P.C.W. FILE

Volume 1, Issue 5
Dec. 87

CALLING
ALL
COMPUTER
BUFFS

USER'S MANUAL

HAPPY   CHRISTMAS

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STOP PRESS .... STOP PRESS .... STOP PRESS .... STOP PRESS ....
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PCW FILE HELPLINE EXTRA

In CP/M, how do I make the message come up "Insert Disc in drive x, and press any key"? I can never get there without giving some quite unnecessary command first. (You appreciate I am working from a distant drive e.g. A, with an order like ERA [se] C: listener.txt). Next, I want to PIP something, but I am in C, and PIP is in A. (I ask for an A Directory which I do not need).

This all arose from p70 of the 8000 Plus for November. I am frustrated because it is not automatic. I have to type CDRIVE each time, but when I need it, I am already in a CP/M word processor, so I have no A> prompt. I want to back-up a file before switching off, but the A disc if full with spare fonts. The first copy will be on B: I want to put the back-up on C:

W.A.Saxton
Park Ridge, Pendine, DYFED SA33 4PQ.

FOR SALE AND WANTS COLUMN

OFFERS, please for Cyrus II Chess, Money Manager, Compact Daybook, Companion and Plan-it, and DK Tronics Real-time clock. All unused.

W A Saxton, Park Ridge, Pendine, DYFED SA33 4PQ. Tele: 450

MASTERSCAN REVIEW p.17

The picture of Charles & Diana has been copied by MasterScan from a photograph in a newspaper. To get the end result means spending some time in setting the contrast control & waiting for the scanned picture to materialise on the PCW screen. By trial & error you find the optimum picture to be saved on disc, which can be either used in a desk-top publishing programme, art software or screen dumped direct to your printer. Some of the results can be very impressive and some are not so good.

Charles & Diana

PCW FILE

CONTENTS

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NEXT ISSUE

20th January Copydate

for articles, Feedback and Hints and Tips.

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BACK ISSUES

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I welcome you to PCW File, it looks like we are on our way to becoming a successful publication. Members are now joining daily thanks to Thurston Brown Associates and therefore a big decision has been made.

We're going Monthly from January! Of course, I need your help to make sure that there is enough feedback, hints and tips, and articles. I wish to cover the whole spectrum on computing, you name it, it will get printed (eventually). The bad news is that there is to be a rise in subscriptions to £10 for six months and £18 for 12 months. However if you saw the offer in the last issues 'EDITORIAL' to renew your membership you can still take advantage of this. If you join before 31 December you will be entered into a £50 Software Draw plus you will also receive a FREE Word Processing Ruler. I will accept subscriptions for £7 (six issues) up to the end of January but **NO SOFTWARE DRAW AND FREE WORD PROCESSING RULER!**

We are not for plugging companies for the sake of it but, if the software/ hardware companies have taken advantage of you, or you want to congratulate them, please let us know.

Three people out of the entire membership have commented about the grammar in my editorials and other peoples articles. I personally accept responsibility for my errors and I hope in this issue, and the forthcoming ones you will see a marked improvement. Thank you to David Axford I am taking up your offer to proof-read, type in any articles for PCW File, and will be in touch soon! David, You have just become my Assistant.

One of our members that joined the other day has offered to help us find Advertising. Do I hear groans? Maybe I do but just think we can have fatter issues with only a few adverts so hopefully it does make sense. So come on down Julian Sawyer, we will sort out a suitable commission for you, for each advert you bring to us. Julian, you have just become my advertisement assistant.

Thanks, to Al Warsh in Colton, America for helping to promote PCW File in America. From now on, we will be working closer with them, giving them access to the Public Domain Library for a mere £2.50 to cover postage/packing and they will be printing our front page contents page with details on how to join PCW File.

I would like to apologise beforehand, as I understand that our 'Excellent!' postal service may go on strike at Christmas, therefore I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy new year or a belated one.

Bye Bye don't forget get those contributions in by the 20th January for the February issue which you should see 2 weeks later unless we have another famous hic-cup!

EDITING BASIC & POKING

An addition to the Oct/Nov issue of PCW FILE on "Dots and Dashes" would be to point out that when an input string is used e.g.

10 INPUT "enter address ";address$

a comma cannot be used in the address$, otherwise REDO from start message appears. By using LINE INPUT e.g.

10 LINE INPUT "enter address ";address$

then any character may be entered in the string, including the comma. It had taken me 2 years to find this out, as all magazine articles always use the more common INPUT command.

If any PCW expert could provide a list of POKE commands (& PEEK) with an explanation of what each command achieves, this would would be of interest to many readers. The only one I have come across which is very helpful in Editing a long complicated Basic program with a lot of branch options, is:

POKE 8792,205 to print out the screen display on the printer.
POKE 8762,195 to switch the PCW back to display only.

When used in conjunction with: TRON (TROFF to return to normal), then a complete print out of the BASIC program line numbers in the sequence of the program is obtained, together with any screen PRINT. Hence the path of a program can be traced very easily from the print out, and the point at which the program diverts from the required path, discovered.

With the Basic Program loaded, simply type:

POKE 8792,205   and press RETURN
TRON   and press RETURN
RUN   and press RETURN

**Lawrence E Helby,
44 Mount Pleasant, Biggin Hill, Kent TN16 3TR**

DR LOGO 'PEEKS'

In his review of SCODE (p.13) Mr Childs comments that there is no communication with memory in Logo. Might I suggest he experiments with '.examine' and '.deposit' (don't forget the dot, it's vital), which I believe are Logo's much more elegantly named equivalents of BASIC's 'PEEK' and 'POKE'? Personally I can't find a use for them.

ESCAPE CODES ETC

On P.19 James Coleman asks for a complete list of Escape and other codes to control the PCW's screen and printer.

