

NEWSLETTER OF THE DRAGON USERS GROUP

Issue 2

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Here we are, issue two and money in the bank, I'd like to say thankyou to all those who've had a little faith and coughed up their £7.50, and to those who haven't - it had better be in the post or we'll send the boys round.

As you can see we still have no name, the best attempt so far is 'POKE 55495,0 for a Good Time', obviously the incentives aren't great enough to get your muses of fire lit so, as Snip Software have kindly donated some of their tapes, I'll offer a prize for the best name of a complete set of their new range. On the subject of prizes Paul is offering two Microdeal 'One Pound Discount' vouchers for the best routine for transferring AUTORUN programs from tape to Dragon Disc.

Quite a lot has happened in the last month, and by the next edition we hope to be offering members discounts on various products. Touchmaster have been contacted unofficially and seem quite enthusiastic about a national group and even our national group. Coming up is the 6309 users show for Dragon and Tandy users at the Royal Horticultural Halls, I intend to be there on at least one of the two days - hopefully both - and with luck the club will have some kind of presence there. All this may seem a bit fabulous at the moment but by the next edition (yes there will be an issue 3) we hope to have much of this sorted out. Until then keep up the good work - we need more members and more articles, especially for 'Pixel Park' so get busy.

A PRINTER FOR TWENTY POUNDS

BY Peter Williams (sorry about last month -ed)

In part 1 we discussed the various problems to be overcome when using a Teleprinter terminal as a printer with your Dragon. This month the method of converting ASCII 8 bit to Baudot 5 bit will be explained.

When the Dragon sends a character to a printer from its parallel Electronics port it is formed as an 8 bit parallel byte using the universally accepted ASCII code. For example the letter A would be sent as 0100001 binary, which is 65 decimal or 41 hex. The Baudot code for the letter A is 11000 but the normal convention in telegraphy is to refer to bits as Mark and Space, the letter A is therefore described as MMS 00.

A system using a 5 bit code can only recognise a maximum of 32 characters so teleprinters use two modes, Letters and Figures. For instance the code MSSSS can either be the letter Z or the figure 5. The teleprinter needs to receive the appropriate 'figures shift' or 'letters shift' first to put it in the correct mode.

The easiest way to convert from ASCII to Baudot in software is to set up a table of the Baudot values in the same order as their ASCII equivalents. The ASCII value of the printed characters run from 32 (space) to 90 (Z) so that if 32 is subtracted from the ASCII value it tells us the position in the table of the equivalent Baudot value. The table of values is shown in figure 1.

The column headed HEX in the table is the value we can store in the Dragon memory that will convert most easily to marks and spaces but in serial format they are sent the least significant bit first which explains why MMSSS is stored as 03.

Some of the ASCII characters in the Figures column of the table are not included in the teleprinter type font. The table shows these as

SSSS(hex04) which is the code for space, but it is also possible to have a more complicated programme that will overprint two of the available teleprinter keys to produce an approximation of the missing character. For instance, we can get a dollar by using S and / or a close match for hash using = and /.

With a suitable machine code programme we can intercept any character being sent to the printer port and, by using the table, convert it to a different character which can easily be changed from parallel to serial by some added hardware.

Future articles will describe this hardware and also look at some of the other functions that can be included in the software.

Fig 1. Table of ASCII to Baudot conversions.

