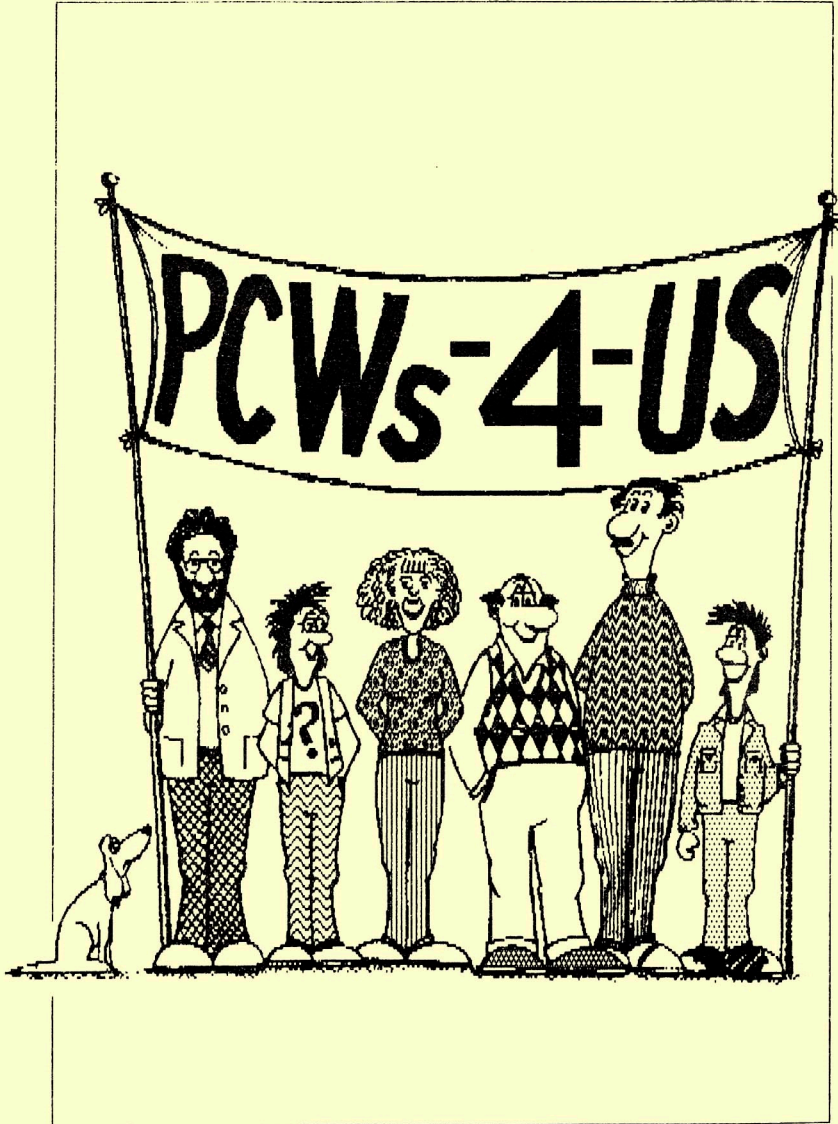


# The Disc Drive

ISSUE 26

SUMMER 2000



The British Amstrad PCW Club Magazine  
for all PCW and PcW users

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The Disc Drive is a compilation of articles submitted by fellow members of the British Amstrad PCW Club just like you! So if you would like to contribute, or there is a subject you wish to know more about, why not drop me (the Editor) a line.

Remember, "The Disc Drive" attempts to cater for the raw beginner as well as the more experienced user, so something you perhaps consider trivial could prove to be of great interest to other members.

Articles and small items of interest are accepted in any format, on paper (typed or hand written), on disc (3", 3.5", 180k, 720K,) or by email. (Steve@Lentil.org) The Editor reserves the right to edit articles.

So come on get tapping those keys.



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Contributions on disc in LocoScript, ASCII, MD TXT or Protext files are welcome from all readers on the understanding that copyright will be held jointly by the Club and the author unless otherwise agreed in writing. The Editor reserves the right to edit, amend or omit all contributions.

@ British Amstrad PCW Club

## CONTENTS

PAGE

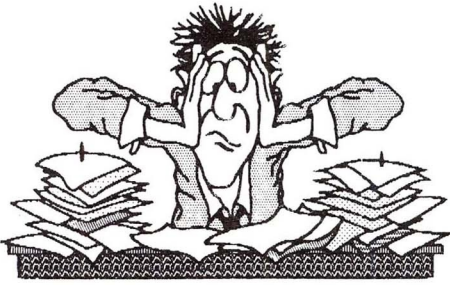
Editorial .....	2
<i>By Steve Massam</i>	
Instant Recall 3 .....	3
<i>By Steve &amp; Dave Landers</i>	
Accounts .....	4
<i>By Tony Dimond</i>	
USA PCW .....	7
<i>By John King</i>	
Footnote to Battery	
Replacment .....	8
<i>By John King</i>	
Keeping Your PCW Running .....	9
<i>By Mr R. Blake</i>	
Gallery .....	10
<i>From the PD Library</i>	
To The Rescue .....	11
<i>By Dureen A. Bridge</i>	
The Creation .....	14
<i>by Dureen A. Bridge</i>	
Hot Tips .....	15
<i>Contributions from Members</i>	
So you want to write BASIC programs? .....	17
PD Blake CD-Rom .....	22
<i>By Anthony Hill</i>	
Just for Starters .....	24
<i>By Steve</i>	
Readers Letters .....	27

### Meetings

Are held on the first Thursday of every month, at 7.30pm THE BASILDON CENTRE Committee Room N<sup>o</sup> 4

### Subscriptions

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# EDITORIAL

First, my apologies for the delay in the preparation of this issue. I have had the material ready for some time but have been kept particularly busy with my work which has, of course, had to take precedence.

Thank you to those who have sent in articles for publication and the items for the tips and queries corner. We could still do with a few more, so keep them coming. Unfortunately, I have not received any material relating to the PcW16. As you may remember my own PcW16 died on me some time ago and from now on, will be relying on PcW16 contributions from our members.

I had an interesting tete-a-tete with a colleague up north the other day that may amuse some of you. As a practising professional taxidermist I am an active member of *The Guild of Taxidermists* and as such get called upon to carry out a few minor tasks from time to time. Our chairman had attempted to send me a fax, but unfortunately the machine ran out of paper part way through. You know how it is, the red line appears on the sheet and you say to yourself I must put a new roll in, but some how you never get around to it. Anyway, I telephoned him to explain and he was none to pleased and exclaimed: 'Wasn't it about time I got out of the stone age and bought a B!\*o!y PC, then he could have E-mailed the information to me!' I didn't like to tell him that he could have e-mailed me via my PCW. But anyway, as I'm sure you can imagine I ended up getting into

somewhat heated debate over the pros and cons of purchasing a PC. But that isn't the best bit.

After things calmed down he explained to me that he was trying to send me information relating to our forthcoming conference and although we have a number of committee members with PCs, *including himself*. No one seems to know how to use them, and please could I produce a programme on my PCW as I had done in the past. I believe that's what's commonly known as shooting one's self in the foot!

Even better, a few days latter I had a phone call from our somewhat concerned immediate past chairman explaining to me that we could really do with a membership secretary who knows how to use a database and would I be interested in the job? I don't know, it seems to me that it's all very well having one of those all-singing, all-dancing, user-friendly PCs but unless you are prepared to take time off playing games and put a little effort into getting to know how to use it for more practical purposes they can be a complete waste of time and money. 'A machine is only as good as the person trained to operate it.' Now who said that?

May PCWs rule for ever!

Steve



# Instant Recall 3

This is not intended as a review, more of a notification of development and imminent release. David Landers the writer of Instant Recall 3 very kindly sent me a prototype copy of this his latest release and I consider it to be a brilliant piece of work.

Many of us are very familiar with LocoScript, LocoFile and LocoMail, but what's missing? — A spreadsheet that can be easily accessed from within this friendly environment. Well not any more! This is where Instant Recall 3 comes to the rescue.

Probably the best thing to do is let David explain to you what Instnt Recall is all about and the following is more or less a copy of David's introductory letter to me.