FEEDBACK

Escape codes etc cont'd

Sorry I can't oblige, but the lists in Appendics II and III of the Amstrad Manual look pretty full to me - though one could add character 0, the tab code, to p.139, since it works on the screen as well as the printer. However, the apparent ambiguity he noted in the use of 'ESC M' isn't an ambiguity at all. 'ESC M' sent to the screen delets a line, sent to the printer it switches it to Elite typestyle. In BASIC the difference is between 'PRINT' in one case and 'LPRINT' in the other; in Logo there's more of a problem. Unless somebody else has come across a better solution, the only way to send control sequences to the printer seems to be by using 'copyon', which echoes output to both printer and screen; all right most of the time, but codes like 'ESC M' will affect both screen and printer in different ways simultaneously!

Incidentally, using 'type word char 27 0' to switch off the 'Drive is A' message in Logo can have unexpected side-effects, since it upsets the normal relationship between text and graphics screens. If you're in the habit of text to a drawing by using a procedure which reads the current co-ordinates of the graphics turtle, carries out the arithmetic to convert them to the equivalent text column and line numbers, and sets the text cursor there before printing your text (useful when labelling a graph or to put the numbers on one of those ubiquitous clock faces!), you'll find it no longer works properly and the text is displaced slightly vertically.

MATHEMATICAL PRECEDENCE

On p.27 Mr Coleman queries Dr Logo's understanding of the order of precedencein dealing with parts of a complex mathematical expression. It's about 30 years since I took 0 - level maths, and I've forgotten most I ever learnt about such esoteric subjects; to me Logo's approach is eminently logical, once one has realised that Logo evaluates any expression - mathematical or logical - from RIGHT to LEFT. Thus having defined a procedure 'power :x' which outputs the square of 'x', Mr Coleman's 'power 5 + power 5' is interpreted by Logo as 'square 5 (= 25), add 5 (=30), square the result (=900)', and 'power 5 * power 5' as 'square 5 (=25), multiply by 5 (=125), square the result (=15625)'.

If logo's logic causes problems, and I can see it might, there are (at least) two answers:

> 1. PREFIX the aritmetical sign - '+ power 5 power 5' and '* power 5 power 5' work perfectly; the latter is read as 'square 5, square 5, multiply the results (=625)'.

> 2. Use parentheses () brackets (not to be confused with [] square brackets), - '(power 5) + (power 5)' and '(power 5) * (power 5)'. Parentheses are often useful in Logo, to group parts of an expression that would otherwise be ambiguous. Try for example the following:

4

Mathematical precedence cont'd

    'if emptyp [pr [No Logo files on this disc.]]'

There's an error as 'dir' tries to evaluate the following
list rather than simply looking at the disc; parentheses
work, as in:

    'if (emptyp) [pr [No Logo files on this disc.]]'

If in doubt use parentheses; Logo readily forgives too
many sets of parenteses, but is eaily misled if they're
left out where they are needed.

John Clark,
308 Falmouth Road, London SE1 4JQ.

AMSTRAD PORTABLES ARE COMING!

The thing I am watching with closest interest at present is
development in the (affordable) portable field amoung machines
which will be compatible with PCW's - if any other readers are
interested in getting involved in this side of things I would
welcome contact. So far I've collected most of the 'hype' put
out about the Z88, but in addition to (perhaps uncalled for)
reservations over getting involved in 'Sinclairism', there
seems to be the impossible cost to be incurred by the 1 MB ROMS
which are 'to be released in the New Year'. If 128K costs
£49.50, I think we can all form an idea of the probable cost of
a Megabyte! The whole thing smacks of a marketing ploy to sell
machines incautious, and only follow up later with the 'bad
news' of £100+ megabytes - by which time they have committed
themselves, of course. Any readers tempted to rush out (as I
almost was) and fork up £280 for a machine after the review in
8000 PLUS should think twice and three times before committing
themselves to a final bill which may exceed even that spent on
their PCW8512.

Additionally, as loyal Amstrad Users, they should wait to see
what Alan Sugar actually has up his sleeve in this respect.
After vehement denials, the latest (in Popular Computing
Weekly) is that a portable is to be launched at the Which
Computer? Show between the 19-22 January 1988. Quite what the
characteristics of this machine will be are unclear, but I have
seen speculation that it will be MS/DOS based and use 3.5"
discs.

Peter Houchin,
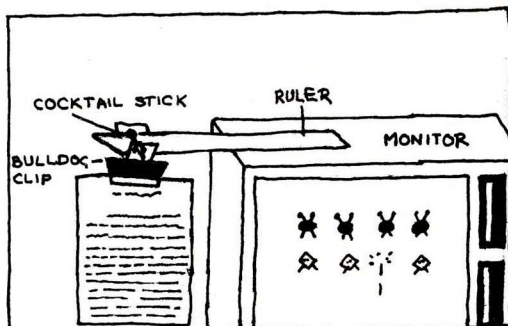**2 Rosary Drive, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 7JS**

(**Editor:** Since we received this letter AMSTRAD have confirmed
that they are entering the Portable market. There will be 4
models available. The 512S single 720K 3.5"" drive at
£399+VAT, the 512D double 720K 3.5" drive at £499+VAT the 640S
single 720K drive + internal modem at £499+VAT and the 640D
double 720K 2.5"" drive at £599+VAT.)

COPY HOLDER

A cheap copy holder can be made
using a 30cm ruler, a large bulldog
clip and a cocktail stick. Clip the
document in the bulldog clip. Place
some of the ruler between the levers
of the clip then push the stick through
the holes in the levers. Now you can
stick the other end of the ruler to the
top of the monitor with some good old
double-sided selotape !

COCKTAIL STICK   RULER

MONITOR

BULLDOG CLIP

LOCOSCRIPT LISTINGS

D.R. Logo and Mallard Basic listings can be inserted into Locoscript
documents without re-typing them. When you are in D.R. Logo with your
program in memory, put your Locoscript disk in drive A and type :-

SAVE "FILENAME   (followed by [RETURN]).

When you re-start into Locoscipt, you will see this in group 0 as
"FILENAME.LOG".
From Mallard Basic, insert Locoscript disk and type :-

SAVE "FILENAME",A   (followed by [RETURN]).

