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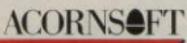
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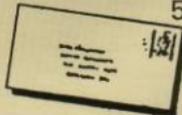
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Bargains galore!

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electron user NEWS

Top people read their monitor...

THE world's leading financial newspaper - America's famous Wall Street Journal - is now available daily on the Electron.

This latest service from MicroLink provides an authoritative, up-to-date source of financial and business news. There is also a facility to search through issues dating back to 1986.

It is just one of a package of four new online databases for MicroLink subscribers.

Also on offer are selected English language summaries of articles taken from more than 500 business newspapers and journals covering UK and overseas markets.

The full text of Marketing Week - the leading UK magazine covering the marketing and media world - and Peat Marwick McLintock Grants - a comprehensive guide to private and public sector grants and initiatives in the UK - are also now available on-line.



Testimony to Acorn popularity... waiting for the show to open

New products give Electron a boost

THE wealth of exciting accessories and upgrades pouring on to the Electron market continues unabated.

This was never more evident than at the Electron & BBC Micro User Show in Manchester where, for example, Pres - which has taken over where ACP left off - launched no less than nine Electron products and gave a promise of more to come.

One of the debutant upgrades - the Advanced Plus 2 Rom - contains no less

than 21 helpful utilities for owners of Electron add-ons. Also just off the Pres assembly line are a new power switch, user port, 1MHz bus, advanced printer buffer, enhanced ABR software and - as a change of pace - three volumes of games on disc.

The company has also brought out ADFS Version 1.1 and ADFS E00 for Plus 3 and AP4 users. Coming soon are internal battery-backed ram upgrade Advanced Plus 7 and Advanced Basic Editor+.

"Most users tell us how delighted they are with their Electron, but ask if it is still worthwhile upgrading or should they change to a second-hand BBC Micro or Master 128", a Pres spokesman told *Electron User*.

"We try to remove any doubts by designing, where possible, products that Electron owners can use with other Acorn computers".

Meanwhile, sources close to Slogger say the firm is developing for release in the

autumn a souped up rom box that will give the Electron "everything the BBC Micro has got including rom cartridge sockets, RS423, user port, 1MHz bus and printer sockets".

And hopes are high that Slogger will take over production of Pace Micro Technology's RS423 interface for the Electron.

The Manchester show proved once again that there is still plenty of computing left in the Electron. Despite unpleasant weather, crowds exceeded expectations with queues stretching right round UMIST and the doors having to be closed several times.

Visitors praised the high quality of the re-introduced seminars and enjoyed the Treasure Hunt with its more than 150 prizes.

The next Electron & BBC Micro User Show takes place at the New Horticultural Hall, Westminster, London, from May 13 to 15. Ticket details are on Page 4.

Flip look at floppies

A FREE booklet which takes a lighthearted look at floppy discs and data storage has been published by Fuji Photo Film.

Called *The Floppy Disc story*, it explains how to protect discs and get the best from them.

Richard Ferrand, Fuji's

sales and marketing manager said: "Although floppy discs are now a familiar part of computing, people still need to be educated on how and why they should be cared for".

The booklet can be obtained from Fuji Photo Film UK (01-586 5900).

Winner collects his prize



Winner James in Calgary

WINNER of Tynesoft's massive Winter Olympiad competition which attracted thousands of entries from all over Europe was young Electron owner James Yerkess.

The competition, which ran concurrently in the UK and Europe, was open to all users of Winter Olympiad 88, regardless of machine.

James successfully listed the attributes that go to make a perfect skier, winning through a tiebreaker in the face of stiff opposition.

His reward was an all-expenses-paid trip for two to the winter olympics in Calgary.

In his seven days there he managed to take in most of

the major events, as well as finding time to see the sights.

Back home, 16-year-old James spends a lot of time with his Electron - despite the fact that his computer studies teacher swears by the BBC Micro.

"After my success, however, he might just change his opinion that you can't do much on an Electron", said James.



Heidi Kinseler at the show

Electron's a hit

THE Electron is a big hit with physically handicapped members of the Newbridge Resource Centre in Stockport.

The centre was among many groups from schools and organisations which visited the Electron & BBC Micro User Show in Manchester.

One of the members, Heidi Kinseler - who suffers from spina bifida - was particularly impressed by the Fun School program which features 10 games to help the learning process.

