

TAPE PUBLIC DOMAIN LIST

1. ADVENTURE Adventure PD by Debby Howard
2. PRINTING & UTILITIES Banker, Cassette Card, HomeAccounts, etc.
3. QUIZ/PUZZLES/BOARD GAMES Tower, Black Jack, Yatzee, etc.
4. WORD PROCESSOR, DATABASE E-Sheet, WP, etc.
5. GAMES Battleships, Lawn Mower, Angler, etc.
6. SOUNDS LIKE PD MUSIC & DEMOS .. Various sounds, demos, etc.
7. SCULL PD M-Artist, Datasystem, etc.
8. G.D. PD Imported from Australia, etc.
9. DARTSMA PD Whist, Pairs, Roulette, etc.
10. ROBOT PD Pbcse2, Romprobe, etc.
11. EGERTON PD Superbasic, Birth Facts, etc.

NEW PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC DOMAIN TAPE

1. Please send me a jiffy pad with to 2nd class stamps.
2. Please send me quote your name & membership number, telling me what tape from the library you would like to borrow, one tape being the limit a month.
3. I will then send you your PD, for you to copy and send back within three weeks so other members use the tape.
4. Please can you send the tape back to the Tape Librarian.

The New Video Master by Campursoft is now available on discount to members of UAUG and if your are thinking about buying but would like a preview of some of the screens before hand, SEND ME ONE GOOD QUALITY VHS VIDEO TAPE PLUS WHICHEVER GAME, SOFTWARE ETC YOU WISH TO VIEW AND INCLUDE RETURN POSTAGE. I will gladly record it all onto the video tape and send everything back to you - as speedily as I can. Take up the offer - its amazing how good the picture comes out!! I will also include video titling on the video and send the program back to you with everything else, the only cost is that you pay for the return postage. Why not take up the offer and see what the result is!!

TYPE - IN

There has often been various type-ins for giving you double-height text in any screen mode, so I thought it would make a nice change to give you a routine for allowing double-width text instead. The following is such a routine. It works in any mode and once installed is used as follows....

CALL &6000,@a\$

where a\$ (or any other string variable name) is the string you want displayed in double-width, so naturally, the string variable MUST have been initialised with the string to be displayed before the routine is called.

You should be extremely careful when entering all the DATA lines, as this is where any errors are likely to crop up. Also, make sure you SAVE the program BEFORE running it...just in case.

```
5 REM *** DOUBLE WIDTH TEXT
6 REM *** IN ANY SCREEN MODE
7 REM
10 FOR add=&6000 TO &60fc
20 READ a$
30 POKE add,VAL("&"+a$)
40 NEXT
50 PRINT"DATA INSTALLED!"
60 END
70 REM
80 REM
90 REM
100 DATA fe,01,c0,dd,6e,00,dd,66,01,7e,fe,00,c8,47,23,5e,23,56,eb,e5,c5,cd,28,60
110 DATA c1,e1,23,10,f6,3e,0d,cd,5a,bb,3e,0a,cd,5a,bb,c9,cd,06,b9,f5,7e,cd,a5,bb
120 DATA dd,21,e5,60,06,08,7e,dd,77,00,23,dd,23,10,f7,f1,cd,0c,b9,21,f5,60,11,ed
130 DATA 60,06,08,dd,21,e5,60,cd,71,60,23,13,10,f9,3e,fe,21,ed,60,cd,a8,bb,3e,ff
140 DATA 21,f5,60,cd,a8,bb,3e,fe,cd,5a,bb,3e,ff,cd,5a,bb,c9,eb,4e,dd,7e,00,cb,7f
150 DATA cc,c2,60,c4,bd,60,cb,77,cc,cc,60,c4,c7,60,cb,6f,cc,d6,60,c4,d1,60,cb,67
160 DATA cc,e0,60,c4,db,60,71,eb,4e,cb,5f,cc,c2,60,c4,bd,60,cb,57,cc,cc,60,c4,c7
170 DATA 60,cb,4f,cc,d6,60,c4,d1,60,cb,47,cc,e0,60,c4,db,60,71,dd,23,c9,cb,f9,cb
180 DATA f1,c9,cb,b9,cb,b1,c9,cb,e9,cb,e1,c9,cb,a9,cb,a1,c9,cb,d9,cb,d1,c9,cb,99
190 DATA cb,91,c9,cb,c9,cb,c1,c9,cb,89,cb,81,c9,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00
200 DATA 00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00
```

HINTS AND TIPS

By Dave Church

Since buying my trusty Arnold back in 1965 I have kept a notebook of useful hints and tips. Some are quite well known and will already be familiar to many readers but others are less so and, I hope, may prove useful. The following selections from my notebook are listed in no particular order.

