

THE ARM CLUB MAGAZINE

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Welcome

to the final issue of the ARM Club magazine for 1992, bringing the latest news and views of other Archimedes users.

The magazine has changed somewhat from the last issue because of the increasing number of copies being distributed, and we hope that you approve of the new style. If you would like to tell us what you think of the magazine, or the Club itself, please write in to the Secretary or our letters page.

The last few months have been an exciting time for Acorn users, with the launch of so many new computers. These have been mainly produced for their appeal to new Acorn owners, but as part of Acorn's *Vision for the Future*, and following the recent unveiling of the VIDC20 graphics processor, we can look forward to some exciting developments in the next year.

The BBC Acorn User Show has been and gone, and this was undoubtedly a great event for everyone involved in the Acorn world, including the Club. Our thanks go to Safesell Exhibitions for organising such a successful show, and for the help which they gave to the ARM Club. Next year Acorn will be running its own show in the Autumn, and the BBC Acorn User Show will be taking place in a new venue in the Spring.

Don't forget the events which we are organising for next year, particularly our software package training courses. Over the Christmas period, why not get in touch with other Archimedes users in your area and arrange a get-together? Computer-using is much more fun (and more productive) if regarded as a social event.

I hope that you enjoy reading this magazine. Remember that it is the Club magazine, and you are all welcome to contribute. Only in this way will it reflect the views of Club members and get your points of view known.

Happy Acorn computing!

Simon Burrows (Editor)

## Badgemaking with the Archimedes

Having read the article by Margery Swinton in Eureka Issue 5, we thought that readers may be interested by our experiences in this area.

We purchased our A3000 about 2 years ago, and soon acquired a copy of 4Mation's *Poster*, followed quickly after by a colour kit for our Dot-Matrix printer. With 3 children in the family, each at different schools we were soon producing posters and items for inclusion in school projects, when Helen came home to say that her school had a badge machine which she could use to make badges for the guests at the party we were planning for Sarah's sixth birthday. Using the "Path Text" facility in *Poster* and some of the Clip-Art pictures supplied with the program, we soon had a dozen individual name badges prepared with the names following the curve of the badge.



By the Spring of last year, feeling that we had over-used the school badge machine, we purchased our own, and have since then produced over 3000 badges, all printed with *Poster*. A catalogue showing the available Clip-Art and Fonts has been produced and is being continually updated to include examples of the work done. This is very useful in helping customers decide on designs for custom badges. The orders are still coming in, providing the elder two children with a source of extra pocket-money as well as a lot of work, with Dad acting as consultant and resident specialist at using *Draw* and *DrawPlus*. Helen and a friend from school made badges and posters as the Mini-Enterprise for their B.I.S. course at G.C.S.E. clearing a modest profit.

We have been able to incorporate customer designed logos since the early days, but originally they had to be hand drawn by placing an enlarged transparency of the design over the screen. Some designs took several hours to draw, but produced a feeling of achievement in that they were compact draw files which were easy to colour and scale to size. A Watford hand scanner and a copy of David Pilling's Trace program have now been added to the inventory enabling a complicated cartoon drawing to be transferred from customer artwork, traced, edited in Draw and ready for printing within an hour. Draw files have been found preferable to Sprites as they generally take up much less memory, which can be important if 12 or even 15 colour badges are being printed on a sheet of A3 paper. "Out of Memory" messages are not unknown if this is attempted using scaled Sprites, even with 2Mb of memory installed.

Although the badge size is a nominal 58mm in diameter, an image size of 55mm is about the largest which is practical, the paper disc being cut to 68mm in diameter to allow for overlap between the parts of the badge. We have found it difficult to accurately align the perspex guide disc in the badge cutter with the image and therefore we now use the horizontal and vertical centering facility in *Poster* to centre the image

within a circle 84mm diameter and about 1.5mm line thickness which aligns with the It is important to inside of the cutter base. correctly group the design for this process or the result, especially with the vertical centering, is a mess. This means that with the vertical margins of our printer, 5 or 6 badges only, can fit on an A4 page, with 12 or 15 on A3 paper.

Using the "Alter Text" facility in Poster it is quite simple to produce custom name badges with an otherwise similar design, all that is required is to "Copy" the first badge, and then "Select" and alter the name. The easiest badge orders to produce are those in monochrome all to an identical design, as only one page has to be printed on the computer, the remainder being photocopied, possibly onto coloured paper, with the flourescent colours being very effective. With a Dot-Matrix printer, large areas of black are often not well rendered, so touching-up with a pen and photocopying often gives the best results for heavy designs.

The badge components as supplied include clear plastic discs to cover the paper insert, and with a little lateral thinking, we came upon a new approach to badge design. It started with Grandparents' Golden Wedding when we wanted to produce special gold badges and discovered that although gold wrapping paper could be cut into a badge disc, it was difficult to print onto satisfactorily. Dad realised that Overhead Projector Transparency film which we had used in both Write-on and Photocopy form to enable designs to be put in front of the screen for drawing round, was about the same thickness as the clear plastic discs supplied with the badge components. One more step, and reversed images printed on paper became photocopied images, which when cut out with the cutter were the right way round on the inside of the badge covers, when made up with backing of foil or patterned paper. a Particularly effective is the "holographic" foil which reflects different colours in the light. Each of the children at Andrew's school had one to celebrate the school's Silver Jubilee incorporating the school badge, and the same design was supplied on paper to be printed on mugs. Those of you with colour printers which print onto transparency could no doubt explore enhanced effects.

Poster is also used to produce sticky labels for the back of the badges, eight stickers giving name, phone no. etc. being obtained from each 102 x 35mm. label using Outline Fonts. A number of orders have resulted from this advertising.



The machine is often taken to fêtes and facilities are provided for children to make badges to their own designs. As it is not practical to take the computer and printer, especially to events held in the open air with no mains power handy, pages of names are printed which can be cut out as required, and added to pictures or stickers to build up a design; pens and blank discs are also available. Pre-printed whole badge inserts are taken and made up as needed, the costs being a small part of the total badge cost, so it is not too expensive if they are wasted. We find that plastic Dairylea cheese containers are suitable for keeping the discs in.