"I was surprised to see how easy the Electron is to use", said Heidi. "We have a computer at the resource centre but there are so many people who want to use it that it was a nice change to be able to

have a machine to myself" she added.

The Newbridge centre was founded two years ago to help the physically handicapped achieve their full learning potential.

Courses in typing and computer programming are all carried out on a single machine which is causing a bit of a backlog for enthusiastic students who want to use it.

Currently the centre is trying to provide more computers for its members to use, but cost is a major problem.

"We were persuaded to go along to the show by one of our members, Gavin Key, who is just crazy about the Electron", said Gail Godfrey.

THE GALLUP CHART

TOP 10

ELECTRON SOFTWARE

THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	TITLE (Software House)	PRICE
1	1	COMBAT LYNX <i>Alternative</i>	1.99
2	6	STAR FIGHT <i>Alternative</i>	1.99
3	2	SOCCER BOSS <i>Alternative</i>	1.99
4	•	PRO GOLF <i>Atlantis</i>	2.99
5	3	PAPERBOY <i>Elite</i>	9.95
6	5	FOUR GREAT GAMES <i>Micro Value</i>	3.99
7	•	THAI BOXING <i>Anco</i>	5.95
8	4	AROUND THE WORLD IN 40 SCREENS <i>Superior</i>	6.95
9	•	PLAY IT AGAIN SAM 2 <i>Superior</i>	9.95
10	7	SUPERIOR COLLECTION VOL 3 <i>Superior</i>	9.95

Compiled by Gallup/Microscope

The chart is quite static this month which is expected at this time of the year. However, there are three new entries - Thai Boxing is an old title from Anco and enters at number seven, while Superior's Play it Again Sam 2 enters in ninth position. Highest entry is the budget priced Pro-Golf from Atlantis. Yet the budget label with the first three spots is Alternative. Superior Software hold the bottom of the chart with its full-priced compilations.

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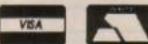
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MACHINE CODE

It's routine work

LOTS to do this month, so straight down to work with Program I. Before you say "Oh no, not more of that beeping code", take another look at it - it's changed:

```
10 REM Program I
20 MODE 6
30 P1=62000
40 [ \ enter the assembler
50 LDA #7 \ put 7 in the acc
unulator
60 JSR &FEE \ invoke a subr
outine
70 RTS \ go back to basic
80 ] REM leave the assembler
90 CALL 62000
```

The difference lies in the comments attached to each mnemonic. These comments come after the backslash \, which is the assembler equivalent of Basic's REM.

Take my advice and use comments liberally. If you don't, assembly language programs rapidly become unintelligible.

Notice that the comments also appear in the assembly listing produced. Figure 1 shows what each field in the listing contains.

Not that I'm obsessed with beeps, or afraid that you might fall asleep reading this, but Program II produces another beep. And while the code produced is the same, the techniques used to produce it are very different and well worth getting into the habit of using:

```
10 REM Program II
20 MODE 6
23 codeStart=62000
25 number=7
27 oswrch=&FEE
30 P1=codeStart
40 [ \ enter the assembler
45 .start
50 LDA #number \ put 7 in th
e accumulator
60 JSR oswrch
70 RTS \ go back to basic
80 ] REM leave the assembler
90 CALL codeStart
```

For a start, three new lines are squeezed in between lines 20 and 30. The first -

line 23 - sets up a variable *codeStart* which holds the address of the first location you want the code to be assembled at. Later on P% is set to this address.

The next variable, *number*, holds seven, the bell code. Finally, the address of our tame operating system - or os - routine is held in the strangely named variable *oswrch*.

Actually there's good reason for calling it *oswrch*, as the routine at &FEE is known as *oswrch* - Operating System call to Write a Character.

These variables are then used with our familiar assembly language mnemonics. Line 50 now LDAs *number* rather than 7, while line 60 JSRs to *oswrch*. And once we leave the assembler we find that the CALL is to *codeStart*.

Using these variables makes the mnemonics more intelligible and flexible. To see what I mean try changing where the code starts. You could have *codeStart* as &2100 or &2200 or whatever.

Just be wary that you don't go into areas of memory used by the operating system or Basic. You'll soon know if you do!

Still ringing the changes, try using other values for *number* such as 65 or 66. You'll see that what *oswrch* does depends on the value in the accumulator.

