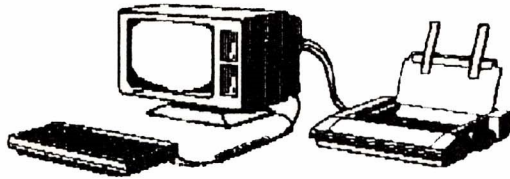# MARCH 96

HEADS OF THE VALLEYS PCW USERS GROUP

Club meetings are held on the first Friday of each month at 7.30pm at the address below-

> BIRCHACRE
> CROES BYCHAN
> LLWYDCOED
> ABERDARE
> MID. GLAM.
> CF44 0EJ.
> Tel. 01685-874972

Further details can be obtained by contacting either ROY UNDERWOOD on ABERDARE 01685-874972 or ANTHONY HILL on CARDIFF 01222-618012

The aim of the club is to further the knowledge of PCW users, so that they can derive the full benefit from their computer.

Help and advice can be given on most software, this includes such programmes as LocoScript, Masterfile, MicroDesign, ProScan, SuperCalc, Mini Office, Comms. The club also has a large library of Public Domain files.

A file transfer facility is available, i.e. copy files from 3" disk onto a 3.5" disk, also CP/M files can be copied to MS-DOS formatted disk's, and MS-DOS files copied to CP/M formatted disk's.

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EDITORIAL

The Heads of the Valleys PCW User Group has renewed its affiliation with BACC (British Association of Computer Clubs) and our User Group is covered under BACC's Public Liability Insurance for User Group activities, also your Equipment Insurance Policy is valid until 31 December 1996. The BACC Equipment Policy offers cover for accidental damage and theft for members equipment on the way to the meetings, at the meeting and on the way home.

Under the Data Protection Act the Heads of the Valleys PCW User Group is classed as an unincorporated members club, and as such is exempt from the whole Act as long as certain conditions are observed. To comply with these conditions we hereby ask all members whether as individuals they have any objection to the personal data relating to themselves being held on computer, and to those details being available to other members in the form of a members address list. If any member has such an objection they should contact Roy who will delete their data from the computer files.

For all members with bubblejet/inkjet printers, CPC (Combined Precision Components) now do black and colour ink refills for most models. Each pack can fill most cartridges more than once. The black refill kit contains 2 × 20ml. And the colour kit contains 20ml. cyan, 20ml. magenta, 20ml. yellow refills

Black refill 2 × 20ml. £3.49 +VAT
Colour refill 3 × 20ml. £6.59 +VAT

Remember that there is carriage charged on all orders under o30.00.

ALL FORMATS COMPUTER FAIRS.

3 March   NAC (Royal showground) Stoneleigh
16 March   NAC (Royal Showground) Stoneleigh

AUCTIONS

No details as yet.

Next meeting 5 April 1996   7.30pm.

Subscriptions due on 01/04/96

MASTERSCAN

LocoScript, and MicroDesign, are two examples of quality survivors in a fiercely competitive market. There are many more, but MasterScan arrived with fanfares, then faded into obscurity. - Or did it?

We do know that there are at least two enthusiasts in Europe, as a question in the Nov/95 edition of "PCW PLUS" received a reply this year from a user in FRANCE! If any member has more information about the product than I have gathered, would you please let me know.

. . . .

Heralded as the world's cheapest facsimile machine, MasterScan arrived about eight years ago, and was chosen as a finalist in the British Micro Computing Awards. Launched by Database Software, the product looked a winner. MasterScan was designed to clip on to the printer, enabling text or illustrations - when fed into the printer - to be transferred automatically on to the computer screen. By using a suitable modem and software, scanned images could then be transmitted to another PCW anywhere in the world, and offered a real alternative to spending on an expensive video digitiser. The optical scanner attached to the print head captured the image line by line, and the result could then be combined with text or other graphics to create news letters, posters etc.Any part of an A4 page could be reproduced in a range from half normal size right up to six times magnification, and MasterScan could be used with do-it-yourself publishing packages.

