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ATARI USER

The Resource for the ATARI CLASSIC and the ATARI ST

Issue 73 - August/September 1995

\$2.50

FOR THE ATARI CLASSIC



⊙ THE DISK COMPANION

*A superb utility to help get your
disks in top shape*

⊙ HIT THE JACKPOT!

*We provide the numbers for you
to win the National Lottery*

⊙ 8-BITS IN A PC WORLD

A look at how the future might be

FOR THE ATARI ST

ITALIA '95

Domark's last ST program?

PUBLIC DOMAIN a concluding look at the Budget range



PLUS ... A NEW MENU SYSTEM ... ZONE 1 ... JOURNEY INTO CYBERSPACE ...

This issue's

Thanks

Lee Ellingham puts it all together and fills us the gaps that he and thanks goes to the following who made this issue possible

Sandy Ellingham who takes care of all the office work, advertising and mail order

For their regular contributions

John B Denton
Paul Wilson
Ian Hingston

Alan J Palmer
Garry Murray
Mark Atkinson

For their contributions this issue

John Palmer
Eddie Reynolds
Graham Franklin
Doreen Parrish

Joel Goodrich
Brian Kenworthy
Kevin Colford
Peter Skirrow

Thanks to all who continue to support the magazine and the PD library. Your continuing support is needed more than ever

Some of these bits have appeared on lines about the beginning and without them we would not be here. There are listing articles published for the first time. All are to be thanked for sharing their enthusiasm with all who read New Atari User

HOW IT'S DONE

PDlib is shown just what you can do with your Atari. NEW ATARI USER has always been created mainly with short copy articles, normally 100-150, but more lately with a longer TV and other stuff, who sends PDlib to our readers includes a Mega 872 suggested to £800. All PDlib articles, Super 8000 (hard disk), a 1000 (computer), a 1000 (1000) printer, the Super 1000 (computer), a 1000 (a couple of 1000-1000 drives, 1000 letters, 1000 1000 letters). Program software used is Microsoft and Home Office Publisher 3.0. Other software available for sale. The Atari 1000 and various systems require programs on the PDlib. Articles published on PDlib 1000 disks are considered access to the PDlib via the Atari 1000. Programs are coded on the PDlib and printed out directly by printing to offer the best possible copy. All PDlib articles are published in this order. Printed and page are laid out with Home Office Publisher. Each page is printed directly from Home Office to a 1000 (1000) printer. Printed pages ready to go into the press. All that is left to do is to print the layout and print.

Well, it's not quite so easy as that but you get the idea



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Page 4's New Atari User

PAGE 4 PUBLISHING'S

NEWS!

ATARI

USER

The Magazine for the
Dedicated Atari User!

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CONTENTS

Issue 73 - August/September 1995

REGULARS

EDITORIAL	4
MAILBAG	5
DISK BONUS	19
MacPHEE'S FORTUNE/ BACKGROUND DESIGNER	
THE TIPSTER!	28
THE CLASSIC PD ZONE	32
TUTORIAL TIME	48
THE ACCESSORY SHOP	50
CONTACT	18C

ADVERTISERS

CHAOS COMPUTERS	5
MICRO DISCOUNT	18
FUTURA	21
NOBAGO	30

PROGRAMS

HIGHLIGHTER MENU	14
An excellent drop-down menu system	
HIT THE JACKPOT!	28
At last a way to win the lottery!	
THE DISK COMPANION	38
The ultimate utility for fixing your disks	

FEATURES

8-BITS IN A PC WORLD	20
This is what the future holds	
SOFTWARE CLASSICS - ZONE 1	46
Clues and solutions on an all-time classic	

ST CORNER

ST PD ROUNDUP	54
JOURNEY INTO OTHERSPACE	58
How much is it all going to cost?	
ITALIA '95	61

The next issue of NEW ATARI USER is due to be published on 29th September
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SUBSCRIPTIONS

MAGAZINE ONLY

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DISK SUBSCRIPTION

A disk containing all of the best programs from each issue of NEW ATARI USER is available either separately or as a subscription. Single price £11.95 per disk, a disk subscription costs you almost £1 a year. This subscription rate is (£ sterling)

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A few years ago someone in the States came up with a device to use a PC keyboard with the Atari Classic. I thought it was a waste of time. This someone also worked out a way of using a PC as a sort of disk drive for the Atari. How many people are going to be interested in that, I thought. Then the PC Observer came along which allowed you to use a PC to emulate the Atari Classic. I wondered whether there would be enough interest even to mention it in New Atari User. In recent weeks, however, at least half a dozen readers and contributors have told me that they have a PC and are very interested in running Atari software on it. So I guess I have been wrong and I therefore make no apologies for devoting several pages this issue on ways in which you can use a PC to run your Atari software. A couple of years ago our regular contributor Paul Hines sold his PC and bought a PC and he was obviously on the right track. We have to face the fact that in a couple of years, or even sooner, there will only be one type of computer to house our Atari. The PC will rule.

The AT is dead. The Amiga is dead. So is every other 16-bit, non-PC computer. What is remarkable is that there is still a strong readership supporting the Atari Classic. The reason is that you can still do things with the Classic that you could never do with the more technologically advanced computers. You can write your own programs, adapt other people's programs for your own use and enjoy just tinkering about with the computer. All without a great deal of computer expertise. Just read a few articles in New Atari User and you can do something new with your Atari. That's what keeps the Classic alive. Sharing what you do with others will keep the Classic alive even longer.

NOT SO EASY AFTER ALL

Putting this issue together was rather strange. I sat through the first forty or so pages and thought I might complete it in record time. Then it slowed down as I tried to find material to believe and some of the heavier stuff. It was especially hard to believe on the bonus for this issue. We do still have a lot of useful contributions for future issues but we will need more to create the right balance.

Programs that we can use for our disk issues are especially needed so if you have anything suitable please share it with others. If you are a programmer that has had your work released commercially in the past, how about giving us permission to feature some of your games that are no longer on sale? Perhaps games that were never released. A few years ago the author of Joe Blade gave us permission to use an unpublished game called Aquatic Capers but there was a mix up on the disk and the game was not on it. Unfortunately we could not get in touch with the author again.

If you are a recreational programmer, or you know some of the big names of the past, how about sharing some of your work with the remaining faithful? There is no longer any chance of a commercial deal with the Atari Classic but you can at least show your programming talents off to the Atari world.

STILL MORE SOFTWARE

All the best supply stores from The Accessory Shop are gone but there is still plenty left. Take this chance to buy all the software you can before it all disappears. Remember we are talking about just a pound or two for software that was made to retail at up to £15. You can't go wrong!

Les Ellingham

Bits & Pieces

A couple of programming tips from John Foskett

MIMICKING TURBO's "DO-LOOP" LOOP

Turbo Basic's infinite DO-LOOP loop can easily be mimicked in standard Atari basic by using ...

```
FOR X=0 TO 1 STEP 0
```

```
  "
```

```
  "
```

```
NEXT X
```

This works on the principle that with a zero step, the variable X can never equal 1 with the result that the loop can never end. The loop is then said to be "infinite" just like Turbo's DO-LOOP loop.

CHANGING VARIABLE NAMES IN TURBO BASIC

Have you ever needed to change the name of a variable, a string or an array when using Turbo basic? If so the answer is easy. Save your Turbo program to disk and boot an formatted Atari User Toolkit program which checks and loads your Turbo program. Don't run it because it won't run and simply use CHANGE in the normal way. Save your assembled Turbo program back to disk and reboot Turbo basic and that's it!

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Please order CHAOS! FORTH Disk (available in "FORTH" issue) as well as HYPER DRIVE 1/2, as they are required to ensure trouble-free operation.

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Mailbag



Another excellent set of letters this time - keep them coming!

Well, it's Mailbag time again. Luckily the horoscopes at the end of June has abated long enough for me to toil over a hot 15000s deciphering your letters and transferring them to a disk for Les to process into the next issue. Ottawa/2

Allan J. Palmer

8-BIT DEDICATION

Here's something unusual to start off with - James Knevel of TheCity writes that he's called his "Fantasy Football" team "Henry's Club's Ball Basher" - after the 2048er and Disney Club Sorcerer (back character) who he wrote back in February this year - the letter was last

in Mailbag for a bit...

James's team was 20th in the Daily Telegraph list of Fantasy Football teams. Well, James, the question is: how did you finish the season? James is also interested in knowing if there are any other Atari Classic owners with a FF team.

BARGAIN

James Knevel also reports that "...via NAD's Contact card I have bought a 1050 disk drive for only \$25 and am very pleased with it. I intend now to have a crack at some 80Pcs like *Alvarado Reality* and another attempt at *Lilith's III* - games which required a fair amount of disk swapping on a single drive system. Incidentally, one anyone tell me how to increase magic levels in *Lilith's III*?"

James also has three observations about the menu on various PD-disks: "I generally buy games and use a joystick in control my SE as the keyboard is underneath the TV in the corner of the front room. The problems with the menu are twofold - (1) you have to use keyboard to select/load up menu, press a key, etc., and (2) some games are BASIC, some are Binary and therefore require no-foot with Option flag. My solution has been to amend the 'File Manager' if

menus as pointed in Atari User that will succeed, allowing joystick selection, and turn off BASIC if you say and load a Binary file. Can a similar menu be used on future Page 9 disks please?"

TRANSFER UTILITY

Finally, James asks for help in transferring files from tape to disk: "I have successfully transferred 'Eternia Europe' onto disks using TransDisk IV but it will not save either to disk or tape when playing the game. Has anyone got a utility to put a foot tape-disk into a DOS format object file?"

EXPANDED MEMORY USE

Steven Pagny, from Boulder, reports to Nigel Henry's recent question about "I'd about"... applications which make use of the increased memory from a 256K upgrade. If he is into Word Processing, I suggest he obtain the 2K version of *TEXTPRO* Word Processor. This can be found in many PD Libraries but, unfortunately, the disk only has update documents so, in my case, it was

a case of trial and error because I only have the full document for v.1.5 104K memory. Version 5K creates 3 banks for text, and each one holds 18,872 bytes - a massive total text memory of 57,636, which is a godsend for any serious wordprocessing user. These text wordprocessing can still benefit from this disk for loading the very lengthy document files that appear on disk from time to time, like docs which, with a standard 64K wordprocessing, need special file load/save processing to view from logging to end. D.O.S. also has *TEXTPRO v.4.5042K* available on 1 1/2" PD disks, one of which contains the full manual for printing. I guess, this, too, will provide 3 memory banks but, not yet having purchased it, I cannot comment."

I am not sure of the status of *TextPro 5.2*. A report in Current Issues last year indicated that it was *Shareware*, available only to registered users of earlier versions but other reports seem to indicate that it is PD. If it is genuinely PD, then could someone send us a copy as I cannot seem to locate a source. (E)

Leslie Benson, from Alberta, Kev also has some comments on Nigel Henry's query about "...bits Lyme not working on machines with extra memory. I had the same trouble when I transferred this program from cassette to disk and also when I transferred Speed

from cassette. Both worked perfectly on my 6502K but although loading into the 3200K neither would run. I haven't been able to find out why, but by fitting a Computer House Controller Card to my 6502K I was able to make a copy that would work on the 3200K and also on a 3002K with 256K memory."

Alan from Ontario, both worked perfectly on my 6502K but although loading into the 3200K neither would run. I haven't been able to find out why, but by fitting a Computer House Controller Card to my 6502K I was able to make a copy that would work on the 3200K and also on a 3002K with 256K memory."

HOWFEN HELP

Leslie Benson also offers the following advice to those suffering about his problems with *HOWFEN* tape to disk transfer: "I would recommend in future that Stan use the *HOWFEN* menu program and not the tape to disk transfer. All is not lost, however, if he creates a *HOWFEN* menu with *HOWFEN DOS 0.07* he will be able to use the facilities of that program to transfer his best disks to the menu. It is advisable to use the enhanced density option as many of these games are over 350 sectors long. Do not use the double density option - this always gives me trouble. It is not possible to transfer normal best disks to *HOWFEN* unless they are single load, which very few are these days. As a matter of interest, in single and enhanced density, the *HOWFEN* menu uses sector 7 to store the sector numbers for each file. Byte 828 is the number of files on the disk, byte 829 is the low byte of the address

of file 1 and 830 is the high byte. Bytes 829 and 830 set the low and high bytes of file two, and so on. The *HOWFEN* start at sector two but use in the Atari internal code and not 828/31."

If that all on aside, my own- my tells me that in the early days of the Atari Classic in the UK it is 1/801/2. *HOWFEN* products were available on mail order from AVG (A. V. Gray) Software - does anyone know what happened in this Atari supporter?"

Also supplying comments on Stan's *HOWFEN* problems is W.A.C.D. M. 'Domini' of Boulder, Essex: "I don't really know what Stan meant when he said he should only get one game per disk as *HOWFEN DOS* has a menu system and you can get a lot of games on one disk, I suppose he is just making the best disks which only makes one game per disk. I have used *HOWFEN DOS* to transfer the following with complete success - *Phantasia Pyramid*, *Jawbreaker*, *Hyperion*, *Darts*, *Procton*, *Type Attack*, *Peagan*, *Don Man* and his *Devil*, *Centipede*, *Quasmoed*, *Chess*, *Redport Transit*, *Vegas Jackpot*, *Devoction*, *Crystal Baller*, *Eastern Front*, *Submarine Commander*, *Arms 2000*, *Big Dog*, *At War* II, *Star Challenge*, *Diamonds*, *Thrust*, *Kickstart*, *Flag Off*, *Blivik*, *Command*, *Big Postion*, *War Hawk* and *Star Raiders*.

The following list that you

The following list that you



garbage on the screen - Loren Kauter, Strip Poker whilst Frigger and Zaxxon, both up on court loaded, I cannot get the BOWSER DOG to load in Kirkbrington, Medalist or Chop Swoy, I have had BOM success with BOWSER DOG.

PENPALS

M. Fendin has a complaint that he'd like to air: "When I respond to proposals wanted, I put you to paper and often send them at the same time as greeting disks full of PD software for their amusement and hang - that's all you ever hear. Sometimes the post to Australia costs £1.50p but I have a couple to write to in issue 70 - maybe I will have a bit more luck this time. My thanks go out to all New Alert! Users readers who keep coming up with all sorts of interesting things which keep me up all hours."

1050 PROBLEMS, AUTORUN.SYS

M. Fendin aside these comments on various systems "in Dennis Hodges' 1050 problems - it sounds like a handy one/all switch or around this area, but I would advise Dennis if he doesn't know what he is doing to leave alone and send this drive to Derek Parr of Miles (Dunsmuir or some-

one who knows what they are doing - a little poking around with this sort of thing will make it worse.