Experiment with these, but avoid the values below

32; these are control codes and can cause odd things to happen if you don't know what you're doing.

One other technique is introduced in Program II. This is labelling assembly code. Line 45 introduces our label, *start*, using a dot to tell the assembler that this is a label.

When the assembler comes across this it makes a note of the location it's up to and whenever it comes across *start* again it knows that it refers to this address.

In this case the label is at the beginning of the code and we've told the assembler (via *codeStart* and P%) to start the code at location &2000.

Hence *start* takes the value &2000 and you could,

if you wanted, use the line:

```
90 CALL start
```

to get the routine working.

Notice that you don't need the leading dot, that's just there when it's initially used. The rules for labels are the same as for variable names, and it is good advice to use meaningful ones.

One last thing about labels: The assembler uses them but they don't appear in the opcodes produced. They're just notes used at the time of assembly to help the assembler keep track of the locations involved in a routine. Look at Program II's assembly listing if you don't believe me.

Also note that *number* and *codeStart* don't appear

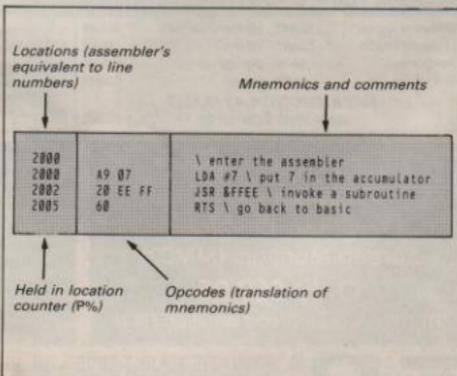


Figure 1: Output from running Program I. What each bit means

in the opcodes, the assembler substitutes 7 and &FFEE (in the annoying about-face style that the 6502 uses for addresses).

Because of this, the actual code produced by Programs I and II is exactly the same,

Memories are made of this ...

A quick way of seeing what's in location &2000 and its successors is to set up a function key to do the job. Just enter:

```
* KEY 1 X=&2000:FOR I=0 TO 8
:PRINT "X+1, "X1:NEXT I:MG
```

Now whenever you press function key 1, the contents of locations &2000 to &2008 are displayed, along with the seemingly obligatory beep.

despite the obvious differences in appearance of the two.

I leave it to you to decide which is the more intelligible program.

Program III shouldn't detain you for too long. It's as easy as ABC. However, there's a lot to learn from it if you're willing to spend some time messing about with the code:

```
10 REM Program III
20 MODE 6
30 codeStart=&2000
40 number=65
50 oswrch=&FFEE
60 PI=codeStart
70 I | enter the assembler
80 .A
90 LDA #number \ put 65 in t
he accumulator
100 JSR oswrch \ displays A
110 .B
120 LDA #number+1 \ put 66 i
n the accumulator
130 JSR oswrch \ displays B
140 .C
150 LDA #number+2 \ put 67 i
n the accumulator
160 JSR oswrch \ displays C
170 RTS \ go back to basic
180 J REM leave assembler
190 CALL codeStart
```

For a start, lines 120 and 150 show that you can use

A question of ?

Most Basics allow you to examine the contents of a location or change its value. Electron Basic does the same, only it replaces the usual PEEK and POKE with the rather more sophisticated indirection operators ?, I and \$.

The ? operator stands for the "contents of location" and can be used to find out what's in a memory byte or to change the value held in that byte.

If you want to see what's in location &2000 you just use:

```
PRINT ?&2000
```

If you try this after running Program I, you'll find that you get 169, not A9 as you might expect. This is the decimal value held in location &2000.

The Electron will convert it to hexadecimal for you using the tilde, ~ as in:

```
PRINT "~169
```

Of course it's easier to use:

```
PRINT "?&2000
```

in the first place.

? can also be used to give an offset from a base address taking the form:

```
baseaddress?offset
```

which is handy for use in loops.

expressions inside the assembler, which is quite clever enough to calculate number+1 and substitute that value in the code produced.

You can even use Basic functions, as you'll see if you make line 90:

```
LDA #ASC("X")
```

Observant readers will see that I've used three labels, A, B and C. What do you think will happen if you use CALL C or CALL B or CALL A in line 190? Try it and see.

