

The magazine for members of

THE
ARM
CLUB

**Visiting the big shows:
Acorn World and BETT**

**Reports and special offers
on TextEase & Zip Drives**

The ANT Internet Suite II

**Musical chairs in the
Committee Room**

**Designing
a logo**



Issue 21 — Spring 1997

New Age Of StrongARM

The long anticipated Acorn World has been and gone, leaving the memory of the exciting air of confidence and optimism that it generated and, more tangibly, the marvellous new StrongARM chip and RISC OS 3.7 operating system that became generally available there for all the thousands of Acorn enthusiasts who now have it installed.

The Club responded to the new hardware with its own highly successful StrongGuard! software which has enabled more applications to run with StrongARM and has also taken over and surpassed everything that Game On! did for earlier versions of RISC OS.

The Show and various Club Open Days have allowed members to meet some of the Club's officers and helpers who keep the whole organisation running. There have now been some changes among them, with Steve Arnold giving up the chairman's duties he has carried out so well for so long. There are more details in later pages.

Bye bye Beebug?

Soon after Acorn World a multi-coloured folded A4 card from Beebug popped through my letter box with headings such as: 'Superb interactive entertainment... Mind blowing games... Multimedia... Internet.'

The start of a campaign to shout aloud the brilliant new era of StrongARM computing on Acorn machines, I thought. But, no, there was no mention of Acorn at all. It was entirely devoted to Beebug's range of PC machines and software.

Companies can't be blamed for moving into the very profitable PC market and for some organisations it may be the only means of survival. But to anyone not knowing the enthusiasm and effort which Beebug are putting into their brilliant new Ovation Pro DTP it could seem that the company had sadly followed Watford Electronics and waved goodbye to the Acorn world after playing such a prominent role right back from the pioneering days of the BBC A and B.

Peter Jennings

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EasyFont Goes Pro



After three or four versions of an application have appeared on the market, the trend now is for the following upgrade to be dubbed a 'Professional' version.

When upgrading, fonts can be dragged in from an earlier version but, when I did that, I found one font failed to appear. The manual explains that this could be because the name contained within the IntMetrics file

Peter Jennings upgrades his font management system.

★ ★ ★

Two previous versions of EasyFont have been reviewed, in Eureka 11 and 15.

Fabis has followed the trend with EasyFont for its latest, StrongARM compliant, version which now comes with a second disc, full of fonts, a flat-opening manual, a Quick Reference card and a host of new features.

To recap briefly, for those not familiar with the earlier versions, EasyFont Professional is a font management program which allows you make selections of fonts which can be displayed in named groups. Fonts can be copied or moved from their original source or accessed directly from it. In addition, new styles can be designed and added.

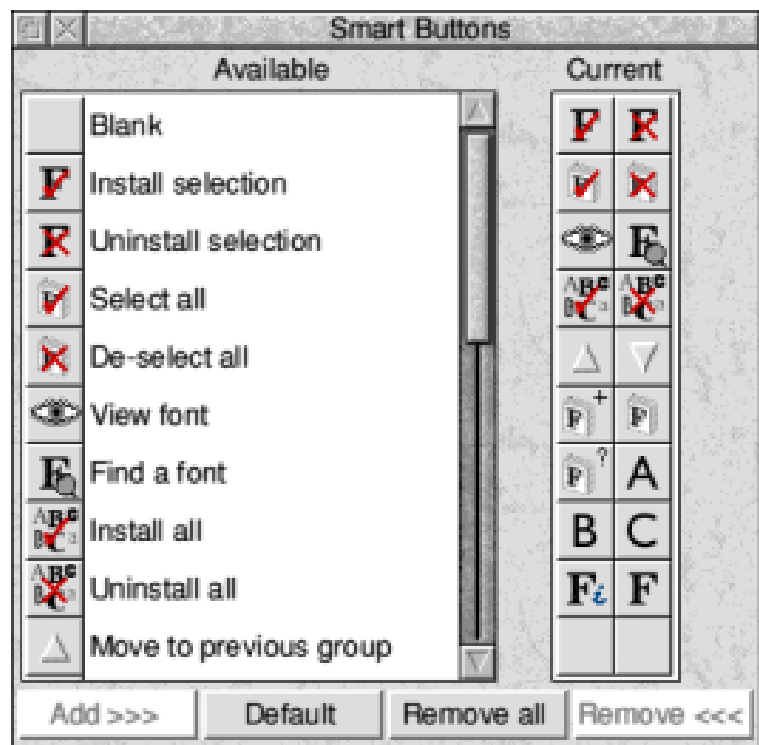
did not match that of the directory and this proved to be so. It can be rectified by making the names match but must be done without changing the length of the file. This caused me some problems and a number of attempts to install the amended file caused the machine to hang up. Then, when I reloaded EasyFont it helpfully tried to complete the installation and the computer promptly crashed again. Eventually I loaded two versions of the fonts, containing different styles, under different names.

Among the changes from earlier versions is the method of protection, which now means that the hard drive

copy is not restricted in any way. However, the original disc needs to be kept handy as it has to be inserted periodically to verify ownership. How often this will be necessary — and so how much irritation this will cause — still remains to be seen.

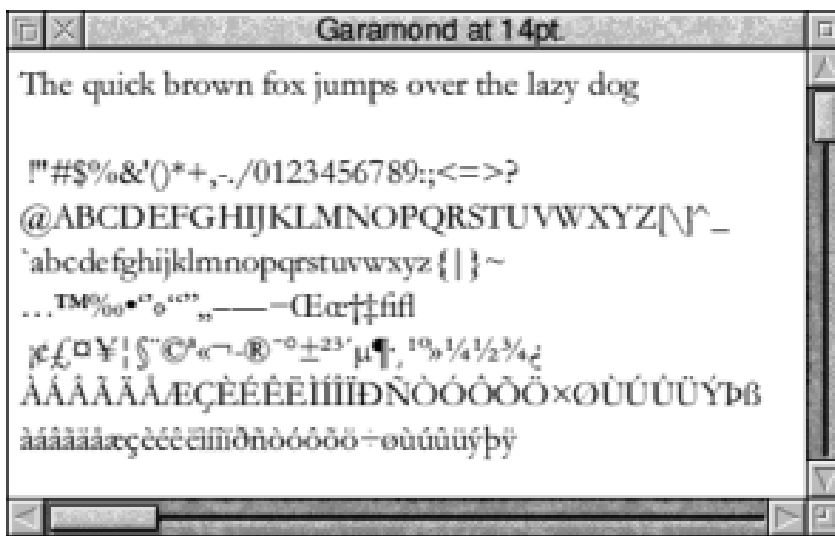
The main window, which shows and controls all loaded fonts, now has a smart button bar attached. This displays a selection of icons which can be added or removed as you wish.

In addition to a facility to search a file and install any fonts which are found in it, EasyFont now has Automatic Font Detection, using AutoFont™,



which makes it quicker to view a document by turning on all the fonts needed without having to scan through the file.

The font viewer, which allows you to see a line of text in a chosen font, can now be opened further to display all the characters available. In addition a text file of up to 2K can be dropped into this window to show how it looks in the selected font.



An interesting new feature, which works with Impression, Artworks and a few other supported applications, allows any selected text to be changed to a different font simply by dragging the font's name from an EasyFont window onto the font menu icon on the toolbar.

Six useful new utilities are now included.



Backup does just that by saving a data file which can be quickly restored if the application is ever reset.



Extract takes selected fonts and resets them to their original state in a directory.



GroupsEF3 saves out the group data from EasyFont3 and allows the fonts in EasyFont

Professional to be put in the same groups as they were in EasyFont3.



OpenEF3 Opens an EasyFont3 filer window containing all its fonts, allowing them to be copied out.



Repair If the program crashes, this utility offers three different options for a possible repair.



Restart can be used to start the mending job if Repair will not run.

Free upgrades

EasyFont Professional is being well supported by Fabis and there has been a succession of upgrades, mostly correcting minor faults. These are available free from the Fabis Web site (address below) or by post.

EasyFont Professional

Price: £59.95 (inclusive)

Upgrade from EasyFont3 £15

Demo £2 (refunded on purchase)

Supplier: Fabis Computing

48 Charles Street

Church Gresley, Swadlincote

Derbyshire DE11 9QD

Tel/Fax: 01283 552761

Email: efpro@fabis.demon.co.uk

<http://www.fabis.demon.co.uk>

TextEase DTP



Peter asked me to write some tips about TextEase, ways to do things that only the author would know about. A tall order I thought, since TextEase was designed to have no surprises, no hidden corners, so what could I say?

The first thing is something that Peter told me about! Ctrl U. On the first version of TextEase it didn't work. What does it do? Well, if the caret (that red line!) is in an entry field and you press Ctrl U, then the field is cleared. Very useful, but also very

In the first of a new series revealing some trade secrets, Geoff Titmuss gives tips for using his TextEase DTP program and throws in some useful general hints.

Well, after some thought I managed to come up with a list, falling into two categories. The first few are things that apply to some, or many applications, including TextEase. Many 'power users' will use them all the time, but some of you may learn a thing or two.

The second group are TextEase specific and may help those of you with TextEase to use it with greater dexterity, or for more complicated jobs. TextEase is being continually improved, so if you find the tip doesn't work on your version, contact us to find out the price of an upgrade.

obscure! But beware, if the caret is not in an entry field, you may find large areas of your document become underlined!

TextEase is object based and so in some respects is similar to Draw. In both of these applications selected items may be moved by using the keyboard arrow keys. Draw does it by moving the mouse pointer, so you have to have a mouse button pressed as well. TextEase moves the selected items with or without the mouse button pressed. Also, with Ctrl pressed, objects will move 10 times quicker on TextEase.

Selecting objects is vital, since effects apply to the selection. Acorn selection techniques are superb, but again obscure. Give your Acorn system to a PC user and they will try to hold down Ctrl on the keyboard to select multiple objects. No need with Acorns, we have three mice buttons. Most Acorn users know that using the right hand one, (called Adjust), will allow multiple objects to be selected. Easy, you can do it with one hand. The advanced bit is when you use Adjust to 'Drag select'. Clicking Adjust over an empty area will not remove the current selections, so you may drag with Adjust to add a group of objects to your selection.

Powerful

But it goes further than this, if the dragged area contains selected objects, then their selection is toggled off. This is very powerful, and easy to visualise once you understand it. Selection of items that is just not possible on a PC application can be done with one hand! (Actually, we liked this so much that TextEase for Windows uses the second button of the two button mouse as Adjust. It just works so well).

Adjust again gives good value while scrolling. If you drag a scroll bar with Adjust you will find the the document will move both horizontally and vertically. Great for moving around those posters that TextEase does so well!

Drag and drop

Acorn have the best implementation of drag and drop that I know of. Some applications allow you to drag objects off one window and on to another. No need to use the clipboard. This is wonderful when you find you can use it. Just drag things across windows, it is so easy. Unfortunately Acorn never implemented this in things like Draw and so few applications support it. TextEase does so, between its own windows, and also lets you 'drag copy' an object. That is, if an object is selected and then you press 'shift' before moving it, a copy will be dragged off, leaving the original in its place. With drag between windows, this lets you drag a copy of a picture on one document, straight onto another document. An object that is drag copied is stored in memory only once, although it may be rendered as many times as you like, making for efficient use of memory.

Three printing tips next. If you want to produce masters for spot colours, first lay your work out in TextEase in glorious colour and save it. Next select all the items to be the first colour, set them to black and use 'Print selection' to print just those objects. Then select the objects for the next colour and repeat the process. In this way it is easy to produce spot colour masters.

Print selection

'Print selection' can also be useful when you realise that you missed something out of the work of art you have just produced. Add the missing item in position on your screen, select it, put the paper back in the printer and press 'Print selection'. Less ink used, mistake corrected, and with most modern printers positioning is so accurate that no one will know you added it on as an afterthought!

TextEase cannot do full colour separations, but Artworks and TurboDrivers can and TextEase can output as a Draw file, so that is easy. We do all our own adverts in this way, allowing TJ Reproductions and Alternative Publishing to produce colour film from our Draw files. *But,*

the colours never look as good as they did on the screen. Usually, some dirty blackness has crept in. A good way to spot this before you send the Draw file for separation is to look at the colour using Acorn's colour picker and look at the CYMK view of the colour. That murky black does show up in that view. If you thought you had pure yellow and you see some black in there, be warned!

That's the end of the general tips, the following are just for TextEase owners!

Tables are a common requirement, and TextEase works well with TableMate, which does the job admirably. However, if you don't have TableMate you may just use TextEase, even if it is slightly more fiddly. For each cell, click to start a new text object. Type all your cells in first, in roughly the correct positions. Then, drag select the first row and use the alignment tool to line up all the tops. Then drag select the last row and again line up all the tops. Repeat this with the columns and your table will be neatly lined up. Now add a rectangle for the border and use the line tool for vertical and horizontal

lines. Use the zoom tool to tidy up the line ends and you have a table. TableMate clearly makes the job easier if you have many tables to do, but for a one off the above gives excellent results, if slightly longer to achieve. It also allows you to add pictures and to apply effects down to a single character in any cell, which only those with TableMate Designer can achieve otherwise.

Adding effects to draw files can be very effective. You can change the fill colour, or outline colour or the minimum line width. This does not change the original, so it is easy to play and then at the end click 'remove effects' and be back with your original. An excellent use for this is to fill colour pictures white and print as outlines for children to colour in.

Another feature of TextEase that is often missed is its ability to grade and shade. This can apply to text, or to other objects such as ellipses and rectangles. With text, you can grade the colour and the size. So you can start with a large 72 point letter in red at one end and end up with a small 10 point letter in blue at the other. And in the middle, a smooth transition

between red and blue and, of course, getting smaller all the time. Very effective on screen with Multimedia TextEase.

One feature that TextEase does not yet support is grouping. This is very important if you wish to scale a group of objects. The way to scale groups in TextEase is to save the group as a Draw file, pop the Draw file back on to a TextEase page and then resize the Draw file. This works well for small tickets, or even whole posters. For example, you can produce an A4 poster in TextEase, decide you need one at A1 for the notice board, save the whole lot as a Draw file, drop it on to an A1 size TextEase sheet, resize it and then print it. The whole lot will be printed on your A4 printer, as several tiles that you then trim and paste together. You even have control over the paper overlap and the colour of the crosses which help you line up the sheets.

Draw files dropped on to TextEase are brought in at 100%, unless they are too large to fit on the sheet when they are scaled. If you want a large Draw file at 100%, then drop it on to a larger TextEase sheet, say A3. Then drag the

Draw file across to the document you want it on. In this way you can add things such as 'graph paper', which can then be selected and locked to the page, providing an accurate grid on which to work. Any object can be set to print or not, so your grid can be just for working to, or a part of the finished document. Don't forget to use the coordinates feature if you require accurate positioning.

I have already mentioned that drag copying an object means that only one copy is held in memory, reducing memory requirements. This is also true for objects that are cut and pasted. The same memory saving is then retained when you save your file to disk. A further way to reduce disk space is to use !Squash, to make your saved files smaller. This can be particularly effective if your file contains a picture as a sprite which has large areas of block colour. The savings can be quite dramatic. Squashed files may be dropped directly on to TextEase, so no need to unsquash them first.

TextEase is still developing. We now have TextEase for Windows and that is fully file compatible with the Acorn

version. As a result, Acorn TextEase will now accept PC Metafiles and Bitmaps and the PC version will accept Acorn Draw files and Sprites. We have added an RTF reader, so that other documents may be imported.

The most exciting area is Multimedia TextEase, allowing video, animation and sound, and links between objects and between documents. The same package can now be used for word processing, desktop publishing and multimedia authoring.

