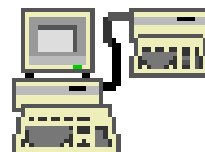
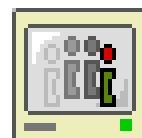
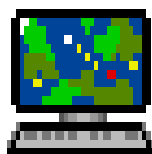
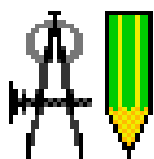
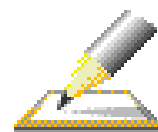
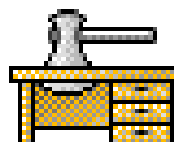
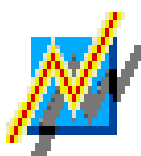
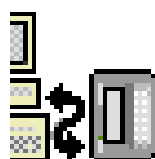
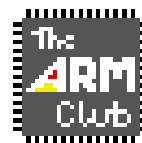
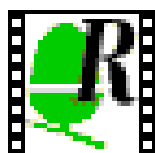


THE  
**ARM**  
**CLUB**



# ***Eureka***

**The Magazine for Members of The ARM Club**  
*Issue 14 — January 1995*

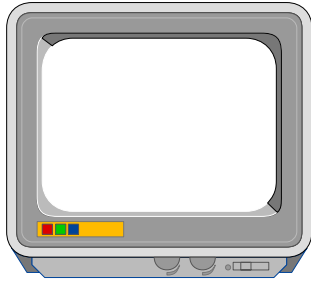


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**New Year Edition**

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*The ARM Club, FREEPOST ND6573, London, N12 0BR*  
*Tel 0171 624 9918 Fax 0181 446 3020*



## THE ARM CLUB MAGAZINE

### PUBLISHED BY

The ARM Club  
FREEPOST ND6573  
London  
N12 0BR

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Fax 0181 446 3020

### EDITOR

Simon Burrows

### SECRETARY

Geoff Stilwell

### COVER DESIGN

Simon Burrows

### PRINTED BY

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An



Club Production

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Issue 15 of Eureka will be published in April  
with details of the Harrogate Show and  
developments from Acorn plus lots more

## THE TRUTH?

A recent Club Open Day brought a thought-provoking experience when a chap approached me to say that, in his opinion, all of the Acorn-related magazines including Eureka are far too kind to Acorn and only ever say complimentary things about its computers and what it does.

Talking to him further revealed a partial explanation for this phenomenon, quite simply he was not aware for the reasons behind some of the actions and decisions which Acorn has taken. Over the past year Acorn has made a great effort to provide the Press with more information about what it is doing and has enabled greater contact between journalists and relevant staff so that articles and readers can be better informed.

There are undoubtedly some negative topics concerning Acorn and third party suppliers which rarely receive an airing in the magazines. For example Acorn has been incredibly (or should that read *typically*?) slow in releasing the 486PC card for the Risc PC. There may be good explanations for this and other causes for complaint however

Acorn needs to find better ways of communicating with ordinary users. Its new *Clan Acorn* scheme appeared to partially address this matter but what will happen to it in the future?

**Simon Burrows**  
Editor, Eureka



# Editorial

## CLUB NEWSLETTER

Welcome to yet another issue of Eureka, first of all may we wish all members and readers a very happy and successful 1995.

Back in December you should have received a copy of the result of our latest venture, the Club Newsletter. In the past, Eureka has been the main means for members to communicate with one another but it can only be published four times a year due to the amount of work needed to put together a magazine of this type.

The Club experienced significant growth during 1994 and as a result has a need to keep more in touch with members as well as having the greater resources (both human and financial) needed to achieve this.

Our illustrious Secretary, Geoff Stilwell, has taken on the responsibility of editing and producing the Newsletter, aided and abetted by a team of people including PD Librarian and former Club Secretary Nick Evans.

Please continue to address any material for publication to Eureka itself, we will filter out items for the Newsletter as they come in. We are always particularly keen to receive original articles or letters of interest to other members, if you would like any advice or assistance then do let us know.

# PRO ARTISAN

# 24

Clares' new 24 bit graphics package, ProArtisan 24, has the technology to tweek and fiddle with images as never before. It has the potential for original creativity alongside the intricacies of photo retouching. But is it Art? Must all painted works of art be produced using paint, palette or pencil? Or is the electronic computer medium one big, irrelevant cheat?

This question was posed to me by a friend keen on amateur photography. It is an important issue that needs addressing. It could be said that computers are just one stage further on than cameras from the "hands on" approach of traditional art. Cameras, after all, are also an artificial medium, often using tinted lenses and computerised meters to judge the right light and distance setting. Are we so suspicious of computer art simply because it is unfamiliar?

I wonder quite what Leonardo could have produced with this new technology at his finger tips.. Even I, who

number among the artistically challenged, can create effective images. Programs such as *ProArtisan 24* give the opportunity for everyone to indulge their latent artistic abilities to their best level, however good or bad that may be. Art cannot remain elitist in this sense.

Purists could argue that computer art can never inspire in the same way as conventional paintings. Staring at a canvas rather than a monitor does seem to have an inherent advantage. Traditional art has the romantic image of the painter out of doors with his easel, the work based on a detailed observation of real life. Computer design seems mechanical in comparison. Yet there are some similarities in the two approaches.



*A landscape produced with ProArt 24.. it looks rather better in colour..!*



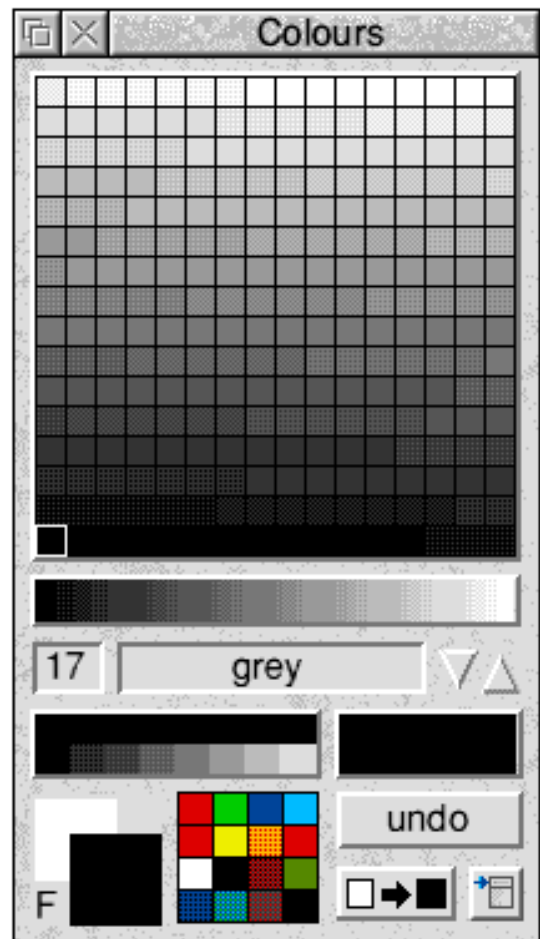
Traditional and computer art both share the challenge of manipulating their media, shape and choice of colour. Each aim to communicate through created images.

### Designers

*Pro Artisan 24* has been designed specifically for the Risc PC by Frank Dart and Jon Warminsham. They have also produced *Artisan* and *Pro Artisan*, both very successful packages for Acorn computers. *ProArtisan 24* makes full use of the extra power that can only be achieved with the new Risc PC. Users of *Pro Artisan 2* will be instantly at home with *ProArtisan 24* as the user interface is very familiar. Those new to the program will soon become accustomed to the intuitive icon and menu system.

### Presentation

Full marks must go to Clares for the very professional way the package is supplied. A strong boxed 3-ring bound manual displaying superb examples of what may be achieved using the program. The manual is easy to read and clearly organised. It covers in detail all aspects of the program - from getting started, a study tutorial and then a description of all the options. Three floppy discs contain the program and resource files to use with the

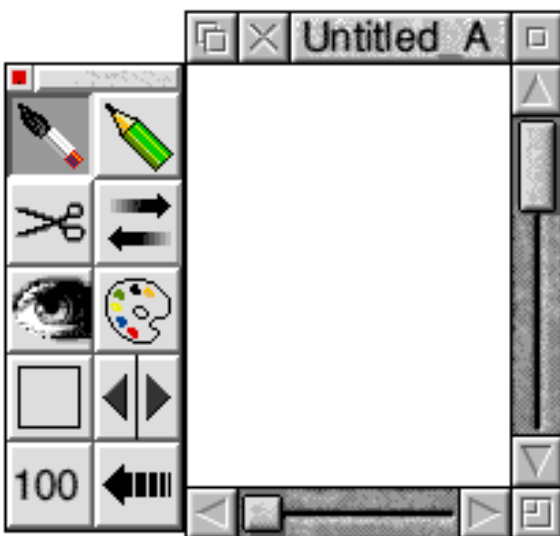


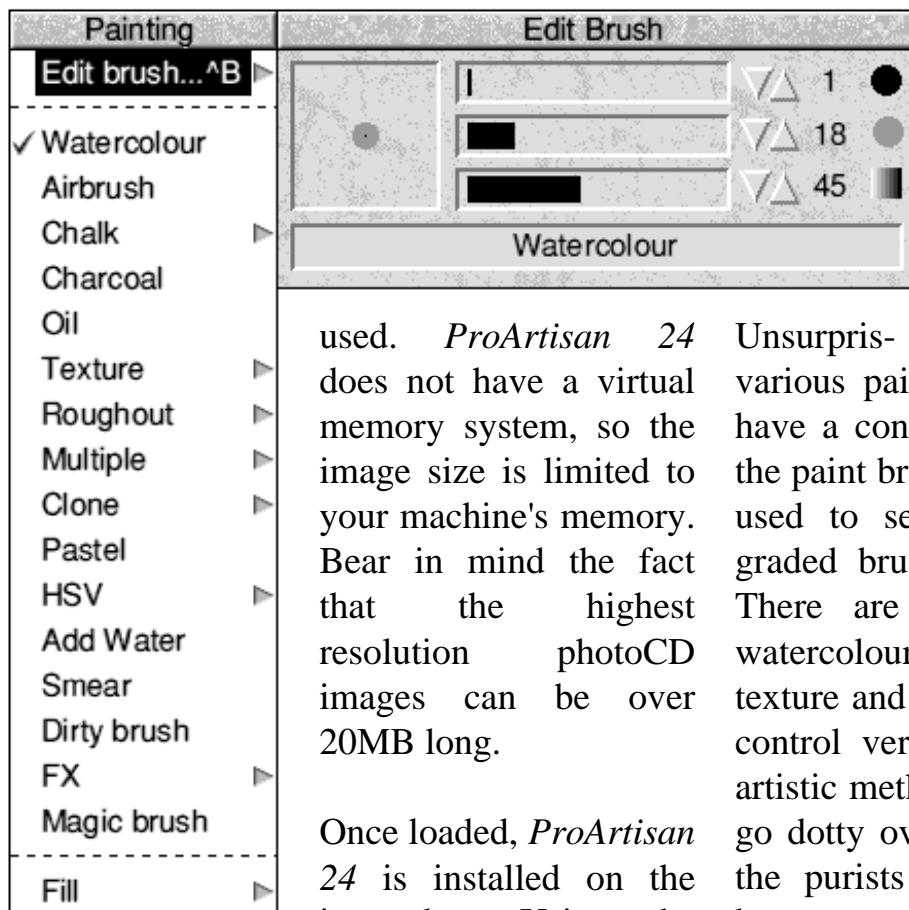
well documented tutorial section in the manual.

There is also a CD Rom containing over 80 high quality photoCD images to help get you going. Part of the program is devoted to viewing and accessing this media, which I think will become the normal way of storing our camera snaps in the not too distant future.

### Installation

The *ProArtisan 24* program disc has to be initialised and then it can be installed to hard disc. It is not recommended to run the program from floppy. *ProArtisan 24* is a 24 bit colour painting package and as such can requires large amounts of memory. A minimum of 4MB of RAM is a requirement. 8MB is suggested with 2MB of VRAM to enable 16 million colour screen modes to be





Painting menu

create a canvas and access the import options used with ChangeFSI, Load PhotoCD images and Quit the program.

Clicking select with the mouse button accesses the create canvas option. Several predefined sizes can be used or an individual size choice can be customised by the user. Once created, a canvas or window can be opened. Attached to this is a tool pane and each tool is accessed by selecting with the mouse button. It is through the various tools that all the functions of *ProArt24* can be used.

### The Tools

All the functions have been grouped under several main tools. These are : Paint, Draw, Sprite, Input/Output, Process, Palette, Frisket, Zoom, Undo. Pressing the menu button when a tool is selected will open up a menu giving

access to all the functions in that group. The following is brief description of some of the various tools and functions available.

### Paint

Unsurprisingly, this gives access to the various painting facilities. It is possible to have a considerable degree of control over the paint brush. Sliders and bump arrows are used to set the solid brush centre size, graded brush opacity, and colour opacity. There are different types of brush — watercolour, airbrush, chalk, charcoal, oil, texture and multiple brush effects. With this control very realistic effects of traditional artistic methods can be achieved. You could go dotty over a Monet effect. At this point the purists will throw their hands up in horror...

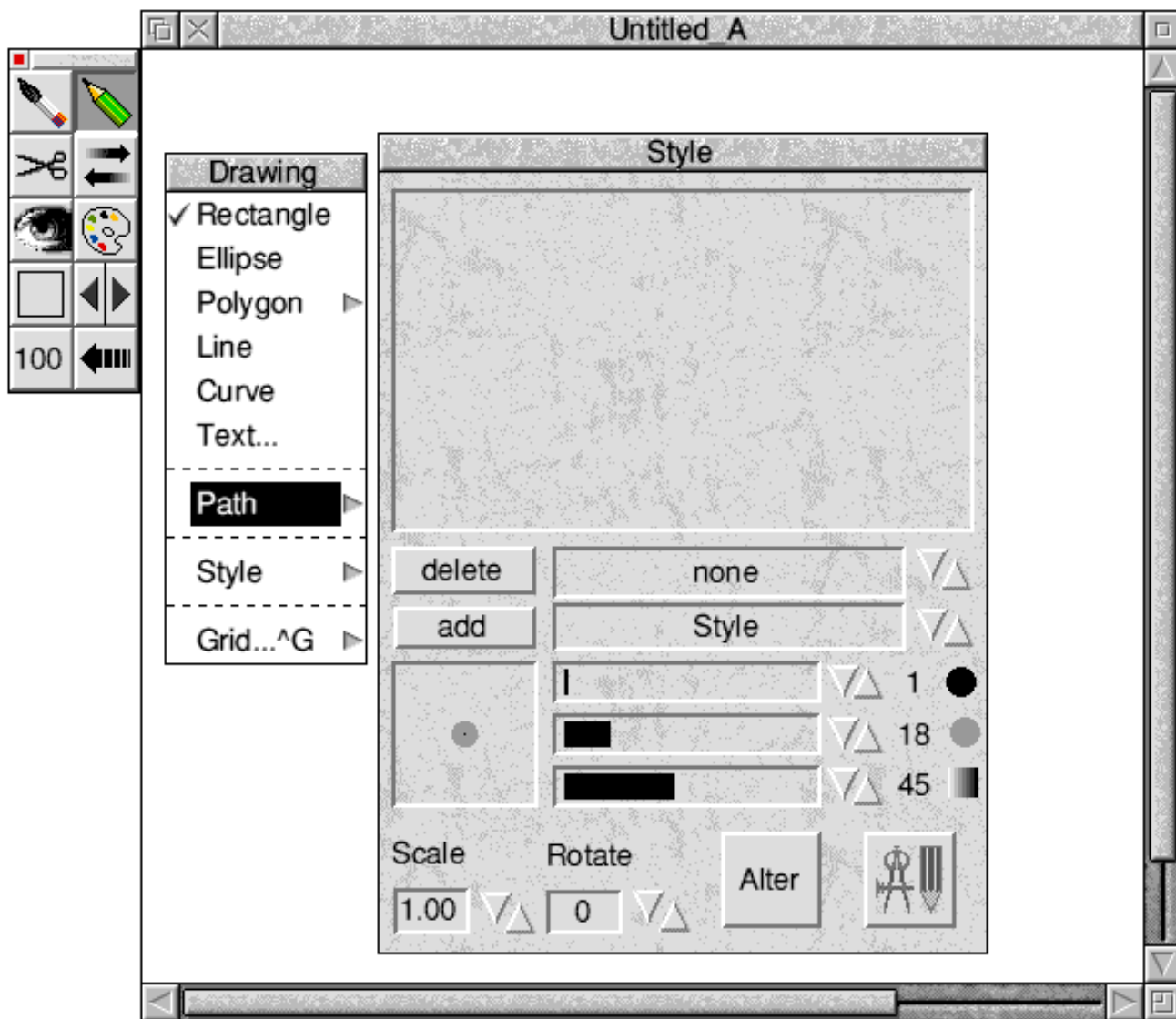
Various cloning options can also be provided. It is possible to selectively undo the painting option by pressing Ctrl and select whilst painting. Other paint options include : add water, smear, dirty brush. Various filters can be painted into the image, such as sharpen, lighten, darken, vaseline. Also various fills can be applied, such as plain fill, circular, liner, 3D and sprite fills.

### Palette

There is a dazzling choice of 16.7 million colours. These are organised into 32 palettes, each containing 256 colours. These palettes are helpfully logical groupings and have useful names, such as flesh or grey scale. An individually selected palette can be created if required.

### Draw

The draw tool enables geometric shapes to



be created. Text can be entered through the text dialogue box. Draw paths created in this option can be used to apply various effects with a considerable degree of control.

### Sprite Mode

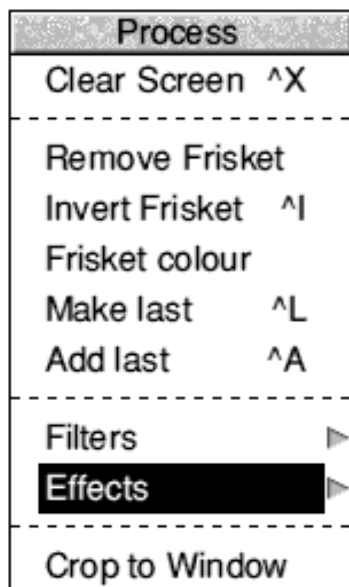
A sprite is an area of screen that can vary from one pixel to full screen size. A cut item enables you to cut a piece of the canvas for use in other options, in a rectangular or irregular shape. The magic wand facility can automatically cut out sprites by tracing around a boundary. Everything inside the boundary can be transferred into the Sprite Pool. The outcome is that it is possible to click on an object and have it transferred to the sprite pool.

### Input/Output

This menu deals with all the input and output concerned with *ProArtisan 24*. This includes disc saving and printing. It can accept files from different sources, but the two most common are Sprite and Draw files. It can import all files recognised by Change FSI. These currently include JPEG, Clear and TIFF files amongst many others.

### Frisket

This is not a popular cut of meat, but a mask placed over a painted surface to protect this area from any further applications. *ProArtisan 24* allows you to choose the colour of this masking paper from a palette of 16 million colours. This will provide a



colour contrast from the original picture. The frisket can be used with varying levels of opacity, 256 in fact. There are three different modes that affect

last actions were taken. As a general rule, the screen will be confirmed when a new tool or colour is selected.

In conclusion, *ProArtisan 24* certainly fulfils its brief as a package that takes full advantage of Risc PC technology. The wide range of tools and clear instructive manual make art accessible to those with a modicum of talent. It should also be noted that such a package will be a real boon to those who do not have the physical dexterity to hold a paintbrush or pencil.

There are two main limitations in that it is available only on the Risc PC and it currently lacks virtual memory facilities. However, my brief description of the various tool functions indicate the range and sophistication of the

package. This has real possibilities for creative artwork combined with a photo retouching facility. It would be a worthwhile investment for senior schools & colleges or anybody enthusiastic about art and graphic design.

### Reviewed by John Bancroft

*Pro Artisan 24 costs £169.95 inc VAT from Clares Micro Supplies, 98 Middlewich Road, Rudheath, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 7DA. Upgrade from ProArt 2 or 2CD costs £49.95 inc VAT. Upgrade from any other art package only £85.00 inc VAT. The latest version uses dynamic areas for improved memory management, and Clares are actively looking into implementing virtual memory facilities in the application.*

how this item works — Frisket Inactive, Active and Create Frisket.

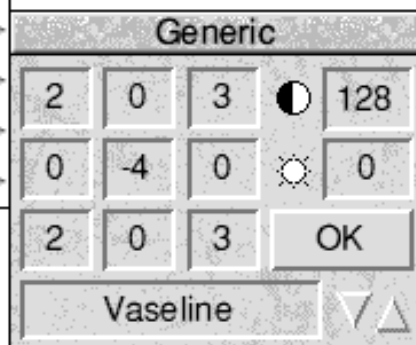
### Process

This provides the interface to the image processing section and some very powerful frisket facilities. Tints can be manipulated to lighten or darken the picture. The focus can be sharpened or blurred and the colour balance altered as required. An emboss effect is quite stunning. It uses the current palette to create an embossed texture to an image. One immediate use would be to make some interesting backdrops for your desktop.

### Zoom and Undo

These are the last two items on the tool pane and are more or less self explanatory. The zoom can range from a reduced 50% scale to a maximum magnification of 800%. All *ProArtisan 24* tools work at any zoom scale.

The undo icon enables you to undo any actions taken since the canvas was last confirmed. A back screen is held in place, which keeps the image as it was before the





*Toby Smith asks whether  
10 out of 10 Software  
would have helped in his  
Driving Test...*

# Driving Test

10 out of 10 Software have produced many educational titles, using simple games to teach languages, maths and so on. This is their first foray outside of the National Curriculum, so does it pass or else suffer the embarrassment of a re-test?

uncovering-the-sign and so on. All of the material is themed (you match road signs and meanings for example) and to get to complete the game, you must answer a multiple choice question on each turn. Having completed 5 games at the requisite level, you even get to take a “test”.



*Correctly answer the multiple choice questions to manipulate the race result...*

The software contains 6 games designed to teach you certain facets of the highway code along with other motoring questions. Basically these are rehashes of old games such as matching the pairs, patience,

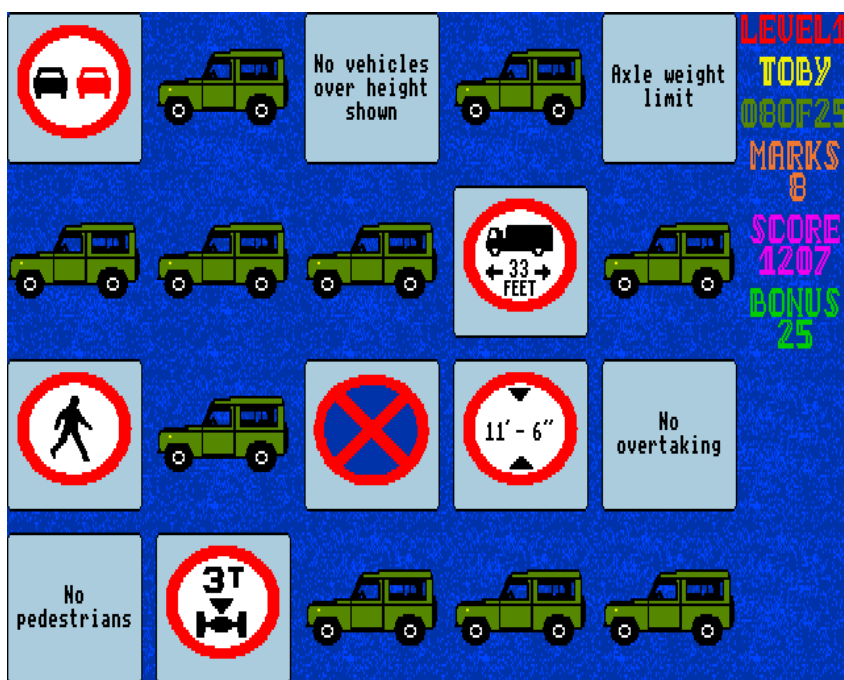
The software shows its origins in the classroom by including a comprehensive attainment scheme for multiple players, showing where the weaknesses and skills lie.

In use, I must say that I really don't like this kind of interface. Whilst it was fantastic on the BBC, I expect a lot more than mode 7 graphics for my money on the rest of the Acorn range, especially the Risc PC. Some of the graphics are downright poor: some signs bear only a passing resemblance to their actual counterparts and are incredibly blocky. I know that road signs *are* 3 colour pictorial representations, but they are not this bad. As well as the traditional road signs, other symbols are included, theoretically appearing on the dashboard. Half of these are practically invisible on a multiscan monitor and bear only a passing resemblance to the symbols in real life. Another point is that I, for one, drive a car which does *not* have a vast array of lights to tell me if my doors are open, my petrol tank empty, my engine overheating, my boot not firmly shut and so on.

low level, and you either know your continental road signs or you don't...

The lower levels are too simple to be of any use to people taking the driving test, and those above the stated "test level" are of little interest to most drivers. Some of the questions are unusually difficult due to the nature of the question. Sit a person in a car, tell him to put his foot on the brake, and he will instantly do it with the correct foot. Ask the same question with multiple choice answers and the reaction time will be a lot longer. This is a problem with many of the games — I can tell you what the sign means, but can I find what they call it in their list?

In conclusion, I do not feel that the Driving Test is a very good way of practising for an



*Match the road signs with their descriptions*

The game questions are divided into 6 levels, starting at the simple and progressing onto more complex questions including the make up of the MOT test, basic car maintenance and continental road signs to mention a few. Unfortunately, the questions are still pretty

actual driving test as you are far better off out driving a real car getting the experience in. Particularly as the question and answer highway code part is a very small part of the overall test. The material contained within this software is possibly useful, and at least accurate, but not all of it is needed for the test and the presentation method is more suitable for primary school children than those of an age to actually be behind the wheel of a car — whilst little games are a good idea for the under-sevens, most 17 year old potential drivers can handle a multiple choice test without silly frills.

**Toby Smith**

*10 out of 10 Driving Test costs £25.95 and is available from 10 out of 10 Educational Systems, 1 Percy Street, Sheffield S3 8AU*

# Club Corner

## *Recent Club Events & some future plans*

It's been good to meet so many Club members at recent events, what with the Acorn World Show last year, two Club Open Days, the Acorn Computing Open Day in Manchester and various other events, the Club has provided a focus of activity and attention on many occasions.

Andi Flower reported in The Newsletter that the Club had a very successful time at the Acorn World Show which was certainly true. Special thanks to everyone who helped on our stand including Phil Thomas, Toby Smith, Ian Giblin and Dave Ruck.

Many people have been using the Club stands at events as places to meet other members and discuss the Risc PC, the latest software and any other topic relating to Acorn machines. There are usually some interesting conversations going on so don't hesitate to come along and join in!

A number of members have recently been making use of the Club contact list containing the names, addresses and interests of other members, however the list has now become rather large and unwieldy. Ralph Sillett, our Membership Secretary, is in the process of splitting it into regional lists which will be available on request.

We reported in Eureka 13 that the annual membership fee would need to rise at the beginning of November 1994 due to rising costs and the fact that the fee had remained at ten pounds for an unusually long time. The fee is now twelve pounds, we hope that you still feel this provides good value for money.

If, for any reason, you don't, why not make use of the Club Discounts Scheme to recoup the cost of your membership when you next buy some software or hardware.

Thank you to everyone who has bought one or more of the software products which the Club has been selling recently. These have all been written by Club members and proceeds from their sale goes towards general Club funds so that we can improve the services available to all members. They have also had a significant effect in raising the profile of the Club among people who otherwise might not have heard about us.