In issue 70's Mailbox, Brian Arnold was having trouble with the old Atari User Toolkit, you were right to say that it was an old idea, if somebody would like to send me a tape copy I will attempt to convert it to run from a `AUTORUN.SYS` file, as I have done this sort of thing many times with other tape programs and have had 100% success in doing so, that is of course if Page 6 didn't state as they must build the copyright to this program, if I can I will of course return to Len (Page 6) the finished `AUTORUN.SYS` file so it can be put in the Accessory Shop."

1027 QUESTIONS

From Chalkholes, Derby: Michael Alltop has some queries about his 1027 printer: "Which codes do I need to send down to print the starting file, correct my pened sign, and any other special functions? I understand that this has been answered before in RAM, but no-one I know knows where. Also, what sort of ink is suitable for re-inking the 1027 roller?"

Well, as I was about to start looking the answer up in the many dusty tomes I've accumulated, I found another letter in the Mailbox - from

Stanley Hill in the West Midlands, Jeff Willett happens to mention that "...to get a pened sign in my graphics or text mode, add to your program the POKE 756,204 without a line number; then at the start of the line on which you wish to use it, again type POKE 756,204. At the place you want to print the pened sign, type Control-H. When you run the program a pened sign will appear on the screen."

OK - that's just an extra bit of info for anyone who wants to know how they can get a pened sign displayed, looking back to issue 68 of PAGE 6, I found an article by Phil Bar discussing StarWriter and the 1027. Phil suggested that to use the power sign for any of the international character set is an `ASCIIWriter` document, "...you first need to use `ASCIIWriter's CTRL+Q/QT CTRL+O/OZ` commands to turn the international character set on, then use

`CTRL+O/OZ` when you want to include a pened sign. All of the other international characters can be printed by typing `CTRL+O` followed by the appropriate decimal code as given in the 1027 manual." Chris Reed also advised more info in PAGE 6 issue 28's letter column. Can anyone supply a list of these decimal codes for people without 1027 manuals? What are the equivalents to the `CTRL+I` commands for other word processors? Could anyone supply a 1027 manual for a future

issue?

Issue 27 of PAGE 6 had a letter from Keith Barry which advised to avoid using ordinary stamp pad ink in re-bit 1027 rollers: Keith recommended just using a thicker ink that had been formulated for use with metal dies such as master metal manufacturers and cheap signing machines."

PORTUGUESE POWER PROBLEMS

Michael Alltop also replies to last issue's tale from Eddie Jones about PSU difficulties: "It was sensible/correct to use the Portuguese PSU - it would be designed to run at Portuguese mains voltage (230V) I think. All 230's run at 5V regulated DC, so the PSU is not the problem. If on power-up the TV screen goes from 'snow' to blank, this is a good sign as it indicates that the AMTC/video system is working. I have had some success repairing XE's and find that the most common fault is simply a faulty DRAM memory chip. A single faulty DRAM will reset the XE inoperative. Custom chips may also be faulty - this is obviously a problem as they cannot be bought, but the other dual XE could be replaced in effect as a repair. The use of IC sockets for replaced chips will cause any future servicing. The PCB is of high quality and is hard to dis-

assemble. Nevertheless, extreme care with proper tools should be used as PCB leads are easy to fix and harder to find."

Brad Rogers from Southampton also adds some comments: "I don't know what the mains voltage and frequency are in Portugal, but can offer some general advice about PSUs. First plugging an AC output PSU into equipment expecting a DC input may result in damage to both units. Obviously the same applies to DC output PSUs and equipment expecting AC. Secondly, using a power supply with either a voltage or current rating too low, will likely result in damage to the PSU and the computer. Here in the UK, mains voltage is 240V. This is as high as can be found almost anywhere in the world. The frequency used in the UK is 50MHz. Most countries use 50 or 60 MHz. However, voltages are more problematic, since the two halves used are quite broad, falling in the range of 110-120V or

220-240V. Interestingly, the second group is exactly double that of the first. Using a 1027 PSU on a 240V supply is likely to damage the PSU. Using a 240V PSU on a 1027V supply will result in the output being obviously overvoltage, without much risk of permanent damage. Further note, it is the equipment that is connected to a PSU that draws the current it requires.



The PSU can't force more current into a device than the device wants. (This ignores constant current PSUs, which aren't relevant here anyway.)

Taking note of the 50 or 60 MHz frequencies used, it can be explained why (most) checks for the Atari don't work correctly in the UK quite simply, they are comparing a frequency of 60 MHz, and have all calculations on this frequency. Using a 50MHz supply, as we in the UK do, results in the slow running of the clock."

HARDWARE and the NET

Brad Rogers continues with these observations: "It's good to see that there is now hardware coming onto the 8-bit scene. First, a cartridge port adapter, to allow more than one ROM cartridge to be connected at once - something that has been lacking on the Atari for a long time. Second, the hardware/software member of a disk backup utility. As less said, these are probably reasonable nowadays as a result of ever diminishing supplies of the older software. Let's hope it doesn't bring about a further bout of piracy, leading to an even earlier death of the 8-bit Atari."

Finally, I was pleased to read about John Denton's ex-



plots on the interface. For those that are interested, I can be contacted on the Internet and Fidonet. Fidonet is a free network similar to, but not directly connected to the Internet. The addresses are as follows:

Internet: lester@vortex.beam.com

Fidonet: 2:201:146:12

Please explicitly contact me by either of these methods. Don't find out something about me that I would never admit to in these pages. Now if that isn't incentive enough to try, I don't know what is!

MONITORS

Robert de Letter from Brussels, Belgium sends this information regarding a suitable monitor for the Atari 940:

"Sony is still producing composite video, 60Hz colour monitors. The KS-1419QM is a 14-inch monitor and the KS-2119QM, a 21-inch colour monitor. I've just bought the KS-1419QM (made in the USA) and I am highly impressed. I've never seen such vibrant colour before; audio is built in, and also a mini-jack for external mono/stereo speakers. Both monitors are multi-standard (PAL, SECAM, NTSC). Both monitors are equipped with audio/video input and video output, and a 21 pin SCART connector. The price is professional too - 18,000 Belgian Francs - approximately £367, but

BTW (MS) is extremely high in Belgium - must be a lot cheaper in the UK."

I thank you for that information, Robert. Unfortunately I haven't had the opportunity to contact my local Sony Centre for details of the monitors you describe. I'd forgotten that other countries have higher VAT (especially in Belgium). I had assumed it was a relatively mild tax in Belgium at the end of May when I travelled to live in company with the 80 members of "Canadian Marching Brass" (a youth marching band of which my daughter is a member), their staff and about 100 supporters to watch the band compete in the European March Championships. It turned out to be a great experience, as the Canadians were placed first by the international judges - winning the overall contest against over 80 other entries and they are now the reigning European Shoreland Champions.

FILE SEGMENTER

Leslie Denson of Ripley, Kent also has some ideas to answer in Steve Shewring's issue 77 problems with Dave Sargent's File Segmenter (Issue 69): Leslie suggests "...the following amendments to the program -

Line 168 change \$GOTO 168 to \$GOTO 120

This is sufficient to make the

program work with the 1000K version of AtariWriter, but the XL version is limited to a buffer length of about 10000 bytes. Stan should therefore change \$BLOC to line 120 in this figure. There is one other point about the program - line 100 asks for the filename, but it is not used (line 200 that you are instructed to insert) in the source disk. This results in an error 120. Probably the most straightforward way over this is to add:

```
107 "Insert source disk, press RETURN";INPUT #1,$FILENAME
```

Sorry not to have got around to this before but I am sure Stan will be glad to have the program working. Incidentally, the SuperDOS disc file breaks down into four segments."

BACKING UP ATARIWRITER

Jeff Willets of Strickley Hill in the West Midlands has an answer for Eddie Jones' issue 72 query about making a back up copy of AtariWriter: "COPYFILE from the ATFDOS 4.50.1M disk (same from Mirror Discount with a 200K upgrade) makes a good copy but with this and other copy programs you must write protect your disk before you try to run it so it writes back to the disk and will not load."

NEW ATARI USER CONTENT (1)

Gordon Talbot from Peterborough has a complaint: "On I really got out my head screwed on tight, however, money to subscribe to a user group and New Atari User just so that I can read the work article in both magazines within 2 or 3 months of each other? I'm referring to the article about entry 1000 discs that was in issue 70 of NAL. I couldn't believe it when I turned to page 40 - it must be different. I told myself but no, there is black and white was the same feature, apart from a few changes to contain words.

Whether this was by the author himself or the editor doing his job, I'm not sure. What I am sure of, is the fact that it seemed two pages less to read in an otherwise featureless publication. There wasn't the usual "Reprinted by permission of ..." acknowledgment anywhere to be seen - and you, I wouldn't have thought it would have been reprinted that quickly anyway. Of course anyone not subscribing to the user group wouldn't have seen the article before, as they were the lucky ones. I do think that NAL could have checked beforehand to make sure the article hadn't been printed elsewhere before. Hasting said all this, I still enjoy reading NAL and will continue to stay with

it for as long as it remains available."

I thank you for a job for the editor/publisher in question. But before I penalise you to Lee, I'd just like to note that I would expect contributors to indicate that they've submitted articles to other magazines in this case the (TMAG) newsletter - the article may have been in NAL's inventory for a while. What often happens with articles is that we hold them for some time before publishing, usually for reasons of balance in each issue. The article you refer to had been with us for some time but it seemed to fit nicely into issue 72 which had a couple of other articles on disks and so it appeared. Often, when an article doesn't appear after a few issues the author thinks that it is not going to be published and sends the article somewhere else. If it is not for the author to let us know that this has been done, if articles are published in club newsletters either before or after being submitted to us there is usually no way of us knowing as we do not receive copies of any club newsletters on a regular basis. TMAG used to send their newsletter but no longer do so and the only complimentary publication we now receive is the American Current Notes. If I repeat something from that, it will always be acknowledged as such. How about snapping the question about? We have always said that User Groups could reprint material from Page 8 and over the years dozens

Page 8's New Atari User

around the world have done so in their newsletters. Some, unfortunately, have not credited us as the original source but we have let that go. Does reprinting material from Page 8 make a club newsletter any less acceptable to its members? I don't think so.

We have to accept that, from time to time, the sort of duplication will occur but I don't think it is a big problem. For some it will be a matter of a page or two but for many others it will be something new. Let's just accept it and be thankful that people still want to write about the Atari. The last thing I want to do is put them off, but

NEW ATARI USER CONTENT (2)

From Sittingbourne in Kent, James Austin responds to last issue's discussion of the listings format: "I have come up with several ideas about how listings could be improved into the magazine again. Issue 70's listings are much better, the lowercase characters are actually readable this time, and so a while the listings are much more acceptable. There are also more listings in the magazine this time - this can only be a good thing for the magazine as a whole, but the big program listings are mostly missing. Now that the Accuracy thing is being closed down, why not use the extra pages





for more listings? There is also another way in which listings could be kept - say huge listings could be made by contained in a type of listing magazine, so they could be pulled out as and when needed. This would be preferable to sending off for them and arguably would be cheaper for all parties concerned. At the moment we are paying postage for the magazine and any listings required, as well as paying photostating costs and keeping poor of them consistently on the phone. Let's face it anyone who is not on a disk subscription would want the listings, and even for people on disk make it is handy to have the listings for reference anyway - so why only send them when asked for? Enclosing the listings to the magazine would save around half the postage costs. If we have to stick with the same format and considerable listings have to be printed, why print them in this condensed format? An A4 page consists of two A4 pages, right? Then print them A5 (the two-page spread, I believe that I confused some of you when I mentioned reductions in size back before the magazine became NEW ATARI LINKS, PAGE 8 used to print the listings in 2 columns per THREE, look at The Post Factory in issue 31 for an example. The listings in that issue are arguably clearer than the now condensed for-

mat. Two columns of listing of that size would fit on an A4 page quite comfortably, and allow for headers and titles to be added as well. Sorry if I confused any of you, but I'm not the clearest of writers at the best of times...

✍ **WILL**, there's some more thoughts for Les on the listings debate. Once again, I heard over to an interested editor for his views. Dear is you again, less. (The whole issue is one of economics. We cannot include extra full out pages just for listings and whilst it is true that an A4 page is two A4 pages it does mean that a listing that takes 4 pages out of an A4 size will take 18 pages in A4 size. I feel that if pages of text is more valuable in our readers than 4 pages of a single program listing, I believe that we have got it about right as, in fact, only a handful of readers would need the type in listings and it is no bother for us to mail out the exact number of listings requested. As for the quality of print last issue, it was better because I used an old editor! Normally I use a new editor for the listings and whilst it looks fine on the master copy it obviously isn't when printed. Last issue was better but had the opposite problem of some characters fading out. The trick is going to be to be how to fit out just exactly how much a ribbon needs to be used to get the perfect balance! Ed.)

✍ James concludes, 'Is Bill Habel still with us? Come on Bill, write us some more

crackles! 'Crooked House' is the best one you've written so far, go for the impossible and make the best one better! (It was until I formatted the disk... Oooped! But does he really have to present his listings in horrendous gibberish? Does he lose watching others list over his listings? Does he know how many people he must have put in hospital?'

WHO ARE THOSE PEOPLE?

If you think James Kewell's letter about naming his PlayStation Football team after an old game character was a bit off the wall, what do you make of this one from Aaron Gainsborough of Bedford?

"Over the years PAGE 8 magazine has had some great covers. Though recently I've started looking sleep and hair over a number of the more interesting pictures. Can you help me obtain a regular routine please from episodes of 'Space Previews' and 'Diskylon II' don't send me a subscription? Who are the people on the following PAGE 8 covers? Issue 28 - the 'Bigger' character, Issue 29 - the 'New White' fan, Issue 34 - the witch and wizard (lovely cover), Issue 35 - the three Claude people?

Are those hands on Issue 44's cover human or plastic? On Issue 40 why is that man

filling his pint glass from a F-1000ing plane? And what's Gordon the Gopher doing in the cockpit? Is that a crank handle on the nose of the plane?

Thanks for reading this letter. Perhaps someone could even suggest an article out of this subject - it would make a change from DLI's and VDI's...!

✍ (Alan seemed to think this was a bit strange from his comments, jotted out for the sake of keeping Aaron as a subscriber) but I thought it was quite interesting, at the very least a pleasant diversion. Let's start with 'Diskylon', I have no idea who he is but he sure did not expect to appear on the front of a computer magazine as part of his Degree course in Photography? The photographs on most of our covers were taken by a professional photographer based at Stafford University.

Whenever we needed a model or two he would just grab a suitable listing student and bundle them along to our office! We increased or lowered the costumes and, hey presto, a suitable cover. Another student (who had probably never even seen a 300K before) appeared as the 'New White Fan' on Issue 28. On Issue 34 the wizard was again an unknown student but the witch was a girl called Jackie who was working for us at the time. The 'tower' was, in fact the basement of our office but while the walls didn't look too impressive as the shot was married together with a separate shot of some impressive stair-

case which we bought (more expensive than the studio shot). On the next issue the mail is Stacy who worked for us for some time and who will be well known to those of you who read the strange comments which appeared on page 4 of that issue. The other two people were students on another of those strange 'fant' type.