Program IV uses assem-

Oddly, the base address has to be a variable holding the location value, it can't be the actual numeric address. Hence:

```
base=&2000
PRINT *base?2
```

gives the contents of memory location &2002 whereas:

```
PRINT &2000?2
```

just gives the decimal value of &2000 followed by the contents of memory location 2.

? can also be used to alter a location's contents. This takes the form:

```
?address=new.value
```

Since each location is a byte wide, it can only hold values between 0 and 255.

As an example, run Program I and alter location &2001 with:

```
?&2001=66
```

Check that you've got it right with:

```
PRINT ?&2001
```

and then:

```
CALL &2000
```

Can you explain what's happened to the code?

by language to look at the keyboard, and echo the key you press to the screen. To do this it employs three os routines:

```
10 REM Program IV
20 MODE 6
30 codeStart=&2000
40 PI=codeStart
50 osrdch=&FFED
60 osrdch=&FFEE
70 osnewl=&FFEE
80 C | enter the assembler
90 JSR osrdch \ get keyboard
character
100 JSR oswrch \ display thi
s character
110 JSR osnewl
120 RTS \ go back to basic
130 J REM leave assembler
140 CALL &2000
```

The first is osrdch - Read Character. Found at address &FFED, this routine examines the keyboard and places the Ascii value of the key pressed into the accumulator.

Oswrch we've met before. The third routine is osnewl, which you can contact via &FFEE. This provides a carriage return and a line feed giving, in effect, a new line. Leave out line 110 and see what happens.

Readers of an ingenious and inquiring mind with a knowledge of some of those control codes may wonder

Turn to Page 10 ▶

Programming

◀ From Page 9

why they can't use the following routine to get a new line:

```
.newline
LDA #10 code for CR
JSR oswrch
LDA #13 code for LF
JSR oswrch
```

The trouble is that this is long-winded. What's really needed is osasci, which can be found at &FFE3. This routine does the same as oswrch and in addition, adds a line feed to any carriage return.

I leave it to you to knock

Routine	Address
Oswrch	&FFEE
Osrch	&FFEO
Osnwl	&FFE7
Osasci	&FFE3

Table 1: Some routine addresses

up the required routine as an exercise. Otherwise stick to osnwl when you want a new line. Table 1 shows the routines and their addresses.

Our final program this month, Program V, shows how we can use assembly language to produce

Before	Assembler	After
Mnemonics	become	Opcodes
Variables	become	Values
Functions	become	Values
Labels	become	Addresses

How the assembler interprets your program

```
10 REM Program V
20 codeStart=&2000
30 PI=codeStart
40 oswrch=&FFEE
50 [
60 .modeChange
70 LDA #22 \ select vdu
80 JSR oswrch \ tell the operating system
90 LDA #5 \ select the mode
100 JSR oswrch \ inform the os
110 .draw
120 LDA #25 \ vdu choice - P
LOT
130 JSR oswrch
140 LDA #6 \ pick DRAW option
150 JSR oswrch
160 .coordinates
170 LDA #255 \ x coordinate, low byte
180 JSR oswrch
190 LDA #8 \ x coordinate, high byte
200 JSR oswrch
210 LDA #255 \ y low
220 JSR oswrch
230 LDA #8 \ y high
240 JSR oswrch
250 RTS
260 ]
270 CALL codeStart
```

graphics. In effect we use the VDU codes

VDU 22,5

to select Mode 5 followed by:

VDU 25,6,255,0,255,0

to draw a line from 0,0 to 255,255.

This is done by successfully loading the accumulator with the VDU code numbers and their parameters, passing the data over to the Electron's operating system using the versatile oswrch routine:

Try altering Program V, giving the parameters different values and see what happens.

● That should keep you busy until next month, when we'll be learning about other registers and the mnemonics that go with them.

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The plume of my tante

OK – it's not perfect, but PIERRE DUPONT's DIY translator is a step in the right direction

FOREIGN languages are the bane of most peoples' lives. But now you can translate any word processed file from one language to any other, with the help of a pocket dictionary.

Text Translator – for disc users only – uses a simple, brute-force method for converting a file from one language to another.

It must first be fed some words, together with their best approximate translations, before you can set it to work.

It then scans through any named text file on disc, printing the translations of any words it recognises.