## News from Instant Recall A Spreadsheet for LocoScript?

Yes... the Instant Recall Psuedo-Spreadsheet. It uses LocoMail in conjunction with LocoFile and requires LocoScript-Mail/File v2.5 onwards. It's still a prototype at present, with a few last tweaks to be made but the final product will work in the same way as this review copy. (Incidentally, the review copy is written in Loco 4, though 'customer' versions will be in Loco 2.5 or 3, allowing conversion to v4).

The primary intention was to produce a *pseudo-spreadsheet* for LocoScript users, which not only mimicked the operation of a standard spreadsheet but also offered many of the specialist features associated whit these programs. So, for instance, various optional Commands are built-in as are a 'Sum' Function plus two internal Macros. External Macros are also supplied, along with 'What-if' and 'Goal-seek' problem solving facilities. And there's extensive documentation, of course.

The two essential elements of the package are a special LocoFile Datafile (containing a hidden LocoMail routine), plus a LocoMail Master (merge) file. A new worksheet starts life as a file copy of the Datafile. Once filled in, the worksheet is processed (ie. calculated) by being merged with the Master file.

Each record card within the Datafile holds 48 cells and, just as with a normal spreadsheet, these can contain text, numbers, formulae and cell reference commands. 288 cells per worksheet (ie. 6 record cards) seems to be the size limit imposed by LocoMail's data buffer capacity. Obviously this is much smaller than genuine CP/M spreadsheets, but should still be acceptable for most home-based applications. However, compared with ordinary spreadsheets, one big advantage is that the final result document can be printed to the highest LocoScript standards.

The package will retail at £14.50 inclusive and I hope you'll agree that it's a welcome addition to the 'Loco family'.



# Accounts

by Tony Dimond

My name for this LocoMail listing is ACCOUNTS.NEW but it is not a full-blown accounts program. However, if you enter details of your spending and your income, as well as payments made with your credit card, it will keep a running total of your expenditure set against your income, an accumulated total of your credit card payments, and in the event of the credit card debt exceeding your current cash this will be brought to your attention. I

adapted the listing from one of the PCW magazines, adding the routines for credit card transactions, and for highlighting the fact when your indebtedness is greater than your current assets. The information you will need to enter will be found in the stubs of your cheque book, direct debit orders, credit card slips, wage/salary slips, pension and share dividend statements, and similar documents.

```
(+Mail)!Date:today=?;What is today's date - DD/MM?(-Mail)␣
(+Wordul)Date → From or To → VISA → Debit → Credit → Total(-UL).␣
␣
(+Mail)cr="␣
";tab=" → ";space=" ";v="v";d="d";y="y";c="c";vbrf=?#;How much is the visa balance?␣
␣
vbrf=[vbrf!2]␣
brforward=?#;How much is brought forward?␣
brforward=[brforward!+2]␣
show=?;Do you want to show them?␣
;␣
;␣
;␣
#show=y :<(-Mail)(+Mail)tab(-Mail)VISA Outstanding is:(+Mail)tab:vbrf:tab:tab␣
(-Mail)B/forward =(+Mail)tab:brforward:):(-Mail)␣
(+Mail)vtotal=vbrf␣
(-Mail)(+Mail)total=brforward:namedate="(+Mail)date=?;Date of transaction? DD/MM␣
(-Mail)(+Mail)FromTo=?;Who was involved?(-Mail)"␣
Loop="(+Mail)Sortofentry=?; Is this a (D)ebit, (C)redit or (V)isa (ENTER)?␣
# sortofentry=d :(:Debit=?#; Amount of debit:␣
debit=[debit!2]␣
Credit=space:total=[total-debit]:%namedate:(+Mail)␣
date:(-Mail)/00(+Mail)tab:FromTo:tab:tab:debit:tab:tab:total:cr␣
)<(-Mail)(-Mail)(+Mail)␣
# sortofentry=c :(:Credit=?#; Amount of credit:␣
credit=[credit!2]␣
Debit=space:total=[total+credit]:%namedate:(+Mail)date:(-Mail)/00(+Mail)tab:FromTo␣
tab:tab:tab:credit:tab:total:cr:>(-Mail)(-Mail)(+Mail)␣
# sortofentry=v :(:Visa=?#; Amount of visa:␣
visa=[visa/2](RETURN)
```



```

Credit=space:vtotal=[vtotal+visa]:%namedate:(+Mail)␣
date:(-Mail)/00(+Mail)tab:FromTo:tab:visa:tab:tab:tab:total:cr:)(-Mail)(-Mail)(+Mail)␣
Again=? ; Again (y/n)␣
:#Again=y :(<:test=1:>(<:test=0:>)(-Mail)"(-Mail)␣
(+Mail)%loop@test(-Mail)␣
(+Mail);␣
;␣
;␣
cr:tab:(-Mail)          (+Wordul)VISA Total is:(+Mail)tab:vtotal:(-Mail)  Balance at
(+Mail)datetoday(-Mail)/00(-UL):(+Mail)tab:total(-Mail)␣
(+Mail)#vtotal>total:(-Mail)  Overspent by:(+Mail)tab:[vtotal-total](-Mail)␣

```

Let's go through the listing line by line.

First you are asked for the present date as DD/MM, that is two digits for the day, a slash, and two digits for the month. You can use zeros or spaces for leading zeros, as you prefer. The listing will enter the year as two digits, and to continue this you will have to edit the routine at the beginning of each new year.

After switching LocoMail off, the second line prints some column headings, improving the appearance and making output easily understood.

Each time you use the routine you will be asked for today's date as explained above, the VISA balance, (**vbrf**) and the Brought Forward (**brforward**) balance - what you are currently worth. You will be asked whether you want to show the balances, and during each month you may choose to show them just once at the beginning of the month. To show them simply answer **y** for Yes.

In line seventeen the total is initially set equal to **brforward**. **namedate** is a subroutine used to enter a date for every transaction, in the same form as explained above, DD/MM. The total will be increased or reduced as each entry is made, according to whether they are DEBITs or CREDITs. VISA items are totalled separately.

The program asks you what kind of transaction you are entering - a VISA item

(for VISA read ACCESS or whatever is applicable to you, and you could alter the listing if this mattered to you), for transactions with your credit card, a DEBIT when you pay for something, and a CREDIT when you receive value in the form of income. At the time of the month when you pay up on your credit card(s) balance(s) these items must be entered twice, as a negative (minus) VISA amount and as a DEBIT to the amount of your payment cheque. In this way your credit card balance will be reduced and so too will your bank balance. Think about it, that's not really a contradiction.

Each time you use the routine you will be asked for today's date as explained above, the VISA balance, and the Brought Forward balance - what you are currently worth. You will be asked whether you want to show the balances, and during each month you may choose to show them just once at the beginning of the month.

After making each entry you are asked whether there is another entry to be made - Again -, and if you answer (y)es you will be asked to identify the kind of transaction, (V)isa, (D)ebit or (C)redit. This enables the listing to enter the details in the appropriate column and to add or subtract the amount accordingly.

Other details are the amount involved in each transaction, the date, and "From/To" meaning from or to whom is the amount to be credited or debited - your employer, gas

company, petrol station, ... For my personal use I have a PHRASES.STD file to cover regular items and save typing; I just PASTE the appropriate letter for the item involved.

When you have entered the final item you will answer (N)o to the question 'Again' about any more items and the listing calculates the VISA and Brought Forward balances; if your VISA indebtedness is greater than your Brought Forward balance the amount by which you are overspent will be calculated and shown.

When you input amounts of money enter digits only, no pounds signs for example. The listing will accept numeric input only. Be careful to place a decimal before the pence. It is not necessary to enter trailing zeros. Amounts of pence only can be entered with a leading decimal point followed by the appropriate digits.

When you identify a transaction, say payment of your gas bill, I advise you to make the entry as simple as possible compatible

with conveying the facts. Gas Bill, for example. The date is already there. Likewise for your salary/pension/wages. If you have more than one pension DSS would distinguish a State pension from your BTcom pension supposing you had retired from work with British Telecom. If you buy a camera from QVC then QVC Camera will be sufficient, no need to put down the shutter speeds! If you pay by cheque the date will enable you to find the stub, if necessary.

After your first usage of the routine the listing is used again by editing the last record you entered, and using f1 (f7 if you are using LocoScript 1) to insert the routine at the foot of the page. Then you save this document, and fill it again as described in paragraphs above.