This will show in Locoscript as "FILENAME.BAS". Now create a new document
and select 'insert text' from F7, and choose your program from group 0.

PCW FILE HOLDER

If you are troubled by loose copies of PCW File strewn around your desk,
then a trip to a car accesories shop could be the solution. What you need
is a plastic box which fits into the space designed to hold a radio. When
you have got this, you wedge it into a gap between your desk and the wall,
or some similar convenient sized hole, and put the PCW Files in it. Then,
whenever you want to look up that *extremely* useful hint or tip, you know
where to find it. This can also hold other bits of paper that you are
always looking for.

JOYSTICK NOTE

If anyone has just bought a Spectravideo joystick interface ,screwed it
onto the back of their monitor and then tried to play Trivial Pursuit, they
will notice that there is some problem. This is because the program has
detected an interface but does not agree with the Spectravideo joystick and
got confused. It is not compatable with this joystick and the interface
must be removed for the program to work corectly.

Carwyn Cook, Perivale, Middx

Escape Sequences are wonderful things really, they permit you do do all sorts of hideous (sorry, I mean lovely) things to your devices.

One of the first things to understand is that ESCAPE codes work directly on an output device (screen, printer, etc.), and each device will respond to a different set of codes in a different way. Hence the apparent discrepancy in the manual described by J Coleman in the last issue. The manual is in fact perfectly correct, the pitch instruction only works on the printer, and the erase line works only on the screen.

Providing that you remember that the printer behaves differently to the screen (and almost certainly differently to any other device you may ever plug into your machine) then the information given in the manual is the comprehensive and definitive source of wisdom. Appendixes 2 and 3 will tell you just about everything you could possibly want to know, but be prepared to persevere a bit.

The important thing to bear in mind is that some Escape Sequences can have very peculiar effects if you put in the wrong numbers or get the right numbers out of sequence. You can for instance find yourself with a line width of just one character, so that everything prints out in a long thin column straight down the screen. You might even have only one line as well so it appears as one changing character in the centre of the screen. This sort of thing happens with the viewport control sequence ESC X tr lc h w.

Try PRINT CHR$(27)+"X"+CHR$(32)+CHR$(77)+CHR$(62)+CHR$(32)   or

    PRINT CHR$(27)+"X"+CHR$(47)+CHR$(77)+CHR$(32)+CHR$(32)

You might therefore consider getting any program you write to create a special string variable, lets call it RESCUE$ which, if printed directly from the keyboard after a disaster will restore the screen to something approaching normality.

Try RESCUE$ = CHR$(27)+"X"+CHR$(32)+CHR$(32)+CHR$(62)+CHR$(121)+
            CHR$(27)+"E"CHR$(27)+"H"+CHR$(27)+"e"

Which will reset the screen size, clear the screen and switch the cursor (back) on.

Apart from the character immediately following the ESC, everything has to be given as absolute internal values (hence all the CHR$ bits above). ie To advance the printer half an inch you use the sequence ESC J n. In this case n is the number 108 (for reasons best known to Amstrad n/216 inches). The internal value 108 can be represented by CHR$(108) or, as it happens by the character "l" (lower case L). So the escape sequence becomes:

LPRINT CHR$(27)+"J"+CHR$(108) or LPRINT CHR$(27)+"J"+"l" and NOT LPRINT CHR$(27)+"J 108"

The latter will just result in a line feed and the printing of the character 108 (I'm not sure why though). I know it sounds complicated but it needn't be.

In practice this means that all numbers given as parameters to an escape sequence have to be translated so that the machine understands them. In exactly the same way as the machine requires you to put in CHR$(27) and not the characters ESC to start the escape sequence.

How you output the ESCAPE code and its associated parameters will depend on the language you are working from. From BASIC you would use PRINT or LPRINT and CHR$(n) where n is the number you are thinking of. From dBASE you use ? or SAY with chr() (note no $) and from 'C' you have to do the translation yourself using OCTAL, since 'C' likes octal, and then PUTS or PRINTF so for instance ESC E (to clear the screen) is represented as PRINTF(" 033 105"); .

The only respect in which the manual doesn't make itself entirely clear is in the handling of foreground and background colours. ie do you want everything green on black or do you prefer black on green. Although foreground and background can be set separately, it seems you need to change both to get a sensible result. eg:

PRINT CHR$(27)+"b"+CHR$(0)+CHR$(27)+"c"+CHR$(63) or
PRINT CHR$(27)+"b"+CHR$(63)+CHR$(27)+"c"+CHR$(0)

for green on black and black on green respectively.

I trust Escape Sequences are now just a little less mysterious than they were.

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Here are the answers to the questions in the PCW File Helpline Issue 4 (Oct/Nov).

Harley Ristad from Los Angeles, America asked 'Can he change the default setting for baud rate, data bits, parity using MAIL232? and whether the Keystrokes can be changed.'.

Andrew Borland from Wimborne answers: To answer Harley's first question about Mail232 he can change it from SYS to DIR status by means of the SET command. SET MAIL232.COM [DIR]. It can be accessed in the same way as any other utility file. However as it is a .COM file it cannot be edited simply, it will have to done using SID, about which I am not yet (and may never be) qualified to lecture.

On his second question about key interpretation ; should anyone turn but to know where the machine stores uts translation tables, under Locoscript or better yet under CPM, Please make sure it appears in PCW File. I am keen to be able to define keys under program control.

Andrew K.Borland,
88 Jubilee Road, Corfe Mullan, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3TJ.

T.Charlton from Amble, Northumblerland asked 'Why was he getting 'Old Format' when trying to copy 4 Spreadsheet Templates using disckit'.

Mick Reed from Angmering, Sussex answers: I don't know what it means, but the solution is easy.

1. Format a disc using Disckit.

2. Then follow these steps:

    With the CP/M utilities disc in the drive:

    A> pip m:=a:pip.com

    A> m:

    M>

Remove utilities disc and insert disc to be copied:

    M> pip m:=a:*.*

This copies all files to drive M: Remove disc and insert new formatted disc:

    M> pip a:m:*.*

This copies all files - including pip.com to the new disc. Simply erase pip from new disc if you don't want it.