### **Committee Members**

Chairman — Steve Arnold  
Vice-Chairman — Bruce Dickson  
Secretary — Geoff Stilwell  
Treasurer — John Bancroft  
Magazine Editor — Simon Burrows  
PD Librarian — Nick Evans  
Membership Secretary —  
Ralph Sillett  
Product Development Officer —  
Mark Smith  
Public Relations Officer —  
Andi Flower

The Club was founded by  
Rene & Maria Barreto

Don't forget that, as a member, you are entitled to a 10% discount on Club software packages such as Game On!, SmartCD+ and TypeTutor. Please remember to return your registration cards for any products which you buy since we can only provide upgrades and support to registered users due to the significant problem of software piracy.

Our message about the Freepost address seems to have got through, please remember that items sent to the Freepost address bearing a stamp do not save us money or get to us any faster. If you wish to use a stamp or live outside the UK, from where Freepost is not available, please use the following address:

The ARM Club  
40 Barlow Road  
West Hampstead  
London  
NW6 2BJ

We have recently had some new membership cards printed, those of you who joined recently and were missing a card should receive one through the post.

Last year a few copies of Eureka apparently went astray in the post, if you missed a copy yourself then please write in and let us know. Eureka is published quarterly in January, April, July and October, primarily to coincide with the major Acorn-related shows.

The Club has recently adopted *DataPower* from Iota Software as its preferred database management system for keeping Club records although *Squirrel 2* from Digital Services is used for certain purposes. Thanks to Adrian Critchlow of Iota for his generous help.

Several potential venues have been put forward for future Club training courses and open days, many thanks to those of you who approached us. We are very keen to have more events spread around the UK — and even overseas if possible. The Club has a significant (and growing) number of members living outside the UK in countries including Ireland, France, Germany, Belgium, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Iceland, Finland, Italy, Greece, South Africa, Arabian Gulf, Canada, USA, Australia and New Zealand.

If you have a need to telephone the Club or Committee members, the best time to phone is during the evening or at weekends otherwise you are likely to be put through to an answering machine. Please be considerate when choosing a time to phone, for example calls on Christmas Day did not go down too well, particularly with our families!

Fax and Email are good alternatives to telephone if you need to contact us in a hurry, Email has proved very popular since we introduced a service to contact the Club. We also have some pages on Arcade Bulletin Board which will be updated shortly.

Eureka magazine can be contacted using the following Internet Email address:

**editorial @nucleus.demon.co.uk**

The Club's software development team:

**softdev@nucleus.demon.co.uk**

Technical questions can be sent to:

**support@nucleus.demon.co.uk**

General enquiries about the Club:

**clubinfo@nucleus.demon.co.uk**



## South Wales Open Day

*Freda Gibbs reports on a wet & windy day in Cardiff...*

The South Wales Open Day held in Cardiff on 3rd December proved to be an “open day” for the skies as well, and several weeks worth of rain seemed to fall during the first few hours of the morning.

However the members and exhibitors arrived in good time to set up for the day, black plastic bin bags being much in evidence for the short ferry between car park and hall.

The rain gave way to sun at regular intervals and visitors came and went in satisfying numbers. The choice of the Leisure Centre as a venue proved to be good as there were many children visiting the pool and other attractions who afterwards spotted the computers and insisted on showing their parents “what we use at school”.

As the day got under way, I counted 37 full size Acorns, of which no fewer than 13 were Risc PCs! An amazing total. Also there was at least one A4.

During the day I managed to visit most of the stands and learned much. The ARM Club stand was manned by Simon Burrows, Mark Smith and

Andi Flower. It was interesting to put faces to the names I had only met in Eureka. I had a long chat to Simon who “knows a man who can”. Hopefully this will result in my being able to add my redundant 20MB ST506 HD to the 40MB one on my venerable A440 (doesn’t 20MB sound frugal these days?). The Club stand seemed to be doing a good trade in help, advice, new memberships and club software, and, of course, lots of PR.

Gordon Taylor of Computer Concepts had an impressive array of equipment which he used in his demos of Eagle, Publisher, Style and Artworks. As usual he gave interesting and in-depth demonstrations, answering questions and generally ensuring that users, and potential users, of CC products had all



*Technical & buying advice from Computer Concepts*



the information they needed. There were several computers available for visitors to use, should they want to “have a go”.

Glyn Howells of Celtic Clip Art had his lovely designs displayed. It is always good to meet a creator/supplier, especially as I had found Glyn prompt and helpful. I was pleased to say “hello”.

The school area, which covered almost the whole of one side of the room, was varied and interesting. A collection of *Pick & Mix* educational software was being given test runs by a succession of young people. Various games were also getting the treatment, receiving almost instant approval or dismissal by the “testers”.

Ysgol Gyfun Cymmer, a school in the Rhondda had a large table area. The thing that most appealed to me was an embroidery machine which, when linked to an Acorn, would stitch out any design that could displayed on the screen as a Draw file. They seemed to be stitching all day, in multi-coloured silks, and producing excellent logos and names on real garments, as well as on demo samples.

Harry White, Exhibits Director of Techniquet, had lots of things for the younger visitors to try. *Sketching Symmetry* was popular, and some amazing patterns were produced. The “hands on” scientific devices were well tested and I now can’t wait to visit this very popular hands on scientific centre in Cardiff.

Dave Rees and Peter Hughes of the CD Circle were present at the Open Day, Dave Rees educated me about the use of CDs. Not yet having a CD player I have generally by-

passed CD-oriented stands at exhibitions, however his enthusiasm inspired me to ask questions and I learned that by using *Multimedia Viewer* he can read clip art from PC CDs and transfer them to Paint format on the Arc. CD-ROM drives and CD-ROMs are coming down in price rapidly. Maybe I will get one next Christmas!

Tim Beeby of Acorn and Paul Middleton of Uniqueway were answering endless questions about the Risc PC and the 486 PC card, which it is hoped will start to be generally available shortly [*ahem... Ed*].

Polaroid were demonstrating a box *Digital Palette* which enabled the production of slides from sprites on an Acorn via a Polaroid camera. The Datafile had catalogues of their Public Domain products & fonts and were showing their new catalogue disc which incorporates a sophisticated method of choosing and ordering items. It will even produce a bill for you!

The EESOX graphics tablet was interesting to try for the first time, I could see that it would be a useful tool with an art package. Neil and Mark from EESOX were also doing a roaring trade in SCSI CD-ROM drives and had some other interesting products.

All in all very productive, interesting and sociable day. I can wholeheartedly recommend any member or interested party to attend any or all of these Open Days. You will learn more than you thought you didn’t know, if that makes sense.

**Freda Gibbs**



# ARM'94

Acorn

*The Midlands Open Day took place in November.*

*A report by Ralph Sillett*

The day started very early as I had to pick up Phil Thomas to help me put up the directional arrows which would, hopefully, attract more than just Club members to the first ARM Club Open Day to be held in the Midlands. The venue was St Mary's Activity Centre, Sedgley, just off the Birmingham New Road south of Wolverhampton.

The first of the exhibitors arrived at 8.30am but had to wait for us to finish putting up the signs. By 9.15am most of the exhibitors had arrived including Club members who were going to show us how they used their Acorn RISC machines.

The setting up was a bit frantic but due to the foresight of Phil and myself, the stock of electrical leads and plugs more than sufficed.



The tables were plentiful and soon the hall was taking shape. The Club stand, situated by the main entrance, was the largest due to the size of the PD Library and the other software products we sold. Mark and Andi had brought along their Risc PCs to demonstrate products and to offer technical assistance for both Hard & Software. At the other side of the entrance Geoff Stilwell (Club Secretary) was looking after the admissions and the Bring & Buy Sale stand. The Bring & Buy attracted many of the early visitors who snapped up many of the bargains.

There were a good range of interests represented. Gordon Taylor from Computer Concepts was kept very busy answering many questions about CC's products and demonstrating the colour scanner bundled with Spacotech's *PhotoDesk*. Maudens, the local Acorn dealer was doing good business and in fact sold 3 machines at the Open Day. The technicians from Maudens, Len & Stuart Underhill were answering technical queries and the benefits of the Acorn machines over the PCs (they had a PC on show, but it didn't create much interest).



James Parry of Smart DTP and FEDnet (a Club member) was showing off his latest blockbuster *Starfighter 3000* and the *Impression Resource* packs. While Simon Burrows was demonstrating his prowess with *Impression Publisher* and showing how he produces this magazine, Roger & Andrew Claringbull (Club members) were demonstrating badge making, digitising using the EagleM2 card to capture visitors images (including my daughter) and printing out in full colour using *Artworks*.

Oregon Software were demonstrating and selling their full range of products including a new game called *Arcturus*. Rob Cowl of Design IT was showing his TVTuner/Teletext card which is now being jointly marketed with Computer Concepts/Wild Vision. John Bancroft (Club Treasurer) was showing off his graphics handling skills using *Artworks*, *PhotoDesk* and other commercial & PD products.

Last of all Phil Thomas & myself were using our machines (Risc PC and A5000) to show off *Vision24* and the capabilities of *DataPower*. My daughter Kelly and

Andrew Morrish, were doing a great job making the teas and coffees for everyone and selling my wife's famous chocolate cake, with all proceeds donated to the Club.

We had a good number of visitors join the Club at the Open Day. Visitors came from as far afield as Somerset, Norfolk and Cumbria (Lake District). I hope they thought that the trip was well worth it. We would like more support like this to make our Club a success. The Club needs your support at these events, please help

in any way you can.

The day was a great success thanks to all who helped to make it so. A special thanks must go to Phil Thomas who gave so much to the day and to Maudens for their contribution to the advertising of the event. Copies of Acorn User and Acorn Computing magazines donated by IDG Media contributed to the overall takings for the day of over £400.00.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Committee, all exhibitors, David Morfitt of Coventry and Toby Smith for their help on the day.

We hope to hold ARM 95 in the Leicester area late in the year but would welcome offers of help event to make the drinks. If you use your computer for something unusual, like washing the car or even rocking the baby to sleep, then we would like to hear from you. The Club is only as good as the support that you, the members give.

**Ralph Sillett**  
**Membership Secretary**

# **ARNOLD'S OBSERVATIONS**

## *Steve Arnold warns against making assumptions*

Welcome once again to a new year — 1995 — half a decade to the new millennium.

It seems just like yesterday that I was wishing everyone the season's greeting. It was a very interesting 1994, many successes, few failures and many changes, some good, some bad, that's life I suppose. I have watched my children grow, learning new tricks to either wrap me around their tiny little fingers or else send me nova with new antics bent on destruction of one of my personal treasures. Still, kids will be kids! Arrgh.

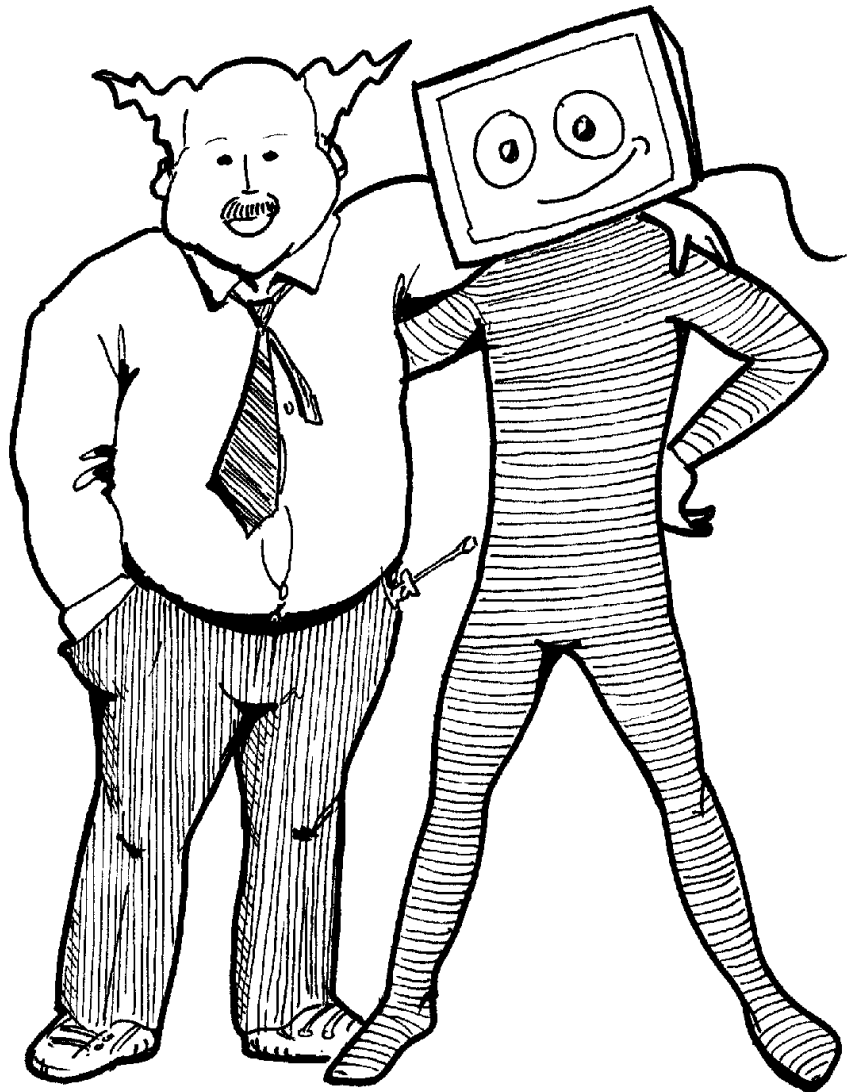
I have been constantly supported by my wife, who despite my continued involvement in my computing hobby has remained patient and has rarely subjected me to barrage of verbal abuse. She still thinks I'm mad though. Small mercies, I suppose.

For me, I start the new year with new opportunities, I start a new job with a fresh set of challenges and tasks to complete. Don't you just love the "Work Ethic"?! I'm sure I will pass on any worthwhile anecdotes or snippets of information during the next few months. Anyway with the change of job, the leaving parties and the christmas festivities, I was somewhat lacking in that most useful of resources — TIME. So once again

I burned the midnight oil to get this article out. I start this year the same as last year — in a mad rush! This article is intended to show everyone what assumptions we all make without really understanding reality.

### **Assumptions**

Assumptions are a killer. It's funny but everybody makes them sooner or later. It doesn't matter who you are, you will end up making an assumption about someone or something.



*Happy New Year!*

*Roger*



What is an assumption? A dictionary definition is as follows;

**assumption** belief, conjecture, inference, premise, premiss, presumption, surmise

**assume** *v.* take to be true without proof; pretend, e.g. *I assumed indifference.* take upon oneself, e.g. *he assumed command.*

—**assumption** *n.* assuming; thing assumed.

—**assumptive** *adj.*

Why am I harping on about assumptions? Well as usual, I have a few personal experiences to relay to you, hopefully to demonstrate how easy it is to get caught out by making assumptions.

For my sins I assist in the Club's technical help facility. Recently I had a phone call for help from a member regarding loss of configuration after a power-on delete. The main problem lay within the re-initialisation of a non-Acorn SCSI card. I considered this to be a relatively easy problem to solve, but this was my first wrong assumption... I started to mentally analyse the problem using my trusted problem solving technique, I.D.E.A.S. (this is my 5 letter acronym for general problem solving). This works most / some of the time. Here what I.D.E.A.S. stands for:

1. **Identify Problem.**
2. **Determine root cause of problem.**
3. **Evaluate possible solutions.**
4. **Action on best solution.**
5. **Solve problem or "Start again at 1"!**

Well, getting back to the problem, after many repeated phone calls from the poor Club member who each time informed me that my previous solution had failed, I was beginning to get concerned. You see, I had identified

the problem — loss of the SCSI configuration — correctly. However I had not determined the real root cause of the problem. I had assumed the user did not have the knowledge to re-configure the SCSI card correctly. All my solutions were based on this premise and therefore not correct. So I'd gone through all my various solutions without getting any closer to solving the problem.

I had assumed (wrongly) that the card would use the standard way of initialising itself. I was about to give up. This was one problem that wasn't going to get solved without some outside influence or help. Then divine providence came during a closing conversation with the frustrated ARM Club member. I was advising him to call the SCSI card manufacturers to get the required information on re-configuring the card. The telephone number would be in one of the various Acorn magazines or even in his user manual, if he was in possession of one. Manual... Manual.. Why, I hadn't thought of that... too \$%^&%^ obvious! Of course, the information about how to re-initialise the SCSI card would be in the user manual. A few minutes later, one satisfied customer.

This is when I realised that the root cause of the problem should have been "WHY did the user not have the information to reconfigure the SCSI card?". From this basis I would have a whole new set of questions to ask and new set of options for solutions. However the cardinal sin I committed was forgetting to ask the obvious question. Still, I've learnt another lesson from this experience. Remember that those assumptions bite!

Once again it's time to close, it just leaves me to wish everyone a very happy new year.



Be nice to everyone and don't forget yourself.

Remember Weller's Law: "Nothing is impossible for the man who doesn't have to do it himself".

**Steve Arnold**

*Editor's note: I would like to take this opportunity to thank Steve for his fascinating series of articles and also Roger for providing the excellent illustrations. I know that it has been difficult for Steve to fit the writing of these articles into his busy schedule but it is much appreciated. Happy New Year Steve!*

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## **Club Training Courses 1995**

The following training courses are planned for the coming months. They take place at Mill Hill School in North London which is easily accessible by road and public transport. For more information or to book a place, please telephone the Club Secretary, Geoff Stilwell, on 0171 624 9918 evenings.

### **Saturday 18th February — Pocket Book**

A new course looking at the Acorn Pocket Book computer, its use and applications. Learn how to get more out of your Pocket Book and see how it can be connected to desktop Acorn computers. A great opportunity to learn from the experiences of other Pocket Book users.

### **Saturday 25th March — DTP Plus**

Individual and group guidance on desktop publishing using tools such as Impression Publisher (Plus) and ArtWorks. Improve your DTP skills or simply learn how to use the available software.

Courses last from 10am to 4pm and cost £20 per day including lunch, refreshments and course materials (£25 non-members). Places are limited so please book early. If you book but cannot attend, please let us know at once.

If you have any suggestions for course topics which we have not covered before, please write to the FREEPOST address.

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## **Annual General Meeting**

The ARM Club Annual General Meeting will be held on the day of our Spring Open Day at Merton Court School, Sidcup, Kent, on Sunday 19th March.

There are a few matters that need to be brought before the membership relating to proposed changes to the Club Constitution. Details will be sent out with the Spring Newsletter along with the Agenda for the meeting, in accordance with the Constitution. If you have any items of business you would

like discussed at the meeting, please inform the Club Secretary in writing as soon as possible. All Committee positions will be up for election, if you are interested in standing then please get in touch so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

Finally, please make a note of the Open Day in your diary. Even if you do not wish to attend the AGM you will be most welcome at the Open Day, there will be lots to see and do with several companies in attendance.

*Computer Concepts' new equation editing package reviewed by Tom Hughes...*

# Formulix

Until now, there have been two dedicated equation editing packages for the Archimedes - Computer Concepts' previous offering, Equasor, which has been looking dated for a little while now; and BestForm which was generally better than Equasor but always seemed very slow to respond to the user.

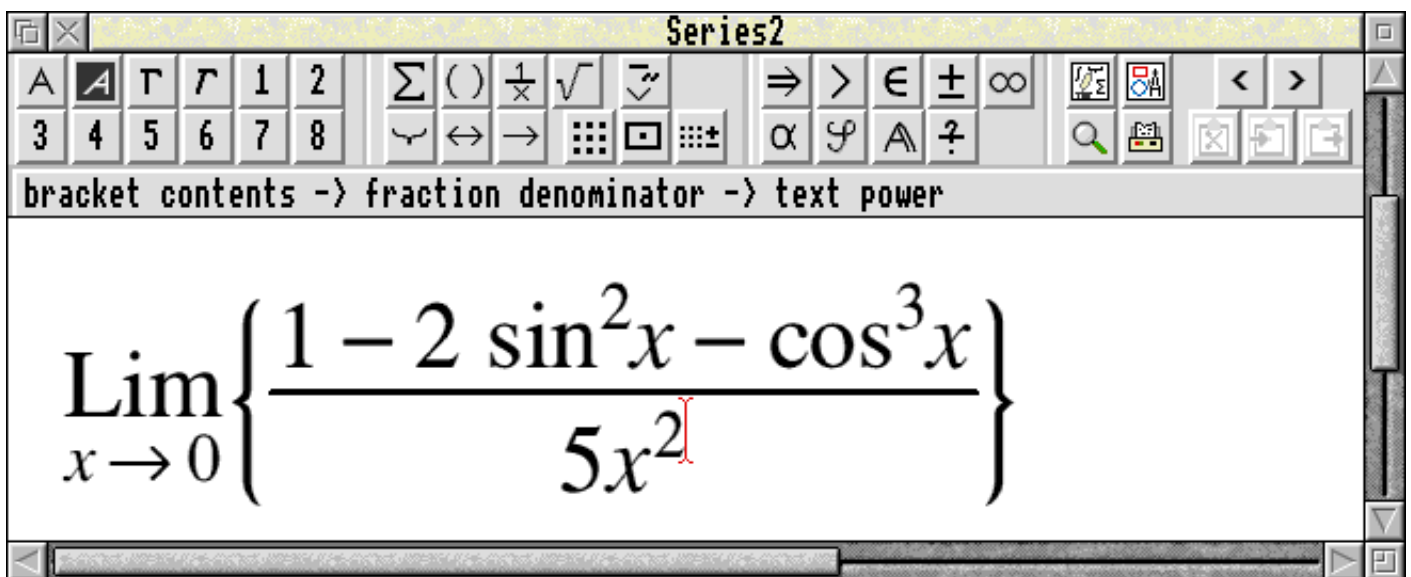
Having started giving Equasor away with Impression, Computer Concepts have now launched Formulix as a replacement. This is a completely new program written (confusingly) by the author of BestForm, although it can import old Equasor files for people who are upgrading.

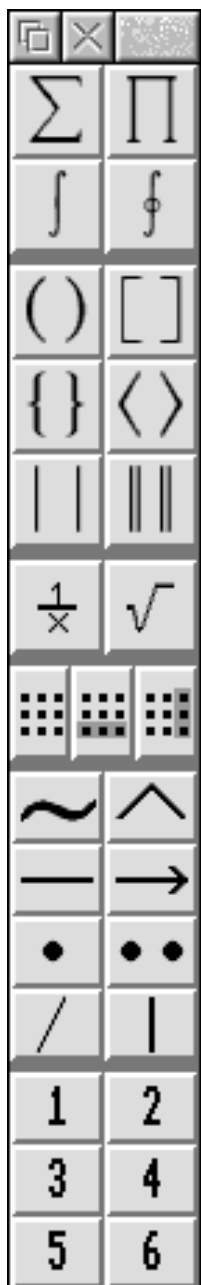
Formulix arrived in a small cardboard box, which opened to reveal a 70 page A5 size spiral bound manual, a handful of flyers, and a single disc with the software on. The disc contained the program itself, a selection of specialist fonts (fifteen fonts in five families)

and a directory of example files. The manual included clear installation instructions for both Risc PC's and older machines, and I had the software installed in just a few minutes.

Adopting my usual technique of ignoring the manual and getting on with it, I clicked on the icon to open a blank document and started typing. The response was fast and smooth, which was a very encouraging sign! I then began using the two tool bars that had appeared (one across the top of the window, and one on a floating palette) to add various specialist symbols and such like to my by now rather bizarre looking equation.

The toolbar at the top of each document window is used to open various dialogue





boxes which give access to all the various symbols and structures that can be added to an equation. By contrast, the floating palette which appears at the side of the screen has icons which give quick access to the most commonly used of these items.

As an example of this, there is a dialogue box which allows you to select almost any kind of bracket you could ever want, and to mix and match different left and right brackets to form a pair. For most of the time however, it is sufficient to use the icons on the floating palette which can give you a pair of round brackets or a pair of square brackets very quickly and easily.

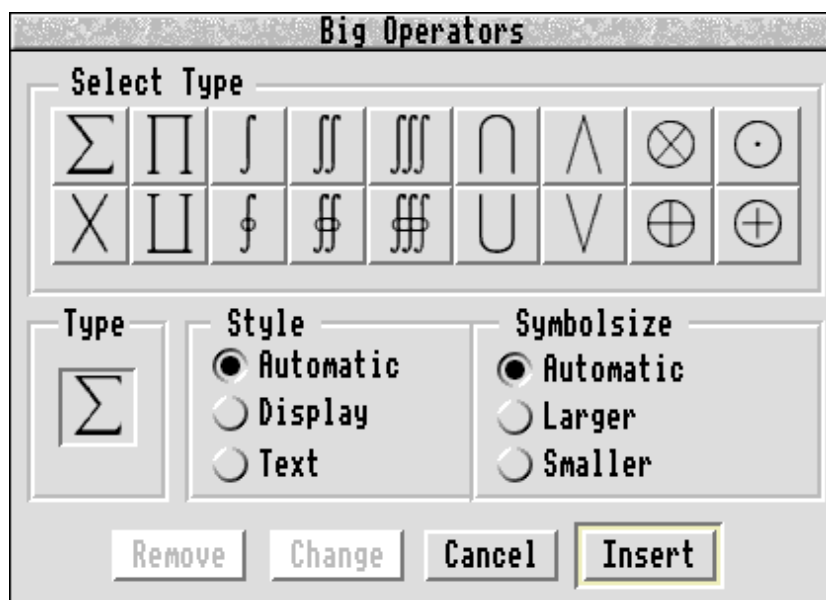
An important feature of Formulix, and one of the biggest missing features in Equasor

is support for vectors and matrices. These can be of any size, and be easily nested for total flexibility. The mechanism can also be used to create multiple equations or equations with several cases distinguished by conditions. One thing which I did find annoying about matrices was the difficulty of identifying cells visually when they contain no data. I suspect that it would be useful to have the grid structure of each matrix displayed using grey lines to assist in creating matrices, especially when dealing

with complex structures of nested matrices.

One of the biggest problems with equation editing programs in general is the difficulty involved in devising a user interface that allows access to the vast range of structures and special symbols needed to cater for the broad range of equations the program will be used for. Clearly, it is only possible for a small selection of these to be available quickly and easily via single key presses or dedicated icons; and the rest must be buried more deeply in menus or dialogue boxes.

This tends to lead to one particular type of equation being easy to enter quickly, usually simple algebraic ones, at the expense of other types such as logic equations. I was very impressed therefore, to discover that Formulix incorporates a very simple and neat solution to this problem, in the form of user definable macros and key bindings.



The first of these, user definable macros, allows the creation of standard parts of formulae which can be inserted into a larger equation using a single keypress, or by

clicking on an icon on the floating palette (up to 24 macros are accessible from this palette).

The user definable key bindings extend this principle even further, by allowing the user to bind a keypress to run a particular macro or to perform almost any other operation such as inserting a particular special character or opening a given dialogue box.

As with most modern applications, Formulix supports both the cut-and-paste and drag-and-drop paradigms although it doesn't support the Acorn message protocols required to make these work between applications, so both of these are only available within and between Formulix documents. None the less, both of these help to make for swift and easy editing of formulae.

Equally to be expected is the seamless integration with the OLE mechanism in Impression Style and Publisher. Somewhat surprisingly, given that this is a new application, the OLE message protocol is not implemented directly, but relies on the

OLEsupport module in much the same way as Draw or Equasor do.

Another very useful feature of Formulix is the full multi-level undo and redo which allows you to easily move back through your edits when you realise that you preferred the formula before you tried your master edit... Once the memory based undo buffer (which is of user configurable size) is full, the oldest undo information will be stored on disc and then reloaded when needed. This feature can itself be turned off if necessary.

All in all, this is an excellent package that makes the incorporation of equations into printed documents. I would certainly have been grateful of this program when trying to write up coursework at university, and would recommend this program to anyone who needs to typeset formulae and equations for any reason.

**Tom Hughes**

*Formulix costs £69.00 excluding VAT from Computer Concepts. Upgrades from Equasor are available for £49.00 ex VAT.*

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## **ARMlock from Digital Services**

The review of Digital Service's ARMlock package by Toby Smith in Eureka 13 contained an unfortunate and regrettable error which affected the overall conclusions of the review.