To change HEXadecimal numbers to DECimal use the following:-

a) For hex numbers below &8000 use PRINT &???? i.e. PRINT &1FFF returns decimal 8191

b) For hex numbers &8000 and above use PRINT 65536 + &???? i.e. to convert hexadecimal &AFFF to decimal PRINT 65536 + &AFFF returns decimal 45055

C O N T A C T

THIS IS THE SECTION FOR CONTACTING OTHER FELLOW CPC USERS. FOR WHATEVER THE REASON YOU NEED A CONTACT (PLEASE KEEP IT CLEAN!!), THEN THIS IS THE PAGE TO WRITE TO. JUST DROP A LINE TO THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.....

OFFERS OF HELP

Help with problems on a varied subject list except hardware and assembly language (full details on request).

COLIN EVANS, Windsor Crescent, Monk Bretton, S.Yorkshire. S71 2LU.

Help for anyone with problems in BASIC.

DERRICK SHERWOOD, 13 Rodney Close, Bilton, Rugby, Warks. CV22 7HJ

Help with CPM+ Protext/Promerge/Prospell (or try me with other versions). I can also produce customised printer drivers for all versions of Protext.

BRIAN WATSON, 39 High St, Sutton, Ely, Cambs. CB6 2RA. Tel: 0353 777006

Help with with CP/M, BASIC, FORTH, assembly language (machine code), RSX's, etc.

DAVE CHURCH, 1 Merston Close, Brighton, Sussex. BN2 6WJ.

Help with all sorts of Amstrad problems. Software, hardware, games, tape to disc. No problem too small! Please send a stamped addressed envelope.

CHRIS WILLIAMS, 6 Frank St, Great Horton, Bradford, BD7 3BT.

Help offered to anyone using the ROM versions of Protext, Maxam, and Utopia.

PETE DUNLOP, 6 Lychgate Park, Locking, Avon, BS24 8DE.

Help with MSDOS for newcomers to PC XT/AT systems.

PETER (0257) 421840.

SERVICES:

Have you any damaged, creased, distorted or snapped tape software? Or do they simply give read errors when loading? Send your tapes together with loading instructions & £1.00 plus 2 first class stamps. Programs will be retrieved and returned on a new tape (originals only please).

STEVE MAKIN, 19 Westbury Rd, Dover, Kent. CT17 9QH.

No problem too small...software, hardware, games and disc to tape. Just write to me and please enclose an SAE.

CHRIS WILLIAMS, 6 Frank Street, Great Horton, Bradford, BD7 3BT

PENPALS - LOCAL CONTACTS - DRINKING PARTNERS - ETC

Help and advice given about general computer stuff. Ale quaffed, etc, etc. Interested in Lovecraft (the author, not the technique), or the Call of Cthulu game?

STEVE HAYWARD (address inside front cover). Tel (0203) 312571

WAL SAVIN, 201 Ulverley Green Rd, Olton, Solihull, West Mids. Tel (021) 706 0992

Fellow CPC users wanted as penpals/contacts.
R. PRIEST, 8 Motueka Street, Nelson, New Zealand.

Local CPC contacts wanted. I may also be able to help anyone having problems with Basic programming. Enclose a stamp if you want help.
M. STUBBS, 8 Overdale Close, Barton, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9LE.

REMEMBER...TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CONTACT PAGES, PLEASE DROP A LINE TO THE
EXECUTIVE EDITOR NOW AT...9 JESSAMINE ROAD, SHIRLEY WARREN, SOUTHAMPTON, SO1 7AJ.
TEL:- 0703 512746. BETWEEN 3pm-8pm.

BRIAN WATSON:-

The news of Mike Catton's death was notified just as the last "CPC User" was being distributed. The issue carried a very clear and helpful article from him and a letter apologising for his being a bit behind in responding to requests for help due to his continuing ill-health.