EXPONENTIATION

Anthony and Roy's helpline has been useful to our members, but it is always pleasing to discover that through the notice in PCW PLus enquiries trickle in to them from far and wide.

A recent call from a frustrated Leicestershire reader revealed a problem with the program "Gravity" listed in Issue No.82 of the magazine.

Bugs come in all sizes, - this little fellow rested at the end of line 200 where 2 to the power of (4-c) was printed incorrectly. The sign shown as " ^ " (circumflex accent) is a continental textual symbol and should be replaced by an upright arrow. - Like so: 2æ(4-c). In BASIC of course, use the keys   [EXTRA] + U

If you fancy a little archery, the upright arrow in Locoscript is produced by pressing ALT + F7/8 then q.

THE PROTEXT RESCUE - the latest information.....

When Arnor Ltd ceased trading, it seemed that Protext (considered by many the best word processor for Amstrad's PCW and CPC computers) would be lost, along with Maxam, Prospell, Utopia, and all Arnor's other fine programs. However, the range has been rescued by WACCO's purchase of all the copyrights and they have now re-issued all the disc and rom versions of the principal programs from the master copies bought. ComSoft (formerly CampurSoft) are already shipping the following programs:

CP/M Protext, Utopia, Maxam, as well as Amsdos Protext, Prospell, Promerge and Promerge Plus. The rest of the programs will follow in a series of releases through 1996.

" If we had rushed everything out at once we would probably have made a mess of it," says Brian Watson of WACCO. "This way we were able to assess demand for the various programs, set sensible priorities, and offer proper support afterwards. The first program re-issued was CP/M Protext at a reduced price of £25 as, although the manual is very expensive to produce, we do not have the same pressures as commercial publishers. Arnor's price was around£40-£45, so we feel £25 is very attractive to potential new customers for it."

CP/M Protext has exceptional Word Processing, Spell Checking and Mail-merge facilities as well as other useful integral utilities. Its many features, including its speed of operation and easy handling of text in columns, make it a strong competitor with the most commonly used word processor program on the PCW, particularly in terms of value for money. It can be configured simply to operate on all CPCs and CPC+s with a minimum of 128k memory, and all PCW and PcWs except the PCW16 (so far, but see below). It seems any printer can be used (we haven't found one which won't work, although some add-on printer ports can be tricky) and using the colour output feature of printers such as the Star LC or Citizen series is easy.

The C and BCPL languages will follow shortly, and a very underrated 'add-on' to all versions of Protext called Protext Office will be released later once user support can be guaranteed.

"I was one of Arnor's biggest fans but I missed this one on its first release," says Brian, enthusiastically. "It adds standard letter, file-sorting and accounts facilities to Protext. This has to be one of the most significant products to look forward to from WACCO in 1996."

WACCO Software Price List

Program	On disc	On ROM	For Which Computer
Amsdos Protext	£15.99 v1.00	£22 v1.23	CPC and CPC+ only
The superb word processor for the CPC range			
Amsdos Prospell	£14.99 v1.08	£21 v1.10	CPC and CPC+ only
Add spell checking facilities to Protext, or use as a stand-alone program.			
Amsdos Promerge	£14.99 v1.06	---	CPC and CPC+ only
Add mail-merging facilities to Protext.			
Amsdos Promerge Plus	-----	£21 v1.07	CPC and CPC+ only
Add mail-merging facilities and other advanced features to Protext.			
Amsdos Maxam	£14.99 v1.16	£21 v1.14	CPC and CPC+ only
The sophisticated assembler program for the CPC range			
Utopia Utilities	-----	£21 v1.25	CPC and CPC+ only
A suite of disc utility programs to work with Protext or as a stand alone module			
CP/M Protext	£25 v2.23	---	CPC, CPC+, PCWs