Finally those hands on Issue 44 are none other than my own, carefully painted in bright green poster paint from the Early Learning Centre! You see, Alan, some of the letters are not half as crazy as some of the things I have done over the years!

As regards Aaron's comments on the F-10 on Issue 40 I think Alan may well be right after all and maybe Aaron does need to switch his machine off once in a while! Ed.)

✍ So, that's it for another issue. Surprisingly, when I don't have to try and meet the deadline for this review, I found that Mailbag seemed to write itself this time around. Thank you to all the contributors.

Air your views on all things Atari or help your fellow users with their queries - even ask for help yourself. It's all interesting, if only you write it down. Here's the address:

**MAILBAG
NEW ATARI USER
P.O. BOX 54, STAFFORD
ST16 1TB**



problems for helping make this so.

As I seem to be ahead of schedule, what else can I find to write on about...? I was disappointed that the anticipated review of PC XFormers didn't make it into the last issue; I hope to see it in issue 73. If not, I may end up writing one myself, or following the recent acquisition of a 486DX4 multi-media PC, I have already tried the PD clone of PC XFormers and am in the process of purchasing the commercial version. Perhaps the next Mailbag column will be compiled using PaperClip as usual but running on a PC that's evaluating the Classic Atari Strategy things have happened...



8-Bits in a PC WORLD

It won't be long before there is nothing but PCs and games consoles. Paul Rixon investigates whether your Atari can survive in this new world

The PC is firmly established as the popular standard for personal computing in the nineties. For years, business users pioneered the PC's evolution while home computing enthusiasts were occupied by a plethora of differing hardware standards. The majority of these proprietary formats couldn't sustain support in the longer term and PCs now dominate both the business and home user markets.

So what? Well, if you don't already use a PC then it's highly likely that sooner or later you'll end up with one sitting on your desk - at home, at work or at college. You will then

have at your fingertips an extremely handy device that can be used, among many other things, to expand upon the capabilities of your Atari Atari!

GETTING CONNECTED

If you have access to a PC and an Atari, you've no doubt considered the possibility of transferring data between these two machines. There are several ways to approach this: For those who have use of an Atari ST the problem is quickly solved by Page 9's 'Talk-Talk' cable - since ST disks can be read by a PC (or can be easily modified to allow it) an indirect transfer route is achieved.

Transfer can be carried out with the help of a modem, by downloading files from one machine to the file holding area on a bulletin board or on-line service, then uploading them back to the other. With two modems, you can obviously have the machines connected directly across your computer disk. A simpler method is to use a 'real modem' cable which lets the machines think they are communicating by modem, whilst they're really talking direct to each other.

If you're handy with a soldering iron it's useful to know that construction details of a dedicated data transfer cable - known as SIO2PC - are available from various electronics sources. The cable has been developed by US Atari enthusiast John Fall (see electronic

aid engineer) Rick Kennedy. He provides you with circuit diagrams, a parts list and adequate instructions - all YOU have to do is acquire the components from a well-stocked electronics store and fit them together. Apparently it's also possible to build a cable that connects an Atari disk drive to your PC, allowing data to be accessed without need for an Atari computer. However, I've yet to uncover full details of this one.

G.M. TRANSFER CABLE

Fortunately, there's a straightforward option for those people (not included!) who would prefer to 'plug and play' a ready-manufactured product. Micro Discware have recently launched a new accessory called the G.M. Transfer Cable. This performs a similar function to the SIO2PC cable and is fully compatible with the associated SIO2PC utility program. Indeed, the latest version is supplied on 3.5" floppy as part of the package.

The cable measures just under a metre in length. One end is enclosed with a 13-pin Serial Inport/Dataout (SIO) connector of the sort that's used with all Atari peripherals, while the other end has a 25-pin SIO2PC serial connector, for plugging into a COM2 port on your PC. A small gripe here is that modern PCs have 9-pin serial ports so it's more than likely you'll need to invest in a serial converter plug. These cost about a fiver from suppliers such as Tandy and Maplin. To be fair, the larger connector used by the G.M. Cable is

utilised to house several electronic components which unfortunately do the business. The cable's generally compact design substantiates the absence of a 'third' port - it will have to be the last device to your Atari's peripheral dataing chain.

USING SIO2PC

Once the cable is plugged in, all you need do is run the SIO2PC utility on your PC. The ingenious program creates up to four virtual 'disks' in the PC's memory, then converts your 8-bit Atari files are generated. This means you are able to load the Atari files on a virtual disk on the PC, or execute DOS operations using real and virtual drives.

After loading the utility you're prompted to enter the serial port number you intend to use. If all is well, the main options are then presented. The menu lists sixteen functions, though relatively few of these are needed during normal use. Create Disk! reserves memory for a virtual disk. You must specify whether single or double density is required, and also the disk size measured in tracks and sectors. Various pre-defined sizes are shown, or you can enter a custom format. For a standard DOS 2.0 enhanced density disk, you need 1640 sectors (see John Pookin's article in MAG issue 72 for more info on tracks and sectors). Select a drive number from 1 to 6 and hey presto! - your Atari thinks you've got another drive connected.

The next thing to do is format the new 'disk', using DOS on your Atari. You can either boot your usual DOS-disk from a real drive, or use Atari DOS 2.0 or MyDOS loaded from a virtual disk - show these two are thoughtfully provided. Select the Format command in DOS

and specify the drive number for the virtual disk. Once formatted, the virtual-disk operation is exactly the same way as any other.

COPY, COPY

If your disk duplicating software supports the use of multiple drives, shifting entire disks to (or from) PC is a breeze. With a real disk as drive 1 and a virtual one as drive 2, the copy is performed in a single operation. If you want to do it the other way round, you can alter the drive selector on your Atari drive to 2 and set the virtual disk to 1 - or any other valid drive numbers. Even if your software insists on controlling a single drive, there's a simple technique to overcome the restriction. **SOX2PC** lets you change the drive number of a virtual disk at any time without altering its contents. This means you can wait for the copies to finish reading the contents of a source disk in the real drive, then switch off the drive's power and set up a freshly prepared virtual disk as drive 1. When it comes to perform the 'write' your Atari can't find the real drive as it uses the virtual one instead. Then, when it's time to read the source disk again you can power up the real drive and switch the virtual one out of use.

Virtual disks are initially stored in the memory of the PC though if this is insufficient to accommodate the size of disk you have in mind, you can specify direct file access to access on the PC's hard disk. You can give each file any name you like, but the normal extension for a disk image is **.ATR**. **ATR** images can be loaded from disk into memory as and when required. With this facility, it's possible to store almost all your Atari disks (partitioned disks are the only exception, as proved) on PC and then load them selectively to boot your cable-connected Atari. An enhanced density disk occupies about 1000k - this means you could store ten Atari disks on one 5.25" high density floppy. With, say, 100MB to

space on the PC's hard disk you could store in excess than 750 Atari disks. In theory, it's possible to manufacture a standard compact disc containing over 1000 Atari floppies!

One last function deserving a mention is 'Print Thru'. When this is set to standby, any printing initiated by your Atari is diverted to the PC. The only problem is finding Atari software that's compatible with the PC's printer - Epson users have no worries, of course, but HP Laserjets are less commonly supported.

THERE'S MORE

Apart from **SOX2PC**, there are a few additional utilities contained in the G.M. Cable package. **MARKAZINE** takes a PC file and converts it to an **ATR** disk image. This can be useful if you've downloaded Atari files from a bulletin board, though **SOX2PC** can handle this normally anyway. **TI**, or Text Translator, converts text files between various formats. The function most relevant here is its ability to change the Atari's **'ATARCE'** Cartridge Headers and Title characters into standard ASCII text, or vice versa. **PLICE2PC** runs from the Atari and writes **SOX2PC** into file transfer mode - it's handy if you want to port the code over. **SEMICDC** also runs at the Atari end and basically sends commands to **SOX2PC** as if you were typing them on the PC's keyboard. This effectively turns the PC into a true 'server', so there's no need for easy accessibility - or even a monitor level, that's the theory!

IN THE DOC

If having read this far, you're truly confused about **SOX2PC**'s capabilities then don't worry - the disk contains a generous supply of documentation files to explain how everything works. There is everything here from a quick summary of program functions to a

history of version changes and technical information on the software's internal methods.

The release notes mention problems that some users have experienced but I encountered no difficulty at all transferring data. My Atari system is not modified in any way, so it may be that some hardware upgrades cause some compatibility problems. The author has added various configuration options to assist in these cases. The only noticeable 'feature' I found was that with the G.M. Cable connected to my PC, the Atari wouldn't recognise the 1000 drive until **SOX2PC** had been initialised. Unplugging the cable solved this one, but I'd prefer to keep everything connected.

At first sight **SOX2PC** seems rather daunting but this is mainly because it's an unfamiliar concept, and the documentation is unusually thorough. In reality, there are only a few functions that you will use regularly and the software carries out its main task reliably, without fuss. Just as it should do!

PC XFORMER

Having migrated your Atari disk collection to PC, it's understandable that you might want to run software without using an Atari computer. As you already guessed this is indeed possible with the aid of **PC XFORMER**, a program distributed by the American company Branch Always Software. Branch Always specialises in emulation products and have published at almost every North American Atari show since 1988. You may recall **BT Xformer**, an 8-bit Atari emulator for the ST, which I mentioned last year ago in **FD World**. More recently a version of **PC Xformer** has been released as Shareware and also published on a real-time PC magazine's cover disk. With version 3.0, Branch Always have addressed several drawbacks associated with earlier releases, added a printed user manual and launched the package commercially through an international network of authorised dealers.

For the curious, **PC Xformer 3.0** is a 32-bit

DOS-based PC program, though you can launch it from Windows if desired. It's claimed there are no problems running under the OS/2 2.1, OS/2 Warp, Windows 95 and Windows NT operating systems. You'll need at least a 386/33 PC with VGA graphics - the better machine you have, the better performance can be expected. According to documented statistics, a 386/33/33 achieves about 100% of an Atari 1000's speed while a Pentium runs seven times faster. However, my experience with a 486/33/33 indicates that some Atari programs are emulated more slowly than expected, others slightly faster. It usually depends on the amount of graphical activity. If you have a very fast graphics card in the PC, the speed of emulation may be significantly improved. Incidentally, **PC Xformer** has two speed settings: 'normal' tries to match the pace of a standard 1000k, so is most useful when running arcade games, while 'fast' cranks along as quickly as your PC allows.

NO INTEL INSIDE

Within **PC Xformer** are the operating system ROMs for Atari 800, 8000k, and 1300k computers. It supports expanded memory of 256k to 1500k mode. As well as offering 8000 processor emulations, **PC Xformer** takes care of the AMTC chip's text and graphics modes, including the 6M colour STPA palette, and Player Missile Graphics with collision detection. Display List Interrupts, DRQs and NMI interrupts are included and, of course, Real-time Atari (RARC) is present and, on Ready.

Windows and printers can be used via the PC's serial and parallel ports, while a PC joystick can be used as an alternative to keypress joystick emulation. Four-channel **POKEY** sound is available to PCs equipped with any sound card meeting the Soundblaster specifications. At present the sound is limited to pure tones only - distortions, such as those used for special effects and theme music in arcade games, can't be reproduced.

Key-chicks and other internal sounds such as BASIC's end-of-line bell are handled by the PC's internal speaker.

IT'S LOADED

Once loaded, PC Xlanner defaults to 19200 mode with BASIC present - a familiar Mac screen with READY prompt. Command-line flags can be used to start up with alternative settings - Start ROM mode, BASIC disabled, no serial jelly screen, external joystick attached, mouse connected and Mouse Guard present. The last three options are otherwise disabled to avoid conflict with PCs that don't have the respective devices, and to avoid wasting time performing unnecessary checks.

The Atari keyboard is mapped, where possible, onto the equivalent PC keys - so for example, Shift-7 gives an underscore sign rather than Atari's inverted comma. This makes life simple for those who are used to typing on a PC keyboard. Unfortunately an American layout is assumed and the 'BCYF' setting of the PC's configuration is ignored. This means that a few characters - such as double quotes and the 'W' sign - don't match up. I hope this problem will be sorted out soon! The Atari's unique 'mouse' keys are operated via function keys. The 'F' keys also provide an ability to toggle Atari BASIC on or off, change the emulation mode and exit from the system. Page Up and Page Down serve to scroll the display window, not pixel at a time. This can help if the screen appears to extend too far in one direction.

DOES IT WORK?

Enough already! The proof of the pudding is of course how well PC Xlanner copes with real-life Atari software. It supports four virtual drives using the ATX disk image format, so with the use of a suitable transfer cable you can port over software for experimen-

tion. Build instructions for the SIO2PC cable are included, so are all the associated utility programs. Naturally I used the O.M. Cabinet!

Start BASIC resolution appears to be quite successful. I tried a selection of the latest Public Domain disks from Page 8 and was quite pleased with the results. PC Xlanner had difficulty coping with Page 8's title page and menu systems, but the underlying BASIC programs usually worked okay. For example, on **Disk #206 - Atari User Classics** (a lot of right games were fine, of those that didn't work, the problem was probably due to Player Missile Graphics - PC Xlanner isn't too hot on these). Certain programs seem to start up in a never-never cycle of collision detection, which immediately triggers a lost life in some games. The title screen for the **Issue 72** disk failed, but the programs themselves didn't pose a problem. The bonus that Database on side B also loaded without drama. On **Disk #223 - Collect and Blast** only two out of four games would operate. These were the ones that loaded with BASIC - the others were machine code only.

As for commercial software, it's a case of trial and error. I found that many programs worked on Start ROM mode but, strangely, not in ROMUL or 128K mode - even though they would normally be considered compatible with these machines. Textual programs loaded with a higher success rate than those which involved advanced graphics. **Mind Office II** was a success story, as was **Graphics Art Department - but Atari Writer couldn't be loaded. Shogun and Battleships** were a no-go and **BuildBreak, Video Classics and Dickingle** wouldn't run either. But **Tail of Beta Eyes** was an playable as ever (see match) and **Leads Runner** functioned perfectly in its usual additive manner. **EMU Pool, GI's Well, Beach Frenzy, Miles 2048er and Jet Boot Jack** all worked - **Escape On Frontline** was okay too, though rather slow due to its intense graphics presentation.

Of those games that didn't work most simply refused to start up at all. Some played the bonus tune but progressed no further, others

displayed a jumble of corrupted graphics. Again, FMOs and many 'Database' effects might be to blame. Collision detection in general didn't seem as reliable as it should be, making some shoot 'em ups rather tricky! Some screens overlapped the visible area - the scroll feature helped here, but it was still rather inconvenient. Mouse graphics conversion was quite accurate - but didn't usually spot a game. Straightforward utility programs were less problematic. **Kub C and Multitask** menus were fine, as was **Turbo Basic**. Of course, there are plenty more I haven't tried yet! If you get hold of the PC Xlanner, why not let us know how you get on?