Mick Reed,
11 Older Way, Angmering, Sussex, BN16 4HQ.

Andrew K Borland suggests the following advice concerning "Old Format" under DISCKIT. I can't say for certain what it is about the format that makes it OLD, but you've probably got a disc in CPC6128 format (176K per side instead of 173K).   >>>>>

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QUESTIONS ANSWERED
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However the PIP utility should still be able to cope with the files
so, since there are presumably only the four of them on the disc, you
should be able to use this instead without too much difficultly. (I've
just had this problem with CBASIC and PASCAL MT+, which had far more
files, it's tedious but it works).

Andrew K.Borland,
88 Jubilee Road, Corfe Mullan, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3TJ.
==
PCW FILE HELPLINE
==

PCW FILE HELPLINE was set up to allow users, who are stuck on a
problem, to send it in and we will print it in PCW File to allow other
users who can help with the problem to write to them. If your problems
are solved please send it into PCW File as we can print it in the next
issue where we will all benefit.

DISC PROTECTION

I am seeking a program which will make it impossible to copy discs -
have you published such a listing, or would you think it possible for
a reader adept at programming to devise one?

Peter Houchin,
2 Rosary Drive, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 7JS.

AMX MOUSE

I have an AMX Mouse and I would like to make use of it in my Basic and
Pascal programs, but I don't know how. Can anyone help.

Henning Moos Christensen,
Rahojparken 12 Stavtrup, DK-8260 Viby J, Denmark.

LOGO

I've been experimenting with Logo, and gradually discovering the
functions of most of the undocumented primitives listed in Appendix I,
p.19 of the Logo section of the Amstrad manual. I'm now down to a hard
core that won't respond to my experiments, notably '.in', '.out' and
'piece'. Any offers.

John Clark,
308 Falmouth Road, London SW1 4JQ.

****

WANTED: 'Through-Connector' for expansion port; used mouse; used 5¼"
drive; 3" disks and labels in bulk; library cases for 10-15 disks;
programs (1) for making disks copy-proof, (2) for patching in graphics
with long, continuous Locoscript 2 files or other w/p's.

Peter Houchin, 2 Rosary Drive, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 7JS

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PROTEXT

1. Is it possible to create a pure right-hand tab marker (as in Locoscript)? I realise that the right-hand margin marker (the letter **R**) takes on this function, but it also takes on the job of a decimal tab marker at the same time and treats any text containing a full stop as a decimal number, shooting everything after the full stop off to the next line.

2. Is it possible to print at 15 chars. per inch as with Locoscript? I was informed by Arnor prior to purchase that this was one of Protext's features, but so far I have not managed this.

After waiting two months for a reply (pre-postage paid) from Arnor on this point I fell justified in nominating them for this month's black mark award for customer relationship.

<div align="right">

A.Phillips,
Dagmar Road, Kingston, Surrey, KT2 6DP.

</div>

LOCOSCRIPT 1

1 have been using the PCW for nearly two years and several times had a problem when printing files, I am using an 'updated' (!) version of Locoscript(1) supplied to me in early 1986. The sequence of events is:

1. Edit a file: possible import material from saved blocks, or format a table and insert page stops.
2. Save file to disc.
3. Print out part, or all, of file.

The problem is that when selecting to 'print some pages' the number of pages shown in the menu is incorrect. The size of the file in K is given correctly on the disc management screen but the last page is missing. Checking in the file, i,e. going to 'Edit' reveals the text present and e.g. 15 pages correctly numbered but if the file is re-saved the print pages menu still shows last page as number 14. This has happened on files of between 3 pages and 17 pages, on about seven occasions recently. Deleting the page stops (If I have a 'short' page perhaps containing a table), e.g. reducing the number of pages from 3 to 2mmade the correct number of pages be shown but re-inserting them brought back the old problem. I imagine it might be due to page stops somehow but I use them quite frequently in my 'text with tables' files and the problem does not occur on every occasion.

I wondered if you have an explanation or could you suggest how to restore the correct page number for the printing menu, at present I have had to print a file and copy the last page to another file and print it separately.

<div align="right">

M Wood,
92 Inchmery Road, London SE.6.

</div>

Have you ever wanted to produce icons of dustbins, telephones
and discs in your programs just like the ones in 'AMX Mouse'
and other such software? These and many others are quite simple
to produce using Mallard Basic ASCII characters. To see the
full range of these available, type in this line. . . .

FOR A=1 TO 255 : PRINT A : CHR$(A);: NEXT A

. . . . followed by [RETURN] and the screen will be
festoonedwith about two hundred different letters, numbers and
symbols. If you want to take a screen dump of these for future
reference, specify WIDTH 89, then type in the above line again.
Once more, the screen is full up, but it will be restricted to
89 characters per line, which will tidy things up a bit. Now
you can put some paper in the far left side of the printer, and
press the [EXTRA] and [PTR] keys at the same time.

A DUSTBIN

```
10 FOR A=1 TO 6 : FOR B=1 TO 6 : READ AB: ? CHR$(AB);: NEXT B:
   ? : NEXT A

20 DATA 32,32,150,156,32,32,150,154,154,154,154,156

30 DATA 134,142,142,142,142,140,133,133,133,133,133,133

40 DATA 133,133,133,133,133,133,131,139,139,139,139,137
```

If you have typed in this procedure correctly, you should find
that when you RUN it, a small dustbin appears on your screen,
When you care the numbers in the program with the codes on your
screendump, you will see how it is made up.