The review stated that the default access string for files is WR/ resulting in the files being fully locked under ARMlock. This overlooked the fact that when installed, ARMlock automatically alters this default to WR/WR giving public access to the files.

This inaccurate statement affected the overall conclusions of the review and made them unduly negative. We apologise to readers and to Digital Services Limited for this mistake, and wish to assure all readers that the accuracy of reviews is our primary concern at all times.

ARMlock costs £35 for a single user licence or £139 ex VAT for a 10 user licence from Digital Services Ltd, 9 Wayte Street, Cosham, Portsmouth, PO6 3BS.

# Water, Water Everywhere...

*Geoff Stilwell explores a water main with the help of James Pond*

Have you ever wondered where water comes from? I mean when you turn on the tap, do you ever think about the journey that water has undergone to fill your kettle? Neither do I! Until now that is.

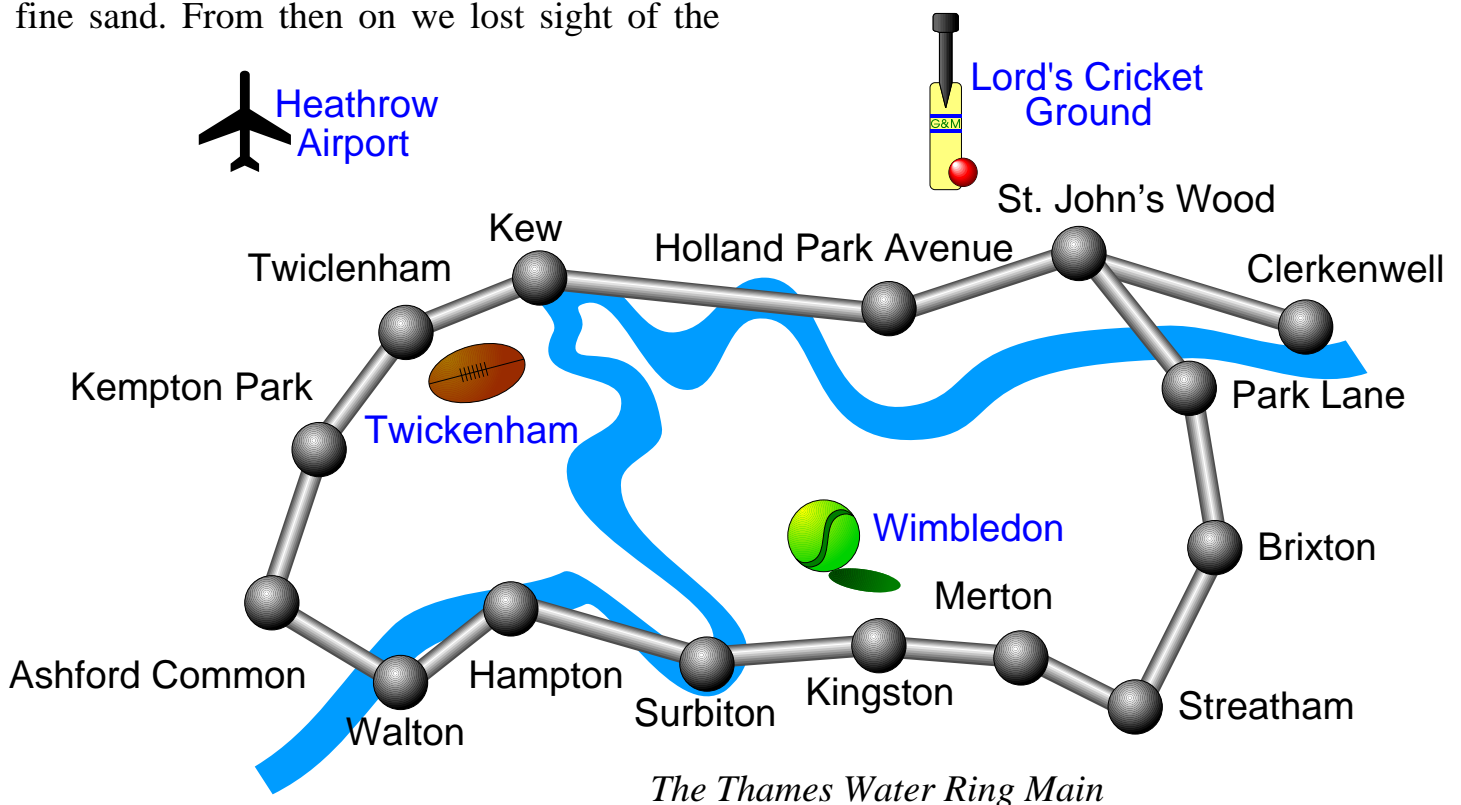
Just recently I was invited down to Hampton on the River Thames to visit the Control Centre for the Thames Water Ring Main, you might remember the Queen formally opening the ring main in November. The occasion was to preview an educational computer game. What has Thames Water to do with computer games? you might ask. Quite a lot actually.

I arrived in the social club building just as a party of people were being taken round the works so I tagged along. We were shown the holding reservoir from where the water is taken to the filter beds. First the water is filtered through coarse sand and then through fine sand. From then on we lost sight of the

water as it went into the works for treatment and distribution.

Then we were taken into the Control Centre. This is where London's water supply is controlled, all by computers. We were shown how the engineers, from their computer terminals, can predict, plan and distribute London's water effectively. Not being a techie a lot of it went over my head but I was reliably informed it would all make sense when we returned to the social club.

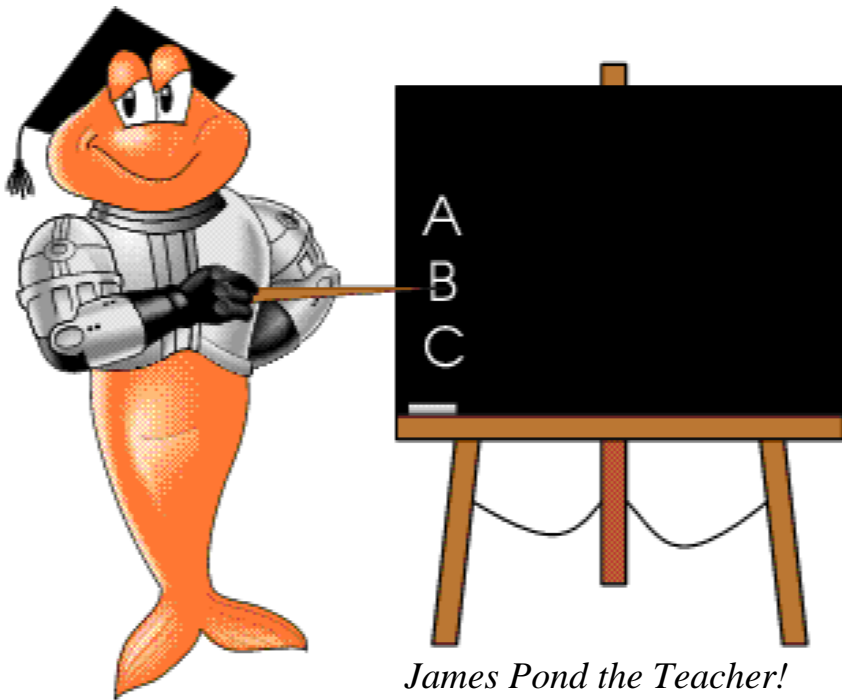
Back in the social club building there were two Risc PC computers set up. I sat down with Simon Lovesey at one of them and my education about water began. Skillshare (which is an offshoot of Simon's company, Gamesware) is developing a suite of programs, in association with Thames



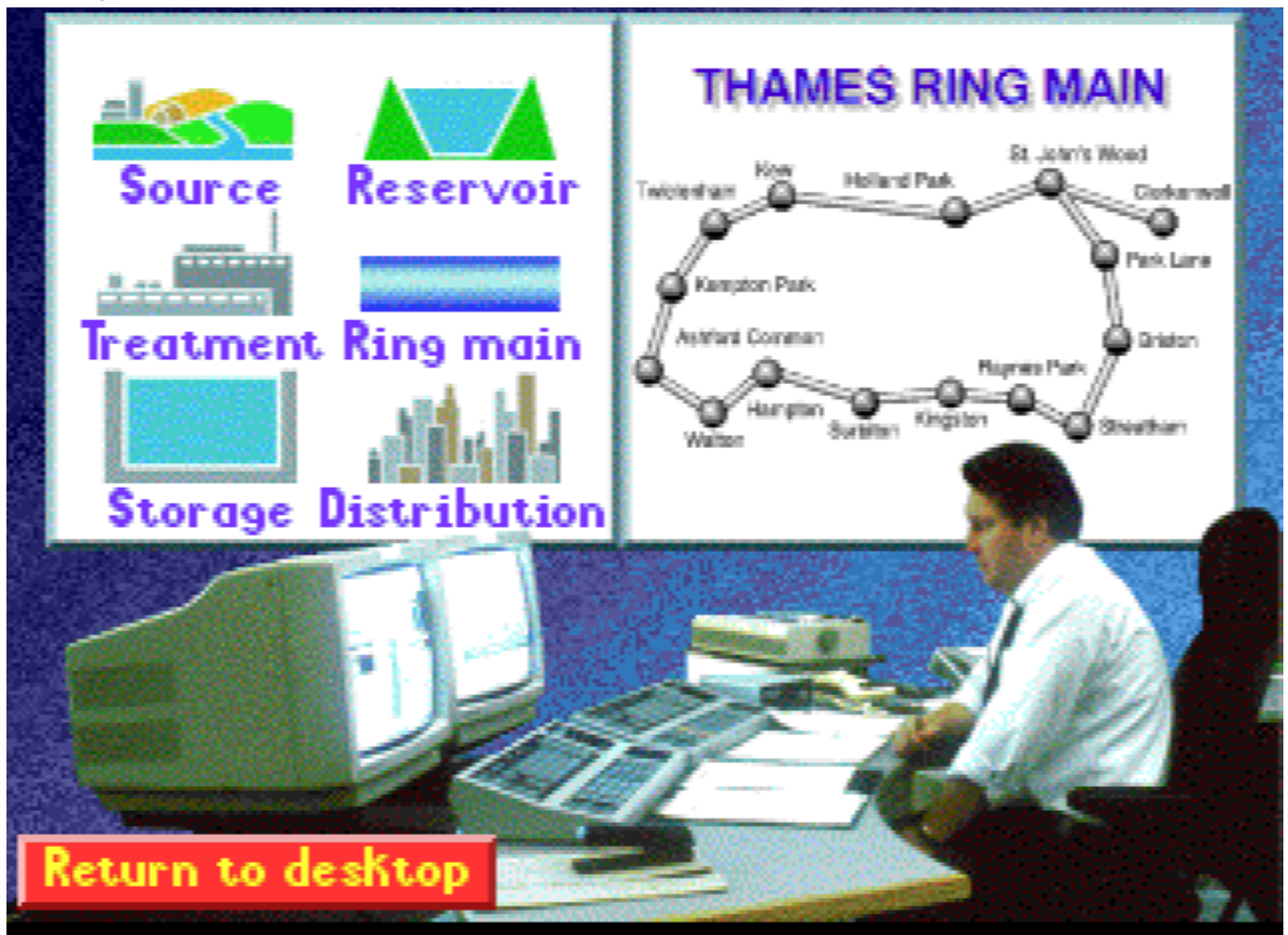


Water, to promote the knowledge of water, where it comes from, where it goes and how. The suite comprises two programs; one aimed at primary aged children and the other at secondary.

The first of the two programs, aimed at the younger children, contains a well known computer game character. Most children already know and love James Pond (also known as RoboCod). The programmers have used James Pond in a game which takes a raindrop from the clouds, through all the processes necessary to purify the water, through London's new ring main, through local storage reservoirs and pipes and out of a domestic tap. Children have to solve simple problems along the way, such as getting the correct amount of chlorine in the water, and they will be asked questions by James Pond with a teacher's hat on at the end of each section.

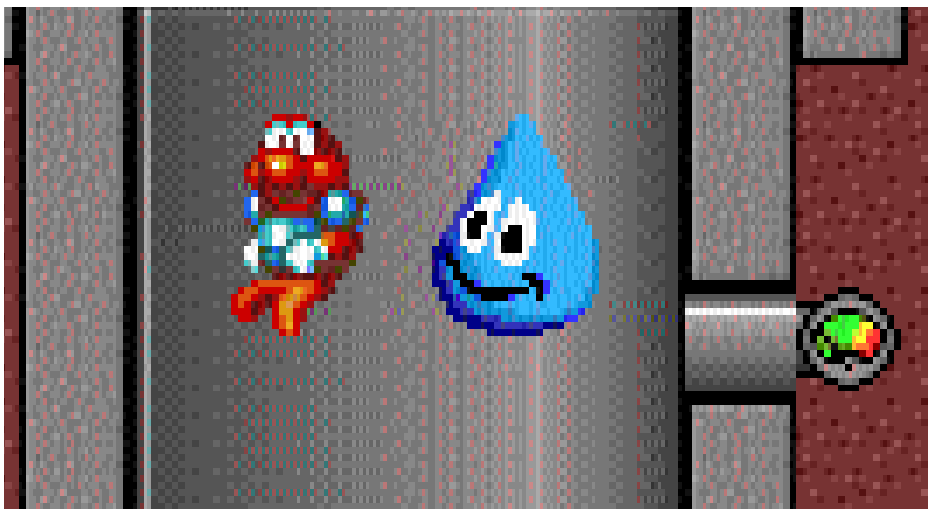


*James Pond the Teacher!*



The game is wonderfully graphical with geographically correct landmarks, like the Houses of Parliament and London Zoo, presented above ground while James Pond

must make the same decisions the real controllers make taking into consideration the different levels of water quality in different reservoirs and changing electricity costs throughout the day.



*James Pond falls down a water pipe but still looks happy!*

escorts his drop of water through the ring main tunnel beneath. The arcade style game, with the working title of “James Pond — Underwater Agent” is certainly going to appeal to children. To actually finish the game children will have had to acquire an awful lot of knowledge about water, which is what is intended.

The second application, with the working title of “Running Water”, is more of a simulation. It is very much a simplified version of the real thing that I’d just been to see in the control centre. There was even a digitised picture of one of the engineers I’d just met on the title page (see last page).

The user first selects one of eleven zones on the ring main to manage. They will then use a built-in database of real data to make decisions about, water demands and operational costs. This data may also be exported for further analysis in a spreadsheet. They will receive weather forecast faxes and news flashes about maintenance or flooding which will affect the decisions made. The user

After the decisions have been made the simulation is run. This shows different pumps being switched on and off and gives an overview of the ring main showing how the user’s predictions have compared with what would have happened. The user is scored on a number of factors: the

amount and quality of the water supplied, the costs and the impact on the ring main as a whole.

Although the two programs are aimed at different age ranges there is always a great deal of overlap. Able children in primary schools will certainly find the Running Water an interesting challenge and children of all ages find it hard to resist the appeal of



*A workman in action on screen*

an arcade style game, particularly one with the lovable James Pond. Consequently both programs will be packaged together. Teachers' Packs will be included with the package and will suggest activities for the classroom.



*SkillsWare is run by Simon Lovesey alongside the well-known GamesWare*

I was very impressed with the concept and the implementation of the whole package. The greatest recommendation came when the engineers came in from the control centre to have a look at the programs. One of them said: "I'll have to get a copy of this to play with. I might find out how I do my job." "It's just like the real thing scaled down," said the

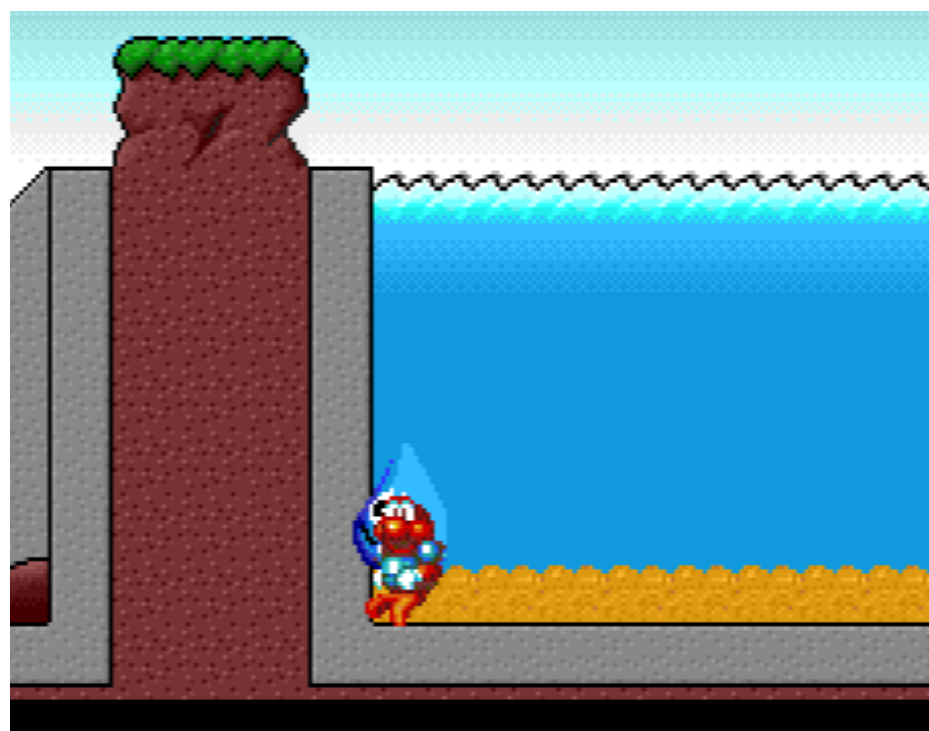
other. I left them discussing whether the program could be used as a training introduction to new staff members at Thames Water or as an introduction to visitors to give them an insight into what goes on at the control centre.



*Exploring the sights of London*

I did not see the finished product; indeed the purpose of the day was for Skillsware to receive feedback from the Thames Water Schools Liaison Team and others and to discuss ways of implementing improvements to the programs. I am certainly looking forward to the release of the package around March/April '95. Further details can be obtained from Simon Lovesey, Skillsware, Worthy House, High Street, Hamble, Hants. SO3 4HA Tel: (01703) 457333 Fax: (01703) 456523.

**Geoff Stilwell**





# 486PC Card Preview

*Simon Burrows looks at Acorn's long-awaited upgrade card*

When I first heard that Acorn would be selling a "PC-compatible" computer (a long time ago) I was astonished. Was Acorn planning to throw in the towel and give up with its unique range of machines?

As time went on, more and more information reached my ears about the computer which was to become the Risc PC and I discovered that Acorn intended to produce a dual-purpose computer with both an ARM and a 486-series processor running alongside one another. Not quite so mad!

Existing Acorn users seem to fall into two camps, those who think the card will be wonderful for Acorn's future prospects and those who think it heralds the death of Acorn's own proprietary computers and operating systems. Acorn's answer is that the 486PC Card will open a large number of doors to potential buyers of its machines — for example many companies will only buy computers that can run DOS and Windows. If Acorn can sell to these customers then they may come to see the advantages of Acorn machines over traditional PCs.

Acorn was busy demonstrating prototypes of the new card at the recent BETT Education Show, the processor used being a

Texas Instruments 486 SXL chip clocked at 33MHz. I have used one of these prototypes to run Windows 3.11 and some standard applications, it appeared to work very well. According to Acorn there are a few minor problems which are being fixed, and extensive soak-testing has been taking place. 500 evaluation cards will become available in Quarter 1 1995 for the press, dealers and key customers, with 10,000 cards expected by the end of Quarter 1.

The 486PC Card will be available to all existing Risc PC owners for a limited period at the special price of £99 excluding VAT and can be fitted by the user. A full review is expected to appear in Eureka 15.

**Simon Burrows**



*A prototype of the Acorn 486PC Card...*

# Acorn *Replay*

## Starter Kit

*Reviewed by Simon Burrows*

Acorn Replay was first demonstrated several years ago, producing amazing video clips on the Archimedes screen totally in software without the use of any specialised hardware.

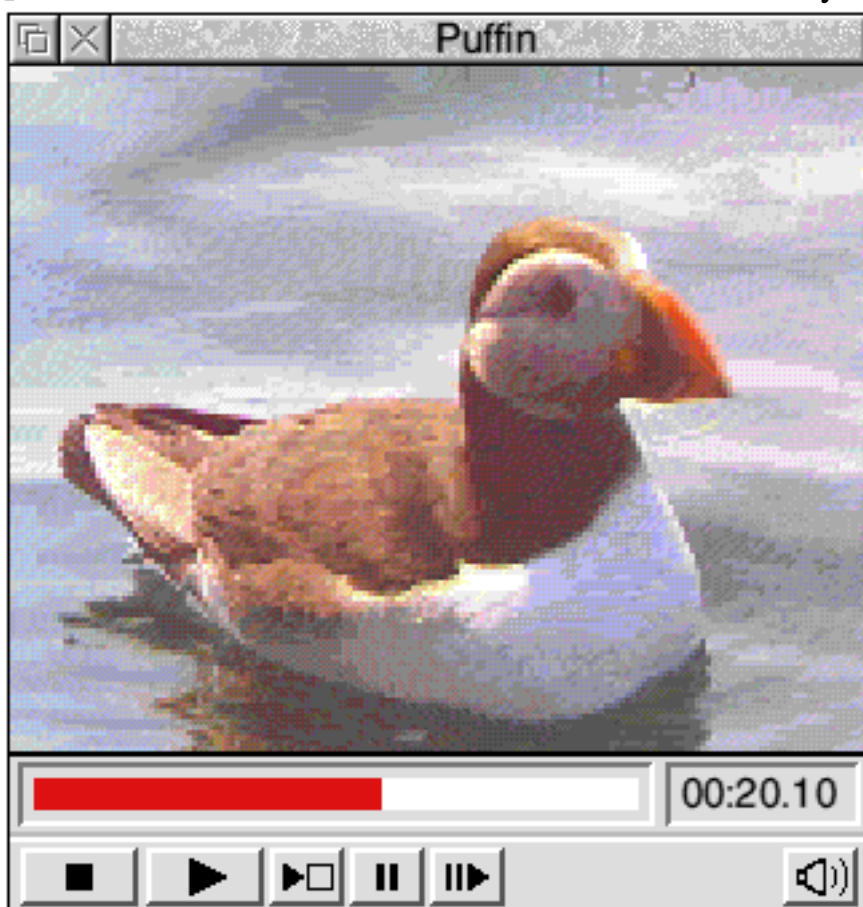
More recently, other technologies and standards such as MPEG have come along but Replay remains the core standard on Acorn machines, and indeed is sufficiently open to allow other standards like MPEG to be handled transparently through Replay.

The Acorn Replay Starter Kit is a new product from Acorn intended for serious

users of Replay, for example programmers wishing to incorporate Replay support into their applications and teachers wishing to use Replay in desktop multimedia applications.

Priced at £34.95 excluding VAT, the Replay Starter Kit is supplied in an Acorn-style library box featuring some very attractive and colourful graphics. This product would certainly stand out on the shelves of any dealer! More important though are the contents of the box.

Inside, the Kit contains a CD-ROM, a high density floppy disc, two manuals, release note, registration card and a large piece of polystyrene to prevent the contents from rattling around.



### **Replay VideoClip CD 2**

You may be aware that Acorn produced its first CD containing Replay clips several years ago, this was often given away or supplied with CD-ROM drives as a demonstration disc.

Now Acorn has produced its second VideoClip CD, containing a greater variety of material than the first. Again, Acorn has made both the disc and packaging colourful and attractive by including the cover graphic on them.

*Some high quality clips are included on the Replay CD*

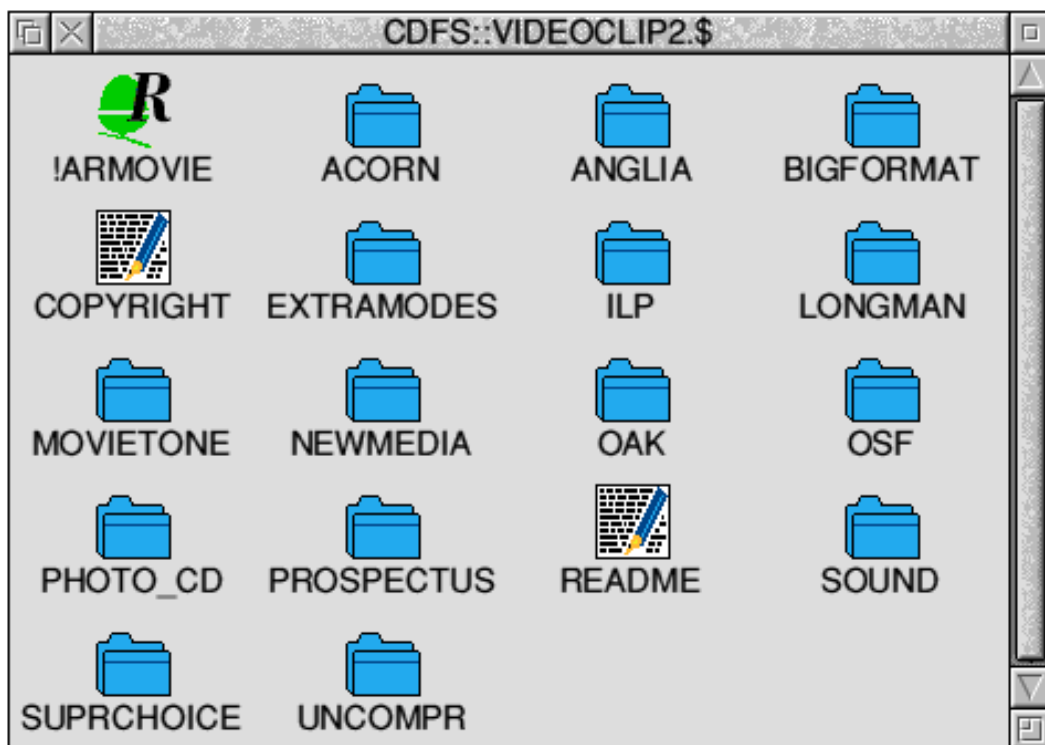


The \$ directory of the CD is shown to the right. It contains the latest versions of *ARMovie* and *ARPlayer* which will be familiar to existing Replay users, as well as numerous Replay clips from a variety of sources.

Firstly there are some clips from the ILP and Anglia discs, plus some demo movies from Oak's *Rephorm*.

There are several more Oxford Scientific films similar to those supplied as standard with the Risc PC. There's a rather large (on screen) clip of the Shuttle Launch, 320x256 resolution, plus a number of education-type clips, some narrated by John Craven.

