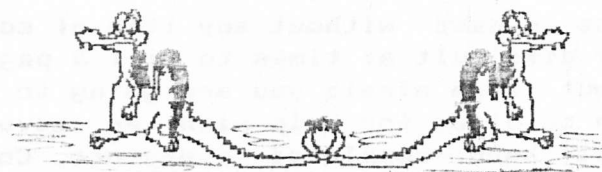


The Newsletter of the National Dragon Users Group

DRAGON



UPDATE

* ISSUE 71. 'Is there anybody out there?' JULY 1990. *

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The Gaffer's Bit

It will come as no surprise to you, I'm sure, when I tell you that we have a problem with Update. To be more precise, there are three main problems: increases in the cost of almost everything from paper to electricity, which have reached the point where they can no longer be "absorbed" or even ignored, lack of interesting material (partly due to the decrease in numbers as people change to later machines), which makes it almost impossible to produce a consistently good publication, and thirdly, lack of time here, which means that Update is getting later every month!

I could get around the first point by simply increasing the subscription rates to cover the additional costs, but that would do nothing to assist with snags two and three, so after much deliberation (and even some consultation!), I've decided that the only practical means of improving the situation is for Update to become a bi-monthly publication instead of monthly.

Hopefully this will mean that we will be able to produce a better publication without any increase in subscription, and even get the thing out on time for a change!! It isn't a move that I wanted to make, but I don't think there is any viable alternative, unless we cut the size of Update by around 50%, and even that doesn't do as much for cost as the postage bill would remain virtually the same as now.

All other Group services etc will remain as they are now, but from the NEXT issue (August 1990) Update will become a bi-monthly publication, which will mean that the sequence for the remainder of this year will be August, October, December. OK?

There is still the point that to produce a more interesting newsletter we will need a lot more material FROM YOU, so please, more and better articles, soonest. By the way, I had a letter t'other week from a person who claims that Update is full of "foul and obscene language" there wasn't any in the copies I printed, so is there a PIRATE Update in circulation?!! So far as I know the only obscenity in any issue has been the occasional use of the word "Thatcher", and I didn't think that counted, so I'll offer a prize of a fiver to the first person to find this alleged "obscenity" (foul or otherwise!). OK?

Paul G.

The Editor's Bit . . .

I always knew that the Dragon scene was in decline, but I think that we may now be entering the final phase. Following last month's DISASTEROUS Hove show (how kind of most of you to ignore it), things certainly haven't picked up. Barely any articles, as usual; Mike without any software to review for some months; need I go on?

IS anybody out there?
Stephen.

PEEKING THE DRAGON (27) BY MIKE STOTT

Yet another month has passed without any item of software being received by yours truly. It is very difficult at times to fill a page but without anything at all to write about I am afraid you are going to have to put up with this effort. There have been no pleas for help with an adventures lately, either. Surely you cannot all have completed every one. Come on, let me have a few queries. If you do not want your name in print as someone who is stuck then I promise anonymity if you request it.

Has anyone got any software related subjects they would like me to discuss in future articles. Please write and ask - I can only say no. I am not happy having nothing to write about and I am sure it must be worse for you having to read it, so let's have some ideas, criticism of software, how the companies are treating you, anything.

After a takeover by another company, my firm are in the process of making about 24 office staff redundant and I am one of only 7 people who are being retained. At present we use an IBM System 36 with a section of 8 people. What is replacing it. Me, and an IBM PS2/55 with 2 extra meg of memory. I am going to have to transfer the General Ledger and Purchase Ledger, somehow, as well as taking over invoicing and setting up a much reduced Sales Ledger. In the near future the Accountant is going so I will have to do most of the monthly accounts work myself. On top of this I will have to go back to night school to learn what I should have learned this year if I had not had to miss so much due to pressure of work. Hopefully I will get some time to construct better articles than this one for you to read. When I first took over as Software Editor I struggled to keep my articles down to one page but I admit that I had a huge backlog of software to contend with. Nowadays it takes me much longer to write a page and I would prefer too much to write about rather than too little. To those companies, and individuals, who took stands at Hove must go a big THANK YOU (sorry it is not bigger. They did their best to provide a good day out with plenty of bargains in the way of software and hardware. Where were you? Those people who did attend will know that the blame will lie at the feet of the majority of Dragon users if there are no more shows. The Dragon world is now small enough without people refusing to help keep it going by staying away from shows altogether.

Right, moans out of the way. About ten days ago I heard about a company that was selling Trackballs for the Dragon and I have written to them for more information but I have received no reply as yet. Has anybody used one of these on his Dragon, or even seen one. Please let me know so that I can let everybody else know how good (or bad) they are. I do not even know if they have fire buttons or what they look like. Hopefully I will have some information about them for next month's article.

