

The magazine for members of

The **ARM** *Club*

**Acorn becomes Element 14
and RISCOS Ltd is born**

Club Changes

Phoenix OS

Shows Calendar 1999

**Introduction to
Digital Art CD**



Issue 29 — Spring 1999

It's Not The Time To Change To A PC

First, a warm welcome to all the ex-Clan members and other Acorn users who have joined us in the wake of the big upheaval.

As older established members well know, the Club is a non-profit making organisation, run entirely by and for its members, which exists to offer help and advice.

We are all united in our desire to continue using Acorn computers but the uncertain future is causing some of us to think the unthinkable about the possibility of having to change to a Wintel PC at some time. But — leaving all sentiment aside — *this is not the time to do so.*

There are a number of good reasons for saying this. The dreaded Windows 95/98 are to be replaced by a much better Windows 2000 (formerly NT 5), the improved Pentium III chip is on the way and other new hardware and software are also coming. But most of these improvements are not likely to be widely available for

another year or so. Also, DVD is replacing CD-ROMs but new re-recordable versions are still awaited and will be fitted in later machines. Finally, another year should allow time for doubts about the Millennium bug to be stamped out.

In the meantime, RISC OS 4 will give the Risc PC a new lease of life and it is worth waiting to see which of the proposed developments for Acorn-style machines are likely to come about. In particular, if the plans for producing RISC OS cards for PCs go ahead this would make any future transition to PCs much easier for Acorn users.

So, put off any worries about changing from an Acorn for at least another year when, if you do have to, you should at least get a better PC than is available now. And, remember, the best option of all is still open. In a year's time you may find that you do not have to change at all.

Peter Jennings

All opinions expressed in Eureka are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Club or its Committee members and officers.

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Club Changes And A Chance For You

Since the last AGM we've had a few changes and a bit of reshuffling within the Committee. Mark Smith has stepped down from the role of Chairman after many years in the role. Mark is to take on a special new role for the Club in the wider Acorn scene, information about which will unfold in due course. (Mysterious eh?)

Filling Mark's chair, is Toby Smith, erstwhile Membership Secretary. Toby has been a Club stalwart for many years, and you will probably have read much of his drivel on the pages of this magazine before. Matt Cook took on the role of Membership Secretary during 1998.

New to the Club committee is Dave Walker, a figure you may all know from his time at Acorn. Dave's knowledge and experience of Acorn machines, Acorn industry companies and Acorn users will obviously be of benefit to the Club.

So, what is our Committee lacking now? It has a set of experienced computer people. It has a set of people who, it would seem, have done a good job of running the Club for the past years. It has a set of some of the most 'famous' names in the field. So what can we be missing? — *You*.

We've got a lot of skills. A lot of knowledge. What we don't have is a huge amount of time. Running a Club of this size is a large and complex task that takes a lot of our private time. As we get older, more responsibilities both at work and at home (and I speak here as newly married and newly re-employed) erode the time we can throw into the Club. As the cliché goes many hands make light work, so if there is anything you think you could do to help, please get in touch; we'd be happy to have you.

Toby Smith
Chairman

Club News

Acorn Midlands Show

It was brilliant to meet so many Club members in good spirits at our Show in Birmingham. Thank you to all who stopped by to have a chat, however difficult it was to get near the stand.

a total of more than 650 visitors altogether.

The Club stand was very busy. Membership drives and the special Clan discount offer were bringing in lots of new memberships and there

The Club's Membership Secretary, Matthew Cook, reports on recent Club events and reveals some of its future plans.

Those with Internet access will have already read the Show review on my World Wide Web Site (www.escarpment.demon.co.uk), or seen a review and my pictures in Acorn user, but for those who have not this is a little bit about what happened.

The Acorn Midlands Show, run by The ARM Club and organised by John Stonier, was in its third year this time.

Attendance was brilliant. We had more than 200 people through the door in the first hour. There were queues round the building and we had

were many more renewals.

There was continued call for our products: PDCD2 (a new CD is to be released at the forthcoming Wakefield Show), StrongGuard!, Game On! and TypeTutor.

Doing a good trade on the other end of our stand was the bring and buy stall, with goodies such as Fast PC cards, CD-ROM drives, Laser Direct Printers, much software and my trusty A3000.

Many other members just popped by to have a chat or share a problem they had encountered.

The Club's future

The Committee is scheduled to have a meeting shortly regarding the running of the Club and its activities. I am not going to surprise you by saying that the Acorn owning marketplace is going to change hugely over the next year. Even with small bright lights — the release of RISC OS 4 and so on — these are still over shadowed by the fact we no longer have the support of Acorn behind us.

We are looking to see what we can do to fulfil our core objective of providing help, support and fellowship to fellow Acorn users.

If you have any comments, ideas or want to offer support, do not hesitate to contact the Club. You can do this by telephone, email or Royal Mail.

Royal Mail Saga

Those long-standing members among us will remember the problems we have had with the Royal Mail. Hopefully these difficulties have now been overcome. All mail sent to FREEPOST 'The ARM Club' should now get through. If you do have problems drop us a line by email or telephone.

Contact Lists

The club can provide a list of members in *your* area! This information is only provided on members that have allowed us to distribute their details (a ticked box on the membership form). This can help to set up a local members' group.

These groups are invaluable and enjoyable. I am a member of my local group DARC (Derbyshire Acorn Risc Group) and enjoy every meeting and the chance to talk face to face with fellow enthusiasts.

Discounts Scheme

The Club's discounts scheme is still running and there is no time like the present to save on the products available from Acorn based companies.

There are full details and an order form, which can be photocopied, on pages 69-71.

In addition we are still looking for another member of the club to help with this. I am very busy looking after the role of Membership Secretary and the scheme is not as up to date as it could be with *your* help!

Products

The Club is constantly looking for members' products that need to be marketed and sold. Very good rates of commission are paid.

May I also take this opportunity to thank all members who have supported us by buying our products over the last few years. The eagerly awaited PD3 will be available soon and it is well worth the wait.

Shows and Open days

The Club is committed to helping organise and attend *all* Acorn-based shows and open days, especially as we have the very talented Show organiser John Stonier on the Committee. If you would like to offer your services, even to man the stand for a couple of hours, you will have free entry to the event and get to help your favourite Acorn group.

Thanks once again for all your support at the Midlands show, without you we could not have had so many people through the door!

Matthew Cook
Membership Secretary

Can you write for

Eureka ?

Eureka always welcomes new contributors.

You don't have to be an expert programmer. We include articles and reviews to suit all levels of skill and all computing interests for our widely varied membership.

Simple hints and tips are as welcome as technical programming articles. Help and advice is given.

At present, we are particularly looking for someone who uses a digital camera and can tell us about his or her experience with it. We would be glad to hear about a beginner's first attempts as well as receive more expert views.

Send your contribution, suggestion or query to The Editor by email at: eureka@armclub.org.uk or write to the Club's Freepost address.

No Doom And Gloom In The Club

You will all be aware of the changes at Acorn in the third quarter last year and the ramifications leading on from them. Many of you will have read the instant despair and gloom spread over the Internet newsgroups and the christening of 'Black Thursday'.

However, our Club Show in Birmingham in early December had an astoundingly good turnout, somewhat reminiscent of the hey-days of the mid nineties. Many people came and many people spent. Club memberships and renewals have also recently taken quite a noticeable upturn as well.

So maybe doom and gloom is the wrong message. Admittedly much of the turnout at Birmingham can be attributed to the lack of an Acorn World Show, but the point remains that these people wanted to go to a show and wanted to buy things.

Our special offer to members of the now somewhat defunct Clan also seems to have brought in many new

members, to whom I offer a warm welcome in what is presumably their first mailed magazine. You will find The Club a very different organisation from the Clan, more proactive and more involving. We hope you enjoy it.

So, what now for us? The ARM Club was started early in the life of the RISC OS computer (or Archimedes as it was then) as an enthusiasts' club. A club of enthusiasts, for enthusiasts, run by enthusiasts, with the aims of enthusiasts. We've done many things over the years, started a Club magazine, run local open days, started a magazine disc, boosted our open days from small school-hall events to increasing large regional shows, and gone from strength to strength in membership.

However, all this was seemingly based on a buoyant market, both in terms of Acorn themselves, and on the associated companies and suppliers, who now seem to be, understandably, disappearing as the major marketplace slowly disappears in Acorn's wake.

We believe that as support begins to dwindle from other areas, the Club will have an increasingly important role to play in the provision of information and assistance to Acorn owners like yourself.

Our technical help service, which has been running for many years, is already geared up to help with almost any problems you have with your Acorn machine. All messages (written or emailed) get passed round our team of experts electronically, and their assembled comments collated and sent back to you as soon as possible. The team has even been recently expanded to take in certain key ex-Acorn staff!

Email your problems to:
support@armclub.org.uk

Our series of local shows will continue to happen during 1999 to bring the companies and other attractions to places near you. We're even plotting one or two big surprises in this field. Watch this space!

The Club software collection continues to provide useful software at budget prices due to our low

overheads, and also to financially support the other Club functions. We're always on the lookout for new opportunities here, and there may be a few surprises in the pipeline as well!

We're also keeping a close eye on the negotiations of the Steering Group about resurrection of Phoebe and/or RISC OS 4, and also on the production of the Interconnex Peanut portable, which may yet be the next Acorn desktop machine. We'll keep you informed as and when we can.

While I may wax lyrical through this history and beyond, the point is that The ARM Club is, and always has been, an enthusiasts' Club. By grouping together, we enthusiasts can provide help, support and assistance to each other and also have a notable voice in the important discussions. While there are still enthusiasts willing to give a little of their time to this organisation, there will still be a enthusiasts' Club.

Happy Computing in 1999. Keep the 'faith'. Put a little into the 'faith' and let the 'faith' keep you.

Toby Smith, Chairman

EasiWriter Professional

When I reviewed an earlier version of EasiWriter Professional three years ago (in Eureka 18) I concluded that it had almost every desirable feature I could think of for a word processor. So I was particularly interested to find out what more has now been added.

version being used in Office 97 and 98). I received an email with an attachment, which appeared as a Data file, from a PC user. I dragged the attachment onto the EasiWriter icon which immediately opened a page containing a readable document

An old established word processor keeps up to date with upgrades and, Peter Jennings finds, some new links for the modern world of the Internet and PC users.

This review will deal mainly with the new features introduced from versions four to 5.02, which have appeared in quick succession over recent months.

A look at the 10 pages of release notes shows that the program has been brought up to date to meet the growing need to be able to interact with the majority world of PC users and to reflect the increasing importance of the Internet. I made use of one of these facilities within a few days of receiving the new version. This was the ability to read and write MS Word files created in versions six, seven or eight of Word (the latter

which I was able to save in Acorn text format.

Rich Text Format (RTF) files can also be read and, if ImageFS² is loaded, embedded graphics will be included in Paint or Draw format.

Portable Network Graphics (PNG), which are used in Word 8 and are becoming increasingly popular among PC users, are accepted without having to be converted, although some other image files do need ImageFS² or InterGIF.

The Internet's Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) can be read, by

dragging a file to the icon bar icon or direct into an EasiWriter Professional document, and HTML files can be created from the *Save* menu, complete with a directory of any graphics the original document may contain.

EasiWriter has a very useful Bookmark facility which has now been extended with new features for creating HTML Web pages.

A simple marker is created by clicking where you want it in the text then clicking *Menu* on the *Find* icon on the button bar and choosing *Add Bookmark* from the menu. You can then give the marker a name to be listed on the Search Menu where you can click when you want to return to the selected place.

A temporary *Untitled* bookmark is automatically created if you do not enter a name and this marker will be replaced when you create another temporary one.

The Bookmark's new functions now provide *Links* and *anchors* which will be exported to HTML files as hypertext links.

The anchor is set in the normal way for a bookmark. A link is made by selecting the appropriate text then clicking on the Link icon on the button bar to open a dialogue box with a menu of the bookmarks/anchors to indicate the required one. If the link is to be to another document, the document is dragged to the dialogue box. If the link is to be to a site, the appropriate URL is typed in.

Links can be hidden or shown by underlining and they can be edited and cut and pasted between documents.

Large HTML documents can be split into smaller ones and page links and a contents page are automatically created.

The new features reviewed above have mainly been for Internet users and those who have to exchange files with a PC but there have, of course, been numerous other improvements with each new version of EasiWriter since our previous review.

Mailmerging can now include pictures as well as text.

Searches can be made for text or pictures in a particular style, which can then be deleted or renamed. Keyboard shortcuts can be changed.

Impression users can now import documents with styles, retaining the formatting.

Similar upgrades have been introduced into TechWriter, the extended version of EasiWriter for producing scientific and technical documents.

One slight disappointment was to find that EasiWriter still lacks the ability to type *smart quotes* (‘’) and (‘‘’’) direct from the keyboard. Instead, the ` and ' keys have to be used for the open and close quote marks respectively with one or two presses for single or double quotes (or three if you want the key unchanged). This facility, which is set from the icon bar menu, does however have one very useful extension for providing dashes. Two presses on the hyphen key (-) provides an en dash (—) and three presses an em dash (—).

EasiWriter Professional has many of the features of a desktop publishing

program and some other facilities that DTPs generally lack.

If you don't have to have full desktop publishing facilities, or the technical abilities of TechWriter, EasiWriter Professional should be an excellent

Special offer

Members of The ARM Club can take advantage of a special offer of a 30% discount from the prices of EasiWriter Pro or TechWriter Pro. Prices when you quote your membership number are:

EasiWriter Pro £90.30

TechWriter Pro £139.30

both + £3 post and packing +VAT

EasiWriter Professional

Price: £129 + £3 post +VAT

Site licences: Primary double, Secondary x4 single user price.

Supplier: Icon Technology Ltd

**Church House, Church Street
Carlby, Stamford, Lincs PE9 4NB**

Tel/Fax: 01778 590563

Email:

sales@iconsupport.demon.co.uk

Web: www.iconsupport.demon.co.uk

Site Seeing

Welcome to Site Seeing, your guide to the best of the Internet.

In this issue we go back in time to the streets of Rome, take a look at the Millennium Dome and investigate science at home.

It is very unusual for a large community to have a single theme but they do exist, and one of the best of these is AncientSites. Devoted to the revival of antiquated cities to their former glory, AncientSites is a grouping of people who are interested

Luke Stutters goes from Ancient Rome to the Millennium Dome, with some stupid science in between, as he surfs the Net in his latest review of Web sites worth visiting.

AncientSites

Online communities are thriving on the Internet and their infrastructure now rivals the Internet's original user base.