The only drawback is that you won't end up with a grammatical result. Things like past and present tenses will be ignored, and word order may be back to front – *la chaise verte* will end up as *the chair green* – but the program will still give you the gist of what the text is about.

To set up Text Translator, select option two from the main menu – Add to the dictionary. This is where you supply the words to the program's internal store.

Up to 150 words and their translations can be stored – a relatively small number, but surprisingly meaningful results can be obtained if the words are chosen with care.

You will be asked to enter a word, followed by the Return key. Next, type in the closest translation in the target language for that word.

Pocket dictionaries, like those in the Collins series, are perfect for this part of the proceedings.

When you think you have

entered enough translations press Return in place of the next expected word, and you will be taken back to the main menu.

It would be wise to save the dictionary at this point, and option four will do this for you.

You will be prompted for a filename – any pathname may be entered if you have the ADFS – and warned if there is already a file of the same name present on disc.

Option three will load a previously created dictionary back from disc, wiping over any currently stored words.

Option five lists the current dictionary, pausing at the foot of every screenful until Shift is pressed, while option six will completely wipe the internal dictionary.

If you select this by mistake, either press the Escape key, or press the N key at the warning prompt.

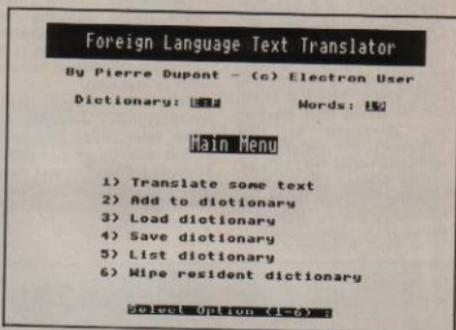


Figure I: The main menu

Now we finally move on to option one – Translate a text file. When you select this option, you will be asked for the name of the file in question, and the program will verify its existence for you.

Then you will be asked whether a hard copy – a printout – is required – to which you answer yes or no by pressing the Y or N keys.

Finally, Translator will ask you whether you would like

the result of the translation spooled to disc.

This is a very valuable part of the program, because it enables you – after translation – to load in a dictionary which contains translations going the opposite way, and re-translate the spooled file back to its original state.

This way you can see quickly if the choice of

Turn to Page 12 ▶

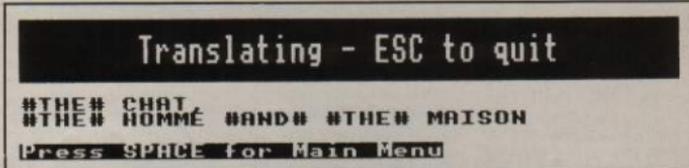


Figure II: The French translation of a short Wordwise file – but it's rather fractured!

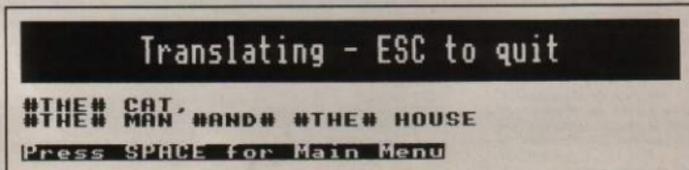


Figure III: The re-translation back into English tests the accuracy of your dictionary

ACTION

4 From Page 11

words in your dictionaries are the best. If the re-translation reads nothing like the original text, you have made some bad choices somewhere, because hopefully you should end up with a sort of a pidgin version of the source file - strange-sounding, but readable.

It can also be great fun translating something from, say, English to French and back again. Many a laugh will be heard from passers by, intrigued at this apparent compulsion to write like Inspector Clouseau.

Any words which Text Translator cannot find in its dictionary will be printed in the original, surrounded by

a hash symbol on either side.

This way you can see just what the program is making of your precious text, while invariably producing something hilariously similar to Miles Kington's Franglais column in Punch magazine.

Language teachers might cringe at this program, but there is no denying its usefulness - especially when going on holiday, or if Latin comprehension homework is involved.

Text Translator will understand View, Wordwise, Mini Office and just about any other possible formats for storing text that you can think of and will function quite happily in Slogger 64k or Turbo modes.

