

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL DRAGON USERS GROUP

DRAGON



UPDATE

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THE GAFFER'S BIT.....

It's New Editor Time once again!, and New Dragon Shows Time, and even New Software Time as well You don't deserve all this, really you don't. The entire country in a state of Major disaster, the pound worth about two lire, no work, no money, the Environmentalists insisting that the entire planet is about to disappear owing to global warming/the next ice age/pollution/motor vehicles/politicians/Paul Grade (delete to taste), but the Dragon Scene is STILL chugging along!. Update hasn't been inflated or devalued, you've THREE shows (including the AMS one) during the next six months, and we're even offering you a new selection of software to spend your overdraft on!. Never mind the mortgage ... who needs a house when you can have a Dragon! .. Blow the moths out of your cheque book and BUY something!. Just been speaking to Bob Preston, and he tells me that as well as the Bristol Show (You ARE going to be there, aren't you?!) he will be at the Stafford Show too, so if you live in that area (someone must!) go along and see him, in fact give him a shock and buy something from him too!. After all, it will soon be Christmas, even if you HAVE just got over the Summer holiday, so treat your Dragon to an early present.

Just a thought, but I wonder if our Returned Editor will be able to take sufficient time off from his Academic Studies at the Union bar to wander down to Bristol for the Show?. After all, it isn't THAT far from Aberwhatsit to Bristol, especially if he's in Batman mode!. Is possible, I suppose ... keep a lookout for peculiar vehicles driven by people in even more peculiar tights!.

Anyway, I'm sure you can't wait to finish reading this rubbish and get on to the more interesting bits ... there ARE some, honest!, so I'll refrain from boring you further and let you get on with it. Paul Grade.

The Bat's Bit...

Well, well, well...

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear...

You were warned.

You were warned.

It was made quite clear to you that if you didn't make the effort for NDUG, then the unthinkable would happen.

And now, it has...

Except in this case, "the unthinkable" does not mean the end of the Group, oh no.

Do you think I'd let you off that easily?!

No, "the unthinkable" entails getting me back as editor - surely a fate worse than Paul/Robin/death (delete as applicable)? But, if you don't heed warnings, then you're leaving yourself open to all sorts of torture.

This is only the beginning...

Get ready for something lethal...because the Bat is back!

Stephen.

Where Are They Now? (2) ... David Linsley

Jonathan Cartwright was the last Dragon programmer to write many popular games, and he finally stopped when the Dragon community started to tremble with the demise of Dragon User.

If Pam D'Arcy was the mother of Dragon Users, the Mike Kerry was the father, and he was probably the most influential of them all, thanks to two things: the Dream series, and SuperDOS. Dream, and all its variants (Dreambug, Alldream, Diskdream, DOSDream), are the most popular editor/assemblers and monitors written for the Dragon, and they are excellent. I myself use DOSDream quite regularly, all because of its full-screen editor and fully integrated environment. SuperDOS is (I think) the most popular DOS in regular use now. It was a good program for its time, but for a total error-free ROM, DOSPlus 4.9 is by far the better replacement to DragonDOS 1.0.

Finally, we come to the software companies of the past who were the backbone of the Dragon's survival during their time. Grosvenor Software were responsible for the distribution of Mike Kerry's Dream series and SuperDOS, but they also sold many programs for the amateur radio enthusiast, which is what they still do now for the PC and Atari ST. As I'm not a Ham, I do not know what the quality of their programs is now, but if it's anything like their Dragon stuff then it can't be bad.

Harris Micro Software was run by Bob Harris, and his "Box" series of serious software got him a foot in with users. With the release in 1986 of Basic 42, the programmers amongst us got a chance to see his programming talent, including the many B42 utilities such as the reportedly excellent KLIK (does anybody know where I can get a copy?). Bob also took over Dragon User when Sunshine Publications called it a day, but he had to stop the press himself just six months later.

Compusense was the greatest serious Dragon supplier, with many popular utilities under their belt. Run by brothers Ted and Stan Orprychal, they were always in a full-time operation, and in 1985 Eurohard appointed them the official UK Dragon distributor, though they were most popular for Dasm/Demon (assembler/monitor), Edit+ (program editor), Flex (professional operating system), PC-Convert (Dragon to PC convertor), and DragonPlus, the infamous display and memory board. They even managed to support the Dragon right up until after Dragon User closed, but in 1989/1990 they suddenly became uncontactable. This being the greatest mystery in modern Dragon computing - Where did they go?

Finally, the big one, the ultimate Dragon software house, the great Microdeal. Who can forget them? They distributed well over 100 Dragon programs, including such classics as Cuthbert In The Jungle, Tanglewood, Shock Trooper, Composer, Airball, and the list goes on and on. They also supplied other items such as joysticks, peripherals, and the magazine The Cuthbert Chronicles, and they also organised Dragon shows as well. BUT, In January 1988, they finally pulled out of the Dragon market and placed all their energies into the ST and Amiga.

Today, they are still going strong, publishing utilities and applications, having given up games in early 1990. Their strength now is sound samplers, such as the new "Stereo Master" sampler on the Amiga; and, just like in the past, they are still organising shows, now for the 16-bit machines.