Anyone who has ever been on the Internet will almost certainly have heard of Geocities and perhaps Fortune City. These are usually a collection of differing interest groups which band together because of what the online community has to offer: free web space, email, etc.

in the great civilisations of the Ancient World and who want to explore and discuss their former glories.

AncientSites is split into about six historical cities, from Rome to Babylon.

These are each separate area where there is specific discussion. The best features of each of these areas are the 'guided tours'. Using 3D modelling and realistic lighting and textures,

ANCIENTSITES™
TAKE YOUR PLACE IN HISTORY

Welcome to the Millennium Commission

you can actually walk the streets of Rome in its prime. The pictures on the tour are so real that you could mistake them for actual photographs.

The atmosphere of the community is equally consistent, making it one of the best resources for amateur archaeological interest on the Internet.

It is not a place for the professional historian who is looking for detailed sources. However, the information provided is more than sufficient for anyone with a keen interest in ancient civilisations or for project work in primary or secondary schools.

Younger children will be particularly impressed by the array of graphics and the variety in this one site.

I would highly recommend the tours to anyone who has seen Rome in recent times; the contrast is astounding.

The Millennium Experience

The Millennium is now on the horizon and this time next year we may all be reeling from the effects of what could be the biggest virus ever: the Millennium Bug. But until then, we may as well all relax and keep surfing while we can!

Many people have asked me where a good site about the approaching celebrations, or Millennium Experience, can be found. A site with stunning graphics, lots of information and a great example of computing in the 21st Century.

I've been looking for this fabled URL for many hours, sifting through countless web directories and megabytes of search engine results. After brain boggling amounts of browsing, it doesn't appear to be out there but I'm sure it will be by the Year 2000. Until then, the Millennium Tent is firmly off the web, at least on an official site.



So I've been looking for an alternative resource and, sure enough, there's a small collection put together by Marvin Suggs.

The Millennium Dome Home page is a small site where you can vote whether you think the Dome is a waste of time or not, view other people's comments on the Tent and visit a collection of links to other millennium-related sites.

The most the government has to offer is an uneventful site which tells us all how wonderful the Millennium Tent will be and where the Millennium Bus is going but nothing with any information as yet. However, you may want to have a look at the backdrop of the home page, which is undoubtedly its best feature.

Science Made Stupid

On a much lighter and certainly more informative note, we round off this journey through cyberspace with the

multi-award-winning Science Made Stupid site, a satire on scientific method and knowledge.

When I first saw this site, I immediately knew that a lot of work had gone into making this site special. Tom Weller has written masses of information on every aspect of modern science, from the Universe to Evolution. The thoroughness and simplicity of the site is very refreshing.

The site is packed with humour which is best appreciated by someone who has done a fair amount of science. (*See table at right.*)

Tom has created a very effective site, brimming with drawings and diagrams, without elaborate backgrounds or animated GIFs. The site claims to have its roots way back in 1985 which, in Internet terms, is very ancient indeed. The site aims to bring science to everyone, and anyone

SYMBOLS USED IN MATHEMATICS	
\gtrless	greater than, less than, or maybe equal to
\sim	has some kind of relation to
\approx	is very reminiscent of
\ncong	probably has nothing to do with
\triangleright	is too expensive
\equiv	must be equivalent to something
\propto	x varies as y, or maybe z
\pm	plus or minus an unknown sum
\ll	I'll let you know when I look it up
\oslash	I left the figures in my coat pocket
\exists	some
\odot	pie
Δ	what's the difference?

from beyond
your modem!

In the meantime,
let me know of
any Web sites
which you think
are worth seeing.

I'm switching
ISPs, so contact
me via snail mail
for the moment
by writing to:

Luke Stutters
Meadow View
Stakes Hill Road
Waterlooville
Hampshire
PO7 5UB

who visits this well written site will
be left with a lasting impression.
However, it brings to mind doubts
about what undergraduates actually
do during their degree courses.

I hope you enjoyed this issue's
offerings from the infinity of
Cyberspace. Next issue I'll be
bringing you some more strange sites

The sites to see

AncientSites

www.ancientsites.com/

The Millennium Dome

www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/3323/index.html

Science Made Stupid

www.moonboy.com/sms/

Acorn Shows Calendar 1999

Acorn Southwest Show

Date: 20th February, 1999

Venue: Webbington Hotel

Loxton

Nr Axbridge

North Somerset.

Email: acornshow@argonet.co.uk

Web: www.argonet.co.uk/acornshow/

There will be the usual selection of Acorn companies and user groups. Our own Club stand will be there providing Membership, products, advice or just for a chat.

Admission is £2 for adults but only £1 for Club members. Remember to bring your membership card or badge! Accompanied children under 16 are admitted free.

All the regular Acorn Shows seem to be continuing this year, with even the hope of a revived Acorn World. Matthew Cook has compiled this list for your diary.

Taking place at the Webbington Hotel the Acorn Southwest Show comes back for a second year, this highly successful show is organised by the ever-busy John Stonier, again bringing the Acorn shows to everyone.

With two major landmarks in the Acorn community looming on the horizon, RISC OS 4 and the Artworks replacement, Cerilica's *Vantage*, may both be present.

Wakefield Show

Date: 15th/16th May, 1999

Venue: Thornes Park Athletics

Stadium

Horbury Road

Wakefield.

Tel: 01924 379778

Web: www.cybervillage.co.uk/acorn/wakefield/

The regular Wakefield Show is taking place regardless of events in the Acorn community.

Wakefield have got sponsorship from Cerilica and Acorn User.

The Show will open Saturday 10:00 to 17:00 and Sunday 10:00 to 16:00. Those with pre-booked tickets are admitted 15 minutes earlier.

Tickets are £2.50 in advance for adults and £3.50 on the door; children under 16 are £1.50 or £2.50 on the door. (There is no Club discount.)

Advance tickets can be obtained from: Show 99

95 Cumbrian Way
Lupset Park
Wakefield
West Yorks
WF2 8JT

Make cheques payable to 'WACG Show'.

The (WACG) Wakefield Acorn Computer Group are calling it 'the Premier RISC OS Show' in the light of recent events, especially as Acorn World has not yet been confirmed.

All the usual attractions will be on show, as well as the Town Crier, the official launch of Cerilica Vantage, prize draws and a charity stand.

This should be well worth a visit, including a stop off at the Club stand.

Acorn South East

Details are still to be released.

Email: acornshow@argonet.co.uk

Web: www.argonet.co.uk/acornshow/

Acorn World '99

Talks are in progress to try to revive *Acorn World* for 1999.

The major players in the Acorn Show community are involved and we hope that an announcement will be made in the next couple of months.

Continued on page 24 with the latest information on the Acorn Scottish and Acorn Midlands Shows.

FileFind

The FileFind application has been released by a relative newcomer to the Acorn software market: ID-Software of Vienna, Austria.

The application is designed to search for text strings and file names on

The input window of FileFind is shown opposite.

There are three writable icons into which data can be inserted before the search is started. The first is named *Directory*. You cannot drag single

Roger King goes searching for text strings and file names with a new PD utility from Austria and finds it the fastest one he's used.

various filing systems. For this review I chose to use three storage locations: an IDE hard disc, a Zip disc and a ×4 speed CD-ROM drive using SparkFS directories.

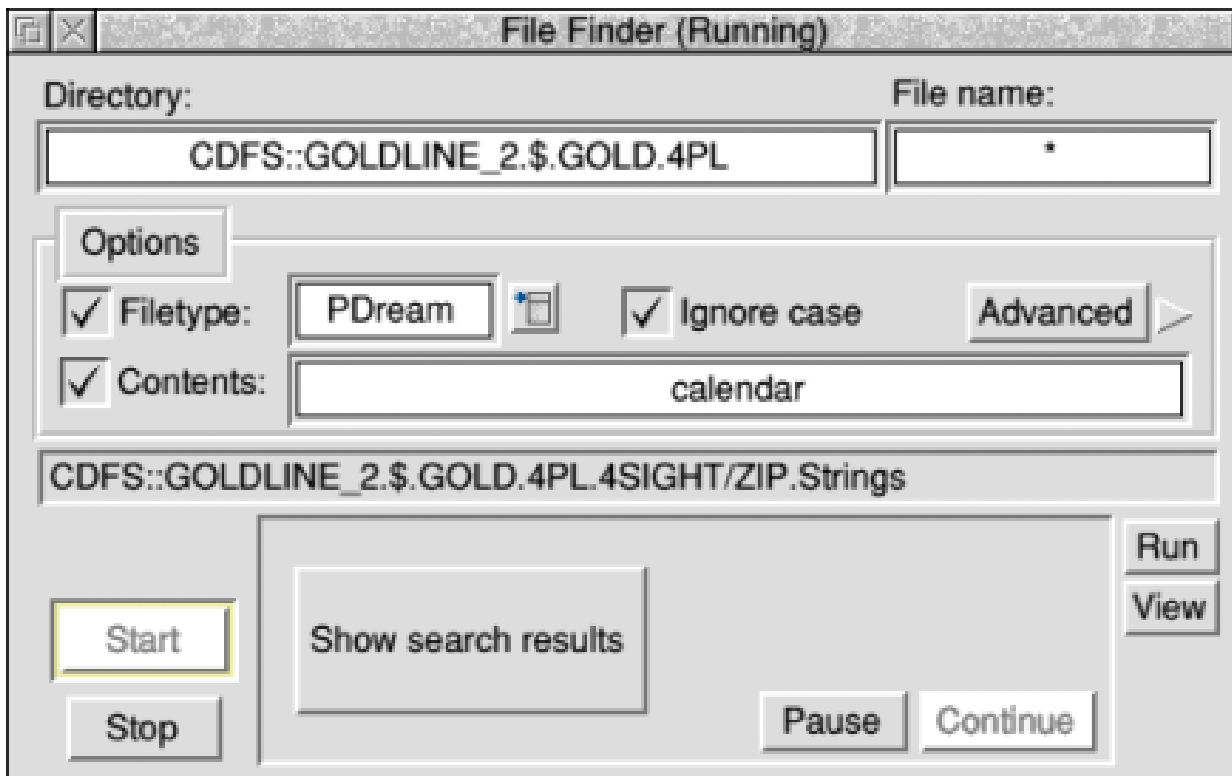
The source of the data used for the test was Abacus Training's *GoldLine* CD-ROM. I selected the '4PL' directory which contains SparkFS-compressed directories of the PipeLine User Group files from November 1991 to August 1998, a total of 3,717 files. I also copied the 4PL directory from CD ROM to an IDE hard disc and to a Zip drive for comparison speed tests of uncompressed files.

files into FileFind, they must be contained in directories.

You can of course drag into the Directory writable icon an application directory if you so wish.

The File name writable icon will permit FileFind to search for file names with the use of a '*' as a wild card if required.

Although the Filetype icon is writable, there is an icon on the right which, when clicked upon, will display a list of filetypes in alphabetical order known to the computer on booting-up. It is a simple



The input window

matter to click on the required filetype to enter it into the writable icon.

The *Contents* writable icon is where you will input your search string. A search string can contain a '?' as a wild card if required. There is an icon above the middle of the writable icon to which one can set the ignore case option. Note that you can use a file name (if known) in conjunction with the Contents icon to narrow down the search criteria.

The *Advanced* icon displayed in the picture will be discussed in detail at the end of the article.

Searching

The files on the GoldLine CD-ROM are all compressed with the SparkFS application as zip directories. You must install SparkFS, not SparkPlug, onto the icon bar before commencing a search with FileFind. Clicking on the *Start* icon will then commence the search.

The window to the right of the *Start* icon is where the search results will be stored. This window, although fairly small, can be scrolled in both horizontal and vertical directions to enable all of the search results to be viewed.

As matches to the Contents string 'calendar' are found they will be displayed in this window. The most recent find will be shown in inverse video.

While a search is in progress you can click select over any filename in the list to highlight it. Once highlighted, you have the choice of two options: run the file or view the location of the file. As all the filetypes we are searching are of PipeDream filetype then clicking on the Run icon will

load PipeDream onto the icon bar, if not already present, and load the file clicked upon. The *View* icon will simply display the location of the file we have selected.

If you are searching for results in Impression Publisher and Style documents then do remember that there are two filetypes associated with these applications. The first is of single file format and has a filetype of ImpDoc (&BC5). The other file format used by these applications is

an application directory. The text will be held in files with the filetype set to Stories (&D88). If you set the wrong filetype then your search results will be zero! It really would be advisable to run two searches with each of the different filetypes set

Application	FileFind	LooknFind
Files searched	3717	3717
Source	CD-ROM	CD-ROM
Compression	SparkFS Dirs	SparkFS Dirs
Search time	13:16	25:21
Source	Zip disc	Zip disc
Compression	None	None
Search time	2:49	6:03
Source	IDE Hard Disc	IDE Hard Disc
Compression	None	None
Search time	2:05	4:44

Speed comparisons

when looking for strings in Publisher or Style documents.

Speed comparison

To compare the search speed of FileFind I used as a comparison the LooknFind application, written by Robert Lytton and available from most Public Domain libraries. It has very similar features to the program under review.

As you can see from the table opposite, the FileFind application is nearly twice as fast or better in finding search strings than the LooknFind application on all media. The gain in search speed is especially noticeable when searching compressed directories on CD-ROMs.

Registering the Application

The FileFind application can be obtained from most Public Domain libraries or downloaded by email from ID-Software's Web site. However, when you receive the application, the Advanced search icon will be greyed out.

To gain access to Advanced searches it is necessary to register the

application. To register you must send an English £10 note to ID-Software. You will then be sent a 'Register' text file which must be then inserted into the FileFind application directory.

Advanced Searches

Once the 'Register' file has been inserted into your FileFind application directory, the Advanced search icon becomes available for use.

The Advanced search option permits the use of the conditional operators: AND, OR and NOT in a search string and many other special functions are available.

In an input string, you could enter 'Acorn OR Archimedes' which would find strings containing either name.

'NOT Acorn AND Archimedes' would find files not containing 'Acorn' but containing 'Archimedes'.

'NOT FTYPE(Text)' finds files with filetypes other than 'Text' (FFF).

'NOT FNAME(a*) AND FLEN(<1024) AND Acorn' would

find files not starting with the letter 'a' with a size smaller than 1K and containing 'Acorn'.

All operators are case-insensitive. You can enter into search strings 'AND', 'and' or 'AnD'.

I can thoroughly recommend the FileFind application. It is the fastest string search application that I have yet discovered for Acorn computers.

The latest version of FileFind (1.26) is on the Eureka disc.

If you are connected to the Internet, any future upgrades can be downloaded (see the Web site address below).