What follows is a simple example of output from the listing. If any member has problems with the listing ask our Editor to put you in touch with me.

**HOME ACCOUNTS - INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND VISA**

Date	From or To	VISA	Debit	Credit	Total
	VISA Outstanding is:	25.00		B/forward = +200.00	
21/ 6/00	Local Pension			50.00	250.00
22/ 6/00	Household payments		85.00		165.00
24/ 6/00	QVC Tools	18.00			165.00
26/ 6/00	VISA Payment		43.00		122.00
27/ 6/00	VISA Payment	-43.00			122.00
	VISA Total is:	0.00	Balance at 20/ 6/00:		122.00





Whilst surfing the Net for PCW related information the following extract, offered verbatim and complete with typographical errors, initially brought a smile to my face but once studied it puts a different perspective on the normal view given by a PCW dealer vending his (or her) wares.

The complete advert, just over a page long, lists various CP/M related software plus over

600 PC-Blue (whatever this is) early Public Domain discs but the part referring to the PCW is of course what is of interest.

The firm's details are as follows for anyone wishing to place an order.

ELLIAM ASSOCIATES.

P.O. Box 2664

Atascadero.

CA 93423.

Their message:-

\*\*\*\*\*  
AMSTRAD PCW (a CP/M computer)

One of the best kept secrets in the CP/M world was the Amstrad PCW. It was sold as a word processor not a computer. With CP/M Plus (3) operating system and the ability to have over 1Meg of memory it is a machine to work with.

There are probably more PCWs running today than the original IBM PCs because most people that use them would fight rather than switch. Today the word processor drives a laser with scalable fonts. You can also do desk top publishing - also add a mouse and scanner.

We repair the Amstrad PCW and can supply parts. Most problems today are caused by a belt (10 year old rubber band) in the "A" drive - replace the belt and it runs as good as new.

Most CP/M software runs on the PCW and there is software designed just for the PCW. We have most of it.

\*\*\*\*\*

I have a number of American friends who collect 8 Bit machines but none had heard of the PCW and I began to doubt if it was actually ever released (in the USA) despite publicity claiming its launch there, but from what is stated above they sure were, though only the 8256 and possibly 8512 as far as I can tell. The American machines were similar

to or the same as those distributed in Germany, I am also lead to believe.

It would be interesting to find out for sure the model range issued and also were they special machines given the 110 volt mains used in the U.S.A. Perhaps I will never know -- unless you know better? John King.

# Footnote to SCA Interface Battery replacement.

by John King

During the last long Christmas/New Year sabbatical what better than to turn to the PCW for entertainment and to complete tasks put off due to other pressures?

The acquisition of a battery for my SCA interface was finalised and fitted onto its circuit board with little problem (although found not to be exactly 'drop-in'). The lot was re-assembled and offered up to my 8256 'workhorse' which was then switched on and CP/M loaded. The machine was left running for about four hours to top the battery up, although I am not sure if this was necessary but it could not do any harm.

As the CP/M (version 1.4) disc that is supplied with the 8256 comes almost full, the SCA software to run the Real-Time clock is contained on a separate disc; this was inserted into the drive and the TIME.COM file called up. This requests that you enter Day/Month/Year, then Hour:Minute. All these were typed in and Enter pressed to reveal the correct date and time.

A re-test was tried, only to show that the computer had turned back the clock by three years, thereby proving the software to be \*non-year 2000 compliant.

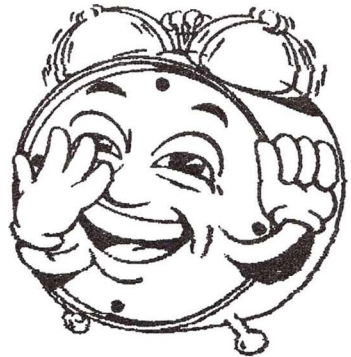
Whilst surfing the World Wide Web I had noted on the site of the PCW-owners' friend, John Elliott, a number of offers of fixes/patches to update various CP/M programmes to Year2000 compliance and, to my great joy, when his Web page was located, there before me was a file titled "TIME2000" which was specially written for the SCA Professional Plus MK2 Interface.

I downloaded this file onto a 720K DOS formatted disc on my PC. I then booted up my PCW9512, loaded the Moonstone program

2in1 and proceeded to copy this disc to a 720K 3.5" CP/M formatted disc. The resulting files were copied to the SCA software 180K 3" disc for use on the 8256. The old TIME.COM file should be deleted (or the name changed) and the new TIME2000.COM file should be renamed to TIME.COM; this will avoid any confusion when referring to original documentation and it's easier to type.

It was also noted whilst experimenting with the SCA software that the CLOCK.COM file which places the Clock display in the bottom lefthand corner of the PCW (silly choice of positioning, far better in righthand corner) will not run on an upgraded version on CP/M, well 1.15 anyway. Just goes to show that when you install a later version of particular piece of software to cure one problem another puzzle pops up.

\* Setting the clock to 1972 (for the year 2000) will give the correct Day an Month for this year, and 1990 for the next year, 2001. See page 27 of *The Disc Drive* No 17, Spring 1998 for full details – ED





# Keeping your Amstrad PCW Running

by R. Blake

As an avid Amstrad PCW enthusiast I would like to share some thoughts and pass on some advice to your readers.

Have you ever noticed the number of second hand Amstrad Word Processors advertised for sale in papers such as LOOT or seen them at markets and car boot sales going for a song?

I am convinced that many have been discarded by their owners, who although were quite happy with their machine's performance, found that when it broke down it was almost impossible to find replacement parts or obtain reasonable repair costs.

My first Amstrad PCW (8512) was given to me by someone who had upgraded to a PC simply because she could no longer get her PCW to work. I used to work at GEC Computers as a Precision Assembler some 20 years ago, so I thought what the heck I'll strip it down and see what's what, I had nothing to lose as it hadn't cost me a penny.

The first thing I noticed was the amount of thick dust and dirt smothered all over the circuitry. Much of this had also found its way into the disc drives which was part of the reason why the drives refused to read the floppy discs. I may be stating the obvious but PLEASE for your own sake cover your monitor, printer, and keyboard when not in use; you would be surprised how many people don't. I have cleaned the inside of monitor casings that were so thick with nicotine you could almost write your name in them.

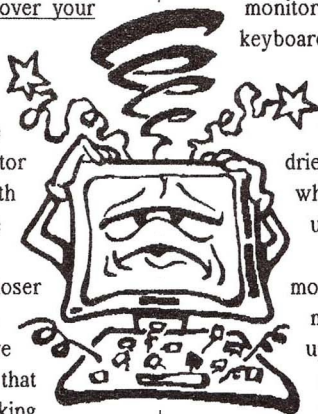
Once stripped, on closer inspection of the disc drives, it became clear that the disc drive belts had stretched so much that they were no longer making

contact with the motor which, in turn, means of course the floppy discs can't be read properly by the head. This can be the cause of that dreaded "Disk Address Mark Missing" message, that and, of course, a faulty floppy disc. The above two problems, dirt and belts, are usually the main cause of the 3" 8256/8512/9512 PCWs breaking down. (See issue 24 of the disc drive, Ever felt like giving your pcw a good belt?) I have repaired and cleaned many of these, much to the joy of their owners, three of whom are professional writers who have given me signed copies of their books. This just goes to show how much regard people still have for their good old Amstrads.

Another observation I have made is that on several PCWs the users had the brightness and/or contrast set at maximum. This is ok for short periods but if maintained over a longer time this will burn an image of the disc manager screen onto the PCW's screen, so that even when you have switched off you will still see the image on the screen. I therefore recommend turning the brightness down a little.

There's not a lot more to go wrong with the monitors. As for the printers and keyboards again keep them free of dust and foods and drink. I have stripped keyboards that were smothered inside with dried and sticky coffee/coke etc which had rusted the springs under each key.