AN EXCELLENT USER GUIDE

PC Xlanner's User's Manual is an excellent reference guide, even if you don't intend to use the software. The first few pages cover the specific functions of resolution but there are also descriptions of MyDOS and Atari DOS 2.0 (both provided as disk images) and an transferring file between different machines. Appendices cover the ASCII character set, device handlers, editor commands, error codes, graphics modes, colours, sounds, file extensions and sources of existing Atari 8-bit support. In fact, all the information that most Atari users refer to frequently is contained into the handy A5 booklets. Over 13 pages of the manual's 36 are occupied by a glossary of terms, all of which you might have mentioned in an Atari computing context. I've never seen such a comprehensive list in one place before. PC Xlanner still has a way to go before it can realistically claim to replace a genuine Atari computer, but it does try hard to impress. In my case, most users don't want to ditch their old machines - they will probably use PC Xlanner to develop and test new software or to run a favourite utility. I had loads of fun experimenting with Atari resolution but I'd certainly be sticking with the real thing!

COMING SOON

Once you've registered a purchase of PC Xlanner with Branch Always, they'll write to you with news of the latest developments. CyberSpace cabin can also gather information via CompuServe and the Internet. The company's newest product is Generator 4.0, an emulator which enables ST or STE software to be run, at full speed or faster, using Windows on a PC. It comprises a card that plugs into a spare DMA slot on your PC, and software that will run on any 486 or Pentium with at least 8MB RAM. The UK price will probably be £129, but you have to buy TOS ROMs as well as an estimated \$30. A non-book version - Generator For Laptops - is promised here. For 8 letters a new version of PC Xlanner, designed to complement Windows 95, is due for release shortly. Come to think of it, so is Windows 98!

SUPPLIER INFO

PC Xlanner 3.01 requires a 286, 486 or Pentium PC with at least 6MB RAM. A SoundBlaster compatible sound card, joystick and joystick are useful extras. The review copy was kindly supplied by Micro-Discuss 0121 859 8796 who sell the package at £22 inclusive. For further details of this and other emulation products you can also write to Branch Always Software at 14150 N.E. 20th Street, Suite 302, Bellevue WA 98007, USA. Their Internet address is branch@hulysys.com and the CompuServe number is 73657, 2714. Contacting details for the SIO2PC cable are provided with the PC Xlanner 3.01 software disk, available from various PD sources. The ready-assembled O.M. Transfer Cable, complete with the latest SIO2PC software release, can be obtained from Micro-Discuss or J24.

HEY? HEY?

It's The TIPSTER

Time to awake from my slumber once again and see what tasty morsels there might be in the Tipster basket this time around. Let's see ... looks like there is something there, certainly enough for this issue thanks mostly to Kevin Caldwell's wonderful explorations of a certain dungeon, or if I get things together for your delight. Remember though I'll need lots more tips for the next issue as the basket is now full, so after you have read these little favorites, send me a few tips of your own. There must be loads more things you know about games that I don't.

A NEW FOURSOME

From beside the land, **Grease Frenchie** has a neat foursome for you, one of which is just for fun and absolutely no use at all!

DEATH RACE Always stay on the left hand side of the road, only starting when it car comes along - you can build up ridiculously high scores this way

NUCLEAR NICK/MR. ROBOT You can use the **RELOCAT** key to skip levels. Also, to **NN**, pressing **START** as soon as the game is over gives you an extra life

SHAMUS staying at the very edge of the screen means the enemies can't get you. This is really difficult and you can't avoid the fire due this way

NEW YORK CITY Remain outside the city and wait until your gas runs out. Now go back the way you came and score what happens. Billy isn't it?

DOWN IN THE DUNGEON

A million thanks to Kevin Caldwell from **Teenage** by request opens on **ALTERNATE REALITY - THE DUNGEON** which has gone a long way to making this issue's return. Let's get on with it ...

- 1 You can increase certain stats if you use the following procedure. Some items, e.g. an 'increased Statist' increase ST/DT by 20 temporarily when used. It is possible to make the increase permanent.
- 2 Make sure you are using the item (check that your stats have increased).
- 3 Go to go to the weapon anchorage and enchant the weapon (you will need crystals. Any form of enchanting will do. Now leave the enchantment).
- 4 Examine your inventory. You will see that you are no longer 'using' the weapon, but your ST/DT has returned to the same.
- 5 You can do this as many times as you like but, unfortunately, only once per weapon, so you can't enchant an enchanted weapon.

The procedure will work on any magical weapon or armor. You may discard the weapons if you wish.

2. The answers to the Gargoyles' riddles are:
 1 - **DISAPPEAR** 2 - **DISOCCUR** 3 - **CRACKLE**
 4 - **THE BUBBLES** 5 - **THE BUBBLES**

- 4 Carrying a **Sword of Demons** summons Flame Demons automatically.
- 5 Don't go anything valuable to the Clothes Horse. He will accept something else, e.g. a leather jacket. Leave anything valuable outside the room and collect it again on your way out.
- 6 Fight the Basilisk with Fire (and a primary weapon and Mirror Shield as secondary weapon).
- 7 Groups will expect dead corpses as gifts.
- 8 If you go north with the Lichens, get rid of it by going to the Oracle of Wisdom and throwing it into the flames or by offering it as a gift to a Goblin (there are some who will take it).
- 9 If you lose your P.A.C. Card or Mirror Shield (essential to complete the game) don't worry, they will appear as treasure if you kill a Goblin. Trust!

TOO TOUGH?

If you found that level 25 of **THE PATRIOT** was well too tough even with the password given last issue, it's probably because the password was wrong! The level 25 password is not **TOUCH**, it's **TONGUE**. Sorry about that (my eyesight is going from lack of sleep) and thanks to Joel Chodura for spotting it.

10 Some Old Hags are lousy trapped. Instead of visiting your H.P. in time, they get in **Barbarians** and then disappear. You can't do anything with one lousy trapped!

- 11 You can sell small Dragon Corpses at the **Bar** (Sambler, Bar and Girl - I won't say how much).
- 12 Get the **Travel Boyer** (score three stars if you can sell it - it has about 7,000 hit points) for even more.
- 13 Take any other objects here and you will be frozen out.
- 14 A really good character can bring to all four 'good' Guilds, but a bad character can only bring to three of the four! Guilds. The Thieves will not accept you unless you are the guilds of the three evil ones:

1st door - the left door
 2nd door - the left door again
 3rd door - middle door
 4th door - middle door again

You will now find yourself in a large room with a winding passage leading from it. This will take you to a **winning** Guild. This is where you should take your staff pieces.

- 16 Wanderingly made characters will be allowed access to the chapel sanctuary where you will be given a new weapon and taught a new spell (good to find out what and proceed with the spell).
- 17 You can have more spells than **Permanence** the Guilds will allow, e.g. if a Guild says you can have only 4 spells, then learn the 4 permitted and you will be able to learn the other spells available in the Sanctuary, e.g. **Temporal Pagan** from the priestess giving a **spell** of spells.
- 18 The **Golden Apple** will increase your H.P. by 15, then disappear from your inventory. On the following to increase your H.P. considerably. As soon as you have picked up the **Golden Apple**, go to drop room you have to the **VERY** quick Hags. You will see the **Golden Apple** in your inventory. Now drop it. Your H.P. will have increased and the **Golden Apple** will be there. You can do this indefinitely.
- 19 The **Overcoat** on the second level requires 6000000 (no more, no less) to take you **ACROSS** the fire (it's four other stairs of course).

20 In the hall of the **Adapt**, there is a picture of a **Purple Pyramid**. Stand here and use the **Amulet of Red**. You will be escorted to Level One (it's level 50) East in a corridor where you will find a **Green Pillar** and a **Red Star**.

- 21 One of the Oracle's quests requires you to get the **Red Hags** from the **North** and **Golden**, take them to the **Chapel** (where they're waiting), then throw the red bag into the Oracle's hands. However, you do not need to go to the Oracle to bring the bag. On the following - get one ring that doesn't make any sense and take it to the ring. After you have given up your ring hat, ask both the priest and the priestess the ring back. When you defeat the King of Tyrants you will find one red bag ring (very small valuable gems as jewels at the **Smithy**).
- 22 The maximum your score can be is 100.
- 23 The Gargoyles name is ... I don't know ... (help).

How else an assisting best of help in The Dungeon. Even more quest most of the in there! Despite all the things it will never be explore and perhaps you can help Kevin with the following:

HELP NEEDED

In **The DUNGEON** Kevin recently came across a **Green Dagger** which he got from an **Archmage**. This is the most effective weapon he has come across since **Dragon**, **High**, **But**, **Very High** and **Gold**, **Very High**, but the problem is it keeps breaking (going made of pieces, I suppose). It is possible to use the **magic** of **DR** (I just a real learning? Kevin has had to enchant it but with no luck.

Can you help?

***** SEND YOUR TIPS!

A great big bunch of thanks to all those who send it their tips this issue. Next time it could be YOUR turn to get your name in the Tipster's Hall of Fame. You must know something about a game you have played. Write it down and send it to the following address:

**THE TIPSTER
 NEW ATARI USER
 P.O. BOX 54
 STAFFORD
 ST16 1DR**

P.S. I'll love you to bits for everything you send me!

RESCUE ME!

Here's a quick tip on **AIR RESCUE** from Dave Parfitt of **Two Million Bytes**. First only take the game for a week before you start to play it. If you find that you can't find them enough to a building to pick up survivors you can still find your good while on the ground (the **Destroying** way remains on the screen. You must not be too close as the explosion will destroy your chopper. Just hold the joystick in the desired direction (ie. left or right) and hold down the fire button.

The CLASSIC PD



PD ZONE

Life off from *Europa Spaceport* was smooth. No litches, however, I have this nagging feeling that something unexpected is about to spring itself upon me. Perhaps I'm just not used to returning to work after a rest period. Loads of rest periods can do that to you.

At the Spaceport I had some time to enjoy some software over my portables.

Looks Good is just the Rainbow DOS title worth.

Load Char Set and **Display Char Set** options are for loading and displaying fonts. By using CONTROL-C and CONTROL-D you can flip between the standard font and any other.

Load Micro Paint is for loading and displaying MicroPaint pictures.

Finally, there is a **Help Menu** which offers some hints on using Rainbow DOS.

If you enjoy computer art then Rainbow DOS will prove useful. The DISPLAY file is quite large at 90 sectors but there is still plenty of space on the disk for your own pictures and fonts. Indeed, on the ARTDISK disk you'll also find 10 pictures and 30 fonts.

CLASSIC PD ZONE RATING: 73%

THE ART OF DOS

ARTDISK contains Mike Mitchell's alternate disk operating system RAINBOW DOS. This is basically an altered version of Acorn DOS 3.5. A number of the standard options have been replaced with some interesting graphics and text handling facilities.

From the multi coloured Rainbow DOS menu you can still get a disk directory but with the advantage of a two-colour display, go to BASIC, delete, rename, lock, unlock, format and binary load. All options are retrieved with a single key press. However, the other standard DOS options have been replaced with the following:

Read Text Files will display a text file on-screen. Use CONTROL-F to pause the list.

Make AUTOEXEC will create an AUTOEXEC.BAT file to run a BASIC program of your choice.

Load Koolie File will load and display a Koolie / ARTPaint picture file.

UTILITIES

THIS 'N' THAT is a collection of six utilities and three demos.

First up is **THE CREATOR**. This program is used to create the powerful Follows screens by David Caser. It is a 10-sector machine code file that can load both BASIC and machine code programs as well as display text files. The Creator allows you to customise the heading at the top of the screen. An excellent menu and with The Creator you can customise it too! SUPERKOP is the fractal graphics program from *Artie* magazine. It helps you to create fractals and features an impressive screen mode which allows you to go 'inside' the fractal as it develops. An interesting experience. Next comes a program to test your joystick and paddles. Joystick Tester 2 sup-

ports this title is more original than Joystick and Paddles Tester! allows you to test the eight directions and buttons of your joystick. It also has the facility to test your paddles. An evaluator option is included which gives response times, error percentages, etc. for each controller. A handy way to identify all those broken joysticks you've collected over the years. You know, the ones that are breaking up to the left and scratching the one or two which still work OK.

Calling all gardeners! MY GARDEN is a program which will help you plan your spring garden (a bit late for this year but I suppose gardeners are used to planning in advance). By entering the size of your garden and the types of vegetable you wish to grow, My Garden will give you the number of rows and plants required. It will also plot a graphic representation.

Other programs on This 'n' That are THE ZONE'S ZONE ENHANCER (which claims to speed up the performance by 10% - I don't own an XT/AT so cannot verify this), KEEFWORD: THE ELECTRONIC TYPWRITER (a simple word processor written in Turbo BASIC), and the three BASIC demos: VISIONS, ATARI DISPLAY and DICE ROLLER. Dice Rollie will prove handy if you lose your monopoly dice.

Altogether, This 'n' That is an enjoyable stroll through the world of PD.

CLASSIC PD ZONE RATING: 76%

DIGI DEMO

The 2 UNLIMITED DEMO is a large digitised sound demo which brings the pop-synthesizer group 2 Unlimited onto your 1000K.

There is a long loading period as the samples are loaded into memory - always a good sign with digi demos as this usually means a long demo is coming up rather than just a sample or two. When the demo begins you are

quickly disappointed by the poor sample quality. Grrrr and grrrr, the twobs twobs equate from your speakers. They sound as if they were sampled by using a microphone stuck in front of an Australian music centre.

The 2 Unlimited Demos is simply a collection of poor quality samples which have been spliced together with double-sided stereo tape. It is a disappointed mood. It sounded quite good to me, but then I can't stand 2 Unlimited anyway! (Ed.)

CLASSIC PD ZONE RATING: 10%

COOL DEMO

Staying with demos, we now take a look at COOL EMOTION by David Software. The Hungarian team who brought us the excellent Wyrmslike demo.

Cool Emotion is a 4-part compilation spread over two disk sides. It begins with some very poor graphics including jerky Graphics 0 scrolls on a black and white background. Just as you think you've come across another 2 Unlimited Demo you are informed 'Don't feel afraid, it was just a grin plot'. A digitised "1...2...3..." signals the true beginning of the demo and some top quality digitised / clip music blasts from your TV speaker quickly followed by coloured "MANS" signs and smooth scrolling messages featuring a futuristic font. The scrolls go on to the white and if you read it to the end you'll have a laugh.

This first part of Cool Emotion shows exactly what's in store for the right still is more. There is lots of humour injected into cultured

by
Stuart Murray

programming.