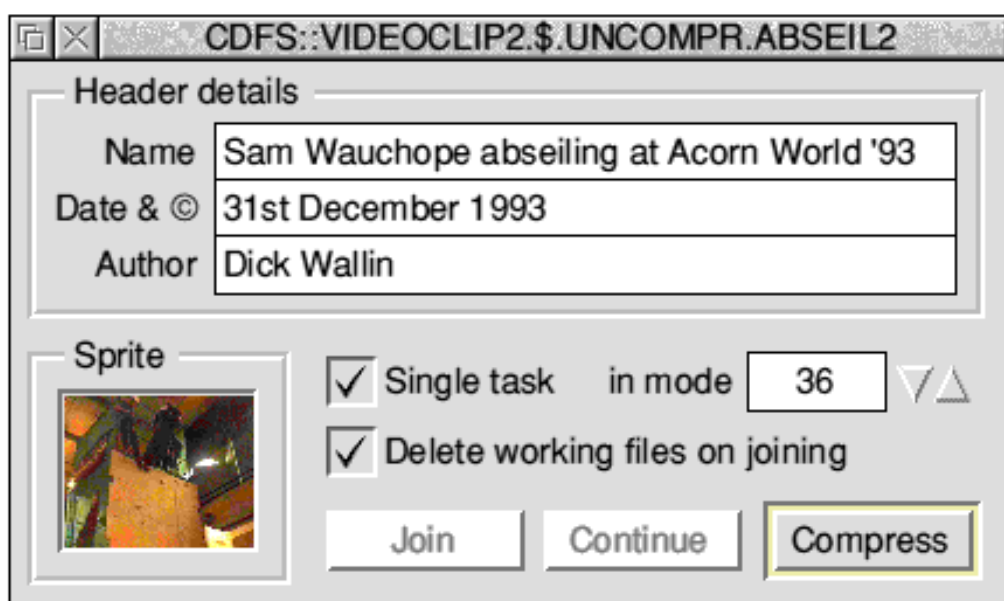
The majority of clips use the newer *Moving Blocks* format for playing back the video, this generally produces higher-quality video



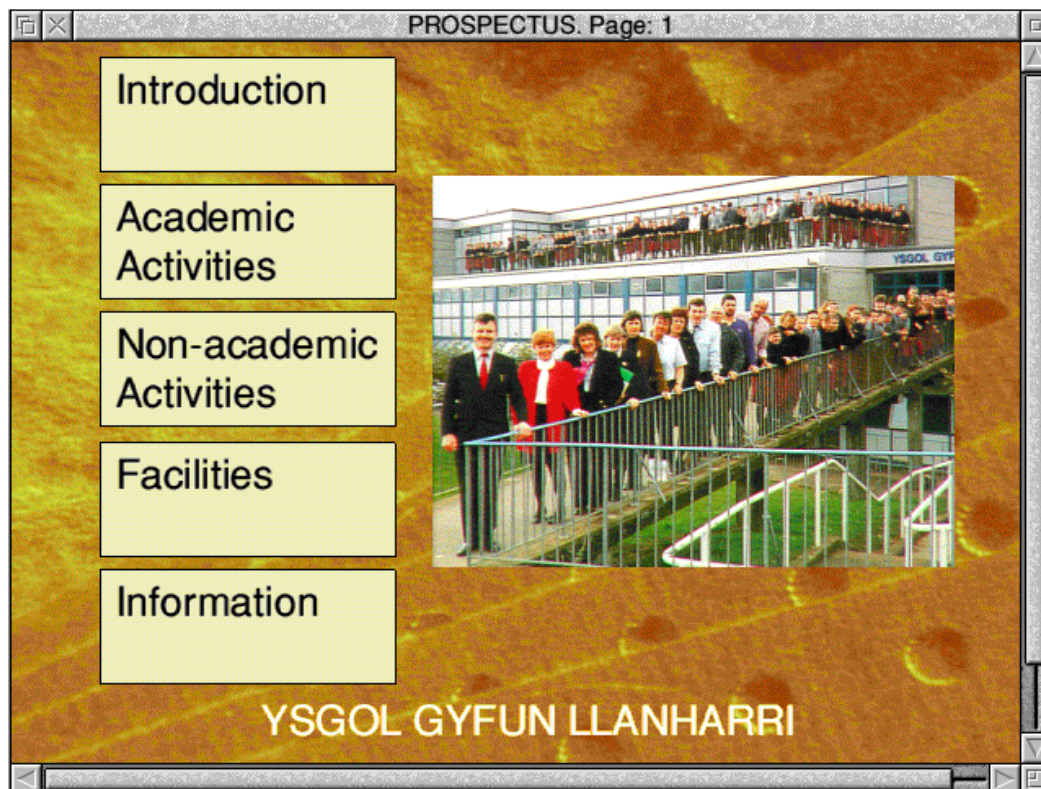
*The \$ directory of the Acorn Replay VideoClip Collection Two CD*

pictures than the *Moving Lines* format used on the first VideoClip CD. Although they are black-on-white, I took a particular liking to the two Movietone clips, one of the Hindenburg airship disaster and one of the Tacoma suspension bridge which blew down during a gale.

The CD does not only contain Replay videoclips, although these form the majority of the files present. There are some VideoCD still-pictures, some sound-only Replay files and a section devoted to a sample school prospectus. This contains stills and videoclips and was constructed using Genesis, KeyAuthor and Magpie to give a worked example of how a multimedia application can be built. Some specially commissioned background tex-



*The Replay Compression Software supplied (!ARencode)*



*A sample multimedia school prospectus on the CD...*

tures are included featuring school-like scenes which can be used in your own multimedia applications.

The floppy disc included is supplied in high-density format only. While I appreciate the reasons for doing this, I do think there should be some warning on the packaging. The disc contains Uniqueway's *AREncode* application which is a handy frontend to the Replay compressor utilities, containing a large number of options and facilities of use to people editing and compressing Replay videoclips.

Also included is another copy of *ARMovie*, although this time it includes the compressor utilities, both for *Moving Blocks* and for *Moving Lines* formats. For the benefit of programmers, a C library called *ARLib* is provided on the disc which allows programmers to interface with the Replay sound drivers. *ARMovie* now includes some of the more unusual trajectories and shapes for use

when showing Replay clips, for example the bouncing ball trajectory often demonstrated by Acorn.

Two manuals are supplied, each similar in size and style of binding to the Welcome Guide supplied with every computer.

The first of these is the *Desktop Multimedia Guide* produced in association with the Hampshire Micro-technology Centre

(based on the *Horizon Report*). This is a detailed guide on producing multimedia presentations, particularly in the classroom, including suggested equipment and software, suppliers of resources and a worked example producing a school prospectus, linking in with the sample files supplied on CD.

The second manual is the Acorn Replay User Guide, containing instructions on how to use Replay as a user, and in later chapters as a programmer, for example giving details of movie formats.

Overall the Acorn Replay Starter Kit is a well-designed product which should appeal to any serious Replay user or person wishing to design professional-looking desktop multimedia presentations.

**Simon Burrows**

*The Starter Kit costs £34.95 + VAT from any Acorn dealer. Product code SKB82.*





## *The Risc Disc from Uniqueway reviewed by Tom Smith*

they are items of software which the producers of the CD would be happy to have installed on their own machines. There is just over 40MB of such software out of, including some applications which are ideally suited to CD-ROM such as a ready-to-run TeX installation.

The Risc Disc also contains demonstration software from 32 companies, including the text of Archive Magazine Volume 7. The Acorn Risc PC Dealer Demo is supplied, although this requires at least 10MB of RAM to be fitted to the Risc PC.

A wide variety of datafiles and resources are provided on the CD, including Acorn Replay movies, PhotoCD pictures, MPEG movies, AVI and FLI files, JPEGs (all innocent), drawfiles, sprites and ArtWorks files.

— “ —

This is the first low-priced CD I have seen which doesn't give the impression of being padded out with junk material...

— ” —

Overall I am very impressed with The Risc Disc. It does not contain everything I would want — this would be impossible on a single CD or at the low price of £19.95. However there is more than enough to interest any Acorn user, even committed enthusiasts. If you have an A5000 or Risc PC with CD-ROM drive, go out and buy this disc today!

*The Risc Disc costs £19.95 inc VAT from Uniqueway Ltd, 42 Crwys Road, Cardiff. CF2 4NN. Tel 01222 644611. Fax 644622.*

At long last it seems that CD-ROM on Acorn machines is starting to take off, and well-known company Uniqueway has jumped in with The Risc Disc Multimedia CD-ROM sampler which was released at Wembley.

To quote from Uniqueway's Press Release, "The disc is the first for the Acorn market to feature commercial demos, PD / Shareware and resources all on one disc". Priced at only £19.95 inc VAT, this CD is within the price range of most CD-ROM users but what exactly does it contain and how useful is it?

The first feature of the disc to catch one's eye is the very slick and professional-looking desktop frontend which gives access to most of the CD's 510MB contents along with much useful information. This is the first low-priced CD I have seen which doesn't give the impression of being padded out with junk material. All the software has been carefully chosen and tested before inclusion.

A selection of public domain and shareware applications are included on the disc although they all fulfil the criteria given above and haven't been included as space-fillers. Instead

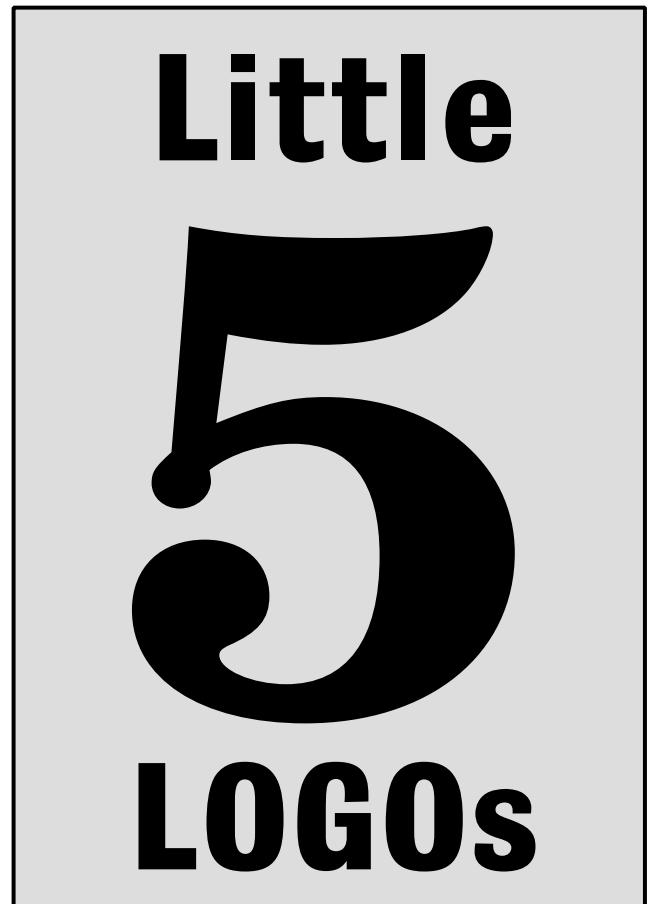
# Education Column

*Geoff Stilwell turns into a turtle to survey five different LOGO packages for all Acorn machines..*

Before I started teaching in 1983 I hadn't been at all interested in computers. I'd had the opportunities at college but other things had always taken priority. But I can remember being absolutely fascinated by the DART program on a BBC B. It all seemed so easy. I drew a square using the turtle graphics commands FORWARD, RIGHT and REPEAT. Using that square procedure I wrote another procedure that drew a circular pattern of squares drawn at different angles. I wrote procedures that drew several squares getting larger. I was having a great deal of fun and I hadn't got beyond the square shape but I realised the potential of this marvellous program for children's learning.

It was the way that a procedure, once defined, could be used by name in another procedure and that in turn in a further procedure until a complex program could be called using a single word. Problems could be broken down and solved in 'bite-sized pieces' each bit in a single procedure.

I soon learned that the DART program was only a subset of a much larger programming language and learning concept and I wanted to know more. I found the book "*Mindstorms*" written by Seymour Papert, one of the original team that devised LOGO at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology



in the seventies. Papert in *Mindstorms* propounds the philosophy behind the creation of the LOGO programming language.

The most effective way to learn a language, suggests Papert, is to be in the environment where that language is spoken. Children growing up with bilingual parents acquire two or more languages without any effort. LOGO, especially the turtle graphic aspects, provides a "MathLand", an environment where the vocabulary and syntax are mathematical, where children learn mathematical language and concepts just as easily.

This basic premise, and the fact that turtle graphics appeals to children of all ages, has led many software developers to produce cut down versions of LOGO, presenting turtle graphics in a more child-centred way. These



programs work in windows on the desktop. Some provide often-used commands on a control pad, entered using a mouse click. They often have a separate window used for entering and editing commands, saving, loading and printing is controlled using picture icons or menus, all making the program easier to use.

This article attempts to compare five of these turtle graphics packages. They are:

FirstLogo — Longman Logotron

Desktop ScreenTurtle — Topologica

GoGo — NW SEMERC

Almost Logo — Advisory Unit Hatfield

Turtle — Porters Primary Software

The programs were all trialled in a year five classroom (9–10 year old children) on an A4000. The children had had some experience using LOGO on a BBC B with a floor turtle while they were in the infants at least three years before.

### FirstLogo

Longman Logotron are the publishers of the full implementation of LOGO that is used in many schools, so one would expect their version of a desktop turtle graphics program to be pretty good. And it is.

FirstLogo starts up with two windows on screen; the *Picture Window* and the *Notepad*. LOGO commands are entered into the Notepad and a turtle (a drawfile of a little green turtle) moves accordingly in the Picture window leaving a trail behind him (or her). The turtle may be dragged around in the

Picture window with the mouse and commands appear in the Notepad to reflect the movement.

There are a few commands available on the function keys and a control pad, called a slate, is available so that commands can be entered with mouse clicks on buttons. Commands may be entered using any method at any time.



*The slate from FirstLogo*

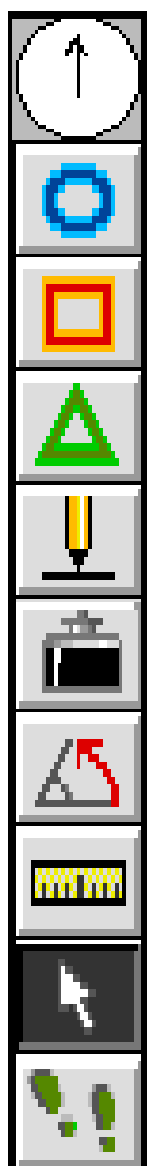
FirstLogo has a total of 26 commands and the most common of these can be abbreviated (eg. FD = Forward or LT = Left). Commands control movement, direction, colour and the Close command will even complete a shape correctly. Alternatively the program can be configured to accept commands in Welsh or French. Commands can also be in one language but Shadowed (in another Notepad window) in one of the other two languages (very handy if you're in Wales or France).

Editing commands couldn't be simpler.

Simply deleting commands will cause the turtle to backtrack. Even commands way back in the list can be deleted or changed with a corresponding change in the Picture Window. Sections of text may be marked and copied, cut, moved and deleted all affecting the drawing in the Picture Window.

The ability to edit commands and drawings to this degree makes this program incredibly user friendly. It is possible for children to achieve a great deal with the program without any fear of making mistakes and having to start all over again. Papert puts great store in debugging with LOGO. With FirstLogo the debugging is interactive with children seeing the effects instantly.

Another control panel or Toolkit is fixed to the side of the Picture Window. This contains button icons which control colour and the pen's state (up or down). There are three shape icons which allow a square, triangle or circle to be drawn, these can also be filled with colour. Two tools allow the user to measure the length of a drawn line and the angle of shape corners. These two would be quite handy for children investigating shape and angle in class. An arrow in a circle gives a graphical indication of which way the turtle is heading and finally clicking on a pair of feet steps through the commands in the Notepad recreating the drawing. The speed of this can be set to between one and several seconds between each step.



Procedures are a fundamental part of LOGO and FirstLogo does implement these but in a simplistic way. Commands in the Notepad are selected then, from the Select option on the menu a procedure is named and created containing these commands which disappear from the notepad and are replaced by an icon. The procedure is edited by double clicking in this icon which opens an editing window containing all the commands.

I was surprised to find that there wasn't a Repeat command in FirstLogo's command vocabulary. It is only possible to Repeat procedures, this is achieved by clicking the menu button over the procedure icon and setting a number of times for it to repeat in a writable icon.

The turtle is not the only design of pointer available. Eleven drawfile pointers, including an aeroplane, a car, a spider, a bee and a frog, are supplied with the program (teachers can design and create their own using any application that saves as Drawfiles). These supplied pointers are associated with activities also supplied on disc. Backdrop sprite screens can be loaded into the Picture Window providing colourful scenes in which the appropriate pointers can be moved around. Small Sprites can also be stamped onto the picture at the turtle position. Two examples of these activities are finishing off a spider's web, and a frog pointer stamping water creatures on the lily pads of its pond. Again, teachers could design their own scenes and stamps and create activities specific to their own children or topic interest.

The documentation accompanying FirstLogo is a 34 page A4 book entitled "A Beginner's Guide". It is aimed at children and is written in a tutorial style that the youngest readers could follow. We presented FirstLogo to a

trial group of children with the guide and more or less left them to it. They began by dragging the turtle around the screen, drawing shapes and also investigating all the different pointer shapes. They soon discovered that they could be more accurate with their drawings by typing in commands or by using the Slate to enter commands with a click of the mouse. They really enjoyed working through some of the activities and worked on drawing geometrical shapes too.

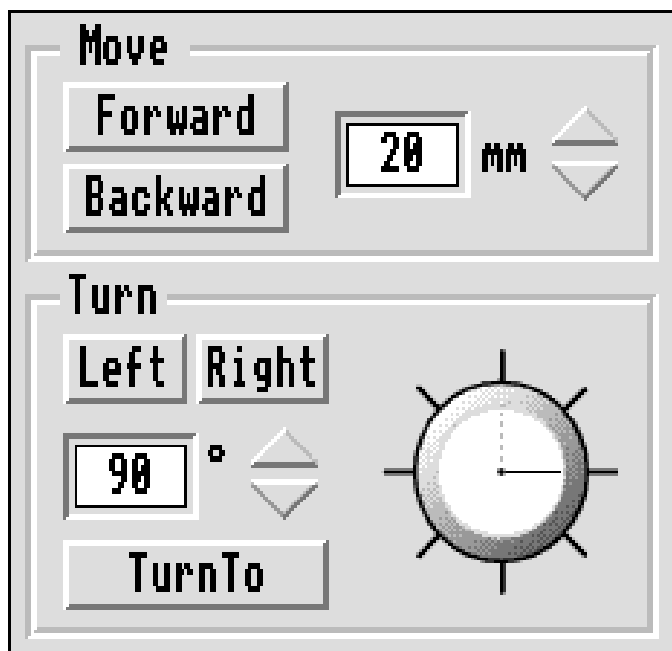
FirstLogo is very user friendly and is designed to appeal to the very youngest and most inexperienced children (and teachers). LOGO experts will find it is a bit limited in that parameters cannot be passed to procedures except for the predefined shapes but in fairness this complexity was never intended. FirstLogo does what it does extremely well.

### **GOGO!**

GoGo, from NW SEMERC, is a very similar package to FirstLogo but with a lot of extras. For example it has 54 command words, the ability to use variables and procedure parameters and even the ability to play sound samples.

GoGo can be configured for any age or ability from the nursery to at least year six children and possibly older. Three windows, the drawing page, writing page and control panel, can be on screen, either movable or fixed. Commands may be typed onto the writing page. Some can be entered with the function keys or by using the control panel. The user can click on buttons with either arrows or words for movement and direction commands (set using a Choices menu). Numerical values are preset on the control panel and included with the command when

the button is clicked. The pointer may also be dragged using the mouse.



*The GoGo Control Panel*

Commands entered may be edited by using the delete keys or by marking text and cutting, copying and pasting as in other RISC OS applications. The turtle backtracks appropriately if commands are deleted or changed so mistakes can be easily rectified and parameters altered to try different effects.

Sprites may be loaded onto the *Drawing Page* as Scenes, tiled, centred or scaled, and Drawfile Pointers (24 are supplied with GoGo) can be combined to provide activities. The one our trial group enjoyed most was the golf game. A golf course scene comprising three holes is loaded with a golfer pointer. The user types in HIT and numerical values for direction and distance and presses <Return>, there is the sound of the swish of the club and the ball hit, the pointer changes to a ball and moves accordingly. A procedure checks the position. If the ball is close enough to the hole there is the sound of it falling in plus the cheer of the crowd. Most satisfying!

Other activities include flying a helicopter around the UK's capitals or sailing a ship around the coastline. Small sprites can be stamped on the screen using the Stamp command. Supplied are a collection of OS symbols and a background grid for some geographical coordinates work. There is a OneKey LOGO setup where very young children can draw using single key presses. Activities may be easily added using your own scenes, pointers and sound samples, and designed to meet your own children's needs.

Where GoGo goes beyond FirstLogo is in the creation of procedures. I believe that the creation of procedures is really the heart of LOGO. Children may first experiment moving the turtle by dragging it around, then using commands either using the control panel or by typing them in. They eventually produce a shape, a square perhaps. By putting that set of commands into a procedure and giving it the name 'Square', they now have something they can use as a building block for other, more sophisticated procedures. Moving on another stage: rather than creating several procedures for the different sized squares they might need for a drawing or pattern, they use one 'Square' procedure with a variable parameter called 'size'. Now they type in Square 5 or Square 10 as appropriate. This is fully implemented in GoGo making the program sophisticated enough to achieve much of the purpose intended by Seymour Papert in the original LOGO.

When it is necessary to save an activity or project, pressing Shift F3 or the Save option on the *Writing Page* menu saves a straightforward textfile into the examples directory alongside the !GoGo application. The Save option on the Drawing Page saves

the current drawing as a drawfile to the same location. Alternatively the respective icons can be dragged into a directory of your choice (eg the child's personal directory) and/or into a word processor or DTP application to illustrate a piece of writing.

An extra application supplied with GoGo allows the teacher to provide aliases or alternatives for the commands; for example, Back could be changed to Reverse or a teacher could change all the words to a different language such as Gujarati.

GoGo is supplied with a manual which is aimed at the teacher rather than the children but it does explain the workings of the program very well. A Teacher's Tutorial gives some useful hints on using the program's supplied worksheets and activities and explains how GoGo can be configured for the different abilities and needs of the children.

Our trial group of children were given some of the worksheets to have a go with but they found that they needed a little help just to get the program set up. Teachers may have to spend a little time configuring the program for their group of children but once up and running it is child's play.

### **Desktop ScreenTurtle**

Topologica's ScreenTurtle program has now been updated and improved so that it runs in a window on the desktop and is consequently called Desktop ScreenTurtle.

The program initially starts in non-desktop format using mode 15. Other setup formats are easily defined by bringing up the configure dialogue box from the icon bar menu. This gives you three different window



arrangements plus the desktop format where windows can be dragged around and resized. The non-desktop formats may be preferable for younger children who may be confused by the desktop. The starting mode may be changed to suit more sophisticated monitors but Topologica suggest that the colours are best in a 256 colour mode.

Commands typed into the *Commands* window produce movement in the very basic triangular turtle in the Graphics window. Some commands are available on the function keys (a keystrip is provided) and a toolbox is also available from the configuration dialogue box. The toolbox contains the usual movement and direction keys plus Penup and Pendown; Show and Hide Turtle; Home, Clear; Pen, Screen and Fill colours; and Undo.

Editing facilities are quite limited in the command window. Only the current line may be edited by deleting and re-entering the line. After pressing <Return> lines correctly entered are ticked. If a line is incorrectly entered the program makes a calculated guess at what is meant. For example, a child might misspell the word FORWARD as FRWORD. The program would offer the message “Do you mean: FD ? (Y/N)”. Desktop ScreenTurtle has a large vocabulary. There are 30 different commands but most of these have several alternatives which include abbreviations. The alternatives for the PENUP command are: PU, LIFT PEN, LIFTPEN, LIFT, NOPEN, NO PEN or NP. This does ease translation between different versions of LOGO.

Another common typing error the program circumvents is the lack of a space between the command and the numerical value, such

as LEFT90. The program will accept this happily. I am not sure about the effectiveness of this in the classroom. Children very quickly learn about the correct syntax of commands and the above smacks of encouraging bad habits.

The Undo command will enable the user to undo previous commands and the turtle will actually backtrack and erase drawn lines. Undo is limited to 10 steps initially although this can be configured to more. Undo cannot reverse colour changes although these can be reversed using the colour commands. Screens erased using the Fresh or Clear command can be replaced with undo but the previous turtle position is not remembered.

Desktop ScreenTurtle is able to define procedures. Entering “Define (Create or Build) Square” brings up a procedure definition window. Commands typed here will be reflected in the Graphics window. Clicking on the Clear or Home buttons at the top of the window clears the Graphics window or centers the turtle but does not affect the procedure being defined. The Run button runs the procedure and Step allows the user to step through the commands one by one, aiding the debugging process. If a procedure is found to be faulty it may be edited using the Edit command which uses the same procedure window and options.

Unfortunately variable parameters cannot be passed to procedures. Variables, however, may be defined globally with the Make command (eg. Make size = 50). These variables may then be used in procedures so complex patterns can be achieved. For the boffins amongst you, a very limited recursion is possible.

Sprites or TIFF graphics may be loaded using the Load Screen command or by dragging them into the Graphics window. Some simple village maps and mazes are supplied with the program and can be used as a scene to enhance an activity. Of course teachers could design and create their own screens and activities however there is no facility for creating or using alternative turtle pointers.

In the classroom, our trial group of children found Desktop ScreenTurtle less than 'user friendly'. They were frustrated by the lack of editing facilities despite being able to undo. It may not have been a fair test as they'd seen another group using FirstLogo and they were constantly asking to use that instead, although this may be an indication of the attractiveness of the two programs. I felt that Desktop ScreenTurtle achieves a nice balance between being an easy to use program and one where the children can investigate more complex LOGO work.

### Almost Logo

Almost Logo is published by AU Enterprises in Hatfield. Unlike the other desktop logos it starts up with only one window on screen. This is divided into two parts: the Drawing Window and a space for two text lines at the bottom where commands are entered and executed. Unfortunately commands entered here cannot be edited after <Return> is pressed. A Notepad Window can be called up from the menu or by pressing a function key which gives a more flexible editing space but commands are not executed until the Obey button is clicked. Commands can also be entered using a Commands Pad, available

from a menu option, which includes movement and direction buttons, plus number digits, space, delete and Return buttons. Clicking with the mouse on these buttons enters the command at the caret position (even in a text editor such as Edit) but not, surprisingly, in the Notepad Window.

The 'turtle' is a basic little triangle which starts in the centre of the drawing window. Commands affect the turtle in the usual way although there is no effect if commands are subsequently edited in the Notepad window. This turtle may not be dragged around using the mouse either.

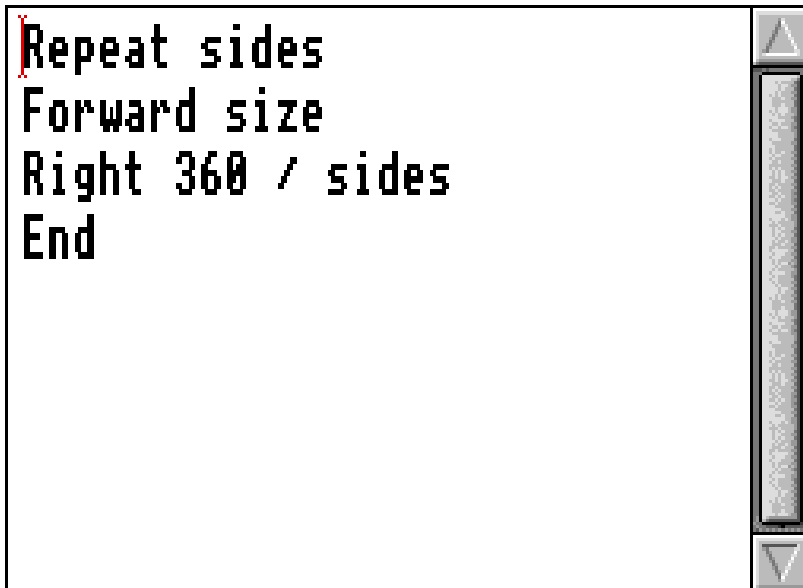
Procedures can be defined by going through a rather unwieldy process. First the user has to open the procedure window (see below) which is where defined procedures are stored. Clicking the menu button over this window



*The Procedure Window*

allows the user to choose New Procedure and give it a name whereupon a turtle icon appears in the window. Again clicking the menu button over this icon gives another menu with many more options (Select, Save, Delete, etc). On a sub-menu across from the procedure name the user will find the edit option which opens the editing dialogue box.

Once here the procedure is very easily defined and subsequently edited. the procedure can have up to four parameters passed to it which is generally more than enough for quite sophisticated procedures.



