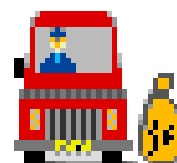
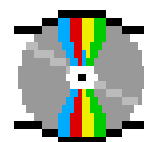
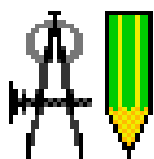
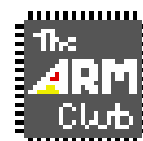
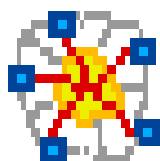
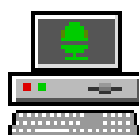
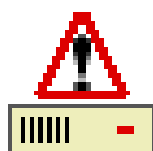


THE  
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**CLUB**

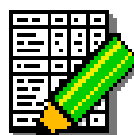
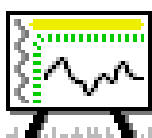
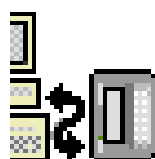


# ***Eureka***

**The Magazine for Members of The ARM Club**  
*Issue 16 — Summer 1995*



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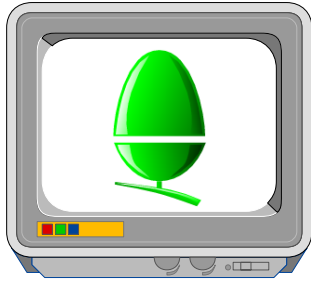


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**Introducing the A7000 & Risc PC 700**

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*Tel 0171 624 9918 Fax 0181 446 3020*



## **THE ARM CLUB MAGAZINE**

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**Read all about the Acorn World Show  
and the latest news in Eureka  
17, doormat date mid October!**

## SERIOUS NEWS

I planned to write this time about CD-ROM and the fact that it is really taking off as a storage medium, however

Acorn has made some very significant announcements in the past six weeks so CD-ROMs will have to wait until another time!

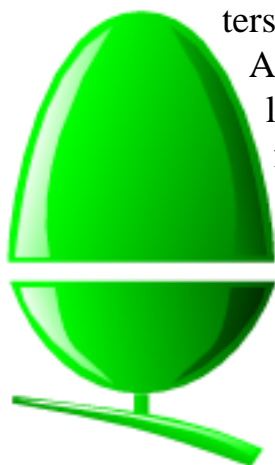
On 12th July 1995 Acorn launched a couple of new computers, the A7000 and Risc PC 700. These are a very welcome and logical development but nothing earth-shattering.

At the same time however, covered in marketing gloss, was the announcement that Acorn's educational dealer network would be immediately replaced by twenty-five or so educational agencies having effective sole-rights to sell Acorn equipment to UK schools on a strict geographical basis.

The effect of this change was that overnight Acorn eliminated the educational sales of the vast majority of its dealers and also reduced the profit margins on non-educational sales as well, all with very little apparent consultation.

If you are an educational customer, what will the changes mean? Simply put, your computers will be supplied direct by

Acorn in Cambridge and local support will come from one of the 25 authorised agencies. There will be a fixed price for every Acorn product and schools will have no choice of Acorn supplier.



# Editorial

What about non-educational customers? Some Acorn dealers have stated that they will not be able to continue supporting Acorn without educational sales and some may even pull out of the market. Fewer dealers promoting and selling Acorn means less local presence, less competition, less product development and fewer magazines as well. On the whole, Acorn prices have come down slightly however the main beneficiary is education rather than enthusiasts and home users who now have to pay a higher price than schools & colleges.

I don't like being negative about Acorn, changes to the dealer network *were* necessary mainly because dealers were competing too much for the trade of loyal Acorn schools rather than looking for new business. However Acorn's new strategy will need very close monitoring to minimise damage to the Acorn community as a whole. It must be prepared to make changes where these are evidently necessary. Acorn must not withdraw into its shell and cut-off links with dealers, developers, schools and others.

Finally Acorn has a new Managing Director following the departure of Sam Wauchope. The new MD is David Lee, formerly of Olivetti UK. He will not have an easy job.

*Simon Burrows*  
*Editor, Eureka magazine*

# The new A7000 and Risc PC 700

by Simon Burrows

July 1995 was an important month for Acorn with the addition of a couple of new computers to its range and the repositioning of existing computers to make them cheaper and more competitive.

On 12th July, a hot summer's day, the A7000 and Risc PC 700 were simultaneously launched to the Acorn and PC press in both London and Cambridge. What facilities do these new computers offer and are they worth the money?

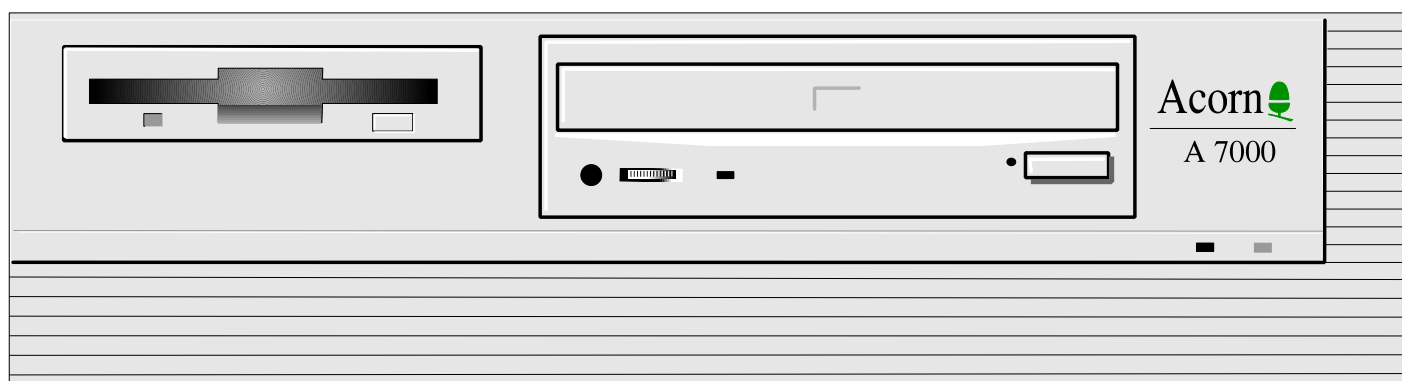
The A7000 is Acorn's new flagship A-Series machine, based on the ARM7500 processor used by Online Media in its Set Top Boxes.



*The new A7000 takes up very little desk space*

This is an integrated chip containing the ARM7 processor core, VIDC20 graphics capability and IOMD-style input/output control in the same way that the ARM250 processor used in earlier Acorn machines replaced a number of separate chips.

The computer itself is housed in a rectangular metal box, coated in “cool grey” plastic, very similar to the design used by Online Media for its prototype Set Top Boxes.



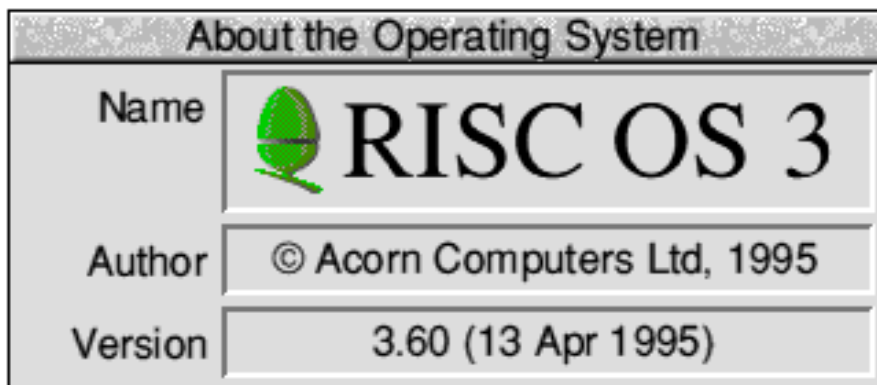
*The front fascia of the A7000 with Sony CD-ROM drive. Picture by Christopher Jarman.*



What are the capabilities of the A7000? Quite simply, in use it feels like a Risc PC without any video RAM fitted (this is not possible) and without the capability to fit a second processor card, for example the PC486 Card.

The A7000 comes with a standard Risc PC-style keyboard and a new type of mouse based on the PS/2 standard. A single floppy drive is fitted with space for a 5.25" device such as a CD-ROM drive. If one of these is fitted, however, it precludes the use of the capability to fit a single half-width expansion card (podule).

The A7000 has a very small footprint, taking up little desk space, and is robustly built with a metal case designed to stand the rigours of the classroom. Supplied with a bundled AKF60 14" multiscan monitor, the A7000 is clearly targeted at schools & colleges who don't need PC capability.



*The new version of RISC OS, completed on my birthday!*

An optional tray-loading Sony CD-ROM drive is available from Acorn which uses the new IDE ATAPI standard. This is a common standard providing access to very cheap IDE CD-ROM drives without the need for an expensive SCSI interface or even a special adapter as used by Cumana in its IDE drives.

The A7000, Risc PC 700 and new Risc PC 600 (described later) are all fitted with a new version of RISC OS, version 3.60. This is mainly a bug fix version over that previously supplied with the Risc PC, however there are some important new features. These include support for hard discs greater than 512MB in size without partitioning (at last!), integrated support for JPEG format files, support for ATAPI-style CD-ROM drives and many more applications and modules included in ROM. Acorn has taken this opportunity to increase the capacity of ROMs used for the operating system from 2MB to 4MB, allowing the applications including !Printers to be included in ROM along with CDFS, Toolkit and the excellent Acorn Access.

The new Risc PC 700 (pictured opposite) is a logical development from the existing Risc PC, being fitted with a 40MHz ARM710 processor card offering up to 40% speed increase for certain applications running in particular screen modes.

The Risc PC 700 also features 16 bit digital sound as standard (as does the A7000), the equivalent of plugging an ESP Minnie Card or Acorn 16 bit Sound Card into an existing Risc PC. A sound-mixer is included on the motherboard, allowing CD-ROM sound to be mixed with the computer's own sound.

What else is different about the Risc PC 700? Well, not a huge amount really apart from the items mentioned above and the inclusion of RISC OS 3.60. The wording on the front of the computer has changed to say "Risc PC 700".

Acorn has decided to continue producing the Risc PC 600, however it has received all of the improvements described above with

the exception of the ARM710 processor card. The ARM610 processor card used in the design has been improved slightly, clocked at 33MHz rather than the previous 30MHz.

hard discs greater than 512MB to be used on an existing Risc PC without being partitioned. A similar upgrade may be released for pre-Risc PC machines as well.

The updated Filecore module is only available to members of the *Clan Acorn* enthusiasts' scheme, either from Acorn's World Wide Web site or by filling in the application form in the latest Clan newsletter.

The ARM710 processor card has also been released as an upgrade, costing a rather expensive £100 plus VAT (admittedly this is the

price that Acorn guaranteed when the Risc PC was launched, however the performance increase offered by the upgrade is not very great). To order an ARM710 upgrade card, send a cheque for £125 plus VAT made payable to Acorn Direct to Vector Services, 13 Dennington Road, Wellingborough, Northants, NN8 2RL. If you return your ARM610 card in the same packaging, you will receive a refund cheque for £25 +VAT.

All in all, these new machines are very welcome, showing that Acorn is committed to producing new computers. However once again people may question whether the prices of Acorn machines (included on the Eureka 16 disc due to lack of space) are too high to persuade people to switch from PCs or other computers to Acorn machines.

*Simon Burrows*



*The new Risc PC 700 looks very familiar from the outside!*

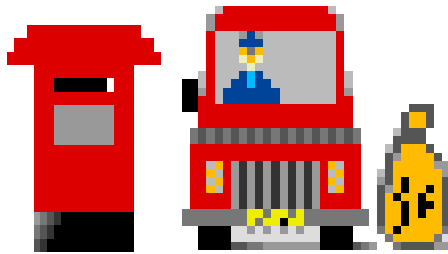
### **Existing range**

In a surprise move, Acorn has announced that it will continue selling all of its existing machines with none being killed off to coincide with the launch of new machines. Prices have been reduced to make them a little more competitive, however the biggest reductions are only available to education.

### **Upgrades**

According to Acorn's Product Marketing Manager, Peter Bondar, there are no plans to make RISC OS 3.60 available as an upgrade until early next year when an upgrade may be released incorporating extra new features.

To relieve some of the pressure for Acorn to release such an upgrade, the updated Filecore module supplied in RISC OS 3.60 has been released as a separate upgrade. This allows



# InterTalk

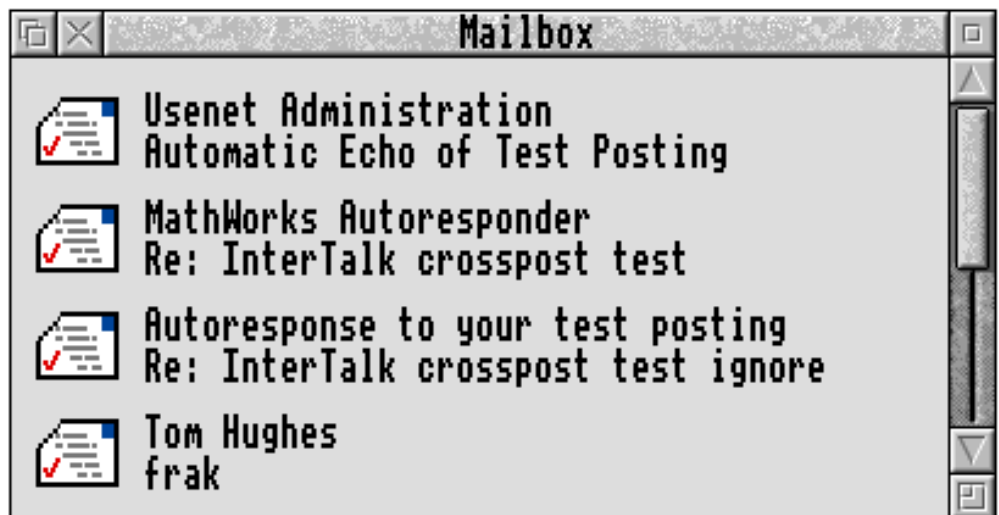
*Tom Hughes takes a long hard look at Acorn's new Internet package for schools & homes*

InterTalk is Acorn's contribution to the rapidly growing market for software to connect computers to the Internet. The current release provides access to electronic mail (email) and discussion groups (USENET news), with access to the World Wide Web (WWW) coming soon as a free upgrade for those who purchase the package now.

When I received my review copy, I was looking forward to trying out InterTalk to see how it compares with the free software which I currently use and how much of a benchmark it provides for other commercial packages which have appeared recently or else will be appearing in the near future.

The package which arrived included a single disc (there is a second disc with the network version) and a 40 page manual along with a printed slip correcting some errors in the manual. I was glad to see that the first part of the manual provides a general introduction to the Internet and some guidelines on what is and what is not appropriate behaviour, particularly in USENET newsgroups.

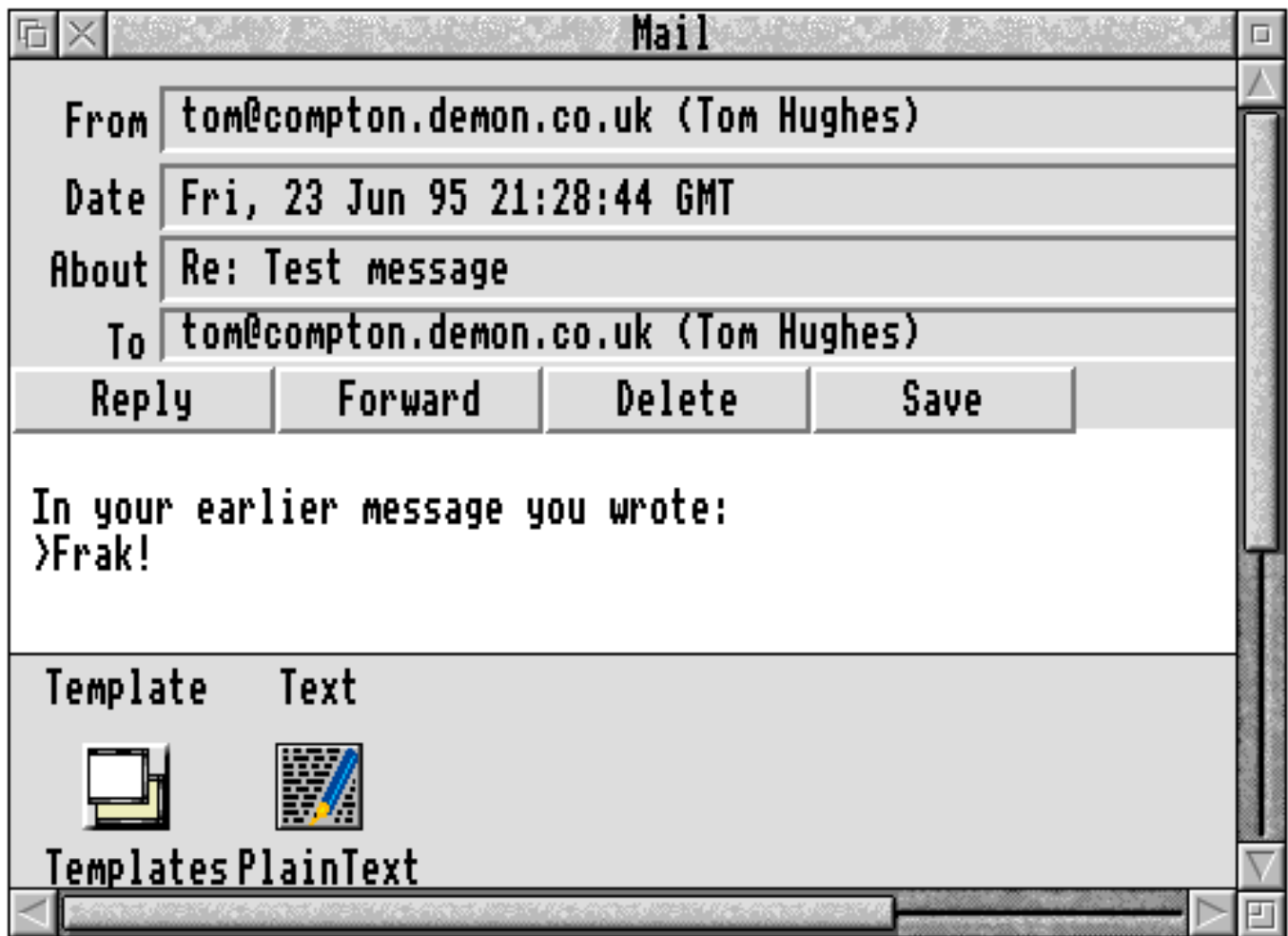
The software provided comprises three applications. The first of these is *!Internet*, which is Acorn's TCP/IP networking software that provides the low level networking code. The second is *!MailServ*, which is the mail server that handles connecting to the Internet and fetching news



*Email messages are represented by icons in a window*

and mail onto the local system, where the mail reader (the third application) can access it, either locally or over a network.

Starting the server installs an icon on the icon bar and from here a menu provides access to a number of configuration dialogues, all of which are reasonably, if somewhat minimally, explained in the manual. Most of this configuration is straightforward, and is just a question of



*The email viewing window complete with icons for attached files...*

entering the name and address of your computer along with those of the *mail-* and *news-servers* used by your service provider.

One thing that the manual does fail to mention is that the dialogue allowing you to select which newsgroups users can access cannot be used until after you have connected to your service provider for the first time as there is no list of valid groups available. Once this has been obtained, the dialogue does work but is horrendously slow — most actions seem to involve lengthy delays (up to thirty seconds or so).

The configuration section of the manual is also somewhat confusing in that it makes repeated reference to certain features only being available in the network version when

they are quite clearly available in the single user versions that I was using. The InterTalk server can be configured to connect to the selected Internet service provider at regular intervals, either on a time basis or when a set number of messages are waiting to be sent. Connections can also be established by selecting a menu option.

Connection attempts work reasonably well although there is very little feedback to the user about the progress of the connection unless the verbose logging is used, which instead generates far too much information.

There are also options to group users together and to allow/disallow access to newsgroups on a per-group basis, as well as to block specified email addresses in the same way.



This feature is particularly useful for schools who may wish to prevent students accessing some newsgroups with high traffic or dubious information content.

The final, and to the average user the most important, part of the package is the actual mail reader, which is used to read news & mail and to compose new messages & replies to messages. Unfortunately, this is also by far the worst part of the package.

When started, the mail client installs a postbox icon on the icon bar and presents a login dialogue for the user to fill in (something else which the manual claims the single user version doesn't do). The postbox icon changes from grey to red once the user has been authenticated, and the postbox bulges if the user has waiting email. Unfortunately the only way to change to another user is to quit and reload the program, which is rather annoying for a single user who has several email addresses.

Once logged in, mail can be sent by dragging a text file from a text editor or filer window to the iconbar icon, which causes a dialogue box to be displayed. This dialogue is in three sections: the top section has writable icons for the addresses of the recipient and any people you want to send copies to, along with the subject of the message. The next section displays the text of the message, and the third lists any files which have been attached to the message.

At this point, files can be attached to the message by dropping them on the panel at the bottom of the window. The message will then become a multipart MIME message with the files attached. Unfortunately, the files are all given a MIME type of *application/x-riscos*

rather than trying to convert common filetypes into appropriate MIME types.

There is also no way to change the value of any headers other than *To*, *Cc* and *Subject*, so it is impossible (among other things) to add blind carbon copies using *Bcc* or to redirect replies using the *Reply-to* instruction.

The contents of your mailbox can be examined by clicking select on the iconbar icon which produces a window listing the mailbox contents. Each message is shown as an icon (which changes when the message is read) along with the subject and the author of the email message.

Double-clicking on a message in this window opens another window which is essentially the same as the send message window described above except that the bottom section is missing if the message has no attachments. The top section also includes buttons to reply to or forward the message, and to delete or save it.

Any attachments to the message are shown as file icons in the bottom section of the window, from where they can be saved by dragging them to a filer window or run by double-clicking on them. Once again no attempt is made to map MIME types to RISC OS filetypes.

Replying to a message or forwarding it opens a send message window with the addresses filled in from the original message and also opens the text of the message into a text editor. Once you have edited this text to create the reply, it needs to be saved back to the send message window as no attempt is made by InterTalk to link to the editor in any

more sophisticated way (either using the Computer Concepts OLE protocol or the external edit protocol).

The final part of the application is the news reading and posting side of things. A window listing the available newsgroups can be obtained by adjust clicking on the iconbar icon, and clicking on an entry in this list opens a further window which lists the threads in that group (these actually appear to be articles grouped by subject, rather than real threads linked by the *references* information contained in the article headers).

Articles can be posted by saving them to this window which causes a *post article* window to appear in which the article details can be entered before posting it. It appears to be possible to crosspost to multiple groups by entering a list of groups in this window, but this isn't actually mentioned in the manual anywhere.

Double-clicking on a thread in the *thread window* will open a window which displays the first message in the thread and has action buttons to move to the next/previous article in the thread, as well as to forward the article by mail, reply by mail and followup to the newsgroup.

Forwarding or replying to a message by mail works in much the same way as it does for mail messages — a send mail window is opened and the text is opened into a text editor from where it can be saved back the send mail window, the addresses and subject changed, and the mail sent.

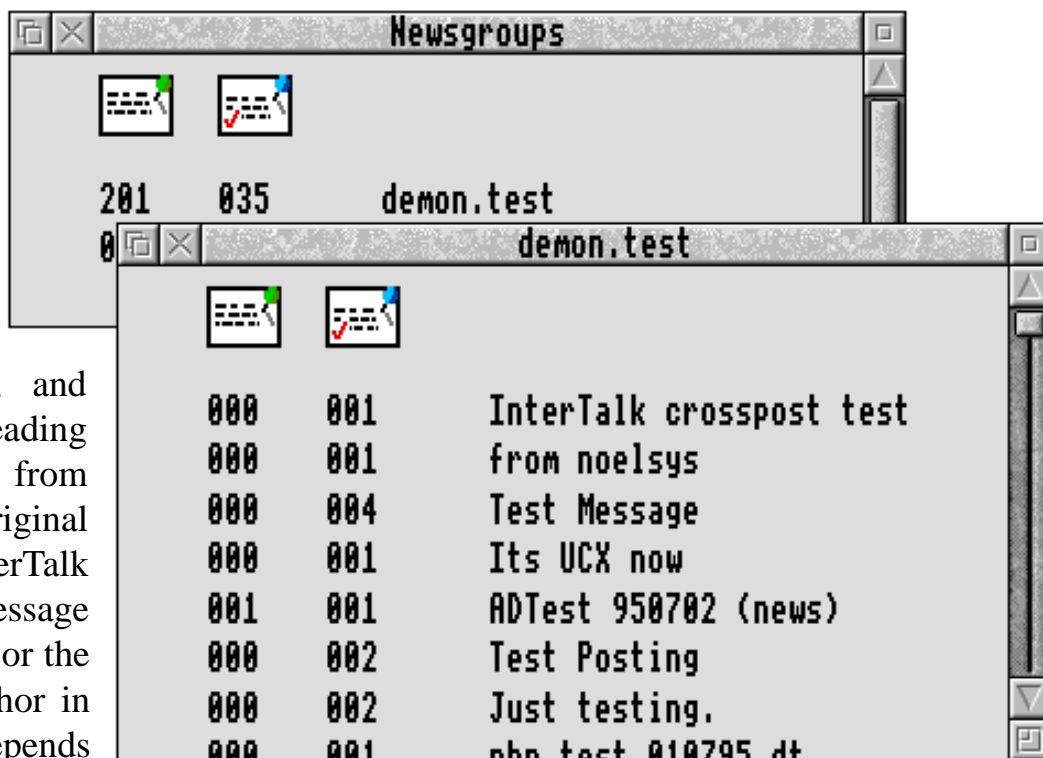
Following up to the newsgroup works slightly differently however — all that happens is that the quoted text is opened into a text editor, and once it has been edited it is saved back to the article window, just as for a normal posting to a newsgroup. At this point the post article window appears with the usual limited selection of headers that can be edited.

There is unfortunately a major flaw in all this — the *References* header in the original message which serves to tie messages together in threads by indicating the chain of replies and replies to replies is discarded by

Connection			
<b>Service Provider</b>			
Name	Demon Internet		
Location	London		
Telephone	01813434848		
Gateway	158.152.1.65		
Node name	compton		
Password	-----		
Address	Auto		
<b>Cheap rate times</b>			
	Start		End
Weekdays	18:00	▽△	08:00
Weekend	08:00	▽△	08:00
<b>Connection times</b>			
Connect when there are 10 messages or articles waiting to be delivered.			
Connect every 60 min. at cheap rate.			
Connect every 120 min. at peak rate.			
Cancel		Set	

InterTalk rather than being preserved and extended to reflect the followup being created.

This breaks the link between the original article and the followup for many newsreaders, and prevents somebody reading the followup from backtracking to the original article, especially as InterTalk doesn't include the message ID of the original article or the name/address of the author in the attribution line it prepends to the body of the followup.



*News messages listed in a non-standard window*

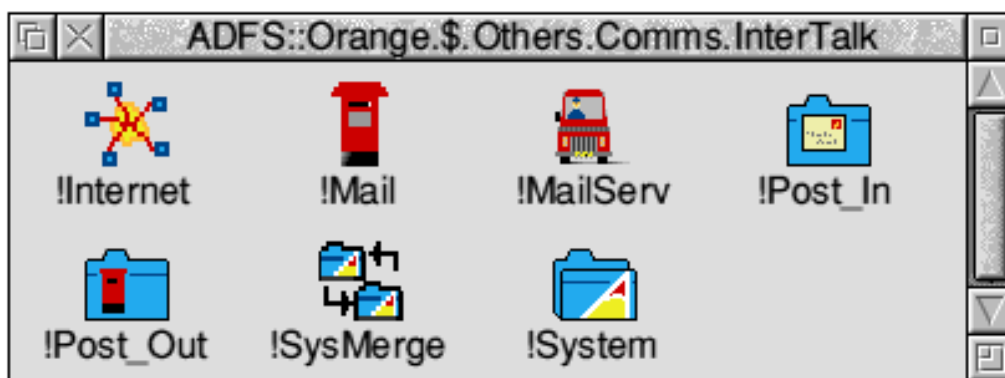
In addition to all this, if the original message was crossposted then no account of this is taken by InterTalk and the followup message will only be posted to the group in which the original article was read.