If you do see the same model of PCW that you own in a market etc, and you can pick it up cheap, do so. It will do for spares. Even if when you get it home you find it doesn't





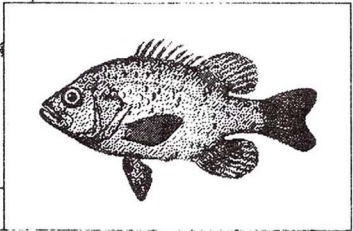
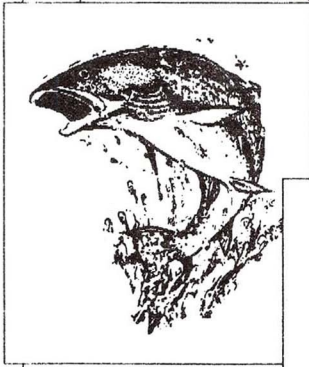
work properly the chances are it's one of the problems mentioned above. Even if you don't feel competent in having a go at repairing your Amstrad yourself, there's always someone such as myself or a friend that will have the know-how. You will also benefit from not having to pay silly prices for replacement parts from PCW spares suppliers who will, for instance, charge in the region of £60 for a reconditioned 3" disc drive.

So if you are happy with your Amstrad PCW, and don't want to feel pressured into upgrading to a modern PC, (and in the

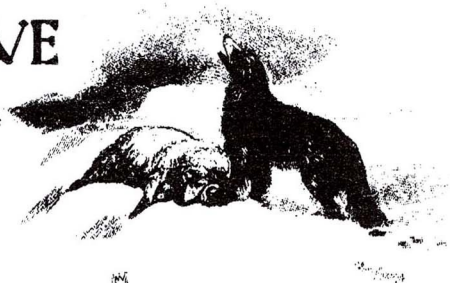
process having to learn a new system) don't be like those others who parted with their Amstrads (Dare I say reluctantly) As you can see you have cheaper alternatives in maintaining and keeping your Amstrad running.

Should any fellow member of The British Amstrad PCW Club wish to contact me for advice on their machines please feel free to do so. I don't have all the answers and I'm not infallible (this is, after all, only a part time hobby of mine) but I have a good success rate in repairs.

# Gallery



## TO THE RESCUE



Christmas is traditionally a time for giving, with few charities flow in exploiting the generosity of this country's population. How successfully depends on many factors but with the lottery, supposedly set up to support charitable organisations, various large national appeals like RED NOSE DAY and CHILDREN IN NEED, added to the numerous disaster appeals, both natural and man made, the small local or single interest charity frequently gets left out in the cold.

I make no secret of my interest in the canine world, and nowhere is this phenomena better illustrated. In this field the big national charities like the R.S.P.C.A. and GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND, not only sit on bank balances of several million pounds, they are also able to command public sympathy and support through television programmes such as 'ANIMAL HOSPITAL' which purport to be information based, whilst the local general, or national breed rescue society, which all too often do the lions share of the work, struggle to meet their vet and feed bills.

In these two areas the local general pet rescue organisation frequently fairs better, their local base making their needs more predictable. Concessionary veterinary fees, and feed supplies, coupled with the support of local business, co-ordinated by a dedicated band of enthusiasts, who organise fund raising events may not make the society affluent, but it will keep it afloat. Breed rescue on the other hand is very much more difficult to predict, subjected as it is to the vagaries of public demand and fashion. Media exposure, whether in advertising like DULUX HUSH PUPPY, and ANDREX or in films such as 'LASSIE COME HOME'



and '101 DALMATIANS' send shivers down the spine of the small band of dedicated workers who try valiantly to make every pound stretch to do the work of five.

Funds for these societies are always in demand and their enthusiasts are perpetually looking for new and original ways of parting the public from its money. Most will take some form of charity stall to club shows, and anywhere else they consider a likely source of fund raising including CRUFTS, but too often with limited resources the wares of each are only distinguishable by their breed motif. This year COLLIE RESCUE - *Rough & Smooth* will break this mould with a set of three old style manuscripts originally produced on my 9512+ with *Literatus* and *MicroDesign*.

The original seed for this idea was sown last March when one of our Collies made its final journey to the pet cemetery and crematorium. Upsetting as these occasions can be, it has become our habit to deliver the remains of all our canine friends to this well run establishment for cremation.

Many who make similar trips find the ordeal particularly distressing, and the company has thoughtfully provided a quiet lounge where owners can wait whilst arrangements for interment or cremation are finalised. The walls of this area are adorned with suitable memorials, and advertisements from animal artist etc, and my eye was drawn to a framed and mounted tribute. Within the canine world 'IF IT SHOULD BE' is a famous poem which looks at the passing of a dog through its own eyes. Appearing in several anthologies to animal poetry it has never been attributed to any particular author and always carrying the byline *Anon*. This shortened version had been nicely printed in a *TIMES ROMAN* type font on good quality linen look paper, mounted and framed. The managers, noticing my interest but unaware of my thoughts, mentioned they were very popular and, whilst not expecting us to purchase, added they sold at a figure I considered beyond their value. The journey home on these occasions is always reflective and by way of a diversion my husband and I discussed this tribute with me expressing a confidence in my ability to produce something rather more appropriate.

Needing a diversion which demanded some creativity to fill in a lull in the research work that normally occupies my time, my mind returned to the tribute, and I set to work typesetting the original longer version. Choosing MD3's *Invite* font for the centred text, improved the general appearance. Setting the title in a larger point size of the same font on two lines using one of JCE'S ILLUMINATED LETTERS for the S of *Should*, which I highlighted in red, added a touch of class. Having decided to use an oval rather than oblong mount also added quality, but I was still not

satified and



fatisfied and considered it looked too stereotyped. I tried typesetting in one of *Literatus*' more elaborate fonts but the piece's length precluded this. Thinking about its likely purpose gave me the idea of surrounding the whole with a shadowy wreath, and a look at my collection of borders produced just what I needed.

I have this oval lily wreath in two sizes, and selecting the larger of these I stretched the file to fill my oval mount area and then flooded it with the pale grey scale seen here before superimposing my text down the centre. The finished file looked impressive and was admired by those who saw it, but it could hardly be offered to the company's management for it was probable they produced my inspiration themselves.

Just as I was putting the finishing touches to the above file, COLLIE RESCUE appealed for original fund raising ideas including item suggestions for their charity stall. Now if a pet cemetery/crematorium could sell these things surely a canine rescue organisation could, thought I, providing the subject could pull at sufficient heart strings.

Searching various sources I added two further pieces of poetry that I thought suitable, and which would present no copyright difficulties. Changing my approach, this time I settled for historical manuscripts using *Literatus* fonts, with illuminated letters embellished in red, thereby determining a rectangular mount, and parchment style paper.

The results can be seen here in this reproduction of 'THE CREATION'. Aimed at the breed enthusiast, it is reproduced here at approximately 70% of its original size, and I am only sorry you can not see the full effect of colour and paper quality. The last of the trio of poems has a more general, and melancholy theme which it is hoped will attract the soft hearts of those who support any rescue organisation, for it appears as a lament from a neglected dog chained up in the yard.

All three are now in production and early signs suggest they will be popular money spinners for a beleaguered charity close to my heart. As a final gesture I give the poor old PCW a plug on the accompanying explanatory sheets which conclude in the following way:

*Designed and Typeset by  
Dareen A. Bridge  
'EMMSMOOR'*

*on an Amstrad 9512+ using Literatus III & MicroDesign 3*

*Sold in aid of*

***Collie Rescue***

*Rough & Smooth*

Registered Charity No. 104703



THE  
REACTION

**H**e made the regal collie, so beautiful,  
proud and bold,  
The dazzling noble sable,  
with coat of shimmering gold,  
His arms extended upwards,  
and touched the blazing sun,  
There stood the sable collie,  
the lovely golden one.

**H**e turned his head so slightly toward the clear blue sky,  
And made the blue merle collie, so pleasing to the eye,  
Tan and white were added to his colouring of blue,  
And there he had created a dog of lovely hue.

**W**hen night at last began to fall  
He made the darkest of them all,  
Combining black and tan and white,  
The tricolour collie of sheer delight.

**T**here stood those three great collies beneath the setting sun,  
The blue merle, the tricolour, and the golden sable one,  
Gifted with a movement so graceful and so smooth --  
Three truly noble collies: to them our hearts we lost.



# HOT TIPS

You may remember that in a previous issue I put to you the idea of having a Tips and Queries section in *The Disc Drive* and asked members to submit small items that would fall into this category. Unfortunately the response hasn't been brilliant, but the following is a start.