FIGURES				LETTERS			
chr	ascii	baudot	hex	chr	ascii	baudot	hex
sp:	32	SSSS	04	A	65	MSSS	03
!	33	SSSS	04	B	66	MSMM	19
"	34	SSSS	04	C	67	SSMS	0E
#	35	SSSS	04	D	68	MSMS	09
\$	36	SSMM	14	E	69	MSSS	01
%	37	MSMS	0D	F	70	MSMS	0D
&	38	SSSS	04	G	71	MSMM	1A
'	39	MSMS	05	H	72	SSMM	14
(40	MSMS	0F	I	73	SSMS	06
)	41	MSMM	12	J	74	MSMS	0E
*	42	SSSS	04	K	75	MSMS	0F
+	43	MSMM	11	L	76	MSMM	12
,	44	SSMS	0C	M	77	SSMM	1C
-	45	MSSS	03	N	78	SSMS	0C
.	46	SSMM	1C	O	79	SSMM	13
/	47	MSMM	1D	P	80	MSMM	16
0	48	MSMM	16	Q	81	MSMM	17
1	49	MSMM	17	R	82	MSMS	0A
2	50	MSMM	13	S	83	MSMS	05
3	51	MSSS	01	T	84	SSMM	10
4	52	MSMS	0A	U	85	MSMS	07
5	53	SSMM	10	V	86	SSMM	1E
6	54	MSMM	15	W	87	MSMM	13
7	55	MSMS	07	X	88	MSMM	1D
8	56	MSMS	06	Y	89	MSMM	15
9	57	SSMM	18	Z	90	MSMM	11
:	58	MSMS	0E	CARR RETURN		SSMS	0C
;	59	SSMS	04	LINE FEED		MSSS	02
<	60	SSMS	04	FIGS SHIFT		MSMM	1B
=	61	SSMM	1E	LETTS SHIFT		MSMM	1F
>	62	SSMS	04	BELL		MSMS	0B
?	63	MSMM	19				
@	64	MSMM	1A				

PROBLEMS

1. R.S. McDermott "Has anyone got a data sheet for the AM7910 modem I.C. and/or circuit sheets for the Dragon 64"

Try multisoft for the AM7910 sheets and we'd like a set of Dragon sheets ourselves.

2. B. McDonald "AS far as I can see DREAM will only support five characters in the FCC function. Is this right? I am not too clear how to load and store the contents of an FCC function. Any advice would be appreciated.

DREAM will support more than 5 characters in the FCC/FCB function. It may only be saved/loaded as part of a DREAM file as it is an assembler directive only. Warning early copies of DREAM had two serious bugs.

3. Harvey Hyman would like help with his Delta DOS, if you can contact him via the editor.

ASCI CORNER
by Heil Scrimgeour

In this issue I have decided to concentrate on Salamander, the main reason being that they are offering a discount on Dragon software at the moment.

I suppose you could say that they are most famous for the 'Dan Diamond' trilogy which actually isn't bad, the first part 'Franklyns Tomb' was one of the first adventures I tried. I quite liked it and it stands as one of my all time favourites, I think the reason is because of the booklet supplied which gives the programme much more atmosphere. The adventure itself has a feeling of it's own and would work without the pictures. I like humour in a game and this has it -mind you I've a warped sense of humour anyway. The programme is in BASIC but this does not hinder the game as it is quite fast in response. The following parts 'Lost in Space' and 'Fishy Business' are in machine code, I didn't like these as much, but for £7.95 they are good value.

Wings of war is a totally different adventure being set in WWII, you have to capture a bomb and its plans and return to base. The game is spoiled a bit by being totally illogical at times and it's a fair bet that you will need a help sheet, if only to find out what to do with the gas mask, against this at £4.95 it's good value.

For all you golfers out there Salamander do a nice line in golf simulations, it's called 'Golf' (oh well). Having seen Dragon Data's offering (in M/C) it's streets ahead and all in BASIC too. The action takes place in Hi-Res and the choice of clubs is quite good, I have never played Golf for real but this programme has given me a taste for it. Recommended at £3.95.

There are loads of flight simulators on the market for the Dragon (one day I'll do a whole corner on them), but 'Nightflight' isn't one of the good ones. The programme takes place on the text screen. The differing controls are quite extensive but I don't enjoy looking at the view which is, I feel, one of the most important things in a simulator. For £3.95, definitely so-so.

'Cricklewood Incident' is not mentioned in the new prices, and I've never played it anyway so you takes yer chances on that fellow sleuths!