Much of the above may sound rather technical to people who don't understand the protocols and message formats used for mail and news on the Internet, but the important point to understand is that InterTalk is seriously deficient in a number of ways.

By way of an independent test, I obtained a copy of a document called *The Good Netkeeping Seal of Approval*, which lists a number of things which news readers should and should not do if they want to work well on the Internet. When InterTalk was assessed

against the guide it failed on at least half the points listed, many of which were (at least in my view) the most serious points.

In addition to these issues of non-conformance to Internet standards and conventions, I found the general user interface of the package very clunky and difficult to use — it is for example very difficult to read quickly through the messages in a news groups, as constant use of the mouse and opening and closing of windows is required.



*The contents of the supplied single-user InterTalk disc*

Acorn has made no secret of the fact that this package is aimed at users (such as schools) who wish to connect an entire network to the Internet, and there are a number of features which exist to meet the needs of this group. It is unfortunate that Acorn seems to have concentrated on these features before getting the underlying protocols and the user interface up to scratch.

In summary, I find it very hard to recommend this package to anybody. Whilst it is just about acceptable for use on a local network, or for use as a mail client (provided you don't mind the user interface of course), there is absolutely no way that anybody should try to use it as a USENET news reader.

*Tom Hughes*

*InterTalk is available from all Acorn suppliers including dealers (non-educational customers) and Acorn itself (educational customers) priced £79 excluding VAT for single user or £299 excluding VAT for site licence version.*

Editor's note: while writing this review, Acorn helpfully provided Tom with several updates to the release version of InterTalk however these were mainly cosmetic.

One of the difficulties is that network users currently have no alternative to InterTalk so may have to put up with the problems. It is very likely that new versions will appear over the coming months so make sure that you keep up-to-date with the latest version and make full use of available support.

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## Club Corner

### *What's the Club been up to over recent months?*

Our most recent open day in North London was a big success as described by Ralph Sillett overleaf, the next one is taking place in Leicester on Saturday 9th September.

Geoff Stilwell wrote about the Harrogate Acorn User Show in the last Club Newsletter. As always it was very successful for the Club and everyone helping on our stand really enjoyed meeting so many people. Thanks again to Safesell Exhibitions for organising the show.

Our plans are now progressing fast to exhibit as usual at the Acorn World Show in October. Ralph Sillett has taken over from Simon Burrows as stand organiser, please direct any questions to Ralph.

As mentioned later in this issue of Eureka, we recently invested in a disc duplicator which will make life a lot easier for Nick Evans, our incredible PD Librarian super-hero.

The letter in Eureka 15 from Club Chairman Steve Arnold has generated a lot of interest and correspondence, particularly from local user groups in various parts of the country and even overseas. We hope to have more news on this subject very soon!

Finally Mark Smith & Andi Flower have been working hard on producing a new version of our popular utility *Game On!* which will be launched before the Acorn World Show. *Game On!* has sold well and contributed money to Club funds.



# ARM'95 SOUTH

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*Ralph Sillett, the Club Events Coordinator, writes about the latest Club Open Day at Belmont School in North London*

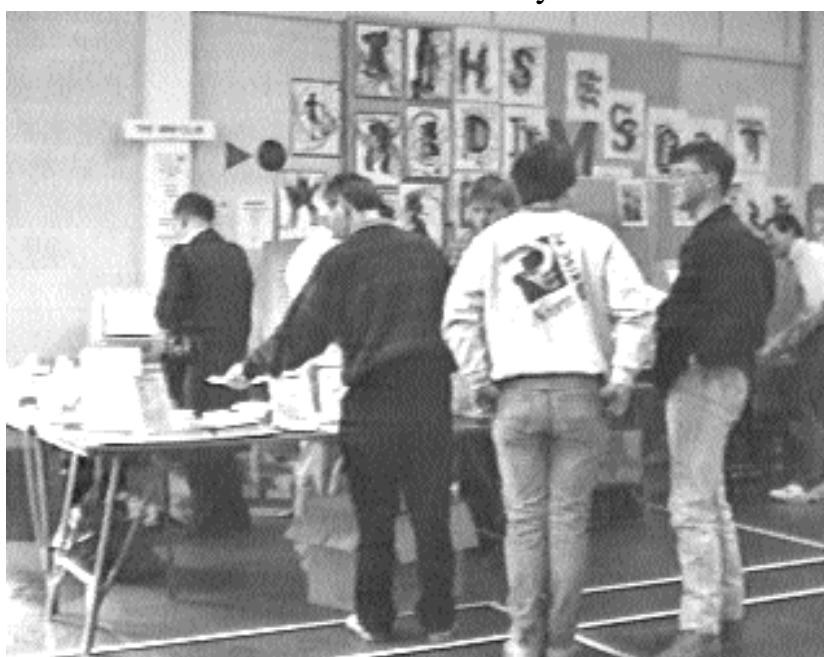
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Well, I guess that we die-hards in the Club must be suckers for punishment to hold yet another Open Day, this time in North London at Belmont School, Mill Hill. I travelled down from my home in Staffordshire to arrive at Belmont School just before 8.00am, having put up a number of directional signs for those following later. I was expecting to be the first on the scene but to my surprise I was beaten by Andi Flower, the Club's Public Relations Coordinator.

After unloading my car it was getting close to opening the doors time. By this time most of the exhibitors were ready for what we hoped was going to be a good event. Aaron Timbrell from iSV was one of the first exhibitors on the scene and seemed pleased with the event. Aaron was showing off some of his new products including various font packs (see the review later) and the *Font Designer's Toolkit*. His latest product *Vivid* is a high resolution screen emulator for pre Risc PC computers allowing 2048 x 1234 with 16 colours on screen. This was the first time he had attended one of our Open Days and hopes to come along again in the future. David Holden from APDL had a good day

selling products as varied as hard discs and PD software as well as giving advice.

One of the star attractions of the day turned out to be John Wallace of Beebug demonstrating their forthcoming release of *Ovation Pro* with its many new features such as rotation of all frames including those containing text.. I only wish that I had been able to have a look —maybe next time...



*Lots of people came along to the Open Day!*

Paul Scott from Creative Curriculum Software made the trip from Halifax and although he didn't get many orders said that he was well pleased with the day and was impressed by the attendance.

One surprise visitor was Dave Walker from Acorn who stayed right to the end of the day and was kept busy answering questions from many of the members and non-members who attended. A few members travelled a fair distance and were rewarded with some bargains from the ever popular "Bring & Buy Sale". Geoff and Phil Jones (father & son) travelled from Lichfield in Staffordshire (not too far from my home) and appeared to thoroughly enjoy themselves, although I think that Geoff turned out to be the one with the hole in his pockets. Phil was trying to sell his A5000 but was unsuccessful at the Open Day. He subsequently sold it about a month later.

Another new exhibitor was Digital Databank with sysop John Stonier. Digital Databank is a major Archimedes bulletin board based in Welwyn, Hertfordshire and is closely connected with the Welwyn Hatfield Computer Club. It was interesting to chat with John as I am new to comms and I have hopefully learnt a little from his knowledge and experience. John was kept very busy all through the day answering many queries.

The Club's stand was manned by some familiar faces from the Club Committee as well as several new helpers. It was kept busy with people joining the Club, asking technical questions and buying software products such as *Game On* and *TypeTutor* which bring in extra funds for the Club. Andi Flower was showing off his Risc PC with a PC486 Card and connected up to his hi-fi system playing a variety of funky music while demonstrating some of the software and the Risc PC's general capabilities.

I had taken my 8MB A5000 along and was kept busy, mainly showing new owners of

Acorn RISC machines around the desktop. In fact one gentleman spent over 60 minutes with me just going over *!Draw*, *!Paint* & *!Edit*. This in fact proved beneficial to both of us with help from our technical guru, Club Chairman Steve Arnold. Simon Burrows, the Editor of this magazine, had brought along his newly-upgraded Risc PC and was demonstrating his knowledge of *Impression Publisher* which is used to produce the Club Magazine. Geoff Stilwell had brought along his A5000 and was running some educational games from Minerva, Sherston and Topologika, allowing many of the younger visitors to beaver away at his keyboard while Mum & Dad had a browse around the various exhibits and hopefully found something worthwhile. All in all it was a great day with a great deal of time and effort put in by Committee members and helpers who did a tremendous job. Thanks to all.

Remember that we are holding another Open Day soon, this time in Leicester. Don' forget that without your support the Club will not survive. Please try and come along, it's the first Open Day we have held in the Midlands. Maybe you have some software or hardware you would like to sell at the Bring & Buy?

If you would like to help out on the day, please give me a call either via the usual Club number or (01785) 714535 any evening. We need help with making tea & coffee along with the other usual things. Also if you do anything unusual with your computer such as controlling a railway set or producing music for *Take That* then please let me know so that you can come and demonstrate it to others!

*Ralph Sillett*  
*ARM '95 Organiser*

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# South Wales Area Group

*A report on more recent activities in  
South Wales written by Freda Gibbs*

The South Wales Area Group of ARM Club members was recently given an introduction to digital imaging and the manipulation of images at their regularly used venue of the White Cross Inn in Caerphilly.

Eleven members and guests were introduced to Chris Hornby of Spacotech, who had come along with Photodesk, his company's most well-known package. He explained that in order to be able to manipulate an image, it has to be stored in the computer and to demonstrate one of the ways of doing this he brought along a colour scanner. Any sprite file or image imported from any other platform could be worked on, for example TIFF, GIF, and JPEG format files.

Chris started the demonstration by scanning in a photograph which was rather under-exposed in places because of a large expanse of white in the frame. By using gamma correction he was able to improve the balance of the photograph. He reduced the intensity of the lighter areas by tinting, and by the subtle use of a mask with the gamma correction improve considerably the rendering of the figure in the picture.

Putting your photographs onto a photo CD is another way of getting pictures into your computer, provided you have a CD drive. Photodesk will give you a page of thumbnail sketches of your pictures.

Of course, if you are a talented artist, you could put pictures into the computer via a graphics tablet and pen, which Chris also demonstrated.

The things that Photodesk could do with pictures were many, varied and amazing. Two pictures could easily be combined, cloned, masked, tinted. Tools included airbrush, paintbrush, magic wand, and you could cut, paste, copy and magnify any area you wanted to work on at great accuracy.



*Chris Hornby from Spacotech demonstrating PhotoDesk*

Having worked on a picture, it had, of course, to be printed out. Chris had brought along a Primera printer which prints in a different way from the usual dot matrix, bubble jet or laser printer. It was called a Dye sublimation printer, and printed by transferring the dye from rolls of coloured film onto special glossy paper. The printing takes about fifteen minutes for each picture, but the quality of the resulting print is superb. Photographic quality at last!



*Derek Rowlands tries out some tips from Chris Hornby*

Of course running the printer is expensive, especially if you want to make large (A3) pictures for your wall! But it was a real eye-opener to see this quality coming from a humble Acorn. To have this sort of quality produced at a bureau would cost a fortune.

Altogether it was a very interesting and stimulating day with Chris Hornby, giving us all much to think about.

*Freda Gibbs*

The South Wales Group meet on a regular basis, normally every other Wednesday at the Roath Park Community Hall in Cardiff starting at 7.00pm. All Acorn users will be made most welcome, whether you are a Club member or not.

More details about the meetings can be obtained from Derek Rowlands on telephone 01222 868635.

## **Disc Duplication Service**

You've probably heard before that The ARM Club has expanded a great deal in size over the past year and we've been finding it increasingly difficult to get Acorn format discs duplicated at a sensible price.

For this reason, the Club Committee recently decided that we should invest some money in a dedicated Acorn disc duplicator, saving us money and making life easier for our Disc Editor & PD Librarian, Nick Evans. We are The ARM Club Magazine page 15

now using the duplicator to copy all varieties of Acorn disc in quantity and would be happy to make this facility available to other clubs, small companies, schools and anybody else needing to duplicate Acorn format discs.

We can supply blank discs at very competitive rates and duplication prices start at around 10 pence per disc (decreasing with quantity). For full details, please contact Nick Evans by telephone or fax on 0181 446 3020.



# Report Writer

*Geoff Stilwell reminds us all of our school reports... eek!*

Teachers often don't look forward to the Spring half-term break because it is frequently the time when they will be spending much of their holiday time writing the children's annual school reports.

Ever since I have owned a computer which is connected to a printer I have used it to write my annual school reports (using InterWord initially, on the BBC). These collections of reports have built up over the years and I have used past reports to aid my thought processes, copying phrases into more recent reports, speeding up the process generally.

With all the reports ported across from the BBC to my A5000 I have a considerable store of often-used statements or phrases which could be incorporated into current reports. Obviously some of the older reports have little relevance to the National Curriculum but the occasional phrase can still be useful when I'm lost for words.

The multi-tasking environment of the Archimedes makes the transference of text so much easier. I have organised all the old reports into subject areas, taken out all of the children's names for anonymity and stored them all as simple text files. Using !Edit to draft reports makes it easy to copy marked sections from old reports into the present one. The text can then be loaded into a favourite word processor or DTP package for printing.

Creative Curriculum Software (CCS) have taken this basic idea and published Report Writer which they claim is a "...software tool enabling quick and easy production of individual, differentiated reports". I watched this package being demonstrated at the 1994 Harrogate Show and must say that it looked impressive. But would the teacher with less experience of computers be able to create his or her reports with the same ease?

In fact Report Writer is easy to use. First it is necessary to have a text editor or word processing program running alongside Report Writer to receive the text that Report Writer outputs. When the Icon Bar icon is clicked a small control panel appears.

From here the user controls all aspects of the program. Clicking with Menu on the Name icon on the control panel allows the teacher to type in the name of the child whose report is being written. Also a click on the appropriate gender button will change the 'he him his' icons on the control panel to read 'she her hers' for a female. It is also advisable at this stage to preset the National Curriculum (NC) Level appropriate for the child. Click on the level indicator with Select to increment the number or Adjust to decrement.

Now the program is set we just need to click with select on the Subjects icon on the



*The Control Panel gives quick access to the features of Report Writer*

control panel. This brings up a window with a list of the NC subject areas. Following the arrow next to English leads to a window with all the Attainment Targets (AT) for that area listed. Each AT is broken down into four sections: 'AT, Support, AT & Support, and User'. These refer to the ATs and Support statements in the NC documents. User is obviously for adding more personal or any additional statements from the teacher writing the report. The teacher would choose which of these was most appropriate.

Now we can start to write the report. Using the Key Stage 1 AT & Support statements for English I wrote the following for the fictitious Roger: "Roger is able to participate as a speaker and a listener in group activities, including imaginative play but he cannot yet respond appropriately to simple instructions given by a teacher. He recognises that print is used to carry meaning in books and is beginning to recognise individual words or letters in familiar contexts. He shows signs of a developing interest in reading. Roger can use pictures, symbols or isolated letters, words or phrases to communicate meaning and is beginning to form letters with some control over the size, shape and orientation of letters or lines of writing."

scratch and without the worry of constructing appropriate sentences. The thought was in making choices from the list of statements available, which are, after all, what the National Curriculum is looking at.

If it is necessary to change anything it is possible to edit this in your word processor, or to make them available for future use the teacher can edit NC statements and personal comments from within Report Writer. These may be stored as 'User' statements in the subject areas or as more general words and phrases accessible from the control panel.

My teacher friend and I gave Report Writer the ultimate test and used it to write her reports this year. Initially we found that only using the National Curriculum AT statements made the report seem quite dry and unimaginative. We found that we continually wanted to use phrases that we found in previous years' reports. It was possible to incorporate these phrases into Report Writer by editing or adding to the subject statements or the non-specific phrases. Unfortunately these had to be typed in, although I understand from CCS that a planned update will include the capability of accepting dragged and dropped text files.

☒	English AT1: Speaking & Listening (AT & Support)
* Level 1	
1A]	participate as a speaker and a listener in group activities, including
1a]	suggest what to do next in a practical activity
	tell stories
	play the role of a shopkeeper or customer in the class shop

This paragraph was constructed without the use of the keyboard whatsoever. It required about twenty mouse clicks on the control panel and on the statements themselves. Far easier than typing the whole paragraph from

I can remember having an argument with a teacher a few years ago about the ethics of computers writing children's reports.

*Review continued on page 74...*

# ARCHITECH

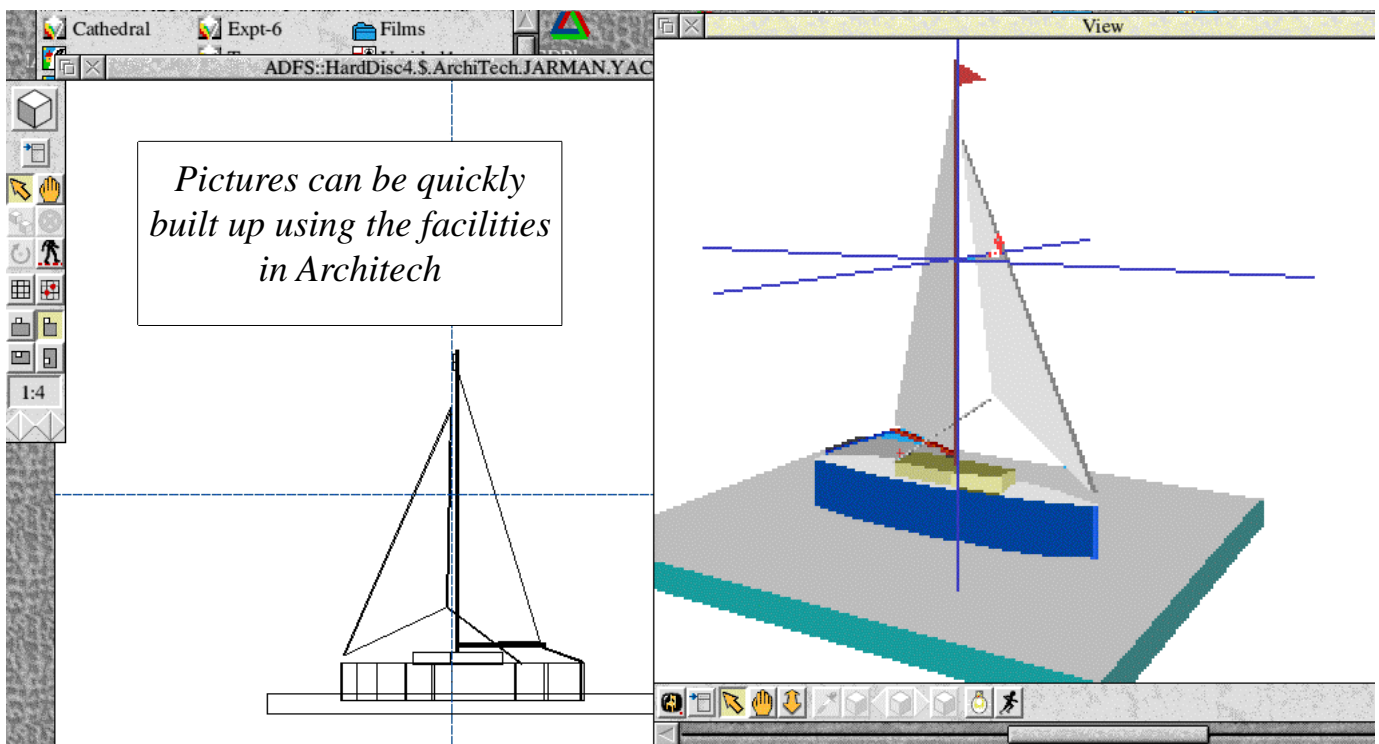
*Christopher Jarman writes about a package with which he is very impressed...*

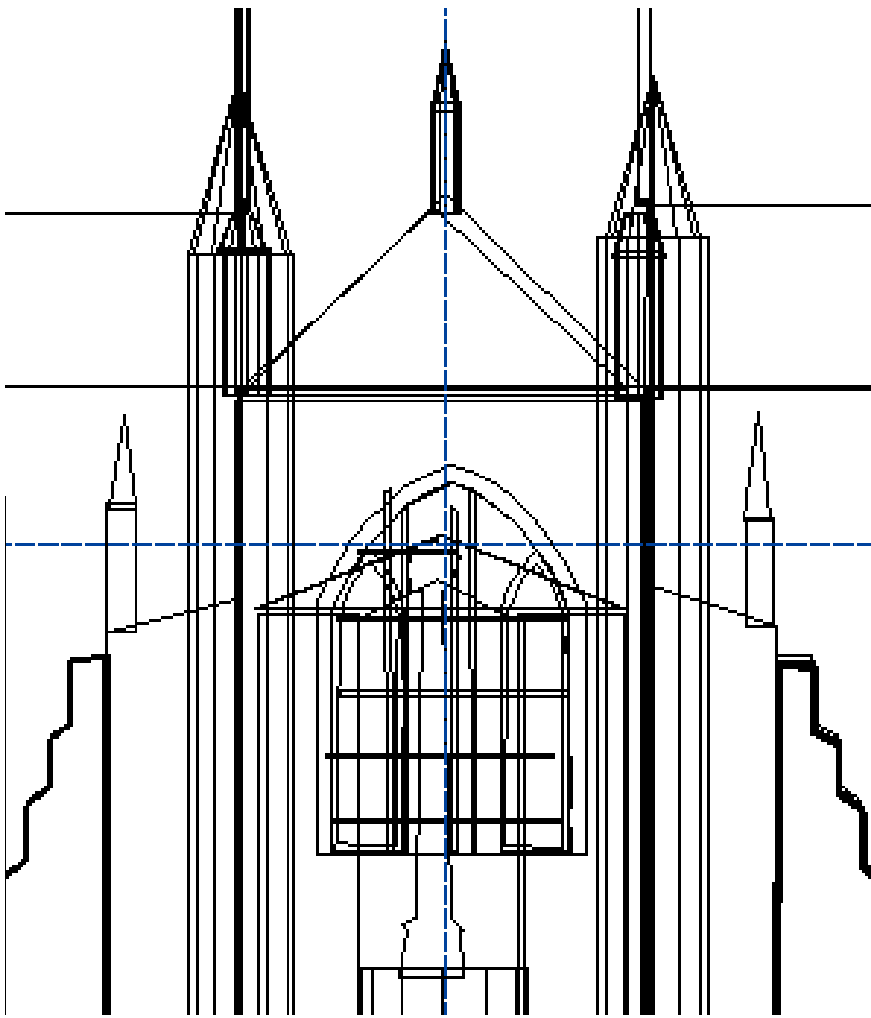
When I first installed *Architech* I was rather mystified because I could not really see how to work it or what it was for. I had no experience of previous 3D constructional programs and had some difficulty in coming to terms with the three dimensional concepts involved. Also, I was not particularly interested in most of the models which were given as examples: a space station, a shop, fighter aircraft and a comic teapot were not my idea of tempting come-ons.

I mention these artifacts and my initial reaction because my impression has changed considerably since then, but first reactions can make or break a complex program. After all, if you simply don't fancy designing any of the things you see in the examples, you are not motivated to break through and work out your own designs. Soon afterwards Aspex sent me a model designed by Tony Stauber of Qatar

showing his own house, and this was really impressive as it showed all the rooms, the garden and trees and looked extremely realistic and satisfying. I would suggest to Aspex that they continually update the models that come with the program with models and animations sent in by users. They don't *all* have to appeal to 14 year-olds, because as a rule their teachers or some other adult will be assessing and actually buying the product.

The program installs easily following the instructions. If you have a high spec machine such as a Risc PC then Aspex will send you a copy with high resolution icons and these are much better both to see and use. It is amazing how quickly the eye becomes hyper-critical of lower quality visuals once it has got used to the best!





window is a bit like a window in !Draw, and the shapes and objects for your models are created and manipulated in it rather in the familiar manner of !Draw. Also, shapes may be created and coloured in !Draw itself and dropped conveniently into this edit window. Selecting an object in the edit window also selects it in the view window, which is extremely useful, as often the view window becomes too crowded to select objects easily.

### The Edit Window

I was advised to start with creating very simple objects such as cubes and spheres. This is excellent counsel because you really need to try out all the effects and animations in easy steps at first or you will get

*Winchester Cathedral takes shape on the drawing board* frustrated. I am a terror for

I must first of all give full marks for the manual. It was written by a teacher trained for Primary work and this gives it a very crisp and helpful approach, plenty of good diagrams and clear, easy to follow instructions. It is ring bound with 206 card pages in a top quality leather-feel plastic folder (mine did come with eight extra copies of some pages so I hope someone else is not eight short!).

There are eight floppies making up the kit plus an extra one if you have the high resolution sprites. The program itself easily fits onto one disc so the rest is examples and films etc. Clicking on the installed icon brings up two windows: the view window will show your model being constructed in colour and 3D. The other which is the Edit

wanting to create a tea-clipper in full sail or the inside of a super-market straight off. This is a very bad idea with this program, because you will just get a screen full of shapes and no idea how to deal with them. I persevered with the cube and soon had it multicoloured or made of granite and spinning like a top. These simple tutorials are easy to make up yourself from the manual but must be done one step at a time. There is a lot to learn in this package. Indeed, eventually one becomes as hooked on it as one would on a game, because there are more and more levels to discover. Just like a game I failed a lot at the early levels but gradually began to get the hang of it. Then comes the phase where you want to stay up all night and create a masterpiece!



One criterion I use to decide whether a program has a touch of genius is to see whether it will perform jobs which the designer had not thought of. While one can never be sure without checking, I suspect that Architech is one of these.

# Reflection Reflection

The expressed aim of the program is to help you to model your design ideas in 3D on the computer screen with high speed texture mapping and graphics. It certainly does this well. There are ten shapes to choose from in the edit window menu. these range from a cube to a funnel to one called extrude which can be drawn to any shape as a cross section and then extruded like a plastic curtain rail. This tool reminded me of the way we used to cut out animal shapes from flat planks of wood at school. The clever thing to do is to design your complicated shapes in !Draw and colour them first, then drop them into the edit window, I prefer using Artworks and exporting in Draw format, and I found this very convenient.

I also discovered printing all kinds of texts in all kinds of fonts in Artworks or Draw then turning them into 3D models very satisfying, and I shall come back to this facility later.

## The View Window

After selecting the various shapes and combining them into ever more complex models you need to cast an eye on the other window. As you design in the edit window, rather as if with a blueprint, your current model is growing in three dimensions in the view window. Here with render tools you can colour any of the facets from 256 colours or texture map them with

texture sprites, either provided, or designed by your own fair hand and dropped into the small render tool window.

You can understand the problem with this program by now can' you? You need to see it rather than to read about it.

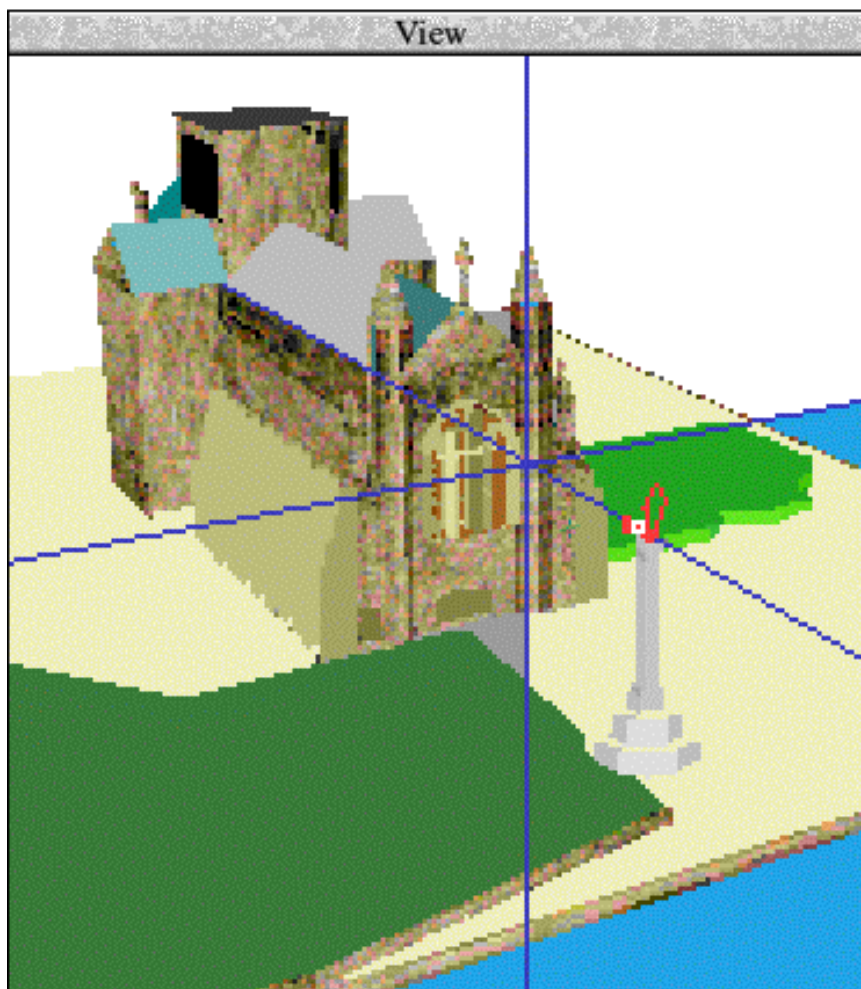
The view window has a valuable Full Screen button which when clicked brings the model up enlarged and much more speedily manipulable by the mouse.