I hope everyone mentioned here continues in their success, but without forgetting their roots and who made them rich and famous in the first place, the Dragon! This article is not meant to cover the current suppliers and programmers, as they are (obviously) still on the scene today, and will be (hopefully!) for years to come!

PEEKING THE DRAGON (41) BY MIKE STOTT

21st July - What a disappointment for the response to the Ossett Helpline! Are there no experts left on the Dragon scene anymore?

Bob Preston has just informed me there is to be a Dragon Show in Bristol in October and an Ossett Show in April next year. I do not know if I will be at Bristol but I will definitely be at Ossett. Bob tells me that among the items he bought off John Penn are a number of OS9 titles which he will be selling for 15.00 each including the manuals. They are CASHBOOK & VAT, BASIC-09, C COMPILER, STOCK RECORD SYSTEM and RECORD MANAGEMENT. There are also over 70 different titles of games.

Robin Hemmings has written telling me to send this article and future ones to Stephen Wood who is returning as Editor. WELCOME BACK; you must be mad to take it on yet again.

They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery so I should be pleased that my heading (PEEKING THE DRAGON) is being used in Up2date. This disk based magazine gets better with every issue and is getting quite a large membership now. Ray Smith and his helpers deserve a pat on the back for all their efforts.

20th August - Thanks to David Mitchell for his help sheets for RING OF DARKNESS and STALAG. Also for his answer to the WINDOWS problem. I seem to have lost my list of the OS9 III HELP sheet. If the person who had problems with WINDOWS would care to send me an SAE then I can send him a cassette with a working version together with other help sheets. I think all the other queries have been answered (in part) in past issues of Update.

Have just heard the Ossett Show is 24th April (usual venue) and 17th October Bristol Commercial Rooms, 43 Corn Street, Bristol is the other show - check with Bob Preston.

P.S Ceallaig of Ireland sent me a note with queries on that I had difficulty reading but I think these are his problems.

1) AQUANAUT 647 (should this be 471) - 10 line cheat to go from adventure part to arcade part?

2) EVEREST - how can you prevent all the climbers dying?

3) ROMAN EMPIRE - how to save game?

Gareth Rutter has scored 80 out of 100 in SEA QUEST and needs a RUBY, he thinks. He also needs help in CASTLE ADVENTURE (I do not know this one, I have CASTLE BLACKSTAR, CASTLE OF THE SKULL LORD and COLDITZ CASTLE). In the maze he is following a luminous arrow and getting nowhere, any ideas? He also appears to take me to task for the length of time before software reviews appear in Update. When I receive a program I test it for a few days and then send it on to a reviewer who returns it as soon as he has properly tested it (not one or two quick tries). The review is then sent in with my article, which is nearly two months before publication date. It is then up to the editor when there is space for the review. Do not forget that it is often months after release of an item that I am sent a review copy. I am not prepared to publish a review of a piece of software that has only been glanced at very briefly. The buyer deserves better than that. I can still remember my PAID reviewing days of Dragon User when I held reviews back because of problems with games. This meant I did not get my next piece to review but at least the software was then fit to buy after the author had made changes. Also in those days some companies sent items direct to reviewers who they felt would give them a favourable review no matter what. Yes, Gareth I try to get reviews out quickly but only when the reviewer and I are convinced we are giving a true (in his eyes) opinion of the software.

22nd August - Just time to finish and post my article before I go to Pontins for a weeks holiday. Alfred Knoetig has sent me another disk version of BLOCK OUT which appears to run perfectly without the problems of the original version. Hopefully a review of this program will appear shortly in Update.

PC GRAPHICS DISK1 REVIEWED BY MIKE STUTT

This is a review of the disk from Graham Kinns that he was demonstrating at Ossett to hordes of interested rams at the group stand. Graham has made it PD and it is available from Stuart Beardwood at the usual address.

GIFREAD is the main program on the disk and it is a real cracker. Unfortunately it will only work on a D64 and, as Graham uses SuperDos, is only guaranteed to work with this Dos. I have had very limited success using DragonDos and not much joy using 3 1/2" disks but otherwise it works brilliantly. RUN the program and then insert an MSDOS formatted disk with .GIF pictures on and it will very soon load them into your Dragon. Different sizings and shadings can then be achieved before saving it out to a Dragon disk for further use on the Dragon. I have transferred pictures of 50K with no difficulty, although some of the quality is obviously lost. What can I say? If this program had been sold on its own I would have given it 5 Dragons in my old Dragon User days. In a suite of PD programs it is a must for anyone with a PC or access to .GIF pictures.

FASTBACK will copy a whole disk for you in a very short time (depending on how much is on the disk) - I copied this disk in 20 seconds.

CHECKDSK is a program you should use before FASTBACK to check for sector allocation errors on disks (a common error with SuperDos, so it says in the sheet supplied with the disk).

SCRTGIF and SCRTGIMG are for converting Dragon text and graphics to PC formats although I have not yet been successful with these yet. To be truthful, I have not given them enough time but I wanted to pass news of this disk on to you before too much time had passed.

RESOPMOC is the last item on the disk which can be used to decompile COMPOSER tunes to work out each note. A fun program although I cannot see much use for it myself but fans of Dave Cadman and the other users of COMPOSER might like to see how they did it.