I didn't know whether to include 'Wizard War' because it is not strictly a simulation, (do you know any wizards apart from Dalgleish and Toodle?) but it is strategy so I'll stretch a point. Having written all that I think it is rubbish. It's very much a love'm or hate'm like Shards 'Empire' (I don't like that either) but an advantage is that all the family can play, as long as there's no more than nine! At £3.95 maybe, but £4.95 -well it does come in a big box.

Bob Laughton wrote in asking for help in Shenanigans, his problem is trying to get past the muggers, from other people I have spoken to this seems to be a common sticking point. The answer is to find out what is in your mail and then 'show' it to the offenders, if you can't get into your box try to think of where room numbers are found -it is so logical that it takes some to work it out!

SECURITY ROUTINE
by Kyffin Jones

This is a routine to give security to your programmes and stop them being ripped off! To use it effectively you must couple it with an autorun routine for the programme, a suitable one is given in the July edition of 'Dragon User' although you will need to relocate the code in one or another of the routines as they try to use the same memory space.

The programme works by changing the meanings of various commands, (for example POKE to TRON) hence line 13 of the programme. It is essential that you save a copy of the programme before it is run.

```
1 POKE 65305,0 : POKE 113,55
2 POKE 411,228 : POKE 412, 203 : POKE 413,4 : POKE 414, 237 :
   POKE 415,228 : POKE 410,236
```

```

3 CLEAR 200, 32620
4 A = PEEK(291) * 256 + PEEK(292)
5 For I = 0 to 117 : POKE 32650 + I, PEEK(A+I) : NEXT
6 POKE 32688,134 : POKE 32689,22
7 POKE 32692,157 : POKE 32693,97
8 POKE 32700,182 : POKE 32701,131
9 POKE 32702,157 : POKE 32703,97
10 POKE 32708,157 : POKE 32709,97
11 POKE 32726,142 : POKE 32727,170
12 POKE 32728,157 : POKE 32729,97
13 POKE 32730,142 : POKE 32731,157
14 POKE 32732,153 : POKE 32733,101
15 FOR I=0 to 6 : READ A$: POKE 32621+I,VAL("&H"+A$) : NEXT
16 DATA 8E,7F,8A,BF,01,23,39
17 EXEC 32621
18 TRON 65305,20
19 * REST OF PROGRAMME

```

Notes. Line 1 disables the keyboard and causes a cold start on reset, line 2 disables the BREAK key, 3 sets the RAM-top, 4&5 copy the reserved word list into RAM, 6-14 change around the reserve words, 15 diverts the execution of commands to the altered reserve word list, 17 executes the diversion, 18 re-enables the keyboard.

To use the security routine:

```

a CLOAD "SECURITY"
b POKE 180, PEEK(25) : POKE 181, PEEK(26)
c POKE 25, PEEK(27) : POKE 26, PEEK(28)-2
d CLOAD "PROGRAM"
e RENUM 20
f POKE 25, PEEK(180) : POKE 26, PEEK(181)
g CSAVE "PROGRAM2"

```

This should now give you a saved 'version2' of your programme on file with the security routine at the beginning of it.

PIXEL PARK

Crazy Painter from Microdeal

Well done Microdeal! I liked this game a lot. You have a choice of colour screens, joystick or keyboard control and many different levels of play. The object of the game is to paint the floor with your brush which continually runs out of paint. You have a can at the bottom left of the screen with which to refill it, however to stop all this excitement all sorts of little nasties from dogs to caterpillars run across the floor wiping out your handywork as you go. As you carry on through the levels of play, paint gets in shorter supply and it's even known for one or two the nasties to nick your brush!

Entertainment value	70%
Graphics	70%
Sound	80%
Presentation	75%

I can recommend this one for the non-zappers of this world.

Gerald Hale

Chuckie Egg by AGF Software

I must admit I am not, nor have ever been, an arcade fan, that's one of the reasons why I am never any good at them. That said 'Chuckie Egg' is one of my favourite programmes, why I don't know - maybe it's the sheer lunacy of the plot where you have to go around picking up eggs and hiding them from hens, or maybe it's because there are ten different screens - I'd better outline the game so that you won't think I'm too mad.