Coal Knight is bursting at the seams with spinning graphics, colourful passages, entertaining sound effects, special effects, pulsating equisounds and powerful digitised and chip music. Lock out for the wonderful half-screen scrolls in Part 4 (with the letters made up of pulsating coloured balls) and the amazing FV's style CG-Planes in Part 6!

Done at the end, the demo is fun to watch as an array of ants carry the final scrolling message on their backs - in step with the music!

Overall, Coal Knight is the best demo on the Atari 8-bit... so far! It surpasses its predecessor *Yoroidal* and even *The Top Magicians* by WYSL. Can 8-bit demos get any better than that?

CLASSIC PD ZONE RATING: 95%

HOT GAME

Moving away from utilities and demos, it's time for a game. **HOT WHEELS** is a machine code racing game from Germany. It is a clone of that addictive-to-the-extreme Atari coin-up, *Super Sprint* (which was in itself a clone of good ol' lady IBM), *Grand Prix Simulator* by Codemasters in the Atari 8-bit equivalent.

The object of *Hot Wheels* is to race four laps around the track and beat your opponent in the finish line. You can either race against a friend or the computer. The entire track is displayed on a single screen and on the one or two are very small. This gives the game an enjoyable cartoon-like appearance.

You accelerate your car by pressing the joystick button. This allows you to judge breaks correctly and avoid on-track obstacles.

Many of the *Super Sprint* features are incorporated into *Hot Wheels*. There are on-track obstacles, opening and closing gates, short cuts, water pools, oil patches and power-ups which increase the top speed of your car.

There are six tracks on the disk and you can increase the speed of the game by selecting Level 3 at the menu.

Hot Wheel is not in the same league as the *Super Sprint* coin up (some of the clones are) or even Codemaster's *Grand Prix Simulator* but it is PD and is very enjoyable nevertheless. If more car had been made of the package and a few more tracks included, *Hot Wheels* would have been very hot indeed! As it stands, this disk is definitely worth a few races and, like all versions of *Super Sprint*, it comes into its own in the 2-player mode! Just switch out for the screens of **GET OUT OF THE WAY!**

CLASSIC PD ZONE RATING: 74%

SEE-YA!

While you mope, I have every confidence in this shabby set and it's advice to react to unforeseen circumstances but this proposition is interesting enough to warrant a degree of enthusiasm.

We entered the *Classic PD* area yesterday and moved into the uncharted sector three hours ago. There is something in here which corrupts all scans and signals to such an extent that they are unrecognisable. For four hours you fly by eyes alone. The screens of shades disappearing in this sector have never been employed. That would affect business. A few minutes ago I thought I saw something...

The disks returned were:

DISK 256 - ARTDOS
DISK 255 - THIS 'N' THAT
DISK DS121 - 2 UNLIMITED DEMO
DISK DS114 - COOL EMOTION
DISK DS122 - HOT WHEELS

Bits & Pieces

JUST ONE LINE

by Peter Kirton

Old hands might find this old hat but newer users might be surprised to learn that you can write a complete program in just one line of code. Of course, it is not easy to come up with something spectacular and most one-liners tend to be done. But Peter Kirton has managed to create a game on just one line. It will take you only a few minutes to type, so give it a try. The program is designed to test your reflexes with the joystick. An orange square moving down the screen must be manoeuvred to pass immediately to the left of two yellow squares. Type it in, save a copy, and type RUN. That's quick, there's no going back! Your score will be printed at the end.

THE LISTING

```
1 GRAPHICS:3-COLOR:3-PLOTS:3-PLT 11,10  
:PDR 1:1 TO 35:8-STATIC:3:1-COLOR 1:P-LOT X  
:Y:R-X-1:Y-S-7:Y-Y+(Y-10):LOGATE X-1,Y:O  
:A:R:(O=2):P=11:NEXT:Y:A
```

THE SCORES

3=PERFECT 1=SLOW 0=BLEEP

If you try and type the listing as it shows above you will have problems as it will exceed the legal 3-line length of Atari Basic program lines. It must be in abbreviated mode where it will fit comfortably into the 3-line maximum. The line is abbreviated made in shows below. First type **POKE 50,3** and press **RETURN** to give the full 40-column width to the screen, then type the listing exactly as follows.

```
1GR3:O:2-PL:3-P:11,10:P 1-11000 0-07  
1OR:2:O:1-PL X,Y:R-X-1:Y-S-7:Y-Y+(Y-11):Y-1  
5:LOC B=1,Y:O A=R:(O=2):P=11:M:Y:A
```

So, you now have a game and a tiny tutorial on using abbreviations. And it was all expanded onto just one line!

Can you get this one up with a one line program for the next issue?

BACK ISSUES

Back issues of **NEW ATARI USER** are still available from **ISSUE 31** up to **ISSUE 72** except for the following

ISSUE 33 and 35 - SOLD OUT

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THE DISK COMPANION

The Disk Companion is a utility program for repairing corrupted disks and was designed for use with DOS 2.0 and the IDE disk drive. The program is written in Turbo Basic and is to be compiled using the Turbo compiler which gives a working speed that is comparable with the DISKFIX.COM utility program on the DOS 2.0 master disk. The Disk Companion has more features than DISKFIX.COM and displays all relevant data on screen so that the progress can be followed. The program can of course be used in the uncompiled format but slowly with the disadvantage of slower speed.

DISK PROBLEMS?

No matter how careful a person is, there will always be times when things go wrong with a disk, such as when the sector count no longer adds up and some sectors appear to become lost. A program under development may write data to a disk but might not close the file properly afterwards which can lead to a directory full of open files. Unfortunately, DOS 2.0 is riddled to some problems so that they may not be noticed until things go wrong.

Another inherent problem with DOS 2.0 that can cause confusion is that when copying a

disk (using option J), only "used" sectors are copied which are indicated as such within the disk's VTOC table, all other sectors, those marked as "free for use" are not. This means that the data filled sectors of deleted files are not copied because those sectors have been returned for use and have been marked as such in the VTOC. Being that the disk's directory sectors are always marked within the VTOC as used, they are always copied in their entirety, deleted file names as well. Clearly this means that whenever a disk is copied (using option J of DOS 2.0), deleted file names in the directory are copied, but the respective data filled sectors of those files are not. How nice it would be to be able to clean up a disk's directory before passing it onto other Masters.

It is possible to modify the lost sectors of a disk in order to load a virus program into the computer when booting. How nice it would be to be able to check the lost sectors of a disk and to be aware of a virus free environment.

Another problem that can easily occur is corruption of the sector link data, such that one sector's link data then should point to the next sector in sequence actually points to itself. This type of corruption appears to be caused by one sector copying the previous sector's link data which can result from pressing the BREAK key during a FATX disk operation. Pressing BREAK doesn't necessarily stop a disk write function as witnessed by

*John Foskett
presents a
great disk utility
that may well
prove invaluable
to you*

the need to repeatedly press BREAK during a disk I/O function in order to interrupt it. But pressing BREAK during a disk write could result in error 129 (Device Not) which is a file indication that some form of data corruption has taken place. When the corrupted link data is read, that is, when a sector points to itself, the computer reads that same sector over and over again in an endless loop which shows itself with a never ending series of beeps when the file is being read. Once the computer has entered the loop, there is no way out, the remaining part of the file is inaccessible since the sector linking has been broken. It then follows that since the file cannot be read, it cannot be deleted in the normal way either.

In a similar way, the disk's VTOC table can

become corrupted, also associated with error 129 caused by pressing BREAK while writing to at least two disks, one in single density and the other in enhanced density. In this way, a single density disk can appear to be enhanced (and vice versa) due to the VTOC data being written in the wrong disk. This can be accompanied by a bogus file name appearing in the directory which currently consists of a row of beeps. It is impossible to delete such a file name in the normal way since the heart is an illegal file name character which results in error 100 (file name error) should this be attempted.

Human error is always a possibility, we have all accidentally deleted a wanted file.

UP AND RUNNING

Upon running The Disk Companion, the title screen is presented requiring the number of the disk drive for use to be entered. Upon either entering a "1" or a "2", the disk to the selected drive is read and its format density is displayed on screen and if the total sector count within the VTOC has become corrupted, then this is also shown on screen. If the disk to the selected drive is changed at any time, then this Disk screen must be re-entered to enable The Disk Companion to be set up for the new disk. A message to this effect is displayed on screen. After a disk has been read, RETURN must be pressed to continue or ESCAPE pressed to exit back to the start to allow the disk drive number to be re-entered.

THE MENU

When RETURN is pressed from the title screen, the screen below is displayed, each option of which is described independently below ...

1. Disk directory
2. Sectors deleted (and verify)
3. Verify disk
4. Clean directory
5. Clean disk (used sectors only)
6. Check boot sectors
7. Disk map
8. Write with/without verify

Along with the above screen, the option to press ESCAPE to exit back to the title screen is given.

When selecting any of the seven main options from the menu, with the exception of option 8, the device is returned by pressing RETURN or to exit back to the menu by pressing ESCAPE is given.

1. DISK DIRECTORY

This option will list the directory of the disk in the selected drive, all 64 entries being listed regardless of whether they are used or not. Upon entering this option, the total number of sectors on the disk (707 or 1010) is displayed along with the total number of used sectors and free sectors. After the total, the first directory sector (sector 261) is displayed, showing all eight entries together with the number of sectors used, the starting sector and the status of each file. The status of the files being marked as locked, unlinked, deleted, open, obtained and un-used. In the same way as DOS 2.0 uses triangular brackets to indicate files which use at least one "enhanced" density sector (that is a sector above 730). The Disk Competition uses a spot preceding the status of the files. Therefore, like DOS, the spot indicates files which are listed in DOS 2.0s. On the extreme left of the screen is a key number which is the address of the file within

the directory on a scale of 1 to 64. The key number is the file number for use in the next screen, option 3 below.

Each directory sector is displayed in sequence upon pressing RETURN whilst pressing ESCAPE will exit back to the menu. When any of the directory sectors are displayed apart from the first, TAB is pressed to return to the first directory sector. When the eighth and last directory sector is displayed, pressing RETURN or TAB will return to the first directory sector or again ESCAPE will exit back to the menu.

2. RESTORE DELETED FILE (AND VERIFY)

When selected, this option will prompt for a file number to enable access to the chosen deleted file, this is the key number stated in option 1 above. At this point, the file number may be entered (only numerals may be used) or ESCAPE used to exit back to the menu. Only when a number has been entered can RETURN be pressed to enter it or DELETE BACK-SPACE pressed to clear it. Any number entered that is outside the allowable range (that is less than 1 or greater than 64) will be rejected.

After entering the file number, the name of the chosen deleted file is displayed on screen together with the total number of sectors in the file and the files starting sector. The status of the file is then checked and if it is "not" deleted, then an appropriate message is displayed along with the option to press ESCAPE to exit back to the menu. If the selected file is a deleted file, then the option to press RETURN to continue or ESCAPE to exit back to the menu is given. Upon pressing RETURN to continue, a full integrity check is performed on all the sectors of the selected file after which the starting sector is displayed together with the total number of bytes in the file. At this stage, the option to restore the file by pressing RETURN or exiting by pressing ESCAPE is given.

Should the integrity check fail, then a message will be displayed informing that the

selected deleted file is not retrievable and ESCAPE must be pressed at this point to exit back to the menu. This may be the case if the disk has been written to after the selected file was deleted. If any of the files access are found to be outside the range of a single density disk during the integrity check (that is sectors above 730), then the file status is altered accordingly to allow DOS to mark the file with the triangular brackets in the usual way. This also allows the Disk Competition to mark the file accordingly.

Upon pressing RETURN after a successful check, the file name in the directory is first removed after which the disk is fully verified in order to update the disk's VTOC table. When completed, ESCAPE must be pressed to exit back to the menu.

It is essential that SELECT is not pressed during the verification of the disk since this would prevent the VTOC table from being updated. This would mean that although the deleted file is fully re-established to the directory, its sectors would not be protected from being overwritten by the VTOC. If this is the case, then the disk must be verified using option 3 below or by restoring another file, in which case the verification of that file will of course include all files.

Once a file has been restored, it is given the status of unlinked, which can be addressed by using option 1 to view the disk's directory or by using DOS. Once restored, a file is fully protected within the VTOC table and is safe from being overwritten.

3. VERIFY DISK

When using this option, the directory is searched to locate all files on the disk and every time a file is found, it is read and its sectors are rechecked to enable a new VTOC table to be constructed. During verification, the current file and the current sector being read is displayed on screen along with the number of open files closed and the number of corrupted files deleted. After all files have been located and read, the newly construct-

ed VTOC table is written to the disk after which ESCAPE is pressed to exit back to the menu.

At any time whilst the disk is being read, it is quite safe to exit back to the menu by pressing SELECT since the disk is not being written to at this time. Exiting by pressing SELECT is only enabled when the disk is being verified using option 3 directly from the menu. If the disk is being verified in conjunction with option 2 to restore a deleted file, then exiting to the menu is disabled because of the importance of re-establishing the disk's VTOC table in order to protect the restored file.

If corrupt sector link data is found in any file whilst being read, the file will be deleted and the disk verified for a second time to re-establish the disk's VTOC table to clear the corrupted files sectors. During the second verification, the option to exit by pressing SELECT is again disabled due to the importance of updating the disk's VTOC table.

4. CLEAN DIRECTORY

When entering this option, a cautionary warning is given stating that the use of this function will prevent the removal of all deleted files on the disk. Along with the warning is the option to exit back to the menu by pressing ESCAPE or to press CONTROL and INSIGHT together to begin cleaning the directory. The CONTROL/INSIGHT keys were deliberately chosen, being more or less at opposite ends of the keyboard to provide a definite two-handed operation in order to begin.

Only deleted file names can be cleaned for removal using this function, all others being bypassed. Once completed, ESCAPE is pressed to exit. The total number of deleted file names cleaned from the directory is displayed on screen. All cleaned file names are given the special status of "cleaned" as witnessed by viewing the disk's directory using option 1. For the section "The Cleaned Directory" for details.

It is not strictly true that using this option

presents the retrieval of all deleted files. It does NOT erase the deleted files system, only the file name in the directory, therefore if the starting sector of a deleted file is known, then a file name can be reconstructed in the directory using a sector editor to point to it. In this way, a deleted file can be restored by using option 2 as described above.

5. CLEAN DISK (DELETE SECTORS ONLY)

This option is very similar to option 4 above with the exception that it cleans all previously used deleted sectors and returns them as blank unused sectors. When selecting this option, the same cautionary warning is given as in option 4 above where pressing ESCAPE will take you to the menu and again pressing CONTROL and SELECT together allows this option to begin.

Firstly this option initializes the VTDC bit map before cleaning begins which takes approximately 25 seconds in the uncompiled format, or just a few seconds when compiled. The bit map is reconstructed each time this option is selected to ensure the safety of the disk's data. Since this option actually erases data by overwriting the sectors, to initialize the VTDC bit map just once was deemed too risky considering the ease of human error.

