

Sorry, senior



but I have never heard of Atari

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Page 6 supports your Atari with the world's oldest and best dedicated magazine ...
as well as the world's best PD library
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Page 6 Publishing's

NEW

ATARI USER

The Resource for the ATARI CLASSIC and the ATARI ST

Issue 80 - January/February 1997

\$2.50

FOR THE ATARI CLASSIC

⊗ **SECTOR EDITOR**

*A great new utility for
manipulating your disks*

⊗ **INTERNET**

*Seeking information
concerning Classic games*

⊗ **UNDER A TON**

A new Epson 24-pin printer



THE WIDER SCENE

**FINDING PAGE 6
ON THE INTERNET**

**DO YOU NEED WINDOWS
TO BUY A PRINTER?**



PLUS ... NEW PROGRAMMING UTILITIES - STM SCANS - THE 1997 ST - ST PUBLIC DOMAIN ... AND MORE!

As we begin a new year and find that one or two people are reluctant to renew their subscriptions because they are unsure of the future, my thoughts have turned to how long New Atari User might last. Thinking things through I reckon we have at least another two years at our normal output of six issues a year, that's another dozen chances for you to have something published before it's too late!

One thing that worries many users is whether they might lose their money should we suddenly decide to stop publishing. Many old hands would have experienced losses with ASCII and Amiga who did just that and more recently with Atari Classics who did their best to mislead subscribers, but give serious supporters rather less of a good deal. My intentions are to give you adequate notice when the time comes, to set a date for the last issue at least twelve months ahead and then strive to review for whatever issues remain. That way you won't lose out, that that is to the future and talking about it now is rather premature as there are at least another six issues before such an announcement. That means six issues to fill with interesting articles, programs, reviews and anything else. I am sure that we can rely on those regular contributors whose work has been that good during the last year to come up with something new, but we also need articles and programs from as many of you as possible who either have not contributed before or maybe not for some years. **Keep sending your contributions, we have another two years of issues to fill (at least) and keep renewing your subscriptions (and we'll tell you otherwise).**

Les Ellingham

NAU INTERNET CONTACT LIST

The following is a list of NAU readers whom welcome e-mail from other Atari users. If you'd like to be added to this list please drop me an e-mail note at the address above.

David Beveridge	davestock@tribal.co.uk	Paul Miller	tmiller@dnv.nl
Paul Carlson	paul_carlson@fr-cc	Ann O'Donnell	annod@teli.nl
Johnny Chan	johnchan@stars.net	Alan Pinner	1006411040@compuserve.com
Michael Curran	mcurran@calson.edu	Paul Pison	new address to be advised
John D Dalton	100254.1177@compuserve.com	Brad Rogers	brad@planet3.com.au
David Foss	101152.1043@compuserve.com	Herman Wright	hfw@planet.nl
Joel Goodwin	j1goodwin@wading.at	Bryan Zilwood	b.zilwood@net.nl
Donna Hooper	wh000@connect.victoria.tc.ca		

HARDWARE PRINTER REVIEW

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS

UNDER A TON

**Need a new printer?
John Robinson
reviews his latest
purchase - the Epson
LQ-100+ - which is a
24-pin printer that
can be used with the
Atari Classic as well
as the ST. What's
more it's amazingly
cheap!**

ADVERTISING

I was most interested in the feature article by Kevin Gaudin in Issue 76 of New Atari User primarily because I use an HP2000 Classic for all my word processing, and I am a regular contributor to a Magazine Collectors magazine. My back in 1987, I bought a Panasonic KX-F108L, which I reviewed for Page 6 in Issue 23.

Recently, the Panasonic fell ill. Not, very probably, my terminal affliction - if you had

the nose to detect about a bit in the electrostatic it could probably be fixed but then I do not. Anyway, it would print around six or seven lines. They slip about two dozen or so. So what is to do?

Repair by expert springs in mind but unfortunately, finding one is not easy. Consequently, when I bought the machine, some to have vanished. Derek Piers failed to reply to my message of distress. Others quoted fantastic prices. Like \$25.00 just to rework the thing - say work done/parts used would be charged extra, so would postage and insurance fees; more - all plus VAT. All this adds up to a hell of a lot of dosh so could I find another printer which would work with the 8-bit? Would it print the size of A4 letters? Could I afford it anyway?

TANDY OF ALL PLACES!

Looking earnestly round the shops, I chanced to visit Tandy, where a quite charming young lady introduced me to the Epson LQ-100+, a 24 pin Dot Matrix machine which has a lot going for it. First it is genuine Letter Quality, some of your "BIG" rubbish. Secondly, I was assured that connections to the 8-bit Classic via my Graphix A-7 interface was viable. Thirdly, it is a genuine 8-bit machine. Fourthly, it has graphics capability, and finally

UNDER A JON

ly at \$289.00 is costs less than the potential impact!

The specifications are impressive: Print speed - 180 cps dot-mat, 72 cps LG, six resident fonts, four of which are selectable to 100psi/120psi/150psi, the other two, passage and script, select to 18 and 12psi only. The character tables and International character sets, plus a legal character set, are all selectable by software command. The machine defaults in the U.S.A. character set, but this may be easily reset in any one of fifteen default sets! The default fonts are accessed by a press switch on the heavy single, two-switch control panel.

MATCHING COLOUR

Mechanically, we have a compact little machine, 17" high, 13" wide, 10" deep and weighing in at around 15 lb. Coloured in greyish-white, it is very similar to the Classic collection. It comes with about 25 of rolls, with a 100 page (trial), also greyish. The projected ribbon cartridge life is 3 million characters, which, at 60,000 a time, is not bad. The Print Head is expected to make 180 million strokes before requiring, and the MTBF life expectancy is 4000 print-on hours. The standard parallel interface socket accepts my Graphics 4-T without protest. It is possible to use paper from 140mm to 217mm wide and up to 0.18mm thick.

Two sheets, one original - one copy, may be fed through the tractor, but only one sheet manually. Envelopes and labels are acceptable with care, although paper must not exceed 150 GSM. Luckily, the printer marks either laid flat or standing vertically!

Available via software command (Control CODE), are: although the handbook lists 2000, Decimal and Hexadecimal alternatives, are over 100 different functions. The most useful to me include: Page eject, Line Spacing, Top and Bottom Margins, Left and Right Margins, Page Length in Lines/Columns, Select Bold, Field, Paragraph, Character, Double Width or Height, Superscript or Subscript, Plots, with Underline, Strike-through, and Overprint - the Score Line can be Single or Double Continuous/Single or Double Broken Line. Then we have a selection of Character Styles - Normal, Outline, Shadow, and Outline/Shadow. There are, of course, many more which I neither use nor, really, understand!

As regards Character Handling, scripts, serifs, no-ops, standard characterisation, available via software are 18 Character Tables, including Greek, Turkish, Cyrillic, Arabic, and Hebrew. The default International Character set in the U.S.A. are used, as yet, the only way I have found to reset this in the software command, which is lost when the system is closed down. However, there are 14 Character sets, including Spanish, French, Japanese, Korean, and Latin American, and, in addition, one called "Legal".

A LITTLE AWKWARD

New for the domestic, the print head is not stable when to work, preventing adjustments to pre-ruled lines (as in form filling, although the top margin can be extended by turning a wheel, after lifting the cover. There is no easy manual adjustment to the roller, (as with a typewriter). To my surprise, the printer does

* PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS *

**NOSAUG
P.O. BOX 11903
WESTHILL
AB32 6GE**

All correspondence should be sent to this address
Thank you

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EPSON review continued

with a sheet feeder cassette, but no tractor, which is extra - a bit costly. The Feeder Cassette will only accept A4 and A5 sheets, although other sizes can be fed manually.

ADEQUATE MANUAL

The User's Guide is generally quite good - well written and presented, clear index, good illustrations where needed, but the usual problem of not being ring bound (or lay flat. Computed (I suppose rightly) with the PC user in mind, there are fourteen pages of ESC commands which are largely unappreciable to me. A glossary follows on that ESC menu: Epson Standard Code and while Control Commands will access the default values to make changes, these are lost when

the return is switched off. A spare's phone call to our M.A.U. guru, Les Ellingham, did not elicit a lot of help, I think he had other things on his mind that day! The alleged help-line to Epson was a complete waste of time - fifteen lines in one day were either ignored entirely or the receiver was filled and you done, cutting off the call. A letter has produced a reply which explains how to access the New Dump Mode, then refers me to the Users Manual. This matter is proceeding!

All in all, a decent printer, of accepted industry standard, at an affordable price. Well capable of producing very neat work for school, college or Aunty's weekly letter. I would suggest a place could also be found with the amateur author, producing a thousand words or so per week. Despite the apparent lack of backing from the makers, I contacted the LG-100+ to your attention.

Mailbag



NOT SO BUMPER MAILBAG!

Doesn't seem to be a great number of letters in the Mailbag any this time but those that are there seem to be quite interesting, so let's get going on another Mailbag column.

As always, once you have read this column why not follow up with a letter for the next issue or start a new topic of conversation?

Les Ellingham

MORE INTERNET CONTACTS

Johnny Chan, whose *Share Diskette* featured an our Disk (Issue 4) that I had asked to let you know about contacting him on the Internet. He writes "Reply to the 4000 Internet Contact list, I wish to have my e-mail address published, as I would welcome fellow Americans to contact me.

I also have a home page which contains a page about the Atari Classic computer. This will be expanding in the near future. Even Page 5 is mentioned briefly, although my site is associated with the UK history. I have owned an Atari since 1988 but haven't really given up on it even though I have owned a PC for nearly ten years. When I get my new upgrade program of PC version 04 for Windows 95 in the next year (and that's what the supplier said to me), I may write a review about it for you."

All contributions are gratefully received as ever. Johnny, as I'm sure you get that approach, Johnny's Internet addresses are:

EMAIL: jw@hawaii.com
HOME PAGE: <http://home.ohio.net/~jrchaa>

Page 6's New Atari User

MIXED BAG

James Austin has a number of questions that you may be able to answer in the next Mailbag, although I'll try to throw a few comments in as we go. James's letter starts with one of the great references of the Atari for any other world. "In Issue 55 of *HiFi!* you featured TurboStar by Jeff Meier. I also read an issue (34, I think) in which the NT version of Colosseum was mentioned as being re-released as *Blazeburn*. How the Atari 8-bit Linux/MS-DOS programs (Colosseum, Attack of the Mutant Corals, Rover Rover etc.) also been released as such? Are they now freely distributable?"

Jeff Meier kindly sent us his TurboStar out of the blue with permission to use it in the magazine but he did not mention anything about other programs being re-released as PD. As for an Atari user permission has been given to distribute Linux/MS-DOS programs other than the NT version of Colosseum and I believe that was only issued on afterword between *Ag!* Post

an updated version commercially available under another name. *Ag!* must surely be on the Internet so perhaps someone with access could get in touch with him and ask what

the status of his 8-bit program is.

The next topic is: I recently bought a couple of bargains from Micro Discount's Christmas offer. One of these was the ViteCade spreadsheet package, an excellent program and a bargain at only £2.99 when it costed an original £150 when it was released. The program was produced by an American company called ViteCorp. Does anyone know if the other 'Vite' programs *PlanetVite*, *ViteFit* mentioned in the manual, were ever released for the Atari 8-bit machines? I have never seen them mentioned anywhere."