On the whole, my opinion of this disk is that it should have been a commercial output, not PD. Alright, I realise that some owners with normal Dos may not be able to use some programs, but it is really satisfying to see a huge PC file load into the Dragon and be saved in 6153 bytes.

G.Kinns 1 Clive Place, Bradford, BD7 3AL would like to hear if anybody uses these programs on disks other than 40T 5 1/4" disks.

The Editor says...

So much space to fill, so few articles to fill it with. I'm sure you're all desperately keen to write some new material for me, so here's some points of clarity to sort things out.

It's been asked a zillion times before, and it is "what's the best way to submit articles?" The range of suggestions has included Stylo under OS9, and various other assorted word-pros, but the simple answer is that a hard copy printout is best, because it has to be compiled under the archaic (but admittedly efficacious) Group formatter program (written by PRG). Consequently, unless you are unfortunate enough to own a copy of this, then a nice, full piece of paper is the simplest way to keep me happy.

WHEN you decide to write your epic, then bear in mind the copy dates. Now that we're bi-monthly, Update appears (copier permitting, eh Paul?) in the middle of alternate months, and therefore any material for inclusion should reach me BY THE FIRST DAY OF THE PROCEEDING MONTH, ie articles for December consideration should be here by November 1st.

On this topic, I see from the previous page that Mike appears to have copped a bit of flak over the timing of reviews. Now then, pay attention, moaners! Mike has already explained his modus operandi here, and on top of that you then have to bear in mind that any material I receive is AT LEAST two months away from publication, as detailed above. It's all very easy to sit back and complain when you're not actually involved in the process, but Mike and his reviewers do their job thoroughly, and the two-month interval between issues is the governing factor in publication. Patience!!

SW

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I KNOW you've heard it all before, but it really IS true! we need more material for publication. Steve is a damned good Editor, but even HE needs something to edit!. Paul.

Telewriter 64... Paul Marlow.

Telewriter 64 is a word processor for the CoCo 1, 2, or 3 with at least 64K of memory and one disk drive. This is the CoCo version of the Dragon Telewriter, and is almost exactly the same except for one or two differences.

Like the Dragon version, TW64 has true upper and lower case lettering on the graphics screen, and has all the features you would expect in a word processor.

Unlike the Dragon version, TW64 has a choice of baud rates, and the ability to change the screen display from the usual 51 characters per line to 64 or 85 characters at the press of a key.

TW64 makes full use of the 64K available, so the user gets a 24K text buffer, which is more than adequate for most people. If this large amount of text space is not enough, TW64 allows chain printing from both tape and disk, so the size of your document is limited only by the size of your tape or disk.

Features available on TW64 include the most readable display I have ever seen on either a Dragon or CoCo, nine definable embedded print codes, margins, tabs, centred text, paging, page numbering, text alignment, block delete and copy, global search and replace, and two character sets for the screen.

To use the embedded printer codes, the user first has to define them at the top of the document. For example, to define code 1 for underline on my DMP106 in IBM mode, just type ^D 27 45 1, and any time you press <clear> (which is the control key) and 1, TW64 will send the codes 27 45 1 to the printer and set it to underline. This may seem cumbersome to have to define the embedded codes everytime you write a document, but in practice all you do is save an empty document with them already defined, then load that document in and start typing.

Most actions performed by TW64 are implemented using <clear> plus a letter. For example, to align text say after inserting into the middle of a line, all the user does is press <clear> A, and the text is automatically aligned.

TW64 has the ability to save to tape and disk in either binary or ASCII, so the text saved using TW64 can easily be imported into other programs. TW64 can even be used to write programs, using the better editing facilities available.

The manual is very comprehensive, with 53 pages in the tutorial section, and another 37 pages making up the reference section. Each feature of TW64 is explained fully, with examples where necessary, which means a new user can become proficient in a very short time. The manual was itself printed using TW64, and so gives a very good example of what can be done with the program.

To finish, TW64 is the best word processor available for the CoCo at the moment, and compares extremely well with those available for the Dragon. It may not have the data merge available on Vistext Dexule (which I use with my Dragon 64), but it is just as easy to learn, and does offer a much larger text buffer.

Now for the bad news. As with nearly everything I review, TW64 is only available from the USA, and so costs a hideous amount. I don't know what it is with software companies in America, but they do seem to like prices in double figures. However, should you be feeling rich, TW64 can be purchased from: Computer Plus, PO Box 1094, 480 King Street, Littleton, MA 01460, USA. The price is \$49.95 tape or \$59.95 disk, plus \$14.09 shipping and handling. They accept VISA, AmEx or Mastercard, and usually ship by airmail.

HELP

Can anyone help me replace my worn out self centring joysticks, needed for use with Knight's "Desktop"? I have bought an Altai interface for use with Atari sticks only to discover that they only sell switched joysticks. Also, on Dragonfire WIMP, whenever I try to draw a fine line with the pen, all I get is a dotted line. I have tried my self centring atick, a floating stick, and a rollerball, all with the same result. J.R.Winchurch.

Any solutions gratefully received at the usual address. S.W. Also Gareth Rutter wants to know if anyone has a copy of Paramount's "Decathalon".

DON'T MISS THE BRISTOL SHOW.

LOOKING AT DASM. by RAD. Part one.