Rectangular, re-usable badges have also been produced for conferences and open evenings, although the badges themselves are quite expensive.

(If any readers would like to contact the Claringbull family or Margery Swinton, the Club will be happy to pass on your letters )



Those of you who were lucky enough to be able to get to the 1992 BBC Acorn User show at Wembley can't have failed to have noticed the vast array of new software and hardware on show. For those people who were either not able to get to the show or whose memories have faded, this is a short summary of some new products which were on display:

Arxe Systems had their new 16 bit SCSI and High Density Disc interface cards on show. All of Acorn's latest machines come complete with a high density disc controller and drive. This upgrade gives existing owners the chance to read and write 1.6 MByte format discs.

The Atomwide / Aleph One stand was almost overflowing with new products. Atomwide were selling their new RemoteFS - which allows files to be transferred across a serial, parallel (A5000 or Ethernet/Econet/AUN later only) or link. RemoteFS simply allows you to have directory viewers on one machine of the disc(s) on the machine to which it is connected. Data can then be copied across the link simply by dragging files into or out of the RemoteFS viewers. They also had a rather neat trackerball for use with the A4 which simply clips on the side and plugs into the mouse port. Their new NETfax system allows all machines on a network to send faxes via Computer Concepts' FaxPack. Aleph One were showing off their new 486PC card together with a reduced price 386PC card which has now had the clock speed increased from 20MHz to 25MHz, and their special Windows 3.1 drivers were also available.

Computer Concepts were showing off their superfast object orientated graphics program -*ArtWorks*. A major feature is its WYSIWYG control, which allows a variable trade-off between full WYSIWYG and just outlines, depending on how much speed you are prepared to sacrifice for on-screen detail. Its modular design means that it is easily upgradable by the addition further modules to perform specific tasks. To top everything off it comes with a set of 220 outline fonts, 200 of which are new to the Archimedes! Also on display was CC's new 24 bit colour card – the combination of ArtWorks, the colour card and an A5000 could make a very powerful graphics workstation!



...there was a vast array of new hardware and software on show...

Integrex had a new range of ink jet printers on sale. Their BetaJet printer is a low cost 300 dpi mono inkjet printer. It is also very small, making it ideal where there is limited space. They were also selling the colour version and various other quality printers.

Leading Edge were selling their easy-to-fit A5000 2 MByte - 4 MByte RAM upgrades for  $\pounds75$  inc. VAT – only three years ago A3000 RAM upgrades cost £150 per MByte.

Morley Electronics were concentrating on their SCSI interface and systems, especially CD ROM packages. They had a range of CD ROM software, including a Creepie Crawlies data base, Grooves - Musical clips and the Hutchinsons Encyclopedia, all of which run on RISC OS given SCSI and a suitable CDROM drive. ESM were demonstrating *Kid Pix*, their new children's art package. This contains lots of rather unusual features such as the wacky brushes (e.g. 'drippy paint') and the facility to include shapes pre-defined by the teacher to help younger children produce a picture on a certain subject. This package seems set to catch the imagination of children in schools all round the country.

Oregan had a very interesting package on display – *Digital Symphony*. This is a fully multi-tasking Sound Track editor incorporating a wide range of effects. Amiga tunes will sound exactly as they do on the Amiga. There is full support for using MIDI instruments to enter music and it can be displayed in musical notation form on a stave. Tracks can be loaded and saved in a wide variety of formats. In many ways *Digital Symphony* is more flexible than *Tracker*. They were also displaying their new flexible database *Archivist* and their recent game 2067 BC.

Software 42, a newly formed company, was also at the Show. They were selling selections of utility and clip art discs, as well as a selection of games (described on the Games Page). They were also selling ArcFS 2.

Krysalis were showing their four latest 16 bit conversions - *Oh no! More Lemmings!*, *Populous, Omar Sharif's Bridge* and *Turbo Challenge 2*. They had an arcade style set-up with a pair of driving seats, each complete with a steering wheel, pedals and a monitor for prospective buyers to try out *Turbo Challenge* 2 - a pity though that both players got the same split screen view. Hopefully, with the release of the A3010, we should see a lot more 16 bit conversions and dedicated Arc games released in the near future.

#### Mark Smith

(Mark recently joined the Club Committee, and is also the author of the well known ArcFS program, used on our magazine disc)

#### The ARM Club Open Day

On a bleak and rainy Sunday morning I set out for Mill Hill School with some trepidation, wondering whether the Open Day would be worth a 250 mile round trip to London.

The Open Day was held in the large hall at Mill Hill School, and a number of well known companies set up their stalls for the day. A steady stream of people came through the doors all day long, perhaps inspired by the free admission, coffee and biscuits!

Many members took the opportunity to renew their memberships in person, and the Club PD Library was also very busy dispensing Public Domain software. Lots of technical advice was given, and the whole range of Acorn machines, (including the PocketBook) was on display.

A wide selection of software & hardware was on show, and could be bought from the relevant company, or from either of the two Acorn dealers present, *TMJ Software* and *Le Computer*. *Arxe Systems* were demonstrating their latest products, which look to be very exciting, *Palette Studio* were showing off their new *Imagery* package reviewed elsewhere, and *Digital Services* were showing off the latest version of *Squirrel*, as well as answering many questions.

Unfortunately a few companies were unable to be there, due to other commitments. *Computer Concepts* and *Ace Computing* were represented by static displays. *Software 42* were present to sell their new range of games and other software, and subscriptions to *Illusions* magazine were selling well.

Finally, the Editorial Team of *Archimedes World* magazine spent the day answering questions and dispensing copies of their magazine.

Thanks to everyone, especially Bruce Dickson for making the day such a success.

# Arnold's Observations

Steve Arnold presents more of his personal views on the state of the world, with a look at the serious subject of Computing in Education...

Well, here we are again, with my second article! As ever inspiration is hard to find -a few pints of any brew with the letters X as a suffix are called for. Ah... That's better.

"Tim fore werk".. oops! Sorry that should be Time for work! I think I'll lie down for bit...

I've just woke up from my little snooze (or was it my drunken stupor).... PANIC!! I've got an article to write [sorry Ed., late again!]. This article is generally about Education and Computing.