## Animation

Once you have designed a model then the fun really starts, because of the excellent animation facilities. By selecting your model you can get it to rotate in all three planes; you can get two or three models rotating in different directions; and you can save your animated model out as either a Replay movie or an ACE film.

In conjunction with Iota's *Complete Animator* (reviewed later in this issue of Eureka) I was able to save animations out as ACE films and edit them, re-colour them, add sound and save out as Iota films too. It was even possible to use them as screensavers very quickly. Using the facility to animate text I found Architech to be a powerful and useful movie animated titling system, with the results easily dropped into a multimedia package such as *Genesis*.





*A developing view of Winchester Cathedral...*

Animating the objects and parts of objects (like turning wheels and drills) is not the only type of motion that can be achieved. It is possible to create what are called "Walkpaths" around and through your models. So I was able to set up a tour around my model of Winchester Cathedral. With a large model you may walk inside and through it too.

The possibilities for combining various kinds of movement with different parts of a model are endless, and I think that the presentational aspect of using animated graphics are tremendous in this package. This simple word 'reflectiontyped in Draw and then dropped into the edit window was quickly and easily made into a small ACE film which rotated the

title smoothly and satisfactorily, all in about ten minutes.

### **Printing out**

It is possible to print out all kinds of products with this program. You may save either sprites or drawfiles of the view window contents. You may also save your models as nets. This means you can design a piece of packaging, colour it, put lettering on it, and print it out on cardboard to be instantly glued up into a real 3D package. I could not find if there was a way of printing out the line drawings from the edit file, I can only hope so, as it would be a valuable option.

To give some idea of the tremendous scope of Architech, let me say there are over 600 entries in the index to the manual. If you

want to play at being an architect, town planner, space ship designer, packager, or animation freak, then this package will give you more hours of addictive fun than Lemmings. But it is a serious program: no CDT department in school or university can afford to be without it, although the Art department will be after it too! It's just too good to ignore from almost any angle!

*Christopher Jarman*

*Architech is available from Aspex Software, Heather House, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9AG. Tel 01822 611061. The retail price of Architech is £169.00 plus VAT although the street price may be slightly lower than this.*



# PUBLISHER PLUS

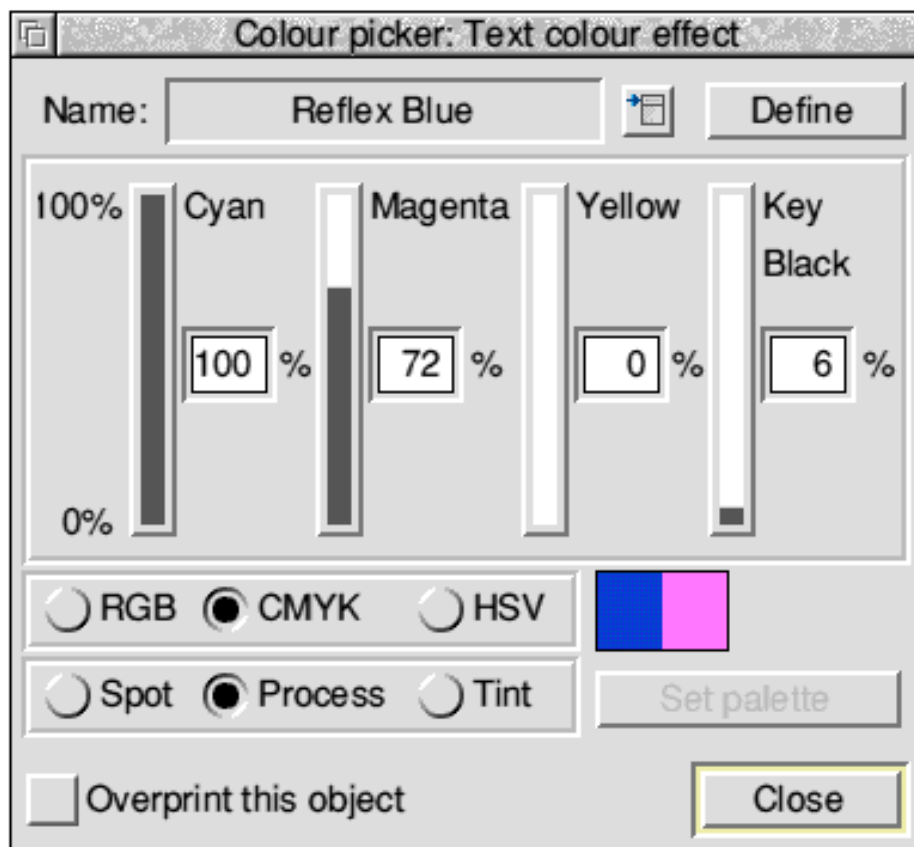
Computer Concepts' *Impression* package has come a long way since I first started using version 0.6 (beta-test). After a while, *Impression II* arrived, followed by *Impression Style*, *Publisher* and most recently the top-of-the-range *Publisher Plus*.

Space is limited to write about the features of *Publisher Plus* so I will restrict my comments to the differences from *Publisher* which has been widely reviewed in the Acorn press.

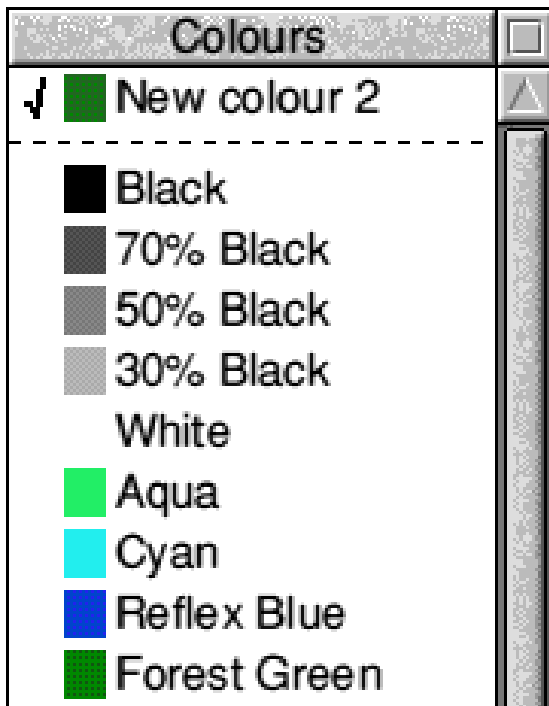
*Publisher Plus* is available as a complete package on eight discs with complete manuals, or as an upgrade from *Publisher* on three discs accompanied by a slim upgrade manual and release note.

The package is clearly targeted at professional publishers and one of the new features is support for the **Open Pre-Press Interface (OPI)**. Quite simply, scanned photographs can take up huge amounts of memory and disc space. A bureau with OPI facilities can produce two

scans of a picture for you, one high quality for incorporation in the final document, and one low resolution which is given to you on disc for use when designing the document. When your Postscript file containing the final document is sent to the bureau for printing, special software automatically replaces the low resolution version of the scan with the high resolution scan which never needs to leave the computers at the bureau.



*Named and Spot Colour support are provided...*



*Colours can be selected by name*

Two new file formats can be handled by Publisher Plus. These are Encapsulated Postscript (EPS) and Desktop Colour Separation (DCS), as described below:

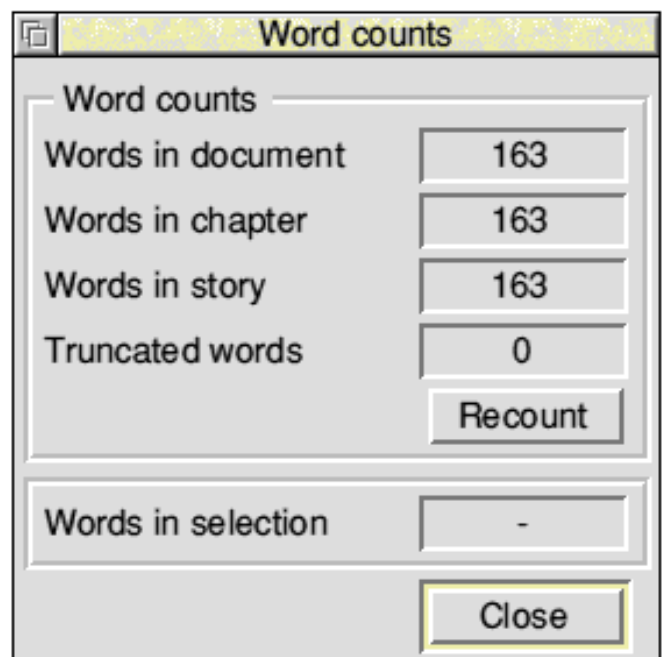
An EPS file contains Postscript commands and data similar to those produced by a Postscript printer driver but is self-contained. They are widely used in the publishing world, supported by numerous applications on different platforms. They can be dropped into Publisher Plus and will be printed if the document is sent to a Postscript printer, however EPS files will only be displayed on screen if they contain a preview image.

DCS is a type of EPS used for holding pre-separated data, containing a preview or main file and four separation files (eg CMYK). The low-resolution preview image is displayed on screen.

The other major change in Publisher Plus is the way in which colour can be handled. First of all it is possible to set up *named colours* which are similar in concept to text styles.

Specific colours can be defined and given a name for easy future reference. Usefully ArtWorks named colours can now be imported into Publisher Plus.

*Spot colour* support is also included, this allows a specific colour to be defined and applied to a document. Instead of being printed using the normal process colour inks (eg Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Key/Black), a special *spot colour* is mixed by the commercial printer and applied to the printed page. Both process and spot colours can be defined using any of the three colour models. *Tints* are also available which extend the range of colours that can be used by using shades of a base colour. Bear in mind that spot colours are of no use with desktop colour printers, only for typeset work.



*Word count — a useful feature*

The changes described so far are the most significant and are clearly aimed at the more serious users of Publisher. The other differences from Publisher are fairly minor, for example a facility to count the words in selections, stories, chapters or documents.



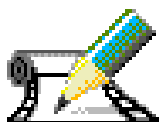
The *swap case* (CTRL-S) feature of Publisher and Style has been extended so that if applied to a selection of text, a dialogue box is opened giving various options for capitalising the text. One useful option is to capitalise the first letter of each sentence. Finally there is a new option in the *Print Setup* dialogue box which makes it possible to move the printed image relative to the sheet of paper.

Overall it is undoubtedly true that Publisher Plus offers superb value for money for the professional user. Other users should check carefully to see whether the additional functionality will be of any use to them. I would like to see more differentiation between the different packages in the Impression family,

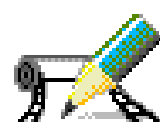
perhaps the CC Graphics Loaders could be supplied as standard with Publisher Plus? Also rumours suggest that we may at last see updates to the Impression family later this year offering new functionality.

*Simon Burrows*

*The full Impression Publisher Plus package costs £299 plus VAT. The upgrade from Publisher costs £130 plus VAT (although at the Harrogate Show CC was offering all products at half normal price). Computer Concepts, Gaddesden Place, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6EX. Tel 01442 351000. Fax 01442 351010.*



# The Complete Animator



*Steve Arnold tries to animate his desktop with Iota's latest animation package...*

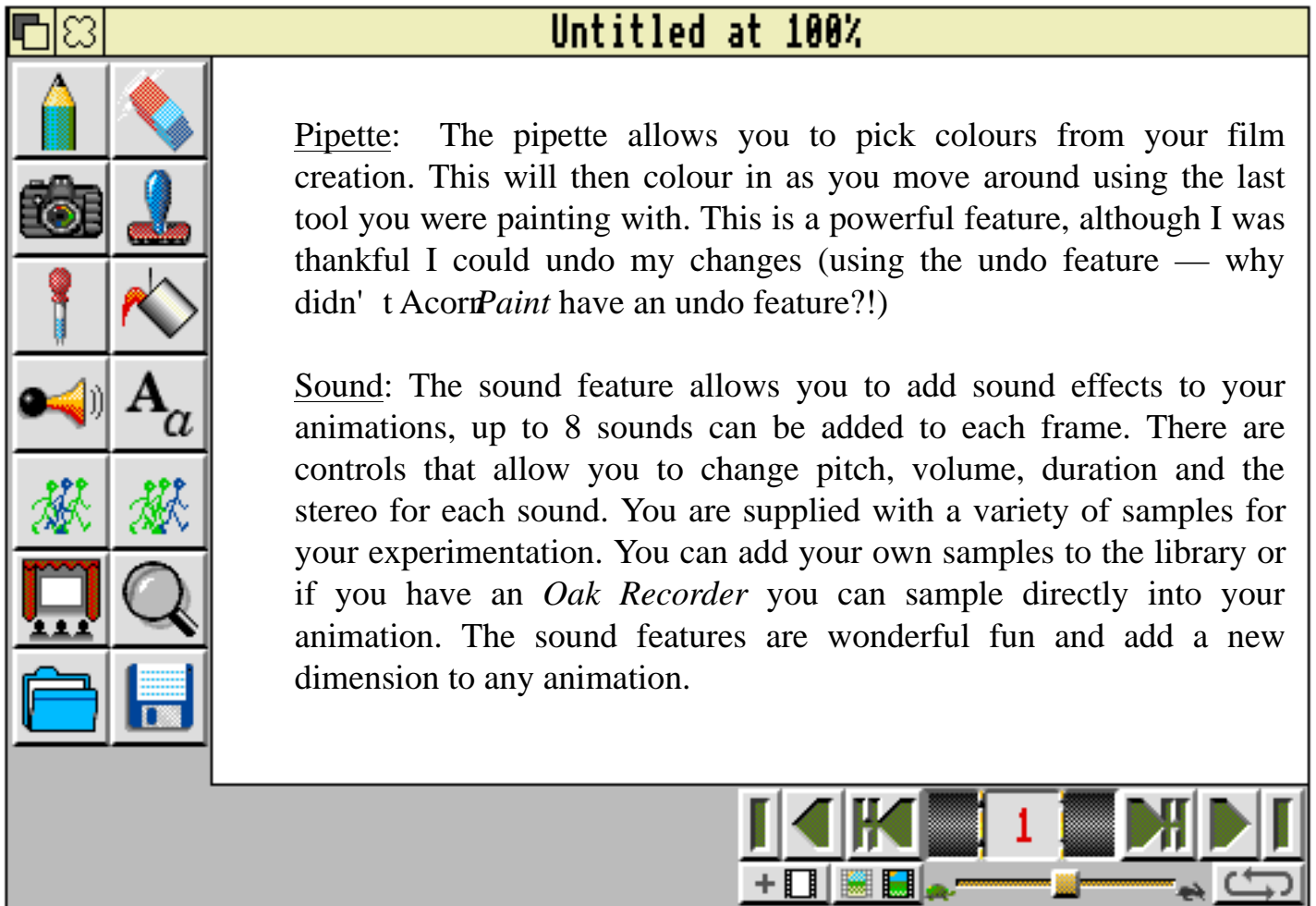
When I was asked to review Iota's *The Complete Animator*, I looked forward to doing it. You see, writing the review would give me an excuse to try out my hand at animation. It couldn't be very hard, could it?

Well, what do you get for your money? Firstly you get a very colourful box to hold all the goodies and a well-produced video covering animation and the techniques associated with it. A manual/guide covering all the aspects of the program is included, and of course two discs, one containing the program and the other containing various examples and stamps. The program disc is protected using Iota's standard protection mechanism. This allows you to use it from the floppy disc, but if you wish to install the package on a hard disc you need to register it with Iota. Once you've got yourself

up and running, up pops a nice little icon which appears on the task bar. Clicking on this opens a window with a variety of tools and functions. Below outlines these in general terms;

Pencil : This gives you a set of paint tools that allow you to draw objects. This is similar to the standard tool set of Acorn *Paint*, however this has a few neat features which allow you to change the size and shape of the pen. All operations are straightforward and obvious.

Snapshot: The snapshot camera allows you to create your own stamps (more about this feature later). It has a facility to also grab from screen or direct from scanners or digitizers. This feature worked well.



Pipette: The pipette allows you to pick colours from your film creation. This will then colour in as you move around using the last tool you were painting with. This is a powerful feature, although I was thankful I could undo my changes (using the undo feature — why didn' t Acorn *Paint* have an undo feature?!)

Sound: The sound feature allows you to add sound effects to your animations, up to 8 sounds can be added to each frame. There are controls that allow you to change pitch, volume, duration and the stereo for each sound. You are supplied with a variety of samples for your experimentation. You can add your own samples to the library or if you have an *Oak Recorder* you can sample directly into your animation. The sound features are wonderful fun and add a new dimension to any animation.

Full Screen Mode: This feature obviously expands the screen to full size. When used with a genlock card it allows a simple way of producing video titling effects. There is a range of frame display options which allow the user to control the display, very useful for producing graphic presentations. There's so much to use, so little time to tell you.

Loading: This allows example files to loaded and run directly. This will you to import various filetypes for use as new frames or add as backdrops. The filetypes you can import are sprites, draw and Artworks files. Other films can also be imported.

Eraser: The eraser is a simple to use feature which allows the user to erase parts of a frame (3 sizes available) undo/redo and finally the most important feature restore

frame. This is a must for any package — why didn' *Paint* have this feature? — yes I know I've already said that, but it needs saying many times in the faint hope that someone at Acorn may listen.

Stamps: The stamp option gives the user a suite of pre-defined resources. These can take the form of sprites, draw, Artworks, film and ACE film formats. These can be added to by the user and changed using a flip, rotate and scale tool within the stamp window. This helps the beginner experiment with simple animations.

Flood fill: This allows the user to flood fill with a desired colour, with the added bonus of showing the user the filled area prior to confirming with the mouse button. This also works at a rapid speed.

Text: The text option allows the user to add text in any font, size, or angle to any frame of a film. Various styles can be used and the text can be presented in a drop shadow format, enough to liven any presentation.

Ghosting and In-betweening: This option is one of the main functions of The Complete Animator. It allows you see the previous two frames of your film or the one before and the one after. This allows you to see the position of your animated object and define its movement. It acts in the same way as an animator's lightbox.

Magnifier: The standard magnifier for tidying the detail of any frame. Definitely necessary to give your film that polished look.

Saving and Printing: Films can be saved in a variety of formats. These are: native Iota film format, ACE film format, Acorn Replay format and sprite file, stamp, sound and palette. Printing options allows you to print as story books and flick books.

### **Lower tool icons**

Colour picker: A colour selector for use in any mode in any colour from 2 to 16 million colours dependant on your mode and machine.

Video style control panel: This allows the user to add frames to make duplicate frames and to control the playback of the film, all at the click of a mouse button.

### **Summary**

What is Iota's The Complete Animator like? Quite simply excellent. This is a very stable product with a rich and quite often innovative feature set. This product has a flair for detail which is sometimes lacking in other products.

All you people who wish to experiment and create your own animations, look no further than this package. The product really does have a quality stamp on it, and is certainly one of the best animation creation programs available.

It has the added versatility of being extremely useful in editing sprites. I just love that undo feature! There are loads of features and functions I haven't told you about, I leave you to discover these for yourself.

As for my usage, I spend some sleepless nights trying to polish my meagre animation skills, but I enjoy every moment of it — Walt Disney would have loved this! This is a very addictive program to use and certainly the best in its class at the moment. Iota must be congratulated for producing a very high calibre product with some of the best presentation ever found in the Acorn market. Very Highly Recommended.

*Steve Arnold  
(aka Walt Disney)*

*The Complete Animator costs £99 including VAT from Iota Software, Iota House, Wellington Court, Cambridge CB1 1HZ. Tel 01223 566789. Fax 01223 566788. Email [info@iota.co.uk](mailto:info@iota.co.uk).*

*As mentioned by Steve in his review, The Complete Animator is an extremely well polished package, for example coming complete with an introductory video on animation techniques. If you have used the package to produce any good animations, please do let us know.*

# ARNOLD'S OBSERVATIONS

*Steve Arnold thinks about DIY guides and Acorn...*

Here we are again, I'm sitting writing this article at the Eleventh Hour. Well, actually nearer the ninth but it feels later.. Needless to say I'm living on the edge again: I got caught yet again by the backup law. You know, the importance of information stored on disc being directly proportional to the occurrence of corruption and the more important the data, the less likely you have a backup. Still it served me right, I should practise what I preach! This has left me with the little problem of re-creating my Observations article in a very short time. So here we go!

## **DIY learning**

I don't know whether you have noticed the wide range of self-help guides that exist for computer related subjects. This covers areas from DOS through to the Internet. However it comes to mind that there are a lot of people who are making a lot of money out of a basic lack of knowledge and understanding of the products that people buy.

Why is this so? It seems to me that products we buy should be generally usable without reference to self-help guides. The following questions may also give some insight into this issue.

- Is it because we the customers never read the manuals or run the tutorial programs?
- Is it because the manuals are usually written by people who know what they are doing?

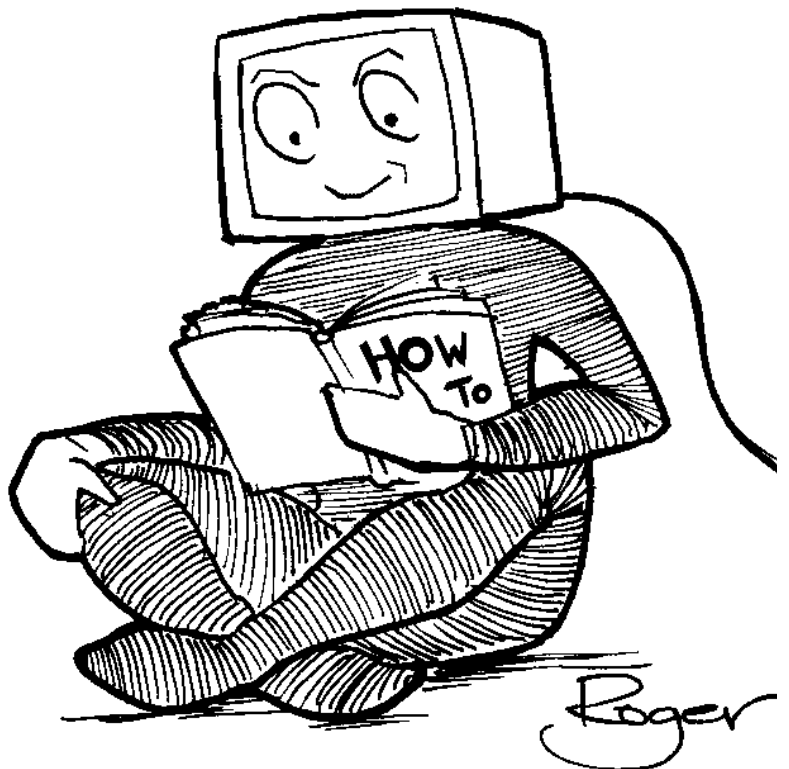
- Is it because the product authors are so wrapped up in features and functions that they forget to simplify the core elements of the product?

- Is it because human nature insists we know best until we reach a point of failure?

Whatever your answers to the above questions are, I'm sure that there is a least a smidgeon of each element in reality. The providers of self-help guides work on principle that knowledge is power and in these times of information overload, real knowledge is real power.

## **Acorn Computers Limited**

I have listed below a number of open questions aimed at Acorn — what do you think? How would **you** answer them?



*"How to read" the manual!*

- *What are Acorn's main objectives ?*
- *What are Acorn's long term plans ?*
- *What is Acorn's long term strategy?*
- *What are Acorn's active markets ?*
- *What are the effects of competition ?*
- *Is there a customer focus ?*
- *Is Acorn still a leading innovator ?*
- *Are Acorn products cost effective?*

The reason for asking these questions is that Acorn appears to be refocussing on its core activities and markets, by which I mean Education. This could mean other customers do not have the same commitment as the education customer. We will have to wait and see what happens in the future.

### **Java**

What the hell is "Java" I hear you shout! Well, at its basic level it is Sun Microsystems' new programming language. This will allow "internet enabled" programs to be created. The aim is to produce freeware

software which is loaded from the Internet and then junked when you finished. It works on the principle that you just upload the latest version. The applications which are called "Aplets" could take the form of wordprocessors, spreadsheet, search tools as well a wide range of interactive tools. What is more important is that the software will also work on PC machines. Here lies the more complex scenario. Sun Microsystems sees the dominance of Microsoft as the great threat to all aspects of growth and free-enterprise. Java means that us, the users will have an alternative avenue to get access to the current "state of the art" software without increasing the profits of one Mr Bill Gates.

I will keep an eye on Sun's progress — I wish them every success — a little competition is a good thing.

I'll leave you with this thought, even though it is a slightly paranoid one:

*"If you don' t move — you die!"*

Have Fun —Seeya again soon!

*Steve Arnold*

---

## **Overseas Memberships**

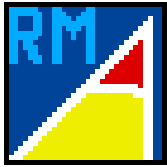
The ARM Club has a significant number of members who live outside the UK but until now we have had a single membership fee and only asked for an extra donation from overseas members towards the substantial extra cost of posting magazines, newsletters and other packages to other countries.

Following many requests for standard overseas membership rates, we have come up

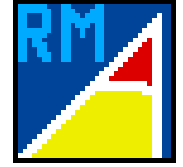
with the following prices which apply to overseas memberships from August onwards: UK membership £12 per year, European Union £16 per year, International £19 per year.

The Club doesn't get any financial benefit from charging these increased amounts, they simply cover the additional cost of posting packages outside the UK.





# Writing RISC OS Modules Part 1



*Following his popular series on ARM coding, Mark Smith starts a new series of articles on writing relocatable modules for RISC OS computers*

Modules may be used to provide extensions to RISC OS. They make up a large part of the ROMs containing RISC OS and may be replaced by alternatives loaded from disc.

Modules are normally written in either assembler or C, it is not possible to write a module in BASIC. The example I will be giving is written using the assembler included as part of BBC BASIC. I'm going to assume a basic knowledge of ARM assembler as covered in my series of articles in Eureka 8 to 12. If you don't have those issues, a booklet of all the articles is available from the Club.

All RISC OS modules have a so-called *header* which gives the address of various routines and other items present in the module. The address of code pointed to by an entry in this table is known as an entry point. As modules must always be written so that they can run anywhere in memory (you can never guarantee where a module will be loaded), these addresses are given relative to the start of the module. This is known as the module's base address.

A module header is made up of the following:

Offset	Type	Contains
&00	Offset to code	Start code
&04	Offset to code	Initialisation code
&08	Offset to code	Finalisation code
&0C	Offset to code	Service call handler
&10	Offset to string	Title string
&14	Offset to string	Help string

&18    Offset to table    Help and command keyword table

The initialisation code runs when the module is first loaded. It may be used, for example, to claim some workspace memory for the module. Conversely, the finalisation code is run when the module is killed. It should ensure that all claimed memory has been freed and "tidy up" prior to the module being removed.

The service call code is run when the operating system or some application wishes either to inform all modules that something has happened or is about to happen or to give all modules a chance to provide some information which is required. For example, a service call is passed round to all modules when a mode change has taken place and when a mode change command has been issued for an unknown mode. A module may be able to define that unknown mode.