By the time the DASM assembler appeared on the scene, most experienced programmers had already obtained the cheaper Dream which was sponsored by Dragon Data. At that time I, and many others, were still struggling with our first introduction to Basic, and the strange numbers which were peeked and poked by others were a mystery to us. When these first steps had been mastered, and I was ready to try my hand at Assembly, DASM appealed to me mainly because it could be used with the normal Dragon Basic Rom commands and it wasn't necessary to learn an unfamiliar editing system to comply with assembler requirements. Lines were entered with the usual numbering system, and could be edited, deleted and inserted in the normal way. The result could be saved to Disc or tape as a Basic source programme or assembled Machine Language programme without any problems. Because of this ease of use it turned out to be the best when trying to pass along my limited knowledge to others. - At least they didn't need to be taught how to use a strange editing system as well, and it did the job as good as any other assembler. It is in fact what's called an 'in-line' assembler and as such is not Rom-independent but adds extra Basic commands to compile the code. There is no need for a separate Editor, and there is a saving of memory space when using the Disc versions. The source code is typed in as if it was a Basic programme. It allows labels (see further) of any length to mark sequences within the programme but only uses the first five and the last character of the label. REM statements can be added to lines or inserted with ease. It detects and reports any errors with understandable text messages, and the offending line can be amended in the usual Basic way. You don't need to know that it is a 'two-pass symbolic assembler' ! The Cartridge version which also provides the DEMON monitor, enables the use of almost the whole of the BASIC Ram for programming, while the Disc version takes the Ram from 27393 to 32768 and EXECs at 27648. The cartridge is EXEC'd at &HCFFA, but apart from that, although the remainder of this series will be for a Disc Version, there are no differences. Some further space must be CLEARED for a Dasm Stack in which are stored the Labels and their addresses, and this is done with the usual CLEAR,n command followed by the address at which you wish the assembled Machine Language to be placed. Because of the ease with which you can make the programmes relocatable, the fact that DASM is using the upper Ram is not important. A typical line for use would be :- 10 CLEAR400,&H3FFF. The assembly will now be from &H4000 and on. Basic must still have HEX shown with &H but Dasm assembly source needs the \$ sign to indicate HEX numbers, and in the following articles I shall also use the \$ sign for that purpose.

RAMDISK REVIEWED BY R.A.D.

Ramdisk V1.0 by D.Linsley is, at last, something new for those who prefer helpful utility programmes to the actual programmes which can be constructed with their assistance. Had it been issued in the earlier years it would have commanded at least a fiver, and probably a tenner, but thanks to David's generosity, and the Group, you can have it now for less than it is worth. - See the advertisement. - The main innovation is a system named RAMDISK which enables up to 5 Machine Language files to be placed in protected Ram (the upper Ram if you use a 64K Dragon), and called into use as if they were on a disc, but with greater speed. This is made possible by extra Commands which he has added to Basic+Dos, 9 commands in all, prefixed with R - e.g. RDIR, RLOAD "TITLE.BIN". And, of course, you still have your normal Basic for use once the RAMDISK is installed. An easy-to-follow A4 sheet of simple instructions for this utility is provided, and is an excellent example for other would-be instruction compilers to note. The Disk Editor, Menu-maker programmes and Printer Control utilities, with help instructions, but Menu-maker to make them easy to use. They work with DOS V1.0, Superdos and DosPlus. David is willing to correspond with those who would like technical information, and he promises us some more useful utilities if the need arises there. Thank you David.

Manipulating "Electronic Author".

One of my hobbies is Caving and, whilst writing an article for a newsletter, I had to write about how Rainwater and Carbon Dioxide get together to form Carbonic Acid, which dissolves Limestone and so forms caves. The formation of Carbonic Acid is written as " $\text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O} = \text{H}_2\text{CO}_3$ " but this doesn't look quite right. If you have ever seen these sort of things written down, they are always printed with the numbers smaller and slightly lower than the capital letters. My trusty, Epsom compatible, dot matrix printer can handle Subscript and my Electronic Author word processor can handle any printer code, using the "pc" (Printer Control) command. I therefore set myself the job of printing this :-

Carbonic Acid ($\text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O} = \text{H}_2\text{CO}_3$) <----- CARBONIC ACID PRINTOUT

Incidentally, both print-outs I'm describing here look much better when printed in Elite pitch - 12 characters per inch. The formula below prints the above line; it took quite a bit of fiddling but it does give a pleasing result. You would imagine that all there was to do was switch on Subscript before each number and switch it off again afterwards.... WRONG. Users of EA will know that commands are preceded by the hash symbol but this can be changed to any symbol, or in my case the "@" symbol, by using #ct@ (For "#" read "hash"). For those who don't do this, just substitute the @'s for your usual symbol. EA has a few strange quirks but, once you've got used to them, it's still an excellent WP. For a start, if a command is followed by a space, it eats the space so you must add an extra space. Subscript (and Superscript) are printed in two passes of the print head so it automatically puts the printer into double pass mode but doesn't switch it off. This requires you to enter a single pass (sp) command after the Sub/Superscript release command. The following three lines are printed 51 characters long, to suit the standard EA screen. Note:- when a "pc" command is followed by a number (e.g. the "2", half way along the first line) leave a space, otherwise the command will end with a "12" instead of "1". Also note the double space before the "+" symbol.