*The Editing Dialogue Box*

For the LOGO boffins: Almost Logo is capable of recursion with a procedure calling itself with local variables although without an IF function to provide a stopping condition this has limited uses.

Almost Logo's vocabulary comprises 24 commands which includes setting x and y coordinates and turtle headings. It has a Hoot command that accepts pitch and duration values so Almost Logo could be used for simple music composition. Many other options are available through menus and function key presses including a list of all variables and a box showing the turtle's coordinates and heading.

One of Almost Logo's advantages is being able to accept sprites and drawfiles (RISC OS 3 or later) as backdrops. Scaled drawfiles make for clearer images than sprites. Two simple village plans are supplied as examples in drawfile and sprite format. Teachers could create their own and use them to provide specific turtling activities.

Almost Logo's A4 manual is aimed at the teacher and has an easy tutorial style with a

following reference section. It does explain very clearly how to operate the program. Stored procedures supplied on the disc show by example what is possible using Almost Logo.

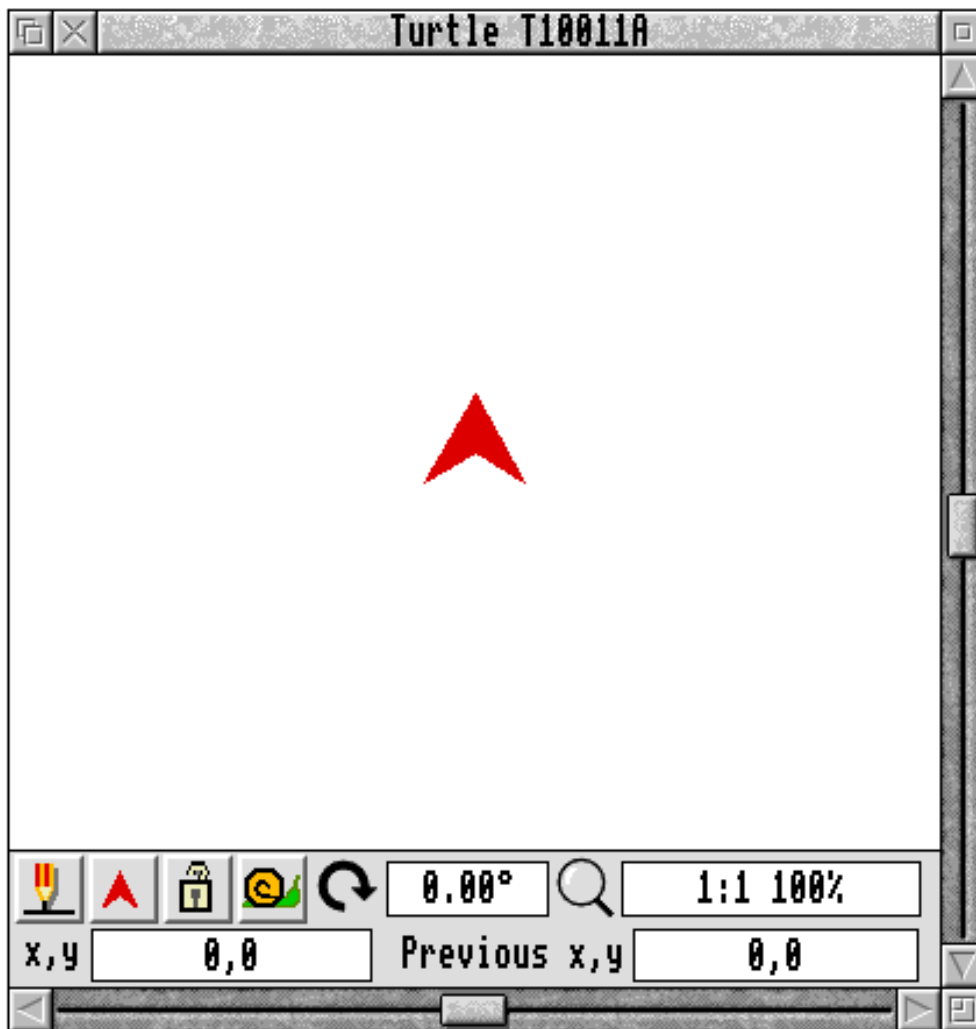
Our trial group of children did not get very far with Almost Logo in the time allocated. Again they were coveting the colourful screens and pointers they'd seen other groups playing with using FirstLogo and GoGo. They enjoyed steering the turtle around with backdrops to provide a colourful environment. They did try to define

simple procedures but found the process quite long-winded.

Almost Logo provides quite a simple basic interface for turtle graphics work. Its greatest advantage over the other packages is that it is the only one providing support for a floor turtle. It does have the capability for quite sophisticated patterns using procedures but I do wish that the process for defining them were easier.

### **Turtle**

Turtle from Porters Primary Software is not really aimed at the younger children. It doesn't have a control panel or a draggable mouse. Commands are entered into a Command Window and another window shows the arrowhead turtle and any drawings (see opposite). Like all the other packages commands can be abbreviated but these are non-standard using the first two letters of a command like FO for forward and LE for left instead of the more usual FD or LT. If a command is entered incorrectly the syntax is checked and an error is reported and the user is given the opportunity to correct the line using the



*The main Turtle window*

arrow keys and the Delete key. Unfortunately the backspace key cannot be used for editing which I found annoying but this is a minor point.

Commands cannot be edited once <Return> is pressed so mistakes cannot be undone. The screen has to be cleared and the drawing started again. A PenErase command might have been useful here, to at least backtrack over minor errors.

The Turtle manual is a 16 page A5 pamphlet and the smallest of all the packages. It basically outlines the program's menu system and lists the commands with some examples. Included in the pack is 19 workcards with a structured series of exercises to help the teacher introduce a class to turtle graphics

using the program.

Turtle's command set of 25 words includes most of the usual movement, direction, Penup/down, Hide/Show, Repeat and Build commands, plus some unusual ones such as Until, for conditionally ending Repeat loops. Turtle can even use BASIC programming functions such as SQR for finding square roots or MOD and other arithmetic functions.

Procedures are defined using the *Build* command. Parameters are passed with the word Get on the first line of the procedure followed by the list of variables. Turtle procedures are

capable of limited recursion but parameters are not local and the drawing speed slows considerably after a few loops. The editing of procedures is rather basic, with only one line presented at a time. You are given the option of deleting/editing that line or adding/inserting another. Procedure Words can be saved out as textfiles and edited in Edit or other text editor and then dragged back into the command window, after deleting the previous occurrence of the procedure in Turtle.

I did have some problems incorporating procedures with IF statements. One example is mentioned in the manual but I wanted to go a little further and pass incremented parameters to the procedures. This was not possible and kept throwing up a Mistake



error (the error messages could be a little more helpful as they don't tell you where the mistake is). David Porter, the programmer of Turtle, confirmed that this was an oversight and would be implemented in future versions.

Turtle's drawing window can be viewed at different scalings using the zoom option from the menus or function key. Colourful backdrops or scenes can also be displayed in the drawing screen by calling up the Backdrop dialogue box from the menu and dropping a sprite into it. From here the sprite can be scaled and its position determined.

One excellent extra supplied on the disc with Turtle is *MazeMaker*, a maze creating application which generates a maze sprite which can be loaded into Turtle for children to navigate the turtle around.

Turtle is not intended for younger turtlers so it doesn't have such a user friendly interface as some of the other packages. Our trial children were given the opportunity of steering the turtle around one of the mazes created by MazeMaker. They were happy doing this but were frustrated by the lack of editing and backtracking facilities. I would say that Turtle was more suitable for year six children and upwards. It has the potential for some quite sophisticated turtling.

### Summary

It would be impossible to say everything about all these programs in a review such as this. I have tried to give a flavour of them all, making personal comments where appropriate.

The five turtle graphics packages are all different but are all very similar as can be seen from the table. I've tried to include all

the commands and features of the packages in the table. An X implies that a command or feature is not present in that program.

The programs all have strengths and weaknesses but they are aimed at children of different ages, abilities and/or experience. Longman Logotron's FirstLogo will obviously appeal to the youngest and least experienced with its easy editing and simple interface. Topologica's Desktop ScreenTurtle goes a little further with more complex Logo commands and still retaining the ease of use but with some losses such as editing facilities and different pointer designs. NW SEMERC's GoGo is similar again but seems to err on the side of appealing to the younger child but it still has the potential for quite complex LOGO work. AlmostLogo and Turtle are similar in that they seem to appeal to the older or slightly more experienced child with more serious LOGO intentions. They still retain the ability to use backdrops but have fewer interactive editing facilities.

All of the packages aim to fulfil the IT components of the National Curriculum (especially as LOGO is the only computer software mentioned by name) and they all enable children to achieve this. I'd say that schools are spoilt for choice with these packages.

Although these turtle graphics programs are primarily aimed at school use, that is not to say that they could not be used at home. My own children had great fun playing with the programs in the same way as the children in school. And that's what LOGO and turtle graphics is all about; fun while you're learning.

**Geoff Stilwell**

## Five Small Logos Compared

FirstLogo	GoGo	DeskTurtle	AlmostLogo	Turtle
Longman Logotron	NWSEMERC	Topologica	AU Enterprises	Porters Primary Software
<b>£24</b>	<b>£40</b>	<b>£45</b>		<b>£34.50</b>
Forward	Forward	Forward	Forward	Forward
Backward	Backward	Backward	Backward	Backward
Left	Left	Left	Left	Left
Right	Right	Right	Right	Right
Penup	Pen Up	Penup	Penup	Penup
X	Middle	Home	Centre	Home
(Clear Screen menu only)	Wipe	Clear, Fresh, ClearText	Clean, Fresh	Clear
(Repeats Procedures only)	Repeat, Next	Repeat, Again	Repeat, End	Repeat, Again, Until
Procedures defined and edited in dialogue box	Procedures defined and edited in editing window	Procedures defined and edited in dialogue box	Procedures defined and edited in dialogue boxes	Build, Change, List, ListAll
X	(Parameters available)	X	(Four Parameters available)	Get (Parameters)
Setpc	Ink	Pencolour	Colour	(Menu)
Setbg	Paper	Background	(Icon Bar Menu)	(Menu)
Fill	Fill	Fill, Paint	X	X
Close	Close	X	X	X
Width	Width	X	X	(Menu)
Style	Style	X	X	X
Write (text)	X	Label, Type	Print	X
Stamp	Stamp	X	X	X
Beep	Play (sample)	Hoot, Click	Hoot <pitch, duration>	Beep
Wait	Wait	Wait	Wait	X
X	Crawl, Walk, Run, Hop, Sprint, Step	Slow, Normal, Step	X	(Menu: Normal Fast)
Pointer (19+)	Pointer (24+)	Show Turtle	ShowTurtle	Show
X	Pointer None	Hide Turtle	HideTurtle	Hide

## Five Small Logos Compared

FirstLogo	GoGo	DeskTurtle	AlmostLogo	Turtle
Longman Logotron	NWSEMERC	Topologica	AU Enterprises	Porters Primary Software
£24	£40	£45		£34.50
(Draggable pointer and lines)	(Draggable pointer)	X	X	X
(2 Control Panels)	(2 Control Panels)	(Control Panel)	(Control Panel)	X
X	If, Then, Else, End	If, Then	X	If
X	And, Or, Not	X	X	(All BASIC functions eg. AND OR NOT SQR)
X	Make (variables)	Make (variables)	Make (variables)	Make (variables)
X	X	X	(Menu option to see variable values)	See, See All (variables)
X	Become, More, Less	X	X	X
(Backdrop:) Load <Name>	(Backdrop: Centred, Scaled or Tiled) Load <Name>	(Backdrop: Drag Sprite into window or) Load Screen	(Backdrop: Drag sprite or drawfile into window. Scaled or centred)	(Backdrop: Drag Sprite into dialogue box. Scaled, centred or positioned)
Load Grid (Sprite)	Load Grid (Sprite)	Grid On/Off	(Drag Sprite or Drawfile into window)	(Menu: Drag Sprite into box)
(Screen saved as Drawfile)	(Screen saved as Drawfile)	(Screen saved as Sprite or compressed TIFF)	(Screen saved as Drawfile)	(Screen saved as Drawfile)
Square ,Circle, Triangle	(Use procedures)	(Use procedures)	(Use procedures)	(Use procedures)
(Measuring Length and Angle Tool + info in Title Bar)	X	X	(Coordinates menu option)	(Info Bar and Find Turtle options)
X	X	Move, Draw, Heading, Vector	SetX, SetY, SetP, SetH	Move
X	X	X	Floor Turtle	X
X	X	Help	(Help on menu and interactive)	X

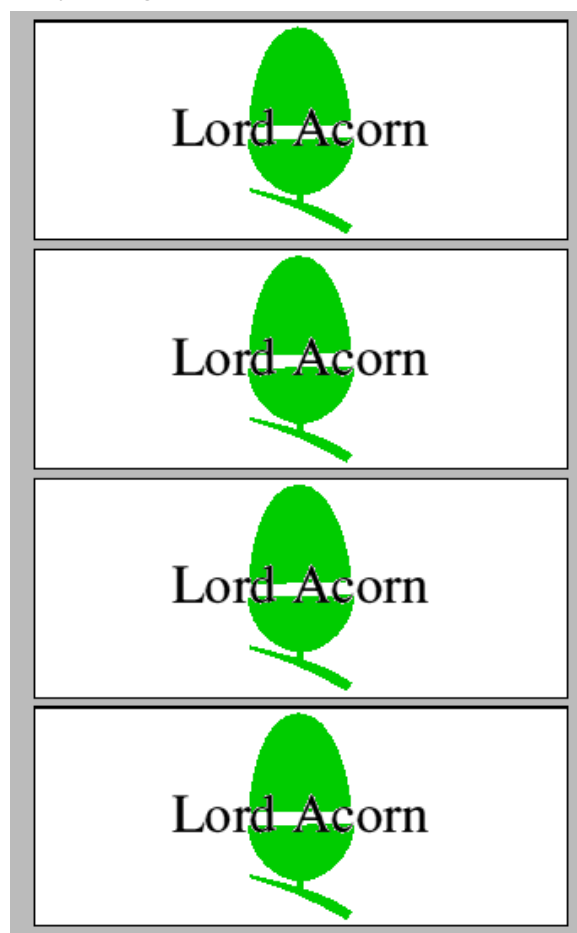
# Utilabel



There has never been a shortage of label printing programs, usually designed for either addresses or discs, and many of them are cheaply available from PD libraries. So what does the new Utilabel program from Le Computer offer to make it worth buying at £58.69 (including postage and VAT)? Does it live up to its claims to be the ultimate labelling solution and the professional's choice?

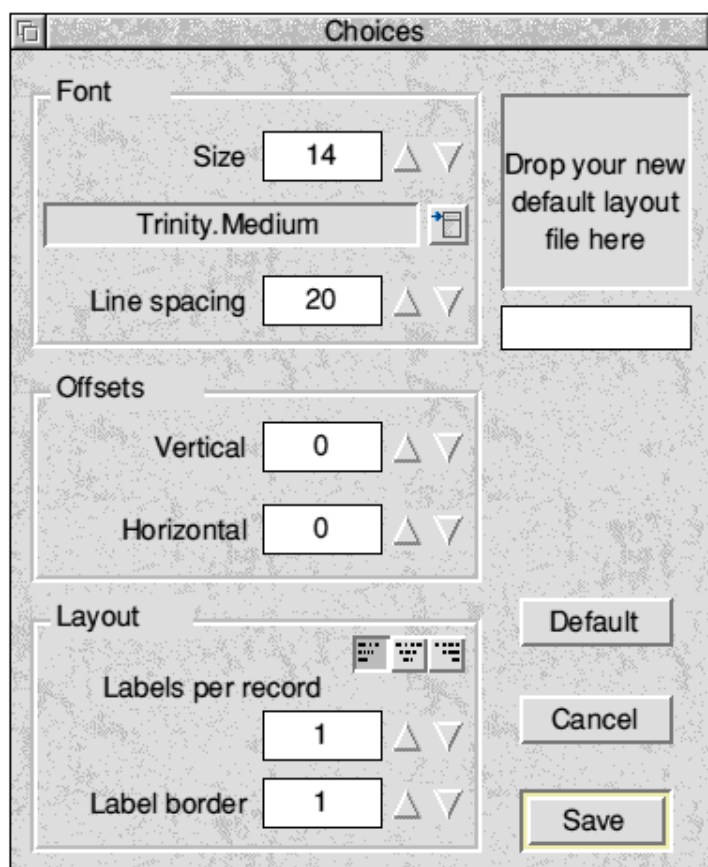
*Peter Jennings looks at a new printing application which boldly claims to be the ultimate labelling solution*

First of all it is designed to print sheets of all types of labels, including both address and disc, and also related stationery such as business cards and name badges. They can contain text and/or graphics arranged so that, for example, a company logo can be positioned beside, above or below the address on a business card or can be centred with a name superimposed for a smart identity badge.



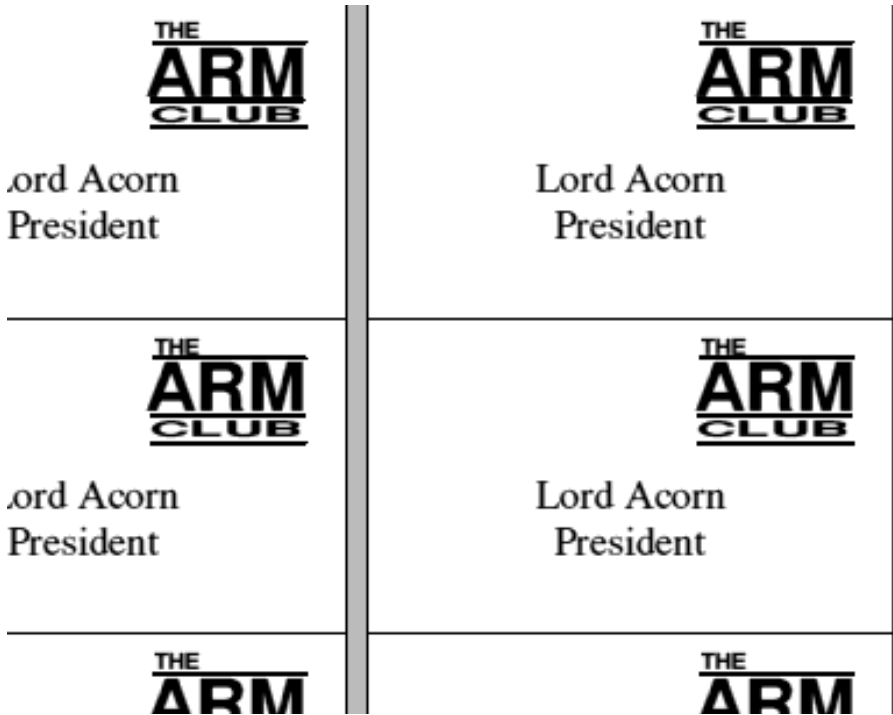
*Text automatically superimposed on a graphic to make a sheet of name badges*

Graphics all have to be Draw files and text must be in the form of a CSV file, where each line is separated by commas and/or



*The Choices box in Utilabel which offers a range of default settings*





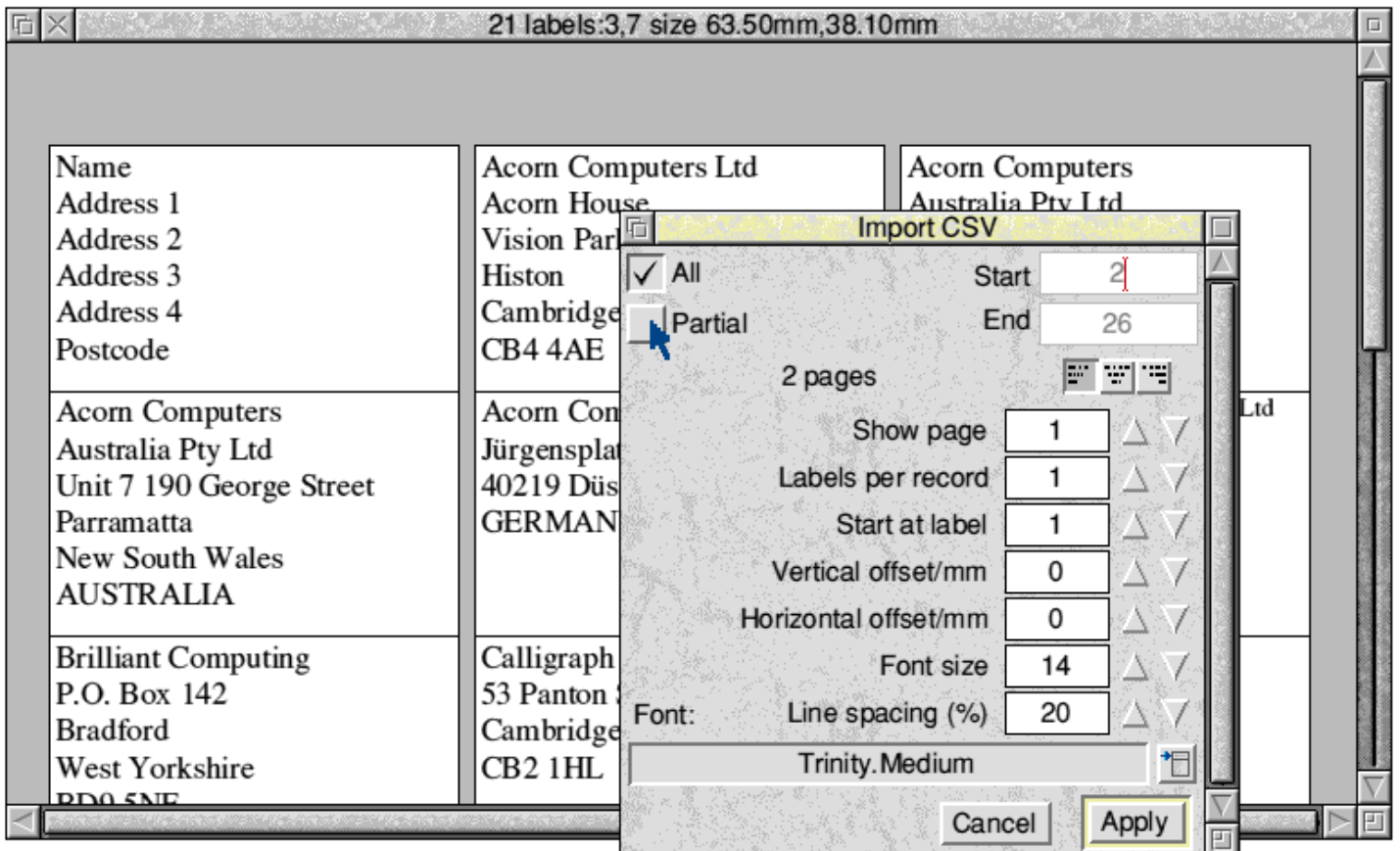
fully explained in the manual. Sprites can simply be loaded into Draw and resaved as a Draw file and there is a page of hints on how label-size boxes can be created with the graphic suitably positioned.

The program is for the Risc PC and Archimedes range, with a minimum of 1Mb RAM and RISC OS 3.10, using a laser, inkjet or dot matrix printer. It comes with 53 different layouts designed for sheets of various sized Avery labels and can easily be customised for other makes. A

*Part of a sheet of business cards, using text & graphics*

inverted commas and the end of each record is defined by a return. Both these restrictions can be worked round. CSV files, which can normally be exported from databases such as address files, are easily created and this is

telephone number is supplied for ordering a free sample pack of labels from Avery Dennison and these were readily supplied when I rang although the person who answered the phone did not know what



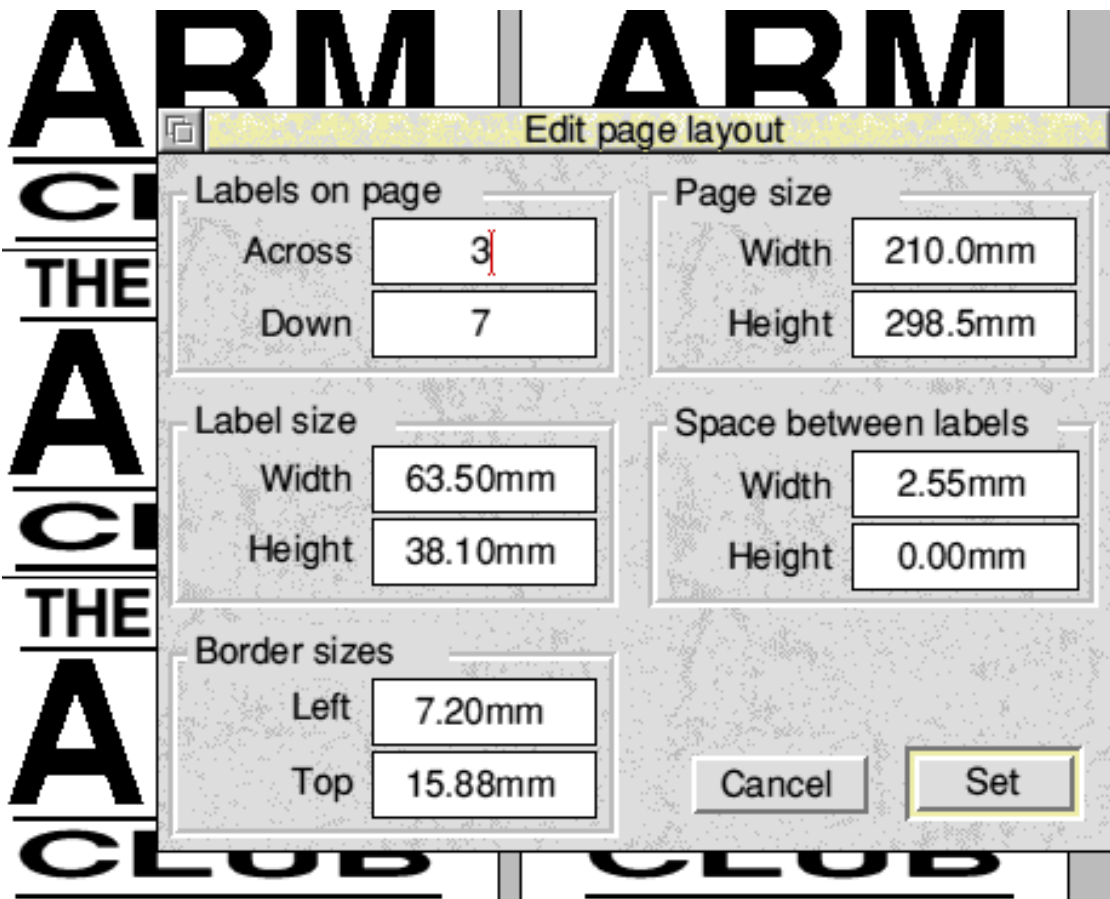
*A page of address labels from an imported CSV file with the unwanted first record removed*

Utlilabel was and had not heard of its publishers!

The program comes on a single disc and has one of the slimmest manuals I have seen, comprising just six and a half pages of instructions with 14 illustrations. This is small enough for even the most impatient of users to read through and it does its job with admirably clear explanations and no excess words.

Loading the program puts an icon on the icon bar in the usual way and clicking on this opens the default page of 21 blank labels arranged in seven rows of three. Dragging a Draw file onto the page loads the image onto every label while a CSV file puts each individual record onto a separate label. Doing this brings up a window containing the "Import CSV" dialogue box which also shows the number of sheets of labels needed. Then the program shows its power.

Using this dialogue box, the text can be offset horizontally and vertically to reposition it on the labels by any distance in millimetres. It can be aligned at left, centre or right and the leading (the space between lines) adjusted. Each sheet can be previewed on screen and if all the records are not to be printed the start



*A Draw file dragged onto a page with the default layout*

and end numbers of those required can be entered. This allows unwanted records, such as any CSV file headings, to be eliminated.

By default, one label will be printed from each record but two or more of each can be preset. Printing can begin on any part of the sheet and this is useful to use up sheets where some of the labels have already been removed.