The start code is only provided by a module that can be started as an application. Examples include BASIC and all the modules, such as Filer, which provide the standard desktop tasks. Every module must have a title string. This contains the name by which the module is identified. For example, a module is removed from memory by the command `*RMKill <Module title>`.

The help string is displayed when the command `*Help <Module title>` is

executed. It contains a short description of the module, a version number and a date.

The help and command keyword table is used if you wish your module to provide additional \* commands or to give help messages for specific keywords when \*Help <Keyword> is executed. Often, the two are provided together for a command so that \*Help Command gives details of what \*Command does.

There may be additional entries in the header if you wish your module to provide SWI / SYS commands. These entries are optional and do not need to be there if your module does not provide any SWI calls.

### Simple Module Example

The following example is very simple. It displays a message on the screen when you load it and again when you kill it.

```
REM >Example1
REM
```

```
DIM space% 1024
REM Claim memory to assemble program
start=0: init=0: final=0: service=0: table=0
REM Set any undefined header entries to 0
```

```
FOR A%=4 TO 6 STEP 2
```

```
  P%=0
```

```
  O%=space%
```

```
  [OPT A%
```

```
  \-----
```

```
  .base
```

```
  EQUd start
```

```
  EQUd init
```

```
  EQUd final
```

```
  EQUd service
```

```
  EQUd title
```

```
  EQUd help
```

```
  EQUd table
```

```
  \-----
```

```
  .init
  STMFD R13!,{r14 }
  \ First store return address held in R14 on
  stack.
  \ R14 is corrupted when a SWI is called from
  svc mode.
  SWI "XOS_WriteS"
  EQUd "Module loaded and initialised"
+CHR$0
  ALIGN
  SWI "XOS_NewLine"
  \ Display message on the screen
  LDMFD R13!,{pc }^
  \ Return using the address on the stack
  \-----
  .final
  STMFD R13!,{r14 }
  \ Store return address held in R14 on the
  stack
  SWI "XOS_WriteS"
  EQUd "Module dying"+CHR$0
  ALIGN
  SWI "XOS_NewLine"
  \ Display message on the screen
  LDMFD R13!,{pc }^
  \ Return using the address on the stack
  \-----
  .title
  EQUd "Example"+CHR$0
  ALIGN
  \-----
  .help
  EQUd "Example Module"+CHR$9+"0.01 (15
  Aug 1995)" +CHR$0
  ALIGN
  \-----
  ]
NEXT
OSCLI "Save ExampleMod"+STR$~space%
+" "+STR$~O%
*SetType ExampleMod Module
*RMLoad ExampleMod
END
```

The first thing to note is the way in which all address references are relative to the start of the module. By adding 4 to the assembler

option (set with OPT), it is possible to assemble the code at one address (pointed to by O%), but to generate all address labels as if the program were actually being assembled at a different address (pointed to by P%). By making P%=0 at the start of assembly, all labels will be given a value which is an offset from the start of the module, for example init will contain the number of bytes between the start of the module and .init.

Secondly, module entry points (with the exception of start) are usually called with the processor running in SVC mode. This is a privileged mode in which the processor can access areas of memory and bits of hardware not normally accessible. It also means that you must be a bit more careful when calling SWIs. This is because R14 will be corrupted by the call (it will be used to store the return address from the SWI, ie the instruction immediately following it) so you must make sure that you've saved R14 on the stack if it contains anything that you are going to need. Module entry points are normally called with R14 containing a return address, so when your routine has finished it should return using either:

`MOV PC,R14` if R14 has not been stored on the stack or `LDMFD R13!,{pc }` if it has.

When running code in SVC mode, R13 points to a full, descending stack known as the Supervisor Stack.

The example program provides only two of the entry points, the initialisation and finalisation routines. Each of these uses a the SWI `OS_WriteS` to display some text on the screen followed by `OS_NewLine` to move the cursor to the start of the next line. Each of the SWI names is preceded by an X. This forces

the SWI to return any errors by setting the overflow (V) flag and putting a pointer to an error block in R0. The error block consists of a 32 bit error number followed by the message which is null (0 byte) terminated. The calling code must decide what to do with the error. In the case of the example, any errors are ignored — the ^ character on the end of the `LDMFD R13!,{pc }` command forces the processor flags to be restored as they were when the entry point was called and this will clear the V flag. Alternatively, an error may be returned by returning from the entry point with the V flag set and R0 still pointing to the error block. For example:

```
STMFD R13!,{r14 }
\ Store return address and flags on
stack
....
SWI "X....."
\ Call X prefixed SWI
LDMVSFD R13!,{pc }
\ If it returns an error then pass it back
....
LDMFD R13!,{pc }^
\ Routine successfully completed.
```

Note that the condition code (e.g. VS) must be placed before the stack type (e.g. FD) specifier in LDM and STM instructions.

If a SWI is called without the X prefix, any errors will be generated by RISC OS and the SWI will never return. You must never use SWIs without the X prefix in any module code, except where the start entry point has been called any the module is running as the current application.

## Example 2

```
REM >Example2
```

```

REM
DIM space% 1024
REM Claim memory to assemble the program
start=0:init=0:final=0:service=0:table=0
REM Set any undefined header entries to 0

```

```

FOR A%=4 TO 6 STEP 2

```

```

  P%=0
  O%=space%
  [OPT A%
  \-----

```

```

  .base
  EQU start
  EQU init
  EQU final
  EQU service
  EQU title
  EQU help
  EQU table
  \-----

```

```

  .init
  STMFD R13!,{r14 }
  \ First store return address held in R14 on
  stack.

```

```

  \ R14 is corrupted when a SWI is called from
  svc mode.

```

```

  SWI "XOS_WriteS"
  EQU "Module loaded and initialised"
+CHR$0

```

```

  ALIGN
  LDMVSFD R13!,{pc }
  \ Return any error from OS_WriteS
  SWI "XOS_NewLine"
  \ Display message on the screen
  LDMFD R13!,{pc }
  \ Return using the address on the stack
  (possibly returning an error)
  \-----

```

```

  .final
  STMFD R13!,{r14 }
  \ Store return address held in R14 on the
  stack

```

```

  SWI "XOS_WriteS"
  EQU "Module dying"+CHR$0
  ALIGN
  LDMVSFD R13!,{pc }
  \ Return any error from OS_WriteS
  SWI "XOS_NewLine"

```

```

  \ Display message on the screen
  LDMFD R13!,{pc }^
  \ Return using the address on the stack
  (possibly returning an error)

```

```

  \-----
  .title
  EQU "Example"+CHR$0
  ALIGN
  \-----
  .help
  EQU "Example Module"+CHR$9+"0.02 (02
  Jul 1995)" +CHR$0
  ALIGN
  \-----

```

```

  ]
NEXT
OSCLI "Save Examl2Mod
"+STR$~space%+" "+STR$~O%
*SetType Examl2Mod Module
*RMLoad Examl2Mod
END

```

Example 2 does exactly the same as the first example, but returns any errors generated by the SWIs that it calls are returned. Note that any errors returned by the initialisation routine will prevent the module from initialising and it will not appear in the list of active modules as displayed with \*Modules. In effect, it will be just as though you didn't load it. Likewise, if an error is returned by the finalisation routine, the module will not be removed from memory. If an error is consistently generated by a module's finalisation routine then it can only be removed by resetting the machine!

*Mark Smith*

*Mark wrote the popular ArcFS compression package as well as the modules for the Club's Game On package for Risc PC users. This series will continue in Eureka 17, Mark will be happy to answer any questions on modules.*

# Sherston Adventures

*Geoff Stilwell looks at a pair of educational adventures from Sherston Software*

Sherston Software have built up an excellent reputation over the years as a supplier of quality educational software for the BBC Micro, Archimedes and Risc PC computers. At the BETT Show I expressed an interest in two of their adventure programs, *The Crystal Rain Forest* and *Around The World In Eighty Days*.

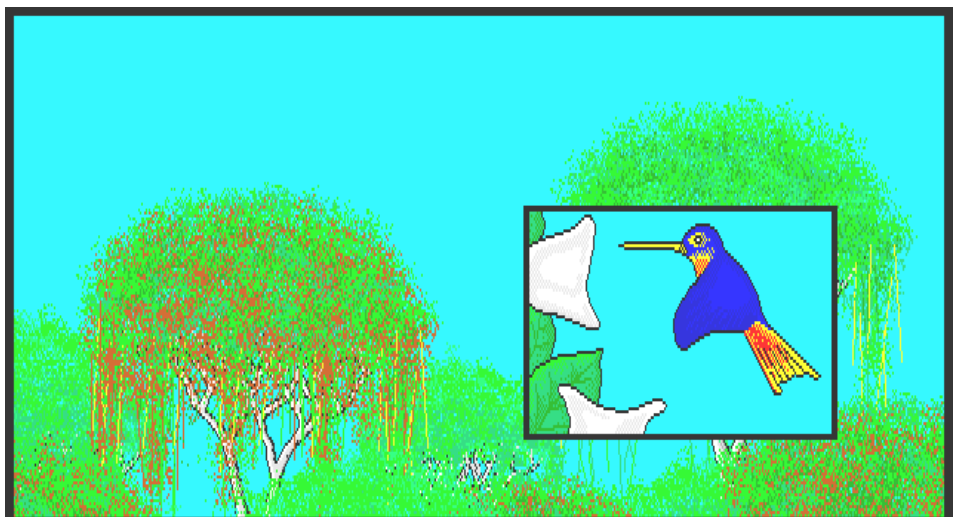
Both of these programs have a geographical focus but in very different ways. *Around The World...* deals with the more traditional aspects of geography, focusing on mapping skills linked to a journey around the world. *Crystal Rain Forest* has an ecological theme but seeks to introduce elements of Logo.

I took both programs into my friendly primary school where the year five classes were involved in geographically biased topic work. One teacher had already had some experience of Logo and was also going to look at *The Aztecs* so *Crystal Rain Forest* had obvious associations, whereas the other teacher had plans to focus on basic mapping skills accompanying work on explorers such as Columbus and Drake. *Around The World In Eighty Days* undoubtedly met her requirements.

Both packages have operational similarities. They may be installed onto hard disc but with single user licensed versions a key disc

is required to start the programs. An icon appears as usual on the icon bar and a click on this starts the program running. The programs take over the machine but I think this is an advantage sometimes with children. A keypress code is used to return to the desktop where the programs' icon bar menu allows the group's current position in the adventure to be saved. How to save their position into their own folders was the only instruction I gave to the children using the programs. Both adventures lead the children through in a very logical way, I have heard them described as linear adventures, there are no frustrating 'Go back to the beginning and start again' surprises.

*Around The World In Eighty Days* takes two modern day children on a trip circumnavigating the world following loosely in the footsteps of their ancestor Phileas Fogg from the Jules Verne story of



The trees are the homes for rare  
animals and plants.

*Combining learning and fun in a single program...*



the same name. Their journey is an attempt to prevent the destruction of Sleepy Hollow, an area of great natural beauty, which is intended for development by the environmentally unfriendly Wiley Windbag.

The tasks the children using the program are presented with are jigsaw puzzles of Europe and the world, matching place names to positions on maps, matching capitals with countries, steering a boat around obstacles in the Straights of Hormuz using the nautical *Port* and *Starboard* commands, finding the obstacles using four-figure coordinates, recognizing contour patterns, compass directions, etc, etc, a veritable multitude of geographical skills.

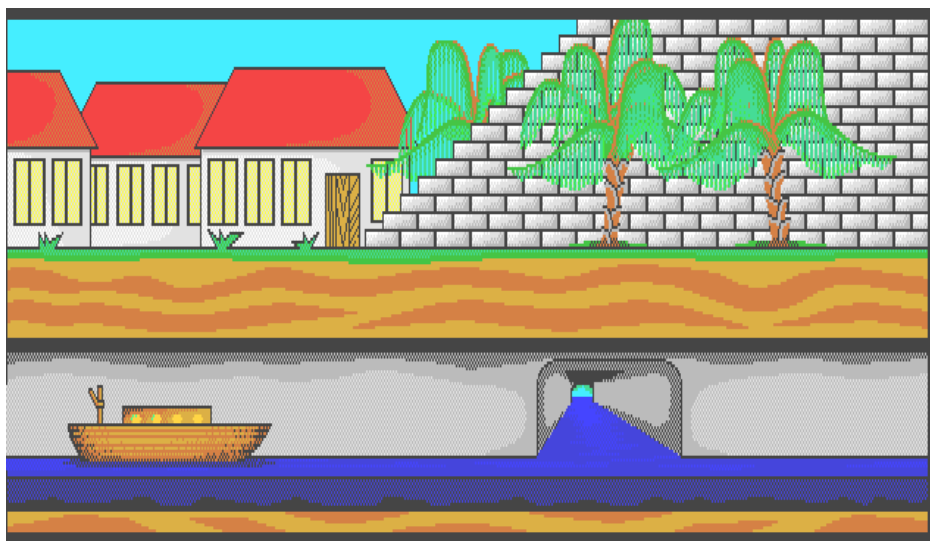
Of course the program on its own cannot hope to teach these skills to the children using the program, it only introduces the children to them and provides a context within which a teacher can teach these and a number of other geographical concepts. It also provides for investigations and research into many other aspects of a journey round the world and an accompanying *Classroom Ideas* booklet gives details of a number of cross-curricular ideas and references to get the teacher started.

Another book of resource materials is available separately. *Around The World In Eighty Weeks* is produced by Peter Sumner, a teacher from Blackburn, Lancashire. The book contains over 100 pages of photocopiable worksheets and valuable information which would be an asset to a school whether they have the program or not. Proceeds from the sale of the book go to the Cancer Research Campaign.

The class of children who used the program really enjoyed themselves. The programmers, Margaret & Peter Hayball, have introduced a lot of humour into the program and the children reacted every time to Wiley Windbag' sscheming chuckle every time he manages to thwart the children' s plans.

All the groups did have problems negotiating the Indian jungle. These screens showed a plan of the jungle paths and a smaller window showing a limited view from where the children were on the ground. The children found this very difficult. This was probably due to the children' slack of experience, and they all did manage to find their way out eventually.

One idea the program introduced the class developed into a game away from the computer. The program encourages an exploration of the screen picture with *Cold*, *Warm*, *Hot* and *Spot On* prompts. The class used this same idea but with a coordinates grid where they' d hidden an object.



*The quality of graphics is very high...*

reading instructions when they were presented. Perhaps something could be introduced at these points to slow them down.

The second adventure, Crystal Rain Forest, begins with the profiteering Cut & Run Gang poisoning the good King of Oglo to clear the way for their plans to destroy his rain forests. Two children must find crystals, hidden deep in the forest, to save the king and the forests. Progress through the adventure is by navigating the children around various locations using maps and LOGO commands.

this area alone exploring the possibilities of LOGO. Shapes drawn can be coloured simply by clicking on a colour and then on the area to fill. The results can be quite spectacular.

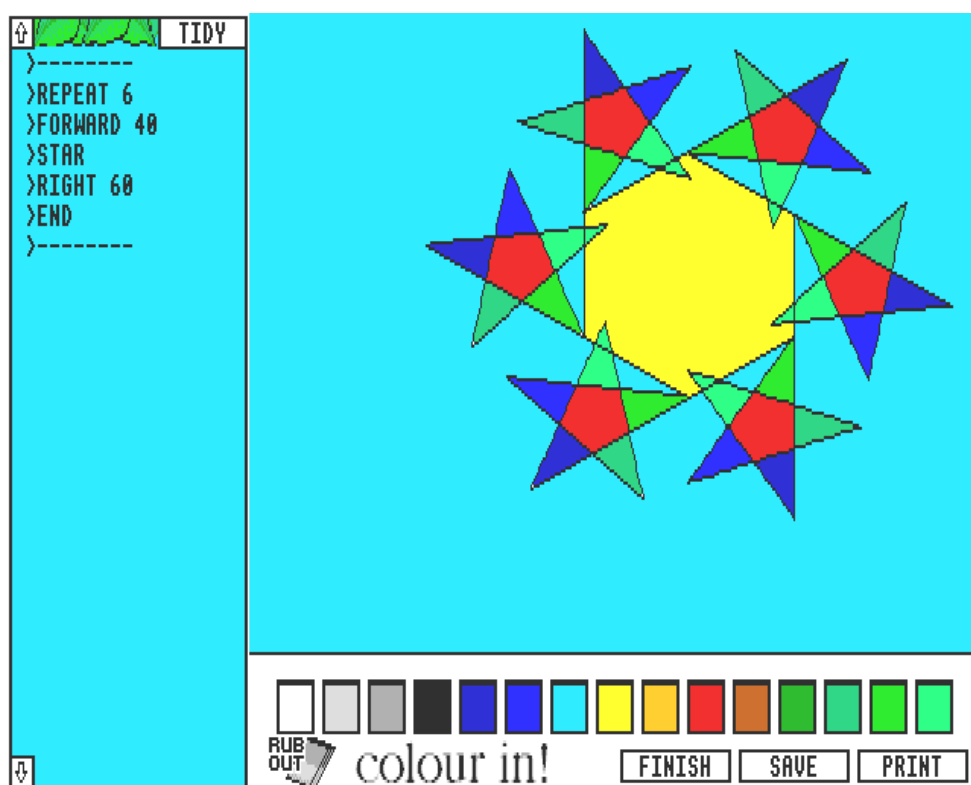
Crystal Rain Forest does have elements which are akin to the more traditional adventure game. For example, money given to the children for completing a puzzle can be used in the shop to buy sweets which in turn can be used to placate the snake guarding the entrance to an important

location. This provides another problem solving experience for the children using the program. Despite the fact that the problems were relatively easy it did result in children getting frustrated going round in circles.

Again the accompanying material provides lots of ideas for further work. I even got my teacher friend interested in the idea of creating a Rain Forest at the back of her classroom. There are also maps of the town and

forest the children have to negotiate and a series of work cards to assist the children in the solving of the LOGO puzzles.

The programmer of Crystal Rain Forest, Simon Hosler, also has a sense of humour, evidenced through the program. Some made me and the children laugh out loud. Some of the screens illustrating the adventure are lovely, the whole effect being to emphasise



*Just when the children thought they' d escaped from work!*

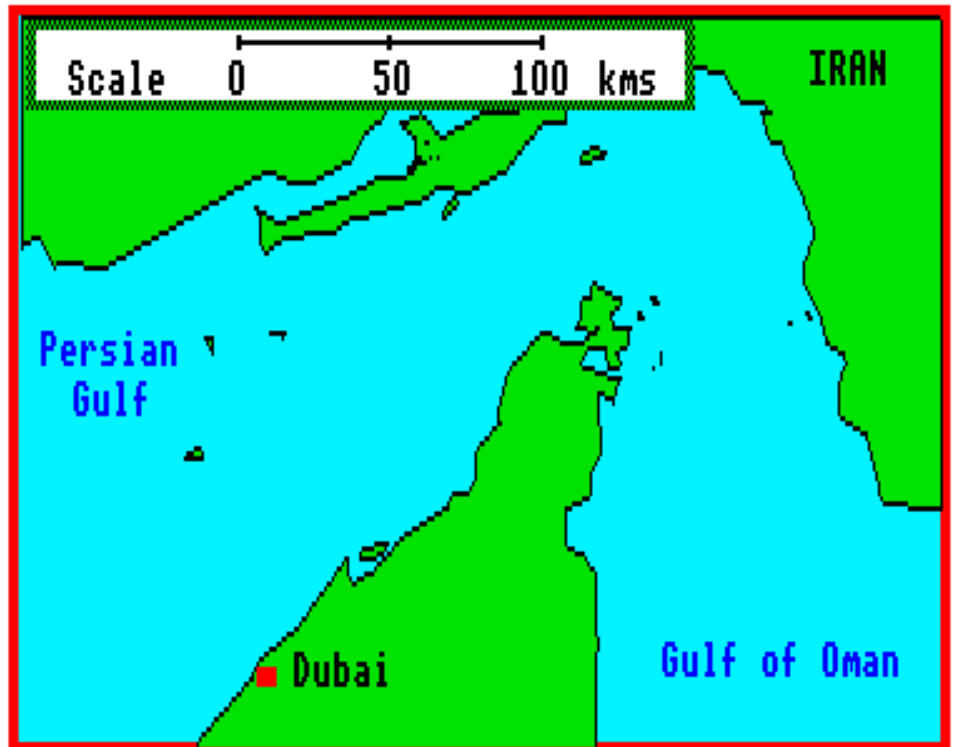
The children are presented with puzzles that are structured to become progressively more complex. The first few deal with basic LOGO commands and develop the user' s understanding of LOGO towards repeating commands and building procedures. The adventure ends with the children creating shapes and patterns (Crystals to save the King) in a simple implementation of LOGO. Children could spend a great deal of time in

the principle of looking after our planet.

The class of children enjoyed working their way through Crystal Rain Forest. They had had some experience of LOGO using Logotron LOGO and found some of the different ways of achieving a result a little strange although once they got the idea they got on with the task quite happily. The program is an introduction to LOGO and perhaps it would have been a fairer test to use it with a class that had little, or no experience of LOGO.

I noticed in the Sherston catalogue that a Crystal Rain Forest 2 by the same author is due to be released this year. This will focus on aspects of Control Technology.

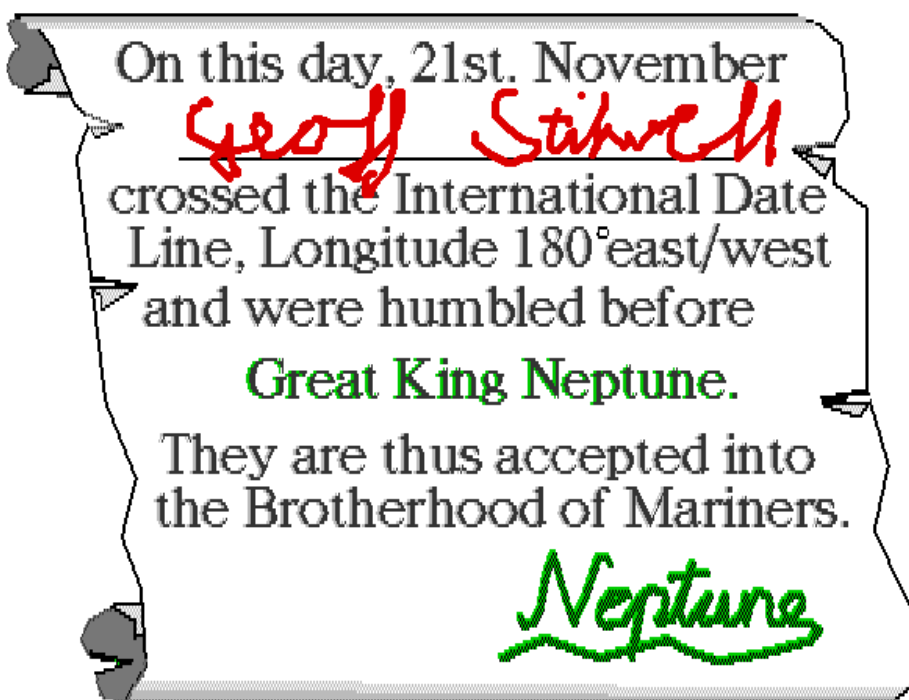
Thanks to Alison Lloyd and Jenny Bond, teachers at Colindale School in north west



London for their helpful comments and suggestions.

Both of these adventures can be obtained from Sherston Software Ltd., Angel House, Sherston, Malmesbury, Wiltshire SN16 0LH Tel: 01666 840433. Price £44.95+VAT each.

*Geoff Stilwell*



The booklet "Around the World in 80 Weeks" is available from: Peter Sumner, FREEPOST, Roman Road Primary School, Fishmore Drive, Blackburn, Lancs BB2 3BR Price: £7.99 Cheques should be made payable to: The Cancer Research Campaign.

*Who says that teachers aren't allowed to have fun..?*

# iSV Outline Font Packs

*Peter Jennings looks at the plain & fancy fonts in two new packs*

Perfectly satisfactory documents of almost any kind can usually be produced with just the standard fonts supplied by Acorn, except perhaps where something, such as an advertisement, calls for some more eye-catching effects. Despite this, there are not many DTP users who can resist having a wider choice, including a range of more exotic typefaces for special uses or just to liven up a page occasionally.

cost £25 each, or £45 for the two, plus £1.50 postage (£3.50 abroad) on each order. The new version of Pack 277 comes on two discs and pack number 298 is on three. The fonts are all compressed and each set comes with an automatic installer to unload them into a !Fonts directory, EasyFont or FontDIR. A hard disc with at least 5MB of free space is necessary. Both packs include an on-screen manual with full details on installation.

Two font packs from iSV Products, numbered 277 Version 2 and 298, each offer almost 300 RISC OS 3 format fonts, all with full Latin 1 character sets, scaffolded and hinted

ANCIOT

ANCIOT.BOLD

ANCIOT.BOLD.CONDENSED

ANCIOT.BOLD.CONDENSED.OBLIQUE

ANCIOT.BOLD.EXTENDED

ANCIOT.BOLD.EXTENDED.OBLIQUE

ANCIOT.BOLD.OBLIQUE

ANCIOT.CONDENSED

ANCIOT.CONDENSED.OBLIQUE

ANCIOT.EXTENDED

ANCIOT.EXTENDED.OBLIQUE

ANCIOT.OBLIQUE

*Each font family contains up to 12 typefaces*

and with automatic kerning data. All are said to be suitable for use in Danish, Dutch, Faroese, French, German, Icelandic, Irish, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish and Welsh as well as English, although, as my Faroese is a little rusty, I have not been able to check that. The packs

**ALPHA**

**Arno**

**Charley**

**Clarence**

**EastWood**

**Embankment**

**Gothic**

**Lothlorian**

**MACKINTOSH**

**Saloon**

**Yngtong**

**ZIRCON**

*Some of the variety of fonts supplied in the packs*

To clear up any confusion over definitions: fonts are divided into named families. There are 36 font families in Pack 277 and 39 font families in Pack 298. Each font family contains from six to 12 different weights (thicknesses) and styles, such as Bold, Condensed, Extended and Oblique, and combinations of them, and these make up the total of nearly 300 fonts, or typefaces, in each pack.

The fonts range from the clean, clear faces needed for everyday text use to fancier designs such as Gothic, ArtDeco and others best described as script, old English, Oriental, ecclesiastical and machine readable type. There seems to be something

for all occasions. Only a few can be illustrated here but every font is shown in the iSV Product Guide, issue 3, and if you are interested this is worth getting to see what each pack contains and which has the designs you want.

! " # \$ % & ' ( ) \* + , - . / 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 : ; < = > ?  
 @ A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z [ \ ] ^ \_  
 ` a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z { | } ~ ¡ ¢  
 £ ¥ ¦ § ¨ © ª « ¬ ® ¯ ° ± ² ³ ´ µ ¶ · ¸ ¹ º » ¼ ½ ¾ ¿  
 À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ð Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ ß  
 à á â ã ä å æ ç è é ê ë ì í î ï ð ñ ò ó ô õ ö ÷ ø ù ú û ü ý þ ÿ

Finally, a word of caution. When you have your big new collection just bear in mind that the commonest and most conspicuous fault in desktop publishing is the use of too many different typefaces on a page. Fewer are always better if you want to avoid an amateurish messy look.

*Peter Jennings*

*The complete Collegum font character set*

*The font packs and the iSV Product Guide can be obtained from iSV Products at 86 Turnberry, Home Farm, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 8ZH. Tel 01344 55769.*

*iSV Products is planning to be present at our Leicester Open Day on 9th September*

## UK School Internet Primer

The UK School Internet Primer is a book intended for schools considering obtaining a connection to the Internet, packed with information about the nature, strengths and weaknesses of the Internet along with helpful suggestions about using the Net in schools.

The Primer, published by Koeksuster Publications, was reviewed in Eureka 13 and has received favourable comments from many different magazines and journalists. Although intended for schools, it also provides a very

good general introduction to the Internet suitable for anyone considering a connection.

We have negotiated a special discount on this book for Club members, only £8.30 including postage instead of the normal £8.50 plus £2.00 postage & packing. To order at this special price, send a cheque payable to *Koeksuster Publications* to Internet Primer Offer, St. Augustine's Cottage, High Street, Mill Hill, London NW7 1QY quoting your Club membership number.