TextEase

Prices (all +VAT): £57.58

Talking version £76.38

Site licence (Primary, Secondary)
£115.15, £152.75

Multimedia version £99.87

Site licence £152.75, £199.75

***Special offer: 10% discount for
Club members until 31 March.***

***Please quote your membership
number when ordering.***

Supplier: Softease Limited

The Old Courthouse, St Peters
Church Yard, Derby, DE1 1NN

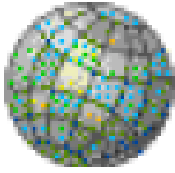
Tel: 01332 204911

Fax: 01684 772922

Email: sales@softease.co.uk

Aegis 2

The Information System about the World and its Wealth



Aegis 2 is an educational package aimed at secondary and primary schools. It was voted 'The Most Valuable Subject-Specific Package for 1995' for the PC version. The Acorn version is available from

the program would not install. A second set of discs arrived and they also would not install. Something on my machine, a Risc PC without a Strong ARM (tears flow), was interfering with the unzip process. I restarted using <shift-break> to avoid

Deputy Head Teacher Peter Blenkinsop goes back to student days to brush up his geography and learn about world development.

the Advisory Unit for Computers in Education.

The program allows the combination of maps and data and its use is not limited to the geography department. I am a science teacher, not a geographer, but with the help of some of the geography teachers in my school, I can act more as a geography student—flicks piece of paper across classroom to get into role—stereotypically!

Aegis comes on three discs and has an installer which asks you to drag a folder to the location on the hard disc where the program is to live. Initially

running my boot program and the install worked smoothly. I guess there will always be software clashes but schools are often users of programs rather than enthusiasts and many will struggle with this simple problem.

Aegis will run on a 2MB machine, using RISC OS 3.1 or later, with a hard disc requiring at least 5MB of free space. Most of the hard disc space is needed to accommodate the extensive map and other data files which come with the package. It is best run on a machine with more RAM—at least 4MB is advised—and a screen mode with 256 colours. It will also run on a network.

I can't resist just clicking on a piece of software and exploring. This package allows just that but I would not advise it. It is a large application with a whole plethora of things to do. One can get lost. Much better is to go through the tutorial. That is what I did. Join me in my investigation.

Aegis loads onto the icon bar in the normal way and a click reveals a list of main topics. I selected World development and a map of the world appeared.

The map can be saved out to other packages, such as Ovation Pro, in Draw or Sprite format. I ran both packages together to write this review and I imagine that students may well want to operate in this manner to write up their own work as they go.

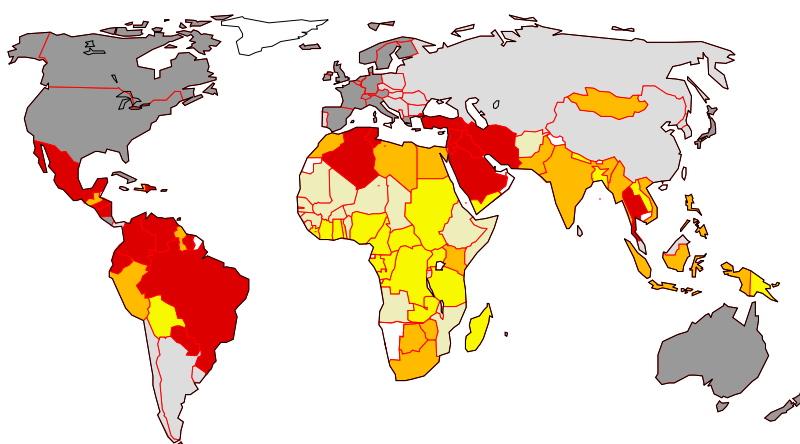
As well as the data for drawing the map, there are data for population, adult literacy, energy use, imports and exports and more —22 different sets to explore in total. The first concept in Aegis is that of map overlays. The tutorial is a bit technical at this point so I am just going to do what it says and see what happens.



I click on an icon with a magnifying glass and a pile of coloured squares and this allows me access to the overlays. I have chosen to seed, whatever that means, both the coastline and countries' overlays. When I do this the map is enhanced with numbers and small squares.

One can then overlay the map with other data. I chose life expectancy and the map was then coloured and a key

appeared. I can tell from this map that, for example, the life expectancy is only up to 51 in some parts of the world and over 75 in the United Kingdom.



Life expectancy 1991

What I wanted to do then was to find out the

names of some of the countries. Guess what, when the pointer is moved over a country the pointer alters shape and a click reveals a table of data about that country, with the life expectancy highlighted.

There are several opportunities to configure the display, change map colours, add different data and include a key. In fact the major second part of this quite impressive package is the ability to make one's own map and add and analyse collected data.

Displays

The work is not all passive. The map can be added to, by teacher or student. Clicking on the text icon opens a small window and a line of text can be entered and placed anywhere on the map. The possibilities for displays in a classroom are tremendous, very impressive on parents' evenings, and certainly very useful to create teaching material. The printing of the map is as flexible as it can be with landscape or portrait orientation and size scaling possible.

Adding data to the map is an important part of this package. The data can be displayed in a variety of

formats. As well as colouring areas, the display can be bar charts, pie charts, line or point graphs. Since mathematics departments in school may not use exactly this terminology for the type of graph, students select the type from a pictorial display.

Scaled

The map can be scaled so that the detail can be seen. It would have been good if one could have selected a portion of the map to zoom in on. I could not find out if that is possible to do within Aegis. One could, of course, export the map to Draw and manipulate it there.

You will have realised that what this package is capable of is much more than just displaying map data. One can ask questions and in that sense it can be thought of as a database. The default is to have all records selected but we might want to know those countries where the GNP (gross national product) was above a certain value. We can then ask if the countries with particular GNPs also have a particular set of, say, energy usages. There are some suggestions in the tutorial section of the manual. The queries can be saved and reused or

they can be combined with other selections or altered to suit different investigations. The principle seems to be that the data is here so use it. There are even more possibilities for types of search than I have indicated here. One can have complex queries such as which countries in Africa have calorie intakes of less than 2,500.

The maps supplied are World, EU Region, maps of the UK, World wilderness, fieldwork maps, River survey, Shopping survey, town study, Local studies and ordnance survey maps.

Make your own

Another part of this remarkable package (you can tell I like it because I give you these tiny hints) is the ability to make a map oneself. Having collected data regarding some geographical matter, for example a survey of the traffic flow locally, it is possible to create a map and add the traffic data. This model can then be explored using the powerful facilities of Aegis. Modelling is a difficult area in the national curriculum and this package provides a very valid approach to such work.

Summary

I am very impressed with the package. It is supported by the AUCBE phone line for those who need help. There is a clear manual which teachers can use to get to know the package and there is a 'case studies' booklet which gives some ways in which the package has been used in schools who have trialed the package.

It operates without fault, as far as I was able to ascertain, and for the most part exactly as one expects a good RISC OS package to operate. The package will support investigative work in several areas of a school but mainly in geography. The package can import CSV data from a spreadsheet and map data from a variety of sources.

Aegis2

Prices (+VAT): £100 + £3 p&p
Network/site licence £200
Higher education site £300
Supplier: AUCE
126 Great North Road
Hatfield, Herts, AL9 5JZ
Tel: 01707 266714
Fax: 01707 273684
Email: advunit@rmplc.co.uk

Designing A Logo



Logos have always been a fascination to me. Not least because some well-known ones are so good and so effective, that people have almost forgotten that they are logos and that someone cleverly designed them in the first place. I suppose Ford motor

companies give to have that one! Of course anything I have to say will be quite subjective and purely a matter of taste, like most views on design. I have lived long enough to see several styles come and go and return again. Two or three years ago almost all design seemed to have gone back to

Professional designer Christopher Jarman reveals the secrets of his success in creating a company image.

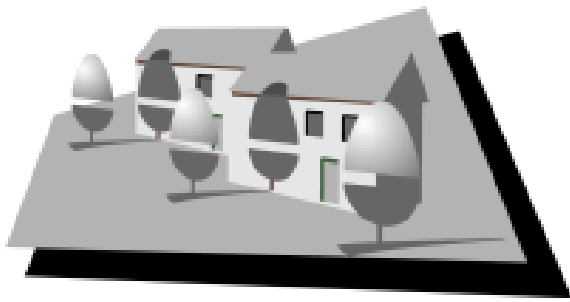
cars, and the Esso and Shell petrol logos must number among these. Also Boots the chemist and CocaCola would figure among the most successful and long standing. On the other hand, I find some equally ubiquitous signs are so bad that one wonders how they became accepted in the first place and how long they will last? The British Telecom prancing fellow with his trumpet springs to mind here!

The simplest logos are in general the most potent and memorable. Take the underground logo. Practically everyone could draw it from memory. What wouldn't some big international

the 1930s for its inspiration. Think of the titles for the TV series 'Poirot' and the vorticist train animation.

Just get on with it

When asked to design a logo I like to ask for quite a lot of information about the client and his or her business. They are sometime rather surprised at this and you can almost hear them saying 'Why doesn't he just get on with it? It's only a logo for God's sake!' The problem is that the smaller and simpler and more effective a logo turns out to be, the more thought and design effort has usually gone into it.



Take the Acorn Cybervillage logo for example, which breaks all my rules by being fairly complicated. The acorns themselves are already logos and of course, clichés too, but there was no way of avoiding them. I thought of a village green and the acorns as trees right away but it was question of how to arrange them that was the problem. To begin with I had far too many houses, and they were too realistic. I had several extra acorns as well. It was a muddle. The great advantage of the computer is that you can use bits of a design like cut paper and move them around endlessly until they look right. Finally, I settled for two houses against a bright green rectangle. I made the houses orange as the complementary colour to green and used the shadows to link the Acorn trees to the buildings and to give a much more three dimensional effect. The act of putting in such a shadow immediately creates space. I did not want to bring in another colour like

blue for sky, as simplicity was important. So back corner of the grass was pulled up to seem more like an aerial view. This was fine but it still looked a bit flat and thin. The addition of the earth coloured shadow under the grass just made the difference! I am sorry that it has to be in B/W in Eureka but I daresay you will have seen it around elsewhere by now.

Another logo that I enjoyed doing very much was simpler. A contact on the Internet asked me for a logo for a



retirement home for which she provides a newsletter. This was one of those cases where more information was needed. False teeth and glasses and walking frames seemed rather undignified for people however elderly, yet those are the first pictures that spring to mind. The client then told me the address which was number 39. I realised that this was a marvellous number, it is the age we would all like to stay! At the same time looking out of my window, I saw the leaves falling and the idea for the logo had presented itself. I thought Autumn was a much happier image!

The 39 is a hole cut in the leaf, so that if printed on a textured or coloured background the number will allow it to show through and help to knit the design to the paper.

Eye catching

When thinking about logo design I usually start with the initials or name if it is short. I then play about with the letters in a very bold and heavy font. The reason for this is that I think that too many logos are thin and ‘artistic’ rather than eye catching. Also, it is very important to think of the widest possible use for a logo from a letterhead to being painted on the side of a van. This means that the thickness of a line has to be quite heavy or it will disappear when printed very small.

Play on words

I try at first to think of some kind of pun or play on the word itself. Unfortunately this is usually the most obvious line to take, but it is as well to look at it in case the image is so good that it cannot be resisted.

Here is a logo I am working on at the moment, the Winchester Art Club.

WAC

I began with the three initial letters in a bold font.

I then started to move them around, but keeping artistic things on my mind. It has some promise, it might be some sort of easel?



But what shall I do with the capital C? I could try making it very big and surrounding the other letters. No, I

don't think so somehow.

I changed the ‘C’ to the word ‘club’ and with the perspective tool in Artworks made the easel a bit more realistic. But I still wasn't happy.



[For the final result, see the cover.]



The Demon Internet logo was my entry for the Demon logo competition. I have heard no more, so I shall be interested to see the winner! My idea of a red devil's fork to replace the E seemed to work as far as I was concerned. I deliberately kept the rest of the lettering plain and traditional to provide a contrast. I also intended the prongs of the fork to look a wee bit radio/electrical to imply communications.



This is the title to a set of web pages on 20th century art.



The 'badge' of the Zimmer Frame Club, an informal section of people who use the Voyager Internet Suite.

Logo for a Guitar Orchestra. I chose this particular font as it seemed to me to look a bit like the clefs in music. It is also rather 19th Century looking which gives a 'Classical' feel to the logo. I used more than one guitar rather obviously to suggest a group rather than solo players.



Writing RISC OS Modules — Part 6



As indicated in the first part of this series, every module has a header which consists of the following entries, each 32 bits:

Offset	Type	Contains
&00	Offset to code	Start code

&1C	Number	SWI chunk base
&20	Offset to code	SWI handler code
&24	Offset to table	SWI decoding table

Throughout this series, Mark Smith has used numerous SoftWare Interrupt (SWI) calls provided by RISC OS in the example programs. In this, the final part, he demonstrates how to write modules which provide their own set of SWI calls.

&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

In addition, if you wish to provide a set of SWI calls, you need an additional three entries at the end of the header:

Every SWI is known by both a name and a number. For example, ResourceFS_RegisterFiles has the SWI number &41B40. SWI numbers must be unique and are allocated by Pineapple Software to developers in blocks of 64, so your module may provide up to 64 calls. When requesting an allocation you will need to specify the SWI prefix, i.e. the bit before the underscore. This is also unique —you will not be able to register your prefix if someone else already has. After your request has been processed you will be sent back a SWI chunk base, that is the lowest

number in your block of 64. This goes in the SWI chunk base entry in the header.

So that you don't have to register SWI chunks that you're using in modules that you aren't going to distribute or you can develop your module whilst waiting for an allocation, a large range of numbers are reserved for you to use for whatever you like, as long as you don't use them in code which is distributed to other people. These SWI numbers have bits 18 and 19 set, so valid chunk bases are $(3 \ll 18)$, $(3 \ll 18) + 64$, $(3 \ll 18) + 128$ and so on. You are responsible for ensuring that your usage of these bases is unique on your system.

Decoding table

The decoding table contains details of the SWI names and consists of one entry containing your registered prefix followed by an entry for each SWI with the remainder of the name, following the underscore. Each entry is terminated by a null character (0 byte) and the table is terminated by a further null character. If using the BASIC assembler, the table will look something like:

```
.swidecode
EQUUS "Example"
EQUB 0
EQUUS "SWI0"
EQUB 0
EQUUS "SWI1"
EQUB 0
EQUB 0
ALIGN
```

This would provide two SWIs, Example_SWI0 and Example_SWI1. The first will have the same number as your chunk base and the second will be one greater.

Finally, the handler code is called when one of your SWIs is. The entry conditions are as follows:

R0 to R9 —Values passed into and/or out of SWI call
R11 —SWI number mod 64, i.e. 0-63
R12 —Address of module's private word
R13 —Full, Descending Supervisor Stack
R14 —Return address

R10 to R12 may be corrupted on exit, R0 to R9 must be preserved unless your SWI returns results to the caller in them.

The first thing you are likely to want to do is work out which SWI has been called. The following code is recommended for this, assuming that the label .title points at the module's title string and you wish to provide n SWI calls:

```

\_____
.swihandle
CMP R11,#(EndOfBranchTable-Bra
nchTable)/4
ADDLO PC,PC,R11,LSL#2
B ukswi
.BranchTable
B swi0
B swi1
...
B swi(n-2)
B swi(n-1)
.EndOfBranchTable
\_____
.ukswi STMFD R13!,{R14}
ADR R0,ukswitoken
MOV R1,#0
MOV R2,#0
ADR R4,title
SWI "XMessageTrans_ErrorLookup
"
LDMFD R13!,{PC}
.ukswitoken
EQU &1E6
EQU "BadSWI"

```

```

EQU 0
ALIGN

```

```

\_____
.swi0
\_____
.swi1
\_____
...
\_____
.swi(n-2)
\_____
.swi(n-1)
\_____

```

All that is required now is that you add the code to service each SWI in much the same way as you would write any other module code. Remember that errors must be returned with the V flag set and a pointer to an error block in R0. You may call other SWIs, but bit 17 of the SWI must be set (or use the X prefixed form of the name) to force errors to be returned. You can choose to ignore errors returned by such calls, but in most cases you will probably want to pass errors back to the caller with an instruction like:

```

LDMVSFD R13!,{PC} (assuming
that the return address is next on the
stack)

```

Example 8 — ImageFSFix revisited

This is a further development of the code which I used as an example last time. I have now added two SWIs, ImageFSFix_Off and ImageFSFix_On to enable or disable the module through the use of SWIs as an alternative to OS star commands.