FileFind

Registration fee: £10

Supplier: ID-Software

Wilhelminenstr. 126

A-1160 Wien

Austria

Email:

webmaster@id-software.co.at

Web: www.id-software.co.at

Acorn Shows 1999 (Continued from page 9)

Acorn Scottish Show

Details are yet to be released.

Acorn Midlands '99

Date : November 1999.

Venue: Motorcycle Museum
Birmingham

Email: shows@armclub.org.uk

Web: www.armclub.org.uk/

Details are still to be released about
The ARM Club's annual Midlands
Show.

More than 650 visitors attended in
1998 and we expect to attract even
more this time.

*Remember, you can keep up to date
with the latest details of the Acorn
shows in all issues of Eureka.*



ACORN SOUTHWEST SHOW

Supporting Acorn users in SW England and S Wales

SATURDAY 20th FEBRUARY 1998

The Webbington Hotel
Loxton, Nr Axbridge
North Somerset

- Acorn companies and clubs
 - Special show discounts
 - Seminars and talks
 - Games Arcade
- Theatre programme:*
11am - News from Xemplar
12pm - Acorn product scene
2pm - Graphics for RISC OS
3pm - Working with other platforms

DOORS OPEN AT 10am UNTIL 4.30pm

ADMISSION CHARGES

Adults £2 / ARM Club or Clan members £1
Children under 16 FREE (accompanied by adult)
(Pay at door only)

For further details - Phone/Fax: (01707) 390410

Email: acornshow@argonet.co.uk

<http://www.argonet.co.uk/acornshow/>

All In The Day Of A Show Organiser

The day started around 7.30am when I turned up with my fiancée to set up for the day's event. As with previous shows, there are a few companies already waiting to set up but nobody is allowed in until 8am.

9.30am: People queue

It's 9.30am and already people are forming a queue at the entrance. Exhibitors begin to rush a bit knowing that the start of the show is not far away. Some companies bring along their own portable stands, while

One of our very active members, John Stonier, details how he spent one busy day as organiser of the recent Acorn Midlands Show in Birmingham.

The tables need to be adjusted so they are in the right position; table cloths need to be draped over the tables and company names need to be placed on them. Show guides, cash box and other sundry items are placed at the show entrance.

8am: Exhibitors enter

At 8am, exhibitors enter and are directed to their stands, pointing out where power sockets are situated. The room starts to come to life, with an enthusiastic buzz, as people chatter while setting up their equipment, positioning posters and arranging their wares.

others rely on tables and a bit of wall space behind for posters.

9.45am: Cup of coffee

Around 9.45am, I head for a cup of coffee, feeling a bit flustered. It's been a hard slog ensuring that everyone is happy and modifying things as and when necessary.

10am: Doors open

At 10am the doors open and people pour in, eagerly looking forward to perusing the stands, chatting to exhibitors and hopefully grabbing a bargain or two. The noise of people chatting increases and empty space soon becomes at a premium. People

1998

An ARM Club event

ACORN MIDLANDS SHOW

SATURDAY 28th NOVEMBER

The National Motorcycle Museum
Junction 6 on the M42
Birmingham

push past each other targeting individual stands.

I wander around making sure that exhibitors and customers are all happy. Problems with air conditioning, lost property and general queries ensure that life is never boring. I always get a warm fuzzy feeling inside me seeing people really enjoying the show.

Late morning: Crowds

Late morning is the busiest time of the day and it's difficult to fight your way through the crowd. Around 200 people enter the show within the first couple of hours. By lunch things get a bit better and as the afternoon wears on, the crowds thin out a bit.

4.30pm: Show is closed

At 4.30pm an announcement is made that the show is officially closed. A few die hard enthusiasts rush around the room in search of some last minute bargains. Eventually, weary exhibitors start to pack up their stands and disappear leaving a collection of cardboard boxes behind.

The room becomes quiet and you'd never have known that a computer show had taken place for the last nine hours. I leave the building with great satisfaction, knowing that both exhibitors and customers have had a great day out.

On to the next show...

Organised Letter Filing

From Tried and Trusted Tips

Eureka 28:

Resolving to have a better organised year in 1999? Here is the simple way to make your word processor correspondence easier to file — and

Enhancement

I use a file naming convention very similar to this, but with a major enhancement.

With the system described on page 39 of Eureka 28, only six letters are

In our last issue, Tried and Trusted Tips suggested a system for naming correspondence files to keep them in date order. Jonathan Stuart suggest an improved way.

find. You can arrange to have copies of all the letters you write filed under each recipient's name in alphabetical and date order.

Create a directory named after the year. Name the file for each letter with the first six letters of the recipient's name (or the full name if shorter) followed by the date of the month and day, in that order, in figures. Use a zero to start the single figure months (01 for January and so on) otherwise the October to December letters will be mixed up with the January ones.

available for the person's name, yet the majority of months have a leading zero.

Longer filenames are not portable to older machines or foreign platforms. You can't sort by the date stamp, as documents are often amended later on.

The solution is a single digit for the first nine months, and then get clever for October to December. The initial letters O/N/D are easy to remember, but they sort as D/N/O. You could use A/B/C, but people who are not confident with hexadecimal run the dreadful risk of a wrong month.

My solution for many years now has been to use H/N/X, which memorably stands for Halloween/November/Xmas. Thus the *Tried and Trusted Tips* example (*WilliS0207*) becomes *WilliaS207*, and this document, dated December 28, is *ArmClubX28*.

Note that the name field is now seven letters, and sorting files by name still gives date order. If sent to a DOS machine, you can make the date neatly fit the three character filetype.

Less happy is a convention where five characters represent the whole date, so right now is 98X28 and January begins on 99i0i. This is used in spreadsheets recording events since the early 80s, where narrow columns means more data on the screen or printed page.

Millennium compatible

The problem is that it's not millennium compatible. If 00 is used for the year 2000, the dates won't sort.

However, I suddenly realised I can use the letter O instead of a leading zero for the year, which works up to 31st December 2009, or O9X31. It can be pushed another ten years by

using a vertical bar for a leading one taking me to |9X31. Note you could not use this for file names, as | is not a valid character.

If I'm still using the system by 2020, I'll have to use four-digit years but of course that makes my H/N/X system more valuable still.

***Our Technical Help Co-ordinator,
David Ruck, writes:***

Although this method is very clever, with the advent of native long filename support in RISC OS 4 and the excellent !RaFS or !SparkFS Zip formats for older machines, I would recommend moving to using unambiguous longer names now.

Feedback is always welcome. If you have any comments or suggestions to make on any article which has appeared in Eureka please email them to The Editor at eureka@armclub.org.uk or post them to the Club's usual Freepost address.

The 123-CD

I started in a very good mood and I was not to be disappointed. Sherston can always be counted on (ouch! —excuse the pun) to entertain and this new CD is no exception.

monitor and it worked perfectly. All the installation and operating instructions were concise and correct. This is important for educational software of all kinds, but especially so

Sherston can be counted on to entertain, says Rilla Paterson, who finds it fun to play the numbers games on a new CD-ROM designed to make learning child's play.

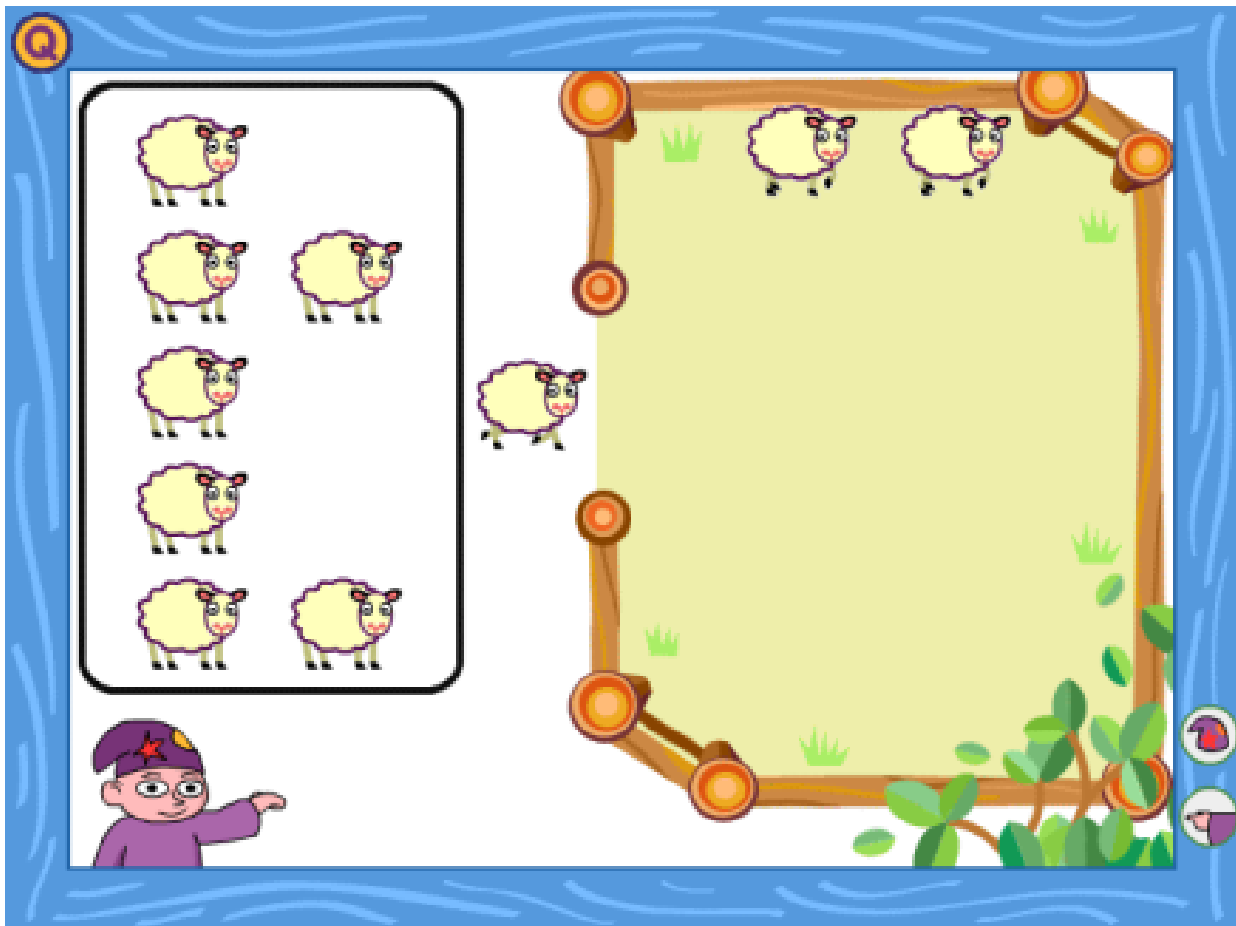
The 123-CD teaches enumeration and cardination. Yes, I had to reach for my dictionary there, too. Cardination means how many, whereas ordination relates to the order in which the numbers go: first, second, third. (It made me wonder how cardinals become ordained, but I dare say the Latin roots are a bit remote to be of further relevance. Back to 123).

It is not often that a CD appears which is designed for the very youngest school intake. This CD comes ready for use on Acorn, Mac or PC. Minimum requirements for the Acorn are A5000, 4MB RAM, double speed CD-ROM drive and an RGB monitor. I used a StrongARM Risc PC with a 24x CD-ROM drive and an SVGA

for infant children who are only just beginning to use computers. It is equally important for teachers who haven't the time to follow anything too elaborate, and who may not be particularly computer literate themselves.

The 123-CD teaches children to count. Can't any four-year-old do that? Well, they may know the numbers, but 123 teaches the concept at a deeper level than just reciting the sequence. As the User Guide says, to count properly children have to:

1. Know the number words in the correct order.
2. Be able to say one number word for every object they want to count.



Counting sheep (which won't send the children to sleep)

3. Separate out the objects they have counted from the objects still left to count.

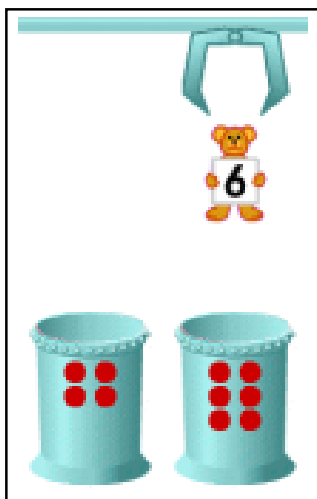
4. Stop counting when they reach the last object.

5. Know that the last number name they say is the number of objects

The program features a friendly character called Wizit, who guides the children through two main areas: *Wizit's Number Workshop* and *Wizit's*

Number Fun. The activities are explored simply by clicking with the mouse.

Wizit's Number Workshop contains seven activities designed to teach counting at a basic level. Each activity features several counting games so there is plenty of variety. *Counting Out Loud*, for example, features sheep in a pen, frogs in a pond, fish in a lake, etc. As the child clicks on them, one at a time, a voice speaks the number and the sheep trot



Drop Teddy in the right machine to dress him.

reinforcing even further the child's learning. In another activity the child is asked to choose by clicking on a numeral how many eggs are in a basket and they hatch into chicks with endearing cracking noises.

Right answers cause Wizit to perform a suitable reward, such as a somersault or blowing up a balloon, with attendant congratulatory noises and gestures. Wrong answers allow further tries. The child can pass to another game or repeat the same one by clicking on self-explanatory icons.

In another game the child has to identify a basket containing the same number of objects as the one displayed and another one asks the

into the pen or the frogs or fish jump into the pond, all with engaging sound effects. The final number is repeated in sound and reappears as a numeral at the

bottom of the screen,

reinforcing even further the child's

child to place more, or fewer, objects in the basket. The programmers have taken the trouble to use the words *fewer* and *less* correctly. It would have been easy for them to say "less eggs" and "less frogs" but they were careful to design the commentary properly.

Wizit's Number Fun contains two animated rhymes to help children remember the sequence from 1 to 10: "One bun in the sun, two shoes for a kangaroo..." and so on. I loved the "Ten hens in a secret den", whereby a chicken pulls a light switch and 10 pairs of eyes go pecking around in the dark.

Teddy factory

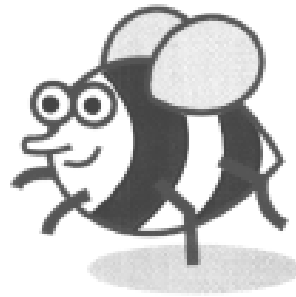
There are two entertaining games. In the first of these the child guides Wizit to the correct number by sending him round a kind of snakes and ladders board and the second is an intriguing teddy factory, where teddies are dropped into dressing-up machines and emerge in various costumes. This production line is supposed to be a race against time, with an attendant hourglass, but I found it still worked long after the time had run out.