#### Education

As a concerned parent I am always trying to ensure that my children get the best education that is available to them, or at least have the opportunity for good education. I have become very aware that with the current squeeze on resources and finances of Local Authorities and Schools, this is becoming difficult to achieve. Only those areas that are externally supported by Business Sponsorship, active PTA's etc. will be able to show any progress in this area.

The use of computers and their associated software in the teaching of Information Technology and as a tool in other subjects is an area destined for cost cutting, or level funding at the very least. Therefore I foresee that unless there is a major change in circumstances, the overall infrastructure of Information Technology and the use of computers within the curriculum is destined to change slowly for the next few years.

#### **Computing in Education**

What do I mean by 'Computing in Education'?

To me, the term 'Computing in Education' is rather a catch-all phrase in that covers a wide area of interests. These can be generalised into Computing and Technology components, which cover the evolution & development of these subjects, the uses and relationships with associated curricular subjects and the use and effects of computer technology in society. The current economic climate and lack of any real political focus only clouds the issues of Information Technology and especially computing within education. There appears to be little or no coordination at any level, from the powers in Government right down to the working teachers. It could be described as educational anarchy.

The attitudes of the various Local Education Authorities and the self-managed schools will dictate how computing and IT are to be taught within each individual school. Do you know how your child is being taught? Do you know what the school's policy and plans are for ensuring that your child's IT education meets the everchanging needs of society?

I suspect that many people may disagree with the simplistic overview which I have put forward, but my response is "*This is my personal opinion and therefore works for me!*"

#### **School IT Advisors / Teachers**

From my experience these are people who fall into two major categories: those who have some formal teaching skills relating to IT subjects or have experience related to the IT environment,

I hope that I am wrong. What do you think?

and those who have been nominated to fill the role (sometimes just because they have shown an aptitude or interest in the subject). Most of these people perform minor miracles given the constraints on them. As a body en mass however, they seem to lack direction or have no unified goals. The advice that is given to parents is usually contradictory and rarely answers the parents concerns. Some advisors fail to address the future needs of IT in education tending to be wrapped-up in *Training* rather than *Teaching*.

Children need to be taught the concepts and principles, rather than some arbitrary operating system with its associated quirks! Terms such as 'Industry Standard' seem to hypnotise most teachers. On close examination it can be discovered that this is, in fact, a myth. The industry standards for software and hardware are likely to change on a frequent basis as each manufacturer brings its latest innovation to the marketplace. There is no doubt that in the future whole concepts of interfacing with the computer will change. Speech recognition systems are on the horizon and multi-media is just starting to make some inroads. It is therefore more important that children are taught to be creative and adaptable.

#### Children as "Computing & Technology" Pupils

There are those children who love all aspects of IT, those who don't, and those for whom it is an excuse to use their Sega's and Nintendo's. (You know the types! Kids who are totally wrapped-up in designer gear, totally brainwashed by advertisements and totally fed on a diet of 'Sonic the Hedgehog' and 'Super Mario' ...Oh Help.. Even I've been brain-washed!)

I am concerned with the use and general public image of technology and computing. I'm certainly not a kill-joy! Computing and Technology should be fun, but it should, where possible, serve a purpose other than just entertainment – I like the occasional game; I enjoy the thrill of winning as much as any Linford Christie, but when I see parents being continually blackmailed into forking out large sums of money for the latest game, which like most current fashion items becomes redundant after a few months, I begin to ask myself "...hasn't all this gone a bit too far?"

Some games do have educational value in the area of problem-solving. These usually involve some logical processing and analysis; however they also tend to be just a little addictive and consume huge amounts of time! We have all been 'hooked' by a game, only to find that we should have completed a far more important task while we were trying to save the world from some evil force! Like most things, I think that games playing should be done in moderation.

#### **Education Software**

I am not going to discuss the merits of the various individual software packages, or whether they are appropriate for a particular teaching need – that is a subject that will be addressed at some future date. I will just remind you however that although most computer systems profess to be capable of supporting eduction needs, it is only in the Acorn environment that you will find software which covers all aspects of the National Curriculum.

Whilst I'm generally looking at the subject of education software, I'd like to say that the ARM Club is planning to produce a public domain / shareware library devoted to education. If any of you are teachers or concerned parents, here's your chance to pass on some little program you have developed. Be it trivial or be it a masterpiece, all are welcome. This includes any course notes you have compiled or drawfiles/sprites you have created. In fact any computer generated material with an educational bias is welcome. Don't be shy, send it in to the Club office!

Anyway, time for me to close. My wife calling me to dry-up...Back to reality with a bang!



Simply put, Squirrel is a multi-tasking and user friendly relational database management system for the Archimedes.

After getting the authorisation code to register the software from Digital Services (a bit of a 'ho-ha' although it only took one phone call!) you are presented with this small fluffy looking animal type thing (presumably a squirrel!) sitting invitingly on the icon bar.

Setting up a database could not be easier, simply drag a box roughly the size you want it on the screen, fill in the empty spaces in the dailogue box that appears to finish creating the first field. Repeat this process for any other fields that you may want to add, pick 'Save' from the main menu and hey presto you have created a database ready for use. Even after you have started filling in the data all field names, types, sizes and positions

remain editable. Fields can be of almost any type ranging from simple text, a date or a number to the more complex fields such as *Draw* pictures or *Maestro* tunes.

I would not say that Squirrel is an 'all singing all dancing' definitive package, but it will certainly perform more than adequately for most people's needs. It is one of the first Archimedes based databases to implement the industry standard SQL (Structured Query Langu-



Toolbox

age) for database interrogation. This means that an Archimedes running Squirrel could in theory link up to the same network as an IBM, an Apple Macintosh or a Unix station, all able to alter and enquire of the same data. Using some additional drivers which will soon be available it could be possible to call your local library with a modem and find out if they have the book that you want (assuming they use an SQL compatible database!).