---

## PC Screen Codes

Can anyone supply me with the set of screen codes for a P.C. running under DOS or Windows, comparable to the VT52 set of screen codes listed on pages 58 to 141 of the blue Loco 1/CPM User Guide or pages 246 and 581 to 584 of the PCW9512 User Instructions?

Thanking you in anticipation.

Graham Swepson 01484 682988

---

## PCW to PC

Until I sussed it, the following problem caused great grief. I use the PD program *Msofball* to convert disc formats when I take files from from the PcW to my PC and vice-versa. It is a brilliantly useful program. However, I recently upgraded my PC from Windows 3.1 to Windows 95. In Windows 9x, file names need not be restricted to 8 plus 3 characters. The way Windows stores the file names on the disc directory is to store eight plus three characters in the normal entry and then the rest of the file name separately. This throws

*Msofball* causing it to completely screw up the disc directory when trying to convert back to CP/M format. As far as I know, the best solution is to save file copying until you switch off the PC. When closing down Windows 9x, you are offered an option of closing down into DOS mode: I select this and then transfer files to the A drive disc using *copy*, then all is well. When in DOS mode you can recognise the extended file names as they have the form ABCDEF-1.TXT, the -1 indicating that there is more of the name not displayed under DOS.

Mr R.D.H. Perry

*If you have any tips to offer, please don't hesitate in sending them to me. ED.*

## Rename that File in Loco

If you find a File name was not as intended a quick way to rename the File is to key [f3], [Move File], then edit the name, press [ENTER] and the newly named File will replace, in the same Group the original with no delete action necessary. Also probably well-known but to change a named Group back to its original number key [f3], [Erase File], then edit as *Title.GRP*, press [ENTER], [ENTER] (ie twice) and the original Group number, 0 to 7 will reappear. Use [f3], [Erase] to delete *TITLE.GRP* from the list of Files.

Keith Bull



## Hop-Skip & Jump to M: in Loco

Those of us with Hard Drives will probably know this tip already, but it may be of use to others with multiple drives.

Often I wish to copy a file to Drive M: and if you have many files across a good number of groups on several drives, scrolling across all the groups can be quite laborious. To save time, with your cursor over the file you wish to copy, the best way to accomplish this is to press [F3] and select Copy file and press [ENTER]. A menu will drop down asking you to Pick Destination. At this point press [ENTER] again. Type in the New group name (simply the group number if the groups haven't been named), cursor down to Drive

and press [M] for Drive M: (A-F for other drives) and press [ENTER]. *Hey presto* you will now be transported to your destination.

Have fun Steve

## Strike a Line in Loco





From within LocoScript, by far the easiest way to strike a line across the width of the page or current layout is to press [+] [U] [L] then [+] [R] [A] and finally [-] [U] [L]. If you use this key combination regularly you could of course save the string of codes as a Phrase, perhaps under [L] and then all you would have to do is press [PASTE] [L] every time you wish to strike a line across the page or layout.

Steve

## The LocoFile Shuffle

At a recent Club meeting I was demonstrating the basics of Locofile, explaining to those present how to set up a new datafile, create new Items (fields) and by going through the various menus, showing how easy it is to reposition and alter the size of an Item even if the field contains information. Tony Dimond, one of our regular attenders and contributors, exclaimed that he was sure there was a simpler way by holding down one of the control keys and using the cursor keys. Having used LocoFile for quite a few years, I was very intrigued by this, as this was news

to me. Unfortunately I had forgotten to bring a Locofile User Guide and the questions led on to other related subjects and I never got to experiment on the night. The following morning I switched on the PCW and immediately thought of Tony's suggestion. I opened up a LocoFile datafile and after going to Datafile Set Up proceeded to experiment without success. I then reached up and opened the LocoFile User Guide and after flicking through a few pages found the following information (Page 77):

- To change the item's size, hold down **ALT** while pressing the Cursor keys: while you press  or , the size increases in the corresponding direction; while you press  or , the size decreases in the corresponding direction. (the position of the tip lefthand corner remains fixed.)
- To change the item's position, hold down **ALT** and **SHIFT** while pressing the Cursor keys: the item moves in the direction of the Cursor key you are pressing.

It just goes to show, even if you have been using a program for longer than you care to remember, the chances are there is still something new to learn.

Thanks Tony! Steve

# SO YOU WANT TO WRITE BASIC PROGRAMS?

Tel: 01484 682988

Tutorial 2

By Graham Sewpson

In the last tutorial we SAVED HEADER.BAS in the three forms, Standard, Ascii and Protected, in groups 0, 1, and 2 respectively of your Basic Programs disc. It is time to see which form best suits our purposes by

- 1) loading them into an empty LocoScript document.
- 2) picking the form that can be worked on in LocoScript.
- 3) saving a copy of the program to a back-up disc.
- 4) printing a listing of the program on paper.
- 5) returning the program to Basic.

1) Loading the three saved programs into LocoScript.

Remove any disc(s) from the drive(s). Load LocoScript. When loading is complete, remove your LocoScript S.o.D. disc and insert your Basic Programs disc into a drive.

Cursor over to Drive M: and pick any group that contains a TEMPLATE.STD file that has no header or footer text. (See \* later.) Create a document and call it **HEADER.BAS**. Enter it for editing. With the cursor at the top left corner press [CUT], [DOC] and [CUT] in succession so as to remove all the content. At the top left, type

```
HEADER.BAS in Standard form. [RETURN]
```

Put the cursor below this, and invoke the 'Insert text' facility. In the disc management screen put the highlight over the file **HEADER.BAS** in group 0 of your Basic Programs disc. Press [ENTER]. Some gibberish will lay itself out in your document. Below the gibberish, type

```
HEADER.BAS in Ascii form. [RETURN]
```

Again put the cursor below this, and invoke the 'Insert text' facility. In the disc management screen put the highlight over the file **HEADER.BAS** in group 1 of your Basic Programs disc. Press [ENTER]. The listing will appear in your document as it was in Basic except that line 40 has changed:

```
10 WIDTH 90:e$=CHR$(27):PRINT e$"E"e$"H"CHR$(13)
20 PRINT TAB(41)"HEADER.BAS"TAB(80)"v 04-03-00"STRING$(5,10)
30 PRINT"HEADER.BAS indicates the function of the program below."
40 REM £ £ £ £ £ £ £
```

The conversion of # signs in Basic to £ signs in LocoScript is only one of several such conversions but it is by far the most common. Because the reverse process of sending programs from LocoScript to Basic will convert £ back to #, these conversions matter only if you have £ signs and # signs in the same program. This does occur sometimes and does cause a difficulty. Some of the rarer conversions are not reversible. Below this listing, type

```
HEADER.BAS in Protected form. [RETURN]
```

Again put the cursor below this, and invoke the 'Insert text' facility. In the disc management screen put the highlight over the file **HEADER.BAS** in group 2 of your Basic Programs disc. Press [ENTER]. Further but different gibberish will lay itself out in your document.

2) Picking the form that can be worked on in LocoScript.

It is plain which form of SAVEing most suits this particular purpose. With all LocoScript's editing facilities and the free movement of its cursor, it is much easier to write Basic programs

in LocoScript than it is to write them in Basic. One day when you are fairly confident that what you write in LocoScript will work in Basic you will be able to use LocoScript in this way.

A further benefit of writing a Basic program in LocoScript is that automatically you will copy your program onto your Basic programs disc *before* you test it. A new and untested Basic program can contain errors that merely cause the running of the program to stop. In this case Basic will print an error message. But there are also more serious errors that will cause a crash back to CPM. If you write a program in Basic or type one in, in Basic, you can easily forget to SAVE it to disc before testing it. If your program contains one of the more serious errors, and you test it, then not only will you have to re-load Basic but such a crash will have destroyed your program! In that event, unless you already have a back-up copy somewhere you will also have to re-type your program from scratch!