The teacher can set the level of difficulty by altering the range of numbers featured in the games and can also set up a sequence of activities for the child to follow. This takes the child's options away, thereby channelling the work in a busy classroom where time is limited. Otherwise children would just go on and on, laughing with Wizit well into the lunch break.

Worksheets

Included in the package is a resource pack of numbers and images which mirror those featured in the CD. There are worksheets, writing sheets, dot to dot games, picture cards, lotto and number displays which can be photocopied for the class. These extras are well-presented and ideas for their use with the software are listed in the easy-to-follow User Guide.

So what's wrong with it? Not a lot, but trust Auntie Rilla to spot the naughty. We find it (mercifully) in the teacher options — "Click on the activities to select them". How about a new game called "Uncle Sherston Learns to Spell", whereby every time a howler like this appears, a gigantic



spell-checker leaps out of the computer and zaps the poor old programmer? Come on, boys, sharpen up. Show your program to a few independent pairs of eyes *before* it reaches the open market.

Apart from that, full marks. It's fun, and it has clear objectives which are fully realised. The program is guaranteed to build confidence, both in learning to count and in using a computer —an ideal first start for the young learner and good value for money.

123-CD

Prices (all +VAT): single £29.95
pack of three £44.93, five £54.95

Supplier: Sherston Software Ltd

Angel House, Sherston

Malmesbury, Wilts SN16 0LH

Tel: 01666 843200

Fax: 01666 843216

Email: sales@sherston.co.uk

Web: www.sherston.com

Professional Typography Expert

Newcomers to the desktop publishing scene may ask why, with all the hundreds of free PD fonts available, it is worth buying any. The short answer to this is *quality*.

The fonts can be used direct from the CD or from hard disc, where they can be installed in a !Fonts folder or into EasyFont Pro (version 4.08 or later) or FontDIR.

Peter Jennings finds all the fonts you are likely to need and some utilities to help you use them, on the latest version of iSV's Typography CD-ROM.

For example, the fonts in the Professional Typography Expert 2100 CD-ROM (to give it its full name) from iSV have been professionally produced and all have font hinting (iSV's own NDT —No Dropout Technology) which prevents parts of letters disappearing when used at small sizes. You cannot guarantee this from PD offerings and, at 1½p a font, they are not very expensive when you buy a CD-ROM full.

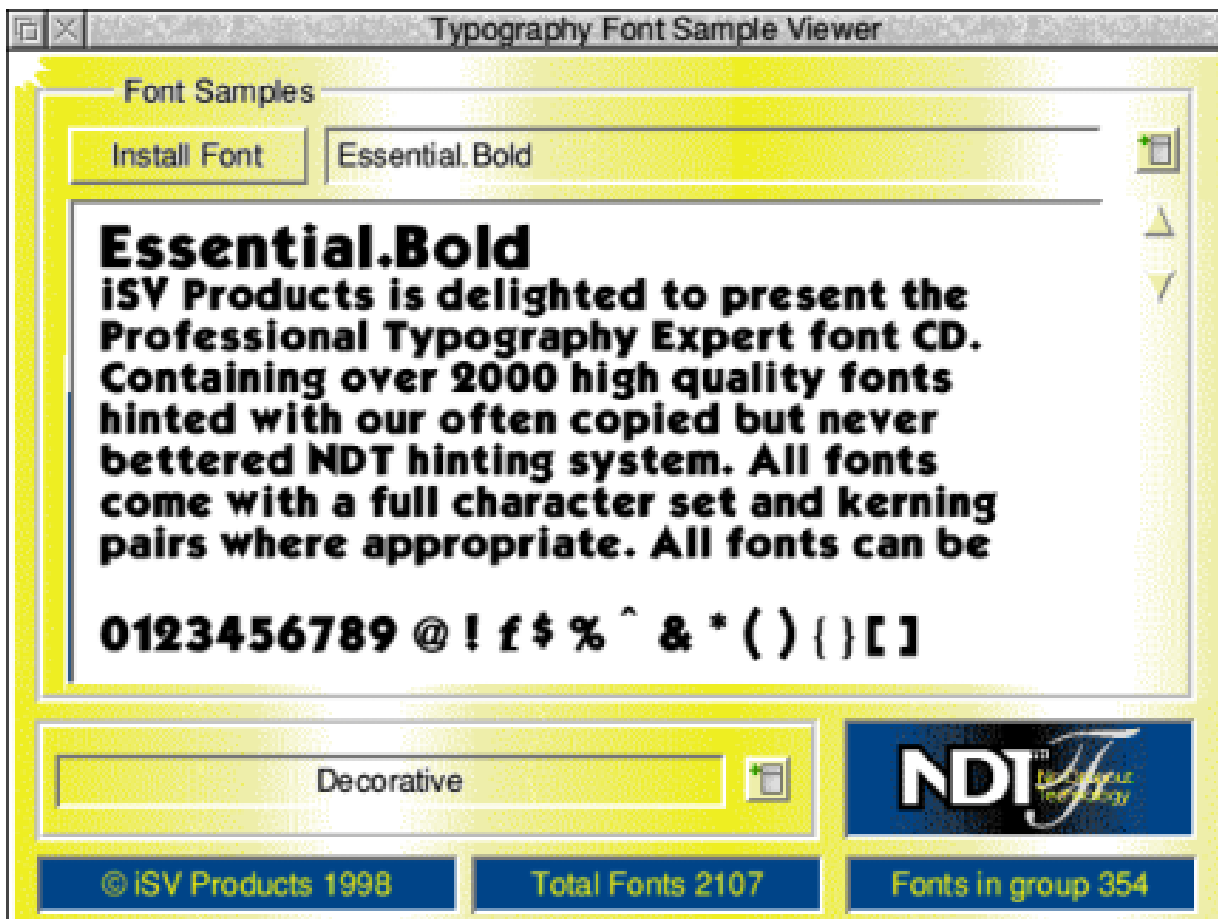
This is the second Typography CD from iSV and more than 740 new faces have been added. It is not, however, just a collection of fonts — although you do get 2,107 of them — it's more a compendium of typefaces and utilities.

The fonts are compiled into complete families, all with a full Latin 1 character set. They are classified on the CD-ROM into 13 groups:

Decorative (354 fonts) contains specialised fonts for uses such as headings and logos.

Designer (102) are all narrow modern faces for similar uses as the Decorative group.

Digital (68) contains two types of fonts: monospaced where each character has the same width, for spreadsheets and similar uses, and other decorative faces designed to look like typewriting or digital displays.



The font sample viewer

Eastern (24) contains decorative fonts with an Eastern style, also for headings and logos.

Gothic (294) are what should be more correctly termed *Blackletter*. They are mainly old German/English style fonts, as used in ecclesiastical documents, and are principally decorative although some can be used for body copy.

NonLatin (24) contains two font families: Hebrew and Greek.

OpenFace (108) are unfilled outline fonts, again for headings and logos.

SansSerif (300) fonts which have no serifs (*see entry below*) and can be used for body copy and headings.

Script (318) a wide variety of fonts, some looking like handwriting and others in decorative styles such as those used on wedding invitations.

Serif (384) fonts which have small lines at the ends of the letter strokes,



Font Catalogue can display and print a complete font family

making them more legible, particularly at smaller sizes, and usually used for the main body copy of a document (as in Eureka).

Symbolic (17) do not have normal letters but are symbols, some of which can be used as bullet points.

Uncial (72) are fonts that have a Celtic appearance and can be used for headings and body copy.

Western (42) are decorative fonts with an American Wild West look, best used for posters and headings.

A Sample Viewer displays a paragraph of text in any selected typeface. There is also a copy of iSV's FntCatlog which will show sample text from a complete font family or a font character table to view or print out.

If you are unsure which typefaces work well together, iDesigner helps

you choose by displaying suitable combinations for body and headlines, letting you specify one of the fonts.

Acorn's FontEd font editor is supplied, in StrongARM and nested wimp compatible form, and there are three other font editing tools.

FontTrix Pro allows new weights to be created in existing outline fonts. FontKern is designed to edit kerning data and can copy it between fonts. It will also convert a RISC OS2 font into RISC OS3 format to allow auto-kerning with applications such as Ovation, Impression and Wordz. iSVMetric reads and writes the information within a font's *intmetrics* file and displays it for editing.

The names of equivalent iSV and Postscript fonts can be found in a database application on the CD.

There is also a very comprehensive dictionary and glossary of font related terms and a directoryful of demos of other associated iSV applications.

Characters Table for Clarence Bold font

This CD-ROM can be recommended to anyone who wants more typefaces and most users should find everything they need there.

Professional Typography Expert 2100

Price: £31.50 inc VAT and post
Upgrade from Typography1 £16.50

Supplier: iSV Products

86 Turnberry, Home Farm

Bracknell, Berks RG12 8ZH

Tel/Fax: 01344 455769

Email: atimbrell@aol.com

Web: members.aol.com/isvproduct/

Introduction To Digital Art

Four years ago I produced an Art Lesson CD-ROM for Primary Schools and this year I had ideas of making a follow up version for Adults. I am sad to say that I think it has now already been done by David Cowell and Spacetech!

Two of the examples are shown opposite.

The !Draw tutorial is very well designed, and I wish I had had something like it when I first bought an Acorn computer. The instructions

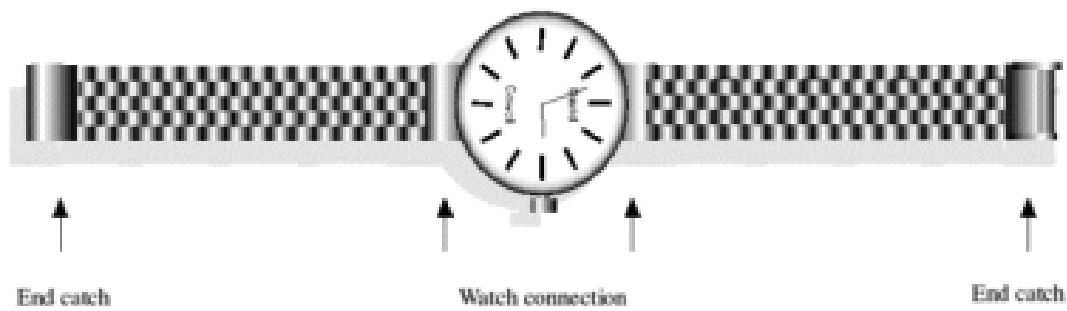
From Christopher Jarman we get the first review of the new tutorial CD-ROM from Spacetech which guides the way from beginner to advanced in vector and bitmap art.

This excellent CD-ROM consists of two tutorials in !Draw and in bitmap Photo Graphics. Two methods of presentation have been used, one with Spacetech's own OHP Show (which I could not get to work under any circumstances on my StrongARM Risc PC) the other was using Multimedia Textease which was very well done.

Included is a three part (beginner, intermediate and advanced) tutorial about how to produce sophisticated artwork using !Draw, although the techniques demonstrated apply to most vector drawing packages including those on other platforms.

demand some concentration as !Draw is quite a sophisticated program but well worth the effort. Once you are taken into the Intermediate and Advanced sections the journey becomes quite exciting and the graphics used as examples are impressive. They certainly inspire you to have a go at much more complex work than the usual flat Disney-like Clip Art which is so common.

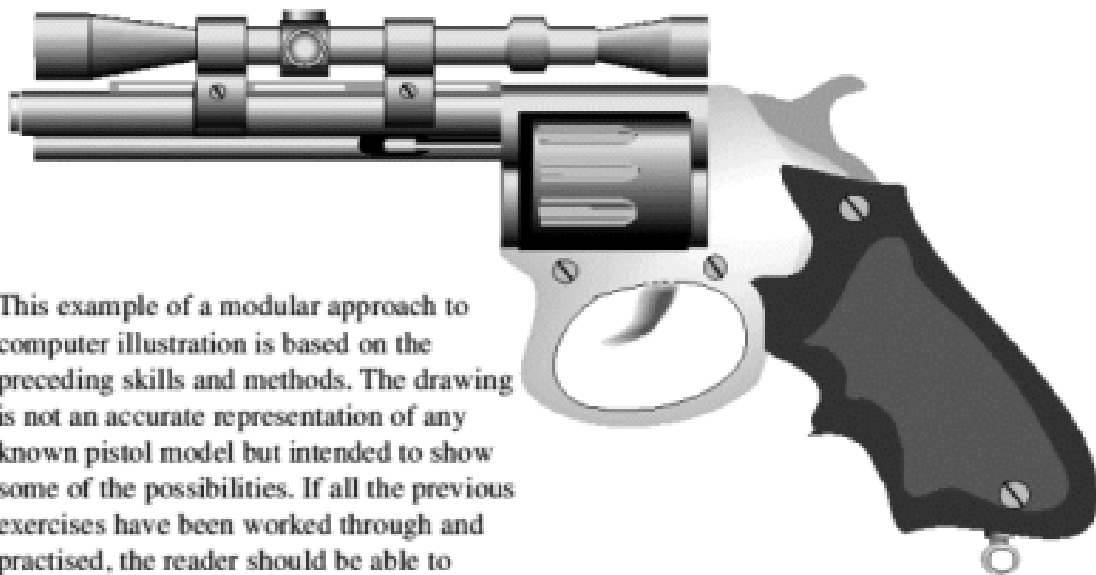
The Photo section which is also titled *An Introduction to Digital Art* has quite a different character. I would say that the author is much more at home here with the manipulation of



bitmaps. If you have ever puzzled over filters and magic wands and what to do with the various tools in photo manipulation, then this tutorial will answer most of your questions. There are some very helpful tips about scanners (did you know that there is a 'sweet spot' on every

scanner? No, neither did I). The Textease pages themselves are well-designed so that even while teaching you something about computer art the layouts of the pages give good examples of the way to achieve this at the same time.

Example Illustration



This example of a modular approach to computer illustration is based on the preceding skills and methods. The drawing is not an accurate representation of any known pistol model but intended to show some of the possibilities. If all the previous exercises have been worked through and practised, the reader should be able to identify the various elements and the construction techniques.



David Cowell shows step by step how to create a watercolour like graphic (below) from the first drawn shapes. We see plenty of this kind of illustration in the glossy magazines but seldom get to see in detail how it is done. Creative Scanning and Scanning 3D objects are helpful and fascinating pages.

Actually, my only real complaint is that the photo tutorial stopped just as it was getting particularly interesting. I wish there was more.

David Cowell has produced this package to complement Photodesk.

Although he uses Photodesk for all his work, the principles would apply to almost any reasonably well featured bitmap editor.

