NEWSLETTER

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Membership Secretary's Report

Hi there!

I am John Harvey, the new Membership Secretary. I have taken this job on from Steve Massam since he seems to be busy doing other things like editing disc drive and the newsletter. I had hoped someone local to the club might take it up since getting to Basildon once a month is a bit of an effort from Harrow, but twice is silly.

My experience is of using the PCW to write Pascal programs, run Money Manager, play chess, design Masterfile databases, use the Protext word processor and loads of other CP/M applications. So I was delighted to learn that the membership records were all held on a LocoFile database. Oh well, it is all good experience.

As soon as I had taken on the job Steve disappeared to Scotland for a month or so and I had to try and understand his instructions to run the system. Total failure. Since Steve returned I have visited him in Hadleigh and been taken through the system. (Thanks for the tea) It's all a bit clearer now and I hope that you all received last month's newsletter eventually. If you are reading this one then I assume that you either got to the meeting or I have succeeded.

I shall probably turn my experience of using LocoFile and LocoMail into an article for the Disc Drive to contrast with Steve Massam's experience of taking the reverse route.

There seems to be a general increase in the membership over the last few months which bodes well for the future of the club. Welcome to all new members, I hope you enjoy the Newsletters and the Disc Drive.

John Harvey

DAILY BLAH

NEW MEM SEC FOR PCW CLUB

From the Secretary's Desk

The communication network is at last beginning to take shape. We are receiving a good number of swop newsletters from other user groups. Great Stuff!

If there are any other groups that want to use any ideas they may get from our newsletter please feel free to do so. Alternatively if you have any particular problems and want a sympathetic ear I know a man who has two of them!

Members should take the opportunity of reading these newsletters when they are available on our monthly club night. If you find an article that you would like a copy of see Steve or me and we will organise it for you. If on the other hand you want the complete thing you will have to join the issuing club.

It seems nearly every day that pressure is put on us in one way or another to change to a P. C, (you will notice I have avoided using the word upgraded) it is a matter of opinion if the change is in anyway an improvement.

Now I have very little experience of PC's but from the comments I have heard and my knowledge of the PCW, why would I want to spend an awful lot of money when the machines I have do all I want? It may be slower but this is not necessarily a disadvantage, it gives me time to reflect and enjoy a little refreshment whilst doing so.

As long as my two machines are in reasonable working order, and allow me to pursue the joys of Wordprocessing and Micro Designing I have all I want from micro processing.

David Lalieu

Christmas Competition Categories

1   Beginners Only (*For members who have been using MicroDesign, or a PCW for less than six months. Any subject in monochrome, i.e. black or one colour.*)

2   Colour - Any subject, *(that is , multi-colour).*

3   Cards, Hand-Bills and Posters, *(monochrome).*

4   Business Stationery, *(monochrome).*

5   Calendars and News-Letters, *(monochrome).*

All work must be carried out on a PCW.
Choice of category will be at the discretion of the judges.

Last month we were looking at editing word processed text for publication and how it could be converted to a form acceptable for setting as in a book. I had removed all the multiple spaces between words and sentences to tighten up the text. If you take a look at the average novel you will notice another difference between the letter written to the bank manager and the type-set book: the book does not have an extra line between each paragraph and the indent at the beginning of each paragraph is only two characters (or an em) rather than the typewriter tab settings or five or six spaces.

To overcome these two differences edit your Template.Std so that the first tab on your main text layout is only two characters from the left margin. Then use Find and Exchange to replace all occurrences of three carriage returns for one carriage return and one tab. To be on the safe side you should perhaps use Manual exchange until you are confident that What you want is what you get (Wywiwyg?).

Having cleaned up the text layout you should next consider the size of the file. To some extent this does depend on how much memory you have on your PCW but it is most certainly unwise to handle files which are more than say 20-40k in one editing session. Why? Well, if you insist on having the whole 150k or 200k file open at one time you are risking losing the whole lot if the mains blink. Secondly, you will find it much easier and quicker to manipulate a small file rather than a large one: try paging through a 100k file from beginning to end and see what I mean.