Using your screendump, you can write programs to print other
icons, in the same way as the dustbin program, remembering that
the values of A and B in the FOR ... NEXT loop in line ten will
have to be altered to print a picture if different dimensions.
In the 'dustbin' program,they are set to show 6 characters
across and 6 down. This 'disc' routine shows the values have
been changed to print a smaller icon.

```
10 FOR C=1 TO 4 : FOR D=1 TO 5 : READ CD: ?CHR$(CD);:NEXT D :
   ? : NEXT C

20 DATA 150,154,154,154,156,149,32,127,32,149

30 DATA 149,150,154,156,149,147,155,154,155,153
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==
                  THE PCW MONTHLIES   Reg V Ward
==

I know of four monthlies devoted explicitly to the Amstrad PCW
(there may be others), and they are all informative and
helpful. Top of my list is 8000 Plus (£1.50) which in spite of
its jokey editorial style and painfully punning heading, is
invariably full of interest.

In issues over a few months it covers just about every aspect of use of the PCW, both as a word processor and a computer, from the most elementary to the most advanced, and reviews, new hardware, software, add-ons and books with technical authority and scrupulous honesty.

Each month it has several program listings, and a wealth of worthwhile tips for readers. Valuable information can be found in its expansive "Readers' Letters" section, and cries for help from bewildered beginners can be comforting to those who also suffer.

Amstrad PCW Magazine (£1.25)is the official Amstrad Publication for PCW users. Started in this form only in August of this year, it is proving a valuable addition to sources of information on the subject, that is not at all subservient to Amstrad and it products. It reviews a good range of software, and is particularly strong on communications. At the moment it is running monthly tutorials on LocoScript and Logo, as well as use of the commands and utilities under CP/M. It "surgery" for users in difficulty, and its readers' letters, make essential reading.

Even younger is Your Amstrad PCW (£1.25), having been re-born as a PCW specific from the well established Putting Your Amstrad To Work only last October. I have so far failed to find the November edition on the news-stands, but the first one had news, articles, and features on a wide variety of PCW topics including programming, graphics, Locoscript, Logo, printer control, Desk-top publishing, and computerised genealogy, to name but a few. It too has a good letters page, which will no doubt develop with future issues.

Last but not least on my list is Computing With The Amstrad PCW (£1.25) another comparative youngster, started last May by the highly reputable Database Publications Ltd. It is running elementary tutorials in both Basic and Logo, and offers monthly prizes for program listings of no more than 10 lines. Some of the entries show great ingenuity in getting a lot into a single line! The magazine is particularly good on software reviews, and helpful with advice on the use of commercial software. It does not run a specific surgery, or a readers' tips feature, but these are covered very well in its readers' letters page.

All four publications have extensive advertisement pages, all of which are of course PCW-specific, and keep the readers well up-to-date with what is on offer, and what the prices are.

We humble PCW-owners are lucky to have such a wealth of expert monthly literature devoted to us, and it needs to be encouraged, as publication of periodicals that do not sell in sufficient numbers has to be discontinued. My advice is to browse at the bookstalls and see which one takes your fancy, buy it casually for a month or two, and order it or take out a subscription if your good impression is confirmed.

If you are at my stage of knowledge, much of what you read will be incomprehensible. But little of this information will get out-of-date, so carefully kept, the back-numbers will become a rich source of help as your computing skills develop.

ESC 0		8 lines per inch
ESC 1		10 lines per inch
ESC 2		6 lines per inch (initial default)
ESC 3 n		Lines n/216" apart
ESC A n		Lines n/72" apart

ESC l n		Set left margin
ESC Q n		Set right margin
ESC D [n] 0		Set tabs at positions n, Always state themall
HT	chr(9)	Execute a TAB
BS	chr(8)	Backspace
CR	chr(13)	Carriage Return
FF	chr(12)	Form Feed
LF	chr(10)	Line Feed
CAN	chr(24)	Clear buffer

ESC LF	Select automatic line feed after every CR.
ESC CR	Cancel automatic line feed after every CR.

ESC 8	Override end of paper detection
ESC 9	Enable end of paper detection

ESC J n	Advance paper n/216", n=0-255

ESC C n	Set page length as a number of the current line spacing
ECHO C 0 n	Set page length in inches.
ESC N n	Set gap to n lines
ESC 0	Cancel previous gap instruction

ESC @		Reset the printer to the current default settings.
ESC d		Reset the printer defaults to the current values.
ESC SI	chr(15)	Select 17 cpi.
DC2	chr(18)	Return to Pica (10 cpi).
ESC M		Select Elite (12 cpi)
ESC P		Return to Pica
ESC p 1		Select proportional spacing
ESC p 0		Return to Pica
ESC W 1		Select enlarged text
ESC W 0		Cancel enlarged text
ESC 4		Select Italic
ESC 5		Cancel Italic

ESC m 1	Select High Quality
ESC m 0	Cancel High Quality
ESC G	Select double strike. (Not applicable to High quality)
ESC H	Cancel double strike.
ESC E	Select Bold
ESC F	Cancel Bold
ESC S 0	Select Superscript
ESC S 1	Select Subscript
ESC T	Cancel Super/Subscript
ESC - 1	Select Underlining
ESC - 0	Cancel Underlining

```
BEL         chr(7)       Bell
BS          chr(8)       Backspace
LF          chr(10)      Linefeed
CR          chr(13)      Carriage Return
ESC         chr(27)      Escape

ESC 0                    Disable status line
ESC 1                    Enable status line

ESC A                    Move cursor up one line
ESC B                    Move cursor down one line
ESC C                    Move cursor right one column
ESC D                    Move cursor left one column

ESC E                    Clear viewport, do not move cursor
ESC H                    Home the cursor

ESC I                    Cursor up one row, scrolling if necessary.

ESC J                    Erase from cursor to end of page
ESC K                    Erase from cursor to end of line

ESC L                    Insert a line

ESC M                    Delete the line with the cursor, all lower
lines move up
ESC N                    Delete character under cursor

ESC X tr lc h w          Set view port: tr=top.row+32, lc=left.col+32
                         h=no.of.rows-1+32, w=no.of.colums-1+32
ESC Y r c                Move cursor to r=row+32,c=column+32

ESC b 0 ESC c 63         Dark background, light text
ESC b 63 ESC c 0         Light background, dark text

ESC d                    Clear viewport to current posn.