Mike will be very much missed, especially by those who knew him or spoke to him for help and advice about the Brunword suite of programs. His knowledge, ability and enthusiasm were awesome and he was certainly one of its most expert users. His articles over the last few years will help very many CPC owners in the future. Mike and I had a really good head-to-head chat at last year's convention on the relative merits of Protext and Brunword and I was looking forward to our meeting up again. Sadly that was not to be. I am sure all our thoughts and good wishes are with his family at this difficult time.

I'm sure that goes for most of us Brian. It was truly a sad loss...Ed

TOM WALTON:-

A number of files have more data than 'Protext' has memory for, including NSWPD.DOC. Is there any way of accessing the end of the file if I get the 'OUT OF MEMORY' message?

The only way I know of Tom, is to use the SPLIT command of Promerge. This takes a file that is too large for Protext and splits it into smaller files. I believe it is available in the disc version. If not, it is certainly available on the rom version...Ed

STUART McNAUGHTON:-

I am a new member of the UAUG and feel that the new 'Profiles' section is a great addition to the CPC USER magazine. Therefore, please find enclosed my Profile which I would like you to publish in the next possible issue. May I also take this opportunity in thanking you for a brilliant magazine. I realise now how much I'd be lost without my bi-monthly CPC USER.

Your 'Profile' has been included in this issue Stuart and it's nice to know that people appreciate new additions to the mag. Welcome to the group...Ed

If you feel you could write in to the Mailbox, then drop a line to the Executive Editor now. And please remember the new address is inside the front cover.

Small Ads**WANTED:-**

RS232C Serial Interface.

Contact Henry Goodliffe, 7 Wellfield Close, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 0BU.

FOR SALE:-

All the following on tapes...

3D Stunt Rider, Miami Cobra GT, Sailing, Fly Spy, Beyond The Ice Palace, Kuma, Bosconian, Countdown, Question of Sport, Maniacs (1989) Diary, Harrier Attack, Inside Outing, Winter Games, Trace Race, The Gold Collection III (6 games), Klax.

The lot for £12 incl p&p or I will separate. I will also exchange for issues 1-21 of CPC USER magazines.

Contact Chris Russel, 57 Brookside Close, South Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9AW.

FOR SALE:-

Siren 3.5" external drive plus Ramdos, Maxidos & Nirvana.....£50
Multiface 2.....£15
Stop Press + Mouse.....£25
Advanced Art Studio.....£5
Discbase.....£5
Speedtrans Plus 3.....£5
Tearaway.....£5
Bonzo Super Meddler & Hack Pack.....£5
Microfile/Microword.....£5

Contact Ronnie Baird on 031 666 0014.

If you have something to sell, or there is something you want, then drop a line to the Executive Editor now...

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- | | |
|--|---|
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| B1042P The Amstrad CPC 464 Disc System, Including CPM & Printers | B1102P Using Amstrad CP/M Business Software |
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| B1046P Amstrad Computing With The CPC 464 | B1106P Basic for Micros ! |
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| B1050P Easy Add-On Projects For The Amstrad | B1110P The Easy Way To Program Your Computer ! |
| B1051P A Z80 Workshop Manual | B1111P Mastering Pascal Programming |
| B1052P Computer Engineers Pocket Book | B1112P Logo For Beginners |
| B1053P Your First Amstrad Program \$\$ | B1113P Basic & Logo in Parallel |
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12.5% off Dee-Cable.

BINARY BITS, 223 Lonsdale Drive, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 9JW.
Tel: [0634] 366982.....10% off Games.....12.5% off Business Software.

BOURNE EDUCATIONAL, The Hundred, Romsey, Hants.
Tel: [0794] 523301.....10% off Software

BRUNNING SOFTWARE, 138 The Street, Little Clacton, Essex, CO16 9LS.
Tel: [0225] 862308.....No discount, but free Font Editor when purchasing the Brunword Elite ROM Module, by post, by cheque.

CAMPURSOFT, 10 Machintosh Court, Wellpark, Glasgow, G31 2HW.
Tel: [041] 554 4735.....10% off Software, and £2 off the price of the Video Master unit.

"TEARAWAY" c/o James Verity, 3 The Cottons, Outwell, Wisbech, Cambs, PE14 8TL.
Tel: [0945] 772035...(after 6.30pm) £7.50 on your disc or £11.50 on mine.

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If Tasword is used, then the article must be in ASCII format with NO control codes.

As a secondary option they should be typed. If hand written articles are sent, then the sender should ensure that they are as clear as possible, as some handwriting is difficult to read.

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