My thanks go out to Richard Sutcliffe who has sent me a version of his Letter Writer program which you could really say has been UPDATED. This version will now read and write articles for Update as it has an option to allow compatability with the word processor that Paul, Stephen and myself use. Unfortunately, apart from testing that it will read this article, I have not been able to explore further into it's editing ability with it due to work and also the World Cup, which is still being played while I am writing this article. To close I will apologise once again for not being very Dragon orientated but hopefully somebody somewhere will send me something this month. Just think if anything had come in this month then it would have had virtually a whole page written about it. If nothing comes in I am considering writing about older items of software that I have enjoyed and also found very useful in the past.

3

Simulated BASIC windows-Harvey Grey.

How often have you wanted to create a screen to look like a form showing exactly how many characters are needed to be input, and where to go after pressing ENTER? The routine below allows you to design such screens and gives a simple routine for editing. For the best results I clear the text screen to black and put my headings in using the lower case characters. Then when I want an input, I set the variable SA to the position where I want the input to start, and LE to the length (ie number of blank spaces) and GOSUB to the routine.

When you call the routine, a blank box will be displayed indicating that an input is desired at that location. Nothing could be simpler.

```
0 'WINDOW ROUTINE (LE=LENGTH, SA=START)
1 '=====
2 FOR A=1 TO LE:PRINT@SA+A-1," ":NEXT:PRINT@SA,"";
3 IN$="":IN=0
4 I$=INKEY$:IF I$="" THEN 4
5 IF I$=CHR$(8) THEN 9
6 IF I$=CHR$(13) THEN RETURN
7 IF IN>=LE THEN IN=LE:SOUND 230,1:GOTO 4
8 IN$=IN$+I$:PRINT@SA+IN,I$;:IN=IN+1:GOTO 4
9 'BACKSPACE
10 IF IN=0 THEN SOUND 230,1:GOTO 4
11 IN$=LEFT$(IN$,IN-1):PRINT@SA+IN," ";:IN=IN-1:PRINT@SA+IN,"";:GOTO 4
```

Fractal Sound...Roy Cashmore.

Here, in true Douglas Adams style, is part 4 of the Fractal Trilogy. This time, a brief look at fractals applied to the BASIC SOUND command. Whilst the program asks for a day, month, year input, any three numbers will do, including your wife's or girlfriend's vital statistics (some may produce pleasing music!).

The plain SOUND command in Dragon BASIC is probably its weakest feature, but despite that, depending on the numbers input, some interesting sounds are produced. They remind me more of some of the modern orchestral music.

One note of caution, the early sounds tend to be less interesting than those that develop later.

I am working on an adaptation of a Fractal Landscape program. This will be rather too long to be published, but I hope to persuade the honourable editor to give some information later.

Here then is the listing for Fractal Sound:

```
0 '*FRACTAL SOUND BY R M CASHMORE, 1990
1 CLS:INPUT"DAY,MONTH,YEAR - E.G. 3,10,89";D,B,C
2 XP=0:YP=0:X1=0:Y1=0
3 XX=Y1-SGN(X1)*ABS(B*X1-C)^0.5:YY=D-X1:X1=XX:Y1=YY
4 XP=ABS(X1+127):IFXP>255 THEN XP=255 ELSE IF XP<1 THEN XP=1
5 YP=ABS(101-Y1)
6 IF YP>10 THEN YP=INT(YP/10):GOTO 6
7 IF YP<1 THEN YP=1
8 SOUND XP,YP
9 GOTO 3
10 END
```


EASY MACHINE CODE (14) BY RAD

The usual method of making a 'FOR-NEXT' loop in machine code is to load the B and Y registers with numbers and then decrement them until both reach zero. If the registers are already in use, and contain address or data still needed, you must first save that information, and recall it later. You can do this by pushing it on to a STACK. The 6809 itself uses the 'S' register as a stack, and while it is permissible for you to do the same, many people prefer to leave it for the 6809, and either use the 'U' register as a stack, or save the information to specially reserved bytes. So you may either PSHS B and PSHS Y or PSHU B and PSHU Y or STB @STORE1 and STY @STORE2, having previously RMB'd one byte for the B store and two for the Y store. To get the information back again, you use the reverse order of pushing them i.e. PULS Y PULS B. (LDB @STORE1 LDY @STORE2). The loop would then be.. CLRB this sets the B register to zero, and the next number it would hold when DECB is called would be 255 (dec), which gives an effective countdown to zero of 256.. Now you need a label @LOOP1 LDY #65535 (\$FFFF). To decrement the Y register use LEA - LOAD EFFECTIVE ADDRESS, or in simple english - alter the number held. You need a LABEL here. @LOOP2 LEAY -1,Y. This decrements the Y register by one. To see if zero has been reached with the Y register use BNE (Branch not equal) BNE @LOOP2 sends it back again to decrement the Y register. When it is zero the routine moves to the next command DECB, decrementing the B register. Here again you must test for zero and BNE @LOOP1 to load the Y register once again with \$FFFF and continue looping. When done, you restore the original information to the B and Y registers. Having printed something on the screen, you can hold it there with this loop routine. You can also use it to repeat some other routine, but beware if that also uses the B and Y register, which it would have to stack and restore when leaving and re-entering the loop.