As yet you need to test even small fragments of programs, and we can do this only in Basic. To overcome the above risk of losing a program in a crash we can build into **HEADER.BAS** a facility that will automatically write a back up copy of each program we run. It is normal to do this precautionary copying to disc but I think we would prefer to reserve the disc for proven programs. Instead, we can SAVE each untested program to Drive M:. We do this by amending **HEADER.BAS** thus:

```
10 WIDTH 90:e$=CHR$(27):PRINT e$"E"e$"H"CHR$(13)
20 PRINT TAB(41)"HEADER.BAS"TAB(80)"v 04-03-00"STRING$(5,10)
30 PRINT"HEADER.BAS indicates the function of the program below "
40 save"0M:HEADER.BAS",A
50 REM £ £ £ £ £ £
```

Make this amendment to your copy. By placing the SAVE command early in the program, **HEADER.BAS** and all the **PROGNAME.BAS** programs we shall derive from it will save themselves to Drive M: before any crash-provoking parts of the program can have any action. You may never need any of these back-up copies in Drive M: but if a crash does occur, you will have to re-load Basic by first ensuring your CPM disc is in Drive A:, and then typing

```
BASIC [RETURN]
```

and then recover the program by typing

```
LOAD"0M:PROGNAME [RETURN]
```

Your back-up copy in Drive M: will be unaffected by a crash provided you do not reset or switch off your PCW. The copy will be overwritten, and hence updated by any corrections you make, every time you run the program.

Writing more complex variations in LocoScript is for the future. [DEL] or [CUT] away all the gibberish so that only the listing and the Ascii heading remain.

3) Saving the program to a back-up disc.

Remove the Basic programs disc from the drive and insert your second blank formatted disc. [EXIT] from the document. Copy the LocoScript document **HEADER.BAS** from Drive M: to group 7 of the new disc. This second disc is your Basic programs back-up disc. You do, after all, have back-up discs for your LocoScript documents so why not for your Basic programs? If such a back-up were ever to be needed, you could obtain the functioning program by copying the LocoScript version to Drive M: and using the process described in section 5 below. We must now establish a convention:

.BAS files kept in group 7 are LocoScript versions of functioning programs that are kept in group 0 of the Basic programs disc.

4) Printing a listing of the program on paper.



Print on your printer the **HEADER.BAS** document that is in Drive M:, and enter the sheet into your ring binder. Until you learn how to set up your printer from Basic, this is the way you will preserve your work on paper.

5) Returning the program to Basic.

Remove the back-up disc from the drive and re-insert your Basic programs disc. Re-enter the **HEADER.BAS** document in Drive M: and [CUT] away the Ascii heading so that only the listing remains. Ensure that the last line (50) has its carriage return. You will lose the line if the carriage return is missing.

[EXIT] from your document and Erase all three **HEADER.BAS** files in groups 0, 1 and 2 of your Basic programs disc. Yes, erase all three. When you have done this you must make an Ascii file of your Drive M: document into group 0 of your Basic programs disc. You may not have made an Ascii file before, so start with the highlight over your document in Drive M:. For Loco 1: press [f7]. For Loco 2, 3 & 4: press [f1]. Select 'Make ASCII file'. Press [ENTER] and cursor over to group 0 of your Basic programs disc. Select 'Simple text file', and press [ENTER]. **HEADER.BAS** should again appear in group 0 of your Basic programs disc.

Remove your Basic programs disc from the drive. Reset your PCW with [SHIFT] [EXTRA] and [EXIT], and load Basic, ref 5/1. Remove the CPM disc and put your Basic programs disc into a drive. Type

```
LOAD"X:HEADER [RETURN]
```

where X denotes the drive. When the Ok re-appears, type

```
LIST [RETURN]
```

and the **HEADER.BAS** listing should appear on the screen though now the £ signs in line 50 have reverted to # signs.

\* If you have a group spare on your LocoScript S.o.D. disc may I suggest you write a **TEMPLATE.STD** for it that is suitable for Basic programs. The main requirements are that it should be empty of text, have a line pitch of 6, no justification, and no header or footer text. I suggest the margins should enclose columns 6 and 95. It should have a character pitch of either 12 or 15 c.p.i. Note: if you have a daisywheel printer and have only 10 c.p.i. printwheels, 12 c.p.i. printing will put the wider characters in contact when they are adjacent but in general the text will appear OK. 90 columns of 10 c.p.i. printing is obviously too wide for A4 paper.

=====

It is time we did some arithmetic, or is it algebra? You will have seen from Daniel's articles and from the manual, ref 9/5, what are Basic's arithmetic operators: + - \* and /, and their precedence, ref 10/6(not 5 as in index) and ref 101/136; and that we can let a letter or letter group stand for a numerical value, ref 21/17. The different types of variable are appended by either %, !, # or \$, ref 26/22. I want you to get into the habit of appending these symbols, even for single precision numbers where the appended ! is not strictly necessary. I want this because

- 1) integer-indicated numbers allow a program to run faster than non-indicated numbers which are assumed to be single precision.
- 2) when you come to write programs in LocoScript, the **FIND** and **EXCHANGE** facilities will cope easily with appended variables like a! whereas they will become clogged with a alone.
- 3) your program can direct Basic to print the two variables a! and b! as a!b! and Basic will print them as you intend, but your program cannot direct Basic to print the two variables a

and b as ab without Basic assuming you are referring to the different single variable ab. For now, let us think about integers. Enter:

```
x%=3 [RETURN]
```

and

```
y%=4 [RETURN]
```

and then

```
PRINT x%+y% [RETURN]
```

and expect to see 7. We could also enter  $z%=x%+y%$  and then

```
PRINT z% [RETURN]
```

and again expect to see 7. What is less obvious is that Basic allows us to economise on these variables. If we had entered  $x%=3$  and  $y%=4$ , and then entered  $y%=y%+x%$ , and then

```
PRINT y% [RETURN]
```

what should we expect to see? Plainly we are not dealing with schoolboy algebra in which we might solve the equation for  $x%$  or  $y%$ . Nor is

```
y%=y%+1.
```

Because of the very transient nature of these variables, Basic maintains the idea of old and new values. The first of these odd expressions,  $y%=y%+x%$ , means

The new value of  $y%$  on the left=the old value of  $y%$  on the right plus the current value of  $x%$ , and the second odd expression,  $y%=y%+1$ , means

The new value of  $y%$  on the left = the old value of  $y%$  on the right plus 1.

This is in fact a very useful convention:

A variable maintains its old value just long enough to contribute to a change to its new value. Let us make use of this convention to do some calculation. I want to write a short program that will add the cubes of all integers from one to ten. Consider how you would do such a calculation in your head or on paper. Adapting your own way of doing a problem is often a good way to get your program to do the same problem. I know three ways of doing this problem but the most obvious one is to say:

The cube of 1 is 1. Remember 1.

The cube of 2 is 8. Add 1 to 8. Remember 9.

The cube of 3 is 27. Add 9 to 27. Remember 36.

The cube of 4 is 64. Add 36 to 64. Remember 100.

And so on... This is what the following program does. Type the lines:

```
100 print:print" n"tab(20)"Sum n cubed"  
110 n%=0:y%=0  
120 n%=n%+1  
130 y%=y%+n%*n%*n%  
140 print n%tab(23)y%  
150 if n%<10 then 120
```

with [RETURN] after each.

Strictly speaking, line 110 in which  $n%$  and  $y%$  are put to zero is unnecessary because the RUN command that will set the program going will also set to zero every numeric variable in Basic's memory; and thereafter every newly introduced numeric variable will have the value zero. However, such a program fragment as the above might one day be a fragment of a large program in which  $n%$  and  $y%$  will have been left with non-zero values by some previous fragment. Therefore it is good practice to set to zero those variables that accumulate value in the present fragment.

How does the program work? In line 120 the new value of  $n\% = 0 + 1 = 1$ . In line 130 the new value of  $y\% = 0 + 1 * 1 = 1$ . So in line 140 a 1 will be printed under the first n of the sub-heading and another 1 will be printed under the n at tab 24. The extra tab space arises because numeric values are always printed with a leading space (for the - sign if there is one). This first cycle of the program is equivalent to the first line of my mental calculation.  $n\%$  is the number increasing from 1 to 10.  $y\%$  remembers the sub answers, 1, 9, 36, 100 etc.

In line 150 the 120 is a line number. If  $n\%$  is less than ten, which at  $n\%=1$  it is, then GOTO line 120. You can insert GOTO in line 150 if you wish but it is not necessary. Such a return to line 120 sets the calculation off again, but now the old values of  $n\%$  and  $y\%$  in lines 120 and 130 are the values that were new in the previous cycle; i.e. now, both old  $n\%=1$  and old  $y\%=1$ .

