

British Amstrad PCW Club

NEWSLETTER

Issue No 85

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the British Amstrad PCW Club is to be held in Room 2 of the Basildon Centre, St. Martins Square, Basildon, Essex at 7.30 pm on Thursday 6th September 2001. All paid-up members of the club are entitled to attend free of charge and are welcome.

No agenda has yet been drafted but the major item which will be included is a vote on the acceptance of a change to the Club's constitution. A copy of the existing Constitution and a copy of the proposed has been sent to all "local" members who have attended a meeting or an AGM in the past for information.

It is proposed to change the name of the club to **The PCW Club**. This is because we are now the only club in the country dedicated solely to the PCW. In addition, we are not connected with Amstrad and we do have members outside Britain. Advertisements for club meetings have been rejected by free newspapers because we are considered to be a trade organisation representing Amstrad rather than just a club.

Under the present rules, purely for historical reasons, only "local" members who are present at the meeting can vote at a General Meeting. It is proposed to change this so that *all* members, "postal" or "local", can vote, if need by the use of proxy votes.

Most of the other changes are a reorganisation of the rules but there will now be far tighter control of the Club's finances, payment of expenses and of disposal of its assets than in the past.

All members of the Club should have received a copy of the present Constitution on joining the Club. If any member wishes to see a copy of the revised document a copy will be sent free on receipt of a DL size (220 x 110 mm) stamped addressed envelope. *This SAE must be sent to Mike Elliston, not Peter Clark*. A copy of the new Constitution will, of course, be sent to all members of the Club who renew for next year.

● As I write this, Peter Clark is very ill in hospital, Steve Massam is in the Falkland Islands and Peter Hathaway is on holiday (in Norway I think!). Thus, the day to day affairs like Secretary, Editor and Treasurer are being handled by just Nick and myself.

Please do not send any correspondence or e-mails to Peter Clark. There will not be a reply. Please address any queries to Nick or me and they will be dealt with as rapidly as we can.

Mike Elliston, 96 Sparrows Herne, Basildon, Essex SS16 5EX. mikell@cablenet.co.uk
Phone 01268 522484 *Strictly office hours only*

Nick Chaundy, 2 Clickett Hill, Basildon, Essex SS14 1NP. Telephone 01268 454917.
chaundy.n@cablenet.co.uk

Instruction Manuals

John King sends in information on a source of manuals for computer and printer equipment. For example, they are selling the original hard copy instruction manuals for the FD-2 (the double sided, double density additional disc drive for the 8000 series PCW) for £6.50 including post and packing.

The name is **Instruction Manuals UK**, 26a St Leonards Road, Far Cotton NN4 8DP. Sorry, no phone number given.

Draughtsman

A while back a member was enquiring after a drawing program called Draftsman or Draughtsman. John King says that you can get a copy from him by sending him a *formatted* disc and a stamped addressed *padded* envelope.

Rodney Hannis

Rodney Hannis was the last public domain librarian of the CPMUG (CP/M Users' Group). He died recently and the library has now closed permanently. John Butler has rescued all of the discs and is working his way through the collection in an attempt to catalogue them and see what is available.

They are in all sorts of formats on 8", 5¼" and 3½", mainly as zipped files stored on DOS discs. Unfortunately the program he used to compress the files apparently did not confirm that the compression had been successful, especially with file names including non-alpha characters such as \.

Here is a lesson for everyone. Be very careful about using odd characters when trying to create exclusive file names. In

particular, never give a name to a file in LocoScript or CP/M which begins with a numeral, eg. 3ColBook.Doc. You are quite likely to find that this file has disappeared when you make a copy of the disc or try and recover it from Limbo. It may appear to be ok but it is not safe.

Rodney was into NasCom and Gemini computers and John has found a number of discs in these formats. If anyone in the Club has knowledge of these machines and could help with translating the files please contact John Butler, 16 Uphill Drive, London NW9 0BU. Thanks.

HD drives

A club member who wishes to remain anonymous reports that he bought a refurbished PCW 9512 from someone in the Southend area which had been fitted with an additional 3½" drive. He bought this so that he could copy files from his original 3" CF2DD discs onto 3½" discs with a view to having the information ready when he eventually had to move over to a PC.

Fortunately he tested the 3½" discs on a friends PC to make sure that transfers would be successful and found to his horror that the results were extremely dubious to say the least! Files which he had copied one day had disappeared a few days later. Unable to get a reply from the vendor he took the PCW to Pinboard for checking.

They pointed out that the front of the 3½" disc drive bore the letters **HD** and that this drive was out of a PC, a modern one at that. It was totally unsuitable for use in a PCW as, whilst it could read from DD 3½" DOS discs, it was not intended to write to them! Be warned. If a 3½" disc drive is not 720k (DD) it is no good in a PCW.