Crossword Number 54. (J.D.Bateman).

ACROSS: 1A. Stimulant found in coffee; 2A. Large public room; 3A. Permit; 4D. Have regard for a mixed up septre perhaps; 5J. Large inner bone of the forearm; 6D. Fasten in a mixed up rescue; 7A. Aeroplane in action during Battle of Britain; 8E. Heavenly instrument perhaps; 10A. Hard or difficult; 10G. Yellow liquid usually consumed with fruit; 11A. No charge; 11H. Singer. Mr.Diamond; 12B. Bomber named after Roman god of fire, brought out of mothballs for the Falklands war; 11I. Positive electrode; 13A. The act of taking retribution.

DOWN: A1. Kingly type of spaniel; B8. Sudden change of direction to avoid collision; C3. Mercury is this at room temperature; D1. Flower seller; D8. Potter casts his clay onto this; E8. Male red deer; F11. Wrap with insulating material; G5. Aeroplane in action during battle of Britain; H2. Remove compass point from a mixed up funeral vehicle to remove wool from a sheep; H8. Value of four crowns; I1. Liquid obtained from crushed fruit; I7. Swear at a bad spell put onto you; J4. Substitute for this liquid is used for cleaning paint brushes; K1. Home of tennis; L1. Gas found in swelling salts; M1. Recently knighted cricketer.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	C	A	F	F	E	I	N	E	J	W	A	R	
2	H	A	L	L				S	U	I	M	I	
3	A	L	L	O	W			H	I	M	M	C	
4	R	I	K	E	S	P	E	C	T	B	O	H	
5	L	O	I		H	A	E	U	L	N	A		
6	E	U	S	E	C	U	R	E	R	E			
7	S	P	I	T	E	F	I	R	E	L	P	D	A
8	S	D	N	H	A	R	P	A	E	P		H	
9	W	H	A		I	O	R	N	N	A			
10	S	E	V	E	R	E	C	U	S	T	A	R	S
11	F	R	E	T	L	A	N	E	I	L			
12	V	U	L	C	A	N	D	A	N	O	D	E	
13	R	E	V	E	N	G	E			E			

If...Then...Else(2)...J.M.Winchurch.

Firstly, last month's problem. It should have been obvious that to do the various tests all that was needed was to alter the test in the IF...THEN command.

Now let us look at the extension to the IF...THEN command. The general form,, in plain English, of this variant would be:

If the test is true then perform the first task, otherwise ignore it and perform the second task.

In Dragon BASIC, this would look something like:

IF the test is true THEN perform the first task ELSE perform the second task.

For example, let us look at the two programs which both test for the larger of two numbers. One program uses the IF...THEN format only, the other the IF...THEN...ELSE format: @

1. Enter two values and store them in A and B
2. Compare A and B
3. Print the larger of the two

```
10 CLS:REM tidy the screen
20 PRINT"ENTER A NUMBER"
30 INPUT A
40 PRINT"ENTER ANOTHER NUMBER"
50 INPUT B
60 CLS
70 IF A>B THEN GOTO 100
80 PRINT"THE LARGE NUMBER IS";B
90 END
100 PRINT"THE LARGER NUMBER IS";A
```

```
10 CLS
20 PRINT"ENTER A NUMBER"
30 INPUT A
40 PRINT"ENTER ANOTHER NUMBER"
50 INPUT B
60 CLS
70 IF A>B THEN LARGER=A ELSE LARGER=B
80 PRINT"THE LARGER NUMBER IS";LARGER
```

Now compare the two programs. Which is the tidier, more compact? And we have avoided the use of GOTO.

Practise using this second program by doing various tests on A and B, ie A=B, A<B. You will need to change the wording in line 80 in order that it makes sense. Don't yet try A<=B as this requires slightly more work on the program.

Next month we shall take it a stage further and include problems which require you to make more than one test.

Crossword 53 answers...Across:

- 1A). Grand.
- 1I). Totem.
- 2D). Australia.
- 3D). Tangerines.
- 4B). Grimace.
- 6C). Knife.
- 6H). Stump.
- 8A). Holly.
- 8G). Holt.
- 9K). Pad.
- 10A). Azure.
- 10F). Nimbus.
- 11K). Asp.
- 12F). Anneal.
- 13A). Pantomime.