🖻 🖾 🛛 Field details			
Heading Type Size	string 2	Heading � Type � OK	
Name Validate		Data ¢ Validate¢	

Field Creation Dialogue Box

From the few relatively simple databases that I have created using this program there are only one or two thngs which in my view could be added to make the database easier to use for the beginner. These are:

• A Toolbox - Squirrel has one, but only for table creation. It would make it easier not only for the beginner but also for the more advanced user to have a toolbox for browsing through records, for easier quick searches to find data and so on. A program such a Minerva's *Multistore* has this feature but it costs considerably more than Squirel, and it takes a lot longer to get to grips with (eg when creating data tables).

Unlike Multistore Squirel has no limitations to any of the attributes associated with

databases. With Multistore you must specify the number of records that the database will hold when it is initially created. The only limitation of this type with Squirrel is disc

Data	
New record	F2
Replicate record	F7
Write record	F3 ¢
Delete record	F6 �
Print record P	°int ¢
Goto ''	\$
Next'' PgDn	-
Previous '' PgUp	
Nafina quanu	 E.A
Define query	F4

space. Squirrel is relational in its approach to reporting. This means that a report can contain information from more than one database.

Another fairly major point to

Main Menu note is that with Squirrel you may only sort records within a report, they may not be sorted for browsing.

Squirrel will print using the standard RISC OS Printer drivers and any outline fonts. Internationalisation is also implemented when used with RISC OS 3. This means that Squirrel will automatically default to the correct monetary units, time and so on for the country in which it is being used. I can only see one problem with this - if a database is created in the UK with fields containing an amount of money (eg £120), and the database is then posted to someone in France who uses this data

the database will now give the value as 120 French Francs (a somewhat overwhelming exchange rate eh!)

Label printing is also catered for allowing labels to be printed accross the web as well as down it, along with other powerful printing facilities.

Data can be easily linked with an *Impression* document, by simply dragging the required data from Squirrel into an Impression window [*using the Impulse II system* - Ed]

Some people may argue that over a hundred pounds is rather a lot for a beginner to pay for their first database and in some cases they could be right, but I feel that most people would be better off with a database which will not need to be replaced (at extra cost), not forgetting the trouble of transferring data from one program to the other. I cannot think of a single reason why I did not buy Squirrel when I bought my first Archimedes database management system.

If I was asked to recommend a database system to an Archimedes user then it would be Squirrel.

For more information on Squirrel contact Digital Services at 9 Wayte Street, Cosham, Portsmouth, Hants, PO6 3BS. Site licences are available.



Written by Mark W Watts



A modem? Not on your life! That is the reaction of many parents when their computer literate offspring hear how useful these things can be!

It's true that modems can lead to frightening phone bills, but this need not be the case, and modems do have a number of very important uses which are well worth the cost.

Perhaps the most useful part of owning a modem is that it allows you to establish contact with other users, finding out the latest news and views, as well as having immediate access to experts in every possible field. Computer use should be a shared experience, and I guarantee that you will get far more out of your computer if you share your experiences and time with other users.

🗗 🖂 🛛 Board : Arcade.	Area 23 - BAU Show 19	992, Message #162496	
From : Simon Burrows	To:Lawrence Kirby	Sent: 20:27:53 08	-Nov-19
Subject: News		Page 1	of 1
Reply To: 162457 Replies:			
I don't think even dotty Acor 120 pounds if all you got wer try that one on! Simon B.	n users would be silly e the drafts. Not even	y enough to pay n Acorn (:=)) would	
<			
ARM Internal :0 Apps	RAM ArcFS 2	🎁 🎢 📑	

Having the use of a modem only once a week is enough to guarantee that you are one of the best informed Archimedes users around, providing that you know the right places to look, and how to do it for the minimum possible expense. Sometimes you will find information on bulletin boards which you could not have ever found elsewhere, and other information appears months before it does in the Acorn magazines. Some bulletin boards even have Acorn Support Areas, which contain files and information direct from Acorn Computers Ltd. The first thing to consider is the speed of modem which you choose to buy - basically, I would recommend that you buy the fastest modem which you can afford, within reason. Combined with the use of an off-line reader (described later), you can easily recoup the extra expense in lower phone bills than you could otherwise achieve.

Offline readers are invaluable - instead of connecting to a bulletin board and reading all of the messages whilst you are connected, an offline reader (such as the careware program !ReaderS) allows you to download all of the messages at once, and then read & reply to them at your leisure, without keeping the phone line busy. The replies are uploaded to the bulletin board next time you use it.

Another way to reduce the cost is to subscribe to the Mercury telephone service. This costs £10 per year, but does mean that long distance telephone calls cost a lot less, AND you can receive a separate bill just containing the modem calls (very useful for parents!).

Another money saving way to communicate is to use "Fidonet" boards - this means that you connect to a local bulletin board, and you can

read & send messages from/to all other bulletin boards connected to the Fidonet system.

All in all, using a modem need not be expensive, has many benefits and most certainly needn't turn you into a spotty computer junkie!

#### **Simon Burrows**

(For an excellent taste of a popular and successful bulletin board, call Arcade BBS on 081-654 2212 or 081-655 4412)

## Club Training Courses Tel 081-959 3321 (evenings)

March 7th – Beginners' Day March 21st – Games Day April 4th - Building Blocks Course April 18th – General Music Day May 16th – Pipedream 4 June 20th – Impression II

Courses cost £20 for a day's tuition at Mill Hill School in North London, including course materials & lunch. To book a place or for more details, please phone Bruce Dickson on the above number.

### Did you know?

Acorn's RISC Operating System is a major piece of software, and has taken many thousands of man-hours for the RISC OS Development Team at Acorn to develop.

RISC OS contains several hidden features to display details of the people involved, and the following describes how to activate these features on the different versions of RISC OS:

#### RISC OS 2.00

From BASIC, type SYS 68, &0387FD44 for a quick list

#### RISC OS 3.00

From BASIC, type SYS 68, &039FFD66 for another quick list

When the RISC OS 3 Title Screen is displayed, quickly type the letters 'r-m-t-m-d' to see some

digitised photgraphs of the Acorn team!

Open the RISC OS 3 Info Window (from the task manager icon) and click on the letters 'r-m-t-m-d' of "© Acorn Computers Ltd" using the MENU mouse button (either 't'). A long list of names will be flashed up in the '© Acorn Computers Ltd' icon.