## ARM Club Newsletter

The next issue of Eureka is expected to be sent out in mid-October, shortly before the Acorn World Show at Wembley. For this reason and because Issue 15 was delayed to coincide with the Harrogate Acorn User

Show, the next issue of the Club Newsletter will be published after the Acorn World Show rather than being squashed between this issue of Eureka and the next. This will mean we can bring you all the latest news.



# Installing the PC486 Card

*An article by Eric Critchley about his experiences installing the new PC486 Card on the SCSI drive fitted to his Risc PC*

Having bought a Risc PC last year, I began to plan how best to cater for two different operating systems. As DOS related programs are so memory hungry, I first increased the RAM size from 4MB to 8MB. I then decided it would be best to have separate hard drives for the two systems, so I invested in a SCSI2 card and a 540MB SCSI drive, which involved buying a second “slice” for the computer to house the drive. All these additions were quite straightforward and I encountered no serious problems.

Perhaps I ought to explain that I am by no means an expert, although having started with a Sinclair ZX and worked my way up via Beeb, Master and A3000, I have learned the rudiments of fiddling with ROMs and other bits and pieces.

Then came THE DAY when my PC486 card arrived. At last, I thought, I can dispense with PCEm, which I was using as a stopgap. I made back-ups of all the DOS material I wanted to preserve and emptied the SCSI drive completely. Following the instructions, I installed !PC486 and !PCConfig on the SCSI drive and created a Drive C partition on it, by changing the default file name to SCSI. With only !PC486 and !PCConfig on it, I was able to specify a size of 520MB for the partition. I happily clicked on !PC486 to start loading the DOS which was supplied, only to get a message that “Drive C” (the partition) could not be found! Being such a dimwit, I was stuck. As a temporary measure I wiped the SCSI drive clean again, transferred all my RISC OS files on to it and made a

considerably smaller Drive C partition on the IDE drive, without problems. (Warning — if you do the same at any time, remember to leave on the IDE drive copies of !Boot, !Apps and Utilities, as RISC OS expects to boot up from IDE unless you make further changes to the configuration.)

Soon after this disaster I read two reviews of the PC486 card, one in *Eureka*, the other in *RISC User*. The latter seemed to suggest that it was not possible to run PC486 from a SCSI drive. The former, by Mark Smith and Simon Burrows stated it was possible. Thoroughly confused, I contacted Simon, who swiftly pointed me in the right direction. I am now in the happy position of having a PC486 of 520MB! [See my reply at the end — Simon]

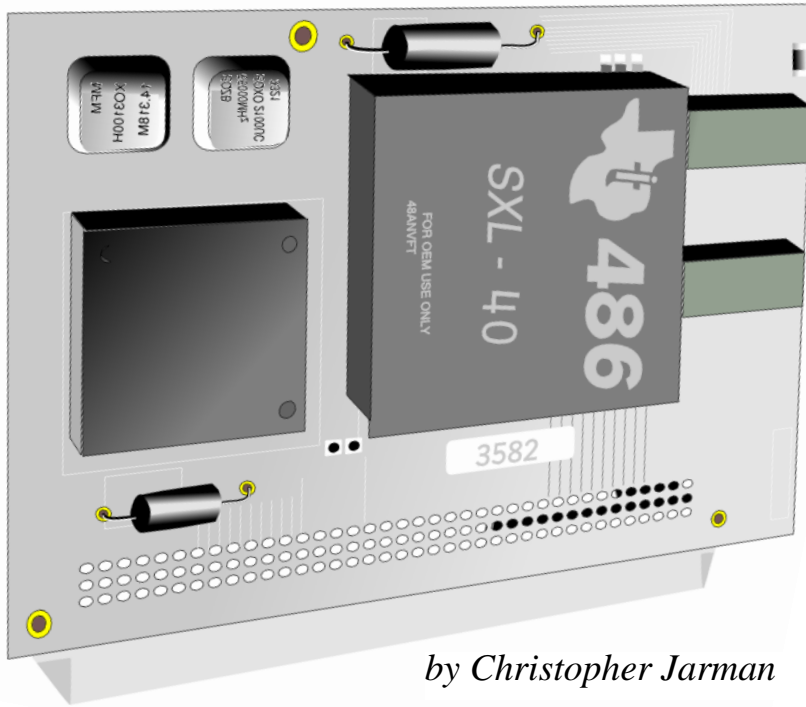
It has occurred to me that there may be others out there who now, or in the future, might have the same problem. So, for what it is worth, I decided to spell out, in the simplest possible terms, how to install PC486 on your SCSI drive.

1. Copy !PC486 and !PCConfig on to your SCSI hard disc drive.
2. Click on the !PCConfig icon. Erase the ADFS definition for “File Name” and substitute an entry similar to the following:

**SCSI::Name\$.DriveC**

(where Name is that of your SCSI drive).

3. All that remains now is to alter the default of 10MB partition size to whatever size you wish.



*by Christopher Jarman*

4. You can now install PCDOS 6, together with anything else you might have saved on floppies.

*Eric Critchley*

Simon replies:

Eric has highlighted a source of possible confusion in our review of the PC486 Card. We received one of the first batch of 150 cards produced by Acorn early this year and it was supplied with a pre-release version of the !PC486 and !PCconfig software.

This pre-release software, on which our review was based, contained a facility to directly access DOS-formatted SCSI drives without having to bother with the use of partitions at all. Instead an entire SCSI drive could be formatted in DOS, doing away with cumbersome partitions and speeding up disc access from within the PC environment. It was also possible to transfer a DOS-formatted SCSI hard disc (or Syquest cartridge) directly between a Risc PC and traditional PC, quite a useful facility.

Unfortunately Acorn effectively removed this facility from the release version of the software, as mentioned by RISC User. This was probably due to the fact that there were some problems as we described in the original review.

However back in late July, Acorn launched a new version of the PC486 software which has had the facility reinstated. It does not appear to be documented in the release note, however the PCconfig window contains extra options to specify a SCSI device ID instead of a partition

location and is fairly self-explanatory.

The new version of !PC486 has several other new features including support for 24 bit colour and redefinable colour palettes. This version is only available from Acorn's FTP site on the Internet, rather frustrating for the many people who don't have Internet access!

A full new release of the PC486 software will be released in September with all of the above features and many other features. This will be made more widely available, including from Vector Services.

Finally of interest to PC486 Card owners is the forthcoming Soundblaster emulation software for owners of the Acorn 16 bit Sound Card or the ESP Minnie Card. This will cost £39.95 plus VAT when released.

Thanks to Eric for pointing out this problem. If anybody else would like to relay their experiences using the PC486 Card, please do write in and share your findings with us all.

*Simon Burrows*

# Impression RTF Loaders

Ralph Sillett uses the latest add-on loaders for Computer Concepts' Impression...

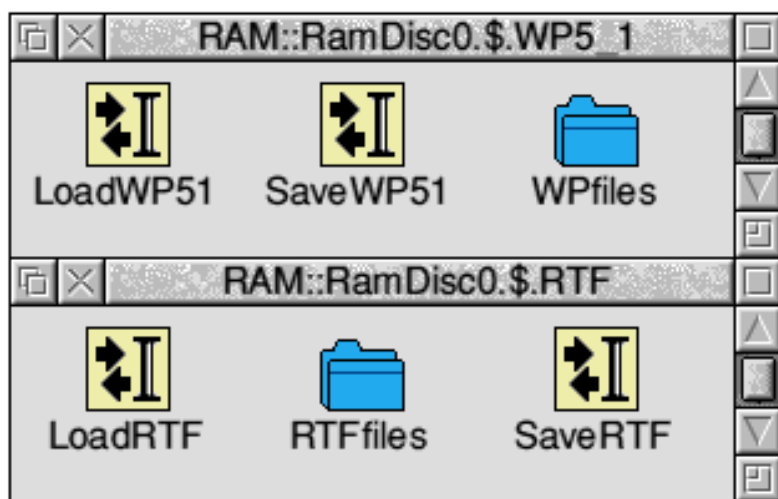
The *Impression RTF Loaders* arrived in a CD case but on a 3.5" floppy with the manual, which fits inside the CD case and has a total of 32 pages, along with a registration card.

The loaders and savers are only compatible with the following versions or later: Style 3.06, Publisher 4.04, Publisher Plus 5.04. If you need to upgrade, this is generally free by returning discs 1, 2 & 5 to Computer Concepts with your serial number. This is a very quick service, mine took just three days.

LoadCSV+ loaded then Impression brings up a window titled Impression Importer with the following message "Use text loader (v1.03) (OK — use loader, Cancel do not use loader)". I had this problem so a call to CC technical queries gave me the answer. Before loading rename the new loaders with an ! at the beginning, ie LoadWP51 now becomes !LoadWP51. This makes sure that the loaders are seen first.

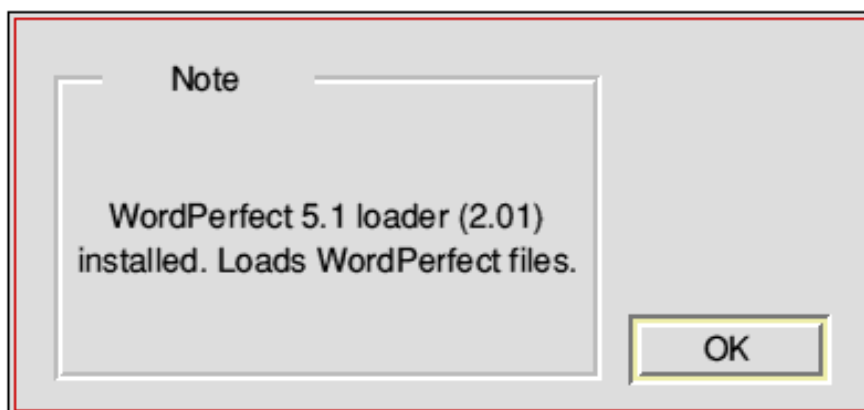
As I use the Pocket Book II extensively it was easy for me to try this out with no problems at all. Without being too technical and according to the manual the loader runs a check on the file to see that it has the correct format, the Acorn file type is ignored. Styles in the RTF file are added to Impression's list of styles, but those that have the same name are prefixed with RTF, simple. The loader cannot accept page sizes, multiple columns, page size information, page borders, info on number of columns and graphics. In the

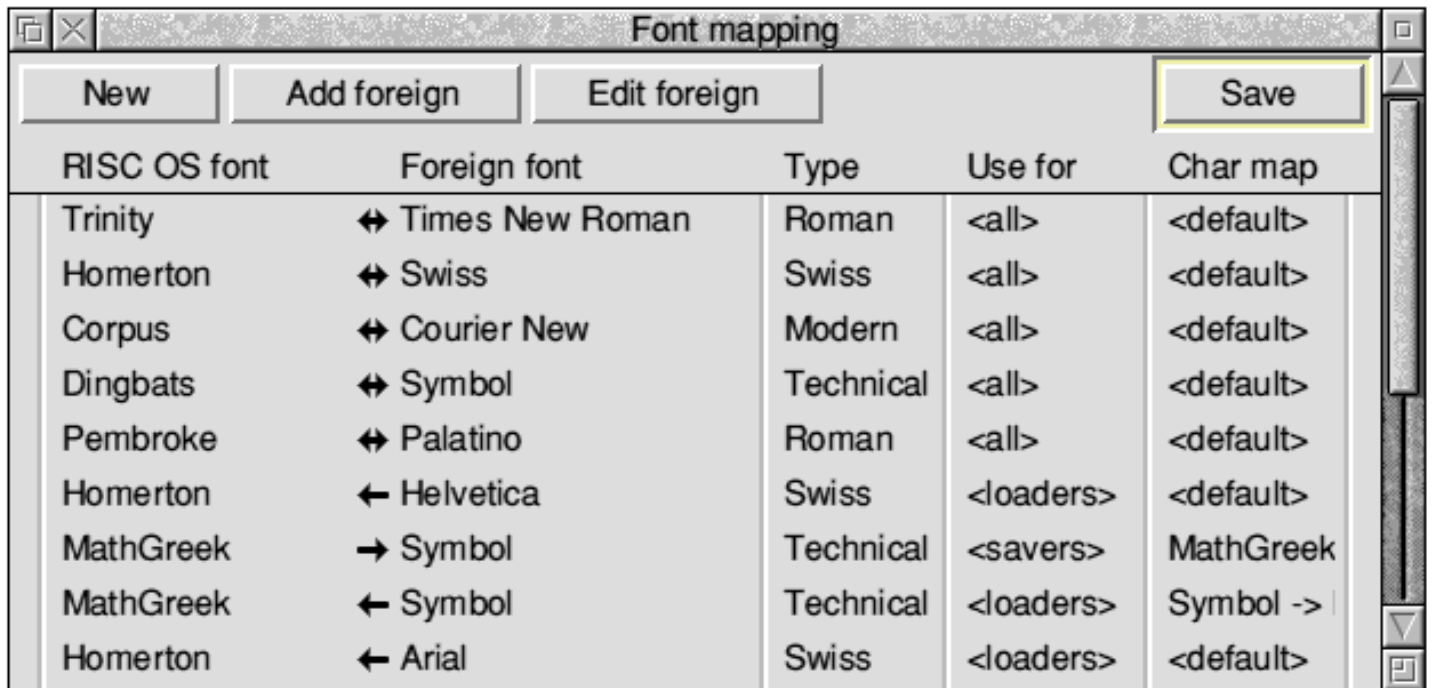
tables style borders are displayed as a single rule, multiple line cells do not format correctly, no control over cell alignment or alignment of rows within a frame and the background shading of cells is ignored.



*The loaders & savers supplied...*

Once you have loaded the modules into your chosen product and run the !CCMapper application supplied (more on this later), it is the usual easy process to load the relevant files. According to CC the RTF loader/saver has been tested with Microsoft Word 6.0, Acorn Pocket Book 2 & Psion S3a word processor and other sources of RTF files. Due to some unforeseen error in Impression when the modules are loaded as per the manual and you also have any of either LoadASCII, LoadCSV or





*The CCMapper utility is used to map fonts & characters onto their correct equivalents*

As I only had the Pocket Book II files and the samples supplied on the disc, I haven't been able to try RTF files from other wordprocessors [*They seem to work — Ed*].

The WordPerfect 5 loaders on the other hand had a more thorough testing as my other half uses WordPerfect at work and was, until recently, doing an evening class using WP5.1. All of the files on the college discs loaded with no problem. I even created a page with Publisher and saved it out to WP5 without any errors.

On the whole if you use a PC at work with either WordPerfect 5 or 6, or most programs that save to RTF then these can be loaded into Impression or saved from Impression to the PC product so long as it is mainly wordprocessed text. Graphics cannot be imported or exported.

!CCMapper helps to correctly map fonts and characters due to the following:

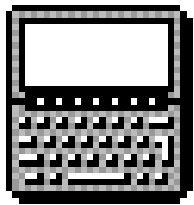
Many fonts are trademarked and often equivalent fonts exist but with different names such as Times is equivalent to Trinity on the Acorn.

The order of characters can differ such as ® is character 174 on Acorn and PC sets but 168 on the Apple Mac. CCMapper is a simple utility to correctly map the fonts & characters.

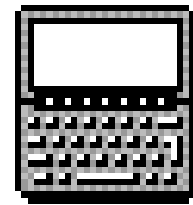
Overall these loaders and savers are very useful if you need to convert files between different packages. My only criticism of the RTF Loaders pack is the price.

*Ralph Sillett*

*The RTF Loaders pack is available from dealers or direct from Computer Concepts, Gaddesden Place, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 6EX. Tel 01442 351000. Fax 01442 351010. The street price is currently around £29 + VAT.*



# Pocket Book Corner



*Toby Smith tells of his girlfriend's findings  
playing with his little Pocket Book...*

The Club PD Library has recently released a series of discs containing Pocket Book software, to run alongside the wealth of RISC OS software. The discs have been carefully compiled by a team of experts (well..), the software has been tested for compatibility with both current models of Pocket Book and this has been indicated. As you read this article, testing and cataloguing are continuing from deepest Wales!

The discs are arranged by subject nature and hold a selection of both PBI and PBII software. PBII owners can install both types, and PBI owners are too hard done by as the small size of the programs means there is a lot on the disc. After all, the entire Operating System and standard Apps would fit onto a single floppy disc...

If you haven't experimented with PD software for the Pocket Book, it really is worthwhile: all the software is of good quality and some of it invaluable (as demonstrated by the amount that has stayed on the tester's machine...).

A few titles to look out for are:

Jumpy — Platform and Ladders game for Pocket Book and PBII.

Mapper — Display roads, locations and other info on your Pocket Book II.

MacroSys — Macro system for adding shortcuts to extra functions.

A full run down of the available programs will appear with the next issue of Eureka!

## **Configuring Schedule (PBII)**

Schedule on the Pocket Book II (or Psion 3a) is a powerful tool in personal organisation. However, careful configuration is useful to get the most out of the limited display size. The default configuration is very good for people who's day is organised around timed appointments (like school timetable) but many people are task orientated instead.

Tasks can be stored on the *to do* lists. It also helps to display the to do items on the day view. I suggest picking a time before you start work (8am) and displaying to do items there. If your lists get large, configure the

**Acorn** 

**Pocket Book II**

**Version: 1.20F - English**

**Copyright © Psion PLC 1991-1994**

**Copyright © Acorn Computers Limited 1994**



layout of the day view (Acorn-Q, Acorn-D) to have one hour (in this case 08:00am to 09:00am) on the left, with neither hour or line displayed, and the rest on the right. This gives you a split page giving a diary on one side, and daily to-dos on the other!

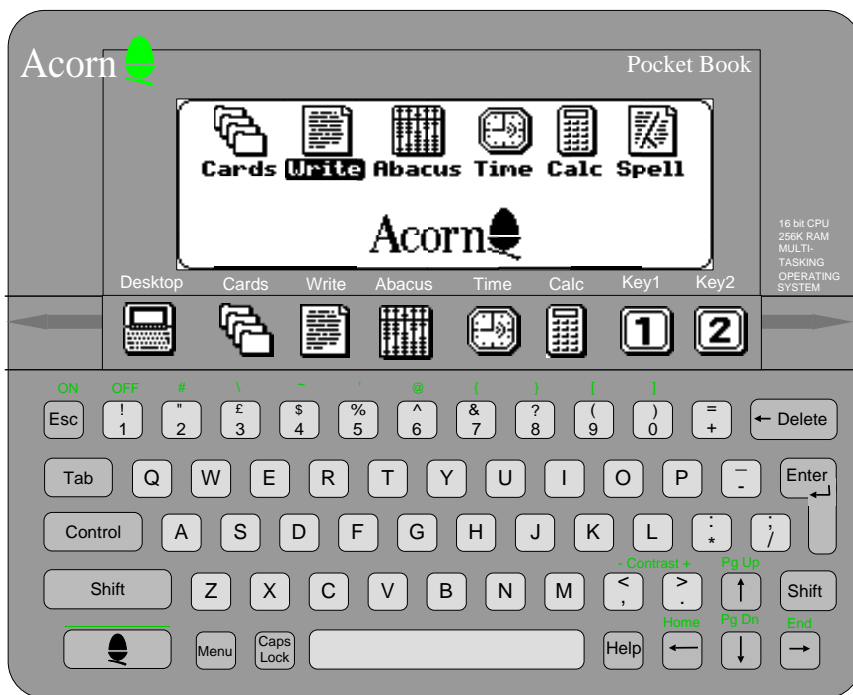
Remember to configure the diamond key list (Shift-Acorn-Diamond) to not include the ones you won't use too — saves a lot of key pressing!

### Tip of the Month

For Pocket Book II owners: to create an irregularly repeating alarm (every 2nd Monday etc) create a repeating entry in Schedule and give it an alarm. Schedule has more repeating facilities than the Time application. This tip is also usable on the Pocket Book I if you've got Schedule as an accessory — but remember to keep it running as this version can only save a single alarm.

### Acorn-1

The time has come once again to A-Link this article up to the big machine and off to the



Editor. [You're welcome to give me the article on a flash disc, Toby, but don't expect it back in a hurry! Ed]. Keep sending in your letters and Pocket Book Questions!

*One final thought:* As my life is documented and run by my Pocket Book, and considering where I carry it, does this explain why my girlfriend thinks my brains are in my trousers?

*Toby Smith*

## KernPlus from PTW Software

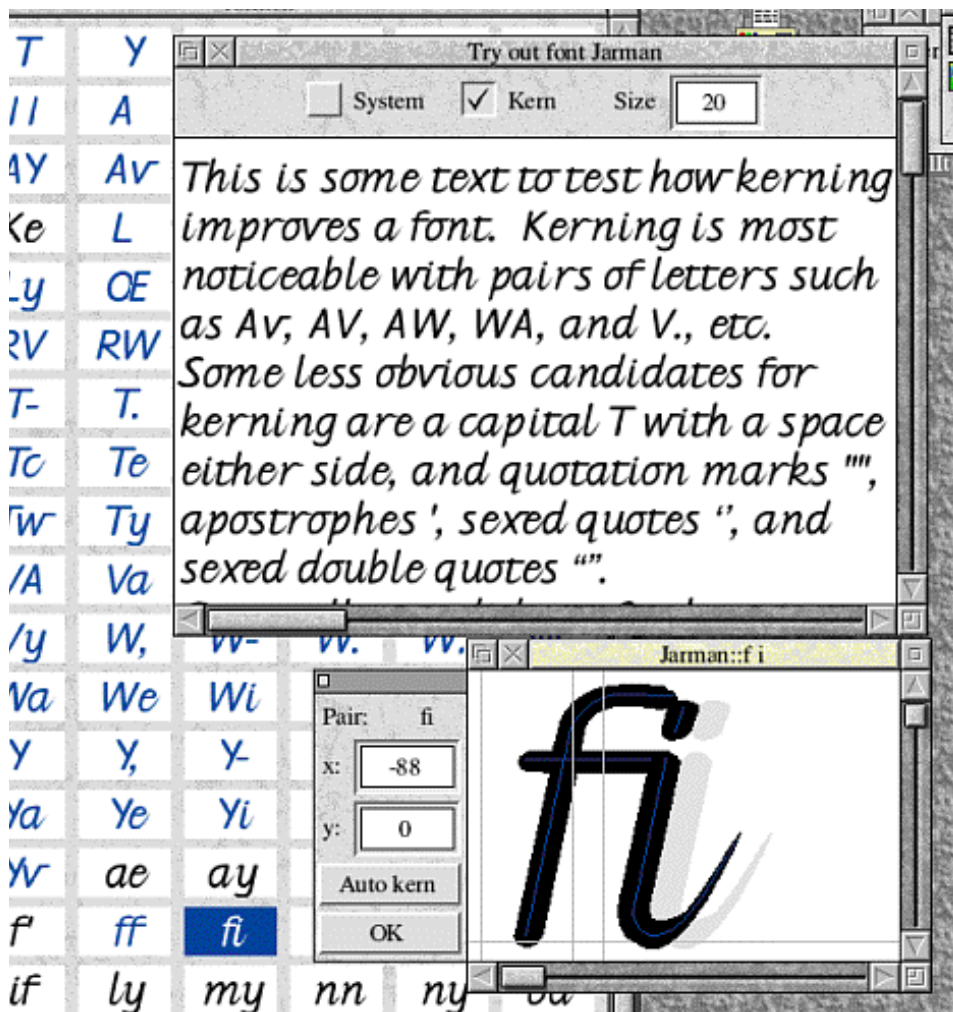
*Christopher Jarman casts an expert eye over this package from PTW Software...*

Goodness only knows how often most of us need to use a Kerning program! I am something of a font freak myself, and enjoy designing my own using the Acorn utility FontEd. But I haven't met many other such enthusiasts outside the professional font designers and providers. Even so, I hardly ever need to play about and alter the kerning of a font other than when I have just designed one for some special purpose.

There does seem to be a fascination among programmers however, for this kind of thingy, and they are quite fun to experiment with. So far, I have been content with Design Concept's !Kerner and !FontKern from Aaron Timbrell's *Font Designer's Toolkit*, both of which are pleasant and easy utilities to use.

KernPlus comes on an 800k disc with another utility !EverKern which is a utility to provide automatic kerning for those of us that don't

numbers, in other words "something for everyone". If you are totally bone idle you can select *autokern* and the program will choose a suitable space between the letters for you! However, you are not confined to the pairs set out in the window. Click menu and choose *create glyph pair* and you can enter any two letters or marks for kerning.



*The attention to detail in some outline fonts is obvious...*

use Impression or other autokerning word processing packages. Kernplus establishes itself on the icon bar in the usual way. Click with Menu, choose Edit Font and select one of your fonts from the list. Straightaway comes up a large window of templates showing over 100 pairs of letters ready to be kerned. This happens with the speed of light on a Risc PC and is very impressive.

Double-click on any pair, and a neat window appears with the kernable pair showing, and a small but beautifully formed toolbar to the left. The kerning may now be adjusted very intuitively by dragging with the mouse or by using the arrow keys or by entering in

at liberty to test your kerning out on any wording you wish.

This program does not do any more than the other two programs I have mentioned. But it is faster than a speeding bullet, it has very intuitive controls and it provides more visual information than the others. So I give it resounding thumbs up (is that possible?) and recommend it without reservation to those that feel a need to get kerning.

*Christopher Jarman*

*KernPlus costs £17.95 incl VAT and postage from PTW Software, 72 Frosthole Crescent, Fareham, Hants, PO15 6BG.*

# 10 out of 10 Revisited!

*Adwoa Sowa lets a group of children loose on their classroom computer...*

Hi all you fellow ARM Club members! My name is Adwoa Sowa and I have recently joined the Club. I am a teacher by profession and I am currently working at a junior school in North London, where I am also responsible for IT. As such I am very interested in any new software, which is why, when I was approached by the Club to review some of the *10 Out Of 10* series, I jumped at the chance (plus, of course, the fact that I never look a gift horse in the mouth).

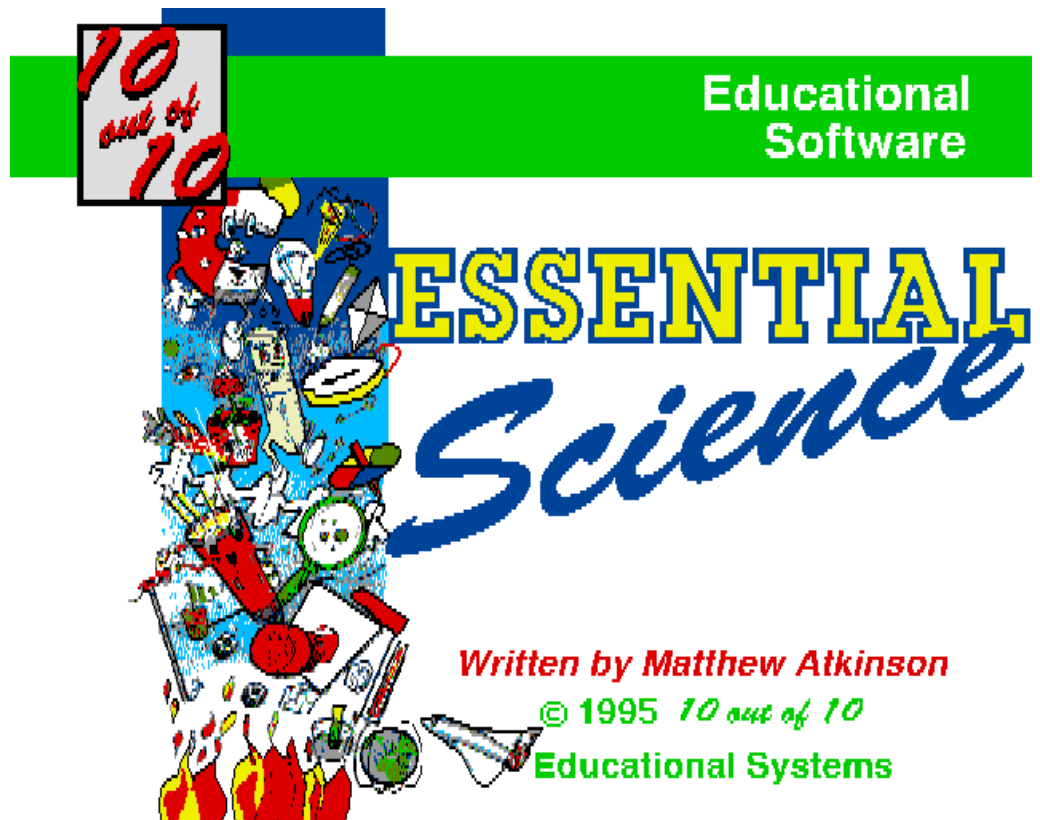
I arrived at school one morning heavily laden with five different programs from the series and was seized upon by my eager and enthusiastic class, each child vying for the right to embark upon a voyage of discovery on the high seas of computer literacy. Each one hungry for the knowledge and skills only these programs could give them.