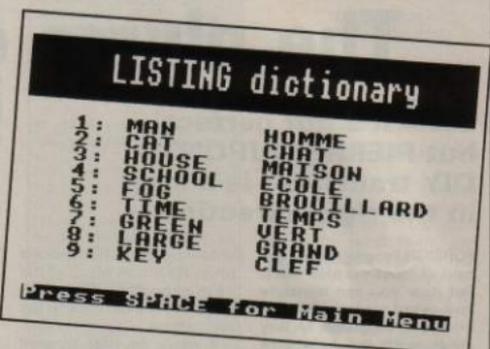


Figure IV: Listing the dictionary

```

10 REM Text Translator
20 REM By Pierre Dupont
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 REM
50 ONERRGOTO62B
60 MODE4:PROSetup
70 CLOSE#B:PROC#enu:GOTO7
80 DEFPROCSetup:DIMdic(51
50,1)
90 dic$="Unamed":maxI=0:
maxitem=150:punc$=".,?":
puncI=FALSE
100 ENDPROC
110 DEFPROC#enu:PROctitle(
"Foreign Language Text Trans
lator"):PRINTTAB(2,5)By Pie
rre Dupont (c) Electron User
:COLOUR#;COLOURI29:PRINTTAB
(15,12):PROcBj=COLOURI29:PR
INT:":COLOURI:COLOURI2
8
120 PRINTSP(6) Translate
some text"
130 PRINTSP(6) Add to di
ctionary"
140 PRINTSP(6) Load dict
ionary"
150 PRINTSP(6) Save dict
ionary"
160 PRINTSP(6) List dict
ionary"
170 PRINTSP(6) Wipe resi
dent dictionary"
180 PRINTTAB(3,8)"dictiona
ry"::COLOUR#;COLOURI29:PRI
NTdic#;COLOURI:COLOURI28:PRI
NTTAB(26,8)"words"::COLOUR
#;COLOURI29:PRINT:maxI
190 PRINTTAB(9,31)"Select
Option (1-6) :":COLOURI:COL
OURI28:REPEAT:GX=GET-48:UNTIL
LG#0 AND GS<7:ONGGOTO20B,2
10,220,230,240,250
200 PROCtrans:ENDPROC
210 PROcAdd:ENDPROC
220 PROcLoad:ENDPROC
230 PROcSave:ENDPROC
240 PROcList:ENDPROC
250 PROcWipe:ENDPROC
260 STOP
270 DEFPROCbj(BS):FORMX=1
TOLENBS:XA#0:YS#89:7890#ASC
(MDS(BS,MS,1)):AX#10:CALLBF
F1:L=L+1
280 FORX=22:GOTO225:VDU23,X
I:FORY#0T03:VDU7:(890#L):V
DU7:(890#L):L=L+1:NEXT:NE
XT:VDU224,8,10,225,11:NEXT:E
NDPROC
290 DEFPROCtitle(BS):VDU28
,0,31,39,0:CLS:VDU23,1,0;0;0
;0:COLOUR#;VDU07:(890#L):V
DU7:0T03:PRINTSTRINGS(CHR,")NE
XT:PRINTTAB(20-LENBS+2,1);P
ROcBj#BS:COLOURI:COLOURI28
:VDU23,1,1;0;0;0:ENDPROC
300 DEFPROCload:PROctitle(
"LOAD dictionary"):INPUT""
Filename",dic$in#OPENIN
dic$:IfIn#0 PROctitle("No
such file - SPACE for Main M
enu"):REPEAT:UNTILGET=32:EN
DPROC
310 PROctitle("LOADING 'd
ic$' - Please wait"):maxI=1
:REPEAT:INPUT#in#dic$(maxI,
0):INPUT#in#dic$(maxI,1):ma
X#maxI+1:UNTIL EOF#IN#CLOS
E#B#maxI-1:ENDPROC
320 DEFPROCsave:IfmaxI#0 E
NDPROC ELSE PROctitle("SAVE
dictionary"):INPUT""File
name",dic$
330 in#OPENIN dic$:IfIn#0
PROctitle(dic$ exists"
Replace (Y/N)"):REPEAT:GX#G
ET AND 223:UNTIL GX#ASC" O
R GX#ASC"Y:If GX#ASC"Y" VDU
7:CLOSE#B:ENDPROC
340 PROctitle("SAVING 'd
ic$' - Please wait"):CLOSE#B
:out#OPENOUT dic$:FORL=1TO
maxI:PRINTout#dic$(L),0;2
10,220,230,240,250
350 PROcLoad:COLOURI29:PRIN
T"Press SPACE for Main Men
u":COLOURI:COLOURI28:REPEAT
:UNTIL GET=32:ENDPROC
360 DEFProcFetch:REPEAT:GX#G
ET#in#;CX#INSTR(punc$,CHR$B
J):IFCX#0 UNTILGX#B:WS#N10$
punc$,CX,1):=FALSE
370 UNTIL(GX#64 AND BX#91)
OR (BX#96 AND BX#123) OR EO
F#in#:IF EOF#in# THEN =TRUE
380 BX#BXAND223:WS#CHR$B
J:REPEAT:GX#GET#in#;IF EOF#in
% THEN 330
390 CX#INSTR(punc$,CHR$B
J):IFCX#0 WS#N10$(punc$,CX,1)
:IF BS#TRUE ELSE puncI=FALSE
520 IF (BX#64 AND BX#91) O
R (BX#96 AND BX#123) WS#WS#C
HR$(BXAND223)
530 UNTIL (BXAND223)<65 OR
(BXAND223)>90 OR EOF#in#:IF
EOF#in# THEN =TRUE
540 =FALSE
550 DEFPROCmatch:GX#INSTR(
punc$,WS):If CX#0 WS#WS#ENOP
ROC ELSE FX#B:FORL=1TOmaxI:
If FX#0 THEN If WS#dic$(L),0
7%I:MS#dic$(L,1)
560 NEXT:If FX#0 WS#WS#
WS#
570 ENDPROC
580 DEFPROCoutput:PRINTMS;
:If puncI PRINT#B:ENDPROC EL
SE If EOF#IN# ENDPROC
590 PRINT":ENDPROC
600 DEFPROClist:IfmaxI#0 V
DU7:ENDPROC ELSE PROctitle(
"LISTING dictionary"):VDU28,0
,31,39,5,14
610 FORL=1TOmaxI:PRINTLX;
:":dic$(L),0),dic$(L,1):N
EXT:PRINT:COLOUR#;COLOURI29
:PRINT"Press Space for Main
Menu":COLOURI:COLOURI28:REP
EAT:UNTILGET=32:ENDPROC
620 If ERR=17 GOTO 70
630 PROctitle("ERROR - pre
ss SPACE for Main Menu"):PRI
NT:":REPORT
640 REPEAT:UNTILGET=32:GOT
O70