ESC e                    Enable cursor blob
ESC f                    Disable cursor blob

ESC j                    Save cursor posn.
ESC k                    Restore cursor posn

ESC l                    Erase all characters on line
ESC o                    Erase up to and including cursor

ESC p                    Enter reverse video
ESC q                    Leave reverse video

ESC r                    Select Underline
ESC u                    Cancel Underline

ESC v                    Select wrap at end of line
ESC w                    Cancel wrap

ESC x                    Select 24 X 80 mode
ESC y                    Leave 24 X 80 mode
```

MasterScan

Title: MasterScan
Type: Optic Scanner & Software
S/W House: Database Software
Tel No: Ø61-48Ø Ø171

Here is the very latest in 'State of the Art' Hardware/Software.
But maybe because it is 'State of the Art' and so very new it also
had a couple of annoying bugs which I have come across. If you
look at the two drawings of the rear of the PCW you will, if you
look closely find that the top sketch has been printed upside
down! This is as it has been produced in the MasterScan manual.
The arrow which is pointing from the (connect interface here) box
is pointing to a vent. The correct view of the rear of the PCW is
sketched underneath showing the correct position of the Serial
Port. Hopefully buyers of this package will have already sussed
this out. I know this is not a major blunder but I think it shows
quite clearly that Database have rather hurriedly put the package
together, probably to make it available to the public before
Christmas.

To use the program firstly SWITCH ALL POWER OFF, then you simply
attach the interface box to the Serial Port at the back of your
PCW and attach the optical scanner directly onto your print head
after removing the ribbon cassette and the front flap of your
printer. The RS232 interface box has a through connector, so that
you can use your mouse or other additional hardware at the same
time. I have a criticism about the length of the flat cable which
is all of 6 inches in length! This leaves the interface box
dangling, which isn't too healthy for the Serial Port connector on
your PCW or the interface box. What I have done is to get hold of
some double sided sticky fixers and stick them on the back of the
box and then attach this to the back of the PCW, which just about
fits in position and is now able to connect to the PCW Serial
port. The only drawback with this is that you now can't use the
through connector because the other side has to be exposed as it
has the contrast control on it. Why they didn't put them both on
the same side I don't know, certainly it would appear a bad design
fault. Next switch on and load CP/M, then insert your copy of the
master disc (MasterScan) and type 'SCAN'. A few seconds later you
have a menu in front of you. There are two menus, the first has
the following which you move the cursor to highlight your choice
and press enter:

                    Scan picture
                    View picture
                    Magnification: x1
                    Begin at column: 5
                    End at column: 8Ø
                    Screen colours: Normal
                    File functions:
                    Exit to CP/M

Insert the picture to be scanned in your printer. Bring down the
highlight to the magnification and choose your resolution. ($\frac{1}{2}$,1,3
or 6 times the size of the original) Next enter the column width,
toggle the screen colours normal or inverse then bring your cursor
back up to Scan picture and press ENTER. All being well your
picture should now be scanning. Check the density of the screen
image and when you are happy with it then it's time for a cup of
coffee and on your return you should have a nice picture on your
screen. If you are unhappy with the picture you can always press
STOP and press (S)crap (S key) and start again.

When the picture is finished you press (K)eep (K key) then press
any key again and you are brought back to the first menu again.

Press File functions next. This menu has the following for you to
move your cursor over.

          Load picture
          Save picture
          View picture
          Catalogue disc
          Picture format: DTP
          Order files by: Name
          Selected drive: B
          User Number: Ø
          Exit to Scanner Menu

Bring the cursor down to picture format, (Enter by toggling the
ENTER key the picture format that is applicable to your Desk Top
Publishing program.) next move the cursor over the Order files
(Which can be by Name or Type), select your drive A,B or M. The
program can even use the different user numbers to store your
pictures on! Bring the cursor back up to Save picture and press
enter. You are now presented with a different screen which tells
you what files you have stored on your disc. At the bottom you
are presented with a string of question marks followed by a full
stop and then the currently selected file format extension. This
allows you to type a file name in place of the question marks.
The manual doesn't make it very clear what you do next, however
after trial and error this is what you do.

Bring the cursor with the left arrow cursor back over the file
type and full stop, then erase the question marks with the delete
key, and after enter the new file name. Press ENTER and the
picture will be loaded. It is much the same procedure to load a
file tho' this time you can press the cursor up arrow and direct
the cursor over the file name and press ENTER. This will put your
picture into the memory and you can press the View picture from
either of these two menus to see it on the screen.

The manual is typical of Database manuals, brief and to the point.
This is not a criticism, far from it, but they could of elaborated
a bit more on the section about Screen Colours.

All they say about this is that moving the highlight cursor over
this option, pressing ENTER toggles the screen colours between
normal and inverse. What they could of added was that upon
scanning a picture in the normal position makes the image on the
screen positive as the picture being scanned. However what they
don't tell you is that if you copy a photograph (like the photo of
Charles & Diana on the cover) then you have to toggle the screen
colour to inverse, which makes a picture on the screen in the
negative. When this is printed out it will then become positive.
Doing it the other way round makes Charlie a blonde and Diana a
Brunette!

On my original MasterScan disc I came across the following two
bugs. Firstly that the software was refusing to scan lots of
pictures. The picture of Charles & Diana took several attempts
before it would start scanning and then it wouldn't finish off the
picture completely. When it refuses to go on scanning or even
won't scan at all then all the keys lock and the only way out of
the program is to take the master disc and data disc out of the
drives and switch off the power button. Which obviously means
that you lose the picture if you were lucky to have scanned some
of it. This is very annoying to say the least, especially as
Database tell you to photostat your photographs and they recommend
that you take a good dark photocopy or go over the lines with a
blacker ink. But my first software MasterScan disc refused to
accept all my photocopies except one, but then it would only print
half of it and then locked-up.

The other bug I have come across is after I have SAVED a scanned
image to disc and then later try and LOAD it in the memory drive
the cursor then locked up and the only way out was to press the
EXIT key, remove the discs and switch off. Next switch on, reload
and if I was lucky all was well and then I could get access to the
image.

This morning I received a corrected version of the MasterScan disc
and have been playing with it all morning and so far it has worked
perfectly on all copies entered for scanning.

Database were helpful on the telephone and reasonably quick in
solving the problems, so full marks to Database for their after
sales service!

The package consists of an optical scanner, interface box,
scanning software, manual with a competition entry form at the
back and a sample art to scan.

This package is well worth the money especially if you have a Desk
Top Publishing program already, as this will save you not only
time but will give you quality images for your newsletters etc.
For those of you that have The Desktop Publisher, Fleet Street
Editor or Newsdesk then you are able to use this package quite
easily as it is compatible with all three including the
MasterPaint art package from Database.

Overall this program is a must for those of us with desktop
publishers and I am sure I shall be using it frequently, which
must mean that this program is worth every penny. It's not cheap,
but <u>much</u> cheaper than a video digitizer which has got to be good
news. This program could be likened to a premature baby which
needed nursing for a bit longer. But now the bugs have been
ironed out I highly recommend it.

Ease of use	5/5	Address:	Database Software
Performance	4/5		Europa House
Documentation	3/5		68 Chester Road
Value for Money	5/5		Hazel Grove
			Stockport
			SK7 5NY