The CP/M version of Protext is the 'top of the range' model in the Protext series, *including* spell-checking and mail-merge facilities as well as other integral utilities. It can be configured easily to operate on all CPCs and CPC+s with a minimum of 128k memory, and all PCW and PCWs except the PCW16 (so far). On a CPC it can easily be configured to work with any 3½" large-format drive and/or the Dk'Tronics Silicon Disc for enhanced speed of operation. On the PCW series it uses the speed of operation from drive M:

NOTE: CPC users will need two blank 3" discs to create a 'working copy' set of CP/M Protext discs. CPC *and* PCW users will need their CP/M Plus master discs to supply some files which **CP/M Protext** requires.

CP/M Protext *plus* ComSoft's print enhancement program			
Proprint PCW (£15 alone)	£35	---	All PCWs

All **WACCO** programs are marketed through **ComSoft**, 10, McIntosh Court, Wellpark. GLASGOW G31 2HW. Telephone orders may be placed through 0141 554 4735 (phone or FAX). Payment can be made by Visa or Mastercard - have your card with you when you phone as details from it will be required. **Please confirm your computer model and drive A: size at the time of ordering.**

WACCO USER SUPPORT SERVICE (WUSS)

All **WACCO** prices include free registration for the **WACCO User Support Service (WUSS)**. If you already own programs in the **Protext** range, you can become a registered user and obtain the following optional benefits:

1) An upgrade to the latest version of the program.

2) User support and help with program operation with particular set-ups. We do not claim infallibility, but will take all reasonable steps to find a solution to any user's requirements.

3) Advance notice of new **WACCO** releases.

To become a registered user, send your master copy/copies on disc or ROM to **WACCO**, *Harrowden*. 39 High Street. Sutton-in-the-Isle. ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA enclosing £10 per program if an upgrade is required or £5 per program if not. Cheques should be payable to **BA Watson.**

We strongly advise that you pack the programs carefully, using anti-static foam to protect ROMS. and take out postal insurance.

All programs listed above (apart from **Proprint PCW)** are copyright (1995) **WACCO** Software, *"Harrowden"*, 39, High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA. Tel:01353 777006.

"We are working on a version of Protext for the new PCW16, and several software developers are interested in working with Protext's source code for other new programs to work alongside it on PCWs and CPCs. That's still some way away, as are responses to the requests we have had that we convert it for other 8-bit computers. It has been very gratifying so far to find that our faith in Protext, and 8-bit computing generally, was so justified. Now we want to make sure we can walk with it before we break into a run."

WACCO USER SUPPORT SERVICE (WUSS)

All purchases of WACCO programs include free registration for the WACCO User Support Service (WUSS) or existing users can become a registered user and obtain the following benefits:

1) An upgrade to the latest version of the program, if required.
2) User support and help with program operation with particular set-ups. We do not claim infallibility, but will take all reasonable steps to find a solution to any user's requirements.

3) Advance notice of new WACCO releases.

An existing user can register by sending their master copy to WACCO, Harrowden, 39, High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA enclosing £10 per program if an upgrade is required or £5 per program if not. Cheques should be payable to B A Watson. We strongly advise that you pack the media carefully and take out postal insurance.

ORDERING

All WACCO programs are marketed through ComSoft, 10, McIntosh Court, Wellpark, GLASGOW G31 2HW. Telephone orders may be placed by phone or FAX through ComSoft on 0141 554 4735. Payment can be made by Visa or Mastercard - have your card with you when you phone as details from it will be required. Please confirm your computer model and drive, A: size at the time of ordering. ComSoft have also now released Proprint PCW, a print-enhancement program to work with Protext on the PCW. They already produce Proprint to work with the Amsdos (CPC-only) version of Protext. Please phone Comsoft for further details. All the programs mentioned (except Proprint PCW) are copyright (1995) WACCO Software, "Harrowden", 39, High Street, Sutton-in-the-Isle, ELY, Cambs CB6 2RA. Tel:01353 777006.