#### RISC OS 3.10

From BASIC, type SYS 68, &039FE528 Open the RISC OS 3 Info Window, and click on the letters 't-e-a-m' of "© Acorn Computers Ltd" using the MENU mouse button. A long list of names will be flashed up in the '© Acorn Computers Ltd' icon.

Some of these features which require typing in letters or clicking with the mouse are fairly time critical - if you see nothing happening, don't give up too quickly! Try again, and if you really can't get them to work, give the Archimedes Help Service a ring on (0533) 413850!



New Games Releases from the BAU Show

The show saw the release of a large number of new Arc games, and for once they were of a surprisingly high quality. Currently, conversions are still the most popular titles, but we also saw the release of some exciting new original games...

Krisalis had by far the most impressive stand at the show, with *Lotus Turbo Challenge 2* and Populous their main products. These are all 16-bit conversions, and are of an impressive quality - if you haven't seen the original, that is. Like most



Krisalis conversions, the graphics and sound have been ported directly and don't really suit the Arc in all cases a few slight tweaks to these would

not have gone unnoticed, especially considering the games cost £5 more than their Amiga counterparts. Another noticeable omission is the two player computer link option in Lotus which allowed two players to compete directly, both with a full screen display. Regardless of this, it is still a my personal favourite of the show's releases. *Oh* 

*No More Lemmings* has been released for over a month but was also on sale, and almost as perfect as the original Lemmings.



Unfortunately, it is only really for addicts of the first game due to the very hard difficulty level.

It was disappointing not to see the much hyped *Black Angel* on the 4th Dimension stand (or *Nevryon 2*, which apparently has been dropped completely by 4th D) but they more than made up

for this with *Chopper Force* and, more impressively,*Galactic Dan*. This is a fast moving vector style game, featuring some stunning ray traced graphics and turns out to be the best thing I have seen from 4th Dimension in ages great fun!

Another disappointment came from Arxe Systems. *Scorpius*, their stunning shoot-em-up written by Sick is still not finished, even after the authors have been working on it for over a year now. Hopefully it will be available for Christmas, and it really will be a product to watch out for. I don't know whether it will beat SWIV, but the playable demo on its own is better than any other Arc shoot-em-up, and costs very much less so don't miss it!

Coin Age Ltd did not have their own stand at the show, but I did manage to pick up a copy of their new release, *Gribbly's Day Out On The Arc'* (sic). Unfortunately, the age of this title really

shows. The graphics and sound are good, but it is just unplayable. After trying the first level about twenty times, I still can't complete it!



Software 42 were at the Show demonstrating two new games, Ixion and WolfPack. Ixion is a 3D vector graphics adventure in a similar vein to Galactic Dan, but a slightly slower paced game concentrating more on puzzle solving elements and featuring the more detailed vector graphics of the two. WolfPack is a new flight simulation with 15 missions. The gameplay is

similar to Interdictor or MiG 29, and it is priced at only £20.



Unfortunately, the promised beat-em-up, Raw Power, was not available, but will be on sale by the time you read this.

The final two new titles available at the show were *Guile* from Dream Software and *Fervour* from Clares. Guile looks and sounds extremely impressive - but unfortunately, that is about all. The game is very similar to Zarch, but goes a lot slower and the control system is awkward and clumsy. Fervour is a good implementation of a fairly original game, but like so many puzzle games can get tedious after about five or six plays [*I disagree with you here Ben – it's very addictive – Ed*]. However, some of the level designs are extremely clever, try the password 'Life' on the beginner levels - start the level and then don't touch any keys!

To sum up, my choice of the best new games would be Lotus Turbo Challenge II from Krisalis. Galactic Dan, Ixion and Oh No More Lemmings are also highly recommended!

#### Hints

Finally, a couple of the latest game cheats for you now. Owners of *Lemmings* can activate the hidden cheat mode within the game by entering 'IAMNOTGOOD' as the password. If you have *Oh No! More Lemmings*, you can enter a similar cheat mode by typing in 'FIDDLECODE'. Both will allow you to press Space to skip past a level whilst playing it.

#### Stuck on Lotus Turbo Challenge II?

The passwords for the various stages are as follows: DARK SKY, FOGY FOG (!!), ICELAND, CACTUS, MANIAC, DAMP PATCH. There is one more password to go, and also some hidden cheats which I will reveal in due course - but I can't spoil the whole game just yet! If you want cheats for almost every game released to date make sure you get a copy of the definitive game cheats PD disc (available from the Club PD library).

#### Ben Eshmade



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For more details, please contact John Bancroft on (0933) 317562.

This is the Game provisional name being given to a game being developed by Software 42 at the moment. To be really successful, the game needs you (the games players) to help. Please write to the address below for more details, and you will receive credit (minimum) and a free copy of the game if your ideas are used. Please write to: Game X, Software 42, 109 Ferry Road, Hullbridge, Essex SS5 6EL, including a stamped-addressed envelope.



One of the latest games releases is Fervour, from Clares. This is a game which tests your powers of memory, skill and dexterity without you even recognising the fact, and definitely has an addictive attraction to it.

Fervour costs £25.99, and comes in a very glossy box, complete with spiral bound manual (ideal for reading after you have played the game!) and the game disc, which is not copy protected once you have entered some personal details which are embedded into the program code.

The story behind Fervour is quite long, so is best read from the manual or Clares' advertisements, but the basic object is to steer your droid (a sphere) along a complicated track, stretching away into the distance on your screen. This might sound easy, but the track contains many coloured squares which have various effects on the droid, from speeding it up or making it move in certain directions, to jumping in the air or gaining extra points, time or lives.



of years on other formats. However Fervour has many extra features, including bends in the track, sharp corners requiring much dexterity and speed control, as well as a desktop level editor (see screenshot). This in itself is a superb piece of software, and gives the game appeal to those who like to customise their games and design their own levels.

Fervour is a game which can appeal to all age groups, literally. Very young children can pick up on the idea of steering the droid along the track, yet it has appeal to older people as well, with that 'just one more game' attraction which makes it so addictive. People need no instructions to get into the game, and even if the attraction does start to wear off, there is the superb level designer which works in the desktop using many facilities borrowed from *Paint*.