As with the star commands, the SWIs simply call the module's finalisation or initialisation routine respectively in order to remove or attach the code to the GBPVB Vector which allows image files with names beginning with a ! to appear as applications in Filer windows.

The chunk base used may be changed at the start of the program. I have set it to (3<<18), i.e. the first chunk in range reserved for users—you may change it be what you like within this range (though it must be a multiple of 64), but make sure you don't use the same chunk base for more than one module.

```
10 REM >Example8
20 REM
30 REM ImageFSFix Source + SWI
   control
```

```
40 REM (C) 1996 Mark Smith
50 REM
60 DIM space% 1024
70 GBPVBvector=&C
80 swichunkbase=(3<<18)
90 final=0:service=0:help=0:table=0
100 FOR A%=4 TO 6 STEP 2
110 P%=0
120 O%=space%
130 [OPT A%
140 \—————
150 EQU D 0
160 EQU D init
170 EQU D final
180 EQU D service
190 EQU D title
200 EQU D help
210 EQU D table
220 EQU D swichunkbase
230 EQU D swihandler
240 EQU D switable
250 \—————
260 .table
270 EQU S
   'ImageFSFix_On'+CHR$0
280 ALIGN
290 EQU D init
300 EQU D 0
310 EQU D OnSyntax
320 EQU D OnHelp
330 \—————
340 EQU S
   'ImageFSFix_Off'+CHR$0
```



```

350 ALIGN
360 EQUd final
370 EQUd 0
380 EQUd OffSyntax
390 EQUd OffHelp
400 EQUd 0
410 \—————
420 .switable
430 EQUs ‘ImageFSFix’
440 EQUb 0
450 EQUs ‘Off’
460 EQUb 0
470 EQUs ‘On’
480 EQUb 0
490 EQUb 0
500 \—————
510 .OnHelp EQUs
‘*ImageFSFix_On allows image
files whose names have a ! prefix to
appear as applications in Filer
Windows’+CHR$13
520 .OnSyntax EQUs ‘Syntax:
*ImageFSFix_On’+CHR$0
530 .OffHelp EQUs
‘*ImageFSFix_Off causes image
files whose names have a ! prefix to
appear as ordinary images in Filer
Windows’+CHR$13
540 .OffSyntax EQUs ‘Syntax:
*ImageFSFix_Off’+CHR$0
550 \—————
560 .title EQUs
‘ImageFSFix’+CHR$0

```

```

570 .help EQUs
‘ImageFSFix’+CHR$9+’0.40 (28
Dec 1996) SA Aware’+CHR$0
580 ALIGN
590 \—————
600 .service
610 TEQ R1,#&27:MOVNES
PC,R14
620 \ Check for Service_Reset -
Reclaim GBPbV
630 \—————
640 .init STMFD
R13!,{R0-R2,R14}
650 \ Stack registers (in case of
service call / SWI entry) & return
address
660 MOV R2,#0
670 ADR R1,entryGBPb
680 MOV R0,#GBPbvector
690 SWI ‘XOS_Claim’
700 \ Claim FSControlV
710 MOVVC R0,#1:MOVVS R0,#0
720 STR R0,[R12]
730 \ Set private word to indicate
whether active
740 LDMFD R13!,{R0-R2,PC}
750 \ Restore registers & return
760 \—————
770 .final STMFD
R13!,{R0-R2,R14}
780 \ Stack registers (in case of SWI
entry) & return address
790 MOV R2,#0

```

800 ADR R1,entryGBPB	1090 EQU B 0
810 MOV R0,#GBPBvector	1100 ALIGN
820 SWI "XOS_Release"	1110 \—————
830 \ Release GBPB	1120 .entryGBPB
840 MOV R0,#0	1130 TEQ R0,#10:TEQNE
850 STR R0,[R12]	R0,#11:TEQNE R0,#12:MOVNE
860 \ Set not active	PC,R14
870 LDMFD R13!,{R0-R2,PC}^	1140 \ If not OS_GBPB 10, 11 or 12
880 \ Restore flags (to mask any	then pass on
error) and return	1150 STMFD R13!,{PC}
890 \—————	1160 \ Stack address to return to
900 .swihandler	after running previous vector
910 CMP	claimants
R11,#(EndOfBranchTable-BranchTa	1170 MOV PC,R14
ble)/4	1180 \ Call Fileswitch routine
920 ADDLO PC,PC,R11,LSL#2	1190 MOV R0,R0
930 B ukswi	1200 \ NOOP to support store
940 .BranchTable	PC+12 (ARM v3) and PC+8 (ARM
950 B final	v4) behaviour
960 B init	1210 LDMVSFD R13!,{PC}
970 .EndOfBranchTable	1220 \ Return any errors
980 \—————	1230 TEQ R3,#0:LDMEQFD
990 .ukswi STMFD R13!,{R14}	R13!,{PC}
1000 ADR R0,ukswitoken	1240 \ Dont bother to do anything if
1010 MOV R1,#0	there are no objects read
1020 MOV R2,#0	1250 STMFD R13!,{R0-R4}
1030 ADR R4,title	1260 \ Stack registers
1040 SWI	1270 MOV R4,#20
"XMessageTrans_ErrorLookup"	1280 TEQ R0,#11:MOVEQ R4,#29
1050 LDMFD R13!,{PC}	1290 TEQ R0,#12:MOVEQ R4,#24
1060 .ukswitoken	1300 \ Offset from start of entry to
1070 EQU D &1E6	leafname in R4
1080 EQU S "BadSWI"	1310 MOV R1,#2

1320 \ Put directory type in R1	1470 ADD R2,R2,R4
1330 \—————	1480 \ Point R2 to leaf
1340 .GBPBloop	1490 \—————
1350 LDRB R0,[R2,R4]	1500 .findleafend
1360 \ Get first letter of leaf	1510 LDRB R0,[R2],#1:TEQ
1370 TEQ R0,#ASC"! ”	R0,#0:BNE findleafend
1380 \ Is it a ‘!’ ?	1520 \ Find end of leafname
1390 LDREQ R0,[R2,#16]	1530 \—————
1400 \ If so, get object type	1540 ADD R2,R2,#3:BIC R2,R2,#3
1410 TEQEQ R0,#3	1550 \ Word Align
1420 \ Is it object type 3?	1560 B GBPBloop
1430 STREQ R1,[R2,#16]	1570 \ Loop back to check the next
1440 \ If so change it to object type	entry
2	1580 \—————
1450 SUBS R3,R3,#1:LDMEQFD	1590]:NEXT
R13!,{R0-R4,PC}	1600 OSCLI'Save ImageFSFix
1460 \ Return if there are no more	“+STR\$~space%+”“+STR\$~O%
objects to check	1610 *SetType ImageFSFix Module
	1620 *RMLoad ImageFSFix

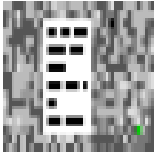
The ARM Club

OPEN DAY & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The ARM Club's next Open Day is being held from 10am on
Saturday 1st March 1997 at Merton Court School,
38 Knoll Road, Sidcup, Kent.

It will be followed at 4pm by the Club's Annual General Meeting.
All Club members are welcome to attend.

The Cherisha Collection



The first of the three is a useful little prog called 'BoardMenu'. I have owned Acorn machines for six years now but have seldom used the Pinboard facility but since using BoardMenu I have found out how useful the Pinboard can be.

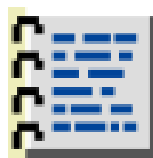
difficult to click on. You can even remove the icons from the Pinboard and still have the alphabetical list to run progs or open the files.

The instructions I found easy to follow and the program simple to use. For anyone who uses the Pinboard

One of the smaller companies in the Acorn market, Cherisha Software has just issued a new collection of applications. Geoff Lane has been using three of them.

When installed on the icon bar pressing the menu button over the icon will give you four options with 'Restore' greyed out initially. You then need to drop a previously saved Pinboard icon onto the BoardMenu icon. From the menu, clicking on 'Restore' will create the Pinboard as it was when saved and sliding across the 'List' option will give you a list of the Pinboard items in alphabetical order. Any of the listed programs or files can be run or opened from the alphabetical list. This is extremely useful if there are a number of icons on the Pinboard and you have a few windows open, making some icons

regularly I feel that the £4 cost is a small price to pay for a program that could be put to good use.



The second of the three is a database program named 'Acquaint', this utility will store names, addresses, phone and fax numbers of acquaintances and through a simple search procedure save the results back to a text file with the text file automatically named after the search parameters.

Once again it is installed onto the icon bar whereupon the menu button will

present you with five options of which two are obvious. Sliding across the 'Search' option will open a window, within which you enter the text or numbers to be searched for. The on/off buttons for 'Name, Address, Phone and Fax' will speed the search up if you eventually end up with a LARGE database of acquaintances as you can restrict it to certain fields. The results of your search will end up in a text file within the 'Searches' directory inside the application. This directory can be accessed by clicking on the 'Searches' option from the menu.

Gripes

The third option from the menu is 'Source' and this is one of my gripes with the program. Source opens a Database text file from within the application. You are presented with Cherisha's data and what can best be described as a 'template' for further data. The data *must* follow the format shown and consist of five lines with the fifth line consisting of dashes. The 'Template' or 'example' must *not* be deleted otherwise the program returns an error message and closes Acquaint. My daughter accidentally overwrote the 'Example' data. No warnings

were given by the program but from then on it would not work until I restored the 'Example' at the end of the 'Source' file.

Cumbersome

The instructions are quite easy to understand but for a commercial program the method of entering new data is cumbersome and prone to error which, to a person not too familiar with programming, could render the program unusable. The search parameters in my opinion need to be improved. There should be a facility for including a 'keyword' within the data such as 'Family, ARM Club, school, Christmas Cards' etc. so that the search can produce a useful list. Also I feel the address line should be able to be split into lines, as is natural. If there was not such a strict requirement for everything to be on one line we could also enter email addresses.

As previously mentioned, I think that with a few minor improvements this could be an extremely useful program but, at a cost of £8 and with the present method of entering data, I would not buy it.

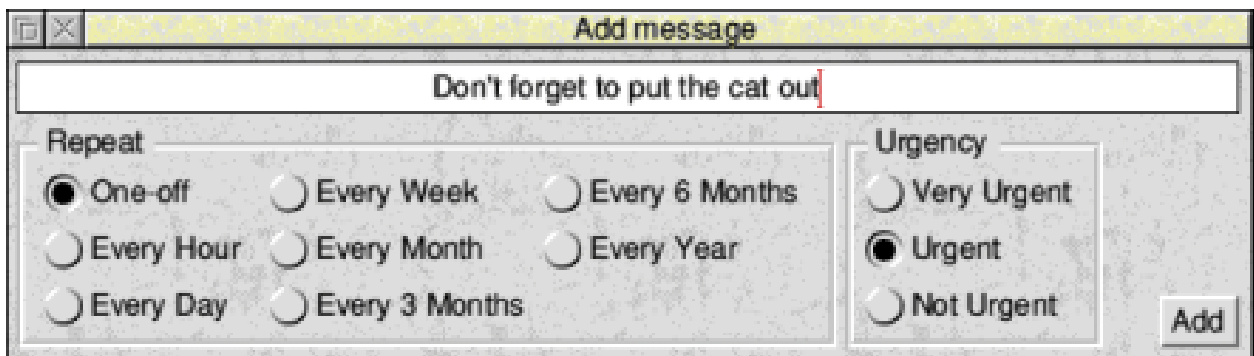


The third of the trio is a reminder type program called, strangely enough, 'RemindMe'. It may be the state of my brain over the Christmas period but I have been finding it hard to understand what the messages that can be displayed are all about.

To be fair, Cherisha Software claim this to be complementary to and not instead of Acorn's Alarm and more suitable to 'Don't forget to put the cat

Frequency and urgency

Here's where my problem started; entering the text is simple enough but then the radio icons give options of frequency and urgency. With a minimum frequency of one hour how do you check the program is working all right or get used to it by putting on a few test messages? I found myself looking at my watch for the hour to be up and then if I was doing something wondering what, if anything, I had missed. I tended to lose interest



out' rather than 'January 13th, job interview with MicroSoft' (*only joking*). Once again, it installs on the icon bar but, other than for info or to quit, the menu button doesn't do anything. To get it going click on the icon with the 'Select' mouse button to open a window with five grey bars for your message displays. Click on the icon with 'Adjust' and a window opens to produce your message.

because I was unable to check how it was working.

The 'Urgency' buttons were also a mystery to me. I know they are something to do with how the messages are displayed but, with having to wait an hour to find out what, I never did discover.

When the messages were up on the

display screen clicking on a message with the 'Shift' key held down produced an 'Amend' window and clicking on a message with the 'Shift and Ctrl' held down deleted a message.

The instructions I found relatively simple to understand. What the program was supposed to do I found complicated and not being able to check the working of the program I found frustrating.

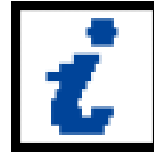
Probably a useful program if time is spent understanding it. At £8 it is not very expensive but remember that there is loads of FREE and excellent public domain stuff out there so, if you ARE going to pay for a program then that 'little extra' is expected.

Summary

To summarise: I thought BoardMenu was good value and useful; Acquaint has got potential but needs minor improvements, and RemindMe was frustrating.

Editor's note

Two other utilities were issued by Cherisha at the same time:



AppByType can identify about 500 different file types from data files dragged onto it. It will also show the name of the application which created it and the publisher. Data upgrades are to be provided free of charge.



CheckCSV, as its name suggest, will check comma separated value files for errors, such as an odd number of quotation marks or the wrong number of fields in a record or blank lines within the file.

BoardMenu

Price: £4 Site licence: £12

Acquaint

Price: £8 Site licence: £24

RemindMe

Price: £15 Site licence: £45

AppByType

Price: £15 Site licence: £45

CheckCSV

Price: £3 Site licence: £9

(No VAT is payable on any product)

Supplier: Cherisha Software

16 Woodside Drive, Wilmington,
Dartford, Kent, DA2 7NG

Tel: 01322 553953

Fax: 01322 400883

Email: rebecca@katech.zynet.co.uk

VTi Voice Mail



The pace of development in modem technology appears relentless. When I bought my first modem, a 1200 bits per second (bps) model, it cost a fortune and was considered state-of-the-art!

special software, it is possible to use the modem as a sophisticated telephone answering machine, offering many of the facilities provided by high-tech voicemail systems you sometimes get when calling mobile or business telephones.

Simon Burrows has been talking to his new modem and hearing voices.

My latest acquisition is a US Robotics Sportster Voice modem, capable of connecting at 33,600bps (far more once data compression is taken into account) as well as operating as a fax and telephone answering machine.

As modems have become mass-market consumer products, thanks mainly to the popularity of the Internet, manufacturers have been fighting to add new functionality to their modems. This has included the fax capability, and more recently voice facilities as well.

I could bore you with lots of technical detail about how voice modems operate, but I won't. Basically, with

Several competing standards have emerged for the commands needed to control the voice facilities of modems. The best known are those implemented by Rockwell, who manufacture the main chips in many different brands of modem, and US Robotics who use their own standard in the Sportster modem range.

What are the advantages of using a voice modem over a traditional answering machine? Well, firstly all of the recorded messages are stored digitally on computer disc rather than a conventional tape. This means the number of messages that can be stored and their length is limited only by the free space on your hard disc.

Secondly, given appropriate software, a voicemail system can be far-more sophisticated than a simple answering machine, for example offering different mailboxes for different people in which their messages can be stored using a tone-generating telephone.

All modems nowadays seem to come with a bundle of discs and CD-ROMs, many of which never seem to get used. For voice modems, one of these discs will be the PC software necessary to use the voice facilities of the modem. However this isn't much use for loyal Acorn users.

Software

There are currently two options for Acorn users wishing to use their voice modems as telephone answering machines. Firstly, David Pilling's well-known ArcFax software contains fairly basic support for a number of different voice modem protocols.