Every sector on the disk is examined in sequence and if it is indicated as "free for use" in the VTDC table and has been previously used, then it is cleaned (or zeroed). If a sector is found to be currently used or a sector has never been used but has been previously deleted, then it is bypassed.

Unlike option 4 above, this feature cleans the names of all deleted files and once the sectors have been cleaned, the data they contained is lost and their retrieval is then impossible. This option overwrites the data contained in those sectors so use with care and always ensure that a duplicate disk is fully created before the use of this option is considered.

Whilst disk cleaning is in operation,

SELECT may be pressed to exit early after which ESCAPE must be pressed to exit back to the menu. Exiting early can save a lot of time when cleaning a disk which contains only a few deleted sectors, that is a disk where the majority of the sectors are unused. Once all the deleted sectors of a disk have been cleaned, the program will continue to load and check the remaining sectors in turn until every sector on the disk has been checked. In the case of a disk where the majority of the sectors are unused, there would be no point in continuing in order to check the remaining sectors because you would know that only unused sectors remain. The program can be followed on screen and a suitable point for early exit (if necessary) can be estimated. The relevant data is displayed on screen in three categories, the number of used sectors bypassed, number of unused sectors bypassed and the number of deleted sectors cleaned.

6. CHECK BOOT SECTORS

Selecting this option will check the three boot sectors of a disk, the result of which is displayed on screen and if the check is passed, ESCAPE must be pressed to exit back to the menu. Should the check fail for any reason, then the option to write new boot data is given by pressing RETURN or again to exit back to the menu by pressing ESCAPE. If the option to write new boot data is taken by pressing RETURN, then the existing boot data on the disk will be overwritten after which ESCAPE is pressed to allow to exit back to the menu. If this option is again selected, then the check will be done to pass witnessing the newly written boot data.

It is important to note that The Disk Composition contains only the standard boot data, that is the data as it is written in a newly formatted disk when using the standard DOS 3.3 master disk. The program can therefore only check for the standard boot data, any other data, such as customized

data will result in a failed check. The facility to check and if necessary to rewrite the boot sectors of a disk was included to ensure against virus programs and to go some way towards ensuring a disk that fails to boot, in the interim, it was deemed only necessary to include the standard boot data.

7. DISK MAP

This option will list every sector on the disk in columns each preceded with an inverse uppercase character showing its current status as follows ...

- N - Not accessible
- B - Boot
- D - Directory
- V - VTDC
- Q - Out of DOS range
- R - Free for use
- U - Used

The full disk map is displayed over several screens, each with the option to continue by pressing RETURN or to exit back to the menu by pressing ESCAPE. On the final screen, only the option to exit by pressing ESCAPE is given. Similarly to option 5, this option also initializes the VTDC bit map each time, see option 5 for details.

8. WRITE WITHOUT VERIFY

This option toggles the normal "write with verify" facility on and off, the current status being shown on screen. This is the only feature that does not have its own dedicated display screen.

THE CLEANED ENTRIES

This is a special non-standard feature which is a cross between a deleted file name entry in the directory and an unused entry. The advantage of a deleted entry is that it allows DOS to read the whole directory whereas an

unused entry forces DOS to terminate, if a file name somewhere in the middle of a directory listing was deleted, then DOS would simply read past it. But if the deleted entry was blanked (or zeroed) using a sector editor, then DOS would read it as an unused entry and think the end of the directory has been reached and would then terminate.

Consider the following example of a directory listing ...

```

DOS SYS
DUP SYS
AUTOBUN SYS
PROGRAM 1
PROGRAM 2
PROGRAM 3
PROGRAM 4
```

If "PROGRAM2" was deleted, then the directory would appear then in the usual way ...

```

DOS SYS
DUP SYS
AUTOBUN SYS
PROGRAM 1
PROGRAM 3
PROGRAM 4
```

But if the deleted file "PROGRAM2" was blanked using a sector editor, then the directory would appear then ...

```

DOS SYS
DUP SYS
AUTOBUN SYS
PROGRAM 1
```

Note that DOS terminates when it finds an unused entry (the blanked entry) and that the last few files are missing from the directory listing. This is the reason why a deleted file name cannot be cleaned by converting it into a blanked unused entry.

The status value of a deleted file name entry is "128" and it was found by experiment that any value above 127 allows DOS to read past the entry whilst any value less than 128 forces DOS to terminate. Therefore the way to solve the problem was to use a value greater than 128 and the value 129 was chosen.

All that was necessary to clean the deleted file names from the directory was to use the non-standard value of 129 for the first or second byte and to blank out with zeros the remaining fifteen bytes of each file name entry. In this way, a cleaned entry appears exactly the same as an uncorrupted entry in the directory, but acts as if it were a deleted entry. The non-standard status value of 129 acts exactly the same as a deleted file name with no adverse effect whatsoever upon the workings of the disk. A deleted file name entry will be overwritten in exactly the same way as a deleted entry would when saving a new file to the disk.

ERROR TRAPPING

It is important to note that because of the use of the computer's own internal disk access routines, the normal Basic error trapping system does not function in the usual way. In the light of this when using the internal routines, The Disk Companion may think it is reading and writing to a disk and will display all the appropriate messages, when in reality there is no disk in the selected drive. Some errors can be trapped through and a small error trap routine has been included to account for these. When reaching a disk's directory (option 1), the screen can go haywire when a disk is not present and the program thinks that it is reading the disk's directory. To account for this and in the event of an error, a specific screen location is checked and if the display does go wrong, then an error message is displayed and ESCAPE would be pressed to exit to the title screen.

Error trapping problems are compounded by the use of modified disk drives such as by using a Laser enhancement. The extended RAM to these modified drives can confuse the Disk Companion since data can be read from the drives' RAM without having to access the disk each time. Errors of this nature are naturally outside the program's control.

Although much has been done within The Disk Companion to force errors where necessary, the main point is to be aware of these potential problems and not to remove the disk from the drive whilst in use.

VERIFYING PROBLEMS

Due to some types of corruption, a disk may need to be verified twice in order to establish the correct sector count on the disk. This will be indicated by errors shown in the sector count at the top of the screen when viewing the disk's directory using option 1. This is a very rare occurrence and is normally only associated with VTOC sector corruption when a single density disk appears to become an enhanced density disk and vice versa.

OTHER PROBLEMS

The Disk Companion can cope with many types of data corruption, but obviously it cannot cope with ALL corruption. In the main, The Disk Companion will cope very well with the normal types of disk problems which may occur, but if a disk was to be deliberately corrupted beyond the normal level in order to try to beat the program, then it may well fail. The Disk Companion was never designed as a game, but was designed as a utility to repair the normal disk problems which do occur.

Opposite The internal workings of The Disk Companion

HOW THE DISK COMPANION WORKS

ACCESSING THE DISK

After entering the number of the disk drive to be used, The Disk Companion determines the format density of the disk in the selected drive by trying to access sector 1000. If accessed successfully, then an enhanced density disk is present, but if an error is found, then a single density disk is in use. In this manner, the VTOC sectors do not need scanning to establish this so that the disk's format density can safely be determined even in the case of a VTOC data corruption.

Disk access is achieved by the use of the computer's own internal routines for reading from and writing to the disk via the use of a machine code string D06. The Disk Companion makes use of two types of buffers to hold data prior to reading from or writing to the disk. When figures are required for calculations, the cassette buffer (CASSETF) is used whose address is 1021, but when calculations are not required, the various strings are used instead. The address of the cassette buffer or that of the appropriate string used is FORKED into the data buffer vector address at locations 772 and 773 (DATAFLOC/4). The sector to be accessed, whether by read or write is loaded by FORKING the sector number into the vector address at locations 776 and 777 (DATAFV1/8). The direction of data transfer (read or write) is FORKED into location 778 (DIRECTION), which is 62 to read the sector or 60 for 87 if write verify is enabled to write to the sector. The disk drive number selected for use, either "1" or "2", is FORKED into location 780 (DRIVE).

THE DISPLAY LIST

The Disk Companion uses a custom display list which provides a mixed mode screen with two lines of mode 1 at the top for the displaying the titles and 23 lines of mode 0 forming the main part of the screen which is lined for clarity. The display list is stored in the form of a string (DAM) where the fifth byte (high byte of the screen RAM address) is stored according to the language used. The screen RAM in the standard Atari base is at address 40000 whilst in Turbo basic it is at address 40100. The display list is stored by

```
DLAS,0=C1080F000000
```

Although The Disk Companion is written in Turbo basic, the standard Atari basic screen RAM address is required when the program is compiled.

THE BOOT SECTOR DATA

The data against which the boot sectors of a disk are checked is stored in a string (BOOTD) which is dimensioned to 284 (128x2) bytes and contains the data of all three sectors in sequence. One point to note is that the 77th byte of the string is the double-quote character which would obviously cause an error if it were included in the string in the normal way, therefore this byte is replaced with a space and loaded separately by using (BOOTD77,77) =CHR\$(32). This only applies to a string which is defined directly as used in the program and obviously not to a string loaded via a loop reading DATA statements. The advantage of defining a string directly is that it has virtually no instructions there when compared with the time taken to read data.

TEXT READING

This is achieved by a custom written machine code routine in the form of a string (RR) which reads text from a mode 0/0 screen in whole line units. It is configured as (LUNREADER),A,0 where "R" is the number of lines to be read starting with line "A".

THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

THE PROCEDURES

BEEP: Beep the key disk

BELL: Single bell ring

BELLS: Double bell ring, sectors BELL enter

BLANKVTOC: Blank VTOC data stored in two strings, one for each VTOC sector which is used for calculating the VTOC when verifying a disk

BOOKS: Deletes all bogus file names which may appear in the directory of a disk due to corruption

CAUTION: Prints a cautionary warning on the screen when using the potentially destructive functions

CHECK: Establishes the format density of the disk and sets up the maximum number of sectors available

CONSTRUCT: Constructs new VTOC data for verifying a disk and loads the results into two strings for writing to the disk

DELETE: Deletes all files which have sector link data corruption

ENTER: Prints the entry or exit message on screen and waits for either ESCAPE or RETURN to be pressed

ESCAPE: Prints "ESCAPE Exit" on screen and waits for ESCAPE to be pressed

FILE: Gets the name of a file

FILENUM: Gets the number of a deleted file for restoring

GETVTOCS: Loads the main working part of the VTOC table from both sectors into a string

INIT: Initializes the program

KEY: General routine for getting a key press

KEY1: Waits for either RETURN or ESCAPE to be pressed

KEY2: Waits for only the ESCAPE key to be pressed

LOADBITS: Calculates the status of all the

bits in the VTOC and loads them into a string

NUMS: Gets the number of sectors used and the starting sector for files in the disk's directory

OPEN: Closes all open files found while verifying a disk

UPDATE: Calculates the number of free sectors remaining after the disk has been verified

VTOCSH: Reads the VTOC sector 090, gets the maximum number of sectors on the disk and the number of free sectors available

VTOCSH2: Reads the enhanced density VTOC sector 1034 and gets the additional number of free sectors stored there

WRITE: Writes the newly constructed VTOC data to the disk

LABEL NAMES

MENU: Entry point for printing the menu on screen

MIS: Prints a message on the screen and exits back to the menu

MIS1: Prints a message on the screen and exits back to the file screen

OPT1 to OPT4: Entry points for the eight options on the menu

SETUP: Entry point for entering the title screen

VERIFY: Entry point for verifying a disk after a deleted file has been restored

MAJOR STRINGS

BITS: Stores the results of calculating the status of the VTOC bits by the LOADBITS procedure

BOOKS: Stores the last sector data

DIRM: Loaded with either the word BENCLE or ENHANCED and used for screen display purposes

DIS: Custom display list stored as a string

DIS: Machine code routine for erasing text from the screen

FILE: Used to store a file name

MSG: Used for printing general messages on the screen

US: General purpose utility string

VE: Stores the main working part of a disk's VTOC

VER: The VTOC sector

VTOCSH: Used to read and write VTOC sector 090

VTOCSH2: Used to read and write VTOC sector 1034

VE: Machine code routine for accessing the reserved disk read/write routines

MAJOR VARIABLES

BIT: Calculated bit within each calculated byte which is used when constructing a new VTOC table for a disk

BYTE: Calculated byte within each VTOC sector used when constructing a new VTOC table for a disk

CHK: Used for integrity checking

CLEARSD: Stores the number of deleted sectors cleared when clearing a disk

COUNT1: Counts the number of sectors used when verifying a disk and is used to establish the number of free sectors remaining on the disk

DEN: Stores the format density of a disk, either 0 for a single density disk or a 1 for an enhanced density disk

DIRM: Number of corrupted files deleted during verify

DIS: Number of the disk drive to be used, either 1 or 2

FILE: Address of a file within any one of the directory sectors

FILE: Last sector of a file which is used in restoring a deleted file

FREE: Number of free sectors on a disk

FREE2: Number of free sectors available in the second VTOC sector 1034

KEY: Stores the ASCII code of the key pressed for menu selection

LOC: Location address of each file entry within a directory sector

MAX: Maximum number of sectors available on a disk, either 700 or 1000

NUM: Generally the number of sectors in a file

OPEN: Number of open files closed during verify

ST: Starting sector of a file

STAT: Stores the status of a file name entry and is used when printing the disk's directory

TOTAL: Total number of bytes a file consists of and is used when restoring a deleted file

UNSEED: Stores the number of unseeded sectors bypassed when clearing a disk

USED: Stores the number of used sectors bypassed when clearing a disk

VER: Stores either 00 or 01 for use in writing with or without verify

VARIABLES AS CONSTANTS

There are many constants in the listing which have been replaced by variables in order to save as necessary space. These variables are the numbers themselves preceded by the letter "N" so that the value of these "constant" variables can instantly be seen, typically they are N1000, N1001, N1002, etc.

THE LISTING

The Disk Companion is available on the lesser 70 disk ready to run. If you want to attempt the more sophisticated task of typing in the listing instead, or you want to study the printed listing, a fully typed coded listing is available from NEW ADAM USER upon request. The program is substantially over 1000 lines long, it is written in Turbo Basic.

ZORK I

Mark Stinson gives you some hints on playing one of the all-time Atari classics now available, as Disney would say, for a limited time only

This issue brings you a short review of an incredible game, Zork I by Infocom. This game is an all-time classic, an all-format and is now available for less than \$5. The review is short as I have put together a number of hints for those of you that are stuck and want to play the game to its conclusion.

Much has been written on Zork, indeed it even spawned a book of the game, however there will be many Atari users who have bought their machines relatively recently who may not have come across it. Well, it all began with a huge mainframe game called Adventure, by Crowther and Woods. Marc Blank and Dave Lebling re-imagined Zork as a mainframe, and later worked together as Infocom to code the game to three settings, Zork I to III. The game was written in ZIL (Zork Implementation Language) and set the standard for all future computer adventure games. The series is still recognized by many as the ultimate in adventure.