Carbonic Acid @CO@pc27,83,1 2@pc27,84@sp + H@pc27,83,1 2@pc27,84@sp0 = H@pc27,83,1 2@pc27,84@spCO@pc27,83,1 3@pc27,84@sp

So how about the Superscript ?. This is treated in a similar way. It comes in useful for algebraic terms, such as the good old one that everybody knows !!! $(x + y)^2 * (x + y)^2 = x^2 + 2xy + y^2$. This, however, looks better like this :-

$(x + y)^2 * (x + y)^2 = x^2 + 2xy + y^2$ <----- ALGEBRAIC PRINTOUT

You have to enter the Subscript command, before the number required to be small and raised, and switch off again afterward. However, as you can see from the formula below, EA could throw a tantrum if you don't treat it correctly.

$(x + y)^2 * (x + y)^2 = x@pc27,83, 2@pc27,84@sp + 2xy + y@pc27,83, 2@pc27,84@sp$

Don't forget that there's a space on the end of the first line, after the "2xy", you'll see this fits in when you type it on EA's 51 character screen. The command for Superscript is "Escape + S + 0" (27;83;0) but it must be written as "@pc27,83," with a space after the last comma. For some reason EA doesn't like zero's so fit a space in there instead; sometimes you even have to add two spaces. Well, have fun with it anyway. I've found that EA also ignores commands that are placed in an order it doesn't like and I sometimes get a "W" that appears on the left of the page, after a centred/underlined heading. For all it's faults, EA (and good old Dorris) still gets more out of my printer than #1000 worth of IBM can. If anyone has solved any of EA's funnies, how about putting fingers to keyboards and letting us all know. I know Paul's WP won't handle Sub/Superscript so I supplied the editor with two paste-ups. Well don't just sit there, switch on and get typing.....Mike Townsend.

Yes, Mike, I KNOW all these fiddly little "extras" are very useful, but the program that you refer to as my "WP" has no use for them, because as I have long since tired of telling people, it IS NOT A WORD PROCESSOR, and was never intended to be one! It is merely a program which enables the entry and editing of text, and which prints it out in a standardised format. It is merely a tool for a job. Please be accurate, Mike. Paul.

Dragoneers A-Z...Gareth Rutter.

A is for Amiga. Steer clear of these, as their owners have a habit of selling you to get shot of your Dragon for one of these.

B is for Bad Marketing. Dragon Data were experts at this.

C is for Computape. Guaranteed years of good service, and then watch your money help Harry Massey set up his timeshare in the Isle Of Wight.

D is for Dangerous Liaisons. Normally associated with sending money to

E is for Eurohard. Need I say more?

F is for Four hundred and seventy five quid, the original price of a Dragon Data double drive. Who said that DD would go bust?

G is for God help us, spoken 100,000 times when DD went bust, and a further 100,000 times when prices fell by over 50%

H is for Hate campaign. These are normally directed at Dragon owners by general computing magazines, generally because the writers of these articles are good at playing dead easy games on a Spectrum and not much else.

I is for Illiterate. Applies to writers of articles listed under H.

J is for Jealous. What many Dragon owners are when owners of other machines can get anything they want by just walking into a computer shop.

K is for Kidding. This is what the directors of Dragon Data said when challenged to answer a statement they had made saying they knew what they were doing.

L is for Loaded. You'll find this is what John Symes and the Orprychal brothers are (if you CAN find them).

M is for More RAM. This is what you will find about 90,000 ex-Dragon users in pursuit of, as they couldn't work out what to do with the 32K they had.

N is for No answer, which happened if you tried to 'phone Eurohard.

O is for Orprychal brothers. They could knock you out Dragons left, right, and centre, as long as you paid them the same price as a Commode 64, and if you asked nicely they'd send you a price list.

P is for Port Talbot, home of the Dragon. Is now more famous for not being known at all than for being associated with Dragons.

Q is for Quality hardware, which is what the Dragon is, but very few seemed to realise it.

R is for Rotten games. Too many of these at exorbitant prices (hello John!) didn't help the Dragon's progress.

S is for Sent in the post. Applies to anything you bought for your Dragon from July 1984 onwards.

T is for Told you so. This is what we got from Dragon User when they closed. If they hadn't filled it with utter rubbish for the best part of 18 months, perhaps they wouldn't have lost so many subscribers.

U is for Undisclosed fee. Harry Massey passed on his entire stock to someone else for this.

V is for vodka. The lifeblood of our chairman - donate a bottle NOW!

W is for Wallet emptying, a specialist subject of Microdeal, Compusense, and others.

X is for eXpert - will someone tell me who's "Arcade Arena" in Dragon User it was?

Z is for Zero. This will be the amount of subscribers left if the editor is forced to print much more of this drivel.

**Alternatively,...

D is for Dragon User, who could only print the material which people sent them - "utter rubbish"...? Bringing me onto...

I is for I don't have any articles for the next issue, so how about writing a few for me now.

T is for Thanks, although this will be hastily retracted if you all sit about doing nothing...SW**

Editorial '85...