The graphics in Fervour are up to the standards of most games these days, and since it is not a straight conversion of a game from other

> machines, makes use of many of the strengths of the Archimedes to produce a visually appealing game (especially on a multiscan monitor). A particularly good feature of the game is its music, with some good tunes which link properly and fade into events taking place in the game.

> Of all the games recently released, I feel that Fervour has the widest appeal and would make an excellent stocking filler for any age-group. It borrows some ideas from an earlier game (which the author of Fervour has never actually seen) and builds on these to make a great implementation of a earlier game. I think that this

One criticism which some people levy on Fervour is that the basic idea is derived from a game called Trailblazer, which has been available for a number game should be in everybody's games library and it will brighten up any rainy day.

**Simon Burrows** 





Simon Burrows looks at some of the ARM Club's latest postbag

Dear Sir,

I felt I had to write on "Arnold's Observations" in the last Club magazine. His observations sum up my own opinions on 'Experts', 'Computers' and keeping things simple.

I came in to computing late in life, and although I don't class myself as brilliant, I'm not daft either! So many articles assume the the reader knows what the writer is talking about, and the use of 'jargon' just seems to compound the problem.

My first computer was the Electron, a pocket device these days, and about two years ago I bought the A3000, like swopping one's Ford Prefect for a Jaguar. I still have trouble with the gearbox, one of these days I will get the A3000 into top gear and surprise myself.

Please keep up the good work, I think the disc is a great idea.

#### John H Meek

Thank you for this letter, Mr Meek – Steve Arnold's first article did take an unusual look at the world of computing, and I expect that most people would agree with his sentiments.



Dear Sir,

Why did Andrew Thacker resign as co-editor of the ARM Club magazine?

Paul Hughes

Andrew recently started at University, and could no longer spare the time to work on the Club magazine, contributing and designing in his unique style! He does still keep in regular touch with the Club and the whole Archimedes scene, whilst at the same time enjoying the benefits of university life <hic!>...



Thanks to everyone who wrote in to comment on the idea of including a disc of software with each magazine – you all agreed that is a good thing, but we must try to ensure that the selection of software contains something of interest to everyone, which can be quite a difficult task.



In Issue 5 of the Club magazine, I commented that "it is generally accepted that C is the language to use if you intend to write a serious application of any complexity".

Oliver Cornes pointed out (by electronic mail) that Computer Concepts is without doubt the most successful software developer for the Archimedes, yet their applications such as Impression II and Artworks (which are certainly serious and complex applications) are written in ARM assembler rather than C. This enables the applications to be much faster and more compact than would be possible if they were written in C.

#### **Simon Burrows**

David Reid has asked us to publicise the training courses which he is organising at an Acorn approved training centre in Surrey. These will look at the RISC OS Desktop, and "Beyond the F12 key". Courses cost £28 for half a day's professional tuition. For more details on these two courses, please contact PRES Ltd, PO Box 319, Lightwater, Surrey GU18 5PW. We are always happy to support and publicise courses which help people discover how to use their machines.



In this 'How To Do it' article, I assume that you have heard of *!Draw* and know a bit about it. Draw can look a nasty piece of work - being a vector drawing package it uses a different method of drawing to *!Paint,* but is well worth getting to grips with. You will find it useful to read through the *!Draw* tutorial in the manual if you have not done so before.

Well let's have a go at drawing a piccy! I drew mine from a photo of one of those frogs you see on the front of nearly every wildlife book. Here's how to draw your own - and it applies to drawing most things. If you do not have a picture of a frog, use a different photo or the pictures on this page enlarged with a photocopier.

#### Stage 1

If like me you are a poor, deprived person and have no scanner then here is the cheap alternative: get an acetate sheet - one of those see-through plasticy sheets - size A4 is best, and a dark nonpermanent water soluble pen.

#### Stage 2

Place your acetate sheet (landscape way up) on top of the picture, which shouldn't be larger than your sheet. Trace the outline of the main features separately, for example the eyes, arms & legs. and if you want to, some light and dark shading in the places where the light changes - this helps to give you the proportions of the picture. Remember it's not easy to include much detail in !Draw so miss things like freckles out for now [*Frogs have freckles? – Ed*].

#### Stage 3

Stick your acetate tracing over the screen using sellotape at the sides. Open a *!Draw* window to full screen

size and make sure you can see the full tracing in the window. The photograph I used for the frog was quite large, so this made things easier. If the tracing is larger than your *!Draw* window then use a larger overscan screen mode (35/36 in RISC OS 3).

Taking the example of my frog, look at any parts of the picture which look like they could be separate shapes from the rest of the picture. For example, the arm could be one draw 'object'. Unfortunately there are no noticable lines separating the arm from the hand so you will

have to draw the hand at the same ( time as the arm and have the whole thing as one object.

In Fig.1, some of the different parts are shaded and have different line



thicknesses to show you. Obviously, you can not have one 'object' with two different colours in it.

Another part that can be made a separate object is the 'bump' of the right eye. Rather than including the bump in the outline of the whole frog, draw it separately and when it is filled it will cover any lines underneath it.

#### Stage 4

Once you have worked out which will be the separate objects to make up the picture, you can go on to use your tracing to transfer the parts onto the screen. Only do it roughly though - remember that you can easily edit and change things in *!Draw* by pressing <adjust> over the object you want to edit. For an object like a frog, nearly all of it is curved so you mainly need to use the 'curve' and 'closed curve' tools.



either). You can make curves using thousands of end points (blue squares) but this makes things difficult to edit afterwards. It is useful to get used to what happens when you are drawing curves - they are rather slithery and lively!

While tracing from the acetate, it does not matter too much how many end points you click because you can delete some afterwards. Use as few as you can while still keeping the shape. I tend to neaten up the points a bit as I go along. If you want shading, remember the line around will be invisible and if you draw it exactly over the black outer lines then there will be a big gap in them. To avoid this, zoom in and draw the shade lines just inside of the black line so that it does not go over it.