Included on the CD are some copyright free images to illustrate the tutorials (see opposite page). These are of sufficiently high resolution to be printed and framed for display.

In 1983, David was seconded from his post as a Deputy Head Teacher to develop the skills of teachers in the use of the new technologies. Since retiring from The Babbage Information Technology Centre,



David has devoted time and space to develop his techniques and to continue his work developing the digital image.

He has held several successful exhibitions of his work which has created interest also in America and Germany. Portfolios of his work have been published in various specialist magazines. David now runs a successful Digital Art studio at Dartington in Devon.

It is a pity that the files in the Textease application have not got the /TE file extension which would enable the program to run on any PC with the PC Textease Browser. Of course, they could have all been saved out as HTML files and thus available on the Mac too but you can't have everything I suppose!

There are about 91 pages of tutorials plus over 30 copyright free images on this CD. While the quality of the



presentation is very high I think that perhaps there is not enough on the CD to merit the asking price. I would expect more like 200 to 250 pages for that sort of outlay, and at least 100 Photo CD quality images. But I certainly look forward to seeing more from this author.

Introduction to Digital Art CD-ROM

Price: £24.95 including VAT

Supplier: Spacotech Ltd

1 The Courtyard

Southwell Business Park

Portland, Dorset, DT5 2JS

Tel: 01305 822753

Fax: 01305 860483

Email: sales@spacotech.co.uk

Web: www.spacotech.co.uk

Around The Acorn World

Element 14

Acorn's new name for its major business now is Element 14 Ltd. Many Acorn users learnt this via the Internet or other sources ahead of the official launch on the 14th January.

RISC OS 4

Confirmation that RISC OS 4 was to be released came first on the 23rd December 1998 with a surprise announcement from Acorn, who issued the following statement.

A round up of some of the news of the Acorn world you may have missed, including Acorn's new name and the future of RISC OS, reported by Matthew Cook.

The name was chosen because Element 14 is Silicon in the periodic table and Silicon is a building block of modern technology.

“Support re-affirmed for Acorn community with release of RISC OS 4.

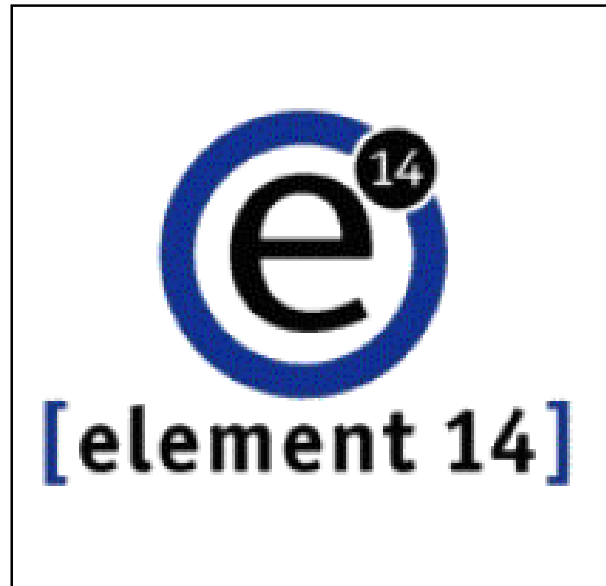
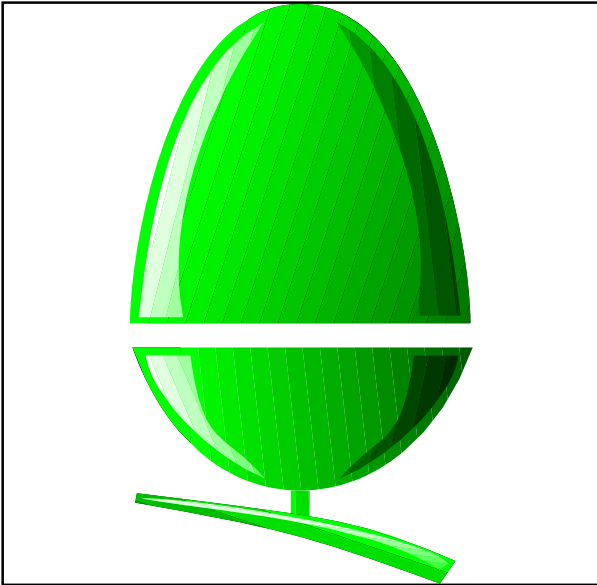
Cambridge, 23rd December 1998

The Element 14 rebranding is aimed at giving the company a fresh start, allowing them to concentrate on the creation of next generation silicon and software for multimedia devices, initially focused in the digital TV market. The Acorn name is expected to live on in desktop computers still available through Castle Technology.

Acorn Computers Ltd, today announced their intention to release RISC OS 4 —the latest version of their acclaimed 32-bit modular operating system. With an anticipated release date in mid January, Acorn will be making this latest version of RISC OS available to existing StrongARM Risc PC owners through the normal dealer channels.

More details of Element 14 are available on their new web site www.e-14.com and, at present, still on www.acorn.com.

Originally launched in 1988, RISC OS is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year.



Acorn moves on ... to Element 14

RISC OS 4 gives the computer a whole new look and feel —complete new icon sets have been created for devices, the filer applications and their toolboxes. The operating system now has a faster kernel to support better task swapping, as well as a new filecore which supports up to 80,000 files per directory, and offers long file names as well as support for bigger discs. Like all Acorn operating systems, RISC OS 4 is stable, scalable and supports a multitasking environment.

In addition to the core improvements, this latest version of RISC OS includes many new features such as an enhanced pinboard, screen savers and easy configuration, these will all

be supplied as part of a new disc image.”

Ray Pinchard, of Acorn’s Workstations division, said “We are delighted to announce the release of RISC OS 4 now —as we would like to reaffirm our support for the Acorn community.” He added, “Acorn have recently been compelled to make some disappointing statements, but we want our customers to know that we remain dedicated to supporting their needs, long into the future.”

Mid January came and went, with no further news. Then, on 26 January, the second announcement came. This time from the Steering Group who had been in prolonged negotiations.

‘New Company formed.

The Steering Group is pleased to announce that a new company — RISCOS Ltd has been formed following discussions, initially with Acorn Computers, and now Element 14 Ltd over the future marketing and development of RISC OS 4.

Further details will be released as soon as possible.

Paul Middleton
on behalf of RISCOS Ltd”

World Factbook CD-ROM

Interconnex announced on the 12th January that it has just released a World Fact Book CD-ROM title. This allows access to a variety of geographical data: Physical Geography, Population, Government, Economy, Communications, Transport, Military and International issues.

The CD-ROM will retail at £20 with £2 for postage and packing. We hope to have a review in a later issue of Eureka.

For further information contact :

Interconnex UK Ltd 01934 522880
email: sales@interconnex.co.uk

Bett 1999 Exhibition

The Educational Computing show *Bett 1999* at Olympia was a great success again, with more than 30 stands either developing, selling or using Acorn machines.

Convergence

Astute Graphics are making their *Convergence* print available in an unframed form. The special edition print is available at the price of £75, which includes post and packaging to United Kingdom addresses. The dimensions are 45cm x 51cm and it is printed at 600dpi on 200gsm paper.

For further information contact:
Astute Graphics 01989 567350
nick@astutegrfx.demon.co.uk

Introduction to Digital Art

Spacetechn released a new tutorial CD ROM. The CD is planned to complement the existing Photodesk Accessory CD. It is produced by David Cowell of the Digital Art Centre in Darlington. The CD is available from Spacetechn for £24.95.

There is the first published review, by Christopher Jarman, on page 38.

For further information contact :
Spacetech (01305) 822753
sales@spacetech.co.uk

Clares Move

Clares Micro Supplies have moved premises as from Monday 11th January 1999. The new contact details are :

Clares Micro Supplies
75a Webbs Lane
Middlewich
Cheshire
CW10 9DS
Tel: 01606 833999
Fax: 01606 836111
Email: sales@claresmicro.com
Web: www.claresmicro.com

EasiReader

EasiReader is a new product developed by Argonet and Icon Technology. It is a stand-alone reader and printer of Word 6/7 documents created by Word 97/99. EasiReader is available from Argonet at £29.95 including postage and packaging. If you are an Argonet subscriber a special price of £19.95 applies.

For further information contact :
Argonet 0500 586586
sales@argonet.co.uk

LanMan 98

LanMan 98 is the latest product from Warm Silence Software. LanMan 98 is a replacement for LanMan supplied with OmniClient, the Multi Platform Networking communications package. The original version was limited, when talking to PC clients, to the 8.3 DOS convention for filenames, the new version allows the full long filenames as used in Windows 95 and the later 98.

For further information contact:
Warm Silence Software 0585 487642
Robin.Watts@wss.co.uk

Magazines

Mark Moxon is to take over from Richard Hallas as Editor of RISC User in, a move decided well before Black Thursday, but the magazine is to cease publication in about a year.

Archimedes World has ceased publication with the January issue.

Fuller details follow on the next page.

Still Worth Reading

Sad as it is to see two more magazines following the sadly missed Acorn Computing (ex Micro user) from the scene, the majority are still with us.

which abruptly ceased publication after its January issue. This was the first (and now only) issue to display its new Arc World title and logo as there will, unfortunately, not be any

Although two magazines are going or gone from the Acorn scene, there is still plenty of good reading to accompany your regular copy of Eureka.

Archive is still going strong and making attractive offers to recruit new subscribers. Best of them is for members of The ARM Club, who can take advantage of our Discounts Scheme and save £10 on a first subscription and get a free CD-ROM by using the official order form. (*See page 69 for full details.*)

Alternatively, if you prefer to try before you buy, you can have the first two copies in advance before paying the normal sub. The two copies form part of your subscription but you don't have to return them if you decide not to subscribe.

Tau Press, publishers of **Acorn User**, have taken over Archimedes World,

more Arc Worlds. However, some of the articles planned for them are now to appear in Acorn User.

Archimedes World subscribers will now receive Acorn User instead. Those who subscribed to both magazines will have their Acorn User sub extended.

There is a choice of free gifts or special offers of reduced price software for new subscribers in the UK and Europe.

Beebug has announced that **RISC User** is to cease publication at the end of Volume 12 but this means it will still be available for another year.

For those interested in desktop publishing there is still the bi-monthly **Acorn Publisher** to keep you informed of the latest developments and guide you through the techniques involved.

Archive

The Subscription Magazine for Acorn Users

Subscription: Full rates £25
(Europe £30, other countries £38)
Address: Archive Publications
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Norwich NR4 7QY
Tel: 01603 441777
Fax: 01603 460736
Email: info@archivemag.co.uk

ACORNUSER

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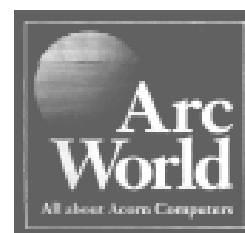


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Fax: 01727 860263
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(Europe £28.95, others £34.95)
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Bedford MK45 4HQ
Tel/Fax: 01582 881614
Email: akalat@kbnet.co.uk

GOODBYE!
Archimedes World
going out with a
new title and logo.



Easy When You Know: Using Paint

I have been corresponding for some years with an African child named Nancy (whom I sponsor through Action Aid). As she could not, at first, write more than a few words she used to send me drawings and I responded by adding some clip art cartoon characters at the end of my letters.

window showing Factor 1. Increase this and it widens the image. In this case 1.5 looked right. But she was still far away from the African look I wanted. Obviously, the skin tone needed to be darkened. The quickest way to do this is to flood-fill the white hands and arms and the face but these

Doing something new with a computer is often easier than you thought — when you know how to do it. Peter Jennings explains how to customise a sprite in Paint.

She will now soon be leaving school and has written to say that she would like to become a secretary. So I looked for a suitable graphic to add to my reply. I found just what I needed on The ARM Club's first PD CD-ROM: a secretary with phone and pencil but not using either a computer or a typewriter, which are still little known in Nancy's remote village. The only problems were that the sprite had a rather squashed up look and it depicted a very white, blonde haired, woman.

The anorexic look is simple to deal with. From the Paint menu, select Edit-Scale X and you get a writable

areas need to be completely enclosed to contain the new colour.

The way to do this is to go back to the menu, find *Zoom* and change the figure one in the first box to four which will enlarge the image into a network of squares, which are individual pixels. If you look at the enlargement of one hand (shown here without the pixel squares, for clarity) you can see the gaps in the outline.

Bring up the menu again, move across *Paint* and click on *Show Colours* and *Show Tools*. This picture has only two colours, black and white. Click on the



The original sprite (left) and widened.



Breaks in the outline of the wrist.

black to select it then look at the Paint tools. It should show the message *Set/clear pixels* and have the first icon, a pencil, selected. If it isn't, click on the pencil icon to select it.

Then click on suitable squares, changing them to black, to complete the outlines of the arms and the face.

When you have done this you need to change the palette to provide some extra colours to use. I gave the sprite a full colour palette by copying it with the Snapshot option from the iconbar icon. I then clicked again on *Paint-*



Finally, the African look.

Show colours and selected an orange-brown, which identified itself as number 92 and which looked as though it would reproduce in black and white at about the right shade for an African skin.

You can then return to *Paint-Show tools* and select the *Replace colour* tool depicted as a paint pot. Then carefully position the pointer within the areas to be recoloured and click on each. Do the same, using black again, on the hair to complete the conversion to an efficient looking African beauty.

Rhyme & Analogy Activity

This is another piece of software that Sherston have produced in collaboration with the Oxford University Press and it again represents an attempt to put some of OUP's book resources into disc format.

packaging, it arrives bent beyond belief and/or quite unusable? Exactly!

The documentation is well up to Sherston's usual standards and includes a user guide explaining the rationale behind the software and a

Teacher Chris Price looks at Volume A of a new CD-ROM from Sherston which introduces children to the delights of rhyming the animated way.