Before I tell you how they fared, let me tell you a little about the series. Each program comes with a set of relatively clear user guides, one for the player and one for the parent or teacher. Most of the programs come on two discs and you need both discs to be able to use the program. In each package there is a suite of six games and although the games are different from each other, the programs

follow a similar format. Once you have accessed a program, there is a chart which informs you of the various National Curriculum subjects and levels which are addressed. There is also a scorer chart which allows the the player to record and assess their progress and that of other players. I found this aspect very useful, especially for planning and assessment purposes.

The programs were tested by groups of children in my year six class (except where otherwise stated). Tickled by the title of the series they decided to award marks out of ten for each program.

The first group of children opted for the *English* package. This program is aimed at helping children "get to grips" with a wide range of topics from the English curriculum. Activities include matching words and



letters, rhyming words, crosswords, picking opposites and recognising synonyms and antonyms to name but a few. The children thought this program was interesting, exciting, thrilling and thought provoking. One girl, Emily, concluded that..."Some of the games were more useful than others, especially Grab It and Cover Up. It was a fun way to learn". This scored 8/10.

Next came *Junior Essentials*. This program covered a range of topics from different

...In fact, many [children] wanted to continue working through playtime!

subjects. Activities include telling the time, naming parts of the body and visually discriminating between different shapes. One had to be very alert to avoid making careless mistakes. I thought that it was sometimes difficult to attain success and witnessed some very disappointed children work hard for very little reward. This program was not received very well. Comments like..."That was boring!" and "Can we use something else?" accompanied this one. This scored 4/10.

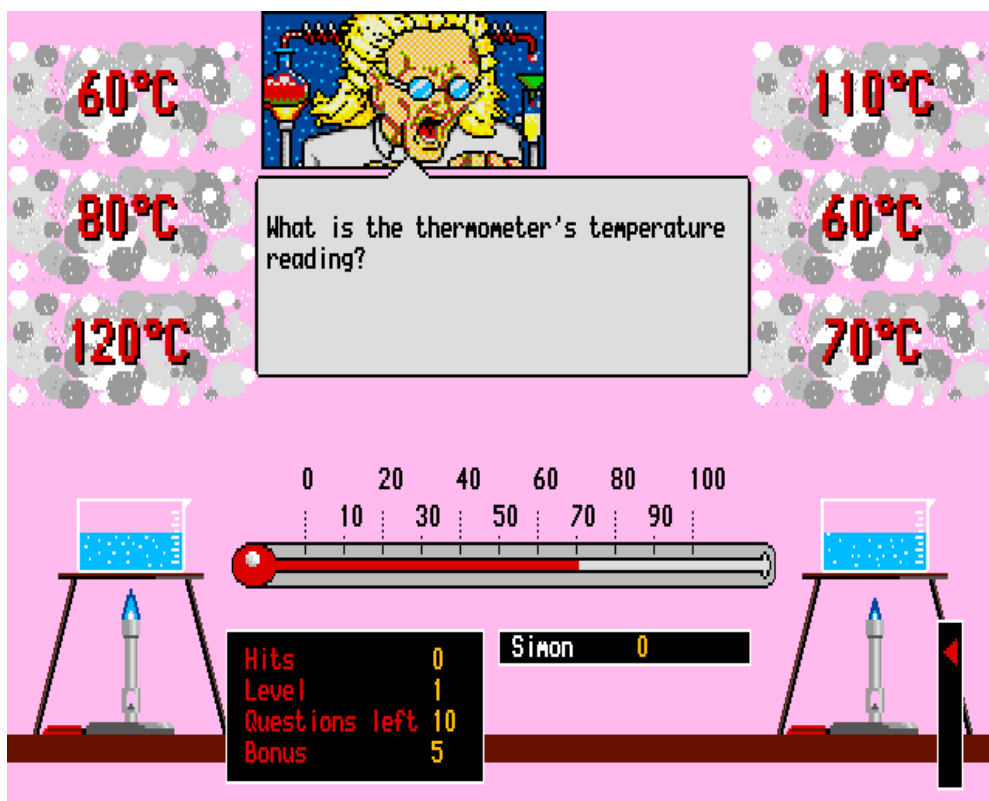
The *Maths Statistics* package was well received. The activities were easily understood

by the children. I wonder if this was due to the fact that the children were by now familiar with the set up and so had begun to apply their experiences. Then again isn't that what learning is all about? This program brought Maths in to the real world in a very imaginative way. The children enjoyed being "pilots" and dropping bricks to "build" graphs. They were held captive when it came to reading charts and graphs and gained a lot of basic knowledge here. In fact, many wanted to continue working through playtime (shock, horror!). This scored 7/10.

*Maths Algebra* was next on the hit list. This was not met with as much enthusiasm as some of the other programs. It covered basic number skills and became progressively more difficult. Many topics were addressed on this program including number patterns, co-ordinates and functions. I found that the added bonus of Wordfit was a great advantage. We had come across it on the English program. It was described by my

	Steamer	
	Space Walk	
	Spectrum	
	Shuttle	
	Microscope	
	Electromagnet	
	Player information	
	Change player	
	New player	
	Remove player	
	Print certificate	





*The graphics are simple but designed to keep attention*

children as "... a cross between a crossword puzzle and scrabble". In this instance it served to help the children familiarize themselves with the language of Maths and this impressed me greatly. This scored 6/10.

Finally came *Early Essentials*. This program was designed with much younger children in mind. It was used by year three children. Again they seemed excited by the program and had to be prised off the computer with crowbars. It involves visual discrimination between shapes, matching pairs, colouring pictures and patterns. Needless to say, this program scored a resounding 10/10.

The different parts of the packages were very varied in their appeal. Some sections were extremely imaginative and exciting while others were monotonous and produced a real anti-climax for the children. It seemed that these activities were there just for the sake of it and did not really enhance the children's learning or appreciation of the value of the

computer. They might just as well have been done with paper and pencil.

Generally speaking, the series was of use to the children in the classroom environment. It was, to a certain extent, interactive and the children were usually rewarded with a positive comment on screen. The series is useful for some specific areas and in my opinion one would need to identify these areas clearly, and thoroughly

check to see if this series could address these areas adequately before purchasing any of the programs.

*Written by Adwoa Sowa*

*The 10 out of 10 Series of educational packages are available for all Acorn RISC OS computers. The range of titles is increasing all of the time, contact 10 out of 10 for an up-to-date list of titles.*

*The recommended retail price of each 10 out of 10 title is £25.95 including VAT, however special offers are frequently available both from dealers and from 10 out of 10 at major computer shows.*

*10 out of 10 Educational Systems, 1 Percy Street, Sheffield, S3 8AU. Tel 0114 278 0370 or 0114 278 9950. Fax 0114 231 4643. Please say that you read this review when contacting 10 out of 10.*



# Calligraph A4-1200 Printer

*Nick Evans writes about a recent addition to his family!*

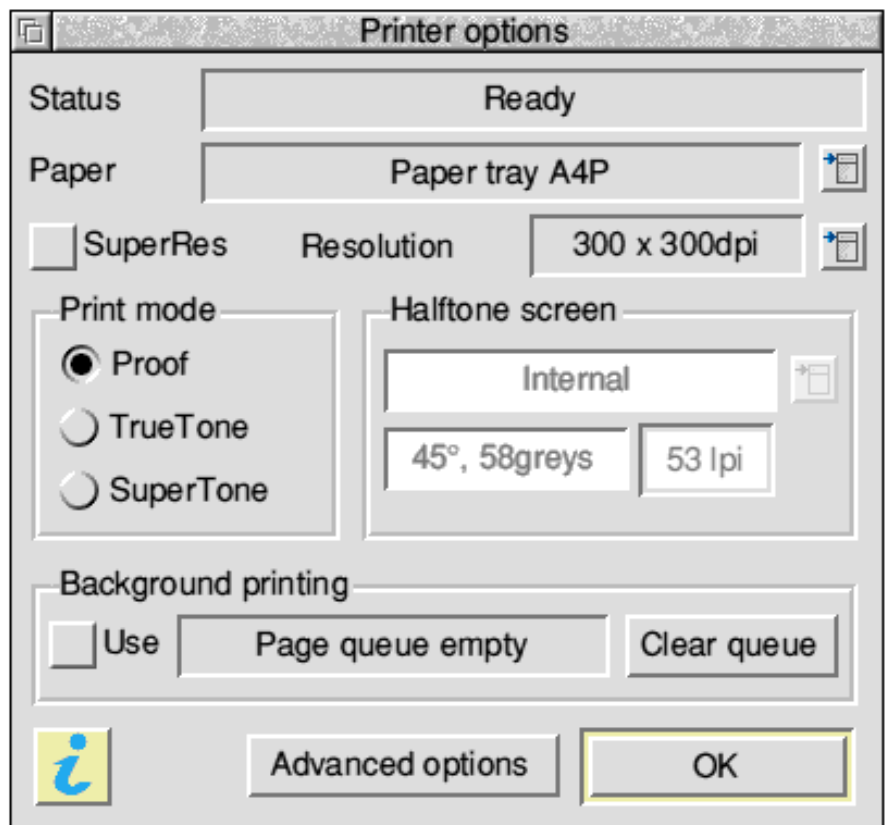
At the Acorn World Show in October last year I decided that I would buy a laser printer to replace the Canon BJ300 bubblejet printer which had served me for two years with a gradual deterioration in quality over that time. My setup is an A440/1 with RISC OS3.1, an IFEL 8MB RAM upgrade, Acorn SCSI card, 512Mb SCSI hard disc with 300Mb free, Beebug high density disc interface and a CC ColourCard Gold.

There had been a few enthusiastic reviews, most notably in RISC User, about the Calligraph A4-1200 printer. This is a direct-drive printer advertised as being capable of printing at up to 1200 dpi and producing steamingly fast output from the Archimedes. The printer is based on a Dataproducts LZR888 engine, can print up to 8 pages per minute and has a (claimed) variable resolution of 300 to 1200 dots per inch. It is capable of portrait or landscape printing on A4 paper and can have 2 paper cassettes.

I duly handed over my money at the Show and took the printer home. I realised that I would need 8MB of memory to use this printer at its highest resolution (as stated in the blurb). For this reason I bought the IFEL 8MB RAM upgrade reviewed in Eureka 15 which works well. I wish that I could say the same about the printer...

printer, drum and two manuals. One yellow covered manual is the printer operation manual and one purple-covered manual which is the User Guide. I started to read the manuals and found that page 6 of the User Guide had only printing on the left half of the pages. This was a fault with the photocopying but not what I expected having paid over £1100 for a printer. However, a phone call to Calligraph produced a new User Guide by return of post.

The printer was easily assembled, the podule put into place and the printer driver loaded from a floppy disc. Oh my goodness! It took 17 minutes to de-archive using *SparkPlug* which must be the slowest de-archiving program in the Archimedes world. However I stood there with my stopwatch, and two



I opened the box and found the

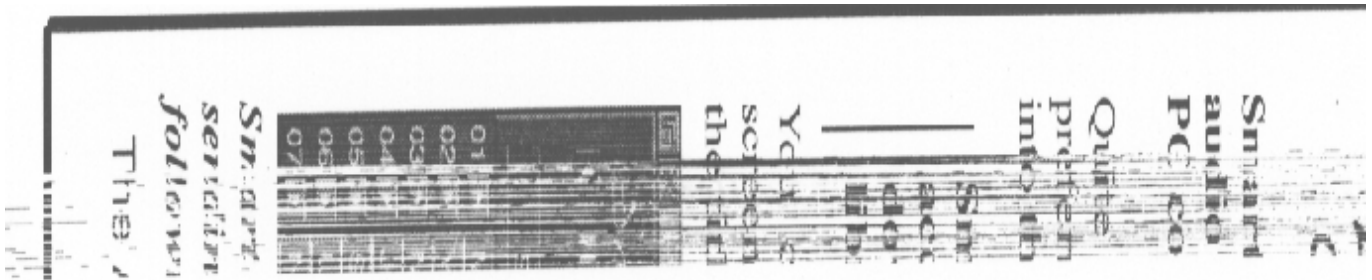
*The main !PrinterDP window has lots of options*

steaming mugs of coffee later had the printer driver, called !PrinterDP, loaded onto the icon bar. Version 2.94 it proudly informed me (the same programs could be de-archived with *ArcFS* in 105 seconds).

I loaded up a few sprites and *Style* documents and printed them out at a blistering pace at 300 dots per inch (dpi), a little slower at 800x600 dpi, and not at all at resolutions above this — the computer just crashed. I

minutes to produce. The same result is obtained at 1200x1200 dpi (or *Super Res* as it is called).

The printout at 800x600 dpi is very good — as good as a Hewlett Packard 4P which is half the price, and when used with a Computer Concepts Turbo driver, half the speed of the Calligraph machine. But sadly no better.



*Output at 1200x600 dpi was not very successful, printing complete rubbish on the page...*

hastily read the manual again and assumed that I was running out of memory. There is a program (!PrintApps) on the Calligraph disc which allows you to spool a large file to a hard disc and then load this back into the machine from the hard disc. It is supposed to allow files larger than the computer memory to be printed however it just produced a printout of three ghostly & staggered shadows of the page.

!PrintApps has a help file which is not very helpful. It should emphasize that the buffer size in !RunImage may need to be changed, that the PrintOut file should be suffixed with a \_ character prior to being placed within the directory and that as much memory as possible should be freed by using the Task manager, as the !PrintApps application does not do this.

You can see the (rubbish) output at 1200x600 dpi on the scanned sprite, and that took over 2

I phoned up Calligraph who promised to phone me back as there was no-one available to help. Two weeks later I telephoned again and received the same reply, but alas, my call was still not returned. I next spoke to them about the problem at BETT '95 and sent off the printouts that I could easily reproduce with both the Printer driver and with the !PrintApps application. This produced, within four days, a version 2.99 of the Printer driver. With great glee I loaded it up, loaded up a document in *Style*, and as soon as I came to print it out the printer driver icon disappeared from the icon bar and the printer defaulted to a 300x300 dpi printout.

This version of the printer driver was of even less use than the earlier version as it forced *Style* to quit with an internal error, caused a filecore error so that all hard disc icons are removed from the icon bar, made it impossible to access the Apps directory, made it impossible to access a Ram disc,

made it impossible to access a floppy disc but interestingly the free space part of the menu worked. Finally it took a control reset to gain control of the machine.

Further protracted contact with Calligraph has now produced version 3.06 of the printer driver. This will now work fully at 1200x600 resolution. Obviously many other users have had problems printing at 1200x1200 as the general consensus at Calligraph is that the main problem with machines produced prior to the A5000 is that the main RAM runs at 8MHz. This causes a bottleneck for data reaching the podule at the fast speed used by the printer. The later machines with 12MHz RAM apparently do not have this problem.

At resolutions below 1200x1200 the printing is wonderfully fast and of superb quality. The printer driver allows you to change all sorts of parameters to alter the print tones, thus tailoring the printout to suit each page of sprites.

The on-line help is superb as long as you don't mind reading text written by someone with a 'however' fixation. Background printing now appears to be fully functional and the printer can print right to the edges of an A4 sheet of paper.

This is certainly a printer that I *could* recommend however I have found it will not perform as advertised on my A440/1. Whether you feel that the increase in print speed and slight, but noticeable increase in print resolution over a Laserjet 4L (when using an A440 series or older) is worth the enormous difference in price, is a matter of personal judgement.

The moral of this story for me is never to buy a brand new product. In the Acorn world, as in the PC and Mac worlds, anyone buying a brand new product must expect to be treated as a gamma-tester, finding the problems that the beta testing has failed to show up. Unfortunately I think that this is mainly due to sloppy beta-testing not to users high expectations. I do find this a frustrating exercise sometimes and I certainly haven't learned from my past experiences.

*Nick Evans*

*The Calligraph A4-1200 printer costs £999 + VAT for the single bin version and is available from Calligraph, 53 Panton Street, Cambridge, CB2 1HL. Tel 01223 566642. Fax 01223 566643.*

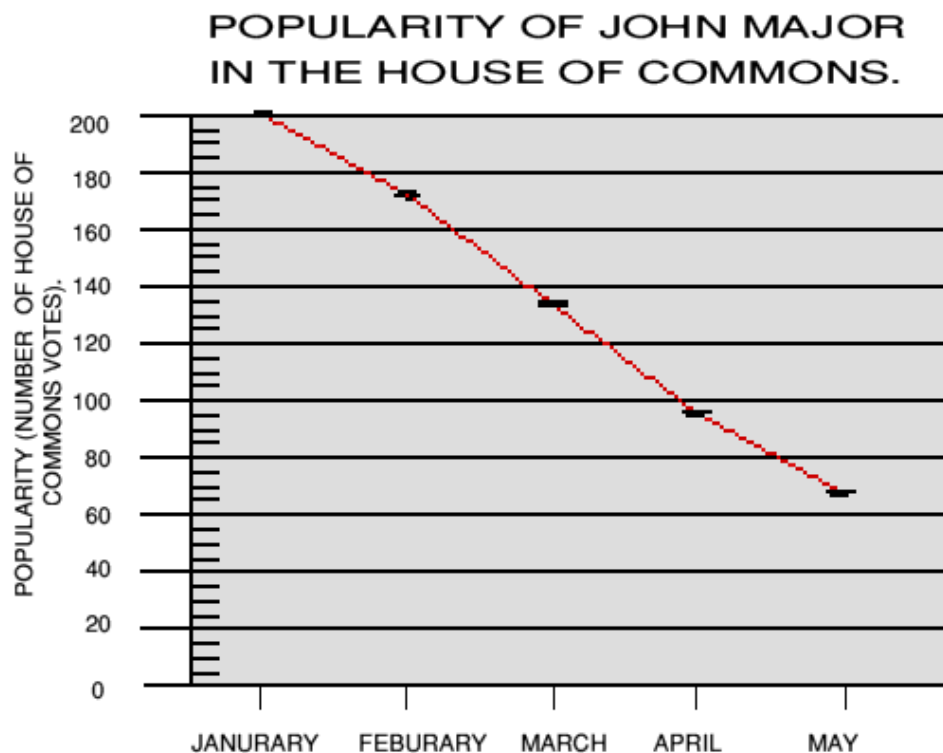
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# Maths Graphing with Coypu

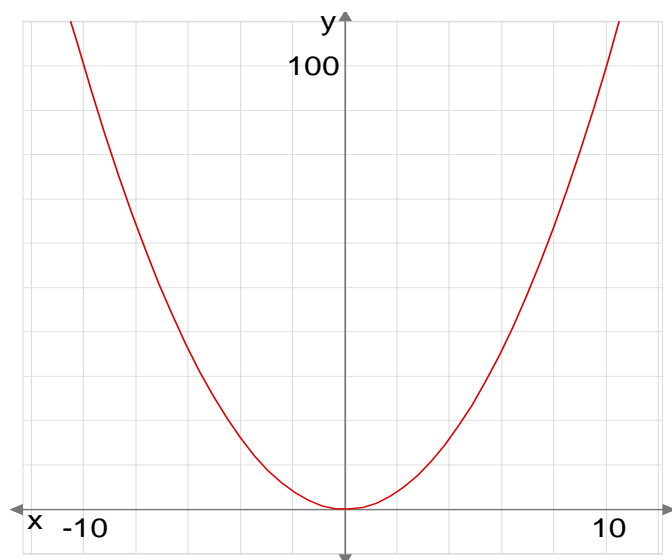
*A new graph & function plotting package tested by Damian Leslie*

The ability to plot complex mathematical graphs, such as cartesian and polar graphs, is just one of a number of features that are pretty much absent from the vast majority of today's graph plotting spreadsheet and integrated packages, such as the various Pipedream's, Schema's and 'Works' packages (Microsoft, Claris, etc) of this world. This creates a problem for quite a range of people, from 6th formers and their teachers at secondary school to the mathematicians of modern day industries and universities who are constantly having to analyse complex mathematical equations. For purposes such as these, packages like Schema and Microsoft Works just don't meet the mark.

To clarify the difference, most graphing packages will (and to be fair, are only designed to) plot a graph from simple statistical data, such as say John Major' popularity (in 'Number of House of Commons votes'), against Time (in named 'Months of the Year'). Any self-respecting ones will plot the resulting graph in a variety of forms, such as Pie Charts, Scatter Graphs, Line graphs etc, and all with a number of variations, such as 3-D or 2-D, labelled or unlabelled etc. The graph below is just such an example, produced using Coypu from the Shell Centre for Mathematical Education based at Nottingham University.



*The sort of graph which can be produced by most packages*



*A graph of the mathematical equation  $y = x^2$ , as produced by a typical mathematical equation graph plotter.*

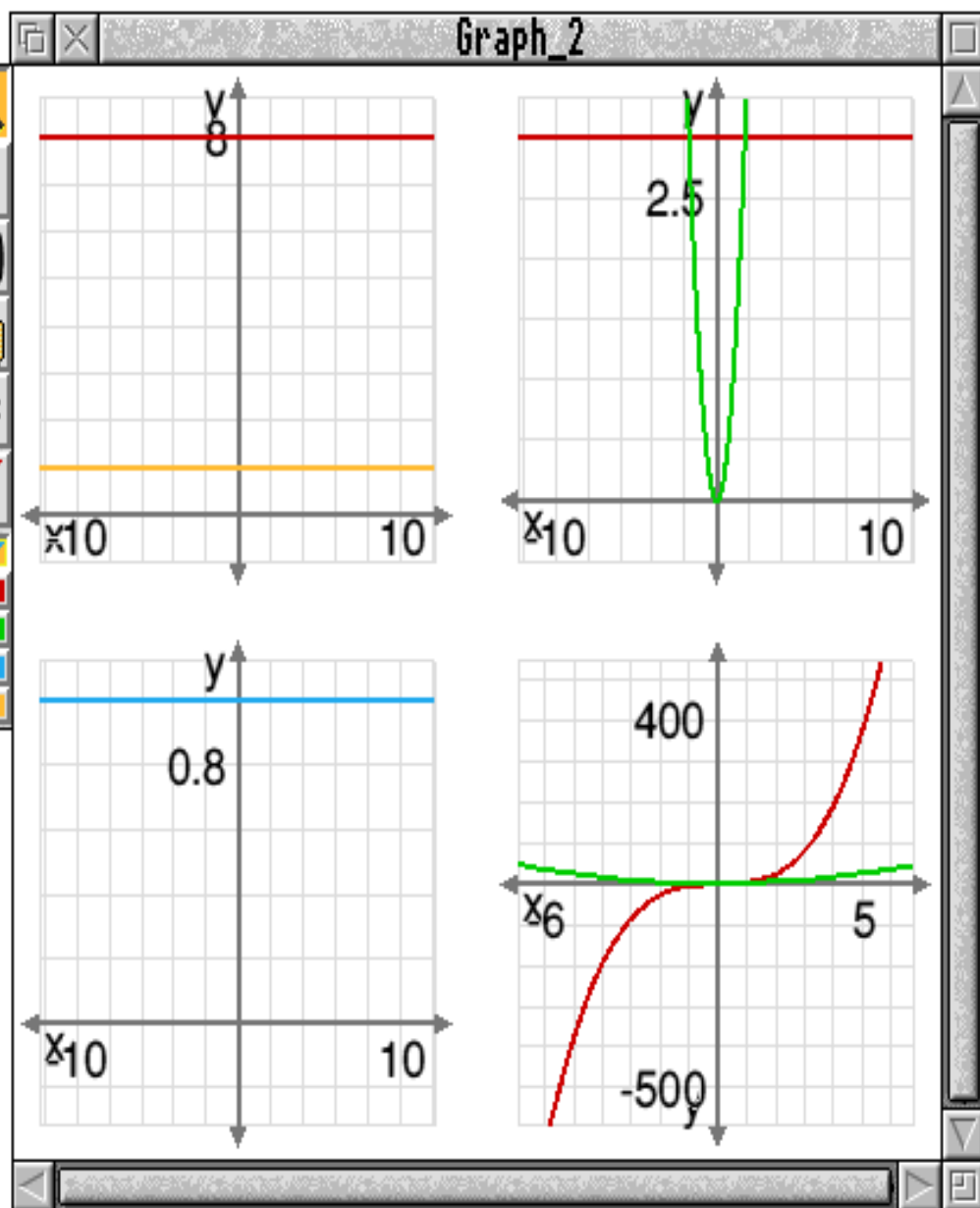
Coypu's main function is to let the user enter mathematical equations from which a graph can be displayed. That is as well as providing the user with the more complex mathematical

features not included in most of today's packages. For instance the ability to plot polar and cartesian graphs. Now, what on earth are these mathematical equation things I'm talking about? Well for those of you who are to say the least confused, the mathematical equations from which packages such as Coypu plot a graph, such as say  $y = x^2$ , work not by there being 2 specific statistical data entries for each point plotted, ie one to tell the package how far along the X (horizontal) axis to plot the point, and another to tell the package how far up the Y (Vertical) axis to plot the point. Instead, the equation entered is used as a mathematical 'instruction'(for want of a better word) which tells the package where on the graph to plot each point. With the sum of any algebra and numbers on the left hand side of the equation's '=' sign, giving the y-axis co-ordinates of each point plotted, and the sum of the algebra and numbers on the right hand side of the '=' sign giving each point's x-axis co-ordinates. So in this case ( $y = x^2$ ), shown in the diagram below,

whatever the value of a point's y co-ordinate, its value on the x-axis will be the square of that value. So say the current y axis value was 3, the x axis value would be  $3^2$  ( $x^2$ ), ie 9. And if say the current y axis value was 6, the x axis value would be  $6^2$  ( $x^2$ ), ie 36. And so on, this applies to any point on the graph, so no data is given to plot specific points, as with our equation  $y=x^2$ , and any other equation, all the points to be plotted, can be calculated from the information that the equation gives.

Coypu was I quote, 'Inspired by Richard Phillips' Mouse Plotter'. For those who don't know, *Mouse Plotter* was, or is, the predecessor to Coypu.

It was made quite a number of years ago, in the days of RISC OS 2, and could plot graphs from a simple mathematical equation such as  $y=x^2$ . It was quite usable for its day but lacked the ability to plot the more complex 'cartesian' graphs, and did not work in the desktop amongst other things. So after a number of years, Daniel Pead & Richard Phillips at the Shell Centre for Mathematical Education have written the successor to Mouse Plotter, called Coypu (apparently a Coypu is also some sort of rodent type animal, not unlike a mouse.



A graph window in Coypu complete with toolbox

The manual gives the reason for both packages being named after rodents and the authors' fascination with the things but I really can't figure it out!).

Coypu requires RISC OS 3.1 or later and among other things, can plot cartesian and polar graphs. It requires its own special outline font called Coypu which is used to display various mathematical symbols such as *Euler's Number* and various superscripts, such as squared and cubed ( $^2$  and  $^3$ ) not found as part of your average font. It is also (or so claim the authors) compatible with most



networks. NB A copy of Mouse Plotter, which is RISC OS 2 compatible, is included with Coypu, along with a suggestion to upgrade your machine to RISC OS 3.1 or later. This is a nice thought on the part of the authors, as it means that RISC OS 2 users at least don't have to resort to pen and paper if waiting for an upgrade to the newer OS.

Coypu contains a number of nice features not found in the majority of competing packages. On the subject of the competition, there are other packages along these lines, such as Equate, which costs £18, can plot cartesian and polar graphs, and as a piece of budget software, is quite good value for money, and also Autograph from Eastmond Publishing Ltd which is a quite high quality package (it can handle Cartesian, Polar, and Parametric graphs), but doesn't work in the desktop.