I can say they were re-released although I may be getting confused with the similar 'Vite' programs like *Ag!* (I think) but were not distributed over here. This goes way back to the beginning of time, as far as Atari is concerned, but maybe someone has a rough overview but a rough overview and could let us know?

James continues with a request on behalf of another Classic owner and asks "Does anyone know if SuperDOS 5.2 exists in any PD library over here? Does it exist at all? I ask on behalf of Ron Wallace from the States - he did read somewhere about someone having it in this country.

I heard rumours a little while back about the Atari

400 computer being bought by IBM, supposedly because people were confusing it with their '400' computer. Is this true? Also, who were the Atari 400/800 and XL range. Is Atari Inc. part of the JDS communication or Atari Corp. (are part of the JDS company)? I ask after recently reading a very interesting article in an old Atari magazine. It was all about the Tri and taken as fact, raising doubt about whether Tri actually bought the computers at all - apparently Warner Communications were (or would) own 33% of Atari Corp's stock. Can anybody throw light on that? Can anybody also explain who actually owns the Atari arcade titles - I thought it was Atari Inc, but recently the 'old' Atari games such as *Milipede* and *Missile Command* have been appearing on the games consoles on certain arcade 'classics' carts with 'copyright Atari Corp.' plastered all over them? Who owns what at Atari?"

You've thrown a few rats among the pigeons there, James! Could it be that of those games we have been hearing Jack Thomas and I cover? (I wish his fault) The scope of making money, or trying to avoid losing money, are long and complicated in big business so who knows what goes on. If there are such things as Computer Bible

then I'd bet that someone did it for their PhD then this seems to be right about their story, but I bet someone will soon know the real truth.

Criticism three year with I would like to draw your attention to a major body you made concerning the Future Components program in Issue 78. The program requires two files to run, *WELCOME.MEM* and *WELCOME.PRM*, neither of which is on the Issue 78 disk or the printed listing I received. This is a pity since it looks to be a useful program. Is there any way you can put the required files on the Issue 80 disk or make the appropriate listings available?"

Whisper! Sometimes there are so many files on a disk that it is difficult to remember to include them all, or someone for which belongs to which. I obviously forgot to test the Future Component file once I had been transferred to the master disk, sorry! The missing files will be on the Issue 80 disk and the master of Issue 78 has been upgraded to cover anyone wants a copy.

Finally, James has a suggestion for upgrading a recently published program "Regarding John Puckett's Disk Directory Movie in Issue 78, can I suggest to John that he modifies the program to enable an already modified disk to go straight to the movie (bypassing the movie

Page 6's New Atari User



and formatting so not having to do all copying to one sector, and have a directory option for both normal directories and the extended one on modified disks? It is frustrating since you do not know what has already been copied and what hasn't most of the time. Other than that, I have heard the program to be extremely useful in giving my disks that added bit of sparkle.

Many thanks for all the various points raised, this is just the sort of letter we need for Mailbox with something of interest to almost everyone. Nice if it other readers turn to supply more answers.

VBI UPDATE

Don't take this as having a go at John Penderel, far from it we really appreciate his contributions, but Joel Goodwin has a lot of information concerning John's letter. Write a VBI update back to issue 71. In the article John explains that you need to save the contents of the accumulator and X and Y before registers. If you wish to use them because the 6800 processor must be returned to exactly the same state as it was in before the VBI began. This is not true - and for a VBI. The OS VBI mechanism automatically saves the processor status, accumulator and X and Y registers. John might

be being confused with DL's where the OS protects only the processor status. If the OS didn't protect the processor status, you would need to use PHYSMAP at the start and end of your interrupt routine. Hope this is of some interest.

MORE TRUTH NEEDED

You will remember that our featured Steve Gade's X-FILES disk in the PD library a couple of issues back and Steve is looking to carry the project forward in the future - with your help. He writes "Steve my 3.5" disk has been returned into your PD library, a further series has started on inverted TV (and has already been shown on telly) from the disks and updating. As some point below (and allowed) I would like to add a further disk to the set and this is where I need your readers' help. Although my thinking about the series itself would be helpful, I am particularly interested in readers' UFO sightings, near-death experiences, etc. A contact in Cornwall has already written to me regarding a 'deja-vu' post-1965 experience which he had and this will however be the update. If anyone reading has had any experiences like this, I would love it

if they could send a description on disk for inclusion. By the way, if/when I do create the update, I will update readers' disks for the cost of return postage and a blank disk.

Steve also has a suggestion regarding DF coverage in future. With respect to the DF section of the magazine, although this new software is being released, we will get someone to review software that was released such as *Quartz Publisher*, *Street Fighter II*, *Star Trek*, *Land on 2*. Why not put out a plea for a reader to do that? Readers could review their own software even, perhaps with a reward of an RT PD disk for every review sent?

Well, Kevin you have just got out the appeal, I am quite happy to publish reviews on any DF software that readers think is worth reviewing. The only problem is that the software has to be well available for a more accurate and the review would need to mention where the program could be obtained. Without this a review is only really of academic interest. I believe that HAN's site used to do a PD library page a lot of commercial games still available, perhaps someone could update us on this and other sources?

HARDBALL INFO

In last issue's *Tipster* James Weatherall asked for some info on Hardball and John Merrington has some of the answers. He also mentions a few other things of interest so let's give his letter in full.

I have been a subscriber to Page 6 for many years now but have never written before. That is, I have not used my Atari 80081 for about 4 years but I got more than my money's worth out of the machine, and I have continued subscribing to do what I can to support the mag so that others can continue to get enjoyment from the Atari Classic.

This mag saved me personally (plus the scope of me but I shall always be grateful to Page 6 for a tip they printed about fixing disk drives (the old ringing up the pad with a paper clip trick that solves the 'read but won't write' problem). The first time this happened to my disk drive I sent it off to Steve Sharp to be fixed and they charged about £75 for the service. But that I was complaining at the time as they were about the only people still supporting the XL and so I was just grateful that they could fix it. The next time it happened I got out the paper clip and saved myself £75. I therefore think your magazine deserves more

gratuity.

The good news is that I now have a 6 year old son who has taken possession of the XL so I have started using it again. The bad news is that whilst it loads ROMs, it won't load stuff from disk or cassette. I suspect there is something amiss with the software. I'll send it off to Micro Dream to see if Derek can fix it.

I'll get it fixed I'll probably be tempted to use it on those occasions when my son allows me to use my PC. I've got to play a better game than *Ball's Wood* on my former, although *Ball's Wood* runs it okay, but having got used to a hard drive on my PC I'm not sure if I'll be able to go back to the agonies of disk swapping and floppy disk access times. Hopefully *Ball's Wood* will work on the Atari XL emulator on the PC.

Another of my favourite games is *Hardball*. I rated that for many years as you had it on your clearance list and I was hell stamped to write in and tell people how good it is. I guess many were deterred by the subject matter. I note, for instance, that one of your correspondents in the *Tipster* does not know what some of the acronyms are on the *Player Stats*. I am by no means an expert on *Hardball* but I can help him out with the acronyms.

At last!

The number of times that a batter comes up in the plate. Equivalent to number of innings for a cricketer.

How Runs

Most people know what this is. It's where the batter breaks the ball into the crowd and therefore can not round all four bases on one hit.

Runs Batted In

The aim of the game is base ball is to get back to home base. This stat is a measure of the number of times that the batter hit a ball that allowed runners to get back to home base.

Stolen Bases

To steal a base is to run to the next base from a pitch that was not hit by the batter. A high SB rating indicates that the player is a speedster and it might be therefore be worth while trying to steal a base with him if the coach also can demands it.

For the pitcher the key stat is ERA - Earned Run Average. This is basically a measurement of how many runs were scored from this player's pitches excluding any that were the result of wildballs. Baseball pitchers are lucky - unlike bowlers in cricket they don't get their stats trashed by poor balling.

Hopefully one of your American subscribers will write in with more authoritative in-





bottom. It's been several years since I played Mailbag and so I have not looked at the state but most American states are usually represented in equal percentages (or not, e.g. a leading average of .245 would indicate that the last to lead managed to hit 24.5% of all balls pitched to him.

I hope this is of some use.
 ■ Many thanks for the letter. It is always great to have some correspondence from a long time reader who has never written before. This just proves that almost everyone has a little bit of knowledge or experience that could be shared with other Atari users and that is just what Mailbag and the Tips are here for.

DESKJET HELP

Finally we have a letter from Joseph Piggott who lives in Maine and would like some help in using an HP Deskjet with his Compaq. I have an Atari 1300X, 207501 disk drive and the Hewlett Pack

your names, questions and general comments are always welcome - (no, demanded!) - so be sure to write a letter to Mailbag in time for the next issue. Here's the address:

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

and 8000 Deskjet printer. I use my equipment for word processing using Mini Office II and the third spreadsheet in which leads programs allow to set up printer codes for printing bold, italics and underlining, and a choice of three types of fonts built in. I am writing to seek your help if there is any program or any other way to be able to print "LARGE TEXT" on the HP8000 printer.

■ I think what Joseph is looking for is to be able to use the graphics element of the printer to print "bigger" type headlines. There are several 16-bit open based utilities and presumably these could be used to use the Deskjet graphics commands. I can't help but to say sure that some one will use a Deskjet or could help Joseph with writing a program if he supplies the Deskjet commands from the manual. If you can help get in touch direct to Joseph Piggott, The Cousins, Highmoor, Darroch Street, Solihull B37 0R, MALTA.

BACK ISSUES

Back issues of **NEW ATARI USER** are still available from **ISSUE 31** up to **ISSUE 79** except for the following

ISSUES 32 and 33 - SOLD OUT

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All issue disks from **ISSUE 14 ONWARDS** are still available

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INTERNET RAMBLING

SEEKING AUTHORS

and Finding the Truth

In recent months much has been said about the Internet in the pages of *New Atari User*, in the mainstream media and on the television. Those inexperienced on the Internet may be wondering what all the fuss is about. This article should hopefully give you some ideas about what it is and there, what is being said and how it relates to the Atari.

It's my guess that most Atari users in the UK who have access to the Internet do so either from work or from college/university. Indeed that is where I gained my experience. A couple of months ago I changed jobs and lost my access and I can tell you it has been sorely missed. Just before that happened I came across a very interesting article in the comp.sys.atari.8-bit newsgroup about the game *Jamboree*. I have sought the poster's permission to submit their articles for publication and they have willingly agreed, so here goes.

ASK AND THE AUTHOR RESPONDS

What's amazing in the collection of disks one Atari user owns across several copies of the classic arcade game *Jamboree* and here is what he said:

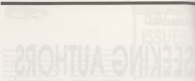
"On one disk there are several copies of *Jamboree* game *Jamboree* with two wrap barrels, one horizontal, and one vertical. On another disk is another copy of *Jamboree* with a different menu layout and only one wrap barrel, at the top and bottom. Anybody know what the story is here? Why two different versions, and which one is the 'real' *Jamboree*?"

The good thing about the Internet is that you can often get straight to the people who know the answers, even though you have no idea that they might be reading. John Harris who wrote *Jamboree* the also did *Microketch* and Piggott replied.

"There are actually three versions of *Jamboree* that got shipped by *On-Line Systems*, but one of them was an accident.