Down:

- A1). Goldfish.
- B4). Gorgonzola.
- C2). Shrike.
- D1). National.
- D9). Trout.
- F2). Snaffle.
- G4). Creche.
- H1). Preen.
- H6). Snowman.
- I1). Tarantula.
- J7). Stout.
- K3). Norman.
- K9). Psalm.
- L6). Pleats.
- M1). Masquerade.

Function Keys...Richard Sutcliffe.

Whilst experimenting with the Dragon, I came across a property which made it possible to have a keyboard full of function keys. This is made possible by reading the joystick. The joystick is read into the same PIA as the keyboard (which uses the first seven bits), using just the eighth bit. If you are not looking for a value other than 0 or 1 on the X input of the right stick, it can be read the same way as the fire buttons, ie PEEK (&HFF00) AND &H80. This blanks out the other 7 bits and just reads no. 8.

To test the effect, any joystick, linear or switched, can be used, plugged into the right joystick port, although it is better to fabricate a key switch to do the same job (see diagram below).

The following programs will demonstrate the effect:

```
10 EXEC34091:A=PEEK(&H87):B=PEEK(&HFF00)AND&H80:IF B=0 THEN A=A+128
20 PRINT A;CHR$(A)::GOTO10
```

```
10 A$=INKEY$:IF A$="" THEN 10 ELSE B=PEEK(&HFF00)AND&H80:IF B=0 THEN
A$=CHR$(ASC(A$)+128)
20 PRINT ASC(A$):A$::GOTO10
```

I have also written a small piece of machine code to do the same thing. It is position independent. The code also forces a complete scan of the keyboard, disables BREAK, and allows SHIFT (CLEAR), SHIFT @, and BREAK to be used as function keys.

```
ORG 32000
7D00 LDA #$7F          86 7F
7D02 STA $0151          B7 01 51
7D05 JSR $BBE5          BD BB E5
7D08 BEQ $7D00          27 F6
7D0A STA $87            97 87
7D0C LDA $FF00          B6 FF 00
7D0F ANDA #$80          84 80
7D11 ADDA #$80          8B 80
7D13 ADDA $87           9B 87
7D15 STA $87           97 87
7D17 RTS                39
LAST ADDR 32023
```

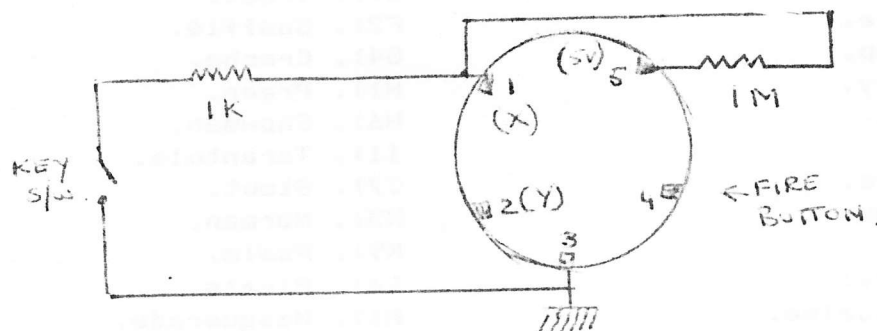
Clear some space as line 10 below, and just poke in the bytes.

```
SAVE"CTRLKEY1.BIN",32000,32923,32000
```

```
10 CLEAR200,32000:LOAD"CTRLKEY1.BIN"
```

```
20 EXEC:A=PEEK(&H87):IF A=3 THEN STOP ELSE PRINT A;CHR$(A)::GOTO 20
```

If you remove the trap for no. 3 it is impossible to BREAK out without pressing reset. If the extra key is put on the keyboard, the joystick can still be used as usual, although obviously the function key will cancel the right X joystick if it is pressed at the same time.



Hove 1990... Frank Fisher.

Heigh ho, it's show time again. Up with the lark and head for the coast. Weather fine and the traffic light. Parked in the multi-storey park opposite, and made my way in and to the Great Hall, it was about 10.15. I did not expect flashing lights or marching bands, but I did wonder if maybe I had made a wrong turn somewhere. I know that the hall is large, but where was everyone? There were too many exhibitors for not enough punters. Ah well, I thought, it was early yet, so I had a wander around to see if there were any bargains to be had. Nearly emptied my wallet for a ribbon printer! Anyone want a Brother HR5? Took a wander to the NDUG stall and bought a new power switch (mine went cuckoo the night before). Then over to the NDUG Library and purchased his latest, The Dragon Notebook, full of hints, tips, EXECs and routines. Then over to Philippe Hennebert (from Belgium) who was demonstrating OS9. Next was Richard Sutcliffe, to see his hardware MoveDOS and Letter Writer, D64 and D32 versions, then over to Bob Preston's and purchased an anti-glare screen, he still had a lot of joysticks and assorted hard/software. Then around for a look see and a chat with John Penn, his supply of software is slowly depleting.