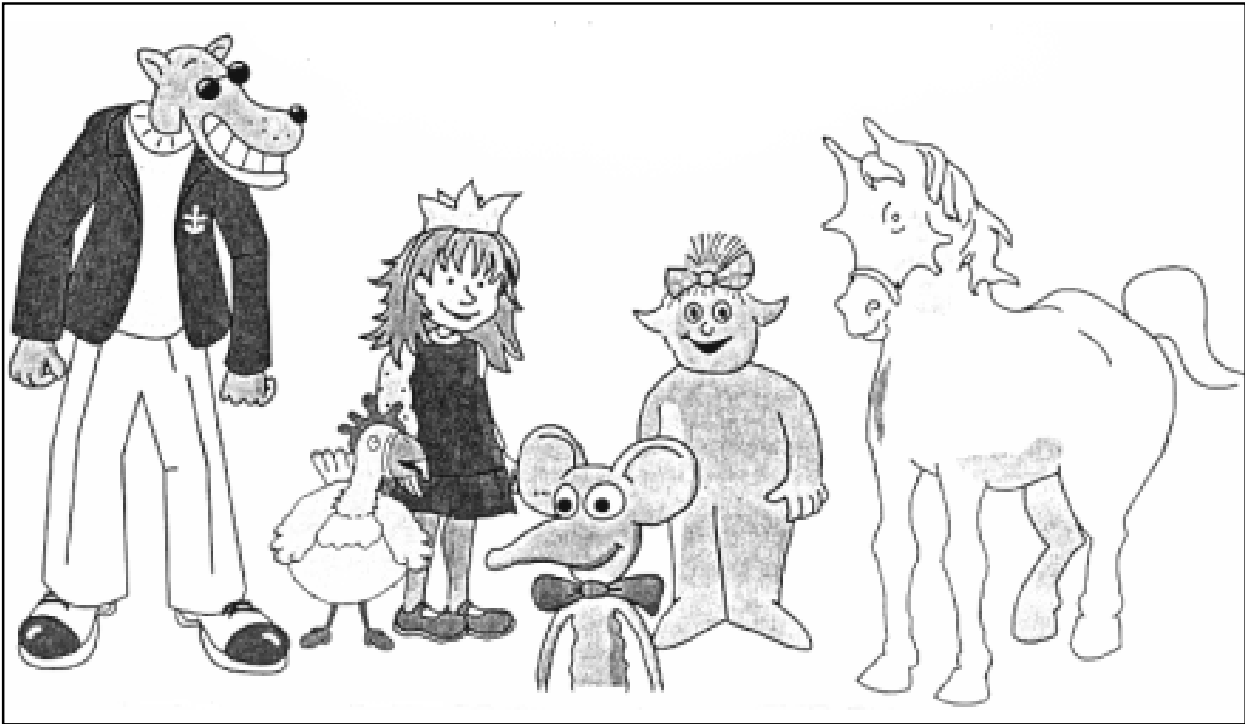
It is advertised as being suitable for children aged four to six.

returns form for the remote likelihood that you will want to send the software back.

The software arrives in the (by now) standard stiff black box with an attractive outer cover (with, for once, the title down the spine — very useful for reference on a bookshelf!) Again, I hope people will forgive me for *banging on* about this but the packaging *does* matter; not so much for the fact that it is attractive but from the purely utilitarian point of view that it stops the contents from being mangled when in the postal system. How many times have you waited for a package to come through, only to find that, thanks to inadequate

The program is on a single triple-format CD (so Sherston haven't given up on Acorn yet!!). Loading it up presents you with a window which allows you either to install the contents to the hard disc or to load up from the CD direct (though, in both cases, you will need to leave the disc in the drive). Loading from the hard disk is marginally faster but I don't think there's much in it.

Loading up presents a screen which slowly fills with various cartoon



An introduction by a cast of cartoon characters

characters and then clears to the main screen. It also presents me with my first serious gripe. The program takes over the desktop and there is no window which allows me to quit the program and yet let it remain on the icon bar. This means that, if you want to quit (to do something else — such as write this review!) you have to quit the whole program and load it back up from scratch.

I'm afraid I regard this as a serious shortcoming which should, if possible, be addressed promptly. (I find it profoundly irritating.)

However, on to the software. Having gone past the initial screen you are presented with a second one which displays the covers of six books by Roderick Hunt. In the bottom corners of the screen are two small icons. Bottom left is a small *Q*, bottom right is a small *T*. Clicking on *Q* allows you to quit the program, clicking on *T* allows you to access the teacher's menu.

Clicking on this latter button brings up the same screen except that, under each book there are now three red buttons marked *L*, *RR* and *RW* — Listening, Reading and Recognising



A word square with the rhyming words revealed

and Reading and Writing. By clicking on the buttons you can turn them from red to white. The purpose of this is to turn activities off. By turning all the activities off on one (or more) books, you can exclude it from the choice on the child's screen; an effective idea if you want to concentrate on only one book. There is also space to enter a pupil's name.

From the left: the listening program presents you with a picture of a boat

with a picture on it and a voice will ask you to find the anchor (Q. Will a four-year-old know what an anchor is?) with the picture that rhymes with the one on the side of the boat (in this case *pet* and *net*). Whether you get it right or not, the computer's voice gently explains the matter by splitting the word into what is referred to as the "onset *p*" and the "rime *et*". Each set of exercises in the books encountered is similar. Indeed this goes for every exercise.

Reading and recognising: the picture is of a bath with a duck in it and a number of large bubbles, each containing an image. "Click on the words that rhyme," says the voice. Getting this right brings up a coloured outline around the image. On the second image you are told, "Yes XXX rhymes with XXX". Identifying all three words means the voice then shows the observer that the words identified have the same ending, by the simple expedient of colouring the end of the word differently from the beginning. The bubbles containing the 2 words that do not fit this pattern are then popped.

Reading and writing: you are presented with a scene. Either side of this is a small picture with its name divided into *onset* and *rime*. A third picture appears in the middle of the scene with only the onset and you are invited to click on the end of the appropriate word at either side to finish the word in the middle. If you get it wrong, you are gently told so and invited to listen again. "XXX does not rhyme with XXX," you are told. "Try again." Getting it right causes a small starfish or another crustacean (of quite indeterminate

species!) to jump about in delight and you are told "Yes, XXX rhymes with XXX." and in both cases the point is illustrated by the word being split by colours so that the point is very graphically demonstrated.

This is a very useful piece of software (the niggles that I have mentioned excepted) which I have used successfully with groups of rising fives. Volume B is promised soon.

With CD products Sherston have abandoned the familiar single user/site licence categories and now sell each CD in packs.

Rhyme & Analogy Activity Software Volume A

Prices (all +VAT): single £40

pack of three £60, five £70

Pack of the books featured £10

Photocopiable activity book £27.50

Supplier: Sherston Software Ltd

Angel House, Sherston

Malmesbury, Wilts SN16 0LH

Tel: 01666 843200

Fax: 01666 843216

Email: sales@sherston.co.uk

Web: www.sherston.com

Getting Into Video Editing

It would be nice if we could all plan and record our film so that it came out of the video camera ‘right first time’. Perhaps ‘nice’ is not the right word -- ‘miraculous’ would be better! However well we compile our video material, the mechanics of which we

We often take still photos and collect newspapers, postcards and souvenirs on the ‘location’ for the movie and this material is readily used if you or a friend can produce still images from it as sprites to import into the editing computer. (The quality will be better

In the third part of his series, Mike Sherwood looks at the use of complementary material in computer-based video editing, beginning with ‘still movies’ and titling.

have discussed in the previous articles, it is too much to expect that third parties will appreciate the editor’s full intent without some additional help.

An additional, complementary sound track is invaluable in this respect, maybe even substituted for the live sound recorded on location with every kind of distracting noise, totally beyond the control of the photographer.

For the moment, however, we will concentrate on the additional visual material that we can produce during the editing process to strengthen the story-line.

than a filmed image). You can then make *still movies* from the sprites via a menu option.

All you have to do is drag the sprite into a window, select recording rate and the desired elapsed time for the still clip, click the mouse and watch the machine make the movie and file it into your *Project Directory*.

Alternatively, you can grab any video frame and make a sprite from that. If you then import the sprite into a painting program, such as Studio 24, Photodesk, Composition etc. it is then easy to add text as a title. The modified sprite can then become a

still movie to play seamlessly into the live action of your video sequence. A nice touch is to make the still picture as a colour negative image so that the live video which follows appears 'new' to the viewer.

Text overlays

Videodesk (Version 1.07) also includes menu options to produce text overlays onto live video. This may be done as vertically or horizontally scrolling titles in the direction of choice or as text which fades or flashes into view, superimposed as a still image over the moving scene.

You can use any text font available to the computer -- a clear advantage over separate text editors.

There is a choice of colour and alignment formats and a useful option is an adjustable *drop shadow* effect which helps the titles to stand out.

After setting up the titles they have to be incorporated (rendered) into the video clip. A seven second title clip, for example, contains 175 frames to be retrieved from disc, recompiled to include the text and then saved again. The time involved on the StrongARM

Risc PC is typically a half to one second per frame.

A scrolling title can certainly enhance the picture -- for example text moving along the line of the video action -- but tends to take up a lot more time (and frames). The underlying video has to be interesting enough to hold the viewers' attention.

For ideas why not watch your favourite programmes on television and see how they go about it?

Special Effects

We have all seen the zooming, tumbling, transitions between scenes on TV and maybe yearn to produce such special effects on our own videos.

Videodesk 1.07 incorporates a menu list of some 40 transitions which cover dissolves, blurs, zooms and slides from every direction. There are no fancy tumbles but more than enough options which, if incorporated to excess, will soon distract the viewer from the video film plot.

It has been said that the quality of a video film can be measured in inverse

proportion to the number of special effects employed !

Judicious use of suitable transitions certainly benefits the film story. Transitions may convey a sense of time, space or change of mood between the actions shown in successive scenes so the ability to try them out and change them easily if necessary is a great asset, one of the most useful features of computerised non-linear editing.

The computer-generated dissolve, which very smoothly transforms one scene into another, is one of the most useful effects which would otherwise not be possible without using two videotape players and a mixer (A-B Roll Machine).

Another Videodesk effect deserves mention: the facility in the clip *save* menu to produce slow motion is wonderfully effective, especially in wildlife studies.

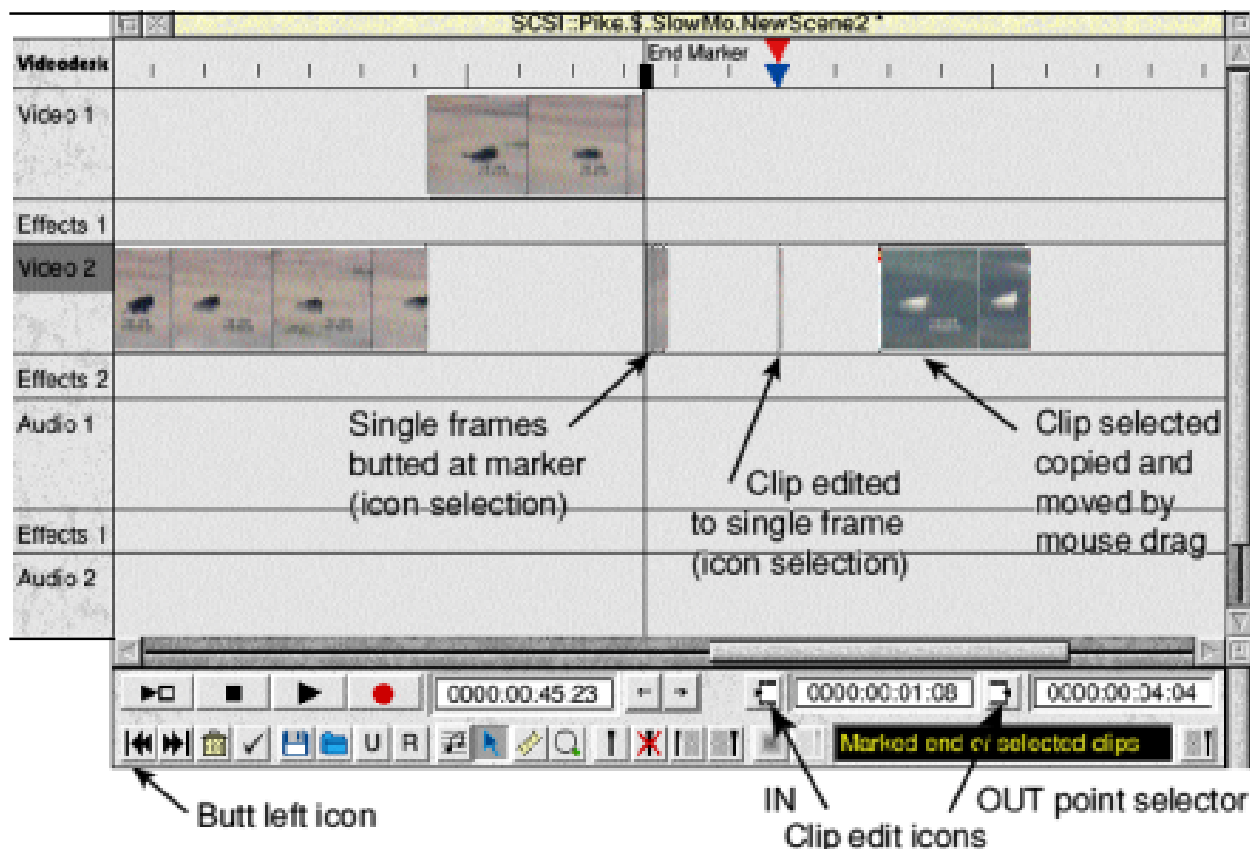
Animations

I have looked at the scope for animation via single frame handling by reversing some action in one case and assembling a sequence of sprites

from a morphing program in another. At first sight this would seem to be a difficult process to accomplish on screen, given the relatively small scale of the video editing scene window.

However, as I have mentioned in a previous article, Videodesk provides the editor with a number of alternative menu options, including some which are particularly good for single frame handling.

The mouse is used to select and mark the clip from which a single frame is required. First, the clip is *copied right*, say, and then dragged using the mouse onto the track on which the single frames are to be assembled. The start and end frame times of the selected copied clip are visible in the clip *IN point* and *OUT point* edit windows. The mouse is used again to shorten the copied and still selected clip via the icons of its edit windows to the required single frame, without going near it! This frame, still selected, can then be made by clicking on another icon to *butt left* against a marker already put in place on the track for the purpose (see illustration opposite).



Editing a single frame from a selected clip

It is quicker to do than to describe. The process is then repeated to assemble the rest of the single frames. Magic!

Even a short scene assembled from single frame clips is asking for a lot from hard disc performance. The disc gets very *busy* indeed. You can, however, compile the scene via a *save* option into a single new clip and restore calm! Irlam seem to have made provision for most situations.

Summary

Irlam's Videodesk provides for good quality non-linear video editing on the Acorn platform at a competitive cost. The software is intuitively easy to use and, with appropriate fast disc hardware, offers edited video similar in quality to SVHS.

I immediately found I could do things just not possible with tape-to-tape (linear) editing systems and single frame accuracy is guaranteed. The software features available are too

numerous to do them full justice in these necessarily brief articles but I hope I have described the system well enough to interest would-be non-linear video editors, both with or without prior experience. While further software releases are under development there are already sufficient facilities to offer plenty of scope for inventiveness.