In line 120 therefore new  $n\% = 1 + 1 = 2$ . In line 130 new  $y\% = 1 + 2 * 2 = 9$ . These values, 2 and 9, are again printed in line 140. As there is no trailing semicolon at the end of line 140, the second values of  $n\%$  and  $y\%$  will be printed beneath the first.

As  $n\%$  is still less than 10 we return to line 120 with old  $n\%=2$  and old  $y\%=9$ . In line 120 new  $n\% = 2 + 1 = 3$ , and in line 130 new  $y\% = 9 + 3 * 3 = 36$ . These values, 3 and 36 are again printed in line 140.

How often does the IF THEN GOTO loop cycle round? If  $n\%$  has increased to 9 in line 120 then  $y\% = 2025$  and as  $n\%=9$  in line 150 it is still less than 10, so the action will still return to line 120. There, new  $n\%$  will become 10, new  $y\%$  will become  $2025 + 10 * 10 = 3025$ , and these values will be printed in line 140. But in line 150  $n\%$  is no longer less than 10, so the condition for return to line 120 no longer holds. The action would drop onto line 160 if there were such a line. But there is no such line so the program ends. It has done what it was intended to do by printing the sum of the cubes of n for all values of n from 1 to 10.

By typing the above lines from 100 to 150 you will have added them to lines 10 to 50 of HEADER.BAS that we loaded earlier. (That is why I started the new line numbering at 100 rather than 10.) You can change line 50 by over writing it as Daniel did, or ref 17/13. You could erase line 50 if you wish, ref 17/13, because Basic erases any line that has no content. However, line 50 as:

```
50 :
```

will separate the heading of the program from its calculation, ref 33/37.

Our program now needs a modified header. EDIT lines 20, 30 and 40 to change the name to say, SUMCUBE1.BAS, and change the date to whatever the date is. Change line 30 to read 30 PRINT "SUMCUBE1.BAS finds the sum of the cubes to 10 by an IF THEN GOTO loop."

Now type RENUM .[RETURN] and LIST .[RETURN] and you should have a nice neat listing. But does it work? Type

RUN .[RETURN] and you should have your heading line with a sub heading and two columns of figures below it. If you do not have these two columns, then you have mis-copied and you will have to work out where. If all is well then SAVE SUMCUBE1.BAS to disc in Ascii form under that name.

It is time you proved your capability for writing a program, or at least modifying one. I want you to read the manual, chapter 5/chapter 4, and then to write two short programs that are different from each other yet both produce columns of n and Sum n cubed like those produced by SUMCUBE1.BAS. Neither program may contain the key words IF, THEN or GOTO. In the next tutorial I shall provide some model listings.



# PD Blake CD-Rom

by Anthony Hill

Those of us who have been PCWing for some time, even a long, time always feel a twinge of sadness when another long time supporter either declares or is found to have discontinued support of the machine. So it was with the announcement of the departure of P.D Blake, who as well as writing some useful programs, also adapted PD software to work with some of the peculiarities of our machines.

His announced departure in the Spring was mildly softened by his promise to release a CD-ROM of his software and PDware in the Summer. True to his word, he has done so. The CD-ROM costs twenty five pounds with two pounds fifty post and packaging.

The product contains in excess of 30Mb of software, roughly translated as Forty-two 720k discs or eighty-eight 180k discs. The packaging is somewhat heavy handed on the disclaiming liability; that said you would expect such a thing from someone who no longer has the ability or wish to support the machine. The author claims that his commercial software is worth nearly two hundred pounds; that may be so if one wanted to pay the rate for the software. Suffice for me to say I think some of the items were overpriced for their purpose at the original time, let alone now.

Purchasers will need to have access to a PC with a CD-ROM drive and be familiar with transferring files from one medium to another. The use of a program from Ansible, of Dave Langford and Ansible Index fame, called CPM.EXE is recommended by both P.D.Blake and this author. For those with Internet access it is a free download. It is unfortunate that P.D. Blake did not delay the issue a week or so to obtain the necessary permission to put a copy on the CD-ROM. Using the program involves

merely highlighting a file or selection of files and instructing the program to transfer to 3.5inch CP/M formatted disks. In the author's experience it is best to format the disk in the machine in which it is likely to be used. The program copes with the minor variation in disks but does expect standard format CF2DD disks. Any attempt to use higher capacity versions available from some formatting programs is a recipe for disaster.

On the disk you will find about 6Mb of the commercial programs in the form of two graphical programs (Graphics Express & Doodlebug Draw and Display), eight discs of LS4 Clipart, some screen novelties and savers and two desktop file handling programs.

There is bundle of 133 Microdesign MDA files for Microdesign3, some 99 CUT files for MD2/3, PCDraw or StopPress, 222 Fonts for MD3 and 50 Shade sets.

Finally over 19 Mb is given to PD Software covering Programming Languages, a wide cross section of Utilities and other programs together with some Games. There is a wide section under each of the groups sufficient to provide something for all grades of PCW users.

It has to be said that if you are exclusively a Locoscript user there is a very limited range of items of interest, but those who have ventured into CP/M will find a plethora of gems, programs and opportunities to extend the boundaries of your computing with your Amstrad PCW.

Some of the programs do work under CP/M on the PCW16, some do not. It is a case of suck it and see; I have simply neither the time nor the inclination to try every single one.

As a collection the disk is a valuable item in the fast disappearing election of software, although it has to be said that a lot of the items are available elsewhere in the club PD Libraries, Bulletin Boards or Internet Download.

The disk is available from P.D.Blake, 32 Sample Avenue, Beverley, E.Yorks, HU17 9DW, Tel 01482864230 or e-mail pdblake@yahoo.co.uk (Cheques made payable

to P.D.Blake) at £27.50 inclusive.

The author of this review is happy to provide support to purchasers, though only at weekends from 10:00 to 22:30 due to work commitments away from home.

Anthony Hill 02920-618012 or 07778044696 or anthony.hill@chaos.camelot.co.uk

Regards Anthony

---

The PCW CD-ROM *Compiled By P.D.Blake*

### Introduction

This CD-ROM contains, probably, the largest collection of CP/M+ and PCW related material available on a single disc.

On it you will find over 30MB of programs and utilities in over 4500 files. This represents the bulk of the programs available for the PCW.

Included in these files are some 6MB of commercial material, worth over £180 in all.

So how do I get all of these wonderful files onto my PCW?

Firstly, as you will have realised the CD-ROM is only useable on a PC. To get the files from the CD-ROM onto your PCW you will need a file transfer utility such as MSODDBALL for the PCW or CPM.EXE for the PC.

The latter is recommended and is freely available from [www.ansible.com](http://www.ansible.com).

NOTE: There are transfer utilities on this disc, but they will only work on a PCW, so you will still need to download CPM.EXE.

### Legalities & Disclaimer

With such a collection as is supplied on the PCW CD-ROM it is necessary to explain certain legalities. These are outlined below:

In purchasing this CD-ROM you have NOT purchased any Public Domain or Freeware material. You have only purchased the

commercial software which is supplied on the disc, all of which is Copyright P.D.Blake 1998-2000. The Public Domain and Freeware on this disc is provided free and as is.

**Warranties:** No warranties are given, whatsoever. The material on the CD-ROM is strictly provided as is. Because of the nature of distribution, it is impossible for the author to know what PCW system either the commercial, public domain or freeware will be run on and, as such, no guarantees of suitability or performance can be given. A limited warranty is given on the actual medium the material is supplied on, up to a period of 30 days. Only discs damaged in transit will be replaced. No refunds will be offered

**File transfer:** it is the user's responsibility to transfer the files over to PCW format. The author will not be help responsible for the user's inability to use or find a suitable transfer utility. No refunds or replacements will be given because of failure of material to transfer.

These disclaimers do not affect your statutory rights.

### What's on the Disc?

The CD contins 22 Programming Languages and Programming related Files: 35 Basic and CP/M Utilities, 18 Games suites and loads of screen savers, clip art and graphics files for MicroDesign, etc, far too many to simply list here.

# Just for Starters!!



## LocoMail Tutorial

If you have been following this series of LocoMail Tutorials you will see this next example (fig 1) is a combination of what was produced in the second tutorial (fig 2), and in the last tutorial (fig 5) and, more or less, produces the same result. But don't forget we have divided the address in the database into a number of separate Items or fields since the second tutorial, making the database far more versatile.