Built-in Printer Fonts

When you use LocoScript 3 or 4 with an external printer you need a Printer Support Pack to provide the correct printer driver file. This is a small piece of code that is loaded onto your start of day disc and it lets LocoScript send the right signals to the printer depending upon what you want to print; change of size, switch to bold, change of face, etc. When you select the printer you are often given the choice of using the printer in standard or download mode.

Standard mode is using the fonts which are built into the printer such as Roman, Sans, Script or Courier. Download means using the LX fonts which are stored on the start of day disc in various sizes. Two LX fonts, LX Roman and LX Sans are normally loaded by default if you have selected the download mode.

What is the difference between the two modes? In the case of standard mode the printer may only have one font available, often Courier, rather like typewriter with a fixed pitch. Even if it does have a couple of other fonts like Roman or Sans there is no guarantee that these will be proportionally spaced faces or that you can change the sizes. The major advantage of using the standard mode is that, because the font files are built into the printer, the process is that much quicker.

If you opt to set the printer up in the download mode the printing process will be slower but you will have a far greater range of typefaces available to you and in a large number of sizes dependant upon the fonts you can fit onto your start of day disc. You will also find that features such as superscript and subscript work correctly rather than pushing the letters up or down.

The LocoScript Printer Support Pack will load LX Roman and LX Sans but there are about thirty other faces available in Decorative, Display and Business discs. You are most unlikely to get anything like this choice from the built-in fonts on a printer.

Why does this all matter? Well one of the most frequent mistakes that occurs when someone first uses LX fonts is that the default pitch for the dot matrix or daisywheel printer is 12 pitch, a fixed pitch with all letters the same width. When LX Roman is set with the pitch still at 12 the effect is rather odd, to say the least. It should be set to PS (proportional spacing) instead.

I was sent a piece of copy for the *Disc Drive* in LocoScript and told that if I printed it out it would be OK for inclusion as it was, without adjustment. When I opened the file I got a message about "Wrong Printer" so I went into Document Set Up and changed it from the Epson jet printer given to my own laser. There was a query about the font, too. This was given as just Roman so I altered that to LX Roman too, and took a test print.

The result was gibberish! Letters were printed one on top of another, columns were all over the place. I opened the file, turned the codes on and looked at the setting. Everything was set to either 10 pitch or 12 pitch. And then it dawned on me. I had had a similar problem long time ago when using an Epson 24-pin printer. All the fonts were fixed pitch including the Roman and the Sans. One expects Courier to be fixed pitch but assumes a Roman to be proportionally spaced. If the original had been set in LocoScript using LX fonts then there would not have been a problem. Moral? Use downloaded LX fonts!

PCW Sales, Wants and Offers

Pristine Amstrad 9256 including monitor, keyboard and printer. £40.00 or offers. Mrs Spong 01306 884449 (Dorking, Surrey)

Wanted to buy or borrow User's manual for **Hewlett Packard 610C** printer. Mike Trueman, phone 01932 881025 (Cobham, Surrey)

Wanted Tecqniche 102 Keyboard
Mike Trueman, as above.

PCW for free but *you* collect:
PCW 9512, keyboard, discs and manual, daisy-wheel printer and tractor unit, four printwheels. Also an Amstrad DMP 2160 printer with printer cable, various ribbons and two mice.
Brian Green, phone 020 8599 4719 (Chadwell Heath, Romford).

Wanted Source of drive belts for 3" drives. Brian Green as above.

Wanted to buy or borrow User's manual for **Panasonic KX P2123** printer. Harold Simmons, phone 01491 837214 (Wallingford, Oxon).

Wanted Keymouse for an 8512 with a 3½" A: drive preferably with disc, manual. Mr Rogers, 01773 776806 (Nottingham)

For free but you collect:
Forty copies of the *8000Plus* and *PCWPlus* magazines with dates ranging from April 1988 to March 1995.
F G Phelan, phone 01329 661524 (Fareham, Hants)

PCW for free but you collect.
Fully working PCW 8256 with extra memory chips and 3½" drive, original manuals and discs. Lots of software. (I now have to use a PC for college).
Rob Boyle, phone 0121 233 0152. (Central Birmingham).

PCW for free but you collect.
PCW 9512 with keyboard, printer, manual, spare new ribbon, etc, in gwo.
Carmichael, phone 01702 339645 (Southend on Sea).

Wanted! Creative Technology **RamPort**
Nick Chaundy 01268 454917 (Basildon)

PCW 8512, printer, manuals, discs, DR Draw and DR Graph plus several dozen 3" discs. Kevin King:
kevin_king@pgen.net

Small advertisements should be sent to the *Newsletter* editor, by either post or e-mail, and are published free as a service to Club members. The Club will not be a party to any transaction and can not be held responsible for the quality of goods or services provided by the advertisers.

A copy of the *Newsletter* in which the announcement is published will be sent to any advertiser on request if a stamp or SAE is included with the advertisement.

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