```
Title     : Trivial Pursuit
S/W House : Domark (Ø1-947 5624)
Price     : £19.95
Reviewed by Carwyn Cook
```

Trivial Pursuit is a game where you must answer non-important
questions to get 'wedges'. The questions are asked by (quote) "The
star of the show" (unquote) who is a little bloke with a huge
noise. His name is TP and he is quite an unhelpful character who
makes comments which range from "Are you sure you're not cheating
?" to "You should be on Mastermind!".

When you do get all six of the aforementioned "wedges", you are
asked to go for "The Centre". The first person (one to six
players) to get six wedges and the centre wins the game.

This program provides the best sounds I have ever heard my PCW
make. All the tunes it plays (in music questions) are instantly
recognisable, except for the one it play backwards! A tune can
also be repeated by pressing the 'UP' key.

The graphics are excellent and there is also some clever
animation, especially in TP's living room, where a fire flickers
gently, a candle slowly burns (the question timer, which can be
set for any length of time between five seconds and nine minutes),
a goldfish blows bubbles, and (during music questions) the graphic
equalizer on the stereo moves. The Grandfather clock also shows
you how long you have been playing.

This is a brilliant game. Every PCW Owner should have it.

Graphics   : 1Ø/1Ø

Sound   : 1Ø/1Ø

Playability : 9/1Ø

Overall   : 1Ø/1Ø

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SOFTWARE REVIEWS
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Title   : Money Manager Plus
Type   : Accounts Software
S/W House   : Connect Systems £39.95
Reviewed by : Stuart Coverley

The new version of this programme corrects all the points I
criticised in my review in Issue 3 of PCW File. This programme is
now adequate for use in small businesses or for personal accounts
where you do not wish to carry out formal book-keeping. For the
self-employed the programme will print out at the end of the year
a fully categorised listing of all the items needed for a tax
return.

All transactions are carried out on the M drive so you have to
remember to save your accounts before clearing the screen for a
new programme that does not boot from CP/M. This does have the
advantage that back up copies are made easily and simply in a few
seconds you are not tempted to ignore this simple precaution.

There is a reconciliation marker, though there seems to be no way
of getting a totalled up printed list of outstanding cheques. This
is the only criticism I can now find and consider the programme
can be highly recommended. If you have the old version your
accounts can be easily be transferred to Money Manager Plus.

Range of Features : 5/5   Address:- Connect systems
Ease of Use   : 5/5   3 Flanchford Road
Performance   : 5/5   London
Documentation   : 4/5   W12 9ND
Value for money   : 4/5

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========================================================================
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A COUPLE OF TIPS FROM REG.V.WARD
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========================================================================
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If you want a printed alphabetical list of your programs, with
length of each program and amount of spare disc space remaining,
Load LocoScript, put your CP/M disc into the drive, signal "disc
change", and take a screen-dump of the Disc Management screen
(EXTRA and PTR).

If you dislike PIP as I do, you can do your copying and moving of
CP/M files from the LocoScript Disc Management screen.

You need never again type the cumbersome escape string for
clearing the screen and homing the cursor! To clear the screen
quickly at any time, I have on my working disc the two-line
program:
5 cls$=chr$(27)+"E"+chr$(27)+"H"
7 PRINT cls$

saved as "cl". When starting to type in a program, LOAD "cl" and
LIST puts in the two lines to clear the screen when the program
runs, and you have a ready-defined cls$ in case this is needed in
the course of the program.

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===========================================================================
                      PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE LIST
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People interested in obtaining the FREE Public Domain Software should
do the following.

a) Write clearly what you require.

b) Mark your disc(s) with your name and address.

c) Please format all discs before sending them.

d) Please enclose a Stamp addressed padded envelope for the safe
return of your software.

e) Oversea members can also obtain the software by sending £2.50 to
cover all postal costs.

f) Please send your discs to one of the addresses below:

Bob Ellis	David Loveridge	John Cockshaw
"Rowan"	55 Windsor Crescent	5 Duchy Close
100 St Peters Close	Harrow	Heaton
Moreton - on - Lugg	Middlesex	Bradford
Hereford	HA2 8QJ	West Yorks
HR4 8DW		BD9 5NL

[0432] 761860 after 7pm

```
===========================================================================
                                 DISC 1A
===========================================================================
```

BOGGLE.BAS (See Doc#2 for comment) LABELS4.BAS Label Program.
NSWP.COM Many useful utilities into one. (See Issue 4 p.28)
LU.COM Library utility program.
MERCHANT Trading Game.

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===========================================================================
                                 DISC 1B
===========================================================================
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Games: BLKJACK.COM CHESS.COM GOLF.COM HORSE.BAS ROCKET.BAS STRTRK.BAS
NEWPUZ.COM Create your own word puzzles.
FOOD.COM Inventory programs

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===========================================================================
                                 DISC 2A
===========================================================================
```

BANNER.COM & GOTHIC (printer utility) See issue 4 p.27.
WCOUNT.COM Word count program.
DISK76.COM Disc utility.
RENAME.COM Rename files.