UFO's

You've heard of the Bermuda Triangle, and possibly the Welsh Triangle (there is even a book by this name), where UFOs are seen to come and go after disappearing as quickly as they came. Now, I feel it is time to reveal in this Newsletter, how UFOs have been affecting computer users, even PCW users. I realize this article may create a stir with some users, but from what I have seen and heard (even on club nights), it is time to speak out. So get comfortable and read on.

Now you've all had it happen to you at some time, usually when its most inconvenient, when you want to get some work done quickly on the PCW. It's a case of more haste, less speed. You set out to do something straightforward which should only take a short time, but you end up spending hours. Know the problem well, don't you?

From experience I can reveal that one of the biggest time wasters in the computer industry (including home computing) is UFOs. You spend ages trying to find the disc with the program/file/data/clip art you want or you think you have got somewhere or did you delete it after all? The general name for this very common problem is UFOs, or Unidentified Filing Objects, also referred to as Flying (sorry, I mean filing) Discs. It is like the Bermuda Triangle, things go mysteriously missing! With the amount of data most of us collect on discs these days, the problem can soon get out of hand.

Traditionally, the filing and documentation of discs/programs depended on the individual user. Only users understood about these things, and company filing procedures dare not venture into such sacred (unknown, actually) territory. Despite some programmers being paid good sums of money, filing remained poor - yes, they were sloppy with their floppies. PCW users fall into this category. The general syndrome is that the more discs you have, the greater the chances of forgetting what you have on them. And after a few years of such a muddle, much of the information can be obsolete anyway.

So how do you solve the UFO problem? Easily! First of all, group your discs together. I do this by usage - all Locoscript discs/backups, all Microdesign discs/backups. Think about this part carefully. Then section each part (master/start of day/programs/various files by subject/clip art/backups, etc). Then number each disc in a section 1,2,3,etc. If you have more than one disc of the same type/files/data, then number them 1A,1B,1C, etc. If you want to identify your sections, you can prefix them, so you could end up with A1,A2A,A2B,A3....B1,B2,B3, etc.

You are now ready to write up your flexible filing system. Take a punched and ruled A4 pad, and a file for the paper. Section this out as required. This could be a list of Master discs (with version numbers) all on one page, and then details of other discs using a page for each disc. On one of these pages, put the disc number in the top right hand corner. On the top line put the name of the disc as a heading. On the next couple of lines I write 'space left' and write in how many kbytes are left. This number is crossed out and updated frequently, so I can tell at a glance how much space I have on any of my discs.

On the rest of the page, write down the discs contents. Put in as much detail as you require. The layout will depend on the type of disc it is. Do use a regular method for the same types of disc. If you use more than one group, you may like to section the details into groups.