The first version was the one with the single wrap barrel, which was a copy of the original

Compiled by
Richard Gore



FacMan menu. On-Line got used by Atari for copyright infringement, and one of the defense strategies was to show that there was a game prior to FacMan that had a similar game play of 'not the data in a more subtle sounding computer controlled bad guys'. If you remember that a game called 'Head-On', which had a car driving around various scenarios, rectangular tracks with places to change 'lanes'. I don't fit that description. I had actually programmed a version of Head-On a while before I did FacMan, and what we decided to do was to create a special FacMan version that looked somewhat like the rectangular Head-On layout in an effort to show a product that functionally looked like it could be in-between Head-On and FacMan, as opposed to just FacMan. Someone on On-Line liked the dual usage scenario and decided to ship this game even though it was only meant to be a court prep. This version did not play very well, because the buggy lanes tended to get stuck in one lane and would just keep going round and round. On-Line got complaints about it, but also got publicity about a new version that had dual usage controls, and so I decided to make a 'real' new version with an original menu layout and lane controls. The result was the final version of the product that was shipped.

So in summary, there are three versions, and although they are all technically 'real', only version 1 and 2 were supposed to be shipped. Version 1 - Original FacMan menu with one usage control. Version 2 - Very rectangular looking menu and two usage controls. This version wasn't have any programming that cost

and was in different directions. Version 3 - Two usage controls, with an original menu but not more in the style of the original version. So that's the truth about FacMan, interesting don't you think?

MORE AUTHORS ON-LINE

Recently the internet has seen the reawakening of several Atari game authors. John Harris has been active for some time now, but others to appear have been from Blackhawk (who wrote Black Lamp, Tails Buddies, Concocks, Crumblers Cracks and some many with the graphical and sound wizardry of Richard Marston) and more recently Adam Billings (of Electroable fame). Other topics of conversation pop up - piracy is always worth a throw and some recently discussion about the Atari emulator for PCs has become common place. Most messagegroups also maintain a FAQ list (archives for Frequently Asked Questions), the Atari 8 bit one is a mine of information about all aspects of the 8-bit Atari from every model released (and not released), to details of the I/O ports to a discussion of which DOS systems you should be using. There is no doubt that if you can get the internet for free (yeah/yeah) then use it, otherwise you have to consider if the \$150 approximate subscription costs plus telephone calls are going to be worthwhile.

continued >>

FUTURA

THE NOSAUG NEWSLETTER

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION ON DISK FOR FOUR ATARI 8-BIT

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NOSAUG, P.O. BOX 11803, WESTHILL, AB32 6QE
* PLEASE NOTE DISK MAIL ADDRESS *

INTERNET Ramblings

continued

SOME MORE TITBITS

Just a few more facts for you to feast on. There is a version of Head-On available for the Atari, it is called Dodge Racer and was the first Atari game ever released by Strategic Software. It plays best in two player mode, but the sounds and graphics are very simple, and it was released in 1978 and parts of it are written in BASIC! You may also have heard of Jumpster 2 which was also created by On-Line but was not programmed by John Harris but by a chap calling himself CharMie who also made a brief appearance on our 8-bit list to short for comp.atr.atari.8-bit, most message groups shorten their names for easy reference to text. There was apparently some confusion between him in On-Line when they were discussing the gameplay they wanted and as a result (in my opinion) the original in the letter game.

STILL AVAILABLE

Now for the plug. For those who don't know I have done a deal with John Harris whereby Jumpster and MouseMaze can be sold again, it can supply the Jumpster package on disk for £2.99 inclusive of p&p, and for that you get both versions. I had 3 (as described above) included on one disk as well as a special bonus surprise just mailing for you to discover! I also will Black Lamp, Tails Buddies, Arco, Bubble Zone and the GTTracer suite of programs for playing and manipulating digitised sounds. For further information I can be contacted at:

RICHARD CORE, 18 SPYBROOKS ROAD,
SPYBROOKS, DORCHESTER, DORSET, ENGLAND, TEL. (001300) 784662.

Sorry no more e-mail address yet!

DISK BONUS

TAG!

by Richard Gore

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Tag is a game inspired by the children's game of a similar name: Tag. Tag yours if Come on, write it in around the school playground as little children playing that game!

In this computerised version furry faces pursue their way around the screen trying to pass on the stretched lung. Of course as with all playgrounds there are obstacles in the way, walls mainly, but I bet in the playground you couldn't pick up lions that made you invisible, made you go faster or slower or freeze you, or even infect you with the lung! Well you can now!

Tag allows up to four players on screen at once, three can be human controlled and the fourth is computer controlled. Go on, save your childhood!

LOADING TAG!

Boot the game disk from drive 1 without BASIC, i.e. hold down OPTION when booting. Tag! requires a disk (or more) Atari XLXE 5-1/4 computer in order to run properly. To obtain the stores sound effects your computer needs to be fitted with a Quality computer stereo upgrade but the sound will still be okay otherwise, it will just be mono. The Title Screen - From the title screen you may select which playground area (also called a maze) you want to play in. Four different mazes are available, selected by pressing keys A, B, C or D.

To choose the number of human players press the SELECT key to toggle between 1, 2 or 3 human players. At the start of each game the computer also controls a player, so if one human player is selected the game will proceed with one human and one computer player, if two human players are selected the game will start with one computer and two human controlled players etc. To begin a game press the START key.

PLAYING TAG!

The object of playing Tag! is to avoid being infected by the lung. Each player controls a furry face on screen. At the start of each game one player is randomly infected with the lung and he must pass this on to another player before the time runs out. To pass on the lung you simply have to touch one of your opponents, but be careful - if you don't get away quickly enough he may tag you back.

After a random length of time, the last six seconds of which will be counted using the on-screen clock (located towards the bottom, centre of the screen) the player infected with the lung will die. If more than one player remains, the next round will begin, whereby the procedure will be repeated but without the player that has just died.

You can tell which players are dead, being or if (the infected one) by observing the status display at the bottom of the screen. Also the infected player will be white in colour.

ALONE NOW!

While playing Tag! you can pick up various items that may help or hinder you. To do this simply move over them. The items are speed up, slow down, freeze, infect, immortal and random. When you are immortal you turn a pale grey colour and you cannot be infected with the lung. Be careful though, the item effects only last for a short period of time, except for infect which lasts until you pass - for long as in the usual way, or somebody else collects an infect item.

THE CONTROLS

Human Player 1 is normally green in colour and is controlled by a joystick in port 1 of your Atari Human Player 2 (if selected) is normally blue in colour and is controlled by a joystick in port 2 of your Atari Human Player 3 (if selected) is normally yellow in colour and is controlled from your keyboard. Keys A and Z move your player up and down, while keys N and M move your player left and right.

Player 4 is normally pink in colour and is always controlled by the computer. Some of its movements is random, but the majority is calculated to chase or avoid other players when necessary.

During the game you may press the SELECT key to toggle on and off the background music (but not the normal sound effects which will remain active). You may also press the OPTION key to pause the game play. Press OPTION again to continue.

At the end of each round you should press the START key to proceed to the next round, as indicated on screen. At the Game Over prompt, press START, SELECT or OPTION to return to the title screen.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Tag! and its source code are copyright (c) 1987 Richard Gore. Tag! is not Public Domain software and may not be sold and/or distributed in any form except by Page 6 or their issue disks or by Richard Gore (or by his officially appointed dealers).

Tag! was programmed using the Cuzik! programming language available from OCS in the UK. The source code is included on the disk (under the filename TAGG.0M) for you to examine and alter etc. for learning and review purposes only.

The movement logic of the computer controlled player is not completely infallible, in certain circumstances the computer controlled face can get stuck. The random function helps to eliminate this but does not do so entirely. There are only a couple of hundred free bytes left but a future revision may include more complex computer logic. As it stands, though, it still offers a pretty mean game. It's even more fun with two or three human opponents.

This great program is the BONUS on this issue's disk, if you are not a disk subscriber you can still obtain a copy for £2.95 from REV ATAR USERS, P.O. BOX 54, STAFFORD, ST16 1TB. Please make cheques payable to PAGE 6 PUBLISHERS or order by telephone with your Visa or Access card on 01783 341100.

NOTE: THE ISSUE NOW OFTEN CONTAINS A SUBSTANTIAL BONUS PROGRAMME NOT MENTIONED IN THE MAGAZINE!

THE NOBILIA column

by Dean Garraghty

THE ATARI USER SHOWS

In this issue I'm going to get nostalgic about another great part of the Atari's history - The Atari User Shows.

These shows ran from early 1985 to early 1988, with two shows a year, one in the Spring and the other in late Autumn. They were all held in London, although they did move about a bit during their time! The first one was held at the Hammermith Marriott Hotel, it then moved to the Northumberland Hall, then back to the Savoy and finally ended down at Alexandra Palace. The shows were always over a few days finishing on a Sunday. Although you were supposed to get a show guide when you went in, I rarely get one and those I did get are now sadly lost. Therefore, I am going to do this article entirely from memory! So you may think when some of these shows were almost 10 years ago I can't remember everything about every show in detail so I will talk about things I can remember. I can sometimes remember which show things happened at, but sometimes I can't as I'll just throw in memories as they come to me.

BIG SHOWS ... BIG COSTS!

These shows were full of 80's gifts and nostalgia, and no success was made for this! The stands were big and expensive to build. The people behind the stands were newbies. Everybody was trying to out do everybody else that all this just made it more fun for the original family at Page 8! I can tell you that these shows were a complete disaster to exhibit at. The stands cost in the small thousands of pounds! You also only got the space, the stand itself was your problem! Also, the organisers had some deal going with a local TV hire company so if you wanted to use a TV at the show (and let's face it, everybody would want a TV), you HAD to hire it from the organisers at some total rip-off price! You could not bring your own! The organisers must have made a fortune out of these shows!

YOUNG VISITORS

I was a mere lad when I attended that first show in 1985. I went down on the train on the Sunday with very little money in my pocket, but plenty of excitement! I had never been to a computer show before and I had no idea what to expect. I can clearly remember that first journey down. Getting across London on

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the tube was the biggest task I've never really liked the tube it still try to avoid it even now when I need to be in London, but I had to use it to get to the show so I didn't mind too much on this occasion. While walking to the show from the station, I met up with an American guy who was on his way there too. He was wanting to buy whatever he could for his new ST. He wasn't too impressed that I had a lovely 6-bit machine, so he'd probably laugh his socks off if I ran up with him again now!

I can still remember arriving at the show. You had to go under some sort of covered car park to get to the entrance, inside there were a few stands outside the main part. You then went through some mirrored doors and there Atari stands as far as the eye could see! What I first fell was to the Atari User stand. I needed some back issues to complete my collection. They had some sort of deal running which allowed you to get 6 for the price of 5 or something, I only needed 3 so I stood and moaned a bit, and the guy gave me a quid back! Yes, I was even cutting deals as a kid! I also bought Mizer 2048er on our bridge from Silvia. They had it on special offer for about a fiver which was cheap back then!

SO MANY STANDS

I spent hours going around all these stands. There and rows of them! I picked up loads of free catalogues and other bits and pieces people had stuck in my hands on the way round. I probably went home with more books than stuff I had actually bought! I also remember paying 50p for a can of warm coke. And don't forget that this was 1985, so just work out how expensive that can of coke would be

today at those prices!