Others include COMPARE.COM CAT.COM NI.COM (Just like DIR [Size] MAZE
(Game) UNERA190.COM (Unerase program).

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                    PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE LIST
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========================================================================
                             DISC 2B
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SMODEM+.COM Modem program.
OTHELLO.COM The popular game of the same name.

========================================================================
                             DISC 3A
========================================================================

COLOSSAL CAVE ADVENTURE

========================================================================
                             DISC 4A
========================================================================

ZMAC.COM ZLINK.COM RASMTA.COM Z80ASMUK.COM (Assemblers)

========================================================================
                             DISC 4B
========================================================================

DBASE Programs
COMPARE.COM

========================================================================
                             DISC 5A
========================================================================

SCRIVNER A word processor, Database etc

========================================================================
                             DISC 5B
========================================================================

Games: CASTLE.COM COUNSEL.BAS MONOPOLY.BAS STARTRK.COM FOOTBALL.COM
CALENDAR Print a calendar for 1988!

========================================================================
                             DISC 6A
========================================================================

NSWP.COM It's newsweep again!
COMPARE.COM
SECTORED.COM
COOKIE.COM
SHELL.COM

========================================================================
                             DISC 6B
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SCRIVNER Again With sample files
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DISC 7

SCRIVNER Locoscript documentation

DISC 8

DBQ relational Database plus other utilities

DISC 9

Improved version of Small C & Small C Optimiser

DISC 10

FORTRAN86

DISC 11

EBASIC
PROLOG

PD DOC #2   **BOB ELLIS**

What a fantastic response, many thanks to everyone who took the trouble to ring in with advice, it was good to have the opportunity to speak to so many of you.

Lets start with NSWP, particular thanks to the members who rang and wrote about this one (far too many to name individually).

The DOC file on disc 4 is in squeezed format, this has lead to quite a number of "I know it can be unsqueezed with the program, but, until I can read the instructions I can't operate it " type of phone calls.

M Wood of London points out that it can be accessed via the V (for VIEW) or P (PRINT) options, further the Q option allows an unsqueezed copy to be made.

I have hard copy available, just send S.A.E..

BOGGLE, my thanks to Richard Pendrill who says " The program when RUN gives you 60 sec. to write down on a piece of paper as many words as you can find across, down or diagonally [how low tech.].

BASIC,thanks in advance to Colin Millar who is working on our programs and may well produce a Basic program, listing and detailing on screen the contents of each disc. Best of luck, Colin.

SMALL C, Mark Atkinson has offered to produce 'an introduction to C for first timers ' should you, the members, want one. Please let me have your comments.

Well, that's the first attempt, I hope it is of use and look forward to further feed back and program information.

Please send any comments direct to :-   **Bob Ellis**
          'Rowan' 100 St Peters Close, Moreton-on-Lugg, Hereford HR4 8DW

For far too long now, the prosecution has been making monstrous allegations about the programs in the Public Domain, and most particularly about their accompanying documents. I feel it is time that Counsel for the Defence said his bit.

There is an old adage that "You get what you pay for". Since Public Domain software is completely free, it has to be the best value for money imaginable. Naturally a lot of it seems "not to work". It will have been written to run on some other machine to perform a specific job and, in the name of simplicity, probably includes all sorts of non standard BIOS calls and machine specific escape sequences, which Amstrads don't recognise. It would be quite unreasonable to expect any author, writing a program to perform some specific function he requires, to waste his valuable time writing it in such a way that it will subsequently run on any other machine. It may not even be possible. And why should he, it does what he wants and putting it in the public domain is just a final act of generosity to anyone who may one day have a use for it. After all he is not being paid a penny for his efforts.

And as for documentation: The author of a piece of software can normally be assumed to be totally conversant with its user interface and modes of operation. The most he is likely to want will be a few brief notes to remind him how to drive some of the more obscure functions. (Details of the internal workings are a different matter entirely, the author will probably want lots of info, where as the end user wants none. With luck the code will be comprehensively commented). Therefore any user friendly documentation you get (over and above the cryptic notes) is an added bonus.

Programs like Scrivner, Z8E (and to a lesser degree NSWP) are notable exceptions whose user guides probably took weeks, if not months, to prepare. I applaud their authors wholeheartedly. Scrivner did in fact start out with the intention of being a professionally marketed product but the authors ended up putting it in the Public Domain because they couldn't decide what to market it as.

You will almost certainly find that major software houses have to employ full time "technical writers" to produce their manuals for them. In general terms, the better the engineer who wrote a particular program the less likely it is that he will be able to describe to someone else (in language they can understand) how to use it. This of course assumes a single author for a piece of software, which in the professional field is unlikely. So no one person fully understands it in detail. The technical writer therefore discusses the product with the authors, picks their brains where necessary and finally produces something which you and I can understand. You can hardly expect Public Domain authors to go to such lengths.

I will be very interested to know what sort of a response, and what sort of product, you get as a result of the appeal for new userguides, I think you may be disappointed. (As an Electronic Design Engineer, I document my work thoroughly, so I know just how difficult it is to write good documents that are clearly understandable by the cogniscenti, never mind the layman or novice).

As a matter of interest, how many of those who complain so bitterly about the standard of PD documentation and programs have ever actually contributed to the Public Domain themselves. I don't mean just passing on a program they picked up somewhere, but actually donating a program they conceived for themselves and then sweated blood over the production of. And just how good was their documentation.

To sum up: The Public Domain was started by enthusiasts for enthusiasts. If you aren't enthusiastic about what it has to offer then isn't it time you questioned your involvement with it.