VTi has recently released its own Voicemail package called simply "VoiceMail" which offers a range of voice facilities but only for the US Robotics Sportster Vi and Voice

modems. Older Sportster modems do not have any voice facilities.

Fortunately for VTi, the Sportster Vi and Voice modems have proved extremely popular and are the best-selling personal high-speed modems.

Installing

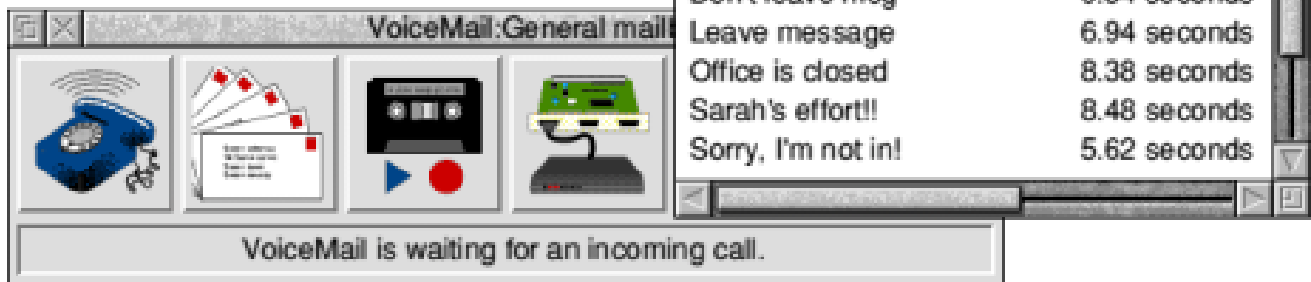
VTi's VoiceMail package is fairly minimal, consisting of a floppy disc containing the software and a 16-page laser-printed manual. Installing the software is easy using its installation program which asks for your name and embeds this into the application.

During the installation process, your modem can be automatically detected and the software configured to use it.

Also included is a copy of the !SerialDev application, developed by Hugo Fiennes, which allows a whole range of serial devices to be used with the package.

For example, the modem can be connected to the computer's internal serial port, an Atomwide Serial Port card or an Intelligent Interfaces High Speed serial card.

The list of available greetings messages.



Once loaded onto the iconbar, VoiceMail opens its main window which currently gives a choice of four options: answering preferences, connection preferences, greetings messages and recorded messages.

Also displayed is a handy indicator informing you that VoiceMail is waiting for an incoming telephone call and telling you if any messages have been received.

Greetings messages

Two different greetings messages can be selected to be played to incoming callers—one for when messages can be left by the caller, and one for times when no message can be left (either because there is no disc space left, or else the owner would prefer not to receive voice messages).

Recording and playing back messages is surprisingly simple. The

Sportster modems conveniently contain a hidden microphone which can be used to record them.

External loudspeakers

Messages can be played back through the computer's loudspeaker or the modem's. External loudspeakers can be plugged into either the computer or modem (not for the Vi model).

When the first voice modems came out, many were criticised for the poor quality of the sound recording, mainly due to the relatively low sampling rate used.

However, I have not had any problems with my Sportster Voice modem. Messages can sometimes sound a little odd, but are always recognisable.

When recording greetings messages, it is often worth recording the same

message several times and selecting the version which sounds best. A beep is automatically added to the greetings message when the caller is able to leave a voice message.

User friendly

VoiceMail is quite a simple package to operate and I have found it very user-friendly. The manual is adequate and covers the available facilities in sufficient detail to make full use of the package.

On a couple of occasions it has crashed with a 'Postmortem' error box, however this happened when using the installation disc rather than in normal operation.

Future options

There are two greyed out options, these are support for multiple mailboxes and external events. According to VTi, they are to be included in future versions.

Many users owning a voice-capable fax modem will want to use it for receiving faxes as well as voice messages. This is possible using Voicemail with VTi's new fax software, available separately.

VoiceMail cannot currently be used at the same time as David Pilling's ArcFax, however this includes its own basic voicemail facilities so should not be a great problem.

VoiceMail performs its stated task admirably. It is not as sophisticated as some of the PC voicemail packages available, but allows owners of Sportster Vi and Voice modems to set up an effective but simple voicemail system.

I hope that VTi will keep to their promise to develop this software in the future. It is effective and good value for money if you have a need for a telephone answering service (and is free to Argonet subscribers).

VoiceMail

Price: £15 +VAT (Free to Argonet Internet subscribers)

Supplier: VTi

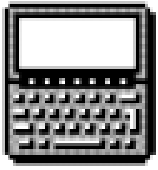
7 Dukes Court, Chichester,
West Sussex, PO19 2FX

Tel: 01243 815815

Fax: 01243 531196

Email: info@argonet.co.uk

The New Psions



As many of you know, Psion have just released two new models. The Psion 3c is an improved version of the 3a that we know as the Pocket Book II. The 3c is based strongly around the 3a, but with a slightly re-

with compatible printers and mobile phones. The 3c is available for £340 (1MB) and £400 (2MB)

The other new machine, the Siena, has more in common with traditional organisers than Psion's traditional

Toby Smith demonstrates once again that small can be wonderful in the computing world.

styled case with a more rubbery feel—a bit like putting your existing Pocket Book in a latex glove. The internal applications are enhanced, as you would expect. A new file management program is included, as is a note-taking application. The biggest change is in the communications area. Gone is the A-Link cable; it is replaced by a new mini serial port on the side, of the style used in many mobile phones. This new port will work at 57,6000bps, a speed that makes even Internet Access plausible. In fact, Psion are already designing email and web software. The 3c also had an infra-red port (IrDA compliant) which can be used to communicate

palmtops. In a smaller case, it is conveniently shaped for a shirt pocket. It contains a much smaller, square screen, and a full QWERTY keyboard. The machine comes with both the serial and IrDA ports mentioned above and an application suite similar to the original series 3 (Pocket Book 1)—far more than its rivals in the organiser market. The Siena costs £170 for the 512KB version, and £230 for the 1MB. Psion plan to continue selling and producing 3c models for the foreseeable future.

But what of Acorn versions of these new machines? The Pocket Book range has been well received in many

Lloyds	Cheque M	Save M	Loans - Alli	Global
Date	Description	Amount in £		Balance
01-12-96	Opening balance	92.19		92.19✓
08-12-96	Sainsbury's Shopping	-29.38		62.81
14-12-96	Petrol	-10.00		52.81
15-12-96	Homebase	-6.78		46.03
17-12-96	Cash ATM	-40.00		6.03

areas, and Xemplar aim to produce a 3c-based machine with certain educational modifications during the first quarter of 1997 —it is also true that some Acorn staff were carrying 3c models at the Acorn World show —and work on a 3c version of PocketFS has started. No definite plans exist to use the Siena, but a feasibility study is planned. Considering the lower cost of the baby machine, it might well suit schools well, on their limited budgets.

Pocket Books in Rocket Ships

Portable fanatics will have been pleased to see a Pocket Book docking bay included in the current incarnation of the ART rocket-ship Risc PC, alongside such other things as remote controlled Kitchen Sinks, Pizza ovens etc. Based round a 3½in slot, the dock is a fairly simple hole, with the A-Link cable in the appropriate place to get connected as

the machine is pushed in!

Round the PD Library: DPBank

DPBank is a wonderful shareware utility for managing your personal bank accounts. Obviously it allows for all the normal banking actions: payments (either by direct debit or cheque), receipts and standing orders and it also has facilities for several linked accounts, between which you can transfer money. Transactions can easily be edited, and marked as reconciled (processed fully by your bank). They can also be deleted (when you get your statement for example).

International

For the international traveller, any account can be specified as being in another currency. Using a purpose-built package for this kind of task has advantages over simply listing the transactions in a spreadsheet —the

Lloyds	Cheque M	Save M	Loans - Alli	Global
Enter transaction details				
•Description:	Monthly Intrest			
•Auto description:	Intrest (Gross)			
•Amount:	1.23			
•Transaction type:	credit			
•Currency:	£			
•Date:	08/12/1996			
17-12-96 Cash ATM			-40.00	6.03

biggest one being the ‘special’ bits, like standing orders, and little things, like automatically ordering the transactions by date. I’ve personally been using this application for quite some time and it is one of the things that make my Pocket Book indispensable. It knows more about my inevitable overdraft than I do.

Readers’ Lives

I’ve had a wonderful letter from one of our members, telling of his moderately exotic use of Pocket Book technology. He is a sheep farmer and keeps records of his several hundred sheep, their offspring and so on. Most of this data is stored in a database on his Risc PC but updates are entered — in the field — onto a Pocket Book II, using the sheep’s unique numbers to identify the records. At the end of the day, the Pocket Book data can be uploaded and merged with the main database.

Six months in a pond

Another member tells of recovering his Psion after its theft. The machine had been in a bum-bag, along with a wallet and so on. The thieves had taken the money but thrown the bum-bag, complete with Psion, into a nearby pond. Several months later, a boy retrieved the bag while fishing, and the police returned the Psion to its owner. Despite having run down the batteries, the machine worked perfectly well after drying out, after about six months in a pond. Amazing ruggedness!

That’s about all for this time folks. Keep the stories and questions rolling in and I’ll try to field them all!

Send those Pocket Book tales or queries to Toby at the Club address, or by email to pbcc@armclub.org.uk

Well I Never Knew...

about colour palettes, Obey files and screen blanking

Hello folks, with spring approaching fast it is time once again for another page within the incredibly exciting Eureka magazine of 'Well, I never knew it did that'. This is the page of fascinating facts about your Acorn computer,

a sprite file duplicate of the original but with a 16 or 256 colour palette (depending on the selected mode). The same method can naturally be used to convert Draw files to Paint files and thereby utilise Paints different colouring facilities.

Once again Geoff Lane passes on some of those useful, simple when you know, hints and tips that you may wish someone had told you about long ago.

hints, tips, useful functions, anything that may be of interest to us Acorn users.

Bill Hensman sent in an extremely useful tip.

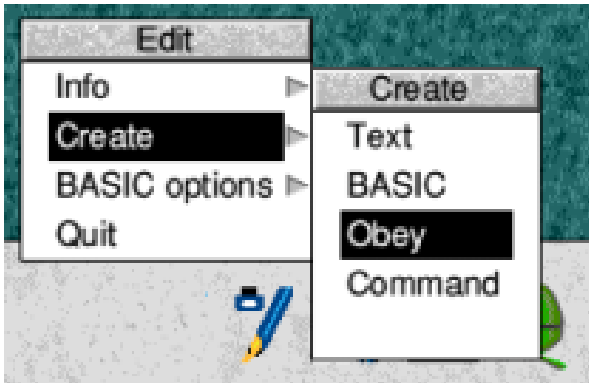
Bill mentions that much PD ClipArt is in black and white and only shows the two colours in the palette. To enable you to use more colours open your black and white image and then load up Paint. Press the middle mouse button (menu) over the Paint icon and select the 'snapshot' option. Then, using the left mouse button (select), create a box around the original black and white image and the result will be

Very handy that one Bill, last year I acquired some black and white Christmas ClipArt, at least this year I can add some colour to them.

Our second useful tip comes from none other than our own editor, Peter Jennings.

Peter mentions that with database programs it is often useful to keep data files within the application's directory, this helps to keep things neat and tidy.

By creating a simple Obey file you can run the application and open its directory automatically. To do this



open Edit, press the middle mouse button (menu) over the Edit icon, slide the mouse pointer along the Create option and then click on Obey; this will open an Edit window. Treat this like a text window and then type two lines, using Return after the first, substituting the name and directory of your application for '\$.!MyApp':

```
Desktop Run $.!MyApp  
Filer_OpenDir $.!MyApp
```

Save the Obey file then just double click on it to run your application and open its directory at the same time.

You can, of course, add a few extra lines and run more applications and open further directories just by repeating the instructions.

A very useful and simple hint, nice one Peter.

I would like to remind those who

don't use it to consider the automatic screen blanking option. Apparently, if a static image is left on the monitor for long periods it can 'burn' the image into the screen and result in a ghosting effect. If you load the Configure application from the Apps directory, open the configure window and click on Screen; from here you have the option to set the 'Blank delay'. I personally set mine quite low to two minutes, reason being that if I'm using the computer I feel I will surely use either the mouse or one of the keys within this time. If the screen blanks as soon as you use the mouse or keys it will burst back into life anyway. I'm not sure of the dangers of the image 'burning' into the screen, perhaps some members have experienced it, if so, let me know.

Finally folks, just the normal reminder. This is your page, without your tips it cannot continue so please, however obvious it may appear to you, send it in. The best ones are the simple ones.

Send your tips to Geoff Lane at the Club's Freepost address or email to eureka@armclub.org.uk

Renewing Your Membership

THE

**ARM
CLUB**

I have had a lot of letters recently about renewal dates, and their accuracy.

The membership expiry date given on your card is actually only a guide — the system really works on issues of

for the magazine mailings, but also includes information about your areas of interest (the tick boxes on the membership & renewals forms) and the computer equipment you own.

*All you need to know about keeping in the Club, from
Membership Secretary Toby Smith.*

the magazine, rather than a calendar date. This ensures that you receive your four copies of the magazine during the year, and avoids any complicated date range searching.

At the end of your subscription you should receive a renewal form along with your last copy of the magazine. Please fill this in, as it allows us to check your interests and machine specification, in order to maintain as accurate a view of the equipment and areas of interest of the membership as possible.

The Club stores information about all our members in a large database. This is mainly used to provide address lists

This information is used to generate statistics about our membership and their interests, so that we can tailor the contents of the magazine or newsletter, pick suitable training days, choose ‘focuses’ for Open Days and so on.

Risc PC

The information about machines also allows us to gauge at what level to aim most of the articles. Over half the membership have Risc PC machines, so we can concentrate a lot of our efforts on Risc PC related areas, notably in producing Game On! and StrongGuard!.

The database information is also

useful for specific planning questions. When the idea of making the Eureka cover disc High Density was considered, the database was able to tell us what proportion of the membership couldn't read High Density.

Your data is not available to any external organisation, and never will be. Members of the Club may ask for regional contact lists (usually done by county) on which your name, address and interests only will appear. You will not be included on such lists if you indicated such on your membership form.

Change Of Address

This is going to sound silly, but if you move house, kindly inform the club in writing. Unfortunately our telepathy isn't that good, and we have no way of knowing you've moved without being told. I have had a couple of people write in recently complaining about not receiving their magazine, and giving a changed address at the top of the letter!

Please note that you will not receive acknowledgment of a letter about moving house (although people who email may get a confirmation).

Promises, promises...

...and why we haven't kept one

In the last two issues of Eureka we have announced that the next one would contain a review of Top Model, the three dimensional modelling program. So where is it? Sorry, but the review still hasn't been written.

The publishers have been having problems; first with the security system and then with StrongARM compatibility and at the time of writing we are still awaiting a workable upgrade from them.

Watch for it in the next issue?

Possibly, but we aren't making any promises this time.

BETT'97

Xemplar and rivals show their wares in the education marketplace



I visited the BETT show at Olympia on Friday 10th January. Entering by a side door the first person I bumped into was my old friend Nick

I next visited a long-standing friend, Neil Souch, of 4mation. There have been various rumours flying round about the health of 4mation and I am glad to report that none of them are true. As well as a new version of their graphics package, Vector, the

Teacher Chris Price goes visiting old friends and sees what's new at the big education show.

Sanham, of ASPEX software. He was showing two new versions of their successful SPEX software —SPEX for early years and SPEX in French. Both looked to be good and I was personally glad that they have, at long last, produced an early years version of this software.

On to LDA Multimedia, who were showing various products including their 'Pondwatch' data handling package and 'Micropedia' as well as a new 'Eye for Spelling' program. The former looked to be a good data handling package but I was left wondering how many spelling programs the world really needs.

company has finally put out its new early years program Patch the Puppy which I saw previewed at last year's BETT. It's available only on CD which is a shame but it should sell all the same.

Floppy disk based products include: Find It, Fix It, a program designed to show children how to identify hazards in the home and how to deal with them appropriately.