Many of you will never have tried an adventure, or will have had a go at some poor game and given up in disgust. I can only say give Zork a try, it was for many the sole reason for buying a home computer. As Page 61 has a supply of Zork I at a ridiculously low price it has to be worth a go even if it turns out not to be to your taste.

Zork is set in a huge underground empire which has long been abandoned by all but a few colourful characters. Your aim in Zork I is to collect a number of fabulous treasures dotted about the empire. In order to do this you must first solve some truly diabolical puzzles, and learn to apply logical thought to difficult situations. I do hope that you will give this classic game a go, it could be your last class.

HINTS

House and Outside

How do I open the egg? Give it to someone more stupid than yourself (later in the game)

How do I open the grating? From the outside

How do I get inside the house? Open the window on the east of the house

How do I get the handle from the conchlid? Take the contents of the egg and swallow it

How do I get on the cabinet? Look for something colorful later in the game, then crawl it on the cabinet

How do open the door in the kitchen? Solve the puzzle of the Cyclops later on, and you will see

How do I get underground? Pull back the rug to reveal the trap door

Cellar

How do I get past the troll? Use the sword, and rope for the belt

How do I beat the thief (if he turns up here or elsewhere)? When you have enough points he is not too difficult

Maze

How do I get through the maze? Read a book in Page 61 and they'll send you a copy of the map

What do I do with the rusty knife? Leave until later

How do I beat the Cyclops? He is not proud of his father, and hates to hear the name of the man that beat him (0001988036)

Other areas

How do I get the platinum bar? Type 6070

How do I cross the lake? Touch the mirror

How do I cross the river? You need a string and something to inflate it

How do I enter the Dams room? Use the rope

How do I enter Hades? By lighting some candles, ringing a bell, and reading a book

How do I open the door? Press the yellow buttons in the control room then walk the ball with the sword

How do I get past the last? Carry something really stupid?

How do I get light into the machine room? Use the basket

What do I do with the machine? Find some fuel in the shovel room? Dig in the corner

Treasure and points list

Treasure	points	points for putting in case
Egg	5	5
Canary	5	4
Painting	4	6
Bar	10	5
Torch	14	5
Coffin	10	10
Sceptre	4	5
Trunk of Jewels	10	5
Trident	4	11
Jade	5	5
Bracelet	5	5
Diamond	10	10
Coins	10	5
Skull	10	10
Scarab	5	5
Emerald	5	10
Chalice	10	5
Pot of Gold	10	10
Brass Bauld	1	1



by Mark Stinson

TUTORIAL TIME

by Ian Finlayson

TURBO BASIC PROGRAMMERS KIT

This is the three disk set. It is all in Turbo Basic and the overall contents is:

Disk 1 - Side A: Compiler Documentation in English, Turbo Basic Documentation Update - describing the differences in the North American version

Disk 1 - Side B: Advanced Turbo Basic Documentation (almost the same as DD#20)

Disk 2 - Side A: Tutorial on structured programming in Turbo Basic

Disk 2 - Side B: blank

Disk 3 - Side A: Example program modules

Disk 3 - Side B: Tutorial style descriptions of how to use the modules on side A. (Some repeats of DD#20)

As you can see this Programmer's Kit has all you need to get going in Turbo Basic programming.

DOCUMENTATION

The Documentation and Tutorials use a reader that allows you to read them on screen or print them out to a printer. I would recommend printing all the text out as it is much easier to refer to in this form. Although the text is clear to read on screen it is not quick to find the particular subject you want to review, and if you overheat the subject you are interested in you cannot go back, but have to start from the beginning again. I thought of loading the text files into a word processor so I could use the search function to find particular topics and move up and down through the document, but the main documentation file and the file containing descriptions of the tutorial modules are both too big for Torgex or Int Alzet word processors to load fully. Anyhow I guess it would not be convenient to have to roll your own thing.

I write with some sadness that I start this article as it is the last regular article I will write for Page 6. Looking back it was issue 30 (March/April 1985) when I was accepted my first article for printing - what a proud day! After that there was quite a gap before I started to contribute regularly about a year later and I have been contributing almost continuously since.

Page 6, which later became New Atari User, must be one of the longest running computer magazines in the country going back to December/January 1982. It is evidence of Len Ellingham's determination, perseverance and dedication to the Atari, and I wish him every success in keeping it running with the help of you, the readers.

Anyhow, enough reminiscing and on with the article. I am following on from my last piece on Turbo Basic by describing some supporting material which is available in the Page 6 PD Library.

TURBO BASIC SUPPORT DISK

This is disk DD#20, and I will not say too much about it as virtually all the material is duplicated in the three disk set which I will mention next. If you already have Turbo Basic and only need comprehensive documentation then get this one, but I would recommend the three disk set as they have a slightly updated version of Turbo Basic and more tutorial material.

Turbo Basic program to load and review the documentation - it has to be printed out. The Advanced Turbo Basic documentation covers all three parts of Turbo Basic which are not in Atari Basic and all these manuals which are changed from the Atari Basic originals. The descriptions are quite clear and concise, and usually accompanied with a few lines of code illustrating the syntax in context. It is much helpful than the documentation which came with the original Turbo Basic, and is supplemented by the file on Disk 1 Side A which brings the documentation right up to date reflecting the latest changes to the North American version of Turbo Basic.

Also included in the documentation is an English language version of the instructions for using the compiler.

STRUCTURED PROGRAMMING TUTORIAL

The tutorial on structured programming will be very useful to those of you who are starting out in Basic programming. It uses an example "Dink Secondary" program to illustrate the concept and does a good job of demonstrating where to start, how to structure your program and gain the advantages of a modular programming style - writing individual procedures to call contained modules which can be reused in other programs at a later date.

OTHER TUTORIALS

The other tutorials reinforce the message in the structured programming tutorial. There is one covering all the individual procedures supplied to the Programmer's Kit. There are 20 little procedures in all covering a wide variety of needs such as:

Copying text
Scrolling
Listing variables
Printing out in 3d columns forward
Max in One character

As well as the main tutorial covering the program modules there are two separate tutorials on how to do scrolling and how to use Arrays. These two topics are a bit too complex to fit the short description style of the other tutorial material and both get a good airing in a clearly understandable style.

SUMMARY

In all this is a very good package, and a must for anyone starting out or in their early days as a Basic programmer. Do look closely at the structured programming tutorial. It will help you to get into good habits right from the start.

If you have been programming in Turbo Basic for some time you may not find much that is new, but the descriptions are clear and the comments are well illustrated with example code so you may find that this material can illustrate some areas of Turbo Basic that you have not really fully appreciated. At the incredible low price of the Page 6 necessary shop you cannot afford to miss it!

GOODBYE!

Here I must sign off for the last time. I thank Len very much for the opportunity his magazine has given me to develop my early knowledge of computers. There is some slight regret in the fact that my hobby has expanded to an extent that I now carry a substantial part of my income from computers (PCs I must confess) and this leaves me little time for the Atari, but I do continue to enjoy it.

The Accessory Shop

ISSUE 73

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POLE POSITION

Everyone has heard of Pole Position, the racing game that inspired almost every racing game since. It may be the original but unless you've played it you have never realised how Pole Position will remain to challenge after many years. One of those games that has caused the right balance of game play and graphics to make a classic that will last forever. It's not in your collection, come through here now!

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All the thrills of American football can be yours in a superb simulation of the league. 20 different teams, plus, playing left hand line, down the right hand line or get the manager in the dugout. Learn what the players' shoulder as he throws the ball too! The control of the action of the receiver, blockers and runners is yours to control and make your way to the top of the league. All exciting game for one or two players.

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BASIC CARTRIDGE

Some programs, especially some early early system programs aren't out on the disk but you will find it on tape in the old version of tapes.

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DISKS ... DISKS ...

ZORK I

The Zorkian classic and the adventure game that changed the way all future adventures were written. The Grand Underground Empire of Zork is well documented by text and thousands of puzzles have become legends. Challenging to Zorkers is more difficult adventure. Zork II is the best introductory text adventure for beginners or those with a little experience. If you have never ventured underground before now is the time to try. (1-1 hour)

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DRUID

Another classic in which, as Lord of the Circle Druid, you wander through the Dungeons of Amdorath with your mighty spells to your side on a quest to destroy the four Cancer princes. As you slay these vile the dungeons you will find other surprising things. It's inevitable when it's all over you'll be a Druid of Life which will lead and reward you. Excellent graphics and excellent graphics make this one of the best available games.

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One of the best of the best. Play and you will get a great game.

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ROUNDUP

THE WORLD OF BUDGIE PART 3

Welcome to my third and final look into the world of Budgie UK software. This time I will review as many titles as possible.

Let's go...

KNOCKS AND CROSSES

FIRST DOMINION is an excellent version of the popular pub game. One to five players play with nine dominoes (using a double six set, i.e. dominoes marked 0-6). You lay the dominoes in the standard way. A control box can be called up at any time which displays your dominoes, how many each player has left, and the next numbers. It also allows you to "knock" when you cannot lay a domino. The speed of the game can be altered from 0 to 128. The default is 100 and this is just fine.

The dominoes are well drawn. They are big enough to be easily identified and yet can all fit on one screen. This game is surprisingly addictive and any fan of dominoes should have it in their disk drive now!

For fans of crossword puzzles comes **BUDGIE'S CROSSWORDS VOL. 1**, a collection of 26 crossword puzzles. Just over half of the screen consists of the crossword itself. Alongside is an info box where you enter

your answers. By pressing the Spacebar you can roll up the list of clues. You then go back to the info box and enter which clue you wish to answer, e.g. 10A. If you are stuck, there is a facility to give you the answer to a clue. At the end you are told how many clues you answered correctly and how fast you worked. You can also given a score and a rating.

I found it handy using the keyboard to enter the clues. The puzzle themselves were enjoyable enough but I just kept wishing that I was using a pen. Crossword fans will enjoy this disk. Given away for best sticking with the crossword in the daily newspaper!

Want to design your own crosswords? No problem - Budgie have the answer with **XPFUZZLE**. This utility allows you to enter the size of the crossword grid (anything from 3x3 to 37x19), limit the maximum word length, etc. **XPFUZZLE** then kicks into gear and inserts words into the grid. All you have to do is make up the clues and you have your very own crossword creation. The whole process takes only a few minutes and you can even print



One of many crosswords taken from Budgie's CROSSWORDS disk. See if you can solve it and get the disk for more!

out the final grid. A very original piece of software. With Budgie Crosswords Volume 1 and **XPFUZZLE** you have the complete crossword package for your ST.

PREDICT AND EDUCATE

BUDGIE'S ASTROLOGY is a package which deals with the main essentials of astrology. Everything is controlled from an Astrology Desktop which gives you access to horoscopes and pointers into the subject. Many points are covered including planets, signs, houses, charts and prediction. There is also an astrology bibliography.

Many example charts of famous people are included.

You can examine the charts of Isaac Newton, Eugene Icarus, Michael Jackson, Arthur Rowell, etc.

I rarely read horoscopes and usually reach for the remote control when Russell Grant appears on the TV (don't complain). However, Budgie's Astrology does offer a first hand look into the subject and was initially interesting. Long term interest is suspect unless you have a true feeling for astrology.

THE SPITTING FISH is an educational title which contains a spelling game and a multiplication program. In the Spitting Fish game you control a fish which catches insects by spitting at them. If hit, an insect drops into the water and the baby fish feed upon it.

The second part is called

Five Tables. This will allow the screen and the child must multiply the numbers and enter the correct answer by clicking on large numbers at the bottom. There are lots of happy faces if the correct answers are entered.

The Spitting Fish is nothing special. For a little time it will entertain and educate a young child, however the repetitiveness will soon have them asking for something else.

RACE AND BLAST

If you're looking for a horse racing program for your ST then Budgie can offer **HORSE RACING SIMULATOR**. You can

by
**Stuart
Murray**



Okay, so *Raffles* is hardly exciting, but with *Budgie's ASTROLOGY* you can work out charts for your family and friends or study other famous personalities like Bob Dylan, Brigitte Bardot, John Lennon, and many more

boy and will horses, check out forthcoming runs, enter your horse in a race, examine the form book and bet on a horse. The program is controlled via an on-line menu and is easy to use.

The actual horse race itself (the most important part) is colourfully animated as the horses race along the track in some pounding mounts. The graphics are simple but effective enough to entertain. Another repeatable disk from *Budgie!*

Next up is *EXODUS*. This is an arcade shoot-em-up which is a mixture of *Xenos* and *Baynes*. You fly over a futuristic landscape blasting everything in sight. The action is viewed from a bird's eye perspective with a large on-screen radar warning of approaching danger. You can fly over the landscape in any

which you must travel deep into a cavern and destroy the Devil's Egg. In your path are a number of enemies and starting mines.

Exterminator is basically a poor man's *Vanguard*. The graphics are colourful but they are poorly drawn and give the appearance of a child's game. The first eight of your ship's missiles are stolen when you see how stupid it looks to be hit. The gameplay is quite fast and the actual shoot-em-up element is reasonably challenging.

If more emphasis had been placed on presentation, *Exterminator* would have been a reasonable clone of *Vanguard*. As it stands it is a dud; this amongst the majority of quality *Budgie* games. It also has more bugs which caused it to bomb a couple of times on my STE. Stick with *Koolhaat*.

STACK AND SQUIRT

If you've been busy playing *Stack 'em Up* (reviewed last time) then you may also be interested in *QUARTIS*,

another quality Tetris clone. Like *Stack 'em Up*, *Quartis* is Tetris with a subtle difference. You must manipulate cubes instead of lines. The cubes contain four *Quas*, which are basically four smaller cubes. The *Quas* are coloured and patterned and

must be laid together in groups of four of a kind (rows or lines). If you drop a cube off-line then two *Quas* land on the highest point and the remaining two fall down the side. This is an intelligent touch which keeps the game flowing and doesn't allow the screen to become unnecessarily cluttered.

Quartis is a travel game, with a bar running slowly down the left. The objective is to last until the end of the time limit without being overwhelmed. *Quartis* is another interesting variation on the Tetris theme. Good stuff.

A noteworthy platform game is *BERT THE SQUIRT*. This is a colourful title which has you collecting fruit from various platforms while avoiding lots of animated ladders. There are traps, big platforms, springs, etc. The gameplay is fast and smooth. Digitized sound effects round off the game perfectly. Then the *Squirt* is one of the few quality platformers to the public domain!

DOUBLE DASH

Of course, no column on *Budgie UK* is complete without including *DOUGLAS ROCKMOOR (1M)* re-visited. This is the ST version of our truly classic it-bit 1000 *Headlands*. All of the original elements are included. Even the graphics are drawn to the same bloody

style!