By the next show later that year, I had loads of money to spend and it was at this show that I bought my first 1985 disk drive. I can still remember it all perfectly! I first went to a supplier who was cheaper than Silvia but they didn't have any. They said they would send me one by courier and there in some free software as well, but I had waited long enough and I couldn't bear waiting a few more days! Off to Silvia I went and handed over £120. They also threw in a copy of Mizer 2048er which I didn't want or need because I'd actually bought this at the last show! Apparently, though I didn't know it at the time, I had swapped up the last 1985 to be full anywhere at that show! Some guy actually offered me £250 for it a bit later on, but I refused! I must have been really that job mad to get some blank disks. I actually found a company selling Maxell branded disks at a mere £1.50 per box. That was a staggering bargain in 1985, and even now some office companies are charging more than double that for a box of 94" 100-disk! I will have all 20 Maxell disks I bought at that show and they all still work perfectly!

I then attempted to find some software to transfer all my tapes to disk. Off to Page 8 I went, but the sales persons didn't seem to have a clue what I was talking about (didn't have been met! Ed) and just along a catalogue at me and suggested I look myself! I have an idea who it might have been now! Ed! After some searching I found some bit of PS which sounded about right. It worked, but not that well!

Visitors to this show may well remember a huge gap between the odds about having software at bargain prices. He had a big amount of software behind him which all looked a bit battered. I asked him about my

COMPAGNIA

column

by Dean Carnaghy

I wonder if disk problems and the obviously idiotic have a clue about anything! He just showed a bit of paper to my friend and said 'this is this number and ask. Don shifting at its very heart! I ended up buying PLATO on an off-price from three people. The box had a hole in it, and I looked like it had been run over by a steam roller!

I was miserable getting home from that show as though it were yesterday! I dashed straight in to try my new drive. For some reason, the first thing I tried was to copy some Basic programs from tape to disk. Being a tape only user for a year, I had no idea about DOS and such things. I remember a striking feeling as I attempted to save a program to disk only to be greeted with an error. I knew that disks had to be formatted first, and I had already done this with DOS. What I didn't know, was that the driver for disk drives had to be loaded from disk (in other words I didn't realize that you had to boot the DOS disk before you could do anything with the disk drive from Basic). After some time I realized that you had to boot the DOS-disk before you could do what I wanted to do. What a delight when I finally got it to work hours later!

STRANGE CHARACTERS

I remember at one show passing the Linn-walk stand. What is a bunch of widders there for now! The stand was in total darkness, except for a few colorful flashing lights. Some very strange music was playing, and about five hipsters were sat on the floor with their eyes closed, just sort of nodding to the music. How on earth this would help sell their stuff is

beyond me!

I can remember that at one show there was a power cut while I was wandering about near the Page 6 stand. It only lasted a couple of minutes, but obviously when the power came back on all the machines started re-booting. A guy was talking to a load of people and said "Ah, you that's called re-booting", and everybody looked really impressed and amazed at his apparent technical knowledge! Heck, some people were taken back to the old days!

THE SHOW ON THE HILL

When the show moved I missed a little journey from Kings Cross station to Alexandra Palace. The train was usually full of people going to the show. Everybody seemed to bring their copy of *Star Trek* along with them and would flick through and discuss what they were going to buy at the show. This all added to the build up and made me want to get there even later!

For people who have never been, Alexandra Palace is on top of a whopping great big hill! There should have been a free bus service to collect you at the station and take you up the hill, but I never saw one! Every time I went I had to walk up the hill, and it was a heck of a walk! I could almost guarantee that half way up the hill the mystery box has would be gone too!

I remember visiting at one show at Alexandra Palace on one nice sunny April day, only to be met by a queue like you've never seen! It must have been half a mile long! We walked past all these people thinking that they must be queuing for something else. There was

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some sort of craft fair or something going on in one of the other halls. We got to the front only to be met by a security guard. He told him we were for the computer show, and he said "The hall's full, you'll have to queue". He pointed in the direction of the queue, and I thought I'd never get in. As luck would have it, a guy came out with a megaphone and said that anybody with advance tickets to the show (which I always bought), could go in. We were wondering about our tickets and as soon as he said that we bought it, but yes, we jumped the queue big time!

THE LAST SHOUT

At the very last show in 1989, there were very few 8-bit suppliers there. It had gone virtually all 16-bit by that stage. There were some bargains to be had though. There was a stand selling off 16-bit tapes and cartridges. These had in front of me got a whopping great pile of brand new tapes for a *Brink* *Crux* today! I would swap that deal up! He must have got at least 30 tapes. I hung around for some deals. The guy behind the stand was a bit sure of himself, and kept having what he described as 'a mad moment' during which he would sell stuff off at a specially low price. Luckily for me he had one of these moments soon after and plunked a load of cartridges on the stand and said "10 quid the lot. You've got 10 seconds to say you starting now". I snatched these looking good ones though I know I was

getting an amazing deal. I said "There is more of these disks and 70 disks about 20", pointing at some disk based stuff. He said "You're throwing us nothing". I said "OK, don't want those then". I was just about to walk off when he agreed to throw in some more stuff I ended up with so much stuff for my 10 quid that I had difficulty carrying them! I got about £100 worth of stuff for a tenner! Was I happy!

END OF AN ERA

After that last show in April 1989, the Atari show became part of history. The idea was that it would merge together with other shows. The Database Exhibition organised including one for the old DOS show. The new show was to be called the Computer Shopper show which is, of course, still going and is now probably one of the biggest shows there is. I have never gone to a Computer Shopper show. For me the magic had gone never to be seen again. Computer shows today are usually in one of two types: massive shows like the Shopper show, and tiny 'car boot under a roof' type of events like AMB. For the 80's these were bargain basement, get it out cheap shows had taken a stronghold. The glitz and glamour of the 80's computer shows had justly much gone.

Later that year, in November 1989, what was left of the Atari 8-bit industry moved itself to the AMB show. But that's another article for next time!

WAIT

FOR ATARI AND TURBO BASIC

When a program written in Atari BASIC is used in Turbo BASIC, everything is speeded up, including several routines, joystick routines, etc. which could for example make a game program unplayable. The machine code routines presented here runs at the same speed in both Atari BASIC and Turbo BASIC and could be used to stabilize the speed of routines of a program to allow them to run at a constant speed no matter which language is being used. This allows a program to enjoy the faster speed of Turbo BASIC whilst certain areas of the program remain user friendly. The routine could be called from within FOR-NEXT loops to regulate the speed, and although there would be a small increase in speed due to Turbo Basic executing the commands, the actual increase in speed of the routine will only be of about a few percent.

USING THE ROUTINE

The routine may be used with or without a timing parameter as follows:

`X=USR(ADR(WAIT),NUM)`

by John Foskett

where NUM is the timing parameter in the range of 0 to 255 (inclusive). 255 (and 0) gives the longest time period of approximately 4 seconds and a value of 1 gives the shortest time period of about 0.04 seconds.

For the maximum time period, the routine may be used without a parameter (equivalent of the above using a parameter of 1).

`X=USR(ADR(WAIT))`

HOW THE ROUTINE WORKS

The routine is basically three loops working inside each other using all three of the processor's registers and without using any external memory locations.

The first action of the routine is to load the X register with a 1 (for the default) and the Y register with zero prior to moving the first parameter from the stack. The first parameter will either be a 1 or 0 depending upon how the routine is used, that is with or without a

ALTERNATING THE MACHINE

parameter. If the routine is used without a parameter (default), then the next stage is to compare the parameter to 1 (assumed, but if there was a parameter then it is removed from the stack and transferred to the X register overriding the default value previously put there). The X register is decremented to zero within its loop (the outer loop) so that the overall time period of the routine is dependent upon the value the X register contains. The Y register always increments from zero through 255 and back to zero within its loop (the middle loop) whilst the accumulator's loop (the inner loop) increments from 0 to 10. Incrementing the accumulator loop to 10 before inserting it gives a maximum time period of about 4 seconds when using a timing parameter of 255 for 0.

ALTERING THE TIME SCALES

The main timing parameter which governs the overall time scale of the routine can be found in the source code listing defined by the label TIME which is set to 10. This is used to compare with the processor's accumulator (CMP) and hence used to exit the loop. Any value may be used here from 0 to 255 (inclusive) where 1 will give the minimum time and 255 (and zero) will give the maximum. The character converted in the USR character which may be altered in the string directly as follows:

`WAIT$(15,15)=CHR$(VAL)`

If required, WAIT\$ may be altered permanently by inserting the relevant character directly into the string. The following table

gives approximate minimum and maximum time scales to account for different values of VAL where X is the timing parameter used in the USR call.

VAL	MINIMUM X=1	MAXIMUM X=0/255
1	0.04	0.0
5	0.04	1.0
10	0.04	3.0
20	0.08	7.0
50	0.18	19.4
100	0.35	39.0
200	0.74	79.0
255	0.82	99.0

DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

The actual machine code routine is the string immediately before the REM header and the rest of the listing is the demonstration program.

The demonstration program prompts for a value from 0 to 255 (inclusive) to be entered and then this value is used in the USR call after which the resulting delay is used. A value of 1 gives the shortest time delay while values of 255 and zero gives the longest delays.

Programs overleaf ^{ES}

screws, remove top half of the case, remove keyboard, and stabilizing if necessary - just as you did when you fitted the POKEY2 mod.

Position the pins of the toggle switch towards you. Let's number them 1, 2, and 3 (from left to right) for clarity - it would be an idea to mark them for reference. Also leave the two main wires going to the two phone output sockets labelled L, & R to indicate their function, etc.

(Left is POKEY1 like signal picked up from the main board)
(Right is POKEY2 like signal picked up from the added POKEY2 mod)

When you are ready, proceed with the following steps.

- 1) Only one wire is disconnected from the phone plug and it is the audio wire for the right hand sound channel signal. DO NOT DISCONNECT THE SPEAKERS/HEADPHONE WIRE NOW!!
- 2) Now solder the wire for the right hand sound channel (just disconnected in step 1) to pin 1 of the toggle switch. Note: The position you will be connecting your switch is up to you but allow for the reach of your wires from the phone sockets to the switch position.
- 3) Cut a suitable length of wire to be soldered to pin 2 of the toggle switch at one end and soldered to the position on the phone socket where you removed the wire providing the right hand sound channel signal in step 1.
- 4) Now cut a suitable length of wire to be soldered to the remaining pin on the toggle switch (pin 3) at one end and then to the same position of the wire connected to the phone socket providing the left hand sound channel signal.
- 5) Drill a hole in the negative wire to allow

the switch mounting to be facilitated at whatever position you wish.

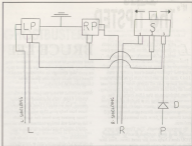
After soldering, check that the switch functions correctly before fitting it in the case. If the switch functions incorrectly re-read instructions and check for errors.

ADDING GTIA SOUND

The tools you will need for this are a Philips type screw driver, soldering iron and solder. Components are simple a length of wire and a diode (see list).

Open up your 8-bit, removing the top half of the casing and stabilizing (unless, of course, it is still open from the earlier switch mod).