Any available font can be used and a "Choices" dialogue box allows you to set the default font and type size, line spacing, horizontal and vertical offsets and layouts.

There is also an "Edit" window for customising the labels if the supplied Avery layouts are not suitable. This provides settings for the number of labels on a sheet, the exact sizes of sheet and labels, the space

between labels and the margins around them. A specialised application of this kind is designed to do a very limited job and, to be successful, it needs to do everything that a potential user wants.

Any desktop publishing program can be used for at least part of what Utilabel does and I missed a DTP's ability to use frames to size and position graphics (both Draw files and sprites) on the label, to import text files and to allow text to be typed in direct.

With Utilabel, once you have the text and illustration on the page it becomes very simple and quick to adjust the appearance of the labels to your satisfaction and to print them as required. But, unless you already have your material as a CSV file and/or a Draw file, the preliminary work has to be done outside the application before you can begin using it.

This is mentioned briefly in the manual, which says "The design of the label is left up to the user to use whatever software package they feel comfortable with." In fact, the ease and scope of the manipulation allowed by the Import CSV window does mean that the main design work is carried out within Utilabel. However, the admitted need to use other software as well removes the element of completeness from a package claimed to be the ultimate labelling solution.

A lot of thought and work has gone into the output from Utilabel. It needs some more development on the input before it becomes the application that no-one who prints labels can do without.

**Peter Jennings**

*Utilabel costs £58.69 inc VAT and P&P from Le Computer, Main Road, Willows Green, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 1QB.*

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## **Suffolk Acorn Risc Club**

The Suffolk Acorn Risc Club is a new local user group for all users of Acorn RISC computers who live in East Anglia.

Meetings with guest speakers take place each month in the Ipswich Central Library, and a monthly newsletter is mailed to all members.

Members have access to a library of Acorn Public Domain software priced at £1.00 per disc, social events & visits to computer shows also take place on a regular basis.

For more information please contact Paul on 01473 728943 or Andy on 01473 216424.

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## **South Wales Lectures**

The South Wales Area Group is planning a series of lectures concerning digital imaging. The first lecture is planned for 7.30pm on Wednesday 8th February at the usual venue, with subsequent lectures at four-weekly intervals until the Summer break.

As well as the lectures I am planning to attract demonstrations of appropriate software (eg PhotoDesk) and hardware, as well as encouraging non-members.

**Bill Harwood — Tel (01222) 862245**

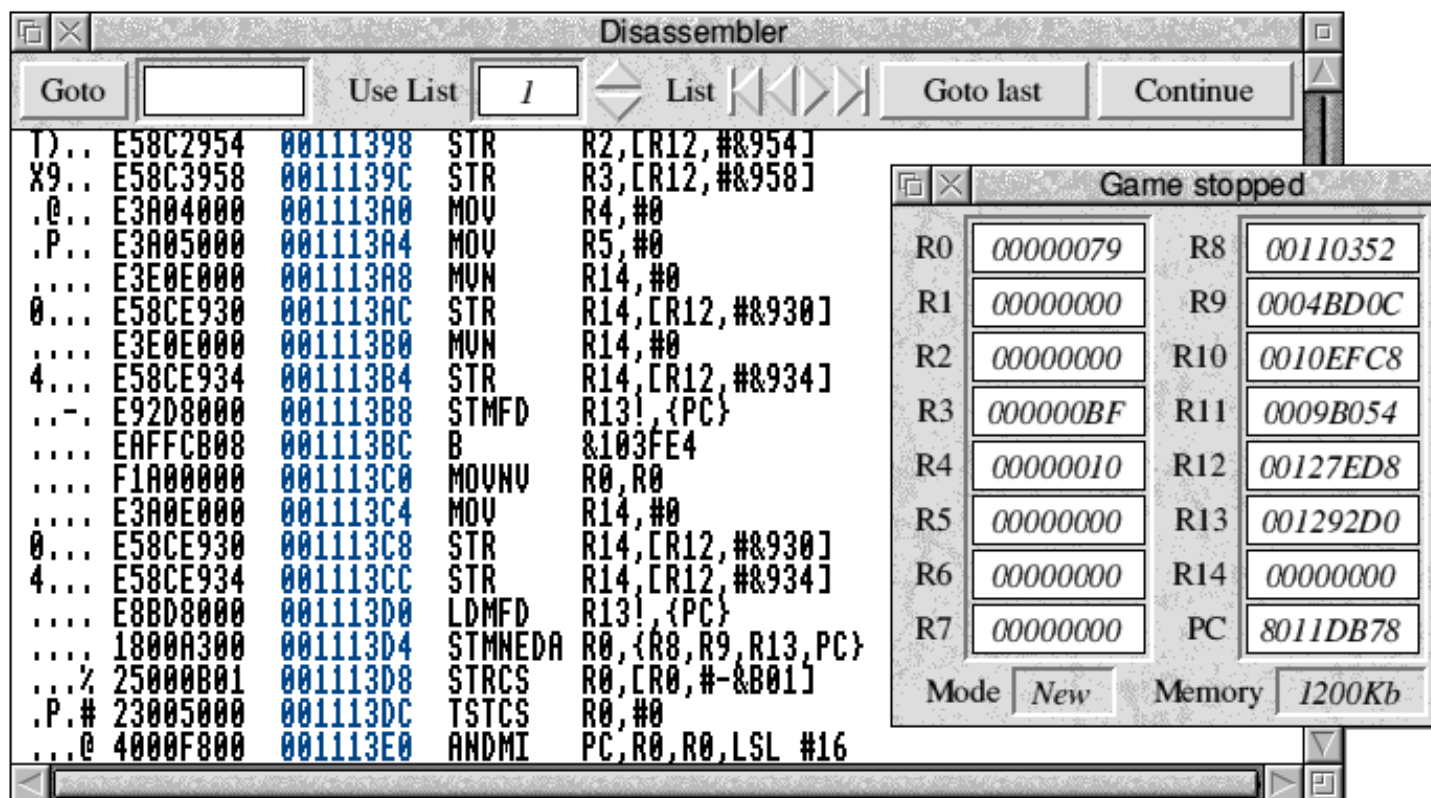
# *desktop* Hacker

*The latest game cheating software examined  
by Mark Smith & Dave Harris*

Desktop Hacker comes in a plastic folder with a disc and a photocopied folded A4 instruction sheet printed on both sides. The cover insert states that Desktop Hacker is "The last word in cheating for Acorn RISC computers".

Running Desktop Hacker is simply a case of double clicking on the !dHacker application on the supplied disc and games to be hacked are then run by dragging the application icon to the Desktop Hacker icon on the icon bar. As with its predecessor, The Hacker, games are interrupted by pressing both Alt keys, although this can be changed if necessary.

When a game is interrupted, the computer returns to the RISC OS desktop with a window showing the status of the ARM registers at the point the game was interrupted and another window showing a disassembly of the game code. Generally, you don't need to be able to understand either of these to produce simple game hack modules such as increasing the number of lives you have in a game. This is done simply by Desktop Hacker searching through memory for every occurrence of the number of remaining lives, then returning to the game, losing a life and narrowing down the list of possible memory locations which hold



*The main Desktop Hacker window showing register values and a disassembly of memory*



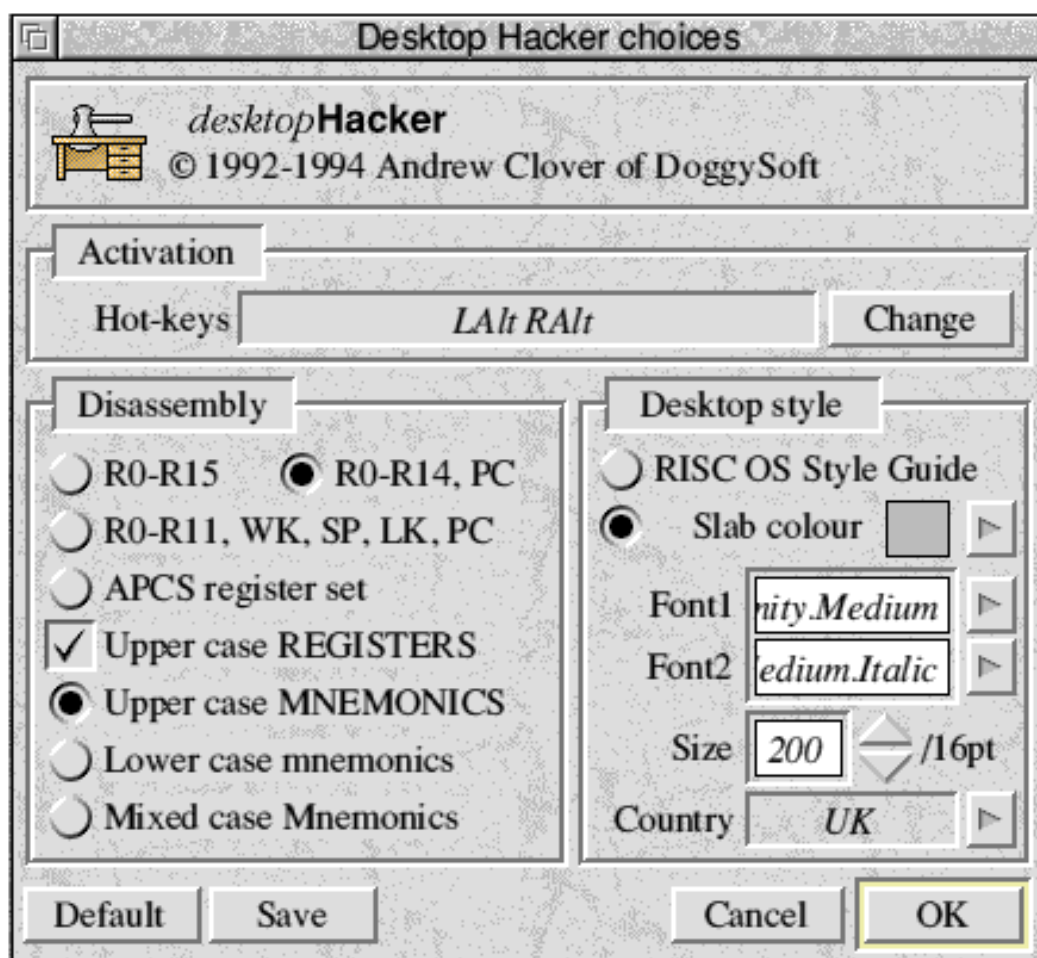
the remaining lives. However, it certainly helps to have a working knowledge of ARM code before attempting anything more complex.

A comprehensive set of options are provided for customising the activation key combination, disassembly format and desktop style. A number of additional applications are supplied, including a utility for searching for and extracting music modules from games and a utility to provide an additional information on the game being hacked are also supplied. There is also an application for using Games Wizard script files which,

unfortunately, comes complete with a text file slating Games Wizard. There is also an application to generate simple key activated cheat modules. Such modules can be used without Desktop Hacker and are freely distributable. 178 modules are supplied with the package to get you started. Also supplied are some text files detailing passwords, file formats and other information about various games.

As well as hacking games, Desktop Hacker allows you to save screenshots of games, save game positions and remove graphics from games (as well as music tracks as already described). Remember, however, that use of extracted graphics and music without the

permission of the copyright holder could land you in trouble!



*A comprehensive range of options are provided to the user*

Desktop Hacker does its job extremely well. If you ever play games and could make use of any of the features offered by this package then Desktop Hacker is for you. You don't need any programming experience to use the many of the features offered by package, although it helps when producing your own hacks. If you already own The Hacker then it is well worthwhile upgrading to Desktop Hacker. The only major feature supported by The Hacker, but not by Desktop Hacker is the SWI intercept feature. Well done Doggysoft on a first class package.

**Mark Smith**

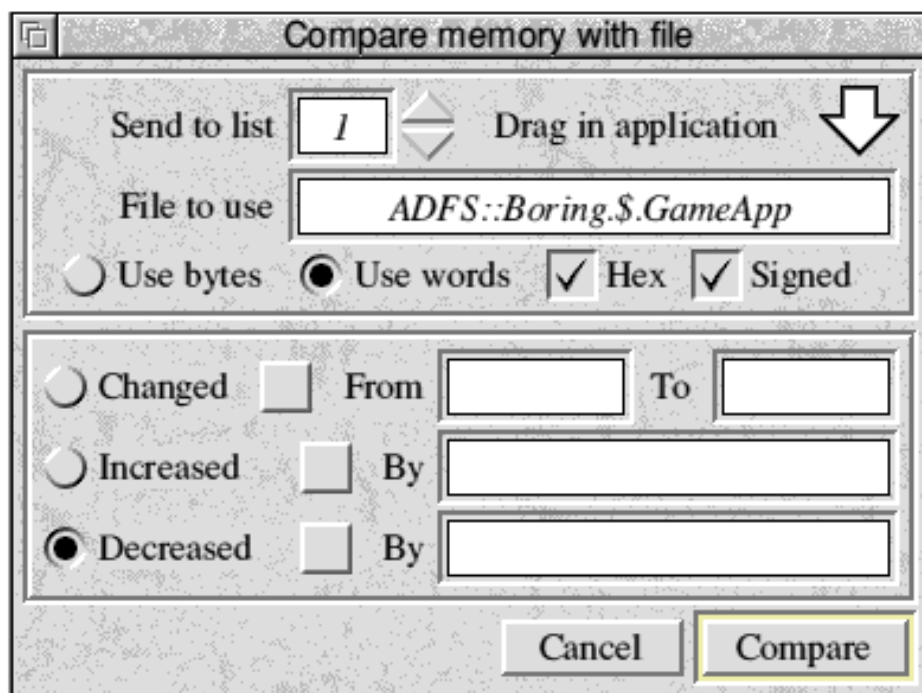


*Dave Harris writes:*

Doggysoft have overhauled The Hacker, and released it as Desktop Hacker with a 10 pound price tag. What is The Hacker, and why the new version?

The Hacker is a games hacker. It allows you to stop games midstream and either find and change memory values (increasing the number of lives for instance) or to save the screen display or whole program (to beat protection for instance). Once memory changes have been identified stand-alone Cheat Modules (CheatMods) can be created which can be loaded before the game and then apply the memory alteration using a special keystroke. You can thus have a CheatMod which adds five lives whenever you're getting low (or with more effort, stops you losing lives at all — you still die but start again with the same number of lives). It also allows you to slow down a game by a variable factor. These facilities have all been in the program for some time, so let's look at the new version.

Well, there are many changes to the program itself and in the documentation. Whereas the previous version almost dared games writers to challenge them the documentation with the new version is much more restrained. One could almost think that the program, and Doggysoft, have finally come of age. However, not too deep under the surface their traditional attitude remains, for example some gratuitous mud slinging against other developers in the Acorn marketplace.



*A fundamental dialogue box from Desktop Hacker...*

Turning now to the program, users of earlier versions will note several changes. CheatMods may now be edited, and are generated by a separate application (old CheatMods may be edited too).

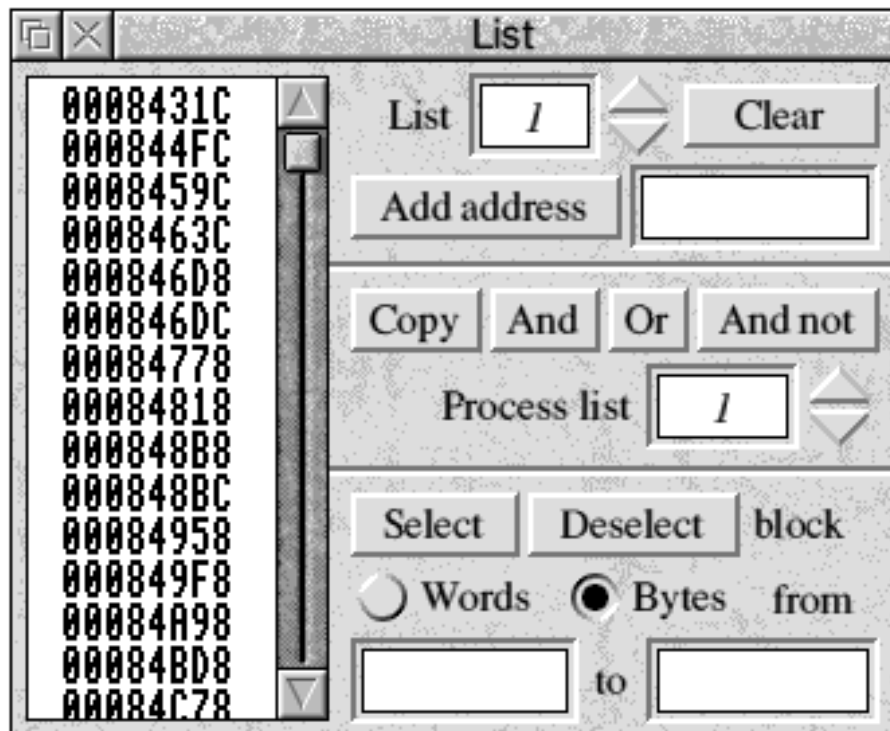
A game must now be run by dragging its icon onto that of Desktop Hacker. This new paradigm is necessary to allow the Desktop Hacker to know when a game is starting so that it can establish all of its various behind-the-scenes intercepts and traps.

As before the disc also contains a large number of prepared CheatMods and details about further games (password lists for instance). These are archived but a copy of the *SparkPlug* application is supplied so that they can be read.

Once the game is running a user-chosen key sequence (both Alt keys by default) will interrupt the game and return to the desktop. You may now perform quite a few operations upon the game in memory — searching it for values, saving it as it stands,

modifying values etc. Although the package as a whole makes little mention of piracy or defeating disc protection the save option at this point is a clear and obvious way to pirate a game. While a game is in this state it is extremely easy to work out where a game's critical variables are. Take for instance the

interception will simply not work and in others that game authors choose to defend their intellectual property rights by trying to prevent Desktop Hacker from working. However, to a user of the program they have a tool which permits, in most cases, things to be done that are simply impossible otherwise.



*Scanning for differences stored in memory*

number of lives. When you start playing you have two lives after the one currently in play, so you interrupt the game and search for a data word containing the value &00000002. You then return to the game, play some more, and deliberately lose a life so that you now have just one left. At that point you may interrupt the game again and perform another search amongst the locations which contained &00000002 before for ones which now contain &00000001. Doing this in practice took me about two minutes in total on one particular game.

Of course, a program like this must inevitably operate far more closely to the operating system than a typical application, and it is to be expected that in some cases its

In operation the program is predictable and largely bug free. It will inevitably fail sometimes, but that is usually a result of the task it is trying to accomplish rather than any coding fallibility on the part of the coding team. If you have no scruples, or just can't get past a particular part in a game, then this is the program to employ!

**Dave Harris**

*Desktop Hacker costs £10.00 including P&P from Doggysoft, 7 Blackhorse Crescent, Amersham, Bucks. HP6 6HP. An upgrade from The Hacker is available for £5.00 if you return your original disc along with a stamped addressed envelope.*



## ClipArt CD 2

*Review by Simon Burrows*

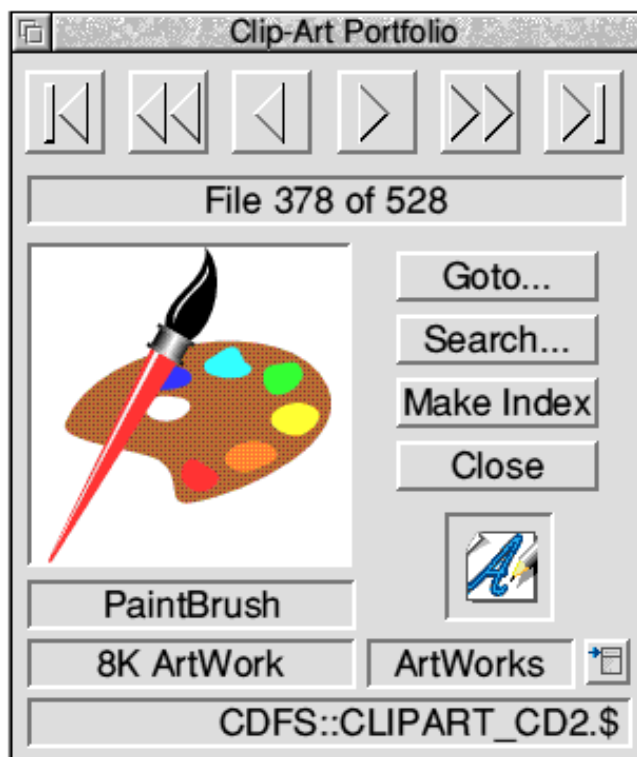
Exactly one year ago in Eureka 10 I reviewed the first ArtWorks ClipArt CD produced by Computer Concepts.

Following on from this year's successful ClipArt competition organised by Computer Concepts and Archimedes World magazine, CC has produced its second ClipArt CD.

The format and style of this new CD is virtually identical to the first CD — it contains over 500 ArtWorks files, many of which were entries in the ClipArt competition. The CD also holds over 100 24-bit colour images stored in Acorn sprite and TIFF format. A year ago these could only be appreciated with the use of a ColourCard or similar unless you were lucky enough to have access to a prototype Risc PC, now they can be fully appreciated by the many Risc PC owners or ColourCard users. Such files are so large that CD-ROM is really the only viable medium for distributing them in any quantity.



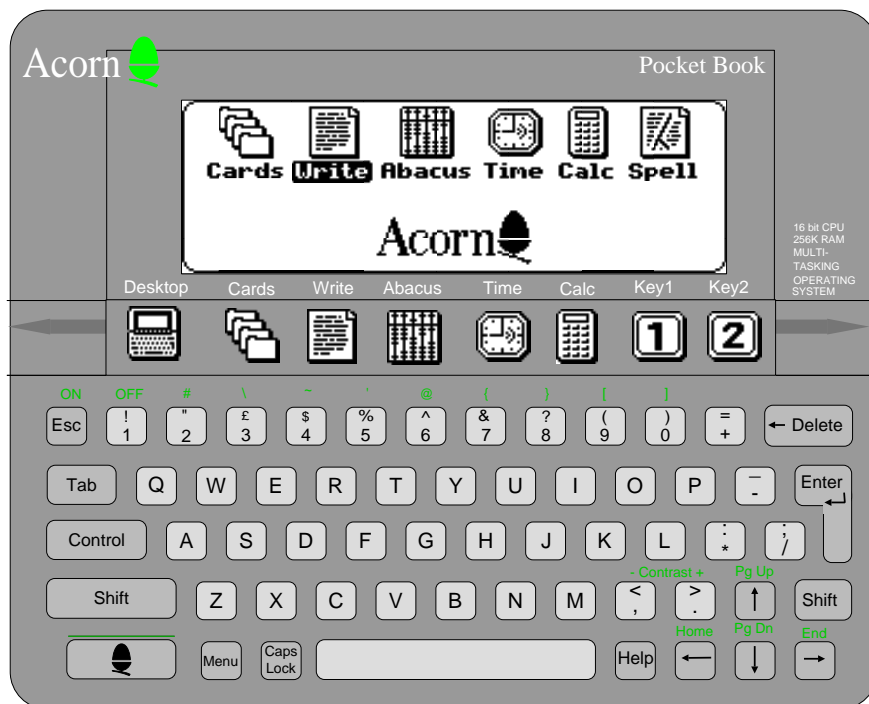
The CD-ROM contains the !Portfolio application as before (shown below) which makes it easy to browse through the large number of files supplied.



Also included are demonstration versions of several CC software packages, sample Matt Black clipart files and over 50MB of professional sound samples. A small number of files are duplicated from the first CD but the vast majority of material is new.

All in all, both of the ArtWorks ClipArt CDs offer excellent value for money priced at only £19.00 +VAT each. Purchasers are allowed to reproduce the images in any printed document and there are more than enough files for there to be something of interest to everyone.

**Simon Burrows**



# Pocket Book Corner

*Toby Smith presents his regular column on Acorn's smallest (adopted!) baby...*

Hello and welcome again to the first dedicated column for users of the Acorn Pocket Book and Pocket Book II (accept no alternatives!)

## Big Brother — The Pocket Book II

After a few requests from the readers, I'm going to briefly cover the features of Acorn's new addition to the Pocket Book range, the Pocket Book II:

Based on the Psion 3a the major physical difference between it and the older machine is the size and resolution of the screen. The new screen is  $480 \times 160$  pixels (compared with  $240 \times 80$  — twice the resolution) and can display grey (as opposed to just black & white) which does make a great difference in the quality of the display. The new machine comes with more memory (256K & 512K versions are available) and a higher speed serial link.

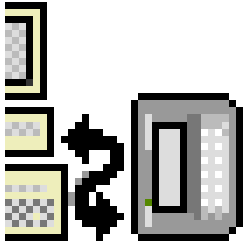
On the software front, not much has changed. Certain updates have been made to the usual applications to make use of the higher resolution screen. As well as Word, Abacus,

Cards & Calc, the Pocket Book II comes with Plotter (graph drawing program), the OPL programming language & Schedule (diary program) as standard (these are available as upgrades for the original Pocket Book). The version of Schedule is different from the upgrade Schedule in that it is basically a renamed version of the Psion Agenda application, whereas Schedule for the original Pocket Book was written from scratch.

The following comment on the Pocket Book II was received from Simon Burrows:

*I recently obtained a Pocket Book II computer and have been very pleased with it. The Pocket Book II is generally superior to the Psion Series 3a on which it is based due to the addition of extra software such as Plotter and Spell & Thesaurus.*

*The only omission, which may be very important to some users, is the lack of any passwording facilities on the Pocket Book range compared with the Psion range. This is because the Pocket Book II is intended for*



*classroom use, however for personal use the lack of password facilities makes it unwise to store any personal information on a Pocket Book which could*

*cause harm or embarrassment if lost or read by the wrong person.*

### **Batteries**

One of the major concerns of Pocket Book users is the efficiency of their batteries. Whilst the Pocket Book battery management system is incredibly efficient in its use of power, it is still true that certain brands perform better than others.

Therefore, a group of Psion 3 & 3a users, are carrying out a battery usage test, taking results from many different users, to find THE best battery for your machine. I'd like a bit of feedback from you readers too on this matter, to add to the information already being collected. If you can send details of the brand of battery you use, and how long they last (in terms of both time between changes, and elapsed time when the machine is switched on). Please also indicate if you A-Link heavily, as this does eat your batteries,

due to the entire process being powered from the Pocket Book. (I'm investing in a mains adapter for this purpose) Details should be sent to me at the FREEPOST address or by Email to pbc@nucleus.demon.co.uk. Thanks!

### *Pocket Books on the Internet:*

Once again, we've been carefully trawling the vast resources of the Internet to bring you a selection of free and useful programs. You will need an A-link to download these to your Pocket Book or Pocket Book II. Follow the instructions provided on the disc.

### *On The Disc:*

PhoneDay	App	PhoneDay tools from Psion
Printers	Data	Assorted new printer drivers
Sorter	App	Sorts Cards databases
GPlot	App	Functional graph plotter

**Toby Smith**

*Yet again this article was written entirely on an Acorn Pocket Book and transferred onto the Risc PC using an A-Link.*

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## **Albert's House**

*A program for young learners reviewed by Susan Bancroft*

Computer skills are now an essential requirement of the School syllabus. Even at Primary level, children are encouraged to become confident by learning to load and use programs, and by mastering the mouse. There is always a need for good teaching software in the classroom. *Albert's House* from Resource is an appealing new program, suitable for all Primary School year groups (age 4 – 7 years). Albert is a mouse who lives with an ordinary

The ARM Club Magazine page 53

family and a cat. It is usually helpful for small children to have a program built around a character, especially one with an “ahhhh” cute factor. We never see the family, but the cat lurks around, bearing a particularly fine set of sharp teeth. The house is a stereotypical solid image — detached, four large windows, front door and garden.