On to Pulser but nothing new or interesting to me, then along to 6809 User. After all that talking, a trip to the excellent tea bar for a brew and top up, then back into the fray. By then a few more punters had arrived, and things were really beginning to swing.

Paul Grade was wandering around trying to console the exhibitors, after all, by noon there must have been at least 100 people in the hall (including the exhibitors). According to Paul, less than half the expected number. Onward, Steven Knight was conspicuous by his absence, so also was Greenweld Electronics and CompuTape. Compared with last year, half the exhibitors and one third the punters. So, no thanks to you who could have but did not, and thank you to those of you who did turn up. A big thank you to Paul for organising, and thank you to those exhibitors who were there.

This will definitely be the last Hove show, and it looks as if the only remaining venue will be Ossett. After today's dismal performance, I would not be surprised if Paul decides to call it a day, so all you southern Dragon owners who missed the show have only yourselves to blame. All in all, a nice day out (from my point of view), if rather heavy on the pocket.

STOP PRESS: Sunday evening: Spoken with Paul, who said that although the exhibitors were very disappointed with the low turnout (final tally 119 - yes, ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN!), everyone made enough lucre to get their fare home with a bit to spare.

OI!!!!

We all know that most of you are completely apathetic towards actually writing material for inclusion in Update, but that doesn't stop you from getting involved in some way. Both myself AND the authors of Update articles wouldn't mind some feedback now and then, just so that we can check that (A) you're still alive, and (B) whether the articles are too complex, too simple, etc etc.

So, if any of you feel like commenting on any articles which appear in these august pages, you know where to write to. Or at least, you should do if any of you bother to read the front page from time to time, which come to think of it I probably doubt. Any suggestions MAY be taken into consideration (no promises!), so who knows, one of your ideas (assuming you have any) may dictate how things look in the future. Think about it! Your name could become as notorious as the Kellog's "Honey Nut Loops" advert! Get writing! Stephen.

8

OS9 Experience... Jeff Purcell

I know that to some OS9 is a bit of a step into the unknown, but it's truly not difficult, and brings to the Dragon many professional features that in its time put our micro in a league of its own. Let me give you a practical example of the way I'm using it to run a small club.

The object is to produce a list of under-age members for the bar staff. Firstly, all members are entered into a database called RMS. This contains their addresses, membership numbers, as called up by the Primary Field, in this case their name. As new members are added or other removed, it is convenient to have an alphabetical sort performed usually every two weeks. To perform the sort, I would give the following instructions:

@@ With the command `progs` in drive 1 and my data in drive 2, we let the system know with: `chx cmds` and `chd d1`, the proceed as follows:

Run the database: `rms club_members`

Make any corrections.

Sort by name: `index club_members alphabet name2 #25K`

This sorted the file by surname (name2) and put the results in a new file called `alphabet`, using 25K of allocated memory.

Write the sorted list: `report club_members alphabet`
>members

This outputs an alphabetically sorted list of members' names to a file 'members'. @ Now we want to identify only the underage members. The membership number if the juniors has a 'U' after the digits, e.g. 555 U. So we want to search the report for strings which have digit-space-U. This is done with a program called 'grep', actually a Unix pattern finder.

@@ Identify underage members: `grep ":d U" members > underage`

Now we have sifted through the file `members` and output to 'underage' those whose number included the U marker. I want to put some titles and dates on the printout, so I use the OS9 word-pro "Stylo":

Modify 'underage' text: `Stylo underage`

I now add a title and position the output nicely on the page, and include a statement `/date/`. This will automatically put today's date in the header when printed using Mailmerge.

Finally to the printer!

`mm underage >p`

Or, if I want to use a fancy script such as italic or enlarged etc, I can pipeline the output through 'dec', which is customised for my Epson:

`mm underage ! dec it >p`

This may sound daunting at first glance, but it isn't difficult, and can you think of anything that would achieve as much in a few minutes?

The Dragon in Amateur Radio... J. Brown.

After 50 years in electronics, and a long time in amateur radio, my introduction to the Dragon came in an unusual way. A fellow amateur bought a "box of goodies" from a car boot sale, and amongst it all was what appeared to be computer boards, with the complete case wrapped in newspaper. Having used from the Sinclair stable for a few years, thoughts were given to rebuilding a Dragon. I joined NDUG and received lots of help and encouragement. I found out how many Dragons were about, and what was available in terms of software and programs for the amateur.