Yus, I'm really back, it isn't all a bad dream - it's a bad reality. As to exactly WHY I'm back, well I must admit that even I'M a little bit stumped on this subject, but the truth of the matter is that Paul literally BEGGED me to come back. I only to restart the good old chairman/editor abuse society.

For a change, I AM going to harp on about lack of material. Things have certainly changed a bit since I was last here, as I'm now only required to fill the first eight pages instead of ten, so if you'd like a chance to get in print, then try some deviant activities with fabric ribbons. Alternatively, send your masterpieces - on ANYTHING Dragon related, even if it's "Ten things stacked on top of my 64" - to the new but also usual address. To start you off, things stacked on top of MY 64 include a CD remote control, the armour plated anti-GPO disc holder (ask Paul), and various unedited Update pages. There, now even YOU can do better than that.

The Batcave is still superbly hidden away in a secret location (behind some hugely convincing tumbleweeds down a dusty road if you must know), and access to the Batphone is restricted, so please do NOT attempt to 'phone me on the number which was featured on the front page two years ago. You will NOT get through to me, so please entrust your epics to the mercy of the GPO, and my grubby mitts will be on them as soon as possible. I'm a busy (and untraceable) bat.

We seem to have a lot of people wearing their "I love Telewriter" badges this month. I can't see what all the fuss is about, actually. Only a 51 column screen, and that "constant insert" feature is a RIGHT pain in the backside. It's Super Writer II for me any day - I'd rather use the Group formatter than Telewriter!. (And I do.)

Despite David Linsley's and Gareth Tuttiett's idealistically optimistic articles, the real fact of the matter is that the Dragon, and more specifically (and dangerously) the Group, are NOT in the best of health these days, and so any material would be gratefully received. I know I always say this, but an emergency could be soon upon us unless a concerted effort is made. Being a die hard user is all very well, but a die hard user who writes articles and buys Group products is eminently preferable. The next few issues could be your last chance to send off that meisterwerk that's been 85 issues in the making. Think about it...

Finally...hello everyone, it's nice to be back. (Paul, there seems to be some error here. It's supposed to read "It was nice to be away" - a program malfunction, perhaps??) ### MALFUNCTION CONFIRMED. COMPUTER REFUSES TO ACCEPT ALTERNATIVE WORDING. PAUL.###
Stephen.

Keeping The Dragon Alive-Gareth Tuttiett

Well, dear Dragon users, have I got a tail for you (no, I don't really, but I've always wanted to use that phrase!). I've been a Dragon user since November 1982, and have a D32 and D64. The 64 is my main machine, but increasingly my work involves the ubiquitous PC (managing a Novell network with an array of workstations from Amstrad PC1512s to an Osicom 286-12). I use Carbon Copy Plus V4 on my PC-AT286-16 to log in to this network via the 'phone lines. This work takes up most of my time. I also use Timeworks Publisher V2 to produce various newsletters, leaflets, posters etc for local and regional organisations (I'm fortunate enough to have a Canon BJ-300 for quality work - my Dragon seems quite at home with it too! Mind you, I do miss my arm and a leg!). By the time you read this, I hope to be using Version 3 for GEM/DOS - don't talk to me about Windows! Talk about BIG - it's positively enormous! Remember Basic 42 and KLIK running in 32K on a D64...?

My fourth machine is a handy Tandy 102 portable (with extra memory - a massive 24K!), which I use to write "on the move", and later transfer work to my PC or D64. Where is my Dragon in this, you may ask? Well, I write text on my 64 (when not on the move), and transfer it to my PC so I can DTP it. I've been using Telewriter since December 1982, and found it to be an excellent word processor, and much of my early work is in this format. Fedit CAN read Telewriter format by simply changing the file extension to .DOC, so I have been able to desktop-publish some of my early works. It must be said that this conversion has some BIG problems; namely all lower case is in upper case, all upper case is in punctuation and other characters, some words and characters disappear during transfer via the RS232, some chunks of text vanish, and Fedit can't handle files as big as Telewriter can - but it works!

This year will see the tenth anniversary of the launch of the Dragon. My father worked for Mettoy in Swansea at the time, maintaining the injection moulding machines that produced the early Dragon cases. He brought home some of the pre-production leaflets, plus some really interesting stories from inside (!). I once visited the Dragon Data plant in early 1984 to get my D64 - no, my visit didn't bring down the company...honest!

Ten years on and the Dragon is still with us. How many similar machines from that time are still being used today? Can you remember any? What about the Oric-1, Enterprise, Aquarius, Jupiter Ace? Even today, the Dragon's Motorola 6809 processor still looks positively modern. Talking of which...does anyone remember the PI-6809 card for the PC that Compusense used to produce? Would anyone who has one for OS9 consider parting with it for a reasonable sum? OS9 is much better than DOS, even if it is DR-DOS5!

Happy tenth birthday, Dragon!

CACHEPACK - BY DAVE CADMAN.

This Packet program was devised and written by R.A.D (G3RLD) and Dave Cadman (G6XGF) for local contacts on 2 Metres and 70 Centimetres FM. It does not stand up to commercial AX25 protocol standards but it does provide a comprehensive alternative means of contact which only similarly equipped stations will be able to receive. It requires a D64, and disc system.