#### Stage 5

Notice how *Fig.1* looks a mess. All of the lines overlap each other. When the shapes are filled and moved in front and behind of each other to make it look right, the nasty bits of line will be covered up (*Figs* 2+3). I recommend neatening out the curves before filling the shapes though. Make sure you know which lines will be covered and which will not. Delete the unwanted control points which are usually in the middle of a curve. Move the orange squares around to remake it into the proper curve again.

#### Stage 6

When your overall outline is drawn you can fill the parts in. So you do not lose any parts bring them forward and backwards into their correct positions as you go along filling in their colours.

#### Stage 7

Finishing touches: one thing which I did not consider at first was using a thicker line width. It's amazing what thicker lines can do to a drawing. 'Select all' and change the Line Width to 0.5 or 1. Having a variety of line widths can be attractive. It usually looks best if you use thicker lines on the outer parts of the drawing and thinner on the inside.

Remember to zoom in on the picture when you are editing it, because *!Draw* pictures go into infinity and there may be gaps and notches that you cannot see before zooming in.

Well I hope that you will find this article of some help. The frog has found its way onto the 'Animals' clip-art disc sold by Software 42.

The Gnelf (Ben Eshmade)





have always favoured the 'vector' based packages such as !Draw, ArtWorks and yes even Vector! I am by no means an artist and find it very difficult to draw any form of natural life freehand without a mountain of effort on my part, my brain going into hyperdrive and unless the freehand object contains a large number of staight lines. In my opinion Imagery is very much an artists' tool, but as such should not be considered beyond the scope of the average human bean!! Any software package, no matter what it is, will need getting used to by even the most experienced computer user.

After the initial demonstration at the Acorn User Show I took the package home, sat down, poured myself a stiff cup of orange juice and thought "Where do I start?" As with most packages the manual is always a safe bet! So I read on:

The only problem I encountered with the packaging was that the manual says that a function key strip is enclosed – however my package only had it as a rather mysterious !Draw file. (Mysterious because it would not load even with two megabytes of space for it to fit into). That's the only nasty bit out of the way, so on with the good stuff!

The manual is a fairly comprehensive document and contains just about everything you will ever want to know about the package, even going as far as including a Quick Guide and a Tutorial, both of which proved to be very useful; it also has the more usual reference section. The layout of the manual could be said to leave a little bit to be desired (from the DTP point of view), with huge titles and pictures that are far too large for the pages which they are on. Money could have been saved and therefore the package been cheaper if the manual had been a little more compact. This should not however deteriorate from the fact that the manual is very well written, featuring clear explanations fully complemented by detailed graphics (although a little too large for my liking.)

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Toolkit		

Installing the program on either floppy or hard disc is easy. All you have to do is click on the 'install' icon, enter your name and post code in the dialogue box which appears, click OK and wait a few seconds, and then the program is ready to use (after making a backup of course.)



The tutorial takes the form of step by step instructions in the manual complemented by a large poster detailing 24 key steps. This sort of guide is always well worth working through even if only to get the end picture. The quick guide was also well worth a glance – it covers many aspects of the program but in a concise and easy to read format, very good for the more experienced user.

The Imagery program itself is well worth the money if you are wanting to upgrade from *Paint*. The only bugs I found in the program itself involved the font manager, which had problems coping with a large amount of fonts (but let's face it, is the average user going to have more than sixty outline fonts?) [*Yes, if they have Artworks as well – Ed*] Also it is not currently possible to zoom down your picture to smaller than actual size, to see what it will look like when smaller. The menus are very well laid out enabling the user to find the

options which he/she wants very fast, although it could have done with a few more key short cuts quite apart from those on the function keys.

As for the functioning of the program itself, what more can I say than "It is a well worth addition to anybody's application library". Imagery is definitely a must for anybody with a digitiser, where there are endless possibilities.



Imagery is well worth the money if you are wanting to upgrade from !Paint

- Some notable features of the program include:
- Graduated shading in any direction (including radial shading).
- Sprites can be scaled to fit any area.
- Pictures can be saved either in a special Imagery format, or as sprite files.
- Uses outline fonts.

The overall presentation of the program is good. It comes with an attractive box, an easy-to-read manual, the tutorial and a function key strip (or not in my case!)

There is a lot more to this program than can be explained in a short review such as this, but overall I think that the program is extremely good. I do have to say that I think it is a bit overpriced, but Imagery is a good buy if you are looking for a pixel-based desktop art package.

Anyway, why are you still sitting here? Go down to your local dealer now for a demo, or for more information contact Palette Studio at 6c Belgic Square, Peterborough, Cambs, PE1 5XF. Imagery costs £89.95 inc VAT.

#### Mark Watts



We start this month with a new version of the well known *!DrawPlus* utility. Version 2.20 is now available, and the main improvements are related to RISC OS 3. Many of the new features of Acorn's RISC OS 3 *!Draw* have been incorporated into it, as well as support for files produced with the commercial *Vector* package (produced by

the same author, Jonathan Marten). If you are a *!DrawPlus* user and have RISC OS 3 then I recommend you upgrade to the latest version.

X	About this program		
Name:	Draw Plus		
Purpose:	Object-oriented drawing		
Author:	© Jonathan Marten 1991,1992		
Version:	2·20 (26th August 1992)		

A fairly new piece of software is *!Lunch* v0.33 by Peter Gaunt. Its full name is "Out to Lunch", and it is a comprehensive screen blanking package, taking up very little memory in the module area, but with the option of some excellent animations and pictures to be displayed when the screen is blanked.



RISC OS 3 does contain a built-in screen blanker, but when activated it completely blanks out the screen, making it difficult to tell whether the computer and monitor are switched on or not. It also has a WIMP frontend which is only needed to change the configuration of the blanker and load new effects. One effect makes the desktop appear to dissolve away – not to be confused with a virus!

Those of you who are programming oriented may be interested to know that a new version of *!Dissi*, by Belgian group BASS is now available, updated to work with RISC OS 3. Dissi is Shareware, and by registering you receive a much enhanced version as well as full support from the author. For those who don't know, Dissi is a powerful desktop based disassembler package.