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The computer is used to explore Albert's house and as a means of playing with him. There are five different learning activities in the program. The manual comments that "Children are good at looking but have difficulty in seeing". A strength of the program is that it progresses through the child observing details and remembering where items can be found.

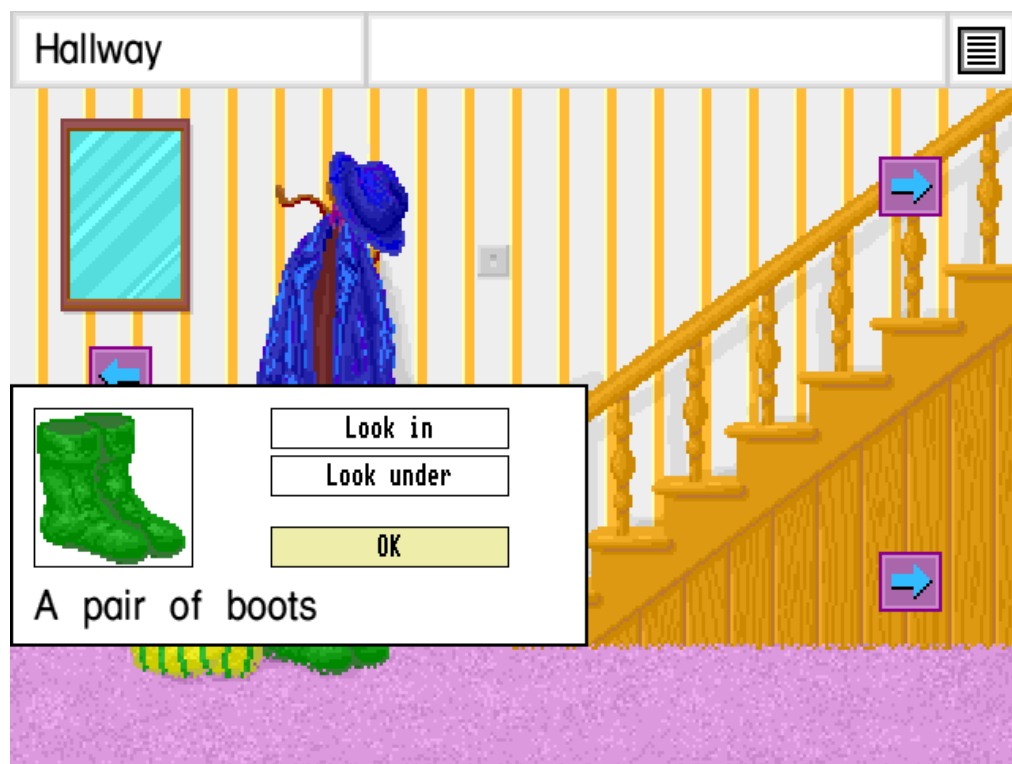
*Explore Albert's House* is an introductory section to explore the internal geography of the house.

We enter through the front door and move from room to room by clicking on arrows set inside a box. Beginners often find it difficult to manipulate the mouse, so it is helpful to have large graphics. Level 1 explores the upstairs bedroom and bathroom. Level 2 allows access to two further bedrooms and downstairs, a living room, hall and kitchen.



*The title screen showing Albert's House*

*Search Albert's House* examines the various rooms and their contents in detail. The finger pointer now changes to an eye. There is the repetition of entry through the front door and the same method of moving from room to room. Clicking on items may reveal further options to investigate inside, behind or beneath. For example, the hall table drawer shows a Yellow Pages directory.



*The graphics are colourful and clear yet simple*

This is used to humorous effect, when the bedroom mirror gives back the reflection of children's faces with the caption "Look it's you!" On the other hand, I doubt the wisdom of putting a monster under the bed that looks like a refugee from Alien 2..

All the items are labelled in a clear, large font. This is an obvious bonus for those just learning to read. Resource provide a

master sheet of words and pictures for classroom work. Another feature is the grandfather clock in the hall. It will display the current time as long as the computer's clock is set accurately. If you click on it, you will get a close up of the clock face and the time displayed in figures. The grandfather's clock song will also begin to play merrily.

*Hide and Squeak* is an option where children can play a game with each other. One child places Albert somewhere in the house and another child has to find him. This is done in two stages.

1. Hiding Albert. Having selected this option, the pointer will have Albert mouse attached to it. When you have found your chosen hiding place, then you click on "Hide Albert Mouse". Some locations, such as the washing machine, will not allow you to hide him. I guess Resource are considering the safety aspect, even in a make-believe game.

2. Finding Albert. Once you have hidden Albert, the outside view will be displayed with a mousemeter. This is a hot / cold bar that will indicate by the length of red bar whether you are near the hidden mouse.

*Just Squeak* is a similar game, but this time the computer will hide Albert for you.

All these games will be suitable for Reception and Year 1 children to play easily. The options are clearly set out and easily accessed. It is frustrating to be stuck within a level in some other games, with no easy method of escape. Teachers would be able to leave children to play this unsupervised, which in itself is a confidence booster.

*Save Albert Mouse* is a little adventure game

for the Year 2 children to figure out. Albert needs the player's help to make his escape from the cat. He is stuck in the back garden and needs to get his Kat Kit from the mousehole. However, the player is too big to get inside the mousehole and the Kat Kit is firmly tied up..

This is where the child's observation and memory are exercised. Hidden items revealed in other levels must now be collected, aided by clues from Albert. A cookie from the jar will shrink the player to the right size to get into the mousehole. You also need a key, scissors and a hat. A hat? To hide under on your escape or the cat will eat you up, of course.. The journey back to Albert under the hat is hindered, because there is a limited view of where you are going. Again, this is a test of memory. Any wrong moves and the cat appears with a fierce yowl guaranteed to make the player jump out of their skin.

This program would be a good investment for a Primary School because it has the unusual advantage of being suitable for each year group. Albert is a very attractive character who would motivate the children to make the most of the program. The colours, graphics and music are particularly clear, bright and cheerful. The National Curriculum contains a section on housing and the environment, so this could be included as part of the project or enjoyed in its own right.

**Susan Bancroft**

*Albert's House is available from Resource, 51, High Street, Kegworth, Derby DE74 2DA. Tel 01509 672222. Ask for their full catalogue of educational resources. Site licence costs £45.00.*

# THE PD SCENE

The PD column this edition starts off with the good news that Andi Flower has re-written the PD catalogue. The PD Library now has a catalogue program that is Desktop compatible and seems to be devoid of serious bugs (all reports that prove me wrong to the FREEPOST address please). It is not at the moment, however, RISC OS 2 compatible. This is only to be expected as Acorn have stopped supporting even RISC OS 3.00. For those members with RISC OS 2 you should either upgrade your operating system or de-archive the catalogue program onto a newly formatted disc, press SHIFT and double click on the application with the Select mouse button. The text files are located in the 'Files' directory and can be loaded into !Edit.

The different categories can be accessed by clicking on the arrow to be found in the top right-hand corner of the window which springs up when placing the pointer over the ARM icon on the icon bar. You will notice that there are a few new categories available which will be expanded upon in the following months.

The programs on this disc have been chosen because they were all programs specifically asked for by people visiting The ARM Club stand at the Acorn World show in October. This is why the programs have not necessarily been written by Club members.

As usual do not expect all the programs to work from within an archive. You should de-archive the programs onto a floppy disc, all of which should work from that medium.

## *The latest Eureka Magazine Disc described by Nick Evans*

The disc contains the *Interface* module which I unfortunately omitted from the last disc. It was needed by *MemoryPie*.

*AppDock2* is an application dock program which is similar to backdrop utilities, in that it allows application icons to be arranged in a nice way and the applications to be started without having to deal with directory windows. The design is similar to the Application Dock that forms part of the NeXT Step system on NeXT computers. Hence the name I guess *Banner* and *BanEd* were inspired by a plea in for a program that will display banners for a pre-determined time just like *Impression* does. The brief stated the need to display a sprite on the desktop with the ability to overlay text in any font and at any size upon the sprite.

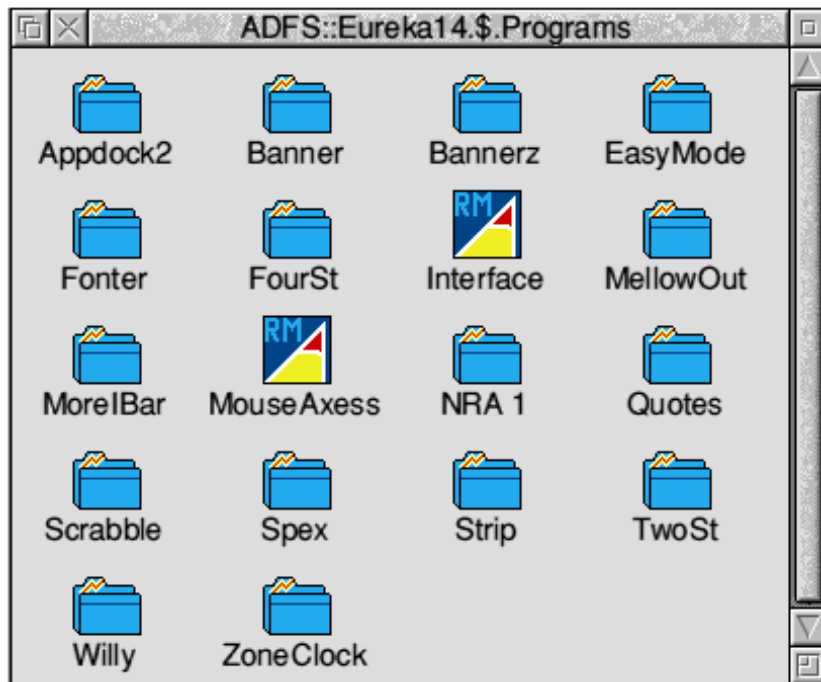
*Bannerz* is a selection of RISC OS 3.00 + Desktop Welcome banners. To use them, you must load in the modules before the desktop starts. If you follow the instructions carefully all should work out well. It is nice to be able to personalise your start-up screen.

*EasyMode* is a short program which can be used in place of the RISC OS 3.5 display manager. *EasyMode* provides everything implemented by the display manager, except for the loading of new monitor definition files, and adds keyboard shortcuts and a new way of selecting modes. It is only suitable for the Risc PC.

*Fonter* allows you to (easily) adjust the spacing between letters in outline fonts.

*FourSt* and *TwoSt* are simple demos of 4 and 2 stroke engines respectively.

*Mellow Out* is a screen saver and will give your monitor a change of scenery. You can choose what scenery to change it to by dropping an IotaFilm file (type C2A) on the icon bar icon.



*The software directory on the disc*

*MorelBar* is a response to a discussion on the comp.sys.acorn newsgroup (and a recurring one at that) about the tedium of having to scroll the icon bar to get at filer icons — the complaint being that it takes too much time. More Icon bar solves that problem by giving you a second icon bar that you can “roll up”, and scroll with a real scroll bar, so you can keep it permanently scrolled to see all those filer icons.

*MouseAxess* is a module which allows you to move windows around easily. To use the module double-click on it, press f12, type Help Mouseaxess and read the Help file which shows up in the CLI window. *NRA 1* contain Style documents which help you write the National Record of Achievement

pages for that lovely folder.

*Quotes* is a small utility to replace neutral quotes (e.g. “”) by smart quotes (e.g. “”), on the fly, as you type. It avoids having to resort to the numeric keypad (ALT-148 and ALT-149 for open and closed double quotes respectively) or other obscure key-combinations (CTRL-SHIFT-[ and ] in Impression).

*Scrabble* is a desktop Scrabble game. There is no Help file but it is very straightforward to use. *Spex* is an interactive help program, sometimes known as a textfile reader. *Strip* is a program designed to remove any leading or trailing spaces from a text file. *Willy* is a version of the Jet Set Willy game so beloved by Spectrum users in the Dark Ages.

*ZoneClock* provides an International clock for your RISC OS DeskTop. It utilises routines from the Timezones program from the June 1990 issue of BBC Acorn User to convert between the different timezones. Just what you need if you’re going on one of those exotic Thompson’s holidays.

The directory *PRMvol5* contains a textfile produced by Acorn containing a list of known errata and omissions for the RISC OS 3 Programmer’s Reference Manual. This information is contained in the new *Risc PC PRM Volume 5* but Acorn has thoughtfully made the information freely available. Anybody can distribute the file provided the conditions contained in the licence agreement are adhered to.

**Nick Evans, PD Librarian**

# REVIEW

## Sim City 2000

*Andi Flower finds his true vocation as a town planner...*

Krisalis are well known for their excellent conversions from other platforms to Acorn machines. However, with the likes of Gamesware (Simon The Sorcerer) and the new Powerslave (Wolfenstein 3D), can they keep their place in the market? Sim City 2000 has been around for quite some time on the PC market and

## The Winter Games Zone

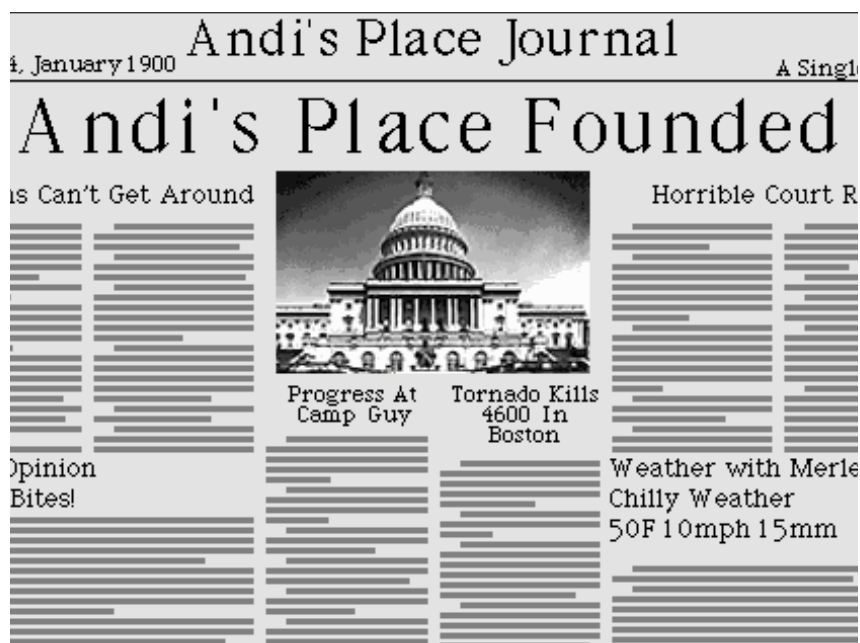
Welcome to the biggest ever Games Zone, so much so that a couple of reviews have had to be postponed until the next issue of Eureka.

Acorn World '94 brought a flood of new games releases, many of which are covered in the coming pages. It is really exciting to see so many new games being released for the Archimedes and Risc PC — this would suggest confidence on the part of games developers that the 486PC Card for the Risc PC will not kill off sales of native Archimedes games.

The main new title which isn't covered here is Simon the Sorcerer published by GamesWare. This is a great pity since our testers seem to like it a lot, however our reviewer was unable to make the deadline at the last minute due to personal circumstances. A full review will appear in Eureka 15, by which time GamesWare expects to have a CD version available with added features. Arcturus from Oregon will also be covered.

Please keep writing in to us with your opinions, suggestions for reviews, high scores and hints & tips.

• The Games Zone • FREEPOST ND6573 •  
• London • N12 0BR •







*Sim City 2000 uses a Windows (TM) style interface*

just like the original it made a big splash when it was released. Now Krisalis have brought the pleasures of being both God and Mayor to your Acorn screen with their conversion. The first thing that I noticed about Sim City 2000 is that it is only available for the A5000 and Risc PC. This is obviously because of the extra processing power, high screen resolutions and hard disk space required for the game to run successfully.

I got home and opened the box (which incidentally looks rather smart) to find that the game comes on two high density disks (another reason for the machine restrictions) and has what is probably the biggest manual that I have ever seen for an Acorn game! The

installation routine for the game is quite impressive and very simple to use indeed. Once installed I double clicked on the !SC2000 icon and waited. Selecting the Create New City option generates a completely new landscape and then brings up the edit window and toolboxes. The first thing that you need to do is select the difficulty level and give your city a name. Then you need to study the map (which is now 3 dimensional and has hills for you to cope with) and select a place to start your dwelling.

Okay, so far there has been very little different to the original Sim City (except for the graphics), but now you get into the actual city building. The first thing that your city will need is power and therefore you need to

build a power station. Simple you might think but it isn't. You no longer have the easy choice of coal or nuclear but a choice of three types to start with (coal, hydro-electric and oil) and more which will be invented as time passes!

Not all of the buildings that you allocate space for will be specified in size by the game and others can be allocated any amount of space from one tile upwards. This allows for great simplicity of development and you can easily fill all of the available space with the city. There are far more things which are required by the residents of your simulated city than there ever were in the original game. You are now required to build Highways, Bus Depot's and tunnels as well as just roads. There are subway stations and normal railway stations which must be positioned effectively in order for your city to succeed. Of course you still need to connect these station with rail and subway links!

You must not forget to supply your city residents with water as you are now required to build pumps and pipe systems to supply all of the buildings.

As if all this wasn't enough, the residents of your city will even complain if they think that you are going to place something nasty near where they live (like a water treatment plant or coal power station). Of course you can still place the item there (the game does not stop you) but, to put it bluntly, you would be well advised to listen to your residents as they will soon move out if you don't do as they want.

You may be wondering where your residents come from and go to. Well another new feature to Sim City 2000 is the addition of surrounding cities each of which can have an

influence on your place of abode. You can build all kinds of connection to these surrounding cities (including road, highway and rail) and then you have both the benefits (people can move in) and the drawbacks (people can move out) of external connections.

Virtually all of the tools within Sim City 2000 have this kind of diversity about them and this gives it a huge playing appeal. Many things are invented as the time passes during the game and the local newspaper informs you of such events. Things that are invented include : Subway systems, buses, highways, water treatment and many types of new power station. There are also things called Arcologies which are effectively cities within cities.

The graphics within the game are absolutely excellent, buildings are extremely varied and differ in size greatly. The sound effects are also very good (the music does get annoying rather quickly though) and there is even sampled speech included for some effects.

Unfortunately there is far too much of interest in Sim City 2000 to fit into this review. All I can say is that it would make a top notch purchase for anyone who owns a machine on which they can play it and if you liked the original then you must buy this (even if it means upgrading your machine to an A5000 or Risc PC in order to play it!).

**Andi Flower**

*Sim City 2000 is available for the A5000 and Risc PC only. Price £39.99 inc VAT from Krisalis Software Ltd, Teque House, Masons Yard, Downs Row, Moorgate, Rotherham, S60 2HD. Tel 01709 372290.*

# Wolfenstein 3D

*Andrew Clover indulges himself in a mindlessly violent bit of fun...*

Even the most reclusive Acorn hermit must have heard of Wolfenstein. It, and its successor *Doom*, has taken the PC games market by storm over the last few years. Over in the PC market, *Doom 2* has by now been released, so Wolfenstein is pretty old news. Still, better late than never, we now have Wolfenstein 3D and all of its six missions available on the Acorn platform.

Once through the nicely presented intro and menu screens, you are placed in a cell somewhere in Castle Wolfenstein, and the first mission (or episode) is your escape. Your perspective on the surroundings is a convincing 3D view of fully texture-mapped walls (that is, they have patterns on them rather than being merely blocks of colour), with some 2D scaled items scattered around the rooms to add variety. This approach is by now not all that novel, even to the Acorn market, with last year's *The Dungeon* using a similar (and actually somewhat superior) system. You run around this environ-

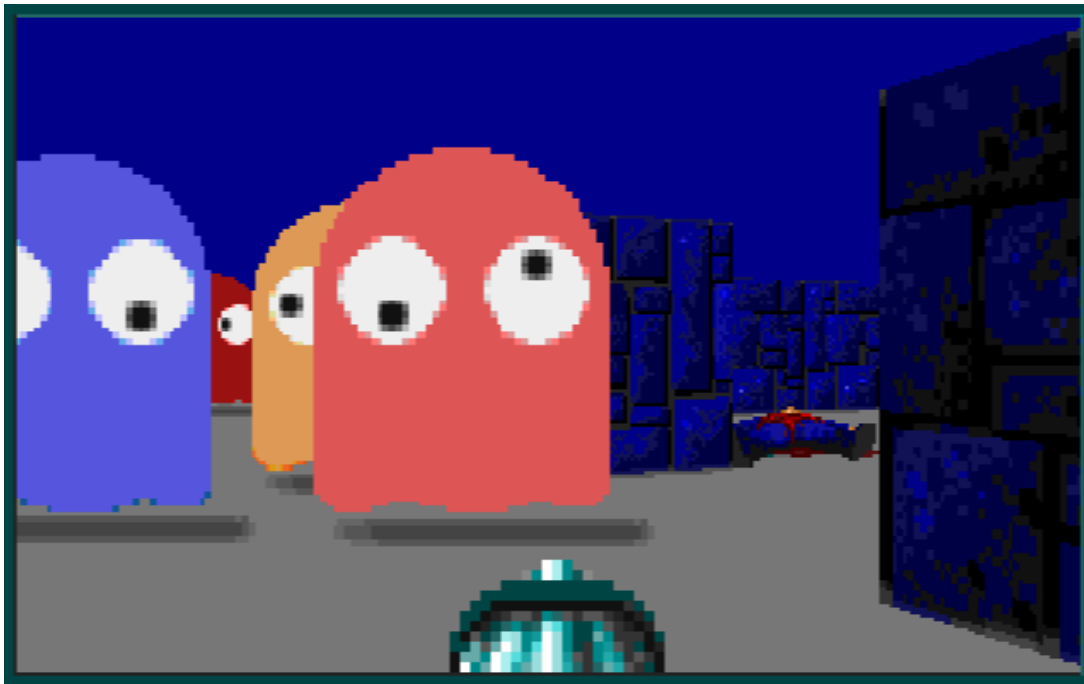
ment, collecting keys, opening doors, and pushing walls to find secret areas, until you find the lift, and exit to the next level. At the same time, you are stashing vast quantities of Nazi gold in your pockets for bonus points.

This all sounds fairly mundane until I mention that the rooms are packed full of Nazi soldiers, SS men, dogs and genetic mutants, all intent on seeing you reduced to a small red stain on the floor. Against them you have only a knife and a gun with limited ammunition — the way to gain more ammunition and weaponry, and to avoid an extremely short game, is to kill people. A lot.



*It's a subtle and thought-provoking game. With pots of blood.*

So off you go, charging out of the first door, and immediately getting shot in the back by a pair of Nazis. One soon learns to peek out of doors timidly, and stand back against the walls. The ominous sound effects of guards shouting and doors being opened also contribute to the very tense, exciting atmosphere that the game conveys, involving the player very well. This is in addition one of the few games that leaves the bodies lying around, very handy when trying to see where you've already been.



*The Nazis' use of PacMan ghosts in World War II is a well-documented but little known fact.*

Castle Wolfenstein consists of ten floors. After you've reached the tenth, defeated the obligatory Big Nasty and escaped, that's only the start of it: there are six missions in all, each harder than the last, each with its own plot and related Big Nasty, and each with ten levels, more if you count the secret bonus floors. This gives over sixty levels to negotiate, and one of the main problems with Wolfenstein: all the levels are more or less the same. Apart from the Big Nasties, there are only about five different types of baddie, all of which you have met by the start of the

second episode. There are few different wall textures, again all discovered early on, and the square grid of the map does make the most of the rooms look very similar to each other. This means that the only incentive to get further in the game is to see the next Big Nasty sequence. That is, apart from simply wanting to play the game for fun; it **is** great fun to run around blasting holes in Nazis, even when you've played the same level many times before.

The only other big drawback is that the graphics themselves (rather than the way in which they are displayed) don't really help with the impression of realism that gives the game its atmosphere. They **are** very well drawn. However, they're very blocky too, especially when close up. It's a shame, but the game is already

showing its age. The music is also pretty primitive, with no samples at all, just the RISC OS built-in 'beep' voice. It's generally not too bad if you ignore this — the title pieces would otherwise have been rather good — although some of the in-game music is a bit ropery.

As for speed, Wolfenstein is excellent. On an ARM3 machine or a Risc PC, you couldn't want for a smoother game. ARM 2 and ARM250 users get a frame rate that, to Risc PC-owning snobs like this reviewer, is

only acceptable. It is, though, possible to get more speed by making the game window smaller than the impressive near-full-screen default. The rest of the screen is filled with the usual score and lives, along with an animated self-portrait of the player. As one gets riddled with bullets, the face becomes more damaged, scarred, and bleeding, until death occurs. This is one great touch of many in the game.

In conclusion, this is a gloriously and mindlessly violent bit of fun, certainly worth the money. Buy it today; tomorrow, write to Powerslave Software demanding a conversion of Doom.

**Andrew Clover**

*Wolfenstein 3D costs £30.00 inc VAT from all good games suppliers or direct from Powerslave Software, PO Box 175, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 6RD.*

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## E-Type 2 — The Pink Lady

*Matt Aldridge gets in the hot seat and finds it to be an E-Typical experience!*

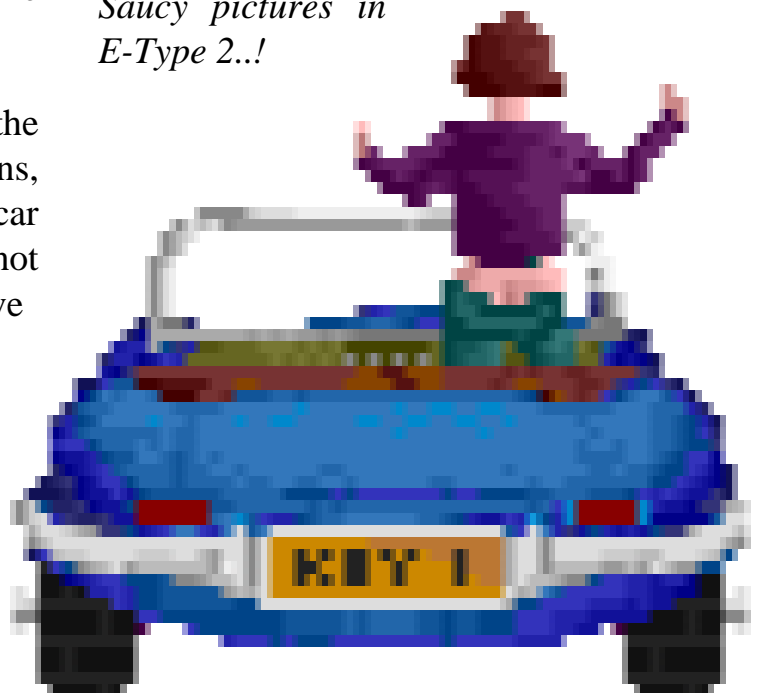
Well here is the sequel to what has now become one of the “old classic” games of the Acorn scene. Usually one would hope for a good sequel to have all the successful features of the original and to have a lot more to make it superior to its predecessor.

4D have taken no risks on the first of these points — the driving experience has very much the same “floor it and hope” feel to it, although this is slightly marred by the engine overheating when you go too fast!

The graphics are also very familiar with the only major differences being explosions, tunnels, weather variations and the whole car rising up when you hit a solid obstacle, not just the driver! I think that 4D may have taken the “sequel” part of the game a little too far as the graphics now look out of date when compared with the likes of Lotus or even Saloon Cars. The sound used is very similar to the original and the “...roar of the 5.3 litre 12 cylinder engine”, quoting the blurb of the original, is as unconvincing now as it was then.