Superspell, another spelling program. This looks to have some of the old 4mation magic on it but, again, I find myself asking, 'Does the world really need anothe spelling program?'

The Evacuees is a National Curriculum Key Stage 2 based adventure about several children being evacuated to the country from the town. This will be a welcome relief/support to the good, but now well-worn 'Landmarks —WW2' program still being used in many schools.

Aerial photographs

On to another company called Photoair that I had never seen before. They supply aerial photographs (which looked most impressive) and use them to build up what they referred to as 'Geography resource packs'. It seemed a bit woolly to me —perhaps a company to watch in the future?

On to Appian Way who were demonstrating their primary data handling products — 'FindIt' and '1stFindIt' (its primary equivalent). I must confess not to be a fan of the company's work but these two products did grab my attention.



*FindIt from Appian
Way*

Valiant —of Roamer fame —have now added an interface so that Roamer can be now be used from a computer as a simple programming tool. This is, presumably, for KS2.

On to TechSoft where I nearly had a row! The bloke on the stand happily demonstrated the tools but said that they didn't feel there was enough confidence in the Acorn world for them to produce the drivers. Cheek!

I then sought out Ian Goodall of Creative Curriculum Software, who was showing off his Tanzania CD — a very good product indeed, which is now enhanced by a 52 minute video. He was also demonstrating some programs for all ages — 'Magic Maths' — mental arithmetic for

children five-50 — a product called TeamWorks, described as film making software for children and adults which Ian obviously finds an exciting project. There is also a New Report Writer — a teacher's reporting system which will, apparently, link in to any WP system on the Acorn range.

Q-Tec were demonstrating their ARM switch —a software interface which will allow you to switch processors from the front end. EESOX had on show a double speed parallel port and an eight speed IDE CD. Twelve speed is available also and 16 speed is promised soon.

Hampshire Microtechnology have suffered budget cuts and were, therefore, only marketing a book which is a summary of meetings and recommendations they have made through the years —cost £10.

Lindis were demonstrating their 'Buttons' program — a front end loader program for Acorn machines. It allows you to have some programs preselected and also acts as a simple form of software protection.

Kudlian Software were demonstrating a program called 'Terry the Turtle' —a KS1 turtling program which looked quite interesting

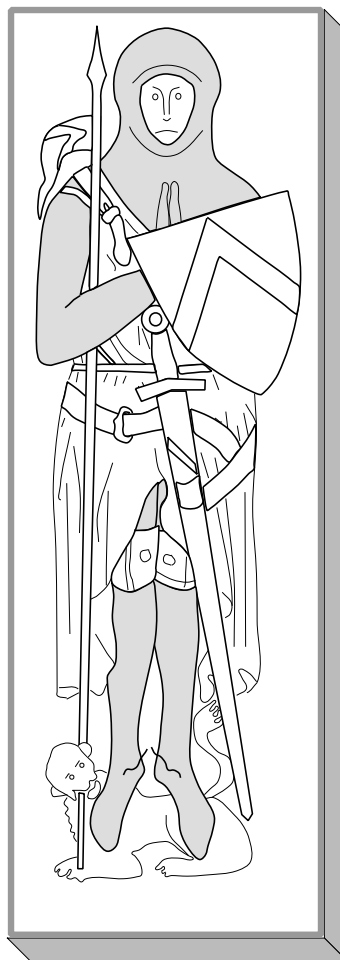
Simtec were showing off their new servers —they have a site server, file server, print server and a web server all of which seemed to be decent products.

Toybox

Ah, Sherston! I didn't get to meet my old mate James Bayliss, but I did get to play with the new KS1 software 'Tizzy's Toybox'. This is the stuff for the troops. I've ordered mine already!! They were also demonstrating the latest Oxford Reading Tree releases which are well up to scratch.

Beebug were demonstrating their OCR package Sleuth3.

Cumana had on show the Parallel Proteus Combined Optical and CD Drive with a SCSI 2 card. This now retails at £149 and will stay at this price.



Knight in armour, Sir John Daubernoun, from CSH's King Arthur CD-ROM.

King Arthur

Cambridgeshire Software House had a new CD based on the legend of King Arthur and another junior one called Cromwell the Firefighter. Disc based products were Spell with Sarah and Sam and Keyboard (which looks like a rather colorful version of TypeTutor.)

Clares were marketing WimpBasic and an improved version of Rhapsody World. Canon had taken quite a big stand and were demonstrating their new PhotoRealism pack. The price of this is not yet announced but it comprises an ink cartridge and a pack of special paper which allows the user to produce very high definition pictures. They also had on show the Canon Powershot 600 with its docking station. This allows you to download pictures direct to your machine and retails at £799.

Acorn

At the Xemplar stand, Acorn were showing off the EMAT 300 —a 4kg laptop and Junior Toolbox — a product comprising a whole bunch of CDs and discs which is, I would suggest, trying to combat the product that RM already have in the market.

Nearing the end now, I went on to Storm who had on show two of their 'Smudge' products — 'Smudge punctuates' and 'Smudge discovers the world' — KS1 geography based products.

Informed choice

Finally, a visit to the Parents' Information Network, who have set up an organisation to help parents cut through the jargon and rubbish in order to help make an informed choice when buying a computer.

So why don't they recommend Acorns??

All in all an enjoyable day.

Dates for your diary

The Education Show is at the NEC in Birmingham 6-8 March 1997.

BETT'98 will be held at Olympia from 14 to 17 January 1998.

Contact for both shows:

EMAP Education

PO Box 231A

Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 4RJ

Tickets Tel: 0181 984 7711

ANT Internet Suite II



Internet software is renowned for being difficult to set up and a significant proportion of calls to the Club's technical help line relate to problems in getting started on the Internet.

The Suite is supplied on two high-density discs in a professional looking A5 wallet with a spiral bound manual.

Before installing the Suite, there are a few prerequisites. These are a modem (as fast as you can afford, certainly no

Simon Burrows tries his hand with the well-known commercial Internet package from specialist networking company ANT.

Traditionally on Acorn machines, people have relied on public domain and freeware applications to get going, picking up programs from various sources and bolting them together, a nightmare for the user.

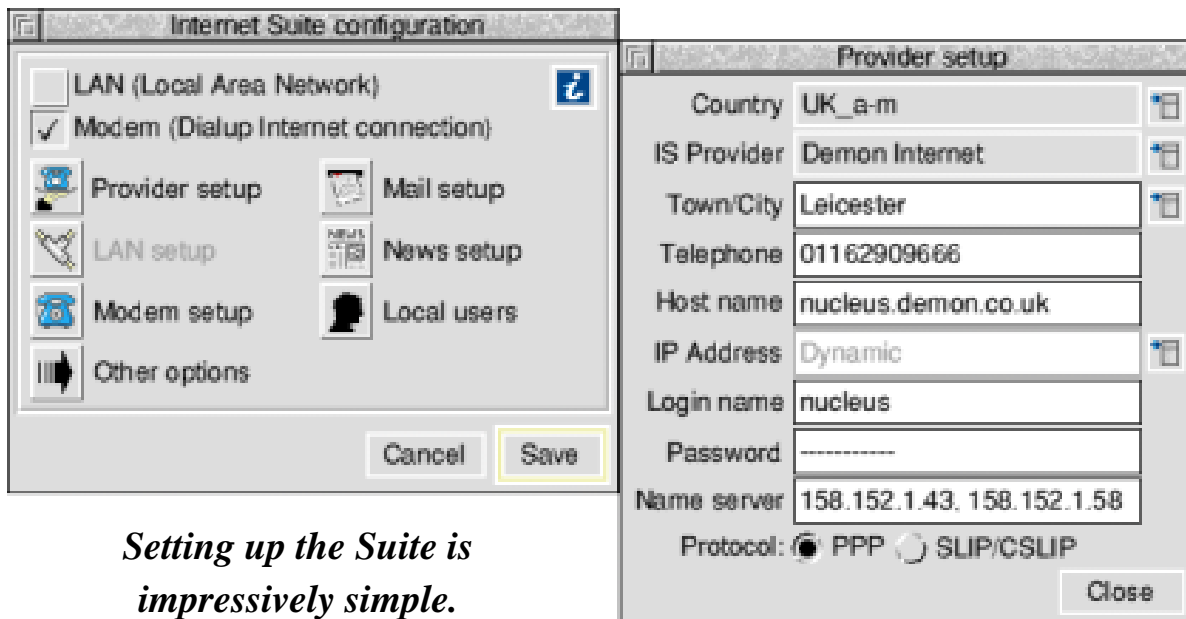
slower than V32bis, 14,400bps), a suitable lead for connecting it to your computer, a telephone socket and a subscription to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) such as PIPEX, Argonet, Demon or Zynet.

As a result of this, there are now commercial packages intended to remove the pain.

Alternatively, the ANT Internet Suite can be used over Ethernet. I have not been able to test this but it requires a suitable Ethernet card and connection to a network with Internet gateway.

Among them is the Internet Suite from ANT, which specialises in networking and has spent a lot of time and money developing this package. As you will see, it has become my preferred Internet access package but not without a few reservations.

Installing the Suite is very straightforward, certainly the easiest installation I have encountered of any Internet package on any computer platform. Installation scripts are



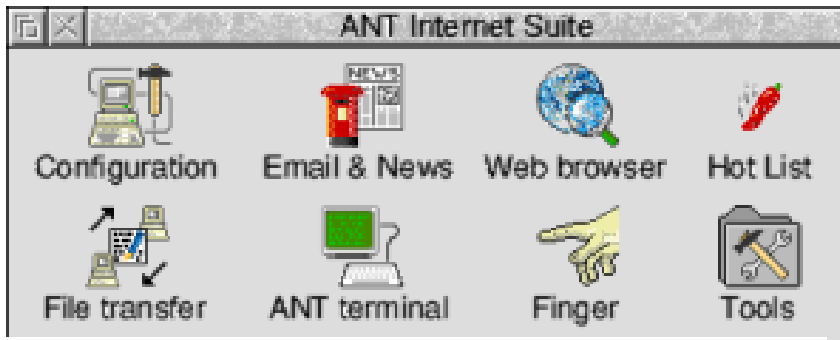
Setting up the Suite is impressively simple.

included for a wide range of ISPs taking all the hassle out of making your first connection. Don't worry if your ISP doesn't have a script, the configuration options are easy to change and ANT offers technical support over the telephone.

An application called !SerTest is provided to check that you have a good modem connection and to tell you the fastest speed at which your system can reliably operate. The Suite is loaded simply by double-clicking on the application called !INetSuite. This installs an icon labelled Internet on the icon bar which gives access to the various tools as well as menu options to dial your ISP and open a log window of Internet activity (useful if you encounter problems).

Clicking on this icon bar icon opens a window, allowing access to the various tools and applications. All parts of the Suite can be loaded while your computer is off-line, ie not connected to the telephone line. This is important with parts such as Marcel, the Email and News reader, since it allows you to read and write messages without running up the phone bill. Other parts such as the FTP client are not really of any use unless connected to the Net.

Dialling your ISP is as simple as clicking on the Connect menu option. Normally you will then hear your modem dial and hopefully negotiate a connection with the modems at the other end, allowing data to flow to and from the Internet.



The front panel shows the main tools available.

has been directed into the version for traditional Acorn computers.

In use, Fresco serves its purpose well and supports a wide range

At every stage of the process, the Internet icon shows the status of your connection so you always know what is going on. If the ISP's telephone number is engaged, it will be redialled automatically.

Once your computer is connected to the Internet, there are a whole host of different things you can do. These are described in the following sections but it is important to remember that your computer is capable of carrying out numerous tasks at the same time: for example email and news messages can be downloaded at the same time as you browse the World Wide Web with Fresco.

World Wide Web – Fresco

Fresco is the name of ANT's web browser. A lot of development effort has gone into Fresco for use in the Acorn/Oracle Netstation, however it is not clear how much of that work

of functions. Compared with the leading PC web browsers, its functionality is limited but keeps being improved as new versions are released.

Fresco has the classic features of a web browser such as the button bar at the top of the window, URL line and status indicator across the bottom of the window (these are all optional and can be disabled).

Graphics images are displayed using progressive rendering, which means that they are displayed while the image is being downloaded with the quality of the picture gradually improving as data is received.

Fresco has a number of configuration windows including display options, colour choices, font choices, proxies, printing setup and files & cache configuration.

A contentious issue among Fresco users is that there is currently no support for the “frames” used by many WWW sites. These involve the window being split into several smaller frames which can be scrolled and updated independently of one another. Apparently this is due to limitations in Acorn’s window manager which are being resolved as quickly as possible. None of the Acorn browsers fully support frames.

One feature of Fresco which I dislike is that if you click on a link while another object is still being fetched, a window pops up asking if you wish to continue the existing fetch or else abandon it and start the new fetch.



The “hotlist” facility has been significantly improved in version two of the Suite. This allows you to build up a personal list of web pages and their addresses which you use frequently. These are now stored in a separate application to Fresco but which is fully integrated into it. Pages can be organised into groups and given meaningful text descriptions.

Overall, Fresco does its job but

without being as wonderful as you might expect from all of the hype caused by the Netstation.

Marcel — Email and News



Marcel is the integrated email and news package, and as such is probably the most important part of the Suite.

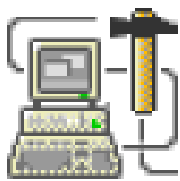
The email reader provides all the common features you would expect, including the ability to send and receive binary files (programs or data) in a variety of formats including MIME and uuencoded.

Email messages can be displayed in various different orders, and multiple folders can be set up to classify different types of message. A search tool allows messages to be searched for any specified text string. The address book facility is useful, allowing addresses to be selected from a list or short-cuts to be used.

Another useful option displays email and news messages without the lengthy header text which usually accompanies each one. This actually makes reading messages a lot quicker,

I guess since your mind doesn't have to skip over so much junk!

Recent versions of Marcel include support for multiple users and mailboxes, each with their own email address, and access to each user can be password protected. Each user can have different newsgroups.



The configuration options for newsreading are comprehensive.

A list of available newsgroups can be displayed, conveniently grouped into hierarchies. Menu options allow the FAQ and Charter for each newsgroup to be obtained instantly. Each newsgroup can have its own expiry period set, that is the time for which news messages are kept before being automatically deleted.

When I first used Marcel, I must admit that I wasn't impressed. I found the menu structure confusing and some of the facilities rather limited. However regular use and updated versions have changed my views, it is now my preferred email and news package.

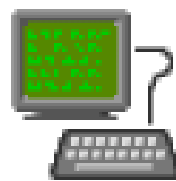
File transfer client — FTPclient

FTPclient, the FTP utility, allows files to be transferred to or from remote FTP sites on the Internet using the familiar RISC OS drag and drop.

Rather than presenting an unhelpful UNIX-style directory listing, files on FTP sites are shown as directories in a conventional RISC OS filer window. Multiple files can be transferred at once and the status of each transfer is shown in a RISC OS standard window.

Regularly accessed ftp sites can be stored using the same hotlink utility as web pages, and of course it is possible to access ftp sites using Fresco itself, but with less flexibility.

Telnet client — ANTterm



ANTterm is the telnet client provided for connecting to text-based services or remote computers on which you have an account.

Written by Hugo Fiennes, ANTterm provides VT220 and VT102 terminal emulation including a line-editor mode and various configurable

options, some of which are applied to individual logins and others globally.

Other tools

A whole host of other tools are supplied with the ANT Suite.



Finger: This allows you to query remote computers, find out who is logged onto them and

display details of individual users (assuming the remote system is configured to allow this).

Archie: This is a system which predates the World Wide Web, allowing popular FTP sites to be searched for particular files.

Host: This is a simple utility which gives the numeric IP address for any given host computer on the Internet.

Ping: Another simple utility which tests whether a remote computer on the Internet is responding to “ping” messages.

Ping+: A more sophisticated version of Ping, allowing you to specify the number of packets used and their size, the connection route and the amount

of information required.

Resolver: A powerful utility for finding out information about an Internet host, including its IP address, name server, mail exchanger and other bits of technical information.