You are a farmer trying to pick up the eggs lying around the hen house. There just happen to be various obstacles in the way; these include

5
those infuriating hens, moving lifts, and gaping holes in the floor. After screen ten a mad flying duck starts to chase after you. Mind you as yet I haven't got this far although my next door neighbour has - I tell you it's panic stations when that duck takes off!

It all happens in PMODE 3,1 Screen 1,0. I personally find this the best colour scheme that is available. Instructions are in PMODE4. This is, in itself, a nice touch in that you don't meet the text screen at any stage, it gives the programme an air of professionalism. The graphics are very good; the farmer has four positions and the hens three.

Control is via the keyboard and this is really my only complaint, the programme will accept up to four players but you have to move your Dragon around, this is a bit annoying - especially with a loose transformer plug! The keys can be redefined but I found the four arrow keys and the spacebar (for jumping) the best layout. Movement of the characters is smooth and very quick, the only time you get flicker is when the farmer is right at the top.

Screen seven is the one that I always get stuck on and trying to time the jump onto the lifts is murder.

If 'Chukie Egg' doesn't become a classic with Dragon owners then there just ain't no justice in this world, great value at £7.90.

Neil Scringeour

Eggs Datatank by Cable Software

Send the wife away for the weekend for this one. This simulation game is well presented with a clear instruction booklet and a card to place over the Dragon keyboard to assist you in playing, but you will need to spend a lot of time mastering the rules of the game before you start. I haven't space to outline all the bits of this one - but if like simulations then you'll enjoy this one. Frankly I am not too keen on these long drawn-out affairs, but then I haven't managed to send the wife away, any offers?

Entertainment value	65%
Graphics	60%
Presentation	75%

Recommended for eggheads!

Gerald Hale

REDUNDANT INFORMATION

First a warning - whilst all these codes work on some Dragons it is unlikely they will on all, and may well crash the machine - so take care.

POKE 65301/3/5/7/9,0 disables the keyboard, POKE a value of 20 to re-enable.

POKE 65495,0 doubles speed of processor

POKE 65494,0 returns it to normal

POKE 113,55 causes a cold start on reset.

thanks to A. Kyffin Jones.

LETTERS

All power to your elbow in starting the User Group, let's hope it lasts longer than Dragon World!! I hope that as a Group it will be able to speak for Dragon Owners and bring pressure to bear on whoever needs to know.

I am disappointed at the lack of support in terms of software in comparison to inferior machines, particularly the BBC and Spectrum, especially in terms of business programmes. What software there is is far less good than that available to BBC and Spectrums.....SEAME!!!!.....I will be happy to review any of the business or other programs that I have.

Anne Hilstead

(We hope to have a review of Anne's in a later issue.)

Next comes a letter from the 6809E Dragon Users Computer Club, the Dutch Section.

Subject MC6847 and Extended Basic(EB)
What we really need in uprating the performance of the Dragon 32 & 64 is a VDG Romchip that contains all the upper and lower case characters and symbols and self to define colour sprites, plus a text screen that is not 32 by 16 but 30 by 25, so that you can use an assembler like ALLDREAM and further software in really worthwhile application modes.

I mean normally a printer has 80 columns so why does not my textscreen? Especially when the chip has all the possibilities, so it is to me a complete riddle why they, DD, adapt the EB and uprate the VDG display. Put the EB on top of RAM and not in the middle and e.g. on cassette. (Independent Programming).

When you put a new home computer on the market you have to have a foresight of things to come, so your product has some built in features which lasts and do not crack when newcomers arrive (Spectrum, Electron, Atmos, MTX, MSX &c.).

I have written letters to DD and Dragon User about this only DD gave me good wishes and asked me if I will support the product, Dragon User so far gave no sign of response.