```

This listing is included in this month's cassette tape offer. See order form on Page 53.

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user
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BEFORE you say wearily, "Oh no, not another Repton-type game", let me put the record straight. Boulderdash has the enviable reputation of being the game which inspired Repton and all its clones all those years ago.

So why is it finally being released for the Electron/BBC Micro market, which by now must surely be saturated to bursting point with diamond-digging maze games? The answer is, as ever, that the original is usually the best. Not always, but in this case it is certainly true.

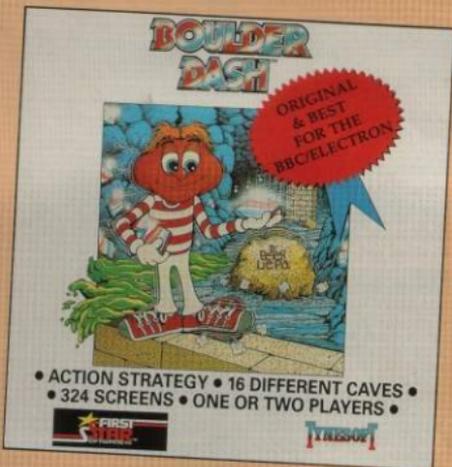
I, like many others, cracked my maze-digging teeth on Repton long before I ever heard of Boulderdash. I first played Boulderdash on an Amstrad CPC464 about a year ago, and thought to myself that Repton had better watch out.

Little did I know that this newcomer actually predated my favourite by quite a stretch, albeit on a different machine – the old 8 bit Atari.

Well, here it is at last on the Electron, and jolly good it is too. You play the part of Rockford, a cute little character who is a right little hoarder, and addicted to those big glistening diamonds scattered about the place just waiting to be scooped up.

Unfortunately, opposition to Rockford's greed lies in the form of hundreds of lethal boulders, deadly butterflies and a rapidly-growing, pulsating amoeba.