Look at the document and determine points where a natural break occurs in the storyline, where a new chapter would be appropriate. Then use Copy to copy from page one to the end of the first "chapter" to Block 1 and Abandon edit. You could copy chapter 2 to Block 2, chapter 3 to block 3 etc, but you will find that this is rapidly eating into the amount of memory left on the machine. It's probably safer to copy each chapter on its own until you are confident with what you are doing. Now create a new document in the same group (thus with the same template and layout) and paste in block 1; save this as Chapter.

One. Open the master document, copy chapter 2 to block 2, abandon, etc and save Chapter.Two in the same fashion.

Now we can spell check these individual chapters. Ensure that there is *not* a UserSpel.Dct in the current group; if there is then Rename it to UserSpel.Old or move it out of the way. Why? If there are spelling errors in the chapters that you are about to check and they have been saved *uncorrected* to the current user dictionary then they will not show up when you run a spelling check! You can look at the words held in a *User*spel.Dct by importing them into a newly created document and simply reading down the list.

I have discovered some interesting words in such lists before now. A recent user dictionary contained *looker*, *cleerly* and *bothe* among others. These can only have been put there by the last user of the spell checker for they are not real words. [If you are old enough to remember TV before the War you may recall that the early viewers of the day were quaintly called "lookers" but I suspect the present typist couldn't find *good-looker* in the dictionary!] I'm not sure whether *bothe* was a mistyping of *bother* or *both* but *cleerly* it was wrong to add it to the dictionary!

If there is a word that the spelling checker doesn't recognise *don't* just Add it to your dictionary! Consult the dictionary to see if you mean something very similar. If its a colloquialism then just Mark it as correct [SiC] for this one document. If its a proper noun such as a place name or surname then you can add it to the user dictionary but remember that using this user dictionary for all your spell checking could allow the spell checker to accept as correct words which are correct in one context such as Mr Smithe, the headmaster on parent/teachers association minutes, but may be mistaken for Rev Smythe on the parish council records. Keep two different user dictionaries in different groups, eg PTA and Parish, for the different sets of documents.

Mike

For Your Diary

Keep Soldering On!

The following is a copy of a letter we have received from Geoff Hayes. As Geoff says, with the reduction of companies supporting PCWs it's great to here of this kind of service.

Recently, I had a mishap whilst testing a 3" drive with the back of the PCW in that I had disconnected the ribbon cable and then had been distracted and laid the drive on its end with only the power cable connected. It was close to the edge of my table. On attempting to resume the job, I accidentally knocked the drive off the table - and it yanked the power cable from its anchoring on the CPU board. This particular board was a very early version with only 4 prongs on the cable linking the power board and the CPU board - so I couldn't just substitute another spare CPU board I have.

I am not a skilled solderer, and although I attempted to do the job, I got in a right mess. I looked in back numbers of *The Disc Drive* for the number of Solent PCW Services - and then gave Mr. Matthews a ring to explain my problem - and get an estimate of a 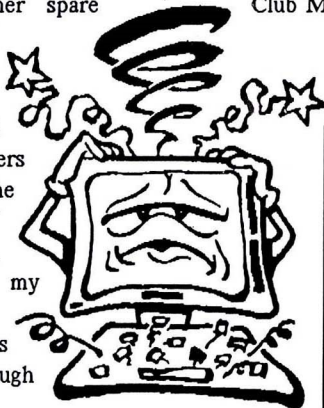repair job - which was gratifyingly modest - although qualified by his stating that he couldn't be definite until he had seen what other damage my ham-fisted soldering attempts may have caused.

Off it went - and it was back within 5 days, very neat repair job done - and priced true to estimate!

Whilst I may have been lucky, I feel it is worth reporting to the membership that Mr. Matthews kept his word, didn't find 'other' problems to boost the bill, and specifically stated on the Invoice that he hadn't tested his handiwork - because he hadn't got a power board with the requisite 4-prong plug. He needn't have worried - it worked as soon as I re-installed it.

As PCW repairers are hard to find these days, on the basis of my experience, I would like to recommend Mr. Matthews' services to other Club Members.

Yours sincerely Geoff Hayes.