The program is menu driven and uses the text screen to write and display messages, but uses MI routines for speed. Up to nine pages can be sent, received or stored in seconds. There is a facility to save pre-prepared messages for later transmission as well as a Mail Box facility to receive and store messages to disc whilst there is no attendance at the receiving station, providing the rem lead is used to put the transmitter into auto-transmit.

All licensing conditions are covered, in that the callsigns are given out in audio, using the PLAY command at the end of every transmission and from the receiving station at the end of a successful transmission.

Since each copy will have to contain the user's callsign, each request for this disc will have to be "personalised" by the authors. There is also a facility in the program to have a PRIORITY contact callsign, ie: your most frequently worked station. This should also be mentioned if required when ordering. If not, the program instructions will prompt you on how to do this yourself.

The instruction program will print to screen or printer (32 characters per line). If you would like to read these instructions, which are far fuller than these brief notes, before you purchase, I am prepared to supply a printout on receipt of a stamped s.a.e to me, Dave Cadman, 32, Breedon Hill Road, Derby DE23-6TG. Alternatively, send your remittance (4.00) to Paul Grade (cheques payable to the Group), including your callsign for a personalised disc. Remember to include any PRIORITY callsign that you might want to be included. Please allow at least 14 days for delivery. All sales will go through the Group accounts, and any profit will go towards Group funds, NOT the authors!.

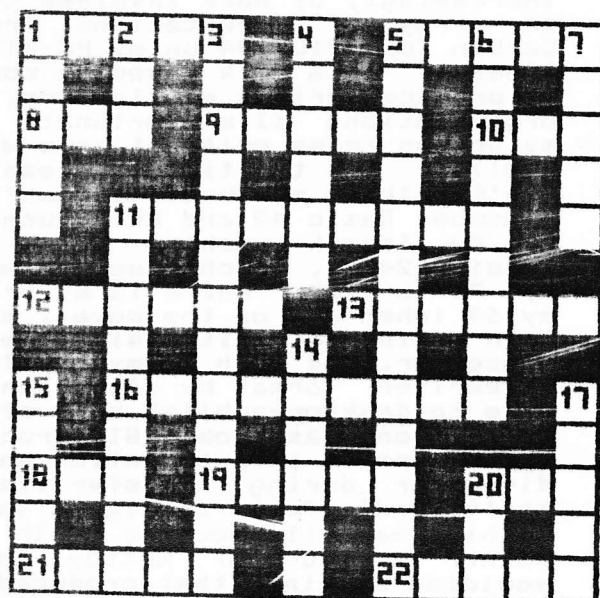
2

CROSSWORD NUMBER 65

ACROSS: 1.Performer 5.Storehouse
8.Interval 9.Shapes 10.Unwell
11.Structures 12.Made certain 13.Do again
16.Churchwoman 18.Throat-wrap
19.Magazine 20.Not Cold 21.Lucifer
22.Baby Soother.

DOWN: 1.To fish 2.Faucet 3.Freezing Method
4.Step 5.Unconcerned 6.Female Minister
7.Stories 11.Scatter
14.Played 15.Warn by 6 Down
17.Trivial 20.Murmur.

ANSWERS TO PAUL GRADE PLEASE, USUAL SOFTWARE PRIZES FOR FIRST TWO ALL CORRECT ENTRIES.



CROSSWORD NUMBER 64 ANSWERS.

ACROSS. 1.Slash 5.Urban 8.Imp 9.Runic 10.Car 11.Enderance 12.Berate
13.Auroch 16. Armatures 18.Ark 19.Nabob 20.End 21.Tides 22.Eager.

DOWN. 1.Slide 2.Asp 3.Hereditaments 4.Eaters 5.Unconquerable 6.Bachelors
7.Lamark 8.Lamarked 14.Stable 15.Start 17.Rider 20.Egg.

THE LATE, LATE BIT

Now, if you don't like this issue you all know who to blame, THE EDITOR!!!. Don't worry, he's well used to it by now, and is more than capable of explaining precisely what you should do if you have any complaints!. Actually, you shouldn't have any this time around even if the Update material is a bit sparse there's still news of some interesting things for you: the Bristol Show, which should be well worth attending (I think pensioners are admitted free if accompanied by their grandparents), and a flock of new software from the Group, thanks to the efforts of Dave Cadman, Tony Davis, and David Linsley. What's the software about? well, there's a couple of discs of general Amateur Radio utilities, some of them may have been around for a while, but it is a very useful collection; then there's a touch of yer actual Culture a Poetry Disc, which is just what its title implies (perfectly respectable, nothing originating from the walls of BR toilets at all!), and a VERY nice Music Disc by Dave Cadman, although I'll never understand how he has the patience to type it all in: there's a disc full of assorted Disc Utility Routines, some old, some new, but all useful, and this month's masterpiece, the RAMDISC program by David Linsley, an absolute must for all D64 owners, especially as there are a couple more useful utilities thrown in!. There is also a unique PACKET program written by Dave Cadman and Tony Davis, which ought to keep a lot of the Radio Amateurs happy. What more could you ask for?!. Anyway, as if that weren't enough, BATMAN RETURNS!! Yes, the Editor you all thought had been driven totally insane has returned to prove it!. Aren't you lucky little Group Members?.