My transceiver being like me (old in the tooth) allowed lots of mods to be made to enable the use of most Dragon programs. My interest started with RTTY (Radio TeleTYpe), going back many years using ex-government TelePrinters and terminal units with vales.

On transmission, the contacts switched a voltage that inturn selected the audio tone required from a simple audio oscillator. The two tones needed were for MARK and SPACE, two conditions which rest the machine and print characters respectively.

This Mark and Space principle is the same when using computers, but here we use the digital 0 or 1 to replace the audio signal. We originally used 50 bauds, switching to 45 when required to enable contact with the Americans. Now, the whole world can be worked using simple gear. The requirements are:

- 1) A good receiver
- 2) A computer with a suitable program
- 3) A decent aerial
- 4) Luck and patience

The main requirement operation-wise is the correct shift, the correct speed, and the correct sideband. Most computer programs have some tuning method built in, for example a flashing cursor or some visual aid. Commercial stations mostly use a 425 cycle shift at 50 baud, but this is not always the case as some have used 100 baud. One snag is that many other modes sound similar audio-wise, so care has to be taken here to select RTTY,, as some fast morse sounds the same. I have often heard of someone complaining of interference by RTTY when it was something different, like morse or even slow scan television.

Sometimes, a separate audio generator is required to convert the computer transmissions (0 or 1) to drive the tone generation process. The receiver side feeds into the computer, whilst the transmit side goes to the tone generator via the microphone socket. Switching from Tx to Rx can be done manually, though some programs enable this to be done via the keyboard. There are contests for RTTY worldwide, and hundreds of stations in all parts of the world, for example commercial news stations, can be copied using the correct standards. Computed RTTY is very fascinating, but I still retain my old 444 Creed.

I will help anyone if I can, for example with programs which I have used or tried. RTTY is in no way limited to the Dragon, for other computers can and have been used with the correct programs. However, I can help with any Dragon-related radio problems. Continued next month.

Oi again!!!

As you will see from this month's Peeking The Dragon, Mike hasn't received any software for review for AGES, so if you've written any software which you think you might try to sell but have never got around to it, maybe a review copy to Mike will promote it to the rest of us.

Don't forget, Mike's column can also be used to help you through any adventures which you may be stuck on, so drop him a line.

Dudley is still swimming off the Northern coast, so don't eat him, anybody! (moderately topical gag). However, this doesn't mean that you shouldn't write to him, his address has appeared at least a zillion times over the past few months, so drop him a line as well (preferably with some bread or luncheon meat on the end). (That was an angling gag).

Just because it's summer doesn't mean you should abandon your computer in favour of the beach. Let's have some input from the rest of you.
Stephen.

T. SHIRTS T. SHIRTS T. SHIRTS
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AND
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Editorial Afterthoughts 71...

I know all the moaning and groaning about Hove has already been done, but I can't resist a little extra gripe in this column. It comes across sometimes that most of you couldn't care less whether the Dragon scene survives or not. You aren't prepared to put in the effort, you just want someone else to do it. One day, you may realise that the Dragon scene no longer works like that. It ceased being a market where you could quite happily buy other people's products some years ago, and it now requires the work of EVERYBODY involved to ensure that it goes onward into the new decade. There are plenty of people who do put in the effort; the software companies, people who write articles, and so on, and I am very grateful to them for doing so, BUT it is very annoying when the majority seem happy to sit and do nothing to help a shrinking community.

The Hove show was a prime example of this. Many of the major Dragon companies turned up to show you EXACTLY what was on offer, and the response they got was frankly appalling. I know group membership is hardly breaking any records, but you all knew about it, and should have made the effort, instead of leaving it with "well, I live too far away and anyway, I read Update every month". If I were you, I wouldn't be surprised if you won't be able to do the latter for much longer, because the way things are going, the group isn't going to be around for much longer, simply because the effort required isn't being put in by most of you. You can't rely on Paul to hold things together much longer, any judging by the Hove show a lot of you don't seem to care. So why should we?

Next month is NDUG's six birthday. Seventy two issued of Update will have been printed, all bearing the same message: NDUG survives on group effort. With higher membership in the past it has been (comparatively) easier to ensure the Group's survival, but now the problem is growing as numbers fall and interest dwindles. You all know the score, you all know that you have to work to keep this going. I can only do so much. The rest is up to you, "the group". Update issue 80, August 1991? Don't put any money on it!.

!!

Open Letter from Paul Standbrook.