The aim is to travel through a large cave collecting enough diamonds to open the exit. In your path are ladders which fall if unsupported, walls and a host of badies. The gameplay is fast and frustratingly addictive. As in the original, sound is sparse but this does not detract from the sheer playability of the game. A real attempt has been made here to create a faithful representation of what was ultimately a perfect game anyway.

Douglas Rockmoor is *Budgie UK* re-visited!

If you want more of *Douglas Rockmoor* then you must get your hands on *DOUGLAS 2*. This sequel features another 20 levels of arcade puzzling (1/2M) and 1M8 versions are included on the

disk. It is playability personified!

This concludes my 3-part series on *Budgie UK*. There are many other quality titles in the *Budgie* range, some of which have already been featured in *FD* (including, e.g. *ATTITUDE*, *FACEIT*, *STOM CRICKET* NOT A SCOO-CYER, etc. No doubt further *Budgie* titles will appear in forthcoming columns.

Around eight out of ten *Budgie* titles are quality efforts which are even better value for money now than they are PD. It is a shame that we will not be seeing any new titles from *Budgie* but at least their range of 100+ ST titles can now be enjoyed for many years to come. *Budgie* all the way!

ROUNDUP RATINGS:

ST385 DOUGLAS ROCKMOOR	94%
ST482 DOUGLAS 2	94%
ST310 EXODUS	87%
ST699 DOMINOES	86%
ST612 QUARTIS	84%
ST482 BERT THE SQUIRT	80%
ST608 HORSE RACING SIM.	78%
ST517 XWPUZZLE	78%
ST1007 BUDGIE'S ASTROLOGY	70%
ST305 CROSSWORDS	61%
ST906 THE SPITTING FISH	49%
ST311 EXTERMINATE	25%



JOURNEY INTO CYBERSPACE

John S Davison continues to explore the Internet and this time asks what it is going to cost



In the last issue I described how I got myself connected to the Internet via CompuServe for sending and receiving electronic mail. This time I'd like to tell you a little more about CompuServe and the links with the Internet, and give you some idea of the costs involved.

EARLY BEGINNINGS

CompuServe seems to have been around forever. I can remember it being mentioned in the legendary *Antic* and *Avant* magazines back in the Golden Age of Atari, but the huge hourly online charges and the need for international phone calls to access it put it strictly in the "millionaires only" class.

Things are very different now though. Over the last few years CompuServe have built their own international communications network, which means you can now access the service via UK phone numbers. Also, competition between online service providers has driven charges down to a reasonable level, so a CompuServe subscription now costs only about \$6.50 per month. For this you get unlimited access to over 130 of CompuServe's "Basic" services: three hours of Internet connect time; up to 90 e-mail messages; and a copy of CompuServe's excellent monthly magazine delivered to your door.

Basic services cover areas such as news, sport, weather, travel, business, electronic shopping, games, entertainment, finance, and a reference library of associated information including several online encyclopedias. It includes a rapidly growing collection of UK oriented material too. Support and help in using the service are also available here, including areas where you can practice sending messages before doing it for real. It's mainly text based, so can be accessed easily from an Atari ST or W-Mid range running an ASCII

based communications program.

Note - CompuServe is USA based so charges are listed in US Dollars, then converted to your local currency for payment by credit card. There's no VAT to pay, for the same reason. Subscriptions is actually \$6.95 per month, which in the UK works out at around £5.50 depending on exchange rate.

WATCH THOSE COSTS...

Basic services are only a small fraction of CompuServe's total portfolio - there are more than 2800 other areas of CompuServe you can link into if you wish, but they cost extra. The next step up from the "Basic" services are the "Extended" services, charged at \$4.00 per hour (about 5p per minute) of connect time. Over 600 of these are "Premium" items, each of which is like a bulletin board in its own right, covers them covering a very wide range of topics.

One of the big attractions for computer enthusiasts is that virtually every major computer hardware and software company and product (including Atari) is represented somewhere on these forums. Stick with a technical problem? Just post a message in the appropriate forum and you'll quickly get help, often from someone who helped design and develop the product. The forums are open to anyone, so you're also likely to get rapid assistance from other knowledgeable sources. For example, after posting a forum message requesting help with a Flight Simulator technical problem I quickly received a reply from someone other than another Charles Gribik, whose books on Flight Simulator adventures I reviewed in these pages a few years back!

As well as the message area a forum also has a series of associated libraries containing all manner of useful bits and pieces, such as software utilities, version updates, bug fixes,

articles about the topic, etc. Any of this material may be downloaded at a cost of 5p per minute, which is why you need the fastest modem you can afford. It costs *you* for itself if you do a lot of downloading.

You can also engage in real-time conversations with other people logged into the same forum, either on a one-to-one basis, or as a group discussion with a number of other people. Often, a forum will host a real time "conference" in CompuServe's equivalent of a conference centre. Famous celebrities frequently make guest appearances at these - Elton, TV, and recording stars. Big names from the world of sport, and major figures from the computer industry have all appeared - and you can "talk" to them live via your screen and keyboard. There's also a special area of CompuServe called CB Simulator, which works rather like CB radio. You can "tune" into one of many chat channels and join in with any live communications you find in progress. You're likely to meet people from all over the world here, and such meetings often result in further communication using e-mail - you friends in cyberspace!

BUSINESS SERVICES

There are other tiers above the Extended services, these being the "Premium" and "Executive" services. Further additional charges apply to these, depending on what information you're retrieving. Premium charges range from a few cents to tens of dollars per item accessed, and the Executive service costs \$15 per hour (about 18p per minute). The really expensive items are often used only for business purposes and therefore the costs can be justified on business benefits obtained.

If you're disappointed in the way you use CompuServe then it couldn't be costly. I log onto the service every day to collect and send





e-mail, look up a few share prices, gather the latest computer industry news, and occasionally spend a little time in forums or surfing the Internet - yet my monthly bill is only usually around the \$10 mark. These charges are extra, but I normally dial in after 6:00pm to take advantage of off-peak rates. If I need to spend a bit of time online (ie download shareware programs, for instance) I do this at the weekend at even lower phone charges. The also subscribed to Mercury, as their long distance rates are considerably cheaper than BT's.

GATEWAY TO THE INTERNET

CompuServe's Internet facilities are fairly new. They've been implementing them at an accelerating rate over the last few years, and almost everything is in place now. Internet e-mail came first, followed later by FTP (File Transfer Protocol) - for downloading files from remote systems on the Internet), then Newsgroup access (a bit like the message areas of CompuServe's own forums, but there are about 12,000 of them). They've recently added Usenet file logging from remote computer systems connected to the Internet), and the biggest bandwidth guinea of them all - the World Wide Web. You get three "free" hours of Internet access time included in your monthly subscription, with additional time charged at \$2.50 an hour (about 2.5p per minute).

E-mail is the most basic (and by far the most important) Internet application offered. For the uninitiated, sending e-mail is the electronic equivalent of sending a letter to someone. Its main advantage is speed - you get virtually instantaneous delivery of a message or data file to any Internet e-mail address in

the world. Actually, e-mail messages aren't usually delivered directly to your system, but are held in a "mailbox" on your service provider's system until you log on and download them.

CompuServe has two types of e-mail - there's "internal" e-mail between CompuServe subscribers, and "external" e-mail between a CompuServe user and someone subscribing to another service. External mail is directed through a "gateway" to/from the outside world, for instance CompuServe's Internet gateway routes mail from CompuServe to other services and users connected directly to the Internet. You get a nominal \$8.00 worth of e-mail included in your monthly subscription, and each message sent costs 10 cents - hence the 90 "free" messages per month. Additional messages cost 10 cents each.

However, there are a number of complications - 10 cents covers you for sending up to 7,000 characters of data (about 3 pages). Additional material is charged at 2 cents per 750 characters. Also, inserting internal messages from CompuServe users carry no charge, but those from the Internet carry "postage due" charges at the same rates as the sending charges. These are also clocked up against your \$8.00 allowance, but there's no real additional cost until your \$8.00 is used up. Invoicing external e-mail isn't charged for unless you actually read it - you can delete it before reading if you're too tight-hearted to pay the postage due! Even though I send and receive lots of e-mail I rarely exceed my \$8.00 monthly allowance.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

As with ordinary mail, e-mail users need an address in which e-mail items can be delivered. You're given this address when you

continued on page 42

ST Review

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER ITALIA '95

Stuart Murray looks at what might be Domark's last ST release

Following in the football boots of Championship Manager '93 (CM93) and the '94 Season Data Disk (see review in New Atari User 98) comes Championship Manager Italia '95, again by Domark Software. This is another football management game for 1-4 players. It is heavily based on CM93 but this time you mean to get success in the world's toughest leagues: the Italian Serie A and Serie B.

I played a few games of CM93 a while back on a friend's ST. Italia '95 is basically CM93 rebranded. I.e. it also features a long installation process, buying/selling players, creating your backroom staff, team tactics, playing styles and strategies, naming commentary during matches, etc., etc. The control and graphics are identical. Everything is held together by a mass of statistics, tables and lists. It is an impressive football management simulation.

For a detailed review of the installation and gameplay of Italia '95 check out Sir Harting's review of CM93 on page 98 and ST of MARCH. There really is no point in repeating the same information so soon after the original review. Only the clubs and players are different in Italia '95. In fact, Italia '95 is effectively a stone that is full-price clothing. It is a blatant attempt to bleed some money from the real user. Yes, the game itself remains excellent but for CM93 users there is nothing new on offer except the chance to play with Italian clubs and players.

As a football fan, a fan of the Italian league (in Parma) and someone who does not own CM93 I can say that I really enjoyed Italia '95. It is incredibly addictive and with the ability

to use fictional players I can use it for years to come and not have to put up with out of date squads! With the merry-go-round of transfers at the end of every Italian season, the real '95/'96 teams will look very different to those on the Italia '95 disk.

Not that it makes much difference anyway because much of the player data on my copy of Italia '95 is incorrect. All of the first names have been mixed up and the positions are quite often wrong, e.g. DARRIO Baggio playing in DEFENCE for Juventus! Many players aren't even at the correct clubs and Domark have seen fit to leave Fiorentina, Fiorentina and Padova in Serie B despite giving the correct Serie A line-up in the colour poster provided.

These silly mistakes mean that you can only play the game effectively with fictional players now. Surely the whole point of releasing a 1995 version of this game is to allow the player to manage the current famous names in Serie A! The mixed-up player and club data make this impossible and part of the enjoyment is lost.

Domark should not be marketing Italia '95 until the player and club data has been correctly updated. Their lack of research is very unprofessional and gives Italia '95 the look of

continued on page 42

ITALIA '95

continued

a random release ported over from Italia 93/94 on the Amiga.

I telephoned Denmark to enquire about the possibility of a fully updated Season 85/86 Data Disk but they told me that there are no plans for such a disk and that Italia '95 would probably be their last release for the 85 format (sadly?). This means it is unlikely that we will see Championship Manager 2 on the ST this autumn. Try contacting Denmark to request that an ST version be released. If enough of us contact them, they may reconsider their position.

As there is unlikely to be update disks or future support from Denmark, the only buy Italia '95! Well, it's just so damn playable if you stick with Italian players this game will keep you trying for one more victory over and over again. It's just a pity about the 1995 player data.

If you don't own CM85 or Italia '95 then I advise you to buy one of them. CM85 can now be picked up quite cheap so it may be the best option. Do NOT buy Italy 95 because they are effectively the same game and even great games are not worth buying twice!

I'm off to take Andrea into Serie A, play a pre-season friendly against themselves and then leave to manage Parma. It'll be 4am before I know it!

the CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER ITALIA '95

Publisher: Demtek Software, Ferry House,
81-87 (Locy Road), Putney, London
SW15 3PL. Tel: 0181 780 2324.

Price: Check around - probably now
discounted

sign up with a service provider and if it's to be used on the Internet it usually takes the form: "username@domain.name.tld". "Username" is your own unique identifier within your "domain" and may be your name, or account code, or any other unique characteristic. The "domain", separated from your username by the @ sign, is usually the name of your service provider, or company, or university, or whatever. "domains" consist of one or more additional levels of qualification (such as indicated by a dot) if there's more than one referring to the type of establishment and/or country in which the domain resides. By convention a commercial enterprise uses ".com" or ".net" qualifiers, educational establishments use ".edu" or ".gov", governmental departments use ".gov", and other organisations use ".org". Many USA based domains often include a country code, e.g. ".uk" for UK based domains. By own address.

SOCCER: 1378@compuserve.com, uses my Compuserve account number as my username, within the domain called "compuserve", within the commercial enterprise class of domains. Any Internet user anywhere in the world can send me e-mail by specifying this address, and the Internet system software will work out how to deliver it to me.

I normally use my IBM PC for writing e-mail, but again it can be done from an 80 or 6-bit system running a standard ASCII communications program. I use an updated copy of Flash for communications on the ST, and this seems to work OK. Unfortunately, it's not nearly as user friendly as the superb WinCIM software Computers provide (free for PC and Macintosh users). I haven't actually tried e-mail from my 1300E yet, but I'd expect it to work steadily using an ASCII system program. If there's anyone reading this who uses an 8-bit machine for e-mail or other Internet applications, please send me a message at the above e-mail address. I'll include details of any tips you can give to the next issue. *



contact ... contact ... contact ...

FOR SALE

GAFFE: 40 games on cassette for sale. Super is asked £15. Tel: 0181 624 0761

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WANTED

PADDLES ETC.: Star paddle type paddles. Also 1300E and most types of hardware sold on. Tel: 0181 624 0761

PS2 Wanted: Flight Simulator 1 on disk with manual. Please contact S.A. Nicholas, 10 St. Thomas St., Atlanta 114-71, Greece.

PERMALS HELP

CALLING SIMON: Simon, head or from South Yorkshire. Please contact me. I will have one of your addresses and you have the e-mail. Does anyone know if Simon is still on the Atari network? Contact: Robert Cookson at 26 (Sable Lane, St. Thomas, Exeter, Devon EX4 1JF)

FREE TO SUBSCRIBERS

The CONTACT column is free of charge to subscribers who wish to sell their equipment or contact other readers. Space is limited so we request that entries be kept as short as possible. Excessively long entries may be heavily edited or ignored. Send your CONTACT notes on a separate sheet of paper (not as part of a letter).

CONTACT, PAGE 4 PUBLISHING, STAFFORD, ST16 1DR

FOR SALE ... WANTED ... PERMALS ... ADVICE ... HELP

PROGRAM LISTINGS

As most program listings would take up several pages of NEW ATARI USER we no longer publish those listings within the magazine. The programs are available ready to run on the Issue Disk which is available for each issue, details of which are found on the DISK DONUS page. If you prefer to type the programs in yourself, every listing, complete with TYPO codes, is available to subscribers free of charge. Either drop us a line or telephone and ask for the listings you require quoting the issue number and the title.

Write to LISTINGS, NEW ATARI USER, P.O. BOX 54,
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