Now when you ar a BASIC user or a newcomer to the world of computer programming you are now really left in the dark about graphics possibilities. Atari claims it has 11 graphics modes in the xxx/300 XL series, but the 32 & 64 has 14! Only when you are dabbling in M/C you are able to use all these modes, now only 7 in BASIC

On the other hand we are fortunate by Commodore standards, they nearly have to POKE the brains out of their machines!

Gladly I like to have your response on this item and do thank the both of you for putting me a heartunder the belt for continuing the support of all Dragon owners, for the 6809E is the M/C microprocessor right now and not the Z-80's.

Maarten Van Damelen.

Lastly we have Neil sticking his oar in and stirring it about.

Just before christmas Oasis Software brought out their Sprint compiler and it seemed to be the answer to all Dragon owners prayers. There were virtually no books at the time on how to write 6809 machine code and so it seemed that Oasis were onto a good thing.

I hurriedly sent off my £14.95 and back came my saviour of machine code routines. The actual program itself is quite good although it does take a long time to compile and there are some limitations. However a friend and I got together to write some programs that could be compiled we intended to release them onto the unsuspecting world.

But we became very dissappointed when we were told that Oasis wanted £200 royalty for each program. Now this was never mentioned in the instruction book (well I can't find it). Mind you it was their program we were using so we understood. Unfortunately we didn't have 2600 so our idea was shelved.

Six months later Oasis brought out 'White Lightning' for the Spectrum which was copyright cleared! Now come on chaps, we Dragon owners helped you to get started, so come on and help us. Contrary to belief not all of us can write hex 3 hours a day.

Neil Scrimgeour

DRAGON ADVENTURES
by Pauline Hampson

Here are my recommendations for all budding adventurers. Please try to start with a fairly simple adventure so you do not get put off as I was by 'Madness and the Minatour'.

I do hope that you will find copies of the games in the shops. At present all Dragon software seems to have miraculously disappeared, finding any could be an adventure in itself.

Start with 'Dragon Mountain' a straight forward adventure with few traps or tricks in an underground location. From here you can progress to 'Jerusalem' or 'Williamsberg Adventure'. These are fairly short but take some thinking about.

The next group of adventures which I really enjoyed are the Franklyn trilogy. These comprise 'Franklyn's Tomb', 'Lost in Space' and 'Fishy Business'. At present Salamander are offering them at a discount so you could be in for a real treat. The first two games are written in BASIC and the third in machine code which gives a slightly faster response. I mention this because I hear that some unscrupulous people actually examine the BASIC listings!! (well I got stuck -ed.) The adventures all come with a booklet showing each location as a picture. All these games were really good and most thought provoking. I sincerely hope that one day Salamander will produce the long awaited sequel.

The next two adventures include pictures of locations on the screen, with text underneath. I am not strictly fond of graphics in adventure games but 'Sea Quest' and 'Shenanigans' are really quite interesting. Make sure you look at the pictures!! 'Sea Quest' involves finding treasures, going diving, sailing a boat and using a metal detector. 'Shennanigans' at first seemed very dismal starting in an apartment, including streets and luggers. Keep going and it transforms into a good game which (sorry Neil Springeour) I think is quite difficult, you end on a rainbow.

I can also recommend 'Calixto Island' and 'Black Sanctum' which I understand now have graphics for Dragon 64 owners. I enjoyed the text versions. 'Black Sanctum' delves into spells and black magic and takes place in an old monastery type building.

My favourite selection and also the hardest is 'El Diablero' it really is the best game I have ever played. Its scenario is a desert with a canyon. There are lots of very similar locations in the game so good mapping is essential. Please try it, I can always help out.

'Keys of the Wizard' is also a good game but not in the same style as most of my favourite games. You have to use weapons and fight your enemies. The object of the game is to deposit treasures into the Sanctuary (if you can find it) to try to obtain a maximum score. You could ignore the enemies if you wanted and run away, but each holds a treasure. The locations of the game are endless with 3 main 'floors' each of 64 locations and 3 mazes. There are also one way passages to contend with and it can be difficult to go from one part to another until you find your way around. You really will need a map. Typing quickly can also help because you only have a limited time to type "BASE ORC" &c. and then he gets his turn!