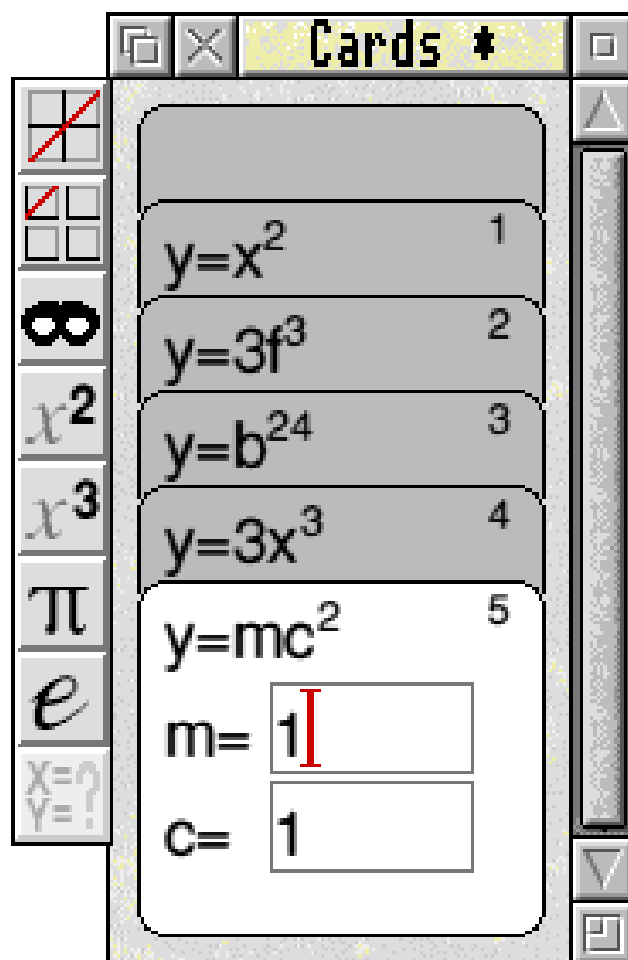
Anyway, the advantages of Coypu include features such as the zoom function that allows the user to zoom in and out on any area of a graph, wherever the pointer is placed at the time, a feature which I have yet to see on any other package of this sort. Coypu can also plot a number of equations on the same graph (automatically giving each equation a different colour, so you can easily distinguish them from each other), another feature which is often lacking from the competition. Coypu has a clever system for displaying and entering equations whereby you can type your equation into the currently selected card (you can have up to 10 at once and sets of cards can be saved and loaded), which is contained in a *Card Window*, and then if you want to plot a graph of that equation, all you do is literally drag the card on to a *Graph window*. This really is quite useful as it means that unlike most other packages, you don't have to plot a graph

of every equation you enter, you can simply leave them there until needed. Another very useful feature of Coypu, is the ability to display not only a number of equations at once but also display a large number of graphs at once, each in their own window if needed, so they can be temporarily moved out the way and then back when needed.

Coypu can save its graphs as drawfiles and while it would have been nice to be able to save them as a form of bitmap file (eg sprites) and some foreign graphic files such as GIFs and TIFFs, maybe for use on say a PC that cannot understand drawfiles, it is not a major problem, definitely nothing to get in a huff about!

### Ease of Use

The package comes with a nicely laid out



*The Cards Window — very useful*

and quite helpful black & white manual, accompanied by three 800K floppy discs, one containing Coypu itself, Mouse Plotter and the *Coypu* font, and 2 other data discs. Part of the manual contains a written "tutorial" in several parts, using a number of useful example equations and also example graphs found on the 2 data discs. These are to a certain extent helpful in getting to grips with the package, and if the package is being used by students then these examples are useful exercises for them to learn about the package.

It isn't particularly surprising considering the sort of maths it involves, but Coypu is not the sort of package that a new user can instantly understand and work (the package's !Help file tells you little about how to use it). On the up side, it does work in the desktop (unlike some packages of this type I could

mention), and it supports interactive help quite nicely. The quality of the messages provided is higher than most packages, giving most of what could be said to help the user but without going into the depth that should really be reserved for the application's !Help file and/or manual. More importantly, it is put across to the user in a useful way, with help messages provided for almost all the actions that you can perform with Coypu.

*Damian Leslie*

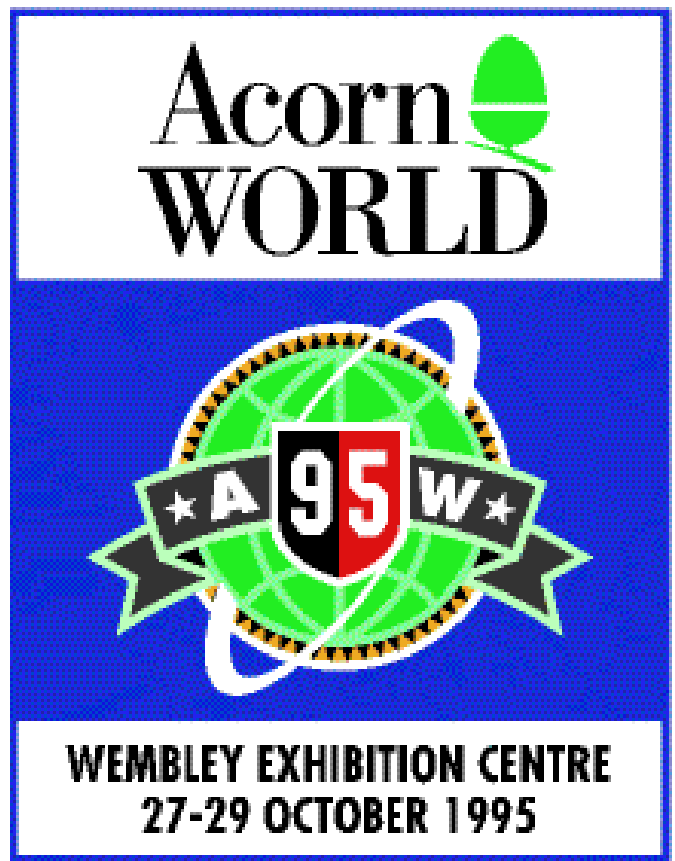
*Coypu costs £60.00 plus VAT for a single user version, £120.00 plus VAT for a site licence copy. £20 discount for owners of Mouse Plotter. The Shell Centre for Mathematical Education, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD. Tel 0115 951 5151.*

The Acorn World'95 Show at Wembley in October seems likely to be an exciting event with lots to interest all Acorn users.

The ARM Club will be having a stand as usual so that we can meet as many people as possible, lose our voices giving out technical & buying advice and possibly encourage people to join up with the Club!

Issue 17 of Eureka will be published shortly before the Show in October with lots more information about what is happening. Make a note in your diary now and maybe book your tickets for the Acorn extravaganza!

Advance ticket prices are £5 for adults, £4 for children or £16 for a family (2+2). Credit card orders telephone 01933 441448



# The Eureka Disc

Once again I must apologise for putting programs on the last Eureka disc which required modules that not everyone has. The offending modules were *ABCLib* and *DrawFile* both of which are on the Eureka 16 disc. I will try to do better next time, honest!

Don't forget that we have, in the past, been able to offer an upgrade service for those of you who have found that the version number of your favourite PD program has been superseded and this has now been extended to those discs which have significantly altered since you bought them. If the original PD disc is returned, along with stamps to the value of 50 pence for each disc, then I will replace this disc with the latest version. Please don't send cash as I have found that a lot of this goes astray in our postal system. Stamps will do and cheques/postal orders can be made out to "The ARM Club".

Some of the programs on the disc may not run from an Archive. You should, wherever possible, de-archive the programs onto a floppy or hard disc before running them.

This month's magazine disc contains:

The latest news about The ARM Club discounts scheme. The *ABCLib* (4.02) and *DrawFile* (1.30) modules. *MouseDex* which is a little program that changes the mouse buttons around for left handed people.

*Pennies* a nearly fully working personal finance management program. This version of

*!Pennies* is a cut down version of the full application, it works correctly and any data created within it is entirely compatible with the full application. However, there are a number of facilities such as *PRINT* missing from this version and some restrictive limits on the amount of new data that it will accept. The program is written by Club member Steve Cheeseman and you can expect the complete program to be available in the very near future, hopefully by the time that you read this.

*Quotes* by Club member Sam Kington is a shareware program that will enhance your DTP documents by converting ordinary quotes into the typographically correct ones as well as a range of other useful functions.

*S2P* by Andrew Sellors may be useful for those of you with two machines and only one printer. It sends all data received by the serial port to the printer port.

*Split* is a useful utility that splits long files into pieces (and glues them back together) so that you are not stuck to sending only small 1.6MB files through the post.

*Nick Evans, PD Librarian*

*If your copy of the Eureka 16 disc proves to be faulty, please return it to the Freepost address for a free replacement.*

*A new CD-ROM of musical resources from Oregan & Zenta Multimedia reviewed by Alan Price...*

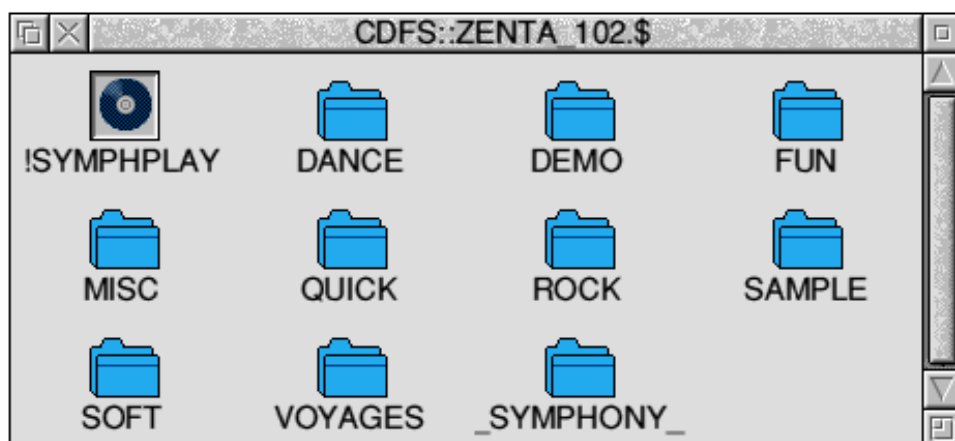
It was with great interest that I read the first advert from Zenta Multimedia for its forthcoming *Digital Symphony Masterpieces* CD-ROM. Would this make my disc box full of Symphony and Tracker tunes redundant?

When Simon, the Eureka Editor, asked me if I'd like to review the CD-ROM now that it has been released, I said an enthusiastic yes! The CD duly arrived in a jiffy bag and I set aside an evening when nobody else would be in the house to listen to a selection of tunes amplified through my hi-fi.

## *Digital Symphony CD-ROM*

the material does vary significantly but on the whole is good and I really enjoyed looking through the CD-ROM. A read-only version of Digital Symphony is included.

One slight niggle is that the resources on the CD-ROM are either public domain or copyright Oregan, however there is no easy way to tell which can be freely distributed and which are copyright. Also the CD-ROM is not full, containing 270MB of data.



*A wide selection of sound tracks & samples are included*

The Digital Symphony Masterpieces CD-ROM came with minimal packaging, just the CD itself in a plastic library case complete with a covering letter. What else was I expecting? Nothing really, although perhaps a bound index of sound tracks would be useful. Onto the CD itself, I must admit that there's not a huge amount to say about it. There are around 3000 Digital Symphony sound tracks arranged into various groups as well as a sizeable number of sound samples for use in creating new tracks. The nature and quality of

medium on which to distribute them. This CD met my expectations and priced at £24.95 fully inclusive is good value for money.

*Alan Price*

*The Digital Symphony Masterpieces CD-ROM is available direct from Oregan Software Developments, 36 Grosvenor Avenue, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield B74 3PE. Tel 0121 353 6044.*

Of all the subjects in the primary school curriculum (apart from IT), I think Music is the one which most worries the non-specialist. The music that happens tends to range from excellent if there is a musician to practically non-existent if there isn't. The computer can provide some excellent musical programs that help to overcome this shortfall. This has the added benefit of also including the use of IT.

Chord Box deals with chords. Children can listen to the nature of notes played together. Do they sound 'discordant'? Do they have a 'happy' sound or a 'sad' sound? Again sequences of chords can be played, recorded, replayed and saved using all the different instruments. Beat Box deals with beat and rhythm. Using the mouse or the keyboard, in real time or not, an instrument sound such as a drum, bongo or a clap, can be placed on the

# Music Box

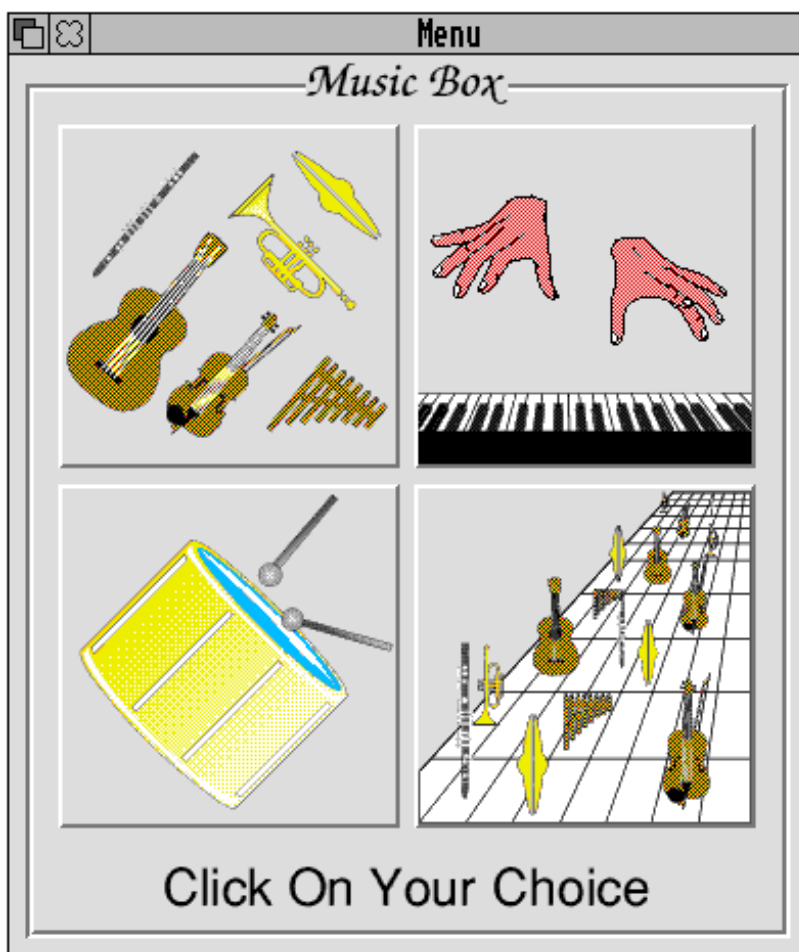
*The award-winning music package from Topologika assessed by Geoff Stilwell*

At the BETT Show back in January I met Marshal Anderson, designer of the Primary Gold Award winning program, Music Box. Marshal demonstrated Music Box to another teacher while I was there and she was impressed enough to buy the program there and then. I took the program into my friendly primary school and tried it out with some children from a year 4 class.

beat line. The rhythm patterns developed here can be quite complex. The final product can be saved to disc as you would expect.

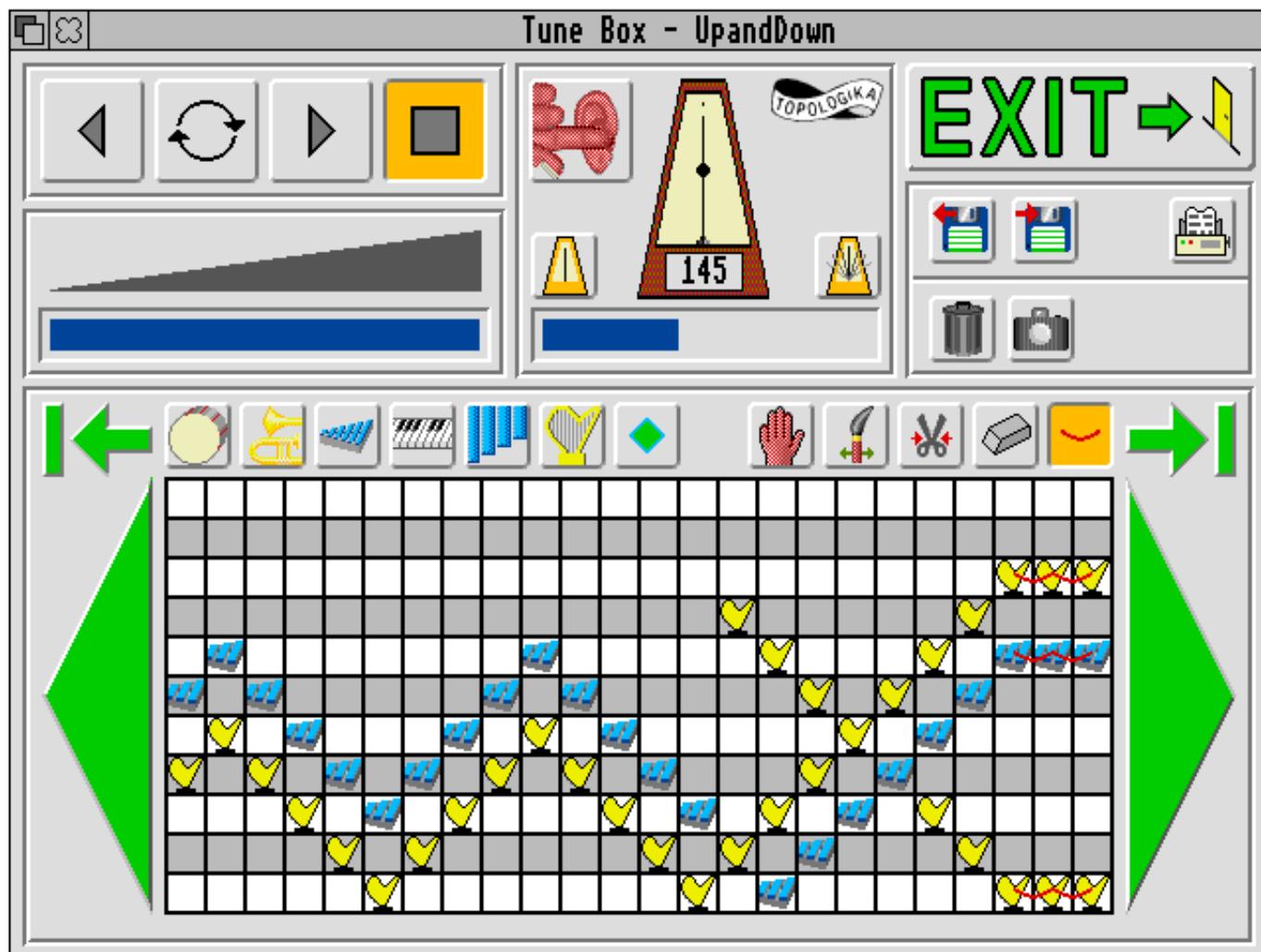
Music Box is in four distinct parts. Each part provides opportunities for children to investigate different aspects of musical composition. The four parts are called Sound Box, Chord Box, Beat Box and Tune Box.

Sound Box is a simple 'Play area'. Children can just try out the sounds of many different instruments, at different pitches. Simple tunes can be recorded and saved for later. Recorded tunes can be played back at different volumes and speeds.



*Ease of use is paramount with clear, effective icons*





*Rather more fun than memorising recorder tunes or learning music theory!*

Tune Box brings together all the ideas the children have explored in the previous three sections. This section provides a grid (not unlike an array of staves) upon which the children can place an assortment of up to seven instruments at a time. These can be tuned or percussion instruments. Instruments can be changed, choosing from a long list of supplied samples or voices. In Tune Box the children come closest to composing their own music using standard musical notation, although there is no need to worry about that. The classroom guide packaged with the program provides a wealth of ideas for using the program. It suggests that the most valuable starting points have been investigations of pattern and several examples of these are supplied on paper and on the disc.

The manual is aimed at the teacher and is an easy to read, jargon-free handbook to the program. In the Classroom Guide booklet already mentioned Marshal Anderson gives the non-specialist teacher some excellent ideas on using the program. Several photocopiable worksheets provide starting points for musical pattern investigations.

Control of the program is very user-friendly. Aided by the virtually self-explanatory control icons the children I observed had no problems negotiating the many different areas of the program. I was a little disappointed because two eight year old girls were not very discriminating and using Chord Box produced, what was to me, a discordant noise, but they liked it. We did

achieve some success when I suggested copying some of the chord patterns from the Classroom Guide. This led to recording a little twelve-bar-blues pattern. The next group of three children I left more to their own devices. They worked on reproducing and amending some of the patterns on the photocopiable worksheets in Tune Box. They tried a few different instruments to find the ones they liked and then added a harmony line to the original pattern. This produced a particularly pleasant effect that the children were proud of. Despite the fact that Music



Box is aimed at helping the non-specialist teacher provide some music in the classroom I am sure that musicians could use the program to begin and develop children's compositions which could then be easily translated into standard musical notation on paper and performed by the children on real instruments. Music Box does enable the user to print out compositions from

*Geoff enjoyed writing this review of Music Box!*

musical ideas creatively and productively, without the fear of failure that real instruments so often produce. I would recommend this program very highly to any primary school.

*Geoff Stilwell*

*Music Box by Marshal Anderson and Andrew Hersee is available from Topologika Software, Islington Wharf, Penryn, Cornwall TR10 8AT Tel: 01326 3777712. Price: £35 plus VAT for single user, site licence prices on request.*

— “ —  
What [Music Box] does provide is an excellent, open-ended environment for children to investigate musical ideas...

— ” —

Tune Box, Chord Box and Beat Box thus making the process of translation from the program's notation to standard notation easier. Music Box is not intended to teach music per se. What it does provide is an excellent, open-ended environment for children to investigate

Ed's note: Have you come across a piece of software which you just couldn't do without, one which you feel would win awards if a suitable competition category existed? Why not write in and tell us all about it?



# Impression Tutorial Guides

*Bruce Dickson looks at a pair of tutorial guides for users of the Impression family*

This is a review of a new tutorial guide, available in two editions for users of Impression Style and Impression Publisher. It is written and pageset by Dr Anthony V Wood and published by Paragon Publishing.

## Format and externals

Two 60-side A4 wire-bound books with quality artboard covers. The sky blue and orange pastel decor is a nice move away from the primary colours of male-designed techie manuals, and the graphic on the front cover is a well-crafted introduction to the packages.

The content of the Guides is eighteen lessons, each starting on a new side with title, aim, outline, exceptions and caveats, gentle full instructions for achieving the aim and up to five exercises. Hints and suggestions abound, as do references to topics not covered in these beginners' Guides.

The topics start from the mouse and saving-removing-printing a page through Effects, Dictionaries, Frames, Styles, Rulers, Master Pages, Numbering and Tables.

The screenshot shows the Summer95 software interface. The main window displays a document titled 'Summer95 at 120%'. The document content includes the title 'Impression Tutorial Guides', the subtitle 'Bruce Dickson looks at a pair of tutorial guides for users of the Impression family', and the main text: 'This is a review of a new tutorial guide, available in two editions for users of Impression Style and Impression Publisher. It is written and pageset by Dr Anthony V Wood and published by Paragon Publishing.' Below this is the section header 'Format and externals' followed by the text: 'Two 60-side A4 wire-bound books with quality artboard covers. The sky blue and'. The interface includes a toolbar with various icons and a status bar at the bottom. An 'Info on 'Summer95' Original' panel is open on the right, displaying document statistics.

Info on 'Summer95' Original	
Document	
Pages	80
Cur page	59
Size	7.74 Mb
Memory	7.74 Mb
Text	
Stories	155
Chapters	5
Memory	235 Kbytes
Words	492
Graphics	
Pictures	62
Memory	7.38 Mb

The icon bar on the back cover is a useful aide-memoire to both new tutor and learner; while the colour-shading (which I don't like) and the drop-shadow (which I do) are nice examples of advanced professional DTP practice to which the beginner can now have full access.

Many an experienced, self-taught Impression user will learn a lot from reading the

keyboard short-cuts at the end: this may well commend these Guides to schools with a range of DTP skills in the staffroom: the knowledgeable will gain from skimming, the beginner will have a friendly hand-holder.

### Style

The author has planned his text for teaching teachers and for teachers teaching, and there is a fresh relaxed feel to it: 'The **MAGNIFYING** tool on the tool bar is extremely helpful in enlarging parts of your document for editing' and after saying how to use it: 'Even more helpful, I find, is to zoom in on just the part of the document you wish to enlarge.

The help offered in no way patronises, but gives constant encouragement and detail. One feels the author based his text on interest, delight, and desire to share a discovery. This becomes clear in the from-the-heart letter at the end of the book.

Two apparent omissions are samples of good practice, probably in the interests of space and one hopes a second volume or disc (a set of home, business and school stationery

would be useful), and humour. In mitigation, the latter is always risky, and again space consuming.

The one cartoon — to illustrate the power of graphics — takes nearly a quarter of a page; and the two car pictures in the Irregular Frames page are small and need a second look to make their points.

The Impression Publisher and Impression Style Tutorial Guides are available at £9.95 (good rates for multiple purchase) from Paragon Publishing, 4 North Street, Rothersthorpe, Northants, NN7 3JB. Tel 01604 832149,

Anyone interested in doing an advanced guide is encouraged to get in touch with the publisher Mark Webb.

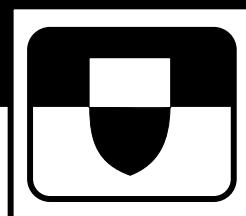
*Bruce Dickson*

*We have a small number of copies of these Tutorial Guides available at the special price of £8.50 including P&P from the Club FREEPOST address. Please state which guide you require when ordering.*

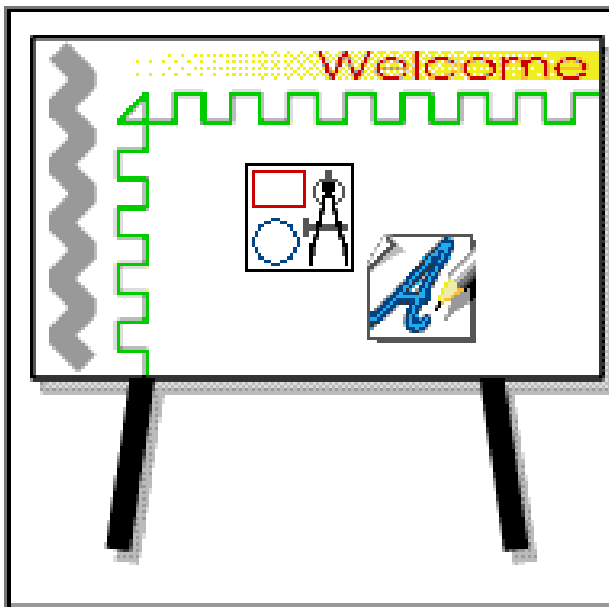
## **Animated Screen Saver School or Business Badge/Logo**

We will make a full colour animated screen saver, with sound if desired, for £9 p&p and site licence included.

Cheques to Christopher Jarman  
Clips Round the Year Wyke Hill House  
Cheriton Close Winchester SO 22 5HN  
Tel/Fax 01962 862227 to discuss.



**You  
can't  
lose!**



# Notice Board

*Mark Smith tries this innovative software for producing static and rolling information displays...*

Rolling demos advertising products and services are a fairly common sight these days. If you need to produce rolling demos, you now can do so using a computer running RISC OS thanks to The Really Good Software Company using their recent release, *NoticeBoard*.

The package works by displaying pages that you have designed using Draw or Artworks around which it places a border with title and any other items you wish to display on all pages which are also designed using Draw or Artworks. An application, !NBEdit is supplied to design Noticeboards using either or both of the above packages and this is

fairly straight forward to use. Pages are divided up into categories, each of which may have a different 'Title' (the background on which pages are displayed). It is also possible to give each category a priority which defines the relative regularity with which pages from each of the categories are displayed.