- 1) First locate your GTIA chip. This chip is part No. CO 4800 and the circuit board designation is U1P. SE owners should direct their attention to the fact large chips in the front edge had not historically along the bottom - looking from left to right the first, one is the GTIA chip. SE owners should direct their attention to the centre of their 8-bit's circuit board, where you have a horizontal stack of chips in a vertical column, the lowest of the three large chips is your GTIA.
- 2) Having found your GTIA chip you must find the pin that generates the stereo sounds. Pin 15 of the GTIA chip is labelled as S0 and is responsible for the keyboard click. To find this pin count 15 pin positions left to right along the top pin row of the GTIA chip. SE owners can simply follow the trace from the pin to the bottom of component C07 (as expected) for their pick up point. SE owners can follow the short trace leading out until it reaches a short distance and stops at a hole for their pick up point.
- 3) Prepare your wire to the right length to go



LP Left Phone output, POKEY 1

RP Right Phone output, POKEY 2

L Left hand sound channel from main circuit board, POKEY1

R Right hand sound channel from upgrade mod, POKEY2

S Switch unit for mono/stereo selection

D Diode

P Pick up point for GTIA generated stereo sounds

L Left hand sound channel from main circuit board, POKEY1

R Right hand sound channel from upgrade mod, POKEY2

S Switch unit for mono/stereo selection

D Diode

from your pick up point to the pin on the toggle switch with the wire that goes to the left hand sound channel output phone connector (pin 2).

- 4) After preparing the wire solder the diode to it on either end by the pick up point or the toggle switch pin NOT POSITIONING THE DIODE IN VOLTAGE POLARITY DIRECTION THE PICK UP POINT TO THE SWITCH PIN.

After soldering check for console generated sounds through the stereo phone jacks. If the sound is weaky like an out of tune radio station, then you soldered the diode the

wrong way so recheck it in the other direction.

Upon successful completion, reassemble your 8-bit but if you find any problems replace your 8-bit to its original setup prior to your latest attempt.

CHECK AS YOU READ

If you have your 8-bit open while reading the above text you will find that it helps to give this text more relevance, and it doesn't sound as hollow.

HEY! HEY!

It's

The TIPSTER

Let's start this issue's column with a few words from *The Tipster himself* — "Assooch, cooh, uggghh..."

There you have the sound of a poor creature starving to death. We thought that *The Tipster* would not make it into 1987 due to a severe lack of reimbursement (what were you all doing over Christmas but at the last minute one Gary Mrozko from Michigan in the USA came to the rescue by sending in a bunch of tips that appeared some years ago in *Family Computer magazine* (have you heard of it?) and these will form the basis of this column.

Be warned though. *The Tipster* is very weak and may not last another issue if PCF doesn't help out for next time. Just like Ken a *Tipster* only lives nine years and as far as I know in June 1988 he still has over a year left to live — unless you tell him off before his allotted span. And thank those folk that will make you feel. Do something about it, you know what you have to do.

First off here's a couple of tips from Gary Mrozko himself.

CAVERNS OF MARS:

Press Tab+CONTROL+SHEFT to skip levels.

PHOBOS:

Same again.

THRESHOLD:

Remove the disk after the main load. Each time the drive starts/presents you will advance one level. Replace the disk when you are ready to play.

BRUCE LEE

Your mission is to run, climb, kick and chop your way through booty traps and bad guys on your way through an evil wizard's castle. These tips come originally from David Longstrein in Brooklyn.

Get a friend to play the part of the double Green Yarn. He's supposed to be your enemy, but so what? Cheat a little and have him help you. This way you can have Yarn protect you from the nasty little traps and his wispy broken sticks so you run around from screen to screen untouched.

On one of the screens you'll see a set of orange symbols. Don't ignore them! When you reach them, they give you an extra life. You can get up to five extra lives this way.

Leave your enemies into following you over the fiery bushes. Just after you pass over one it bursts into flames, killing anyone above it instantly. You can also kick the Yarn or traps into the flames.

On the very first screen, climb up the stairs and wait until the traps is beneath you. They jump down on his head. Keep doing this and you'll soon notice something very interesting. This secret trick works on all other levels where you can jump on the trap's head.

PROGRAMMING

When you're programming, it's better to write what you want to do than what you think you should do. Don't be afraid to experiment.

GHOSTBUSTERS

In this game you must capture ghosts, saving more money than you started with, and struggle to the top of the Temple of Zoro to keep the Darkkeeper and the Koyasato from taking up. It takes guts, calm nerves, steady hands and a little bit of insanity to be a member of that elite ghost-fighting corps. You'll face things that would make the Rank of Gibraltar break into tears. Still want to join? A lot of good Ghostbusters come home with nothing to show for their work but an empty trap and a mouth full of slime. Pay heed to these tips and they'll help you over some of the rough spots.

When you open your first franchise, get a Ghost Visium, but not at least three traps. An Image Intensifier is helpful, but not absolutely necessary. The Marshmallow Breaser is even less vital. A Portable Laser Confuser System is an expensive investment if you have money to burn.

The best car to get, regardless of how much money you have, is the swiftest wagon. The high-performance car is fast but not worth \$15,000.

Remember, it's good to have lots of equipment, but you have to exploit all the money you spend by the end of the game.

If your PW Energy Detector warns of an approaching Slimer, hide your time by creating and breasting some Slimeers. After the detector signals, there's lag time before the Slimer actually arrives.

Team up with a friend. This way one of you can keep a hand on the hot buttons and watch out for the Marshmallow Man. You might want to take turns with the psychik.

If you're in a hurry, here's a quick way to catch a Slimer. Set up your Ghostbusters

in a row, instead of being both at once, wait until the ghost is just to the left of the right man's hands, then press the button. Push the ghost to the left until it's directly above the trap and press the button again. This is the fastest and safest method for catching Slimeers.

Frequently check your power level, number of empty traps, and number of men remaining. If you have three or four hands, step in at headquarters in empty traps, etc., so you'll be ready when head news pops up.

The sooner you catch a Slimer, the more money you'll get. You may, however, want to scribble a few hundred dollars to pick up a few more Slimeers on your way to a house.

SPY Vs. SPY

The idea is to be the first spy to gather the necessary money and lock, sneak it to your car and leave the embassy in an amazing escapade.

There are two ways to attack the casino spy. Hit him in the stomach or knock him over the head. As a rule go for the head when you're at a distance, and for the stomach when you're close.

Use the split screen wisely, making note of where your opponent watches traps and times you may need.

Remember the room where you begin at the game's start or just after you have died has only one door. If you think your opponent will be next head here to start all over again so that you'll have a trap-the door. That's a way to really aggravate your enemy.

There's more

THE LATEST FROM M TOMLIN ON HIS ATTEMPTS TO ACCESS THE INTERNET WITH HIS ATARI CLASSIC

You will recall last issue that I wrote about using my 486 Atari to access the Internet and you may be wondering how I got on. Well, the frustration of not being able to easily read the on-screen text while the host computer was sending has forced me to give up for now. It was very hard indeed to read text sent to 80 columns format while the Atari custom display on screen like a EISA-compatible. Even though I have a high resolution monitor - I use a Sharp which used to belong with an old Acorn - not owning an 80-column XEP-80, which Atari used to enable to alter the screen display to 80 columns, means that it was difficult to cope with the information received.

I did at least manage to read all some E-mail

with the Atari, but I don't know if it was ever received at the other end. When I logged on to CompuServe I could see there was mail waiting for me to my mailbox but for some reason I found I could not download it, try as I may, I would love to know if John G. Dawson and Gordon Hooper did indeed receive the E-mails I sent them, please let me know guys address below.

As for the time being I will have to wait till I can afford an IBM type PC before I try again, I fear I was asking for the poor old Atari 6-bit to do to much this time, but it did try its best, if anybody does wish to try this I suggest that you need at the very least an XEP-80 or you are wasting your time and money.

The software I used like CTERRM (BBC interface routine) seemed to work okay but I can not say for sure because it could have been the reason I could not download my E-mail. If there anybody out there who has managed to download E-mail with the 4-Bit Atari from the Internet I would love to know how and what software (company) they used, anybody can to drop me a line by mail mail? My address is M. Tomlin, 28 Malpas, Malpas, Shropshire, Shrewsbury, SH13 1PU, ENGLAND.

- It's always a good idea to have some sort of hooky-loop nearby to hand. That way if you trip off a loop, you'll have a chance of surviving.
- Before heading for the airport, make sure that you have all the required items. The guard will tell you if you're not fully equipped.
- Think a look at the map when your money is looking at it. Remember, the railway line runs in the aisle for both of you.
- It's always a good idea to place a loop whenever you find an item. But don't forget the spots you've hooky-trapped!
- Develop a code to remember where you've set traps under all TV sets or behind all pictures, for instance. Until your money gets a whiff of what you're up to, it's a way to avoid getting tripped by your own traps.

That's it for another issue, the next one is up to you. Also about some responses to the help requested in Issue 79 for my earlier issues that haven't been answered. For goodness sake give a game lover a PD game to find and send us some hints, tips, traps or scraps. A dead Tipster is not a pretty sight.

Send it to:

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

XL/XE PROGRAMMING

INSTRING FOR ATARI BASIC

by John Foskett

One of the most useful comments that Turbo BASIC has which is easily missing from Atari BASIC is `INSTRING`, a command which locates the position of a small string within a larger string. The routine presented here seeks to recreate the same way as Turbo `INSTRING` command returning the starting position of the smaller string or a zero if no match is found.

USING THE ROUTINE

The routine is called using the usual command as follows...

```
X=LSRADR(FIND,ADR(MAIN),LEN(MAIN),ADR(SUBS),LEN(SUBS))
```

The routine finds the starting position of the smaller `SUBS` within the larger `MAIN` where the starting position is returned to BASIC via the variable `X`. (It is of course the machine only routine itself.)

To clarify the use of the routine by an example, consider the following...

`MAIN="I LOVE MY ATARI CLASSIC"
SUBS="ATARI"`

In the above `USR` call, `X` would equal 11 because the word `ATARI` begins with the already character in `MAIN`. If it were `LOVE="I LOVE"`, then `X` would equal zero because no match is found since `"I LOVE"` does not appear in `MAIN`.

LIMITATIONS

The only limitation with the routine is that `SUBS` must be no more than 254 bytes in length, but `MAIN` can be of any length. This limitation is not a problem in practice because `SUBS` would rarely consist of more than a dozen characters or so and therefore there would be no real advantage in increasing a greater length.

ly respectively. After selecting, the first directory sector (sector 001) is read and displayed on screen in decimal numeric notation along with the menu.

THE MENU

The menu consists of the following options where each option is selected by pressing the stated letter key...

<D> SCREEN (Display)

Initially when the program is run, the data is displayed in the numeric mode. This option toggles the display between the decimal numeric mode and the character mode.

<A> ALTER (Change Data)

When in the decimal numeric mode, this option allows the data on screen to be altered, but is disabled when in the character mode where this option is disabled from the menu. When this option is selected, the reference number (0 to 127) of the byte to be altered is prompted for and when the chosen number is entered, the value contained in the byte on screen is highlighted and the new value (0 to 255) is prompted for. At any time during the use of this option, ESCAPE may be pressed to exit back to the menu. Note that this option only changes the data displayed on screen and does NOT directly alter the data on the disk (see the WRITE option below).

<R> READ

This option allows any sector on the disk to be read and its data displayed on the screen. The chosen sector number is entered at the prompt and must be within the correct range. Data from 1 to 720 for a single density disk and from 1 to 1848 for an enhanced density disk. This option defaults to 001, the first directory sector of an sector number to be

read. Once selected, this option may be called without disturbing the on screen data by pressing ESCAPE.

<N> NEXT

This option allows the next sector in numeric sequence to be read and when selected, 'Y' must be pressed to continue or any other key to exit back to the menu. If this option is selected when the last sector on the disk is currently displayed on screen, then the message "No more sectors on the disk" is printed on screen and ESCAPE must be pressed to exit.