*PowerBase* is a powerful Shareware database management system, written by Derek and Steven Haslam. If you are not sure whether a database system could could be useful, get hold of Powerbase and you will soon find out. It contains many features normally only found in commercial database programs.

The arrival of RISC OS 3 has had a major effect on the world of PD software. Firstly, some utilities have become obsolete, such as set-type programs and file time stampers. Secondly, a significant amount of software may not work with the new operating system. In this case you can try to get an updated version – either from a PD library is one exists, or else write to the author and ask for a new version to be written! Finally, some software can be usefully updated to take advantage of the new facilities offered by RISC OS 3, so it is well worth finding out if any new versions have been written.



**The Archimedes Bulletin Board** 081 654 2212 and 081 655 4412

I finish this time with an advert for the best bulletin board, from which all of the latest PD can be obtained for the price of a phone call. "PD Person"

# **ARM Club News**

#### A Roundup of the latest Club news by Simon Burrows

Thanks to all members who came along to see us at the BBC Acorn User Show - we hope that you all remembered to claim your free disc of Public Domain Software! Running the stand at the Show was no mean feat, and my thanks go to everyone who helped on the stand, not forgetting Geoff Potter of Safesell Exhibitions for organising such a spectacular show..

The Club AGM was held in early October along with a Committee meeting, and many matters were discussed and decided upon. Elections were held for all of the available positions – congratulations and thanks to everyone elected!

Rene Barreto	Chairman
Bruce Dickson	Vice Chairman
Nick Evans	Secretary
Mark Watts	Treasurer
Simon Burrows	Magazine Editor
John Bancroft	Membership Secretary
Mick Cooper	Public Relations

Mark Smith and Steve Arnold were elected as committee members and advisors to the Club.

Nick Evans reported on the success of the Public Domain Software library, the profits from which are used entirely to subsidise other Club activities.

Bruce Dickson gave a review of the year's Training Courses, and the Club thanked him for all of the work which he has put into making these courses so successful.

All in all the Annual General Meeting provided an opportunity to look back over the last year and see how the Club has developed in this time, due entirely to the hard work of our many volunteers – well done everyone! Let's hope that the coming year is even better. The Club's discount scheme continues to grow, thanks to the generosity of many companies and the hard work of Mark Watts, who has been organising it.

Unfortunately the Computer Concepts' scheme has had to be withdrawn because we had to order a minimum number of items at any one time, causing an unacceptable delay before members received their purchases. By shopping around you should be able to find dealers giving worthwhile discounts on CC's excellent products.

The Club is evolving all of the time, and we hope that this means that it will provide more and more for our members. A few people have pointed out that other user groups have eventually developed into commercial organisations, losing much of the user group feel – we have no intention of letting this happen, and hope that you will support us.

At the ARM Club Open Day the Club's new Education Section was born. We feel that the Club potentially has a lot to offer schools, teachers and concerned parents. If you would like to get involved, please write to the Education Coordinator at the usual Club address.

Don't forget the Archimedes Help Service, run by Club member Toby Smith. If you have any problems at all with your computer, give the service a ring and Toby will do his best to help. Telephone (0533) 413850 evenings & weekends.

With the dark & cold nights becoming ever longer, this time of year is an excellent time to huddle up with your computer! The best way to do this is with somebody else, so why not chase up any Archimedes owners who live near to you? The Club's Members Interests list is a good place to start, as well as looking in the !Help files of PD software, and enquiring in your local dealer's shop. Curl up with a computer!



The biggest news to emerge from Cambridge has been the unveiling by ARM Ltd of their new VIDC20 video controller chip, quickly followed by a statement from Acorn welcoming it and stating that they "anticipate using the new video controller in future generations of computers".

For the last year or two some people have been criticising Acorn's computers because their graphics capabilities have fallen behind the rest of the market, but this new product really will enable them to produce leading edge products.

The VIDC20 can display up to 16 million colours at VGA, SVGA or XGA levels of resolution, capable of generating up to 32 bits per pixel at data rates of up to 160MBytes per second!

Malcolm Bird, Technical Director of Acorn confirmed that the controller will be used, and that "it is one in a new series of high performance chips from ARM Ltd". Various other new chips are believed to be in the pipeline which Acorn will use to produce new power-machines based around a different architecture to their existing computers.

The VIDC20 is very adaptable, suitable for everything from power sensitive portable computers, games consoles and cheap X-terminals through to desktop multimedia workstations.

Advanced RISC Machines (ARM) Ltd was formed in 1990 as a joint company by Acorn, Apple and VLSI technology, and has already produced the ARM250 processor used in the latest Acorn machines, and the ARM610 processor being used in the Apple Newton handheld PDA computer.

Congratulations to ARM Ltd for producing such an amazing set of processors, video controllers and peripheral drivers. A new generation of ARM chips appears to be just around the corner, so we can look forward to exciting times with Acorn. Acorn Computer Group plc recently announced some very commendable half-yearly results, showing that turnover was up by 19% at £21.1 million (£17.9 million in 1991), with operating profit for the period at £749,000 (£118,000 in 1991). Net profit was £511,000 (compared with £420,000 loss in 1991).

Nobody can have failed to see Acorn's current massive advertising campaign in newspapers, magazines and even on television. This is all part of their *Vision for the Future* campaign to market their large array of new computers, as well as project a new enhanced image of Acorn as a successful company going places.

Go into any High Street in the country and you are likely to find at least one shop selling the new A3010, and you may even find some sales staff who know what they are talking about!

All of Acorn's Archimedes computers are now available in "Special Access" form at the time of purchase, which means that additional hardware and software is supplied to make the computer more accessible to people with physical, hearing or visual difficulties. The Special Access Upgrade pack is available for £99 with any Archimedes Computer.

For the first time Acorn will be running it's own major show in 1993, complementing its activities at the Computer Shopper and Gamesmaster Live Shows (as well as many others), not forgetting the regional World of Acorn Open Days. The Show will be held at Wembley in the Autumn.

The BBC Acorn User Show will be taking place in the Spring, from 15th-17th April next year, in the new venue of the Harrogate International Conference Centre. The Acorn market is now big enough to support two major shows, so this should be excellent news for the Acorn world.



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