When you have made many changes and a page looks a mess, simply put in a new page and copy out the new details. I have used this system now for a year and I have never been more pleased with the system. I no longer have to switch on the PCW to find out where a file is, or have I got room to copy something onto a disc, I can go straight to it. All you need to do is spend a little time setting it up, and you will find that it will pay dividends. And no more UFOs! You only need a very small time to keep the records up to date after that. You can even have a page for backups to remind you which discs you should backup regularly, but that's absurd, nobody forgets to do backups, do they?
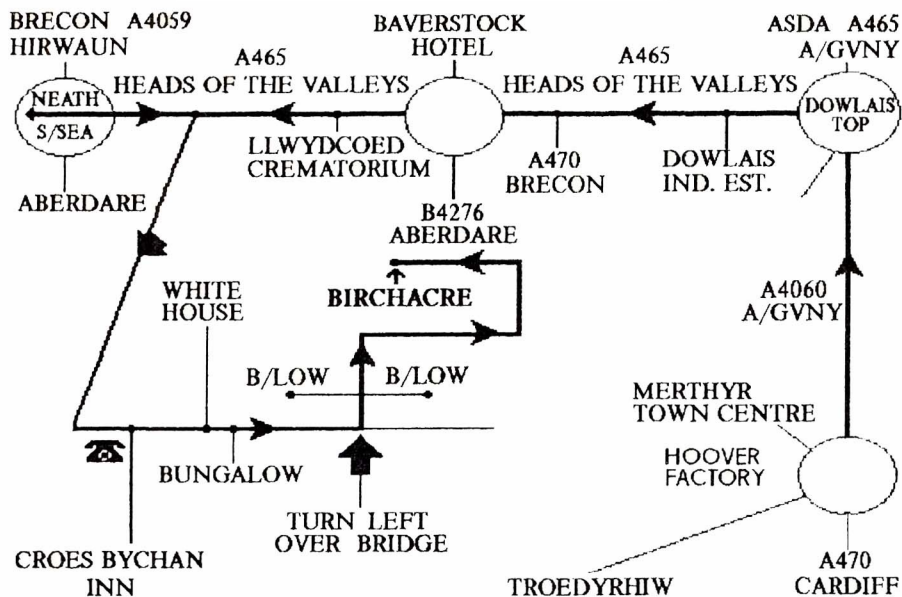
With this method, not only are are all discs neatly filed and ordered, and the information on them, but you can see at a glance and determine if something is obsolete, without even getting a disc out! Why not impress your relatives and friends? A Filing Disc system is so relatively novel amongst users, most people will be highly impressed, not least yourself, and you will wonder how you managed to live without it for so long!

J Carver.

FOR SALE

PCW8512 complete with various software i.e. MicroDesign3, LocoScript3, etc. manuals, spare ribbon, mouse, RamPac, £195.00. For further details contact:-
Mrs Avril Shaw, Ty Mawr, Hirwaun, Aberdare. Tel.01685-811739.

BRECON A4059
HIRWAUN

NEATH
S/SEA

ABERDARE

A465
HEADS OF THE VALLEYS

LLWYDCOED
CREMATORIUM

WHITE
HOUSE

B/LOW

☎

BUNGALOW

CROES BYCHAN
INN

BAVERSTOCK
HOTEL

BIRCHACRE

B/LOW

TURN LEFT
OVER BRIDGE

B4276
ABERDARE

A470
BRECON

A465
HEADS OF THE VALLEYS

DOWLAIS
IND. EST.

MERTHYR
TOWN CENTRE

HOOVER
FACTORY

TROEDYRHIW

ASDA A465
A/GVNY

DOWLAIS
TOP

A4060
A/GVNY

A470
CARDIFF

Go to the last roundabout on the A470 Merthyr/Cardiff road and take the third turning left A4060/Abergavenny. Follow this road for approx. three miles to the roundabout on the A465 Heads of the Valleys road, take the 2nd turning left A465 Neath/Swansea road. Follow this road for approx. 6 milesa until you come to the Baverstock Hotel on your right hand side, the next turn on the left (opp. hotel) is the B4276/Aberdare, ignore this turn. 100 yards further on is another left turn signposted Llwydcoed Crematorium, ignore this turn also. Carry on for another mile until you come to cheverons painted on the road indicating a right and left turn. Turn left here and [*] follow the road for 300yds. you will come to a pub on your left and a telephone box on your right (the pub is called the CROES BYCHAN INN) next to the pub is a large white house , then a bungalow, turn left after the bungalow across a small river bridge into a lane. Follow this lane for 30yds. (ignore the turnings into the bungalows on your left and right) until you come to a "T" junction in the lane, turn right here and follow this lane for 200yds. This will bring you into BIRCHACRE. If you get lost, phone (874972) from phone box opposite the pub, and someone will come and meet you.

The distance from the Dowlais Top roundabout to the turn off the Heads of the Valleys road is about 8 miles.

From Neath/Swansea take the A465/Abergavenny road for half a mile until you come to the cheverons painted on the road, turn right (sign-posted Llwydcoed) follow as from [*] above.