Can I make a special plea to anyone who has played this adventure. I would like to mention any tricks or tips which you have discovered. Has anyone found a use for the spade? Who can open all chests and boxes? Where are the ballroom and kitchen? Is there a room between the empty chamber and the statue room south of the chapel? Can you kill the unicorn? The game raises so many fascinating questions.

I recently obtained a price list from Microdeal and noticed that they were now selling Dragon Dungeon software for £1.99. At this price try 'Crystal Chalice' and 'Temple of Zoren' which are interesting but slightly different adventures and worth every penny. Try all the directions and not just the ones stated!

Well I hope you will all go off and have some fun, I'll just go and LOAD "Keys of the Wizard", I've got an hour before tea.

CLASSIFIED

Paul wants to swap one mint condition Salamander DRS system for any good accounting program. He is also willing to pay for any Bent, Burnt or Bugged (his wording) Dragon Hardware that he can use for spares, so if you have a defunct Dragon give him a ring.

For Sale:- Realistic CTR-57 Cassette Recorder with remote.....£10
Book -Dragon Extravaganza, 50 programmes for the Dragon by Roger Valentine
£3. Both from Mr. Gerald Hale on Crawley 36413.

CLUBNET

Firstly an apology to Ashley Adamson of the Romsey area Dragon Users Group whose name I managed to get wrong in the last edition, sorry Ashley. The Romsey group meets every weekend and holds occasional trips out to exhibitions &c. In addition they publish a fortnightly newsletter and membership is just one pound p.a., can't be bad. Anyone in the area should contact Ashley at St. Elmo, Slab Lane, West Wellow, Romsey, Hants, SO5 3AS. And now for the rest.

For W/C addicts try the
5009 Users Group,
c/o Paul Mills
23 Hobara Road,
Launceston,
Cornwall
PL15 7AE.

U.S. Files' Sussex group can be found:
c/o Multisoft Systems
St. Martins
Orchard Road
Dexhill-on-Sea
Sussex.

The W. Down Microcomputer Users Group, ring Eddie Doak on 0247 450932

Sheffield Dragon Users Group,
c/o R. Crampton,
131 Herringthorpe Valley Road,
Rotherham,
S. Yorks,
S65 3DU.

In Peterborough and district try:
Mr. A. Fairchild,
53 Hyrtle Avenue,
Peterborough,
PE1 4LR.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

From the replies we've received it appears that most of you think that we're making a good start with the Group Newsletter, and although this month's issue may not have grown much we hope that by the time the next one is published things will have improved in both size and quality, although please don't forget that most of the contents depend on YOU. There is, however, one small snag.....MONEY!!

I know that most of you have sent in your forms, and paid up, but a few seem to imagine that all they need to do is wait for the next 'free issue' to arrive. Sorry, but I have to inform you that as of now, there won't be any more free handouts!

It's not that we're mean, it's simply that it would be most unfair on the paying members if we were to use their subscriptions to subsidise freeloaders. You wanted this group, and we've done our best to get it started; we want to build this group into something big enough and good enough to be of REAL use to all of you, so please, give us the chance to do so.

Just in case anyone out there thinks that Jeremy Royland or I are living in luxury on the proceeds, I regret (I really do!!!) that like our contributors and reviewers, we're not getting paid at all, and all money received goes towards covering legitimate expenses such as phone calls, postage, printing &c.

In the unlikely event of a cash surplus at any time, we'll publish the figures and ask for your views on how the money should be used. Here cometh the Financial Times!

Thank you for all your help and support. Don't forget that we need more 'recruits' and more material for publication, whether it's reviews, letters, problems, general articles, complaints, or anything else you'd like to see in print....(the laws relating to libel and obscene publication permitting!!)..

Paul G.