<L> LINK

This option allows the next sector (the link sector) of a specific program or file to be displayed on screen. This option functions in the same way as the "NEXT" option above. If this option is selected when the last sector of a specific program or file is displayed on screen then the message "End of the (XXXX) has been reached" is printed on screen and ESCAPE must be pressed to exit.

<C> COPY

This option allows the data from one sector which is the data currently displayed on screen to be copied or written to another sector. When selected, the number of the destination sector to receive the data is prompted for which must be within the correct range. Note that this option does not actually write to the destination sector (see the destination sector when the "WRITE" option is selected).

<D> DIR

When selected and after pressing 'Y' to continue, the entire directory is read from disk, stored in RAM and displayed using a special screen. This option displays the whole directory, all 66 entries whether or not they are used, divided as open to 4 screens with each

screen displaying 16 file names. Along with the file names, the total number of sectors used in each file, the starting sector and the file status is displayed. Triangular brackets are used in conjunction with linked and unlinked files in the same way as DOS 2.0 to indicate those files which are not accessible to DOS 2.0s. From each screen, START must be pressed to continue or OPTION is pressed to exit back to the menu. When exiting from this screen, the last displayed sector is re-read and once again displayed on screen.

<M> MEMORY

A memory is provided to store the data of a sector should it be necessary perhaps for backup purposes whilst the on screen data is being modified. Each of the following three options requires 'Y' to be pressed to continue or any key to exit. When selected, the following message is displayed...

<C> CLEAR MEMORY

Clears the memory of all data. If this option is selected when there is no data in the memory then the message "No data in memory" is printed on screen and ESCAPE must be pressed to exit.

<R> RESTORE FROM MEMORY

Restores the data from memory and prints it upon the screen overwriting the data previously displayed.

<S> SAVE TO MEMORY

Saves the data currently on screen into the memory.

<W> WRITE

This is the only option which writes to the disk. When selected, this option allows the data currently displayed on screen to be written to the disk and the screen colour is changed to red to show that this potentially hazardous option has been selected. After

selecting this option, 'Y' must be pressed to continue after which the data is written to the disk.

<F> FILL

Provides a means of filling a sector with a specific character or filling a sector with a random sequence of characters. After selecting this option, either 'Y' or 'N' must be pressed to continue. Pressing 'Y' allows a specific character to be used which is then prompted for, whilst pressing 'N' allows a random set of characters to be used. Note that if a random set of characters are selected, the final byte of the sector (the byte count) will be set to 128 in the normal way. Watch out when this option is selected, the data currently on screen will be overwritten second time.

<V> VTDC

Allows the VTDC sector (or sectors) to be displayed on screen. If a single density disk is being examined then 'Y' must be pressed to allow access to the disks VTDC sector (000). If an enhanced density disk is being examined, then the required VTDC sector is prompted for by selecting either '1' to select the first VTDC sector 000 or '2' to select the second (enhanced) VTDC sector 000A.

<P> PEEL (Read Disk)

Allows each sector of a disk to be read in sequence starting from a specified sector which is prompted for after first selecting this option. Any alpha numeric data that the sectors may contain is printed on a special screen. This option will continue reading the disk until the last sector has been reached after which the message "No more sectors on disk" is printed on screen and ESCAPE must be pressed to exit. At any time whilst the disk is being read, CTRL-C may be pressed to halt the reading temporarily and a sub-menu is

displayed from where START is pressed is continue or OPTION is pressed to exit. Keating from this option re-displays the main screen showing the first directory sector.

<ESC> EXIT

Pressing ESCAPE from the main menu allows exit back to the initial screen from where the lowest density of a disk is selected by pressing "0" for single density or "1" for enhanced density. After selecting the format density, the first directory sector is read and displayed as before.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

THE DISPLAY LISTS

The program uses three custom display lists stored in page 6, the first for the main screen, the second for displaying the directory and the third for PEEDING (reading) the disk. Each display list is here defined as LB and is loaded into page 6 at addresses 1036, 1076 and 1095 respectively by using MOVF. All three display lists allow for an extra line (a 25th line) at the top of the screen to carry the program title. The extra line uses NCBR for its screen RAM whose address is loaded into the display lists using DPOKE immediately after loading into page 6.

DISK ACCESS

The program uses the computer's internal routines for accessing the disk using a small machine code routine (DB). The concrete trail for "CAMBRY" at address 1020 is used to store

the data read from the disk. The address of CAMBRY is loaded into the vector address DISPLAY16 at locations 772/773 during the program's initialising. DUNIT at location 789 is FORCED with a 1 during the programme's initialising to enable access to disk drive number 1. PENDING DUNIT with 2 would enable access to drive 2, etc. Vector address DAUX1/3 at locations 776/778 is FORCED with the sector number to be accessed which is entered at random places within the listing. The only other location which has to be set up is DCOMMAND at location 778 which is used to determine the direction of data transfer. DCOMMAND is FORCED with 82 to enable the disk read function and with 83 or 87 for a disk write function (87 enabling write with parity). DCOMMAND is FORCED with 82 during the programme's initialising and is only FORCED with 87 in the WRITE procedure to enable the write function after which it is immediately returned to 82.

LISTING BREAKDOWN

One way of understanding how programme work is to examine their variables...

THE PROCEDURES

ALTER Alters or changes data
BEEP The beep (not key click)
CLEAR Clears the auxiliary data from the screen
CLICK The key click
CLRDISK Clears the vector data from the screen
CMEM Clears the memory
CONTINUE (lock) the screen until a key is pressed (see variable SURE). "Y" is pressed to continue or any other key to exit

COPI Copies one sector to another
CURSOR Positions the cursor (player's) to the INPUT routine
DB Reads and displays the data directory
EXIT Holds the screen until ESCAPE is pressed
FILL Fills the screen display randomly or with any single value
GETSEC Gets the sector data from disk and prints it on screen
 The initialising routine
INT
INPUT Input routine for entering numeric data such as the sector numbers and values
IPRMB Input subroutine, for the INPUT procedure
LINK Reads the link sector
INTERNAL Accesses the internal memory
INSCREEN Prints the main menu onto the screen
INDEX Reads the next sector in numeric sequence
PEEK Peeks or reads the disk
PRINTWRITE Prints the sector data on screen as direct numeric data
PRINTDATA Prints the sector data on screen as characters
READ Reads a sector
RESET Resets the screen colours used with the WRITE procedure
RESET Resets the screen colours used with the WRITE procedure
RESET Resets the screen colours used with the WRITE procedure
SECT Prepares short hand notation for printing on screen (that is, 01, 02, 03 and 04)
SECT Saves current on screen data into memory
YLOC Gets the YLOC (sector's)
WRITE Writes the data on screen to the disk

THE ONE LINE LABEL

BLINK References the start of the main menu for printing it into the screen

THE STRINGS

CLR Machine code routine for clearing the player stripe (much faster than a FORNEXT loop)
CLRDYS Strings of spaces for clearing the auxiliary data
CLRDYS The selected format density of the disk, defined as either "SINGLE" or "ENHANCED"
ESC Defined as "ESCAPE EXIT"
FMS The file name and extension respectively used in the DIR procedure
FMS Stores numeric data used in the INPUT procedure
IL Defined as overflow (CONTROL-R)
IMEM The internal memory
INMEM Stores the inverse byte value used in the ALTRM procedure
PCO Defined as "READING SECTOR"
SE String of 31 spaces
SECC Stores the whole directory used in the DIR procedure
SLS String of 99 spaces
SCRS Screen RAM for the extra (25th) line at the top of the screen
 Blank heading title, loaded into SCRS as required
SECR Sub-title, loaded into SCRS as required
MS General purpose utility string
USEM Defined as "FREE" or "IN USE" for the MEMORY procedure
VBR The VBR routine defined as a character string
26 Machine code routine for accessing the computer's internal disk access routines via the LDR command

THE MAJOR VARIABLES

LOOP	Stores either a zero or a one and is used in the PRINT procedure. Zero enables the loop while a one disables it
BYTE	Stores the value contained in the byte WHICH used in the ALTER procedure
CUR	Horizontal position of the cursor used in the INPUT procedure
KEY	ASCII code of the last key pressed from the menu and from other prompts
LEN	Stores the file sector calculated from the on screen data
MEM	Stores either a zero or a one and is used in the memory procedures
MEMM	Zero represents a free memory while a one represents a used memory
MAX	Stores the maximum number of characters that can be enter in the INPUT procedure
MYITE	New constants for the byte WHICH used in the ALTER procedure
NUM	Stores the total number of sectors on the disk, either 720 or 1840
PRYTE	Equals MYITE for printing data onto the screen via the PRINTBYTE procedure
PRSE	Used for setting up PRSE to use "Page P" as a cursor
PRSE POS	Used in the INPUT procedure to calculate the horizontal position the cursor
PRV	Horizontal and vertical position for each byte of data when printing it onto the screen
SCREEN	Stores either a zero or a one. Zero enables the decimal numeric display while a one enables the character display
SEC	Stores the sector number for sectors to be accessed

SECTORS	Number of sectors used in each file in the directory and is used in the DIR procedure
START	Starting sector of each file in the directory and is used in the DIR procedure
STAT	The status of each file in the directory and is used in the DIR procedure
SURE	Stores either a zero or a one and is used in the CONTINUE procedure. SURE equals one only if the "Y" key is pressed which is achieved by using the logic statement (SURE=KEY=40)
TRICE	Stores either a one or a zero and is used in the DIR procedure to enable less sectors to be printed onto the screen
WHICH	Stores the number of the byte to be altered (0 to 127) in the ALTER procedure
XX	Stores the horizontal and vertical positions for the cursor in the INPUT procedure

Many of the programs constants are replaced with variables to preserve memory, they are preceded with the letter "M" and their values do not vary. These variable constants are easily recognizable in the listing because they compile of the value they represent preceded by the letter "M", thus M4=4, M10=10, M1=1, etc.

THE LISTING

DIRSE SECTOR EDITOR is too long to include in the magazine as a type-in listing and is therefore on this issue's disk ready to run. For those who would prefer to type in the listing a fully PDP10 coded printed listing is available on request. See inside back cover for details.

HARDWARE PRINTERS

BUY WINDOWS

- OR ELSE!

Some comments on a new HP colour printer by Gordon F. Hooper

A s your next official Hacktographer of Doom reporter, I would like to announce that the world has now officially gone to Hell in a handbasket. If you don't have Windows 95, you can't buy a new printer.

WHAT???

That's right. I seriously want to buy a new colour printer, and because I had such good service from my Hewlett Packard HP DeskJet 500, I wanted another HP. A friend had recently bought an HP DeskJet 6800, and it did all that I wanted my printer to do, but I could find only one for sale, and it was priced just \$20 cheaper than the new HP DeskJet 6800. This did some things the 6800 didn't do, so I had done enough out of the reader to purchase it.

Now the fun begins. When I had it set up, I was surprised to see there were only two control buttons on the front - an ON/OFF switch and a Pause switch. Even my new DeskJet 500 had more. Upon checking the manual (which to tell is the poorest excuse for documentation I have ever read... I discovered that all the printers features were controlled by software which was installed in the box on four floppy's. The software only ran under DOS version 3.3 or later, Windows 3.1 or Windows 95. In other words, buy a 6800 Gates-controlled DOS box or forget about acquiring a new printer.

To be fair, Hewlett Packard do make a model called the HP DeskWriter 6800 which has software for Macs, but all other computers are left out of the box. If you don't have an IBM or Mac, your money is no good and HP doesn't want it.