Knowing what I know now, would I buy Videodesk all over again? Yes, I would.

Requirements

The minimum requirements for Videodesk non-linear video editing system for RISC OS computers (Version 1.07 Beta Software) are a Risc PC (StrongARM recommended) 8MB RAM, large fast hard disc and a DMA slot. Irlam are happy to give pre-sales advice.

If you are on the Internet there is a newsgroup to encourage the exchange of information between Videodesk users. Send an email to vdesk-user@downlands.demon.co.uk with SIGNON vdesk-user as the subject.

Future software

This is the final instalment of Mike Sherwood's introductory series on non-linear video editing but Irlam are now beta testing some audio enhancement software and we hope to have another article from Mike, on the use of sound, in a future issue.

In the meantime, Mike welcomes feedback on the series and will answer any specific questions raised. Letters will be forwarded if you write care of Eureka at the usual Freepost or email addresses. -Ed.

Videodesk

Price: £995 +VAT

Special offer: £1,144 +VAT including RiscTV and its Keying upgrade.

Supplier: Irlam Instruments Ltd
Brunel Science Park

Brunel University,
Kingston Lane,
Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3PQ

Tel/Fax: 01895 811401

Email: sales@irlam.co.uk

Web:

www.irlam-instruments.co.uk

Phoenix OS

In December I got wind of something called Phoenix OS. Nipping to the Web site I was quite impressed with what I saw!

The plans are to emulate completely the look and feel of RISC OS, including drag and drop, mouse emulation and icon bar behaviour.

- A universal drawing program similar to !Draw. Not yet implemented.

- A universal help system, based on Java helpsets, with context sensitive, bubble, application and detailed help, Partly implemented.

- A filer system with RISC OS type file viewers. Partly implemented.

Mike Atkinson's response to the demise of Phoebe was to begin work on a new operating system keeping the best features of RISC OS. Matthew Cook reports.

We all appreciate the applications that come bundled with RISC OS, such as !Draw, !Edit and !Paint, and the fact that even without another application loaded you can type text and edit files. Phoenix OS is intended to better this.

- A backdrop system. Partly implemented.

- A Quicklook system (whenever a file is selected, it is quicklooked). Not yet implemented.

Applications that are planned to be included are:

- A universal textual data editor, similar to !Zap, Text, Java & HTML, extendable to other formats. This is partly implemented.

- A universal print system, to print whole desktop, application window, or application page(s). Not yet implemented.

- VRML and 3D display, using Java3D-. Not yet implemented.

- Web browsing, using Jazilla. Not yet implemented.

- A spreadsheet (based on Jixel?).

- An IDE (based on FreeBuilder + CVS?).

- A RAD IDE (based on Korfe?).

- A Java environment monitoring system, JavaMonitor.

- A universal logging function for events, debug and errors.

As with RISC OS, no operating system would be complete without allowing you to write and run applications created by others.

- Automatic booting of applications, running on start-up, running on file double click, running on application double click.

- A universal ‘Save as Gif’ command for the desktop or any applications window.

- Application resources are contained within the application directory and config. directory only.

- Java classes implement default application behaviour.

- Model Viewer Presenter (similar to MVC) model application model.

- Flexible command support with history, undo, redo and remote driver support. Partly implemented.

- Uses Infobus to connect applications together. Partly implemented.

- Between application events and communication. Not yet implemented.

- A universal script system (based on Java? or Python?). Not yet implemented.

- Universal Colour Selector, Save Box, Event Log, Font Selector, Style Selector, etc. Not yet implemented.

- Universal config system. Not yet implemented.

- Use of Resource Bundles for application resources. Not yet implemented.

- Full internationalisation, using resource bundles to hold various

language resources. Not yet implemented.

- Full accessibility support. Not yet implemented except for JavaMonitor.

- Icons can be Gif (load/store), JPEG (load). RISC OS sprites and other formats not yet implemented.

- Applications can be found in ROM, local hard disc, or out on the network. Not yet implemented.

- Applications can be booted or removed while the system is running without requiring reboot or leaving resources scattered about the system. Partly implemented.

- Applications can be updated while the system is running without requiring a reboot. Not working.

- In place editing of objects, like PCA on RISC OS. Not yet implemented.

- Multiple look and feel, by the Swing pluggable look and feel system. RISC OS look and feel. Not yet implemented.

- Multiple themes within the main look and feel. Not yet implemented.

- Built in expert system shell. Not yet implemented.

- Expert system for backup. Not yet implemented.

- Expert system for smart program update. Not yet implemented.

There's quite a bit more information on the Web site (see below), including screen shots and PhoenixOS to download (4.8MB) or source (1.7MB). You will need Java 2 (20MB) to run it.

I was very impressed with what I saw and especially when I downloaded Phoenix OS!

I wish Mike Atkinson all the best for the project, and hope he has lots of success in the future.

Phoenix OS

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www.ladyshot.demon.co.uk/PhoenixOS.html

Making Music: Part 2

In the last issue of Eureka I showed how to create the drum pattern for a piece called *Echoing* on Digital Symphony. In this article I will show how to create the bass line and part of the melody.

Pattern 002 starts with three notes from the melody, then continues with five beats of the bass drum.

First select pattern 002 by left clicking once on where it says *Pattern*

In the second part of his series, Kieran Simkin gets you making music with Digital Symphony and a selection of drum beats, all played from your keyboard.

You will first have to load in the drum pattern from the Eureka disk. If you followed the instructions in the last article, you should have ended up with this drum pattern.

The first pattern you will create will be number 001. The drum beat is number 000.

Press Shift+F9 to open the pattern editor and set *Pattern* (top left) to 001. This pattern is very simple, it being mostly silent except for one *sonar ping* near the middle. Set *Sample* to 09 and *Effect* and *Value* to 00. Then click on position 20 and press '<'. That's all you have to do for pattern 001.

in the top left of the pattern editor. Now set *Sample* to 08, *Effect* and *Value* to 000 and *Step* to 4. Click on position 20 and press '<' on your keyboard, this will play the first note of the melody. Now press 'J' and then '<' again.

You should now have the first three notes of the melody.

Set *Sample* and *Step* to 01. Click on position 3B and press '<' five times. If you press Ctrl+P now you should hear a long silence, the first three notes of the melody and then five beats of the bass drum.

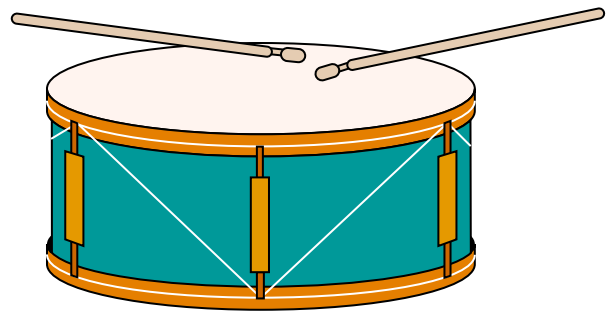
Although this sounds OK, the sine

wave sustains for too long. It is fairly easy to fix this using the volume effect. Set *Effect* to 0C and *Value* to 000. Click on position 23 and press '<'; do the same on positions 27, 2E and 31. This has the effect of silencing the notes.

The volume also needs to be lowered on some of the drum beats. Set *Value* to 014 and *Sample* to 01, click on position 3C and press '<'. Set *Value* to 029, click on position 3E and press '<'. Pattern 002 is now finished. You can hear it by pressing Ctrl+P with the mouse in the Pattern Editor window (be aware that there is a long pause at the beginning).

The next pattern is the bass line, which is relatively easy to play because it has a very simple rhythm and doesn't require any effects. Select *Pattern* 003, set *Sample* to 06, *Effect* and *Value* to 000 and *Step* to 02. Click on position 02 and "Play" the following on your keyboard where a '-' is a space:
 <<-<BJ—<<-<BJB—BB-BDV—B
 B-BBB-.

It does not matter what rhythm you play because *Step* is set to 02. Digital



Bang that drum — on the keyboard

Symphony will sort out the rhythm for you.

Now set *Sample* to 05 and play the note C ('<' on your keyboard) at the following positions: 00, 06, 0E, 10 and 16.

Play the note G ('B' on your keyboard) in these positions: 20, 26, 2E, 30, 32, 36 and 38.

Finally, play the note A# ('J' on your keyboard) in position 3E. This should complete the bass line. You can hear it by pressing Ctrl+P on your keyboard.

In the next issue I will show how to create the melody and the chords.

If you need help you can contact me via e-mail: kieran@bl-soft.com or visit my website at: www.bl-soft.com/

Communicating With A Psion

So yet another edition looms on the horizon and yet another article gets tapped out on these small keys.

The 3c and Series 5 owners amongst you will be aware of the email and web packages available for your

Thus one can use a PCMCIA modem, through either a normal land phone line or a suitable mobile phone to connect direct from the Psion.

Unfortunately, this often ends up looking like a morass of cables,

Toby Smith looks at ways to communicate with your Psion and store all the data you need and reveals the expensive secret of becoming a chuffed bunny.

machines and may even be using them. The most common method of subsequent connection to the Internet at large seems to be through the serial cable and a bigger computer though.

You may also be interested in Psion's PCMCIA / PCcard adapter, an add-on to the series 5 that connects to the 5's serial port, and allows you to use a standard PCMCIA modem in an external 'block'.

The block is unfortunately about the same size again as the 5, having to hold the size of the PCMCIA card and a pack of batteries (giving power, alternately from a mains converter).

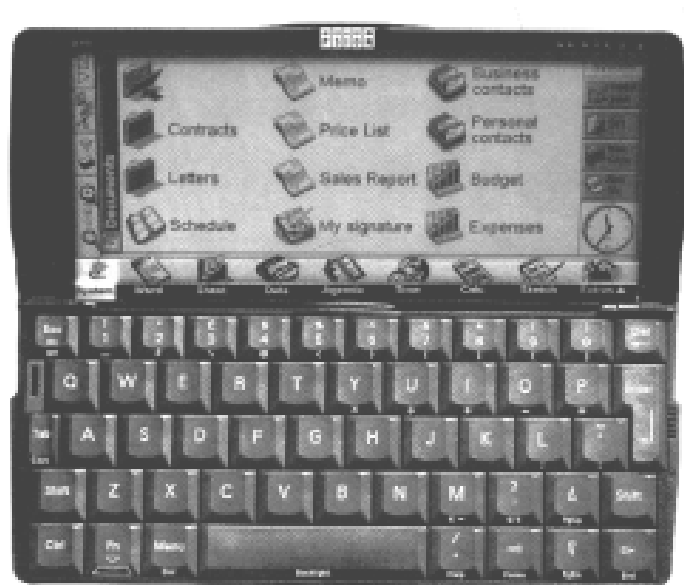
taking up more bulk than the computer!

As an even more flashy (and consequently expensive) alternative to this, some of the newer mobile phones also come with IrDA compatible infra-red connections, and the days when you can point your Psion and phone at each other and surf in true Martini style (any place, any way, any time) are not far around the corner!

Data at the Fingertips

The beauty of palmtop computing is not only the compactness of being able to hold large amounts of data in

a small space (could you fit the contents of your Psion in a similar sized notebook?) but also the accessibility. I've begun carefully converting all of my meeting minutes to my Psion as well, meaning that I've got full access to all the information, sorted into logical files, not lost on pages of day-books.



Now, when I can convince them to buy me one of those mobiles so I can have an uplink to the company Intranet, I'll be a chuffed bunny!

*Do you use a Pocket Book computer?
If you have any hints, comments or queries
send them to Eureka, by email or post, at
the usual addresses.*

Easy When You Know: Using Agenda

Press the space bar to get back to the current date. The quickest way to get to a specific date other than one week or one month either way is to press *Acorn-J* then enter the required date and press *Enter*.

Use *Control-Menu* to toggle the clock at the side: On (Wide), On (Thin) or Off.

Grin Or Groan

Why do Pocket Book users get married?
Because the pocket book cannot cook!

Ralph Sillett

BETT '99

There's an old joke that, being a teacher, I quite like:

Teacher: Jane, give me an example of mixed emotions.

Jane: Please miss, watching the headmaster ride over a dirty great cliff on my new bike.

revealed that the rumours that had been floating around the industry for a few weeks were true. Acorn had sold its stake in Xemplar which was now marketing only Apple and Fujitsu PCs.

By now quite concerned, I asked if

Chris Price spends a day of mixed emotions when he pays his annual visit to the big educational show in London and goes in search of Acorn.

What am I blithering about? Well, that's about the way I felt on entering the auditorium at Olympia this year for BETT 99.

Having struggled through the crowds to what I had hoped was my main point of access — the Xemplar stand — I came face to face with a sea of brand new iMACs.

Don't get me wrong, I've nothing against them. I found them bright, shiny and deeply sexy. Trouble was, wasn't this meant to be what Acorn were doing? Apparently not. A few enquiries on the Xemplar stand

there was anybody with an Acorn stand. I was directed to the galleria, a fact that I found quite disconcerting. Anyway, before I went upstairs I decided to have a good wander downstairs.

First stop: Sherston. Our school is a great fan of Sherston's products so it is rare for me to find new things at BETT (they generally let me know in advance). Nonetheless, an interesting visit where I did think that matters were starting to unravel a bit. Most products were described as 'PC, Mac & Acorn' with the "&" underlined and emphasised. Aren't they taking us

Acorn users seriously any more?

Onto Granada Learning; a display of fine CDs and videos covering all manner of subjects -- history, science, geography. Grabbing a catalogue I was heartened to see that all (well, all I saw) the programs were in triple format, including Acorn.

Next Longman Logotron and more disappointment. Sure, most of the older stuff was still being continued and it *was* in triple format, but, of the newer stuff, I could find very little for the Acorn machine. I left very disappointed.

Over to Atomwide (after a beer and a sandwich -- all this reporting is very tiring!) to find that my friends here were still supporting Acorns. They have a wide variety of services, not all of which are Acorn based (we've all got to make a living!) and seem to specialise in what is loosely referred to as "connectivity" -- connecting disparate groups of Acorns, PCs and Apples to a central network. Good to see that somebody still takes Acorn seriously.

The WWF stand looms into sight. Is

this real? Are the environmental people invading BETT? Indeed they are and a very welcome addition they make. Not all of their stuff is for Acorns (indeed, not all of their stuff is for computers at all) but it is good to see this organisation trying to reach out to another part of the community.

I passed old friends at Kudlian Software and grabbed a brochure -- Windows and AppleMac only -- *UGH!* Put it down Chris.