(Fig 1)

```
(+Mail)$="Surname" ␣
RT=" ␣
":SP=" ":B="" ␣
Mainkey=?;Type persons Surname ␣
Subkey=?;Type persons Initials ␣
$$Mainkey$Subkey ␣
RT1=RT:RT2=RT:RT3=RT ␣
#Address2=B:<:RT1=B:> ␣
#Address3=B:<:RT2=B:> ␣
#Town=B:<:RT3=B:> ␣
Title:SP:Initials:SP:Surname:RT ␣
Address1:RT1:Address2:RT2:Address3:RT3 ␣
Town:RT:County:RT:Post-Code:$="(-Mail) ␣
```

Having typed fig 1 into a new document, merging it with your database will produce the appropriate prompts for you to act upon and produce the name and address of the person requested; the option menu will then drop down ready to print. Note the "\$=" at the end. This is similar to the instruction at the beginning, "\$="Surname", except there is nothing between the two double quote marks. This instructs LocoMail to go to the beginning of the record number index ie: record number one. This prevents LocoMail from automatically closing down should you select

the last alphabetic surname in your records (unless, in the unlikely event, record number one holds your last alphabetic surname).

However, printing every address as it is produced is perhaps not the ideal method. It would be better if you could list all the required names and addresses on the screen then print them all out at the same time and, it just so happens, that is exactly what the example in fig 2 does.

(fig 2)

```
(+Mail)$="Surname" ␣
RT="[RT]
":SP=" ":B="":Y="Y*":NP="⌵
=====
":Loop="(+Mail) ␣
Mainkey=?;Type persons Surname ␣
Subkey=?;Type persons Initials ␣
$$Mainkey$Subkey ␣
RT1=RT:RT2=RT:RT3=RT ␣
#Address2=B:<:RT1=B:> ␣
#Address3=B:<:RT2=B:> ␣
#Town=B:<:RT3=B:> ␣
Title:SP:Initials:SP:Surname:RT ␣
Address1:RT1:Address2:RT2:Address3:RT3 ␣
Town:RT:County:RT:Post-Code:NP ␣
Next=?;Next person [Yes] or [No] ␣
#Next=Y:<:Counter=1:><:Counter=0 ␣
>(-Mail)<(+Mail) ␣
%Loop@Counter(+Mail) ␣
```

It's not a great deal different from (fig 1). There are a couple of extra strings in the third line down; NP="⌵" we have used in the past, but the Y="Y\*" perhaps needs explaining. The Item Name Y is used further down the document and the string includes an asterisk (\*), what is known as a wildcard.



Basically an asterisk used in this way means "anything" but in this case, because there is a character [Y] before it, the Item Name Y holds a string with "something beginning with Y in it". Perhaps it will be easier if I explain how this string is used?

At the bottom of (fig 2) you will see the line `Next=?; Next [Yes] or [No]`. This prompt, `Next [Yes] or [No]`, appears after having selected the first surname. If you press [Y] or type YES then the loop is repeated and you will be presented with the prompt "Type Persons Surname". If, on the other hand, you press [N] or type NO the program stops and the option menu appears.

How does this work? Let's look at the last three lines.

```
Next=?; Next [Yes] or [No] ¶
¶
#Next=Y:<:Counter=1:><:Counter=0 ¶
>(-Mail)"(+Mail) ¶
¶
%Loop@Counter(-Mail)
```

First, "Next" is an Item Name and could hold information beginning with Y or N. The following LocoMail codes instruct LocoMail whether or not the repeat the loop and translates as follows:

if Next=Y then Counter=1 else if Counter=0

The "Y" is the Item Name mentioned earlier and is included in the list of Item Names and strings at the beginning ie: Y="Y\*". Because we have used the wild card [\*] Y could be y, Y, Yes, Yes-Please, or anything beginning with Y. Counter is the Item Name used after the perform % command that tells, LocoMail how many times to repeat the loop. In this case, if `Next=Y then Counter=1`. If Next doesn't equal Y then the ELSE IF comes into play and `Counter=0` which ends the performance.

Merge this LocoMail master with your database to see how it works.

There is one final addition we can make to this merge document that will centralise the addresses vertically on the label ie: add space at the top of the label according to how many lines there are in the address. The extra LocoMail codes required to do this have been added to the following LocoMail master: see (fig 3)

(fig 3)

```
(+Mail)$="Surname" ¶
RT=" ¶
":HRT="( +LSpace2) ¶
(-LSpace)":SP=" ":B="":Y="Y*":NP=" ¶
=====
":Loop="( +Mail) ¶
Mainkey=?;Type Surname ¶
Subkey=?;Type Initials ¶
$$Mainkey$Subkey ¶
BL=0:XL=HRT ¶
RT1=RT:RT2=RT:RT3=RT ¶
#Address2=B:<:RT1=B:BL=[BL+1]:> ¶
#Address3=B:<:RT2=B:BL=[BL+1]:> ¶
#Town=B:<:RT3=B:BL=[BL+1]:> ¶
#BL=3:<:XL=RT:RT:> ¶
#BL=2:<:XL=RT:HRT:> ¶
#BL=1:<:XL=RT:> ¶
XL:Title:SP:Initials:SP:Surname:RT ¶
Address1:RT1:Address2:RT2:Address3:RT3 ¶
Town:RT:County:RT:Post-Code:NP ¶
Next=?;Next [Yes] or [No] ¶
#Next=Y:<:Counter=1:><:Counter=0 ¶
>(-Mail)"(+Mail) ¶
%Loop@Counter(-Mail) ¶
```

Yet another string `HRT="( +LSpace2) ¶ (-LSpace)"` has been added to the top of the master document. The HRT stands for 'Half Return' and `BL=0:XL=HRT` after `$$Mainkey$Subkey` stands for 'Blank Lines' and XL for eXtra Lines. These Item Names will be used further down the document and have been included at this point so that their values are reset to 0 and B at the start of every pass.

Changes have also been made to the lines

beginning with #Address2..., #Address3..., #Town.... If Address2 equals B (Blank) then not only does RT1=B but also BL (Blank Lines) equals BL plus 1. Any calculation in LocoMail, like BL+1, needs to be enclosed within square brackets. This has been repeated in #Address3... and #Town... So now, when the loop is performed, LocoMail checks Address2 and if it is empty (Blank) it adds 1 to the item name BL which has been set to zero. LocoMail then looks at Address3 and if this, too, is found to be blank, adds another 1 to BL so now BL=2. Finally LocoMail looks at Town and if this is blank adds another one to BL making it 3. If either of the Item Names Address2, Address3 or Town are found to contain information then LocoMail skips passed this particular Item Name, no calculation is carried out and LocoMail goes on to the next. Depending upon how many blank lines LocoMail finds,

BL could be 0, 1, 2 or 3 and this information is used in the next three lines to produce the required extra lines at the top of the label, centralising the address. If BL equals 3 then XL equals two [RETURNS] (two lines). If BL equals 2 then XL equals one [RETURN] and one Half Return (one and a half lines). The Item Name XL (eXtra Lines) has been included before Title so that any extra line are placed at the top of the label centralising the address vertically. If all six lines of the address are to be included LX=B (blank).

Hopefully, this short series of LocoMail tutorials has given a basic understanding of the principles of LocoMail, enabling you to produce a few simple LocoMail Masters of your own.



to all  
who  
have

contributed to this issue.

Sorry  
for the delay

Thank you all very much for all the info and your hard work putting the Magazine together, it is a great help to us. We have a PcW9256 which Stavia was to write her life story. The word processor on Loco3 is the best for this type of work, we also have a P.C. but it is not so useful for her work.

Once again thank you all at B.A.PCW Club.

Sincerely Edward Budgen

Dear Mr Massam

I'm sure a word of appreciation about the British Amstrad PCW Club won't come amiss.

The information contained in The Disc Drive and the Newsletters is most useful, and members contributions make interesting reading.

Knowing there are so many other satisfied Amstrad PCW users out there, lessens the sense of isolation that can be experienced when being 'talked down to' by many computer users!

It's like having a lifeline should help ever be needed.

All best wishes,



Elizabeth Roberts.



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- Britains most popular Amstrad PCW website -

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