The package is clearly aimed at fairly long term displays of many weeks or longer as pages may be displayed only for a limited time, i.e. for a certain number of days or on a particular day of the week for a certain number of weeks. This would make it easy to set up a Noticeboard with special offers, for example. It is also possible to display an end screen if all pages 'time out'. Short term noticeboards to be displayed for for a few hours can also be created if you ignore these options.

The time for which each page is displayed can either be fixed or can be calculated on the basis of the number of words on the page or a combination of the two. The time and/or date can be displayed in any corner of the screen in any format and typeface you like, although analogue clock faces are not supported, the time can only be displayed in



## ◆ NoticeBoard

- ◆ Create your pages using Draw or ArtWorks
- ◆ Leave running unattended

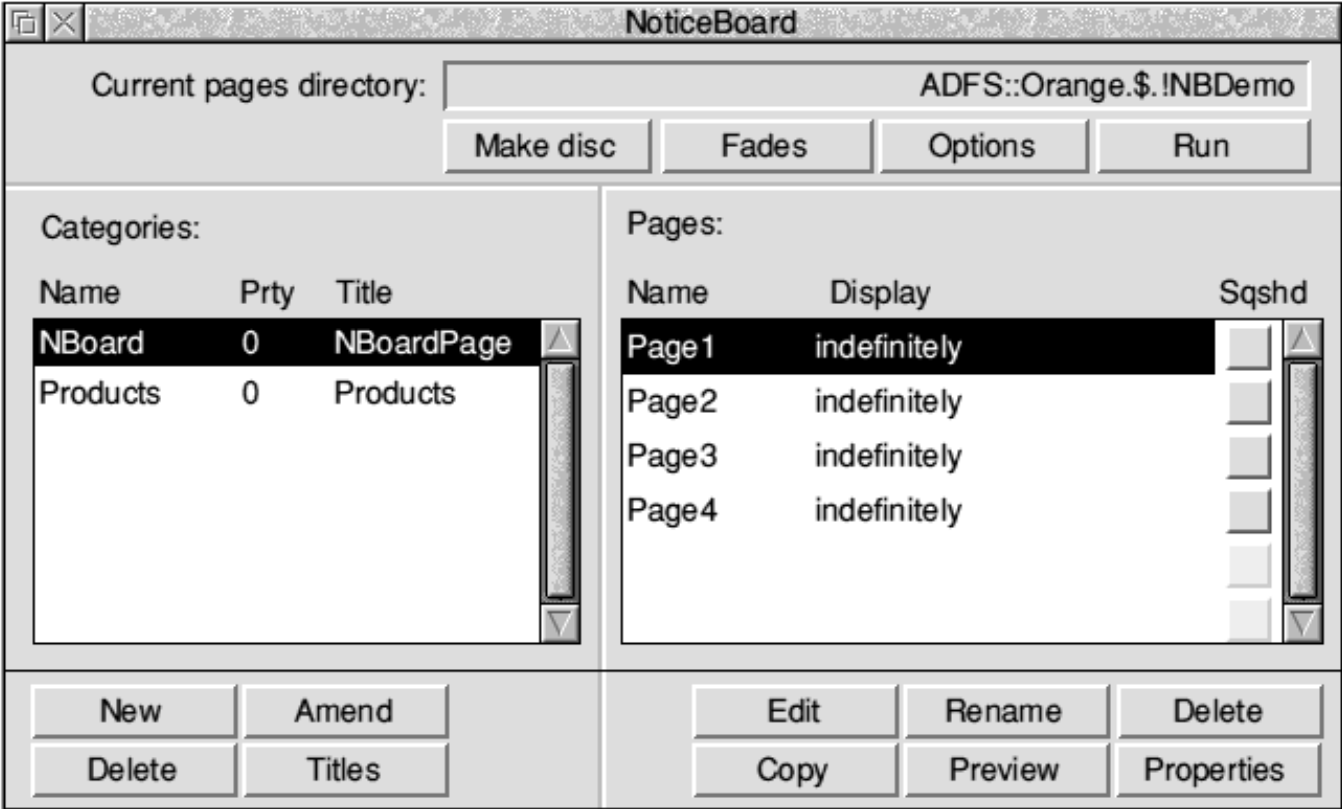
**only £35.00**

◆ A sample page displayed by NoticeBoard



digital format. It is also possible to get NoticeBoard to display an indication of how long the page will be displayed for by dropping an icon down the righthand side of the screen — the page changes when the icon reaches the bottom. The styling of the software is very similar to Computer Concept's recent products like Impression

All in all NoticeBoard works well and at £35.00 represents good value-for-money for anyone who can make good use of it. For example, Schools may well find it useful for Fetes and Open Days and Dealers for providing information about the products and computers that are available. The only major problem I found with the review



*The main NoticeBoard window provides access to the various facilities*

Style and Publisher. For example, The options dialogue box works in a similar way to Style and Publisher's text style editor. This may have something to do with the fact that one of the authors, Ben Summers, works for the aforementioned company.

The documentation is adequate and is supplied as a 12 page photocopied A5 booklet which is not of an exceeding high print quality and disagrees slightly with the software in a few places. It does contain a useful tutorial of how to go about designing a noticeboard followed by an icon-by-icon description of all the options provided.

software was that it sometimes crashed when attempting to display pages designed using Artworks, although loading the freely distributable Artworks viewer application first seems to cure the problem. The Really Good Software Company are aware of this problem and so it should soon be fixed.

*Mark Smith*

*NoticeBoard costs £35.00 from The Really Good Software Company, 39 Carisbrooke Road, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 5QS. Tel 01582 761395.*

Another  
challenging quiz  
devised by  
Chairman Steve  
Arnold

# ANAQUIZ

This quiz is fairly simple — just answer the eight questions — take the letters required from each of the answers and add them to the free letters provided — finally make a two word anagram using all the letters that fit the frame provided.

If you happen to match the answer we have or come-up with a better solution than us you'll win entry to a prize draw — the winner(s) of this competition will be drawn from all the correct answers and awarded a copy of the APDL Clipart CD-ROM worth £25 and kindly donated by David Holden of APDL.

Write your answer on the back of a postcard and send it to the following address:  
Anaquiz Draw, The ARM Club, FREEPOST ND6573, London, N12 0BR

## Part 1 — Questions

1. What is the name of Acorn's first commercially available 32bit laptop RISC computer? (1st letter of answer)
2. Who produces *The Complete Animator*? (2nd letter of the Company name)
3. What colour are the function keys on Acorn's A3020? (2nd letter)
4. What is the name of the current managing director of ARM Ltd?  
(Last letter of his first name)
5. Who produces *Impression Style*? (1st letter of the Company name)
6. Who produces the *Eureka* spreadsheet? (Second letter of the Company name)
7. What does *SCSI* stand for? (1st letter of the second word)
8. What was Acorn's original RISC based operating system called?  
(second letter of the answer)

## Part 2 — Anagram

T S U R M P (plus letters from quiz above)

--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

The boring stuff (Rules):

1. Entries must arrive via the Club FREEPOST address by 15th September 1995.
2. Winners will be selected by random draw from all correct answers.
3. The result will be published & all decisions are final.
4. Committee members & their families are not allowed to enter.

# EVER GAMES

## Burn 'Out

*One of Oregon's latest set of  
new games releases  
reviewed by Andi Flower*

"This looks remarkably familiar!" was the first thing I thought when I saw this latest game from Oregon. At last a really good racing game on the Acorn, and what a long time we've had to wait!

Burn Out looks just like an old favourite of mine from the days when I owned an 8-bit machine

## The Summer Games Zone

This section of Eureka is suffering from the general problem of not enough pages to include all of the reviews and articles that are waiting!

Simon the Sorcerer has now been released on CD and is reviewed later. A version of Dune II has also just been released on CD, an interesting and very welcome trend. Let's hope that the software houses make good use of the extra storage capacity and don't let attention to detail slip. What CD titles would you like to see available?

Eddie Edwards who converted Wolfenstein 3D to the Archimedes recently revealed that he is part way through converting the hit-game DOOM to run native, however he is sceptical about whether it can ever be completed and released because the games market isn't big enough. What do you think? Does piracy have a major impact?

Our next issue will contain reviews of several games which couldn't make it into this Games Zone.

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



and I was really looking forward to getting my hands on it in order to give it a good thrashing at the keyboard.

The 8-bit game to which I refer was called *Power Drift*. Now I don't remember who it was that wrote this game (maybe someone else out there does) but I sure do remember the way the game played and the excellent graphics which it had for its time.



Burn Out comes on four double density discs and includes a very simple installation program which takes the grind out of loading the game from floppy. When installed, the game takes up nearly 2MB of disc space and and, as we have come

*Car racing games seem to be perennially popular*

to expect, still requires the first disc of the four as a key disc.

Once loaded you are presented with the rather impressive introduction sequence (that

lasts quite a while) and then you go on to the main menu. Once you have chosen your options (more about these later) you are presented with a picture of the "custom built island" that has been created specifically on which to hold the Burn Out races. There are three stages at which you are able to begin racing, easy, medium and hard. For almost anyone, wether you consider yourself to be an experienced racing driver or not, I would suggest starting at the easy level!



*Choose your player and your vehicle from this screen*

The graphics in this 32-bit version of the game are extremely good and a lot of time has gone in to them making them some of the best that I have seen. However most impressive of all is the excellent quality (not to mention the quantity) of music, jingles and sound effects that are to be heard screeching and bellowing from your machine.

There are certainly a large number of variable factors within the game and a lot of consideration has been put into the inclusion of these features. Oregan obviously realise that there are still a large number of people out there with the older Acorn machines and to account for this they have ensured that you are able to switch off some of the more processor intensive aspects of the graphics. The other options in the game include the choice of both a driver (from a selection of 10) and a car (from a selection of 5). That's if you can call any of the vehicles used in the game cars!

As you compete in races you slowly earn yourself more and more money (that is assuming that you able to win on the odd occasion) which can, as in most racing games, be put to good use in upgrading your cars engine, tyres, gearbox or even giving it a re-spray if you don' t like the colour.

Even an experienced games player such as myself knows that realism is not really a high priority in a game and Burn Out certainly doesn't cater for the realists among us (of which I am not one! — see that McLaren F1? — that's mine that is!). The same feel is applied to the car as you would find in games such as Lotus Turbo Challenge, with the car sliding out on corners that are too sharp to handle at top speed. There are no high speed thrills and spills when you cheerfully plough

into other cars or stationary objects either, you simply bounce off and slow down (I wish my car could do that!).

Burn Out has got almost everything that it needs to be a perfect companion for the Acorn games enthusiast. I say almost because there is one thing which really lets this game down and that is its long term playability. During the first few levels the game has a real addiction factor which keeps you coming back for more. Most of the first few levels are relatively easy and only take a short while to master. However, once you get a little further into the game the upward curve with which the tracks increase in difficulty becomes far too steep and even those experts among you may find yourselves getting very frustrated with seeing the Game Over message again and again in the same place. The most infuriating thing that I discovered was that you can quite easily be in first place in your race and suddenly find that you have run out of time! Does this sound right to you?

Now it may seem that I don' treally like Burn Out, but this is not the case. The game is excellent, the graphics, sound and gameplay are all top notch and the developers deserve recognition for such a worthy effort. If you are into racing games such as this (and I don' t know too many people who aren' t) then go out and buy this today because you'll love it.

*Andi Flower*

*Burn 'Out costs £24.95 including VAT from Oregan Software Developments, 36 Grosvenor Avenue, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, B74 3PE. Tel 0121 353 6044.*





GamesWare has become the first company to release a game on CD-ROM for Acorn machines, that game is Simon the Sorcerer. Instead of 9 floppy discs, the game is supplied on CD-ROM with the welcome addition of sampled speech. The full game was reviewed in depth in Eureka 15 so I've been asked to keep this review of the CD version brief and to the point.

The CD package includes all of the elements of the floppy disc version, except that 8 of the floppies have been replaced with a gleaming silver disc and there is a leaflet explaining how to install the CD version. There are three different installations of Simon the Sorcerer possible, depending on the amount of free hard disc space you have and how quickly you want the game to load. The smallest

installation occupies only 115K of disc space, the largest around 10MB. The larger the installation, the faster the game will run since CD-ROM drives are still significantly slower than hard disc drives.

So what are the differences in the CD-ROM version of Simon the Sorcerer? The main difference is addition of sampled speech (much from Chris Barrie of Red Dwarf fame) which adds atmosphere to the game & personality to the characters although the sound reproduction is not as good as it could be. The copy protection which relied on the manual has been removed and various other minor changes have been incorporated to make a hit game even better. If you have the disc version of Simon the Sorcerer then the CD-ROM version is a worthwhile upgrade

and reasonably priced too! If you are thinking of buying Simon the Sorcerer for the first time and have a CD-ROM drive then you should certainly consider this CD version.

*Andrew James*

*The CD upgrade costs £8.00 or a complete CD copy costs £45.99. GamesWare telephone or fax 01703 456523.*



# Cyber Ape from TBA

*The latest TBA release reviewed by games expert Adrian Jackson*

I'd been looking forward to this game for some time — TBA have been producing some really quite fun games recently, and surely Cyber Ape would be another worthwhile addition to any games player's collection, especially given the relative dearth of decent platformers on the Arc. But does it live up to its expectations? Well, to be quite honest about it, no. Not in the slightest. Not one single expectation was lived up to.

I suppose I had better start by listing the good points of the game. Some of the graphics are really quite nice. Don't be fooled by the drab black background of the screenshots — in fact the game is played over some very nice coloured bars. And the music is quite good if you like that sort of thing. The plot is vaguely fun, if in need of a spell-checker: an ape is turned into an ultimate soldier by some scientists. However he's not too happy and decides to set off for home, carrying bananas as weapons, because guns are "Very Bad Things".

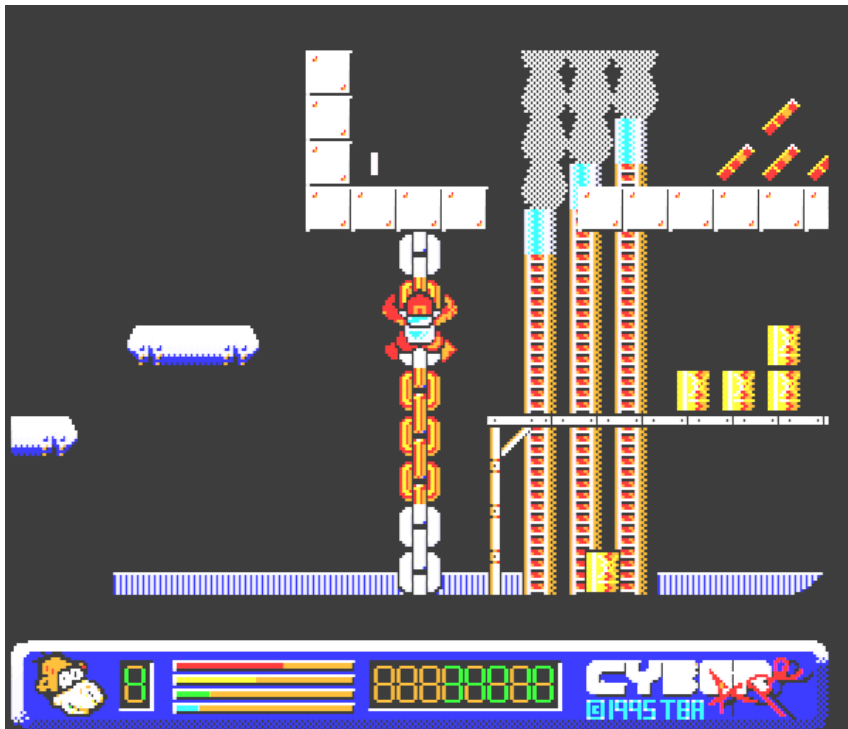
And now for the slightly longer list of things that are wrong with the game. Let's start with the control of the ape. Jumping is a particular problem — if you take a running jump you can control your left/right movement during a jump, but if you take a standing jump you can't. That sort of inconsistency doesn't make for a particularly playable game. Add to that the fact that taking a running jump from what

of platform can result in you falling off (or rather, through) the edge and you really begin to have problems. And when you get the power-up that allows you to run quickly you still jump at the normal speed. Charging along the screen and then dropping to half speed for no reason whatsoever when you take to the air just doesn't feel right.

The scoring system is patently ridiculous. No matter how quickly you complete the first two levels you get no bonus points for time left over. But on the third level you get more bonus than you've actually scored so far in the whole game. This sort of pattern continues throughout the game — either no bonus or far too much.

Then there's the gameplay itself. All the levels are very much the same — it's the same collection of conveyor belts, spiky things and platforms. Nothing really changes on later levels except the graphics, and there





Without a doubt, however, the most heinous crime this game commits is when you try to run it off the floppy discs on which it is supplied. It's fine up until the end of the first set of levels when up pops the *Loading* message and the disc begins to quietly and intermittently churn. Five minutes later I decided that possibly something was wrong, and was on the verge of reloading the game and trying again when I realised what was going on. By *Loading* the game means *Please insert Disc 2*. Simple really. I mean, surely all games players are capable of using bizarre psychic powers to

are only four sets of those. The later levels are distinguishable from the earlier ones only by the fact that they contain more jumps that have to be made with perfect accuracy, and more tubs of acid for you to fall into if you should miss. This just doesn't make me want to keep playing — it's frustrating rather than challenging, and made more so by the awkward jumping control in the first place.

work out that the computer wants the second disc. Aren't they?

I don't particularly like having to say a game is no good, but in the case of CyberApe that accolade is certainly deserved. Unpleasant control, little variation, and almost no gameplay make for a game that is certainly one to avoid. There are games for the BBC Micro that make CyberApe look and feel

dated. Which is a shame, because at times the presentation is quite pleasant, and evidently a lot of work has gone into it. Close, as they say, but no banana.

*Adrian Jackson*

*CyberApe costs £19.99 inc VAT from TBA Software, Mead Farm, North Road, Timsbury, Bath BA3 1JH. Telephone (01761) 470003.*



*Do you ever get that sinking feeling?*

# Sally and Wally

*Sally Arnold challenges her family to play this new game from Oregan*

To start with my name is Sally, so it seemed appropriate that I should test drive and review a game called *Sally and Wally*. For obvious reasons, my husband's name is Steve but I like to call him Wally! I'm not a computer expert, but I do enjoy playing the odd computer game once in a while.

We have two children which made the task of doing this review difficult due to their fascination with the game. My nephew who is a dab hand with a Sega Megadrive mastered the game easily, although I'm top of the board until he finds out about it!

Now onto the game itself. When you buy the game it comes in an A5 size box with a colourful outer wrapper, you'll be surprised how light it is and you may think there's nothing inside the box. A simple shake of the carton assured me that there was something inside. Included are a set of instructions, a warranty card, advertisements for other Oregan products and the games disc itself.

If you haven't got a hard disc, you will find this slow to run off floppy disc. Too many introduction screens to start the game. The game is very addictive, which is one reason why I don't play games very often. Also it has very

catching music, pretty pastel shade colours, many features such as secret bonus rooms, hidden bonus creatures, stepping stones, extra life in the form of a heart, shield protection in the form of a helmet and lots of variable surfaces which alter Sally and Wally's movements.

The game has 120 screens of which I haven't got past the first 20 screens yet. However I have sampled some of the later screens. The object of the game as quoted in the Instruction Manual is you must guide Sally and Wally around each screen throwing balls of insecticide at the bugs and creepy crawlies. When a nasty is hit, he will be stunned for a few seconds so you may collect him.

I had little success with the password feature, whether that is my fault or the





game's fault has yet to be established. It seems that passwords have to be a particular length; if the password is less than that length, a number of spaces must be typed in after the password before it will be accepted. This is rather annoying!

You can program the game keys according to your personal selection which makes it easier to play or even use a joystick. I would rate this game as good clean family entertainment, especially the cute kissable love birds, very humorous.

*Sally Arnold*



*Sally and Wally costs £24.95 from Oregon Software Developments, 36 Grosvenor Avenue, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield B74 3PE. Tel 0121 353 6044.*

## **Welwyn Hatfield Computer Club**

Established for nearly twelve years in a variety of forms, the Welwyn Hatfield Computer Club is a very active club based in Hertfordshire with a strong following of Acorn users. Indeed the Chairman, John Stonier, runs the Digital Databank bulletin board which is one of the leading Acorn bulletin boards in the country.

Mark Empson, the Secretary, has supplied us with a lot of information about the Club which will hopefully appear in Eureka 17.

If you would be interested in attending the regular Club meetings or just want more information, please contact Mark Empson on 01582 767540 or on Digital Databank BBS.

## **North London User Group**

A brand new computer club has recently started meeting in North London, catering for all computer users but particularly Acorn owners. Meetings take place on the third Thursday of every month, from 7.30pm to 10.00pm at the Sidings Community Centre, Brassey Road, West Hampstead NW6 2BA.

The next meetings take place on 17th August

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and 21st September and anyone with an interest in computers will be made very welcome. For more information please telephone Geoff on 0171 624 9918.

Do you know of other local user groups which meet on a regular basis? Please send us details so that we can publicise the local activities and meetings as much as possible.





# Report Writer (continued from page 17)

Of course the computer is not writing the report, it is only being used as a tool by the teacher. Even when writing reports by hand the teacher is calling upon a mental bank of phrases and statements to use. Reports invariably turn out pretty much the same. The computer, in this case, is supplying that phrase-bank, based on the NC, the teacher just makes appropriate choices. If the bank supplied with Report Writer doesn't suit a teacher's style of writing then it can be configured accordingly by adding to or editing what is already there.

Report Writer is supplied in a video-size plastic box. There are two discs and a user manual. The manual leads the user through the workings of the program very gently. It is an illustrated step-by-step guide that most teachers prefer these days. The program disc is copy protected and the program does have to be installed onto hard disc but this is achieved by following on-screen instructions. It may also be used from floppy disc if necessary. If the program is removed from the hard disc it must be de-installed. If you have edited or added to the NC or personal data this should be copied to a floppy disc separately as this is just deleted when the program is de-installed.

Subjects	
English	↔
Mathematics	↔
Science	↔
Technology	↔
History	↔
Geography	↔
PE	↔
Music	↔
Art	↔
Languages	↔
RE	↔
Personal & Social	↔

*Would a computer have improved YOUR school reports?!*

Report writing is one of the more odious tasks that teachers have to deal with each year. Report Writer goes a long way to making that task far less time consuming and consequently less objectionable. Perhaps that will even make the comments about the difficult children sound a little better?!

Report Writer is available from Creative Curriculum Software: 5 Clover Hill Road, Savile Park, Halifax, HX1 2YG Tel: 01422 340524. Price £49 plus VAT (single user).

Incidentally, if any teachers would like a disc full of the old reports broken down into subject areas (minus the children's names of course) just send a blank disc and a reply paid label to me: Geoff Stilwell, 40 Barlow Road, West Hampstead, London NW6 2BJ

*Geoff Stilwell  
(Club Secretary)*

English			
AT1: Speaking & Listening			
AT	Support	AT & Support	User
AT2: Reading			
AT	Support	AT & Support	User
AT3: Writing			
AT	Support	AT & Support	User
AT4: Spelling			
AT	Support	AT & Support	User
AT5: Handwriting			
AT	Support	AT & Support	User
AT6: Presentation			
AT	Support	AT & Support	User



# Recent News from Acorn

This issue of Eureka is pretty full of news from Acorn as it is, but here is a quick resumé of recent announcements.

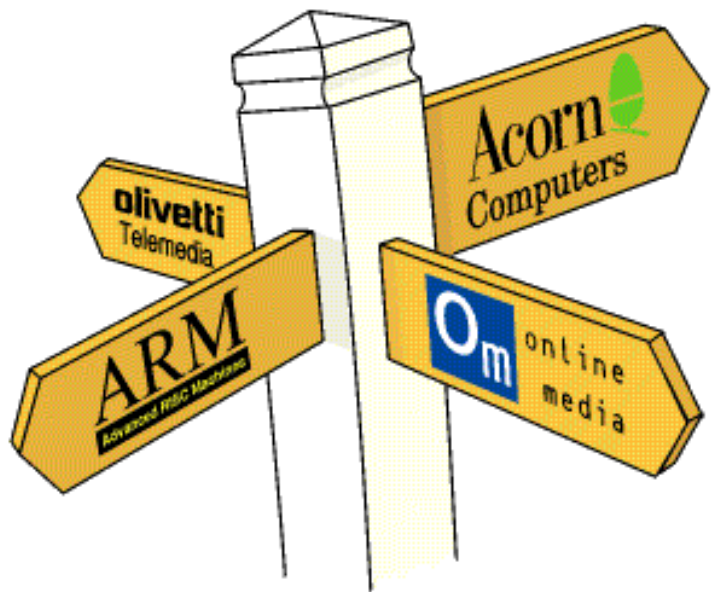
Acorn's sizeable network of Educational Dealers has been replaced by 25 or so education agencies situated around the UK. These have sole rights to sell to schools & colleges in their area, acting as commissioned agents for Acorn. To make this possible, Acorn has introduced a new Recommended Education Price for each product which can be significantly less than the Recommended Retail Price.

Apart from the A7000 and Risc PC 700, Acorn has launched a 1MB version of the Pocket Book II computer. This has been long-expected following a similar move by Psion on whose range the PBII is based. The retail & education price is £285 plus VAT.

Those people with access to the Internet have been avidly connecting to Acorn's World Wide Web site which opened during July. The site contains a lot of useful & interesting information about Acorn and its machines with attractively designed and laid-out pages produced by a company in New Zealand! To access the pages, point your web browser to the URL <http://www.acorn.co.uk/>

Acorn hosted the *Insight '95* educational conference over a sunny couple of days in July. This was the highlight of Acorn's annual training calendar with a large number of teachers and educationalists getting together for seminars and socialising.

Acorn is moving towards making networking even easier and more affordable. The new RISC OS 3.60 has Acorn's Access networking software built-in, and Access+ is included on the hard discs of all the new machines. These packages make it really easy to build a network and their inclusion as standard should make networking cheaper.



*A graphic from Acorn's World Wide Web site*

Online Media celebrated its first birthday in July, looking back on a very successful first year. Many well-known companies are now involved with OM and its Set Top Boxes.

Acorn's Managing Director, Sam Wauchope, resigned recently after several years in the job. This is thought to have been caused by a difference of opinion with majority shareholder Olivetti over the future of Acorn and Online Media. His replacement is Mr David Lee, formerly of Olivetti UK.

*Simon Burrows*

## Final Thoughts

Where do you think Acorn should go from here? The launch of the A7000 & Risc PC 700 are not entirely unexpected, with Acorn dropping strong hints for many months but don't we need a new laptop machine?

Acorn is undoubtedly finding life difficult at the moment, as are all computer manufacturers. It seems a pity that the launch of new products has been submerged by the change in dealer policy and the resignation of Acorn's Managing Director.

One of Acorn's problems is that it has always been seen as rather remote, even arrogant. It must surely need the support of the Acorn-using community and therefore should urgently consider how to improve both its communications and public image.

Looking on the bright side, Acorn has launched a couple of very desirable new computers and The ARM Club keeps on growing. Please remember that we're all unpaid volunteers and lend a hand whenever possible!

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# Benefits of Membership

*The Leading Independent User Group for  
Archimedes and Risc PC Users*

THE  
**ARM**  
**CLUB**

- Quarterly Magazine published free of charge for members
- Disc of quality software written by members with each Magazine
- FREE Technical Help Service – we will do our best to solve any problems which you may have, by letter, telephone or fax
- Special Discounts for Club members from well-known companies
- Training Courses, Regional Meetings and Open Days
- Regional Contact Lists of other members, to get in touch
- Discount Public Domain Library, including unique Club software
- Joining Pack includes copy of most recent Magazine and disc
- Special Offers at Shows and Open Days
- Opportunities to get involved in the running of the Club itself
- School and Affiliate Membership available on request

*If you want to get the most out of your Acorn computer, join today!*

**Annual Membership costs only £12.00**

*The ARM Club, FREEPOST ND6573, LONDON N12 0BR  
Tel 0171 624 9918 Fax 0181 446 3020  
Affiliated to the British Association of Computer Clubs*