Simtec were the next stand that I blundered into (after staying too long at the beer stall -- bad idea, Chris!) and they proved to be very interesting with their goood value schemes for memory upgrades for most of the Acorn machines (A305s -- remember them? Yes, they can do an upgrade!) In this day of tight budgets, for state schools in particular, this is a solution, and a company, not to be sneezed at.

OK, so I've covered the ground floor, had my lunch, what next? Oh, yes, nearly forgot ... Acorn!

Upstairs to Castle Technology and I'm suddenly very, very, underwhelmed. It's not that the

blokes there aren't bright and bushy tailed and very upbeat about Acorn's future, it's just that the stand is so...so...*small*. I mean, I knew Acorn were in trouble but this looks quite drastic.

I'm introduced to some very good machines by a very decent bloke who is a director of the firm. He's very confident that Acorn has a future and shows me how these machines work, including the budget Acorn Sprinter, the Acorn NC. This runs both Windows NT and Acorn's proprietary RISC OS but not, interestingly enough, MACOS. Don't know why? Any comments?

On another point, if RISC OS is so good why is anyone bothering to run Windows NT, or is this just another example of the Evil Empire extending itself and taking another minor player out of the game?

I go down to the ground floor and leave by the back door.

The future's ... bright? The future's ... Acorn? We'll just have to wait and see

Eureka Disc Changes

As from issue 31, the Eureka disc will no longer accompany the magazine. As most members know, we've had many problems with the duplication service recently and unfortunately we cannot find a suitable reasonably priced alternative.

From our experiences with Eureka 24, the issue with the faulty disc, we know that a large majority are happy to download the disc contents from our ftp site (which already contains every disc as an archive) so we will use this method in future.

Those without access to the ftp site will still be able to receive a disc by post. Simply contact us (phone, fax, letter as usual, or email products@armclub.org.uk), when you receive the magazine, with your name, address, membership number and desired format and we'll pop one in the post. These details will appear regularly in Eureka.

The savings from this will go into other, more valuable, club activities.

Toby Smith

The Arm Club Discounts Scheme

How do I get a discount?

You choose the company you want from the list on page 70 of those offering discounts, complete the official order form and send it to the company with your payment.

the discounts are on the normal retail price, not any show special offers, unless the company gives an additional concession.

What if the Company I want is not in the scheme?

For the benefit of all our new members, we recap on one of the valuable benefits the Club is able to offer, with the co-operation of some leading Acorn companies.

This form is the only way to make purchases by post or fax through the discounts scheme. It can be photocopied or obtained at any time from The ARM Club's FREEPOST address or from the Club stand at Acorn shows.

The ARM Club does not have the facilities to accept payment by credit card so this section does not apply when ordering goods from the Club.

What about buying at Acorn shows?

You may complete the discounts form or show your membership card to get the appropriate discount. Note that

Let us know and we will contact the company and see what we can arrange.

More companies now offer The ARM Club discount than in the past and negotiations are going on with others. All those who join the scheme will be added to the printed list and notified in Eureka.

What happens if I have a problem?

For any problems or queries contact:

Matthew Cook
discounts@armclub.org.uk

Companies And Discounts Offered

4Mation, 15% all products.

Alternative Publishing, 17.5% all products.

Anglia Multimedia, 25% all products. Other special offers.

Apricote Studios, 20% all products.

Archive Magazine, £10 off new subscriptions. Free CD.

Argonet, £89.95 Get connected pack, £119.95 Surf at speed pack, .
£94.95 modem trade-up.

Clares Micro Supplies, 10% all software products.

Computer Concepts, 10% all hardware except printers, 20% all software.

Creative Curriculum Software, 20% all products.

Fabis Computing, 25% any single purchase, 40% any 10 mixed items, .
50% any 10 identical items. Bulk Buy.

H S Software, 15% all products.

Learning Through Computing, 10% all products.

Longman Logotron, 10%, 15% for 5 to 10 items, 25% for 10 or more.

Mijas Software, 17.5% all products.

Quadworks, 10% all products.

Quantum Software, 10% all products.

R-Comp/R-Comp Interactive, ring for deals on all products.

Sherston, 20% all products.

SpaceTech, 10% all products.

TBA Software, 10% all products.

The ARM Club, 10% all products. No Credit Cards.

The Event Horizon, 10% all products.

Topologika, 10% any single purchase, 20% two purchases, buy three get the
cheapest free.

Tower Electronics, Free connection, Enterprise Internet.

Werewolf Software, 5% all products.

Yellowstone, 10% all products.

Participating companies and discounts are liable to change without notice



Deliver to

Full Name

Membership Number

Please supply the following goods :

Quantity	Description	Price each before discount	Agreed Discount	Total price with discount
<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>

Add postage, packing and VAT if not inclusive

£

Please find enclosed a cheque / credit card details* for the sum of

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Credit card number : _____ Expiry date : ____ / ____ / ____

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* Note that if paying by credit card, goods can only be dispatched to card-holders home address

If you have any queries regarding the origin of this order then please contact
Matthew Cook, The ARM Club. Email : discounts@armclub.org.uk

Tel : 0073 285 342

Meet Our Active Members

Christopher Jarman

I have always wanted to be an artist. My parents wanted me to be anything that earned a living, so that put paid to my first ambition!

Eight years as a regular naval officer and 30 years as a Primary teacher

The Osmiroid Pen Co. took me on as their Educational Consultant and I was able to design some of the new Primary Maths equipment.

My favourite place for holidays is Ravello near Naples, where I have taken groups out for painting, but our

In the second of our series, we again introduce the people and faces (suitably prettified by Beth Rogers) of some of our members who help to keep the Club running.

never dimmed my view of myself as a 'maker' if not exactly a 'creator'.

I started writing as a journalist in the 60's during my time as a mature student.

I recorded over twenty talks for BBC Woman's Hour before branching into the more academic fields of The Times Ed Supp. and Yachting Monthly.

As a Village Headmaster I wrote a number of books for teachers, and an interest in Handwriting led to a set of Copybooks for Schools.

best vacations have been sailing in the Greek Islands.

After retirement, I began this unhealthy interest in Computer Graphics and The ARM Club gave me an early break as a reviewer. Extra income from

Computer journalism has enabled me to learn to fly.

I am a lucky Jack of many trades!



David Ruck

I've just been horrified to realise that I am probably one of the main contenders for the title of "Most spoddy spod" on the Committee. Not only is my hobby concerned with computers but my work is also with the damn things as a software engineer.

Not that it was my ambition to start with. At primary school I wanted to be a TV sound engineer for no better reason than who do you think gets to wire up female celebrities with body mics! It was down hill from their as

by secondary school I got very interested in the sciences and wanted to be a physicist, and went on to study it at university.

But after sampling the many delights of university life at Brunel (which our former chairman, Mark Smith also attended, but quite a few years after I left), I found I couldn't tell my unified field theory from my elbow, and wasn't much bothered, so I switched courses and universities to study computer science at University College London.



David Ruck

getting our own. I started with the humble Electron, but was able to move up to a BBC B with the revenue from my first programming project which was a chemistry program for the school that displayed the periodic table, gave information on the elements, and could even plot the electron shells for all 103 known elements

Up to then the computers had just been a hobby. It started in the 3rd year, when the school got its first computer, a BBC Model A. As the headmaster's son was one of my best mates, we were the first to take it out of the box, set it up and marvel at our first ever program -- the randomly coloured triangles example from the BBC User guide. Seeing what you could do with only four lines of BASIC (none of which we had a clue about at the time), got me and my friends interested.

Those of use that couldn't borrow the school's computers at the weekends (ah hum), had to bully the parents into

(at that time). I was also commissioned to write a networkable database of pupil records, before retiring when I reached the sixth form. My excuse was the extra work load of four A levels, but the truth was I found something more interesting to do at lunchtimes -- parties with the sixth form girls!

After leaving university I worked for a number of software houses and companies, being involved in writing software for the A330/A340 Airbus airliners, inter-bank gateways for Swiss Banks and a few defence projects.

I am currently working in the motor industry writing the control systems from engine test beds, using Risc PC's and (other) PC's.

Programming on two platform's at work is quite enough so I now don't write much software in my spare time, and have instead become an avid user of graphics packages, especially !Photodesk3. I was sick of seeing horrible dark stripy scans and fuzzy screen grabs produced by PC equipment on the Internet, so I'm now using my scanner and 24i16 digitiser to provide material for a number of websites. My specialities are large crisp pattern free scans and action montages of frames captured using high quality SVHS equipment. You can see some of my work, at my favourite TV celebrity's website www.gailporter.com (I suddenly wish I had become a TV sound engineer!)

My involvement with The ARM Club started when they took over the sale of a few little applications I'd written as utilities during larger bespoke projects. I had sent them off to a PD library but they were intercepted by Ben Case and Adam Toon, who

offered to sell them for me. Up to then I hadn't known much about The ARM Club but I got to know most of the Committee by chatting at the stands during shows.

It was at the Acorn World show a few years back that my involvement increased. I was only supposed to be there for one day but, after going out for a meal and a drink with the Committee, I ended up staying in a spare bed at the hotel and attending all three days. It now turns out this this was a cunning plan to draft me on to the Committee in return for waiving the bill!

After shirking responsibility for as long as possible I have now found my niche coordinating the Technical Support Service of the Club. We certainly get a wide range of questions, from problems with a PC card in the Sudan, to installing ARM Linux during a bit of spare time at Her Majesty's pleasure. But whatever the question from the most trivial to the mind bendingly complex, I try to ensure that I get a detailed response back to our members as quickly as possible, email and postal services allowing.

Matthew Cook

Any regulars at Acorn shows will recognise me, As a *very* active member of The ARM Club and the Acorn community I am usually at most shows soaking up the atmosphere.

Computing has always played a part in my life, from my early programming days

on a rubber keyed Spectrum, through to my current Risc PC.

I enjoy the social aspect of computing, meeting new people and helping those I can. I have been always a great believer that the Acorn community has always been a friendly one. The DARC Club is an excellent example of a local user group where everyone helps each other.

I remember fondly the BBS (Bulletin Board System) days, using a 9600 baud modem (incidentally hanging



out of the window to keep it cool!) connecting to Arcade and The Digital Databank. Of course this is now overshadowed by the Internet which has been unable to recreate the community spirit, especially with several characters on Usenet groups.

I was introduced to The ARM Club by one of the long standing committee members Ralph Sillett. (Yes you know who to blame now).

I helped on the stand at the first Harrogate show and later was convinced by Toby Smith that I

should come on the Committee. Little did I know he had the post of membership secretary in mind! Still I enjoy the now regular after show Pizza/Pub combination!

Most people who have met me will have met my Mini no doubt! My little red Mini comes as an extension of myself and regularly amazes people how many pieces of computing equipment I can fit in.



As a career, I am looking to be a Junior School Teacher, and currently at University. To keep my expensive hobbies and social life, I work as a Retail Supervisor at a small village Co-Op store.

This leaves less time for the other things in life I enjoy, The cinema, pub and walking feature in the list.

Gill Smith

Until two years ago, I was aiming to pursue a career as an academic, with the goal of becoming an authority on Pre-socratic Philosophy.

The jump from there to technical authoring, which now fills my days wasn't a single leap, although my friends tell me there were tell-tale signs, even in those early days as a

classics student. I had this odd ability to find the “on” switch for the Arts faculty computers, and handed in beautifully printed essays that got low marks because the tutors could actually read them and realise that they weren’t literary greats.

I still haven’t given up on the career as a historical novelist, but technical authoring certainly pays the rent until my first Booker prize!

I first started writing and editing as a serious hobby on the student newspaper Redbrick. After a year or so, I stormed out of there in an artistic strop, to walk into the SAS (Student Admissions Service -- don’t let Toby tell you otherwise!) office, and ask to write some articles for them.

The nice man who ran the SAS, by the name of Toby Smith, suggested that I edit it, having just sacked one editor. I accepted, and found myself ghost-writing articles for reticent scientists, while page-making on an Acorn, under the watchful eye of Toby.

Somewhere during that I learnt about the Artificial Intelligence side of his degree, which overlapped with the

philosophy side of mine. I took the plunge and applied for the Cognitive Science course and agreed to go out with him.

Eventually, I got dragged to the ARM club show in Birmingham, ostensibly to meet Toby’s friends, but really in a valiant attempt to turn me into a spod. I also ended up playing secretary -- everything from editing letters your then membership secretary sent you, to helping laminate membership cards.

Yet further down the line, I’m married to the chairman (he changed jobs, rather than me changing man!) and I’ve been talking into writing for Eureka.

I’m now a technical author, and still fighting off becoming a spod, by playing badminton and my saxophone in my spare time.

I’ve even started getting Toby to come along to the after badminton exercise of pint-lifting!

We hope to be brought up to date with the latest pages from Gill' s Journal in our next issue. -Ed.

Coming in Eureka 30

Club affairs

There will be news of some changes, now being planned by the Committee, to streamline the way the Club is run and provide even better value for our members with the maximum support in a rapidly changing Acorn scene.

Reviews

We expect to have a review of what is certain to be one of the most important software issues of the year. The full version of *Vantage*, Cerilica's long awaited graphics program, which is being seen as the natural successor to ArtWorks, is about to be released. There will be a look at some new software to make it easier for Internet users to view and store the contents of Web sites. Educational programs include a new CD-ROM offering a fascinating journey through history leading up to the forthcoming Millennium celebrations and one which teaches science with all the fun of the fairground.

Features

We hope to have a graphic artist's assessment of the advantages and problems of using a digital camera in his work and we see what is going on at some of the lively regional Acorn user clubs.

Regulars

Our regular features will include Site Seeing, to highlight some of the fascinating places you can visit on the World Wide Web. Gill will open some new pages of her Journal on life among the spods and more of the active members who help to keep the Club running will be featured with insights into their real life activities and some revealing caricatures.

All coming in the Summer 1999 issue of Eureka, sent to members in May.

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Benefits of membership

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

***The ARM
Club***

- The Club's magazine, 'Eureka', written by members, is published and sent free of charge four times a year.
- 1.6MB disc of quality software accompanies each issue of Eureka and 800K discs are available for those who have older machines.
- Free Technical Help Service. We will do our best to solve any problems which you may have, by email, letter, telephone or fax.
- Special discounts for Club members from well-known companies.
- Regional open days and shows are regularly organised by the Club. Other events can be arranged on request
- Special offers at shows and open days
- Regional contact lists of other members, available on request.
- 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 (+£3 joining pack for first year)

Europe £16 and rest of the world £19

FREEPOST 'The ARM Club'

Email: info@armclub.org.uk Tel: 07010 709849 (Flexitel)