I AIN'T GONNA BE BEAT!

So did I swallow my good sense and buy an I have Money machine? Oh course not. I made the 6800 work with my Mega4 500, so all

good features will do.

Even before this latest news, printers being sold with minimal costed the greatest amount of problems with computers. Any computer. One good thing about the 880C is that there are no DIP switches which have to be set by the user. DIP switches cause so much trouble, they must have been whether attack the poor computer users by Bill Gates.

When I bought my DeskJet 880, my only computer was an eight-bit 1300SE. All I wanted it to do was print out manuscripts to send to magazines, but the 8-bit was dead before today's printers ever came out. So I did the only sensible thing and bought a case of beer and traded John Perkins to my computer room. Thank God for user groups.

After testing the beer to make sure it worked properly, John looked at the manual. This manual was well written and contained much that was necessary, but John determined he would have to have the technical reference manual before he could write a printer driver. After it arrived and John perused it (John drinks a few more beers), I had a printer driver which, after setting 16 DIP switches on the printer, worked perfectly.

Then I bought my STE. I heard Molson's would be reporting record profits that quarter, but it turned out there were drivers for every program I used and Molson's stocks must have a mini-divide instead. Then I bought the 880C.

DO BUTTONS COST TOO MUCH NOW?

My DeskJet 880 had many switches on its front panel which controlled on/off, which font it printed, whether it printed in letter quality or draft, how fast, envelope status

and online status. The 880C has the aforementioned two, and everything else is controlled by DOS software. Envelope printing is no problem, you can either use labels or a DTP program which prints to landscape mode directly onto the envelope. LaserJet printing, one of the advertised features of the 880C, would require a program written for whichever computer you have.

BUT DO I NEED THE FEATURES?

I had laserJet printing capabilities with my Roland 8 pin, but I only printed one letter to see how it worked, and never did it again. Not too important in the real world, in other words. Also, I never used the different font capabilities of the printer, so it was easier to change fonts by using software, and I don't do anything the hard way. Using different fonts by pushing switches on the printer also requires changing margins, line lengths and page lengths. I recommend the DOS strategy: Keep It Simple, Stupid. Most modern word processor software and all DTP software for the Atari offers different fonts and is simple to use, so use it. (Bring stupid about computers myself. I heartily recommend this method.

WELL, IT'S OK

Let's you think I'm against this printer, it does give laser-quality output printing at a reasonable price. It also has a separate cartridge for black ink which gives superior black lines mixing CMY colours to make it. The only objection I have to this printer is HP trying to have everyone to use Windows. ■

The CLASSIC PD ZONE



by Kevin Cooke

In this issue of the Classic PD Zone, I'll be dealing with some of the many letters I've received from readers asking for help with their Atari 8-bit relationships. My first letter is from a Mr Hugh Moore. He writes:

Dear Kevin,

I just can't understand what's happened with me and my Atari 8-bit. I used to get on so well with it but, now, we hardly ever see each other. What can I do?

Well, Mr Moore, the solution is obvious. I bet you haven't bought your Atari anything for a long, long time, right? Well, sorry, that makes straight wrong! I realise it may be hard thinking of something to buy and so, for this issue only, I'll make a couple of suggestions to help ease that tension. Read on!

HOW MANY GAMES?

THEY'RE COMING!! I had written 15, you 15 games!

The first is *Deathzone*, a clone of Fred Winsor's classic game, *Encounter*. The game is extremely colourful and the animation is terrific. Overall, well worth a look (70%). Next game on the disk is *Trial War* in comparison to *Deathzone*, this game is poor. It's okay for a quick blast (about the trials before you get to your side of the screen) but it won't hold your interest for long (60%).

Blade is a variation on the classic *Collectors* game, and a fun one at that! Graphics are simple but the game is great fun to play. A good game (70%). *Ball In The Bill* is a strange shoot 'em up which allows simultaneous two-player play, however I couldn't work out what you actually had to do! It's not a good game if you know what to do but in this state, it's a graphically-good, dull game! (60%).

Comedo Defender is a brilliant little shoot 'em up. Graphics are simple, yet again, but the gameplay is marvellous (70%). *Shooting Wars* has you trying to keep a robot from touching the stars that become around the screen. Gameplay isn't terrible at times and, as such, becomes extremely addictive. Another good game (70%).

Bank is a hilarious little maze game which involves you collecting gold before being while avoiding badmen. Sports movement, it sounds and the graphics are fine. Another great game (81%). *Clash Of The Kings* is an Archaic type game. Obviously it's not as good as Archaic but then again, what is? It's good for two players. Worth a look (70%).

Ironmongery is a brilliant shoot 'em up. You control a gun which you have to rotate to shoot down helicopters, space shuttles, etc. when fly overhead. These drop burning bombs and you which create barriers either side of your gun. When you can't defend yourself any more, the game ends. This game is great fun (80%).

PROZ PD

by Kevin Cooke

Blaze War is perhaps my favorite two-player PC game (better than *Captain The Flag*, *Insurrection*). Basically, you wander around a degradable arena, shooting a second player's man and/or computer-controlled men. You can select the speed at which the computer-controlled people move, and the number of them between 1 and 45. The first one to score 100 points wins the excellent game (\$29).

Repzies is a clone of *Robotron 2084*.

Graphics are average (although not much worse than in *Robotron*), so it sounds, but the game is good fun to play (\$19).

Elevator Repziesman is an unusual game. Your task is to get the repziesman to the top of the elevator shaft to fix the elevators which have gone wrong. However, the ones which get you to the top are positioned alternatively either side of the screen so that you have to change elevators to get down one side of the screen to the other. Starts in good (the same) tone as in *Wipe Out* and the graphics become a revelation. This one is excellent (\$29).

Brew is based upon the film of the same name. You are required to cause the other light cycles to crash by blocking them off or firing them into a wall. This is an average version of a game that has been done many times before, but it has to be said, it's still excellent (\$19).

Colera is a clone of the commercial game, *Ribbler*. That said, the two are virtually identical in apart from Colera's complete lack of sound, if this doesn't bother you though, you'll find a good game to Colera (\$29).

Finally, **Bats** is a shoot 'em up involving, fairly enough, bats instead of good guys, but it can get extremely repetitive after a couple of runs (\$29).

Overall, apart from a couple of duds, this

disk is well worth the asking price, if only for the excellent *Blaze War*, *Brew*, *Insurrection* and *Cosmic Defender*.

THAT'S JUST DANDY!

You probably haven't heard of **DANDY DUNGEONS** (#73), but have you heard of *Gauntlet*? If so, you may be interested to hear that *Gauntlet* was actually based on *Dandy Dungeons*.

There are a few main differences between the two games, the first being the graphics. *Dandy Dungeons* features far larger characters than *Gauntlet*. The characters which you control (up to four) are made up of their appropriate number, with arms and legs sticking out.

The object of the game is simply to beat the exit which takes you onto the next level. On your way, you must collect keys to open doors, kill any of the three types of monster that you encounter, etc. The weakest monster is the 'Marshmallow Man' who only requires one shot to be killed. The 'Sentry Floor' requires two shots and the 'Evil Wizard' requires three shots. Each time you shoot a monster, it turns into the next weakest monster. If the monster is a marshmallow man, it simply disappears when shot. Each monster does damage if they touch you, 'bridges' doing the most damage and 'marshmallow men' doing the least.

Up to two players can simultaneously take part, each controlling either one or two players with the same joystick. This sounds difficult but it's fairly easy once you get the hang of it. Food and sword levels can be collected as you go along and up to nine can be stored

for later use. Believe me, on some levels you'll need them! Should you be playing with more than one but end either they or you get killed, points literally scattered around the game register to the dead player when shot at - a thoughtful touch.

Dandy Dungeons is a great game, although the graphics and sounds are far simpler than in *Gauntlet*. *Dandy Dungeons* really does win hands down every time on playability.

Dandy Dungeons even has a level counter so that you can make your own levels should you complete the 34 provided.

This has to be THE best-value PD game available (irrespective excepted). Don't miss this one, whatever you do!

AND THERE'S MORE!

If you've managed to fight your way through the 26 provided levels and haven't got the time or talent to create any more? Well, help is at hand!

DANDY DUNGEONS LEVELS AND TITLES (#1) 854 contains 26 more levels, created by your's truly! The levels are generally more varied than the original levels although some do, perhaps, suffer from being too many boxes same provided. However, if you're addicted, you'll enjoy that. Note that these levels require the original *Dandy Dungeons* game to be used!

Also on the disk are two more games - **Titels** and **Whipping Top**. *Titels is a fairly good implementation of the by now well-known game. Graphics are simple but gameplay is as good as ever. The only let-down is the almost total lack of sound. A minimal tone on the odd sound effect wouldn't have gone amiss. *Other**

than that, it's certainly worth a play if you have a bit of time to spare on those at hand.

Whipping Top is an unexplained legendary clone. Although the graphics are excellent on this game, the controls are so unresponsive that the spinning top in question doesn't move (and at least a second after you want it to). This causes you to constantly die when it's not actually your fault! This lets down what could otherwise have been an extremely promising game.

Overall, this disk is good value if you fancy a few more levels for *Dandy Dungeons*, perhaps worth a if you are only interested in *Titels*, but not worth it simply for *Whipping Top* alone!

ARE THEY ANY GOOD?!!

THEY'RE COMING (#145) 85%
(Best games are given 80% or more)

DANDY DUNGEONS (#73) 90%
(A great game, better than Gauntlet)

DANDY DUNGEONS LEVELS & TITLES 80%
(Love to have you created for a while but only if you had Dandy Dungeons)

So, Mr Hugh Moon, I hope this has helped you! If any other readers have relationship problems with their Atari 8-bit, write in and give me all a laugh... I mean write in and I'll do my best to help! Next issue, the Atari World's favourite ongoing article, *Secret Wars*, will be back in this spot again. I know you've heard that before! So, until next time we meet, keep computing!



JOURNEY INTO CYBERSPACE

John S Davison
explores the
Internet and
goes

In Search of Atari

In our last little foray into cyberspace we explored Atari related material available inside one of the large proprietary on-line services, namely CompuServe. From here on we'll be venturing out to look for Atari material on the Internet itself, starting in this issue with the Internet newsgroups. We looked at the concepts behind newsgroups in Issue 74, so I won't go into them in detail again here, but as a reminder newsgroups are public places on the Internet where you can post messages and any user with newsgroup access can read them and post replies. In other words, it's like a giant collection of global bulletin boards.

To access a newsgroup you need a newsgroup reader. Most Internet service providers offer some form of software for this - in my case CompuServe provide software that automatically links in with WinCIM, their standard PC communications access package. It allows you to access newsgroups, search for topics of interest, read relevant items, reply to selected items, and post your own material to chosen newsgroups. There's also an ASCII newsgroup reader available on CompuServe, and what's more it will work via an ASCII terminal program running on an Atari.

There are around 12,000 newsgroups in total so the first job is to locate those of interest to you. Your Internet service provider will have a service machine providing access group access, but you may not make all 12,000 available. It depends how many he elected to carry as part of his service. There's a newsgroup search facility available, so you don't have to look through the whole list to find your favourite topics.