I wonder if there are many Dragon users out there who, like me, don't know all about the electronics of their system, or how to write complex machine code programs with one hand while expanding their RAM with the other?!. If you're out there and you don't have the odd few hundred to spend "Upgrading" then it's time we realised just how dependant we are on NDUG for repairs, advice, software, and contact with the last few loyal Dragon companies. It isn't much effort to put pen to paper, so do that - if nothing else you'll at least reassure Paul Grade & Co that they don't need the services of a medium to get some response!. Maybe there's enough interest out thereto start a "hints and tips" forum (we had one once but it died. P.G.), maybe some people haven't yet completed all the adventures available and would welcome the chance to exchange problems and solutions, or perhaps you've written a few bits of Basic - you know, those few lines of code which only took a few hours and anyone would know how to do that!. Maybe someone doesn't know, or maybe the kind of application hadn't even occurred to them. Why not share it?. Go on, don't be shy!, if we don't talk to each other we stand to lose by our silence, and if NDUG dies through lack of input I reckon most of us will only realise how useful it was when it's too late.

The show at Hove was so poorly attended that Paul Grade tells me he can't risk another. I made the trip down, putting 320 miles on the clock in the process, and felt that it was well worth the effort. There was still a good range of hard and software to be had, mostly at bargain prices. There were also lots of people prepared to offer advice and good company for nothing!!. If you really couldn't make it you have my sympathy, but why not drop a line to the Group or to one of the companies still supporting us if there's something you're after?. Let's face it, even at regular prices none of them are out to rob you and they must be some of the most helpful people around. If you didn't go to the show just because you couldn't be bothered, then tough luck!, you probably missed the last chance to get that thingy you always wanted and couldn't afford!. The Editorial Scissors will probaly be busy with this item (no, they're blunt this month) as it's gone on much longer than intended, but all it boils down to is ... PULL YOUR FINGERS OUT AND GET WRITING ... if Paul gets bogged down with letters he can always send the odd lorryload to me and I'll answer the easier ones (WHAT easier ones?! P.G.). Who knows, given a convincing enough show of enthusiasm we might even convince him that another show is possible - we could even pool resources to help each other to get there!. (Well, I can dream, can't I?!).

The Late, Late Bit

It's a boring scene this month again, virtually nothing new going on anywhere. I received a letter from Donald Morrison formally announcing the end of Dragon Logic, due, he says, to "rapidly dwindling readership and lack of commercial support, primarily in the form of advertising revenue". Well, thank you for trying, Donald, you made a nice job of "Logic", although circulation never really reached high enough figures to give it a chance of survival. A good magazine, but it appeared too late to really stand a chance.

I've been looking through some of the "up-market" computer mags recently, and apart from ridiculous prices they all appear to have one factor in common ... they're so deadly serious about themselves and things in general that they're an almost perfect cure for insomnia. All humour to be clearly labeled "joke", no snide comments, no intentional garbage ... they're so unbearably bland and smug that I don't know how anyone can stand the job of typesetting the things!. I reckon the editors must have been the origin of the old "one-liner" about the guy who thought he was dying and his entire life flashed before his eyes ... and he died of boredom!. Yes, I KNOW Life is Serious, people keep telling me so, but I'm damned if I can see why! I always thought it was there to play with, not worry about!. Anyway, back to more relevant matters for a moment. For the benefit of our newer members, PLEASE NOTE that ALL material for publication OTHER THAN ADVERTISING should be sent to the Editor, all advertising to me. OK?.

Paul G.

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DRAGONART GRAPHICS LIBRARY. Contains THE biggest and best collection of graphics screens for the Dragon, all available at nominal charges. The Library also wants YOUR original graphics efforts. Full details and list available from:-
The Librarian, 5, Glen Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset.

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THE PD LIBRARY is now fully operational once again. For full details of material available contact Stuart Beardwood. More contributions always wanted, so if YOU have any suitable material please let Stuart know. @ Stuart Beardwood, 38, Salisbury Place, Boothtown, Halifax. HX3-6ND.

GROUP SPECIALS!

UPGRADE MANUAL. Full DIY instructions for upgrading your D32 to 64K. Written by Bob Hall. Price 2.00.

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DELTA DOS UTILITY. m/c utility to copy ALL Basic and m/c files from disc to tape in one operation. Basic listing of loader and Hex dump price 1.00, or on tape 2.50 inclusive.
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NDUGSOFT! The former Pasmcoms programs are now available from the Group.
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NDUGSOFT(MW). 52, Downsway, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex. CM1-5TU.

Data & Loader Printer. Turns m/c into Basic loader and data statements. Writes to printer OR tape for hard and soft copies!. Price only 3.00.

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Setter. Set up your Dragon for better colour & sound. Also assists qualified persons in setting up TV's & monitors. 2.50. Prices include p&p and 10% donation to Group funds!. Please state DragonDOS, SuperDOS, tape, or ASCII tape for Tandy.
Cheques / POs to Mike Townsend (Dragsoft. Dept.D.U.). 41, Hereford Street, Presteigne, Powys. LD8-2AT.