Time: This sets your computer’s clock from accurate time sources.

Traceroute: A utility which shows the route taken by data packets travelling over the Internet between your computer and a remote host.

Upgrade: This application is used to install upgrades downloaded from the web site.

WhoIs: A rather old system for obtaining information about users on an Internet system.

Searchweb: A link to a page on ANT’s web site containing a list of Internet search facilities.

The Suite also includes a range of logging facilities, these are useful for resolving problems and also for keeping tabs on how the Suite is being used by other people. Parts can also

be disabled or customised, useful in a school environment.

Support and documentation

These are areas where the Internet Suite excels. The manual is professional and easy to use but still contains a lot of detail. It caters for both new Internet users and experienced people starting to use the ANT Suite. Acorn's interactive help system (!Help) is also supported.

ANT have a reputation for providing high quality technical support by email and telephone, and that has been my experience.

Conclusion

The Suite contains a comprehensive set of utilities for taking advantage of the Internet. Compiling a similar range of public domain utilities would be difficult, probably impossible.

Compared with the other commercial Internet packages for Acorn machines, the ANT Suite is more polished, is having more resources put into continued development and is generally more comprehensive.

I would recommend the ANT Internet

Suite, provided work is put into keeping Fresco up to date with recent web developments.

There have been problems with it in the past, and there are still some niggling little matters which need attention, but the Suite is undergoing continuous development and it has the substantial resources of ANT behind it.

Special offers

Special offers are often available at shows and open days and if you own a competitive Acorn package (not InterTalk!) it can at present be obtained for less than half price.

The ANT Internet Suite II

Price: £99 +VAT

Upgrade from release I £10 (inc)

Users of other Internet packages can get the Suite for £49 inc VAT.

Supplier: ANT Ltd

PO Box 300

Cambridge CB1 2EG

Tel: 01223 567808

Fax: 01223 567801

Email: sales@ant.co.uk

Chairman's Statement

So the new year is upon us and this usually denotes a time of change and this is no exception with the ARM Club. It has come to the time when I step down from the role of Chairperson. This is a role I have thoroughly enjoyed and I am handing

of my life (beyond the Club). The ARM Club will remain high in my thoughts and I will continue to support and promote the Club wherever possible. So I'll step off into the background and on occasions I'll be wheeled out to demonstrate what a

The ARM Club's Chairman, Steve Arnold, begins 1997 with a decision and an announcement. Modestly, he doesn't mention a promotion in his career.

over the reigns to a younger (more dedicated) person, Mark Smith.

wasted childhood does to you!!! So I'll see you at our open days.

Mark is a worthy replacement. He brings a wealth of experience to the role and it is my hope that, with everyone's support, he will direct the ARM Club to greater success.

Finally I would like to thank all the Committee for all their support and patience over the years. I wish them all continued success with the Club. In closing I'll finish with thanking you, the membership for making the Club one of the best user group around. No goodbyes, just a 'See ya' :-)

My decision has been a difficult one. I have felt for some time that I could not continue to commit the time or energy necessary to develop and grow the ARM Club in the way I had envisioned. I felt that I was no longer giving the focus the Club deserves or needs. This was further compounded by additional commitments in the rest

See ya too, Steve. And on behalf of the Committee and all Club members, thanks for all the dedication — and fun — you have put into the job. You were superb!

The New Chairman

So it's my turn to return the favour Mark so graciously dealt me in the last issue. Here is an insight into the famous 'Mark Smith.'

So who is he? Well in terms of The ARM Club, he is a long time working

Why so many different names?

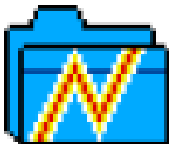
I'm sorry, I don't know! The only reason I can come up with is that it's one of those names you can misspell and come up with a perfect alternative. Mark Smith aka Mike Smith, Michael Smith, Mel Smith and

In this second of the series of revelations about prominent members of the Club, retiring Chairman Steve Arnold sneaks on his successor, Mark Smith.

member of The ARM Club. He has held various roles on the Club's Committee. He is the chairperson designate.

even Mike Cook! These are some of the names I have seen given as the author of !ArcFS in various magazines and on PD discs.

So why is Mark famous?



Mark Smith is the writer of one of the most widely distributed and prolifically used piece of software in the Acorn arena. You see, Mark is the author of none other than !ArcFS. This is used by a number of Acorn magazines as well of thousands of other computer owners. He is the co-writer of Game On! and the new StrongGuard! software (with Andi Flower).



What type of guy is he?

He is generally a quiet, thoughtful, dry-witted individual and all round clever clogs, a downright brainy type. However, he is humble about his abilities and never tries to be a smarty pants. He goes out of his way to try and explain things and hardly ever shows his frustration. (But sometimes there are people who don't know about his sense of direction and ask him where the local pub is!)

Bad habits?

Mark's method of finding his way when driving is to shout at the passenger and it's tough when he drives on his own. He seems to be a bad navigator, according to what I am told by



“An all round clever clogs”

people who travel with him. Unfortunately there are a few other habits which I can't go into, as I might be charged with libel. No only kidding!! (Phew!)

Mark is an all round nice guy. ('All round nice guy!' —that's shot his street credibility). He doesn't smoke, he doesn't get loud or make a fool of himself when he drinks, he has good values and treats people in a friendly manner —it makes you sick! :-)

Is Mark adventurous?

Mark is a valued member of the ARM Club's 'Euro-Spod' team. This intrepid group, 'armed' only with their credit cards, venture forth into the wilds of Europe to represent the Club on an international front.

Silly photographs

Attending user group meetings is their prime goal. However their secondary goal is to get drunk and have silly photos taken of themselves. It makes you proud to think of the guys flying the flag.

Mark's involvement starts at the planning stage and occasionally progresses into the transportation area. Given his mapping dysfunction, he shows that he has 'No Fear'.

So what's the bottom line with this Mark fellow? — *'Good Guy'*

Musical chairs in the Committee room

Now that Mark Smith has taken over the chair vacated by Steve Arnold, Mark's former duties as Treasurer have gone to Simon Burrows.

Zip Drives



It doesn't seem all that long ago that some of us were loading our programs from cassette and using the time to put the kettle on for tea. Then came what seemed the amazing speed and storage

transferring data between machines in different locations.

Iomega brought out the Zip drive for the PC market and Argo, following their internet policy of plug in and go, have provided the

Peter Jennings backs up his software on the latest portable hard disc drive for the Acorn.

*** Special offer for ARM Club members ***

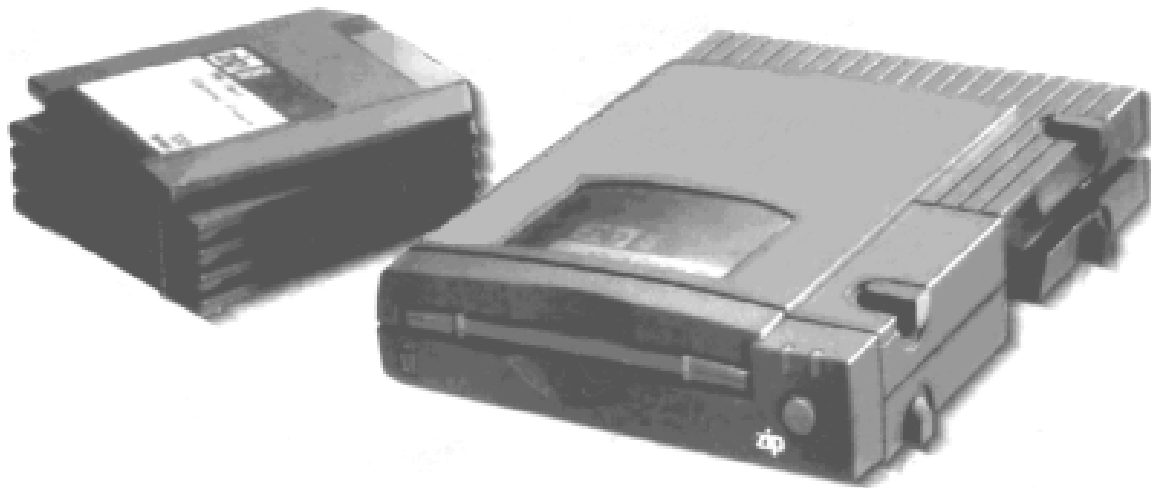
capacity of 5¼ inch floppy discs, followed by the even better 3½ inch culminating in 1,600KB of storage on each.

Now, with hard discs getting cheaper and more capacious, ordinary floppy discs are starting to look inadequate and portable hard discs are becoming freely available at accessible prices.

The latest to come onto the Acorn market is the Zip drive, with 100MB removable discs. Their uses include: extra storage, backups, discs for individual subject or individual users and

necessary software for use on Acorn machines. The drive, as supplied by Argo, is a portable plug-in external drive taking removable discs about a centimetre wider and longer than a floppy but nearly twice as thick. An icon on the icon bar is used as if for an ordinary floppy disc drive, with the big difference that its discs have a nominal capacity of 100MB each.

At present there are still some teething troubles. One of my discs developed a fault when almost full and, when it was inserted, the computer would no longer



recognise the existence of the Zip drive. Argo, who are now trying to salvage the data from it, say it is a problem with FileCore that they haven't come across before but they are writing a new program to prevent it happening again.

A new version of the driver has already been written but it has had only a few changes to do with the interaction of the printer driver and some tidying up of the code, such as providing an eject command.

I have not yet received an upgrade and there are a few other small problems with the first version of the software that I am still using. Clicking on 'Free' on the icon bar menu sometime causes it to hang up. Also it is not possible to copy

between Zip discs and the so-called 100MB disc capacity is actually 96MB. That's only four percent difference but we are measuring in megabytes!

Acorn/Iomega Zip Drive

Prices (+VAT): Drive + disc £149

Extra discs £15

Carriage: £2.50

Special offer: ARM Club members can claim one extra disc free when ordering.

Supplier: The Argo Interactive Group plc

7 Dukes Court, Chichester,
West Sussex, PO19 2FX

Tel: 01243 788668

Fax: 01243 531196

Email: enquiries@argonet.co.uk

TextEase DTP

I mainly use our Acorn RISC computer for word processing and learnt on the Impressions package. Rather like learning to drive a car, I have stayed with the familiar model. However, I was persuaded to try out the 1997 TextEase.

RISC OS 3.1. A Quick Start file gives a helpful summary of information. There are two tutorials to work through —the basic functions in a letter writing exercise and the more advanced features to create a banner.

Susan Bancroft has been trying out the latest version of TextEase and finding if it really is easy.

The title of the program promised no hassles and the manual is clearly laid out. TextEase is aimed at all levels of computer confidence, yet there has been care not to leave the novice at the starting block. The manual shows attention to the small details that aid ease of use. It is a ring bound type (no need to prop it open) and the instructions set out in a large, chunky font. Along the left side of each page is a vertical icon bar with the icons relevant for each section.

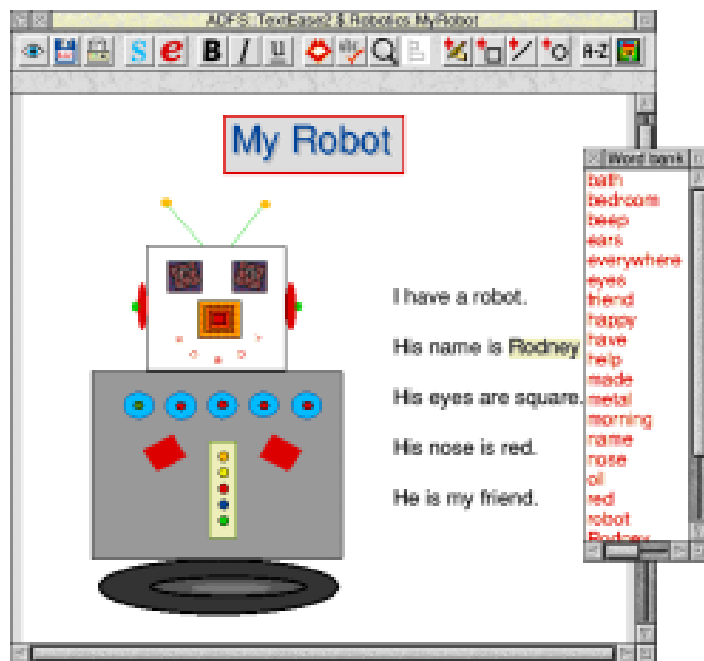
The main program is loaded in from one disc and may be used on a floppy disc only computer. No need for go-faster stripes here —the minimum requirement is 2MB of RAM and

I liked the layout of the page. All the various functions are set out in chunky boxes on the icon bar that heads the page. Underneath, a help text line explains the procedures as you click. This keeps the frustration levels to a minimum. Also graphics are very easy to adjust and move about because they are already set within their own frames. For example, there is a file containing a calendar. In the block for January 7th you will find a birthday cake graphic. This can be lifted and dropped to customise the relevant date for your family (the 28th in my case, if anyone is interested.) Also included in the package are a variety of fonts, borders and labels courtesy of iSV Products.

TextEase goes beyond the standard wordprocessor/DTP in two main aspects. Firstly, it is a talking wordprocessor. This will particularly appeal to children learning to create their own stories on the computer. Each letter can be spoken as it is typed and the word is sounded as it builds. Clicking on the mouth icon will make their text repeat back to them. Spelling errors are highlighted for later correction, without a discouraging bleep.

There are word lists that can be fine-tuned phonetically for a specific pronunciation. An exceptions dictionary can be pre-programmed to avoid the situation where rude words are typed in and spoken for the entertainment of a listening audience. Technology has not quite yet reached the stage of a realistic, human voice. Expect the flat, mechanical sounds of a strangulated Dalek. Those with a low tolerance level will be comforted to know that the sound can be turned off altogether.

A second, outstanding aspect is that the program can utilise animated and music Replay files. These are short



film clips that appear to spectacular effect in the Encarta encyclopedia. Files of a variety of animations can be bought and utilised from the CD Rom or hardisc. These can be easily dropped on to the page and text written around them. This facility is ideal for teaching and demonstration purposes. It would bring information to life and make it entertaining to watch and learn.

TextEase is a sophisticated package, with applications for all levels of use. True to its name, it is written and packaged to be user friendly, and produced at an affordable cost.

For details of versions, prices and Club discount offer see page 11.

Getting In Touch With The Club

One of the most common comments that we have is the time that it takes things to happen in the Club. This is possibly because we have not made it clear to members how the Club runs.

The Club is a national club as you all know and this means that members of

Freepost

The Freepost address which is in London. This is paid for by the Club but using it does mean that all the correspondence travels by second class post. This can take up to five days to arrive. Overseas letters can use the Freepost address but they

Nick Evans suggests some better ways to contact the Club than telephoning him at 3.00am on Christmas morning.

the Committee are bound to come from all over the UK. (At the moment we have no Committee members from overseas but this may change in the future). The Club started mainly in North London but we have tried to ensure that the Committee is representative of the UK as a whole. The byproduct of this is that most of the Committee members have to travel a considerable distance for Committee meetings which are held about every six weeks or so.

At the moment we have four methods of communication.

must have the postage necessary to send the letter to the UK. Once the letter arrives in the UK it should find its way to the N12 postbox. What happens then is that the letter is opened. If it is an order for one of the Club products it will usually be dispatched within 48 hours, unless the person opening the letter is away on holiday, in which case it will wait on the doormat until their return. If it is a technical query then it will be sent to the designated person dealing with that particular subject and this may take up to seven days depending on the volume of post.

These letters are sent out by second class post and so it could be a fortnight before the letter reaches the final and, hopefully, correct person. The person dealing with the query will obviously have to reply but if the query is not straightforward it may take a week or so before the answer can be sent. You can see how easily a month can go by before a reply goes out, even if no-one in the chain is on holiday. If the letter is a membership renewal then this will need to be processed. The worst case scenario is that both the Freepost address and the person looking after the query or the Membership secretary is on holiday and that will obviously double the length of time before you are aware that any action has been taken regarding your correspondence. This can include changes of address.