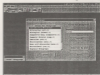
The newsgroup reader is the usual starting point, as it usually gives a reasonable indication of the newsgroup's main topic (but not always). A search using "Atari" as the keyword provided 50 hits on the CompuServe system - that's 52 different newsgroups with the word "Atari" somewhere in their name. The next step is to sift through them all to

determine those most likely to meet your needs. The first skim through was easy - about half of them were German language newsgroups, so could be eliminated (unless you understand German, of course). You may be able to eliminate others based on the name. Then you may take a closer look at what's left.

SPAMMING AND FLAMING

It's worth remembering that newsgroups are publicly accessible on a world-wide basis, so you're going to encounter some rubbish amongst the material you examine. Disappointingly, the first newsgroup I looked at proved the point. Newsgroup "atari.atari" contained nothing of specific interest in Atari terms - most of the postings were of the "junk mail" variety, advertising the sort of get-rich-quick schemes sadly now all too prevalent on the Internet. Widespread posting of such useless and irrelevant material is known as "spamming" in Netpeak, and as you may well wish activities just wouldn't have been tolerated at all. Spammers would find themselves the focus of severe reactions from other users, but they seem to be getting away with it more often now. More on this later.

The next few newsgroups I tried were much more interesting, "alt.atari.jaguar-discussion" as you'd guess, is a discussion group for Atari Jaguar gaming fans. It contained a series of threads on various Jaguar related topics, plus a few junk postings of the type mentioned above. Incidentally, there was also a public APOLLOUT from someone who'd obviously been spamming on this newsgroup in the recent past. His original junk posting was no longer visible, but it was clear that the regular bona-fide subscribers had got very upset and the perpetrator was still smarting from their reactions. It seems he'd been berated with abusive e-mail from angry users



Searching for Atari newsgroups

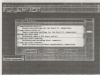
known as "flaming" in Netpeak, and had obviously taken it all to heart. I suspect most spammers wouldn't care less about getting flamed - especially if they're making money out of their questionable business schemes - but this guy seemed genuinely sorry for the trouble he'd caused.

"alt.games.lynx" is the place where Atari Lynx users gather. There were only five threads here when I checked, and most of them seemed to be concerned with the buying, selling, and swapping of Lynx games. There was also some discussion on which were the best Lynx games.

FAQS AND FIGURES

One of the most popular access points to be "comp.srv.startnet", judging from the number of threads listed. One was a "welcome" message aimed at new users, and this contained references to other important sources of Atari related information. Included were pointers to lists of Atari related creators and developers; bulletin boards supporting Atari 8-bit; EA's (frequently asked) questions for Atari hardware, modifications, add-ons, and emulators; and other 8-bit facts and figures. The general postings covered all main-





Browsing the list of 52 Atari-related linkgroups

car of topics, including speech synthesizers, hard drives, file manager software for MacOS and SparcDOS, running 8-bit programs under emulation, and even a query from someone asking if Page 4/News Atari News was still being published! I added my response to the rather terse answer already given by someone else, supplying details of where to obtain it. Unlike like this is the place to come to get answers to any 8-bit queries you might have, or to help support fellow Atari enthusiasts around the world.

Programming enthusiasts have their own newsgroup called "comp.sys.atari.programmer", which covers all Atari programming, not just 8-bit. The first thread I accessed here didn't lack promoting. It was a plaintive cry from a user saying that this newsgroup seems to have died, so they hadn't been much activity on it for awhile. However, there did seem to be numerous recent postings proving that wasn't the case. Topics covered various technical aspects of programming, such as how to communicate with the SCSI port on a Falcon; how to convert between different implementations of the C programming language; and solving problems in getting an ST to communicate with the World Wide Web. Again, when you visit this newsgroup you may also be able to help others solve their

problems - it's easy to jump in and add your contribution to current discussions.

If you enjoy debating about why Atari computers are better than others, then "comp.sys.atari.advocacy" is the place to go. Here you can praise the Atari's advantages as much as you like and you'll always find someone to support or disagree with you. One particular recent argument concerned the merits of using an Atari Falcon versus an Apple Macintosh for running the Colosse Audio music application. There are advisory newsgroups for other makes of computer too, so you can visit them and carry your pro-Atari arguments to their home ground. It can get quite entertaining, if you enjoy making controversial statements. Watch you don't get flamed by rampant Apple fans, though!

ATARI VAPOURWARE

Newsgroups for the 16-bit machines seem to be better supported than their 8-bit equivalents, judging by the number of postings I saw during my research for this article. "comp.sys.atari.st" appears to be the main newsgroup - there were over 40 threads active the last time I accessed it. As you'd expect, there was a really wide range of discussions - typical topics were software to use to set up an Atari bulletin board; differences between using an Atari TT and a PC running Windows 95, and a long posting from an Atari support company listing the hardware and software they have available. This company also had some very nice Atari collector items - they're apparently equipped examples of Atari "vaporware", i.e. products that Atari had offered/developed but never got round to marketing. These included an "expansion bus" for the 800XL, and a twin floppy disk drive unit using 3 inch disks (yes, that's 3 inch, not 3.5 inch). Presumably the items were prototypes or pro-

duction models that never got further than the development labs.

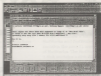
Another interesting posting was from a guy who'd just bought a 1000ST for \$199 and a matching Atari monitor for \$4.99 from a junk shop somewhere in the USA. He wanted information about the system so he could start using it. Users pointed him at lots of available information held in various places on the Internet to help get him up and running.

If you're interested in technical hardware and software projects should visit "comp.sys.atari.tech". Typical threads included discussions on how to use a PC VGA monitor with Atari systems; interfacing non-Atari floppy disk drives with an Atari ST; where to find a replacement mouse and (again!) solving software problems encountered when trying to connect an ST to the World Wide Web.

One disappointment was that a number of newsgroups produced only a message saying "this newsgroup is currently unavailable" when I tried to access them. I visited them over a period of a week and got the same response. These included "comp.sys.atari.amiga.com", "comp.sys.atari.atari.st", "comp.sys.atari.st", and "atari.vaporware". The first is supposed to contain announcements of interest to Atari fans, the second and third are for program materials in binary and source code form respectively, and the last one is the meeting place for the programming crew that bring you those fabulous demonstration programs that push the hardware to its absolute limits.

LURKING AROUND

Once you've located newsgroups of interest, you'll probably want to "lurk" on them and monitor their activity for awhile. "Lurking" is Wikipedia's hanging around part reading the posted material, without actively contributing



Reading the Page 4 form on comp.sys.atari.st about Page 4

anything of your own! Then, having decided on the ones you like, you can "subscribe" to them and participate in the discussions there. If you don't want to actively participate you can remain a permanent lurker if you wish there's no rule saying you HAD to contribute to a newsgroup. In fact, no-one can even tell you're there.

Incidentally, "subscribing" just means you become a regular user - there's no financial implications, so it doesn't mean you have to pay a subscription charge. Newsgroups to which you subscribe are added to a special access list in your newsgroup reader, allowing you to go straight to them without having to search for them first. In some systems you can be automatically alerted via e-mail when new material is added to your chosen newsgroups.

The newsgroups I accessed contained many references to other sources of Atari material. These were scattered around the Internet, in other newsgroups, FTP sites, and World Wide Web sites. I'll be following up some of these in future articles, so join me again soon to find out what they have to offer.

See page 4 for the latest
NAU Internet Contact List

ST PUBLIC DOMAIN



ROUNDUP

Dogs V. Wolf, um, yes, it does appear to be that way! Stuart's been too tied up to do this issue's column again so I've stepped in to take over for the last three. This column is going to be a sort of "make it up as you go along" job so I've left you all present what's going to be referenced in it. You'll just have to wait and see I guess!

ROUND? WHAT KIND OF SHAPE IS THAT FOR A TABLE?

ArchAr of The Britons (STW) is an arcade/strategy-type game, written by STW by Ralph Ellison.

Once you have loaded the appropriate file from the disk, a colorful and fairly impressive title screen appears. From here, after a short time, the main game loads. The object of *ArchAr* appears to be to conquer the kingdom by fighting, collaborating with other rulers, etc.

The game starts off by presenting you with an almost bird's-eye view of part of the land in which you can travel. A flag, necessarily seen waving in the wind, marks your position on the map whilst various objects on the map represent places which you can visit. There are estates of the "gold" rather than the "land" variety - this is the middle aged, villages, other

ruler's castles, food shooting areas, etc. By moving your army into one of these landmarks, the screen changes to a picture of said game, representing that landmark.

Control is made easier by your seeking to keep a constant eye on food, water and crossbow-bolt supplies. Food and water are rapidly used up to feed your hungry army with every move whilst crossbow-bolts are soon depleted every time you enter a fight. Of course, you can buy more soldiers and supplies from villages if they still trade with you! but you have to bear in mind that more soldiers use up more food and water.

Each of the sub-games and generally well done. The gold mines present you with a maze guiding a wheelbarrow who can be moved left and right using the mouse but can't rotate like the falling gold. However, above you is a computer-controlled opposing ruler who is also robbing for the gold.

The "shoot for food" game has you trying to shoot down birds that fly across the screen. However, you have to

shoot quite a distance ahead in their flight-path as your arrows take a while to travel the distance and reach them - no machine guns or laser level!

You may also have to defend a village, or at least a castle, both of which involve you shooting several enemy soldiers who regularly pop-up from the transports. Again, all control is by mouse.

ArchAr is generally a very good game. The graphics are particularly good for a PD game and the range of things that the sub-games is excellent. The author appears to have put a lot of work into this game and it seems to have paid off.

Minor niggles include the fact that the flag which marks your position can sometimes obscure other landmarks, meaning that some times you walk into a sub-game which you really don't want to play. Another niggles is that to move from one map section to another, you have to move your army into an area. However, you can walk onto the arrow for birds that you have only to find that you actually have! Allow trying to do this several times, your food and water supplies can be noticeably depleted.

Overall though, *ArchAr* of

The Britons is very good and well worth a try if you have any interest in this type of game.

HAVING A LAUGH!

PostWorks 1 (ST) (S) and **PostWorks 2 (ST) (S)** are a collection of amusing and cynical articles, jokes and real-life stories, seemingly all from the good of US of A!

The first file on *PostWorks 1* says "Although it is not intended that the contents of *PostWorks* deal strictly with computer related items, it is inevitable that most of the featured articles will, indeed, be computer related for blatantly obvious reasons. The rest, of course, will deal with you". Articles include "How to tell real users and programmers from quibblers and twisters your side", the theory that "light bulbs are dark sockets", and a look at IBM's famous practice of "intentionally leaving pages blank"! If you enjoy this type of humour (which about 90% of the readership probably does) then you will enjoy these disks.

It should be noted that *Post-*

Works 1 contains 6 issues of *PostWorks* and *PostWorks 2* contains the rest 11 issues of *PostWorks*. The *PostWorks 1* disk contains a disk-filler called "Magazine", very similar to the Fujitsu discs reviewed last issue but with many more smaller files - in fact, between 1 and 98 holes! The *PostWorks 2* disk also contains ten files of 50 games and a demo called *StarField 2*.

The *PostWorks* disks describe themselves as "The Electronic Humour Magazine". They are certainly unique and, if you need cheering-up or enjoy a good laugh, they're well worth a try!

One last thing - some of the articles on these disks are aimed at adults and "young adults" and so aren't really suitable for young children. You've been warned!

I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE!

The *California Realities (STW)* is an excellent short (10 minutes) sound and graphics demo. However, it's an impressive one nevertheless.

by
**Kevin
Cooke**