The game can be simply installed onto your hard disc, but asks you to insert disc one upon loading for authentication. If you are not fortunate enough to have a hard disc then the game will run quite happily from the two supplied floppies, although you do have to open a filer window for the second disc and manually drag the tracks directory to the E-Type 2 iconbar icon. This is mildly annoying

*Saucy pictures in E-Type 2..!*



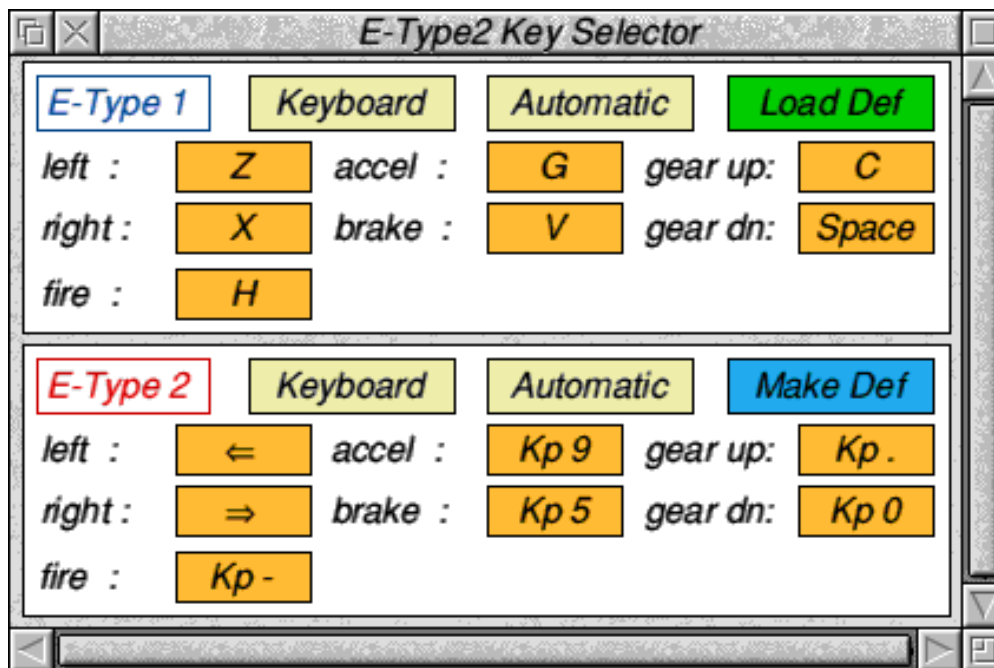


but it does provide for the simple use of your own tracks — see later.

When the game is loaded options are set in the desktop. You can choose which of the six installed tracks you wish to drive on and there are four game type options: one player (blue or pink car); two player mode which is a simple race to the finish against the clock; and pursuit mode, in which the tracks repeat endlessly until the time limit, the objective being to outlive your opponent. Other configuration options are to set player names and types (computer or human), and to redefine the keys or select mouse control — no joystick support appears to be provided.

Various tools have been provided to aid you in your mission to destroy your opponent's "£70,000 worth of gleaming E-Type" — you can laser it, put an oil slick in front of it, or even cover its windscreen with soot! These facilities are available by collecting the relevant token from the centre of the road as you drive along. Other objects which hinder your progress are the same old Porsches, Minis, JCBs and unfortunate policemen, but this time the police get their own back if you drive through a speed trap above fifty without a "radar blocker" — you receive a ten or thirty second time penalty.

Gameplay has generally been slightly improved on over the original game, I enjoyed lasering everything that got in my way for a while, and how the weather



*Keys can be selected from the desktop frontend*

conditions affected how the car held the road but this novelty soon wore off. Clearly the main advantage of this game is its two player mode. I found the computer driver to be rather too poor, it would often die very early on in the higher skill levels, but gameplay is quite fun with another human. The game does not, however, provide either the great suspense of Lotus or the excitement of Stunt Racer. Another misfortune is that the two player mode used is crunched up at the top of the screen on the Risc PC and if you expand it you lose the top of the picture.

When you have completed the six tracks provided (or given up, as the later ones are quite challenging), a very simple track compiler is provided — simple in implementation, not in use. Basically, in order to design a track you have to describe it in a simple language using a text editor. The tracks are built up of very short bands and each band must be defined and then compiled by placing a C at its end in the text file. As an example FINE,W 255,L 1,R 8,I 0,B 0,S 67,C defines a band with no rain or

snow, maximum width, colour 1 track left, colour 8 track right (colour numbers are displayed by the track compiler), no incline, a tunnel entrance and then compiles that band. Subsequent bands will retain these characteristics unless they are changed before the next C command is encountered. The supplied sprites can be re-used or you can create your own with a sprite editor. This whole process does seem quite daunting at first, but it can be done quite easily with some enthusiasm. Unfortunately most users will probably not be enthusiastic enough to try it.

The manual mentioned that an example track definition file was to be found on the third disc. Having received only two discs with the review copy I checked with 4D and it turns out that the game has been compressed onto two discs, and that the example file is no longer included — although they claim that they will send it to anyone on request. Also the manual does not appear to describe how to define a speed trap.

So to sum up, if you are a die hard E-Type fan then I would definitely buy E-Type 2. If you were never too impressed by E-Type then you will be even less impressed by its



successor. It is however a reasonable two player pastime, and it will probably keep the children amused for a few hours. If this game was to have been a success it would have needed a major revamp and this has simply not been done — the whole package gives the impression that it has been rushed and if the native Acorn games scene is to retain credibility it will need much better quality products than this.

**Matt Aldridge**

*E-Type 2 costs £34.95 inc VAT (special offers sometimes available) from The Fourth Dimension, 1 Percy Street, Sheffield, S3 8AU. Tel 0114 276 9950 or 0114 270 0661.*

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## Competition

Welcome to our new Competition section, we hope to feature a competition for members in each issue of Eureka with a top game or other item of software as prize for the winner.

The object of this issue's competition is to produce the longest list of commercial games to have been released for the Archimedes or Risc PC. This is defined as any game sold with a price tag exceeding £4.99. Only the game title is required unless the game is an unusual one, in which case the publisher's name should be included. Entries must be submitted, typed on paper, on or before 28th

The ARM Club Magazine page 65

February 1995, addressed to Competition Page, The ARM Club, FREEPOST ND6573, London N12 0BR. The prize will be a copy of Arcturus, the new game from Oregan worth £25.00!

Committee members & their families are not allowed to enter. No correspondence will be entered into, the opinion of the judges is final. The winner will be notified by post and his or her name published in Eureka 15. If you would like to devise a competition, quiz, wordsquare or crossword for a future issue, please let us know.

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It's been a while since TBA brought out any new software: we haven't seen anything from them since the widely-acclaimed Axis. Now, however, they've started releasing a flurry of games, of which Formula Two Thousand is probably the most impressive to date.

FTT is a racing game set in the future, where hi-tech cars tear around strangely twisting tracks in deep space. This means that you're not limited to the normal two-dimensional left-right movement of earth-bound racing games, but you have two more directions to cope with: up and down.

### *Adrian Jackson plays the latest offering from TBA Software.*

By the looks of things, TBA have spent a lot of time thinking about presentation. This game is just dripping with style all the way through. For a start, unlike Axis, it can be installed onto a hard drive — it still requires disk one to run, but not having to swap discs every time you start a game more than makes up for this minor inconvenience. It loads onto the icon bar, and it's when you click on that icon that things start to get impressive. A full-screen gold logo spins into place, then fades out. In comes the

music, and you get your first real demonstration of what the programming crew at TBA can do. In the background a track from the game hurtles past, with a rotating texture-mapped cube hanging over it. In the foreground messages exhorting you to play the game appear and then fly past.

If you obey the messages and start the game then you're in for even more visual treats. It would have been so easy to have a



*Bob gives a reassuring rundown of the history of the team you're volunteering to race for...*

simple point and click selector to choose which team to race with, but what you get is a 3D wheel, with the team logos mapped onto it. Choose a team and you get details of how the car handles, the history of the team, and a picture of the car spinning in the background. I don't recall ever having seen a game this well presented on the Arc before, including conversions.

Once you have a team selected, you see the Channel 7 team arriving at the planet around which you will be racing, which range from a simple ball of rock to an enormous space station. Then it's into the studio, where your hosts Bob and Ted are waiting to start the show. Ted is a short squat green thing on caterpillar tracks, wearing a collar and tie. Bob is a tall purple thing in a Hawaiian shirt. On the earlier planets the dialogue between these two is strictly business-like, but as you progress things get a bit more heated. ("Look Bob, I haven't got any hands. I never have had any hands and never will have. Just don't rub it in all the time.")

Then you're into the game itself, with your car placed on the top of the pipe that serves as a track. A 'Prepare to race' banner circles the track, and you're off! To stay on the track at any speed you have to keep your car on the inside of every bend, and although the first temptation is just to hold down the

accelerator and thrust and steer as and when you reach corners you'll see the error of your ways as you hurtle off the first corner into space. This is the sort of game where you really do need to have a fairly good idea of how the track is set out before you can start doing well.



*Follow the green twisty road...*

Make it through the qualifying lap without running out of time and you have qualified for the race itself: four laps around the track against nine other cars of the twenty in the championship. Although the time limit is present as in the qualifying lap, the real race is against the other cars: if you finish in sixth place or better you gain some championship points - if you don't, then it's game over.

So far I've been fairly positive about the game, but while I was playing it there were a few small complaints. The first thing to annoy me was the lap times of the opposing

cars. The qualifying times for the cars range from 1:10 to 1:55. But when it comes to the race itself, the cars almost all finish in under 1:15. It would have been nice if the qualifying times had reflected their skill a bit more. It would have been even nicer if the qualifying times had not always been exactly the same round numbers, but perhaps I'm being a bit picky there.

Secondly, the game is not as playable on an ARM2 machine. It runs at a slower frame rate, and you seem to have less control. It's still possible, but it's frustratingly difficult, and I'd suggest owners of older machines try it before buying.

Finally, and most worryingly, the game starts off fairly difficult, and gets increasingly easy rather than the other way round. The fault doesn't lie with the tracks, which get more and more convoluted as you travel through the five planets in the FTT season. It lies with the other drivers, who can cope with any corner that they can take at full speed, but as soon as it's a question of

slowing down for a sharp bend they cheerily sail off the track. As the tracks get increasingly difficult, there are more of these corners, and by the end all you have to do is make sure you stay on the track and don't run out of time and you're almost guaranteed a win.

That said, this is a game that strongly deserves a place in your collection. Visually it's impressive, as far as presentation goes it's unsurpassed, and it's a fun game as well. Just don't expect it to last you all that long. It seems that TBA will be producing more games with the TAG engine they used in FTT — if this first effort is anything to go by then they're going to be well worth looking out for.

**Adrian Jackson**

*FTT costs £24.99 inc VAT from TBA Software, Mead Farm, North Road, Timsbury, Bath, Avon BA3 1JH. Tel 01761 47003. Also available from all usual games suppliers.*

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# Star Fighter 3000

*James Moore takes to the air and likes the feeling*

Upon opening the package my eyes fell on a small box. On the front cover was a picture of the likes seen in the 1980's which portrayed excellent graphics, superb 8-bit mono sound and gameplay that would set your socks on fire. There was then the inevitable disappointment when you looked on the back cover and saw "Space Invaders". However, this time upon looking on the back there were lovely polygon graphics with breathtaking shots of your ship and action that looks incredible. Was it too good to be

true? In this case, no it wasn't, Star Fighter 3000 is brilliant.

The plot of Star Fighter is similar to that of Stunt Racer 2000 in that you are a contestant on FedNet, playing your way through this gameshow completing missions to keep FedNet on the air. So now on to the most exciting part .... the game.

Upon starting the game you are given an outside rear view of your ship sitting on a



planet looking suspiciously like Earth. By using the standard keys for gameplay (no redefine available) you can get your ship to fly about the planet shooting everything. Every time you blow something up some credits appear which you can pick up. This will give you more money to spend in the shop (more about that later). The graphics are very quick and the ground flows past, only slowing down when something explodes (on an Arm3 A5000). The sound is quite good with enough to keep you happy, but not enough to annoy you. There is no in-game music but there is music between levels and quite good it is too!



The levels in Starfighter are arranged in a pyramid with you starting off with mission 1 right at the bottom, working up to the later levels at the top. There are three levels of difficulty; easy, medium and hard. The missions will change in each setting giving a

huge 108 missions to complete. The first missions are dead easy allowing you to get control of your ship and to learn how to fight with dogfight practices and simple missions. The missions soon get harder however, and pretty soon you're battling for your life.

Lucky for you, you have some help on missions with a mothership and sometimes friendly fighters. The mothership is your life line. At the end of missions you dock with the mothership to complete the level, and during the heat of the battle docking will allow you to repair and go to the shop. The friendly fighters are also very useful and it's nice to encounter a game where you have some help instead of just you versus everybody else in the universe. You can order these fighters to attack an airborne target or to protect you in your hour of need.



*The graphics are excellent.. but difficult to make into screenshots!*

Against you are satellites, aircraft carriers, submarines, warships, fighters, ground guns and just about everything else that's nasty and goes bump in the night. One of the best things about Starfighter is that you are not restricted to Atmospheric flight. Yes, you can also shoot up into space and fly around at great speeds in safety (unless you meet a space station), and then fly down on your target in true Star Wars style.

Starfighter also has a shop which allows you to buy extra lasers, shields, engine, air to air missiles, air to ground missiles, ECM system etc etc. To pay for these you must use the aforementioned credits which you pick up when you blow some poor enemy unit sky high. You can only access the shop either between levels or while docked on the mothership. There is also a map which can be accessed at any time showing where you are, where the enemy are and all the landscape (should you wish). I found that this map could be a little bit confusing with so much flashing on the screen at one time, but it really is a small point.

The missions in Starfighter vary from escorting a ship to blowing up your TV enemy's broadcasting space station. There is a huge variety and the missions get tough enough to give the best game player a long but fun game. Each level is accessed by a password although personally I would have preferred to have save player, because when you restart the game with the password all of the equipment that you have slaved to buy is gone. This can be very frustrating at the best of times!

Everything said, Starfighter is a superb game and is highly recommended. However if anyone from FedNet is reading, how about a serial link option? This game is well worth the money. Buy it for the flight of a lifetime!

**James Moore**

*Star Fighter 3000 costs £29.95 inc VAT from FedNet, 66 Park Road, Duffield, Derbyshire, DE56 4GR or any good games supplier.*

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## **CANNON FODDER**

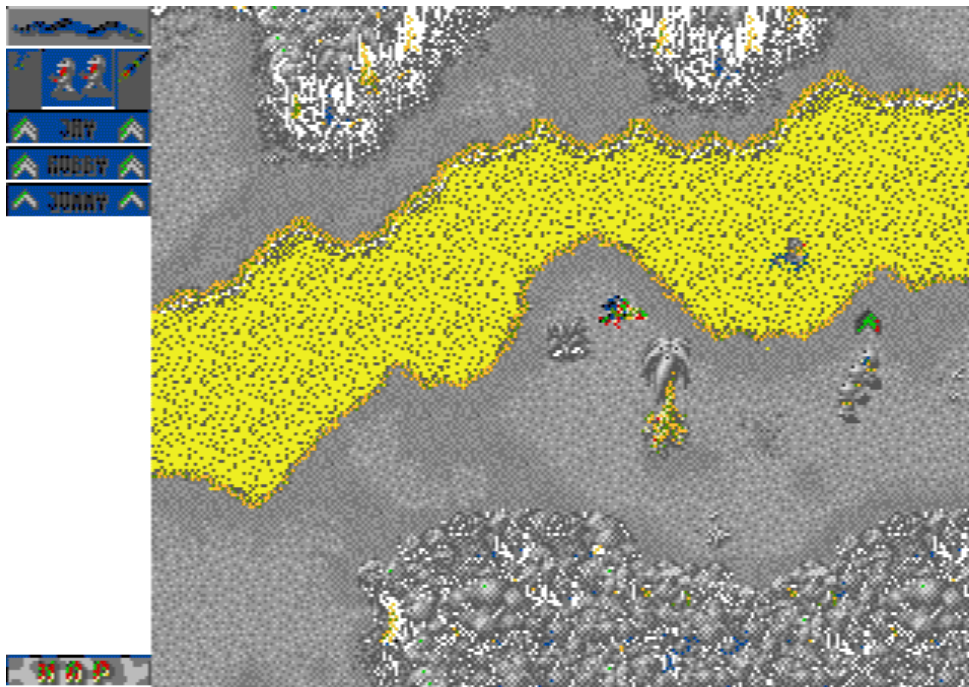
*War has never been so much fun... with Toby Smith*

Have you ever fancied commanding a troop of willing volunteers? Have you ever revelled at the thrill of all out attack warfare? No? Neither have I.

Having said which, I rather enjoyed Krisalis Software's latest conversion, Cannon Fodder. The basic principle of the game is that you are put in command of a bunch of rookie soldiers, and guide them through a series of missions indiscriminately shooting opposition soldiers & buildings.

You are given a sort of slightly raised sideways aerial view of the battle field (look at the screenshots to see what I mean!), and move your men about with the mouse, hopefully avoiding trees, walls and so on. The graphics are very lemmings-esque: small and low coloured, but incredibly detailed and very good. Some people have commented that the graphics display better on the Acorn than on the Amiga original. Cuteness is definitely the name of the game, with wounded men writhing in agony on the

floor for a few seconds, and your troops jumping about in joy on successful completion of yet another sortie.



*Cannon Fodder offers catchy music and fun gameplay...*

Basically the controls for the game are simple. ADJUST will set a destination for your troops, and SELECT will make them fire at the pointer, killing anything in the way.

The first few levels are a simple matter of moving round shooting the enemy. After this you are introduced to weapons stores which you must steal from the enemy, and use to destroy enemy buildings. You can get grenades to lob to destroy enemy buildings and later on Bazookas come in. These are useful to fire at certain enemy soldiers who tote alarmingly accurate bazookas.

There are 5 different terrains (Jungle, Artic, Desert, Moor Lands & Underground base) to battle over, in mixed order through the game. Most scenarios include water, through which your men can swim, but they can only fire from shallow water. Some landscapes also

hide deadly trip wires and dangerous spikes. In later levels civilians appear, and must not be shot (drat) and occasionally hostages should be rescued & returned to base.

Beyond this there are also a series of vehicles, suitable for the terrain, which can be entered and driven. On later levels you also get gun turrets and helicopters. But then again, so do the enemy!

Basically the game continues until you use of all of your recruits (you get 15 each mission) This can be quite quickly on your first go, as a certain

amount of raw recruits are wasted at the beginning of each phase trying to work out what to do, and identifying the snipers the hard way!! The game does include a save & load facility, so you don't have to keep starting at the beginning. We found that it is often wise to start again, as your new found skill will often get you up to the level you are stuck on with less casualties, giving you a better chance. (use of the cheat mode helps...)

Essentially the levels in Cannon fodder are well laid out, starting simply, and getting harder soon enough so as not to be boring, but slow enough so as not to get you stuck too quickly. There is the odd red herring draped through some of the levels, which maybe a little annoying to some, but I think this adds to the problem solving part of the game. The game is made up of 25 missions, which are subdivided into 1-4 phases (sub-missions).



Games being an objective thing, I also tried Cannon Fodder out on a few friends (alphabetic order chaps!):

**Ben:**

“The music is catchy, though the music between levels can get annoying. Sound on the levels is funny, and the graphics good (cute) It starts easy, which is good to learn the control, but later levels get very difficult [Ben is stuck on level 5. Ha!] Some of their bazooka men have too quick a reaction time, causing you to get shot before you retaliate.”  
8/10

**Caron:** [Complete beginner!]

“I liked Cannon Fodder. It’s a little hard to get used to the controls [Caron doesn’t use computers much]. Shooting the men can be fun and doesn’t seem violent because it is on a computer. The music is very good though.”  
8/10

**Matthew:** [regular Acorn User]

“The music gets irritating when you hear it for the thousandth time, but it’s good and didn’t we feel the same about Lemmings?”

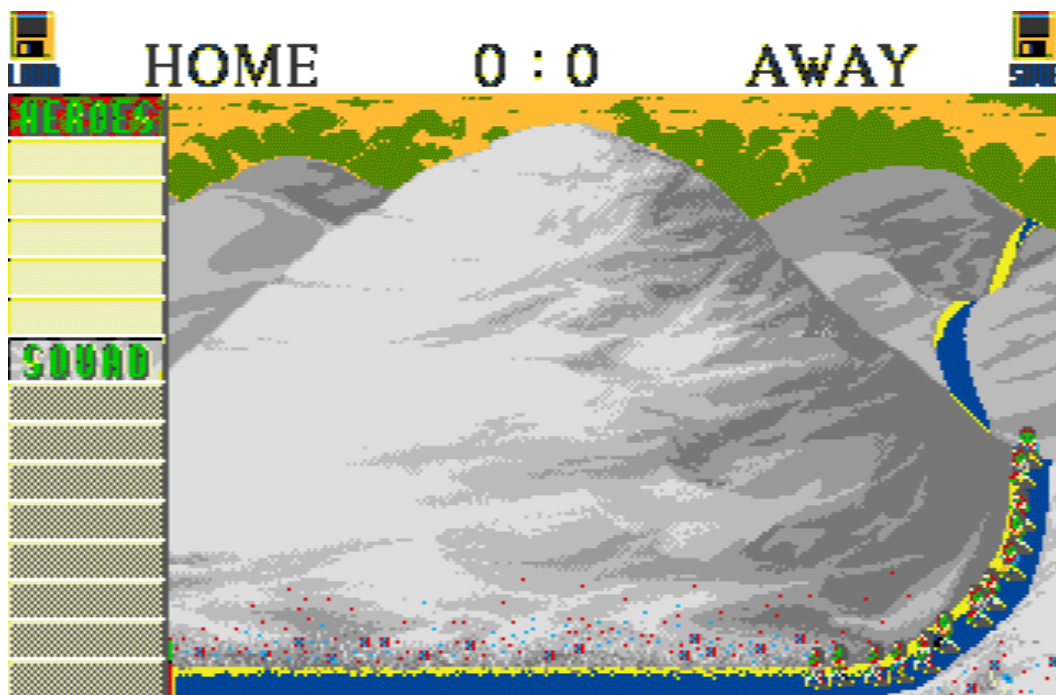
An excellent conversion with a cute addictive appeal that keeps me playing into the small hours. [On my machine! -Toby]” 10 /10

**And finally, a serious bit:**

Many war games are criticised for raising the profile of war, and glorifying killing. Whilst this IS true of many shooting games, it can hardly be said of Cannon Fodder. A very high level of humour is kept up throughout the game, evident in the mission titles (My Beautiful Skidoo, Bang Bang you’re dead, Blimey it’s cold, Bridge over the River Pie. etc) and in the manual, which is one of the most refreshing instruction booklets I’ve read in a long while. If anything, Cannon Fodder goes to point out the futility of war. And to be honest, taking your frustration out on enemy pixel formations is a lot better than shouting at the family or kicking the cat...

Cannon Fodder can be played from disc or installed on a hard drive. It is Risc PC friendly. Available priced £29.99 from “all good stockists” or

*Krisalis Software Ltd, Teque House, Masons Yard, Down Row, Moorgate, Rotherham, S60 2HD (01709) 372290.*



Reviewed by Toby Smith and assorted unfortunates he lives with...



# Members' Page

*Requests from Club Members, please keep them coming in...*

## Greetings!

I am an intrepid musician and am seeking 'like-souls' with interests in exchange of MIDI / Sibelius / Rhapsody files (I have a library of over 3000 files).

Play Roland piano and Rodgers digital concert organ (both with MIDI).. have been playing keyboard for 45 years.. love classics, Gershwin and the like.. I am a recently retired school principal.

I use a Risc PC with sound card SSES 1600 linked to Technics keyboard and other MIDI facilities. Very keen to correspond and exchange material on disc, unable to access Internet. Please get in touch!

*Ron Percy  
17 Donegal Crescent  
GreenMeadows NAPIER  
NEW ZEALAND  
Fax / Voice 64-6-8444-970*

## For Sale:

The following items of software are new, unused and unregistered (postage extra):

Impression Style £79.00  
Impression Publisher £132.00  
ArtWorks £132.00

A5000 Learning Curve, 40MB HD, 4MB, Clares Micro Mouse, Scanlight 256, assorted software £900.00 ono.

*Graham Holman, Peterborough  
Tel (01733) 321540*

## For Sale:

A3000, 2MB RAM £275.00  
Advance, Brand New, Unregistered £70.00  
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A5000 Learning Curve, 40MB HD, 4MB, 14" multisync monitor, RISC OS 3.11. Lots of software. Original boxes and manual, excellent condition. £950.00 ono

*Michael Chappell, Clacton on Sea  
Tel (01255) 436505 after 6pm*

## For Sale:

Acorn User Magazine Volume 1  
First twelve issues, in original binder  
Very good condition, collector's piece?  
£22.00 inc postage

*Simon Burrows, Leicester  
Tel 0956 828806 after 6pm*





# Acorn News

Acorn has recently indulged in a blitz of advertising for its machines with adverts and leaflets included in many of the national newspa-

pers, non-Acorn computer magazines, local newspapers and even local commercial radio! The adverts are generally either for the Risc PC or the A3010 Early Years system.

On the international front, the Risc PC has attracted a great deal of interest and new support for Acorn. The company is in the process of reviewing and restructuring its support in many countries because of the new demand and increased selling opportunities.

As mentioned in Eureka 13, Acorn used the Acorn World '94 Show to launch Clan Acorn '94, the scheme for Acorn enthusiasts. For a contribution of £15.00, Clan subscribers receive various benefits including a joining pack featuring a Clan tee-shirt, mouse-mat, lapel badge and disc. A Clan sweatshirt was included for the thousand or so people who signed up at Acorn World. Subscribers are supposed to receive regular mailshots from Acorn giving exciting information about the company and its products as well as special opportunities and possible discounts.

During part of November and December last year, Acorn made a special offer of a Cumana CD-ROM drive for only £29.00 including VAT with any purchase of an A4000 or Risc PC, provided a monitor was bought with the computer. This caught out quite a few people but was undoubtedly a worthwhile offer.

Acorn is still expecting the 486PC Card for the Risc PC to be available in quantity before the end of March. In a surprise announcement, Acorn revealed that the card will be manufactured by Blue Micro, exclusive manufacturer's representative for IBM Microelectronics in the UK.

Although announced at Acorn World '94, the Acorn affinity VISA credit card is not yet available. Available to selected enthusiasts and educationalists, the Acorn credit card will offer low interest rates and various other benefits.

The software supplied on the hard discs of Risc PC computers has been updated to include new versions of many applications. Acorn does not currently have plans to make these upgrades available separately.

Acorn has joined forces with P&O Ferries to offer *Early Years* computers for its children's play areas on the Portsmouth to Le Havre ferry crossing. The Pocket Book II computer is also available from duty-free shops on this particular crossing.

ARM Ltd announced a new ARM processor back in October last year, the ARM7500. Described as a "highly integrated single-chip multimedia and portable system solution" the ARM7500 combines a cached 32 bit RISC processor, video, sound, input/output and memory controller in a single package. It will first be used in set-top boxes designed by Online Media however it would seem logical that Acorn could use the ARM7500 in future desktop or portable computers.

**Simon Burrows**

## **Final Thoughts**

Each year of the Club's existence has brought accelerated growth, but none of us on the Committee expected a year such as 1994 which was by far the most successful yet.

The year had an exciting start with preparations for the launch of the Risc PC, a computer which has attracted a surprising level of interest and support from both existing and potential Acorn customers. Throughout 1994 this interest grew with knock-on effects for those of us who can't afford a Risc PC!

From the Club's point of view, we've been very pleased to welcome new faces onto the Committee and have so much contact with members by post, telephone and face-to-face at shows, meetings and open days. We plan to attend far more events in the future to promote the Club and meet ordinary users.

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# Benefits of Membership

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- Quarterly Magazine published free of charge for members
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- Regional Contact Lists of other members, to get in touch
- Discount Public Domain Library, including unique Club software
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- Special Offers at Shows and Open Days
- Opportunities to get involved in the running of the Club itself
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*If you want to get the most out of your Acorn computer, join today!*

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