Fax

The second line of communication is by fax. The Club fax number is 0171 288 3451 and, although the fax will be collected within a couple of days at the latest, the same problems with holidays, sickness and so on, as in the Freepost address, still apply. Once the fax is received it is treated just the same as a letter. The recipient of the

fax will not be the one dealing with the order, the technical help, or any other query. The fax is forwarded to the appropriate person who will do the needful.

Telephone

The third line of communication is by telephone. There are two numbers and, although they will remain constant, the final destination of the call will probably change from week to week. This is because many people are unable to make a long term commitment to answering queries (I have been phoned up at 3.00am on Christmas morning by a member because his hard drive had probably crashed and caused an intermittent fault—the worst kind I can assure you). Be warned that, because the telephone numbers have to be portable, calls on both of them are charged at higher rates.

General inquiries should now be made on our new Flexitel number: 07010 709849.

For technical help, the Club's mobile phone number is: 0973 891330. This phone also gets passed around because, knowledgeable as they are,

most guys dealing with technical help are not able to answer all the queries.

For example, not everyone has all versions of RISC OS, not everyone has a Risc PC and not everyone with a Risc PC has a StrongARM processor.

The area that still probably causes most problems is with printing and what with the Acorn printer drivers, Turbo drivers from Computer Concepts, Laser Direct and Calligraph printers and new printers coming onto the market every day with colour, dye sublimation, dry ink, laser printing etc you will perhaps get some idea of the scale of the problem. Much will depend on what information has been given on the membership forms and which Club members are prepared to give telephonic advice to people. Technical help does not have to come from Committee members so anyone who can offer technical advice is very welcome to volunteer their services.

Email

The fourth and final line of communication is email. Using this will ensure that your request is dealt

with as quickly as possible.

Use info@armclub.org.uk or support@armclub.org.uk to get the fastest response. Many bulletin boards will now allow posting through the Internet although this should only be for short messages of a few kilobytes in file length.

If you do not have email, the next best way to send a query is on a disc to the Freepost address. It can then be immediately emailed onto its final destination.

One aspect of the Acorn machines that we are not able to answer questions on is software problems with a PC card. This is really outside the expertise of most of our Club members.

I hope that this has been of some help to you and any suggestions as to how the service can be improved or offers of help will be gratefully received.

A summary of useful mail and email addresses and telephone and fax numbers can be found in Club Contacts on page 80.

How Not To Fit A New IDE Drive

Recently I decided to buy a very large IDE disc for £200, totally replacing my existing 410MB disc. I purchased the new 2.1GB drive from CTA of Tyldesley, Manchester, who were offering the best deal. Now I know what is meant by a 'bare drive'. It

between the computer ribbon cable and the CD-ROM ribbon cable. This, it transpires, is an IDE/SLC interface and I had connected my new IDE drive to the wrong end of it. Oops! I quickly disconnected the interface card and connected the new drive

It all seemed perfectly straightforward when Bob Nicholson decided to fit a new IDE drive to his Risc PC.

means that it comes in an anti-static bag with no instructions! Before purchasing the drive I had spoken to Roy at CTA who outlined to me how the drive should be installed. It all seemed perfectly straightforward, as these things do!

First of all, I disconnected the power and data leads from the CD-ROM and connected these to the new IDE drive. I then switched on ... nothing! Not a flicker, even after trying power up with the Delete key held down (This resets the CMOS RAM to the default settings).

Now the Cumana CD-ROM has a small interface board connected

directly to the correct IDE ribbon interface. This time I had more success. The system booted up OK, but I was unable to use the !Configure application to configure two IDE discs.

Master and slave

After another phone call to Roy, I discovered that the new drive should be configured as a master and the old drive as a slave. I had both connected as masters! The master/slave configuration is set by moving external links on the IDE drives. Having set the links correctly, the system booted up, but only the new (master) drive appeared to have been installed. Opening the disc directory

revealed ... nothing. Surprise, surprise! I therefore had no software with which to configure two drives and so it was back to the drawing board.

My next move was to restore the old drive and copy !Configure plus !System onto a floppy. What a smart move I thought! The new master and old slave were configured again and the system rebooted. I then attempted to run !Configure. No chance! Because the system had not been properly booted up, certain system variables had not been set and !Configure would not run.

Warning message

Undaunted, I ploughed on. It seemed obvious that all I had to do was configure the old drive as the master and the new drive as the slave, despite instructions from Roy to the contrary. I reset the links and sure enough, just the old drive booted up. Running !Configure to set two drives flatly refused to perform, giving a warning message to the effect that this was a dangerous move and I might lose all my data. What now? Another phone call to Roy, of course.

What I should have done is to use the Command Line, accessed by pressing F12. Why didn't I think of that? With the system reconfigured (again) as the new master and the old slave, simply typing *Configure IDEDiscs 2, then rebooting (CTRL/BREAK) did the trick and I found myself with two hard discs on the icon bar. Success!?!? Well not quite. There is more pain to come.

All the Acorn software, except the PC directory, was dragged from the old to the new disc. Easy! I even verified that all had been copied correctly. Then I created a PC directory on the new disc and copied to it all PC files except the 200MB DOS partition.

Running !PCconfig allowed me to create two 512MB DOS partitions. I had been advised by Roy, to watch the size of the "allocation units". "Allocation units", "blocks" or "clusters" are all synonymous terms. A "block" is the smallest group of bytes on the disc and so represents the smallest file size. The optimum number of blocks is 65535, as defined by the 16 bit DOS address limit. The optimum block size is therefore (disc size/65536). In my case this was

512MB/65536 = 8192 bytes. Thus, my minimum file size is 8K. With a small file containing only 1K of data, 7K of disc space is wasted. However, if I had defined the disc size as 513MB, the block size would have been 16K * 32768 and this would have been much less efficient in terms of disc storage space.

Using RISC OS to drag the DOS/Windows files from the old disc DOS partition to the new was again easy. However, attempting to run !PC failed with a message along the lines of, 'This is not a system disc'. The only way I found round this was to use !PCconfig again to permit booting from floppy, then totally reinstall PC DOS!!

Are you still with me? I hope that I'm not boring you rigid! All this messing around took hours as you can well imagine. We are almost there.

My final 'piece de resistance' was attempting to persuade the computer to boot up to the new drive. So far, every time I switched on, the computer booted from the old disc. Another call to Roy indicated that one of my Boot files was addressing the

old disc by name (IDEDisc4), rather than by number (4).

Sure enough, the culprit was \$.!Boot.Choices.Boot.Tasks.!Boot. (Isn't the Risc PC boot sequence unbelievable!). This file (created by RISC OS no less!) called for 'IDEDisc4'. I renamed the original file as Tasks.old_boot (just in case) and created a new file Tasks.!Boot with all references to 'IDEDisc4' changed to '4'.

Still the computer rebooted from the old drive. Aha, I thought, if I remove the old drive, the problem may go away. No chance! An error message appeared requesting 'IDEDisc4'. The error message just refused to cancel and I was totally stuck. 'Help, Roy, what do I do now?'. 'Hold down the SHIFT key, while pressing BREAK and keep holding the SHIFT key', said Roy. This is a break function that I had found no use for before. It starts the computer without running any !Boot files. This gave me back access to my files.

What was the problem this time? You may have spotted that I had saved the old file, Tasks.old_boot in the same

directory as the new Tasks.!Boot file, all within the main \$.!Boot application. The \$.!Boot application runs every file it possibly can. Therefore, the new Tasks.!Boot file was run first, then the Tasks.old_boot was run as well! Grrrrrrreat! Moving Tasks.old_boot to a secret location solved the problem.

Was it worth it?

Finally, I reconnected the CD-ROM drive. Whew! What an effort! Was it worth it? And I thought that I was computer literate! I am now the proud owner of a fully functioning 2.1GB IDE hard drive with all my old files transferred to it and LOTS of space for future expansion. I am also told by Roy that there is a public domain program on the Internet which will permit me to have a third 512MB DOS partition if I ever need it. (It's the PC side which is much more memory/disc space intensive, as you well know). The new drive is performing well and I have now stored away the old drive as a 410MB backup.

As with everything, it's easy once you know how!

How it should be done

Installation Procedure for New IDE Drive on Risc PC 600.

- 1) Disconnect the CD-ROM ribbon and power leads.
- 2) Disconnect the IDE ribbon from the CD-ROM interface card.
- 3) Disconnect the IDE ribbon and power lead from the old hard disc.
- 4) Connect the IDE ribbon and power lead to the new IDE drive.
- 5) Check that the new IDE drive is configured as a master. (Set external links as detailed on top of drive).
- 6) Connect the IDE ribbon and power lead to the old IDE drive.
- 7) Check that the old IDE drive is configured as a slave. (Set external links as required).
- 8) Power up the computer.
- 9) If no sign of life, switch off and power up with DELETE held down. This resets the CMOS RAM data to the default.
- 10) The master drive icon should now be seen on the icon bar. The drive contents will be zero!
- 11) Press F12 to get the Command Line.
- 12) Type: 'Configure IDEDiscs 2'.
- 13) Press the Return key (twice).
- 14) Press CTRL/BREAK to reboot

the computer.

15) Hopefully, the computer now reboots with two IDE drives, the new master and the old slave.

16) Select all directories except PC directory (where the DOS partition file is stored).

17) Drag to the new disc. Copying should take a few minutes depending on the size of the old drive, speed of the old drive etc. Mine took approx seven minutes.

18) From the new disc icon bar menu, verify that the new disc contents are the same as the old disc.

19) Create a PC directory on the new disc.

20) Copy all files except the DOS partition from the old PC directory to the new PC directory.

21) Run the !PCConfig application to setup the new DOS partition.

22) According to Wookey at Aleph1, the size of the partition can now be several GB if you are using RISCOS 3.5 or greater. However, an optimum size is 512MB. This yields 8K blocks i.e. the minimum DOS file size is 8K. The block size is given by (disc size/65536) bytes. The block size is also a multiple of two. Thus, if a 513MB disc is formatted, the block size will be 16K. This will lead to

considerable storage inefficiencies e.g. every small file with only 1K of data will waste 15K of disc space.

23) Open the old DOS partition and also the new DOS partition and copy across all the old DOS/Windows files.

24) The file transfer is now complete.

25) Press CTRL/BREAK to reboot computer.

26) Hopefully, the computer will now boot up to the new disc. More than likely, it will not!

27) The culprit is likely to be file \$.!Boot.Choices.Boot.Tasks.!Boot, because this will most likely contain absolute references to the original IDE drive e.g. 'IDEDisc4'. The Task.!Boot file should be edited to change the disc name to just '4'. Do not attempt to save the original version of this file in the Tasks directory along with the new edited version because the \$.!Boot application will run them both! Save the original in some other private (non Boot) directory if you must!

28) Press CTRL/BREAK again. Hopefully, this time the computer will reboot to the new drive.

29) Power down the computer and remove the old drive.

30) Reconnect the CD-ROM, remembering the interface board, if it

has one.

31) Switch the computer back on and use !Configure to reconfigure the CD-ROM drive.

32) Run the !PC application. As likely as not this will fail and will display a message along the lines of 'This is not a system disc'.

33) Abort from the !PC application (middle mouse button).

34) Rerun !PCConfig and tick 'Allow PC card to boot from floppy disc' within 'Booting'.

35) You will now have to reinstall DOS (PC DOS or MS DOS), whatever you had before.

36) To reinstall DOS, insert DOS floppy number one in the floppy drive, then restart the !PC application. Follow the instructions to insert the remaining floppies when requested.

With any luck this should reinstall DOS and all will be well.

37) Exit from DOS (middle mouse button).

38) Rerun !PCConfig and untick 'Allow PC card to boot from floppy disc' within 'Booting'. The !PC application will now boot from the hard disc.

39) Remove all floppies.

40) Rerun the !PC application. Hopefully, DOS should now boot from the new hard drive and all will be well. If required, run CHKDSK from the DOS prompt, to check the size of the 'allocation units' (blocks) and to see how the new DOS partition has been configured.

41) Stop.

Take a well deserved break!!

Special Offers to Club Members

Which could save you more than a year's subscription

10% discount off TextEase
(See page 11)

Free extra 100MB disc, usual price £17.75, when you
buy an Acorn/Iomega Zip drive
(See page 57)

Arnold's Observations

As I have already commented, the New year has passed once more, with various new year vows broken by the 2nd of January, a year's worth of smellies to consume by next Christmas and a new opportunity to make changes in your life. I have

Get a result, forget the journey

You want to achieve your goal, a new year resolution maybe? You begin to think about all the effort to get there. This is a very common failing. You must consider the positives you will gain in achieving your goal. Give

Steve Arnold devotes his first Observations of 1997 to an attempt to help you to keep those new year resolutions.

written this article in a hope to assist you in different approach to keep your new years resolutions.

Your new year resolutions —failed after the first day? Give up too easily? This is generally nothing to do with a lack of willpower but more about not understanding the best way to focus your brain and command your behaviour. To be effective requires an insight in to how to set goals and in adopting the right attitude to ensure they are completed successfully.

So here are a few simple guidelines to achieving your goals.

yourself a good reason to win. Decide on a clear vision of what you're trying to achieve and what you want from it. Focus on your goal and the benefits it will give you and try to forget how you are going to get there.

If it hurts, you don't do it

You have a new year resolution? — Ask yourself why it waits till the new year to make the change. There are probably several reasons why you haven't tackled the issue. Firstly it's hard work to achieve, because it hurts or will take a long time to be complete, and secondly it's easier not to do it and you probably enjoy the prime cause for the resolution, such as

eating or smoking. To focus on your goals you need to consider what gives you pleasure in your indulgence and develop new reasons and benefits from an alternative avenue. Find new ways to enjoy yourself—try smelling the flowers!!

Your Goals —be specific

When setting your goals, be specific. You need to decide on when, where, why and with whom do you want to achieve your goal. Desire to achieve must be weighed against the way you live your life. Can you afford to strive for your goal 24 hours a day? —Of course not! This will damage your health, cause people to question your sanity and, in the end, make you an incredible bore! Goals require a purpose, a reason and a desire to be achieved, but not at any cost.

Life in the balance

You can fail with your goals if you take a fanatical approach. You must avoid having all your focus in one area of your life otherwise pressures from other areas will exert a high price. You must not let your goals rule your life to the exclusion of all other things. You must allow space for family, social life or free time. Do not

become overly focussed in one direction only, else your life could be in danger of falling down around you. Remember The Balance in your Life —Not Your life in the balance!

Temptation —the Enemy

Do you know your limitations? So, you're smart. How many times have you vowed to give up something or other only to find friends and relatives inadvertently tempting you by their actions. If you are really committed to achieving your objectives, try imagining what it will be like when these temptations try to thwart you. Imagine yourself in these situations, the ones that would cause you the greatest temptations. Consider these situations as the enemy. Ensure planning a campaign of how to defeat them. Win the battle in your head. Don't be surprised when it happens in reality. Be successful in your goals by anticipating these temptations and having methods to deal with them.

Set realistic goals

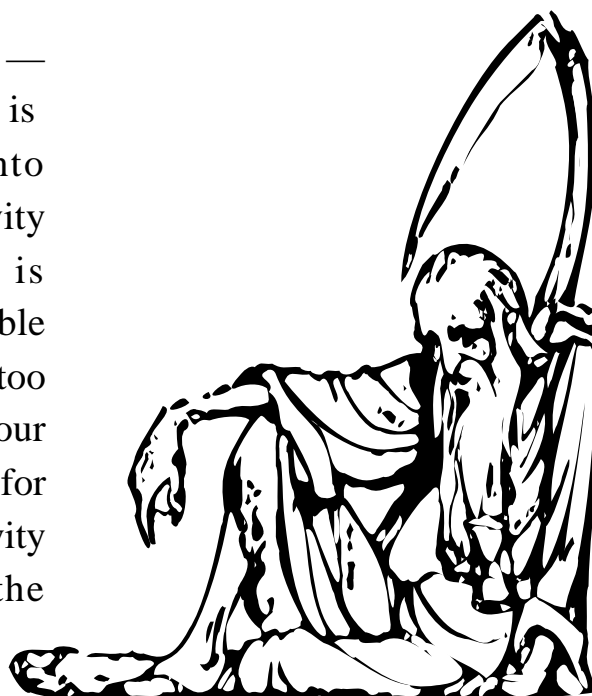
It is important to set *SMART* goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed). How do you get from A to B. Easy really: one step at a time! Analyse this approach. You

know what you want to achieve — getting from A to B —the problem is how! So break the problem into smaller activities, with each activity having a smaller goal which is simpler to achieve. Set a reasonable timescale to achieve to goal (not too easy, but not too hard). Measure your progress and apply a small reward for yourself on completion of the activity and move to the next stage of the process until you successfully complete the task. So the first step is to put one foot in front of the other and reward yourself with a smile.