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Database programs for D32/64 & Dragondos. All with full facilities including search, sort, and print.
1) Names & Addresses, 170 items, 4.00. 2) Magazine details, minimum 5000 entries, 4.00. 3) LP records or cassettes, minimum 2800 items, 6.00. 4) QSO contacts, minimum 3000 entries, 6.00.
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Graham Strong, 78, Coleridge Crescent, Goring-by-Sea, Sussex. BN12-6LT. (Phone 0903-48575).

Must the Dragon Die? D. Riley.

I never cease to be amazed by the steadily decreasing number of Dragon users when no effective replacement machine is available.

The Dragon's original popularity was based on the games market, but it was not long before it was realised that here was a very useful machine indeed, so a large amount of utility software was developed which can now be obtained at a very low cost. Cheap wordprocessors, data bases, graphics and disc maintenance programs abound. I have accumulated software to the value of several thousand pounds were it for a currently available machine, and I am not prepared to renew the investment for the minimal gains obtained from a new machine. Graphic capabilities of modern machines are much improved, but the results of this remain largely on-screen to the benefit of game players and to impress the punters in commercial situations. WYSIWYG for word processors is now possible. To produce better graphics on paper necessitates the purchase of a very expensive printer. WYSIWYG is fine, but it does not affect the machine output in any way, and is it worth all that extra money for such a small gain in convenience? After a while one learns to live with the Dragon screen display. Is a "professional" wordprocessor needed when the main purpose of the software is to enable a lousy typist to write letters?

As I see it as a "home" computer user, valid reasons for replacing my hardware would only exist were I an enthusiastic games player or wished to take my work home on disc. The less said about those people who see an opportunity to "liberate" software from work, the better!

Like it or not we live in a free market economy and are likely to do so for the foreseeable future, so the pressure to buy the latest gadget will remain intense. Before buying ask yourself if the gain you expect is REALLY worth the money, and if you do, and the answer is "yes", please contact me if you then have for disposal a Dragon 64, dual disc drive, or Superdos E6 cartridge with DOSdream, as in this increasingly lonely environment I see a need to back up ALL my Dragon related hardware as I wait for a viable modern alternative!. Paul knows where to find me!.

HELP WANTED.

Not being as bright or well blessed with the old grey blob as some, I would like to hear from others. So I am going to throw open my address to you all so that you can write to me with some help, tips and advice on Dragon printer-related problems (I have a Tandy DMP2100 printer). I know very little about this particular subject, and I have only just started this Dragon lark recently, so pay attention, I will be asking questions.

Signed:-The lone Dragoner, Tony. ADDRESS: 95, Gresley, Glascote Heath, Tamworth, Staffs. B77 2HW.

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STILL MORE ADS.

DOS ADAPTOR KITS to fit your DOS inside the Dragon leaving the port for other uses. Price 16.68 each inclusive. Letter Writer utility 5.00.
 Sutcliffe Electronics, 15, West Street, Hothfield, Ashford, Kent. (0233-634191).

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R.A. Davis, 39, Boxley Drive, West Bridgford, Notts. NG2-7GQ.

"Slow but Sure". Screen dumps for text, Lo-Res, and Hi-Res. Many sizes, upright and sideways. 1/4 size to full A4. Written in Basic and easily edited to suit your own Epson compatible printer. 5.00.

PLEASE NOTE!. Anyone wanting their early version of Data Loader and Printer upgraded to the NEW V2 version should return their ORIGINAL TAPE, plus return postage, for FREE UPGRADE.

Dragsoft, 41, Hereford Street, Presteigne, Powys. LD8-2AT.

SALE BARGAINS!. Two D32's complete with transformers and in full working order, plus Sprite Majic, Trojan lightpen, and two joysticks. Offers around 40.00 for the lot or might consider split.
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 Mrs. D. Sones, 86, Ifield Drive, Ifield, Crawley, Sussex. RH11-0AJ.

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Wordgrid will produce Wordsearch puzzles from the words you supply, and fill in spaces with random letters. Resultant puzzle can be printed at 90° or normally, and also in skeleton form - ie, with no random letters.

Poster will produce - guess what? - a POSTER! ... with very little effort and time: you simply type in the wording you require and the program will centralise it, surround it with the border of your choice, and include a headline if you so choose. Helpful manual contains instructions for customising to different printers.

"Wordgrid" needs any printer, while "Poster" needs a printer capable of producing IBM matrix characters for the border and headline.

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"True or Bluff" (By Roy Cashmore) :

If you liked the TV show "Call my Bluff", or even if you didn't, you'll enjoy playing this with family/friends. Two teams of up to 3 players or play the computer. File of 31 words (each with 3 definitions, 1 of which is true) included, plus a program to create your own files - infinite possibilities! More files available soon.

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