What else is new? Stuart Beardwood eventually decided to rejoin the Group, so you still have access to the P.D Library; the Post Office managed to scare me to death by putting a dent in the master disc so that I couldn't read half the files (fortunately Steve sent a replacement which they failed to destroy, or this would be a much smaller Update!); everyone seems to be doing horrible things to their "second machines" and presenting me with a stack of "my PC doesn't work" problems, which I suppose makes a change from the usual Dragon ones; Southern Electricity tried to improve computer sales a couple of days ago by blowing a grid transformer and coming back on line after the power failure at around 50% over voltage (me crafty, turned all mine off when the power went down!!); other than that, not a lot worth writing about. I suppose I could fill a page or three with comment on our Glorious Leaders and their little games, and the odd pun or two about Major Disasters and Lamontable Demonstrations of Government Policy, but just about every sub-editor in the country has been doing enough of that, so I won't add to your depression. Only thing is, I wonder why HMG hasn't been charged with "obtaining pecuniary advantage by deception"? having got the jobs on the strength of a load of totally false claims, they should have been nicked by now ... unless the DPP is as bent as the politicians who appointed her!. Oh well, that's enough typing for now ... back with more rubbish next issue. P.G

REMEMBER, GUY FAWKES HAD THE BEST IDEA ABOUT INFLATION HE WANTED TO BLOW 'EM ALL UP!. THE LAST PERSON TO ENTER PARLIAMENT WITH HONEST INTENTIONS!.

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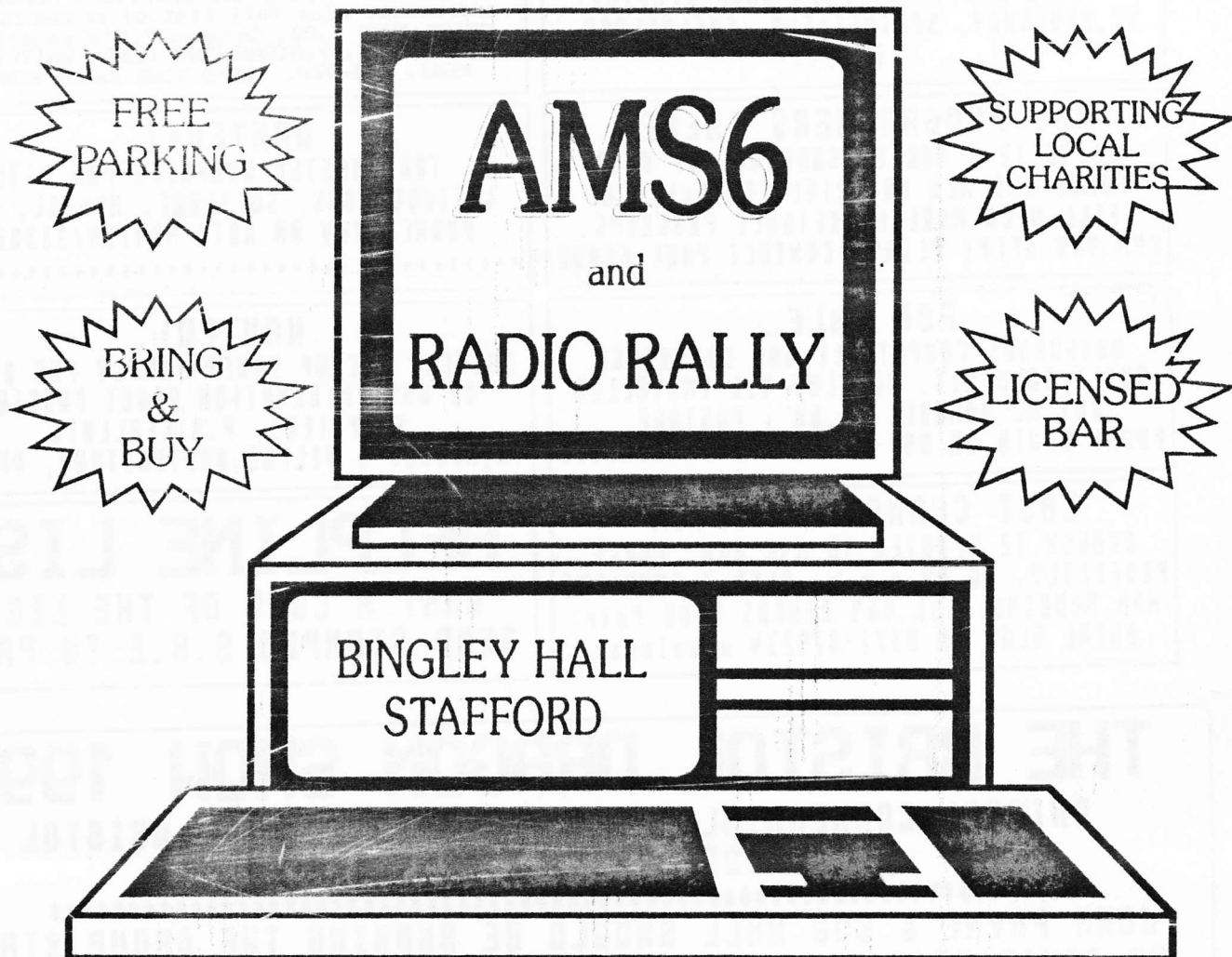
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