Remember, Rome was not built in a day!

Support, motivation, confidence

This is the final section in achieving your goal. Firstly involve others, partners, colleagues or friends. Discuss your aims and goals, tell them about the benefits you'll achieve. Don't let them belittle you; ask them for your help with your goal. Most people like to help, so build on teamwork opportunities. Remember what is good for you is most likely good for them! Self motivation can be hard. Be kind to yourself, tell yourself how you are improving, do it once a day, get into the habit. Focus



...and the year started so well, too.

on winning, believe you are winning. Little by little, it can be turned into fact. Finally, have confidence. Remember you may have bad days, you may step off the path towards fulfilment, but with confidence in yourself you can re-focus on the goal and know you will win!

So having explained a way forward in completing your new year's resolution, it's time for me to put some of this into practice as it is case of 'Physician —heal thyself'!

Happy New Year and good luck with your resolutions!!!

Dune II —The CD-ROM Version

To refresh your memory, you control one of three houses fighting for control of the planet Arrakis, the only source of the Melange spice in the universe. This spice has many properties: it makes interstellar travel possible and can

discs and using a large chunk of your hard disc space or continuously swapping discs whilst playing. Apart from that, you get an additional 82MB of sampled sound data, which includes sampled speech for the newly added introductory sequence,

In Eureka 15, Andrew Clover reviewed the disc version of this popular strategy game. Now Mark Smith and Katie Reed have been playing it on CD-ROM.

prolong human life, so it is naturally very valuable and highly sought after.

Having chosen your house, you build up bases on the planet surface, harvest as much spice as possible and fight off the opposing houses so that you eventually control the entire planet. Sounds simple? Not when you have to do them all at once with a limited supply of funds and everyone else seems to have superior weapons.

But all this is in the disc version, so why pay the extra for the CD ROM? The most obvious answer is that you can run it straight off the CD without the need for installing seven floppy

and some atmospheric music.

However, this ‘atmospheric music’ cuts in over alternative speech samples throughout the game which were also present in the original disc. Despite these useful commands and comments still being audible, the music can become distracting. It really presents more of a choice than an improvement in terms of sound as you can select either effects, music, neither or both, but doesn’t affect the playability in the slightest. The music itself can become infuriating at times as it plays mercilessly as your last missile tank is destroyed by a stray devastator when you were just inches

away from completing the final level.

The release notes also claim that various other improvements have been added to improve the playability, although they do not specify them; possibly because they are next to obsolete. The gameplay itself, while always compelling, is scarcely altered either for better or worse. This should not discourage anyone from investing in the CD if they want the sound improvements or cannot spare the space on their hard disc, but it does not merit purchasing it purely for the supposed improvements. Certainly the final sequences are improved and the fast setting for the game seems just a fraction faster but these changes are minute and relatively insignificant as the game was equally satisfying to play without them.

The CD costs £15 more than the disc version. Curiously, the upgrade from the disc to CD versions is only £10, making it cheaper to buy the disc version and upgrade. This is one of the more expensive games on the Acorn platform, but it is also arguably one of the best and will keep you occupied for hours.

The review version of the CD (v1.30) needs a patch to work on Risc PCs with 16 bit sound (either add-on cards with early Risc PCs or the standard 16 bit sound on later Risc PCs) and all A7000s. It is also incompatible with StrongARM processor cards, although it can be made to work with either a patch from VTi or the latest version of StrongGuard! (v3.10, an upgrade from v3.00 is on the Eureka 21 disc). However, I understand from VTi that a new version will shortly be released which is both 16 bit sound and StrongARM compatible. In order to run it you require any Acorn computer with at least 2MB of memory and a CD ROM drive.

Watch out —this game is still as addictive as ever!

Dune II

Price (inc VAT): CD-ROM £49.99
Disc £34.99, Upgrade to CD £10

Supplier: VTi

7 Dukes Court, Chichester,
West Sussex, PO19 2FX

Tel: 01243 815815

Fax: 01243 531196

Email: info@argonet.co.uk

I found myself on the platform of the railway station on the day of the Show. All I had with me was an extra large Daewoo carrier bag and the Acorn VISA card. I had forgotten the keys, the ones to the 200MHz Strong ARM machine being given away at the show. Several people had given

The weekend before had included a great day at the Motor Show (where a very good looking girl had thrust the Daewoo carrier bag at me —well I wasn't interested in the cars). The week running up to the Show had been hectic, including being head hunted. I had just found time to get

David Ruck manages to keep his Acorn credit card under control when he joins the crowds at Olympia to spend his greatest day of the year.

me theirs from Byte magazine, but they were all identical there wasn't much chance of winning and hopefully no one would find out. That out of the way, I was ready for the greatest day of the year.

I went to Olympia on the Friday by train, as that part of London is a bit more difficult to drive to than Wembley. It gave me my first break for the past two weeks, which had started with the arrival of the Strong ARM, several days of amazement followed by 93 hours to test 1300+ applications for compatibility.

my boss to give me a day off and travel expenses to the Show for the second year running. That's the advantage of working for a company that still uses Acorns; the disadvantage being the stack of extra dosh I'd get if I let my head get caught by the hunter.

Clan outfits

Getting off the train at Paddington I noticed a few Clan outfits as I walked briskly towards the tube. On getting down there I realised I was also wearing the Clan sweatshirt as another similarly attired but slightly lost looking person rushed up to me as

I looked as though I knew where I was going (six years in the smoke and the lungs to prove it).

Despite half the Circle Line just recovering from a power failure in Kensington, we managed to make it round to Olympia in a respectable time.

Better than Wembley

Hall Two at Olympia was good — better than Wembley I thought, as there were two levels always good for surveying the stands (and any talent). The lower level was dominated by the ART stand with I think you can guess what as centre of attention. The ART employees where all dressed in blue and mauve combat gear, and with the orange revolving lights on top of the stand it was reminiscent of one of those laser quest games.

The Show was well attended by exhibitors, the other attractions being the Spacetech stand showing off Top Model and Photodesk, the Aspex stand with the other 3D designer DaVinci 90, and Irlam and Yellowstone stands each with their Desktop TV cards. Mike Cook on the Acorn User stand showed up a few of

the professional hardware manufacturers with his four speaker mixer board and wireless infrared musical instrument.

While looking round, every so often there would be a terrific sound of hammering and banging coming from the upper level. On going up the stairs to investigate I came across the Clan stand where people had the opportunity to express their opinions of the PC using various heavy objects! I was just in time to see ART supremo Peter Bondar laying into an old Compaq with a pair of hammers like a man possessed!

Pile of scraps

The idea was to reduce the inferior system to a pile of scraps which would fit through a narrow slot into a skip on the shortest time possible. Peter didn't feel he was making good enough progress, so he started wielding the axe like a maniac serial killer and then the chips really started flying! His time wasn't to be beaten (except by himself) all weekend. If Acorn ever does fold he won't be short of work as a lumberjack or bare handed demolition expert.

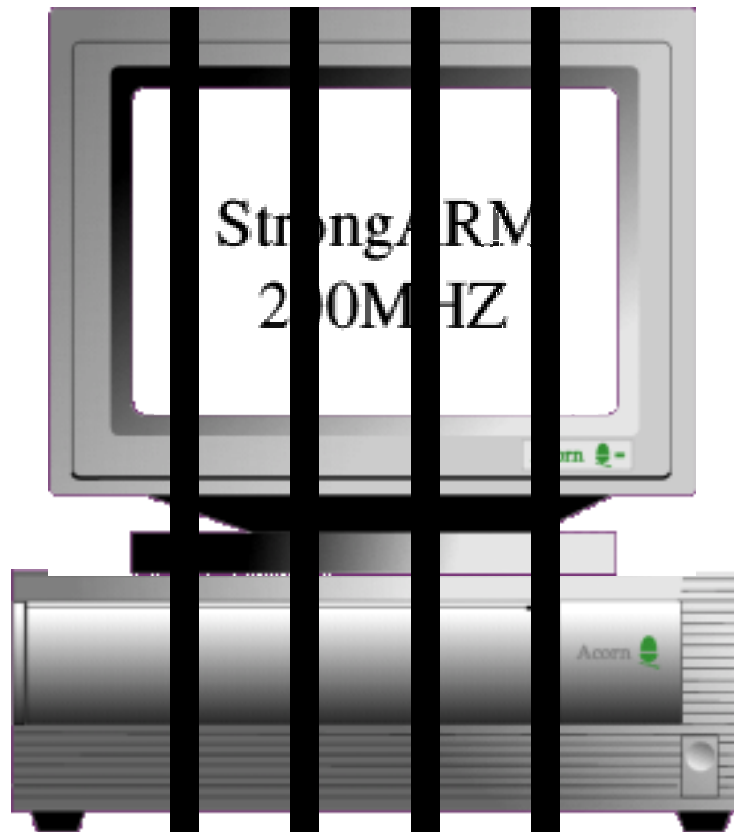
Not to buy

I promised myself not to buy any hardware this time, but was sorely tempted by the new Canon BJ4550 printer being demonstrated on the ART and Integrex stands. It's A3 and has a special 'photo-realistic' mode which is really superb.

When they have the full Acorn driver in December I'll definitely be chucking the old HP550C.

Under control

After a quick look round, managing to keep my Acorn credit card under control, I just bought a new print cartridge and four Syquests. I decided not to give Computer Concepts any money for upgrades with no extra features, and some of the other stuff I was after, such as the new !MovieFS, had already come my way.



"I had forgotten the keys"

I was tempted by the new WinRisc which puts PC windows on the RISC OS desktop (even converts the PC menu bar to a RISC OS pop-up one), but they are still working on the Windows 95 version.

Also upstairs was my bunch, The ARM Club, who had managed to get themselves a huge stand. I spent many a busy time there, helping fellow members and doing the most loved task of copying PD discs.

Help!

New member Robert Bergs has a 4MB A3010 fitted with an Ultimate Expansion System 160MB hard disc drive and Hi Vision 24 digitiser.

After buying a SCSI 2 card at Acorn World he temporarily removed the

On configuring it and rebooting, IDEFS gave an error message about not being able to map the defect out. When the Ultimate's power supply is switched on, the hard drive whirs for about two seconds and then stops.

Have you got an Ultimate Expansion System hard disc and/or can you offer some much needed help on one?

Ultimate and when refitting it accidentally pushed the two leftmost pins together into the second hole from the left on the motherboard socket (when viewing the computer from the front).

He realised this only when he powered up the computer and got a purple screen and nothing else. The card was refitted properly but, on switching on again, the hard disc was silent.

The hard disc had not been backed up and five to 10 megabytes of data on it are completely irreplaceable.

If you can help you will earn Robert's eternal gratitude and, he says, be well rewarded.

Please contact him, preferably by fax or post, at: Longlands, Church Lane, Chaldon, Surrey, CR3 5AL.

Tel: 01883 343473.

Fax: 01883 330518.

For sale

A3000, RISC OS 3.1, AKF12 monitor, 2MB RAM, 60MB internal IDE HD, Epson LX400 printer, PC emulator V1.70 and MS DOS. First Page DTP, boxed with manuals. £300. Tel 0191 2853957.

Can you draw cartoons?

If so, would you draw some for Eureka to illustrate some articles occasionally?

Please contact the Editor, by email at eureka@armclub.org.uk or by post to the Club's Freepost address.

The Eureka 21 Disc

If you've parted with your hard earned cash for a StrongARM processor upgrade, you may have noticed that the version of ArcFS supplied on the Eureka 20 disc (and all the previous ones) isn't SA compatible. This time I've included

On the Eureka 21 disc, we have:

- The latest version of the Shareware graphics conversion utility, Creator, from John Kortink / Zeridajh.
- The latest version of the Shareware

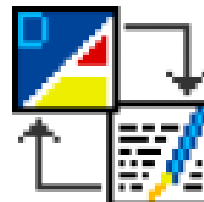
It's the Chairman's choice this issue as Mark Smith compiles a varied selection of the best new public domain and shareware for the Eureka 21 disc.

the latest version, which is. For those on the Internet, the definitive latest version of this software is available from my web home page, the URL is <http://www.findon.demon.co.uk/>

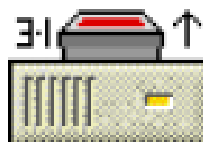
Most software should run from the archives on the Eureka disc, but remember that the version of ArcFS supplied is read only and that more free memory may sometimes be required to run software out of the archives. If you have any problems, try copying the applications out of the archives onto another floppy disc or hard disc and running them from there.

data compression utility, PackDir, also from John Kortink.

- UUCoder by John Allen for anybody using Internet software that does not support the sending and/or receiving of UUencoded files.



- SGUpgrade is supplied for anybody who has bought either Game On! v2.5 or StrongGuard! from the Club. It upgrades StrongGuard! to the latest version, 3.10 and optionally installs a new release programs database. Read the 'Instructns' file for



further details. This upgrade is also available on the Club's web site at <http://www.armclub.org.uk/products/strongguard/>

- To accompany the final part of my series on writing modules, Example 8 is also supplied on the disc.

- As usual, a full catalogue of the Club's PD library is supplied with a viewer application.

Please remember that Shareware software is not free. If you want to continue using it after a trial period, you should register with the author. For full details, see the Docs directory inside Creator and PackDir.

My thanks to Geoff Lane for suggesting a number of the packages included on this quarter's disc.

Coming in Eureka 22

Tips of the Trade offers some new ideas for using 'Blinds'

We review MailMaker, DateMaker and MemoMaker
from Carlton Software

More hints and tips to make you say:
"Well I Never Knew That!"

A report from the Club's AGM

How the Data Protection Act affects the Club
and its members

Eureka 22 — through your letter box in May

Club Contacts

The Club and any of its officers can be contacted in four ways. The easiest, and the one likely to bring the quickest response, is by email—if, of course, you have a suitable internet or bulletin board account. Failing that, the Post Office will snail mail your message, free of charge, if you send it to the Club's Freepost address. Otherwise British Telecom, or one of its competitors, can offer two services: by fax or telephone. Phoning will be at higher rates as Flexitel and 'mobile' numbers have to be used because the telephones are rotated among the Committee members who have the knowledge and can find the time to offer their (unpaid) services.

Here are the addresses and numbers to use:

Email

General queries	info@armclub.org.uk
Product sales	sales@armclub.org.uk
Membership queries	membership@armclub.org.uk
PD Library	pd@armclub.org.uk
Members technical help	support@armclub.org.uk
Magazine	eureka@armclub.org.uk

Fax 0171 288 3451

Telephone (premium rates)

General queries (Flexitel) 07010 709849

Technical help line (Orange) 0973 891330

Mail

The ARM Club
FREEPOST ND6573
London N12 0BR

Benefits of membership

*The national club for all users of 32 bit
Acorn computers and Pocket Books*



- The Club's magazine, "Eureka", written by members, published and sent four times a year to members with a supporting disc.
- Technical Help Service — we will do our best to find someone who can provide a solution to any problems which you may have by letter, email, telephone or fax.
- Special discounts from well-known companies for Club members.
- Training courses can be organised on request, regional club meetings are supported through the affiliation scheme and Club open days regularly take place.
- Regional contact lists of other members, available on request.
- Discount Public Domain Library, including unique Club software.
- 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.
- Joining pack includes an extra copy of recent magazine and disc.

Annual membership £12 only

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