You won't meet the amoeba until the later levels



– there are 16 in all – but the other hazards are present right from the start.

Most obviously dangerous are the boulders. Although this doesn't need explaining to Repton fans, the boulders are imbedded in earth and digging for diamonds undermines their support. If a boulder falls on Rockford, it's curtains.

A large element of strategy is involved in turning things to your advantage. Boulders may be pushed either left or right, and as they will topple off the edge of a precipice – which can be dug carefully to suit your requirements – traps can be laid for the mutant butterflies.

Dropping a boulder on a butterfly mutates it into nine separate diamonds. As a set quota has to be collected,

butterfly crushing is a necessary pastime – especially on levels deliberately low in their supplies of diamonds.

Collecting the full quota for a given screen causes a door somewhere in the maze to be activated. It won't always be near you, so when you hear the bang which signifies its opening, a quick dash is indicated, especially if time is running short – there is a time limit for each level.

The green amoeba encountered on later levels is a real pain. It grows at a phenomenal rate and after a certain point it will turn into hundreds of boulders, which will then rain destruction on Rockford's head. Another incentive to hurry things up.

What surprised me the

most about Boulderdash was the way the screens have been copied faithfully from the original version on the 8 bit Atari. The two micros are worlds apart and the programmer has done a good job in converting the game.

As far as I could tell, every single diamond and boulder is in the same location as in the original version, and it was with great excitement I realised that I could complete level after level using exactly the same techniques that I had spent so long working out a year ago on the Amstrad.

That is the mark of a truly successful game conversion. Even the sprites are identical, except that the Electron/BBC Micro version runs in Mode 5, using just four colours – but then so does Repton.

My only niggle, oddly enough, was in the keyboard control. Rockford simply would not stop smartly on the spot when I released the keys.

Instead – during what were usually tightly calculated manoeuvres – he would plough ahead for one more move, totally mucking up the strategy and sometimes getting himself crushed under a deadly impromptu rockfall.

My verdict is that Boulderdash is the original diamond digging game and it's still the best ever. Buy it, even if you are an unshakable Repton fan – you'll be amazed at just how addictive it can be.

There are many, many more secrets further into the game which I'm not going to spoil by revealing here.

Chris Nixon

Sound	7
Graphics	8
Playability	9
Value for money	10
Overall	9

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5. *KILL
 - to lock all sideways RAM banks found.
6. *LOCK
 - to unlock a sideways RAM bank in ABR, AQR, AP7.
7. *LROMS
 - to lock all sideways RAM banks found.
8. *UNLOCK
 - to unlock all sideways RAM banks found.
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14. *BUILD
 - creates a text file that can be used by *EXEC (ie IBOOT).
15. *VFORM
 - displays a numbered listing of a text file.
16. *LIST
 - displays a file on screen with no line numbers.
17. *TYPE
 - to view a file's contents on screen.
18. *DUMP
 - selects a default language to be booted on <CTRL-BREAK>
19. *LANG
 - provides a full 'help' list on all the ROM's commands
20. *HELP
 - **STOP PRESS**
21. *AQRPAGE
 - selects the specified page in any AQR present.

Now there is no need to search for your utilities disc every time you want to Format/Verify a disc, Build a IBoot file or Lock/Unlock/Load a ROM image into ABR PLUS much more . . . the ideal companion from the company that produces the Acorn Plus 1.

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Phantom of the skies

Product: Phantom Combat
Price: £9.95
Supplier: Doctor Soft, P.O. Box 66, East Preston, West Sussex BN16 2TX.

THIS is the single computer version of a program demonstrated on BBC Television's Micro Live. You may have heard of Doctor Soft's now famous Double-Phantom flight simulator, where two BBC Micros are linked together via their RS423 ports.

Each computer controls a separate jet, but both occupy the same air space and each is visible out of the cockpit window to the other player.

Phantom Combat is the single player version of the same game – or should I say, single computer version, because Phantom Combat does support a kind of two-player option.

The instrument panel at the bottom of the screen is

superbly drawn in full colour with analogue dials and digital readouts. I have never seen as good an instrument display on the Electron. There is also a black and white version of Phantom Combat further on the tape, in Mode 4 for extra speed.

Flying is easier said than done. Although the manual lists all the keys, I kept fumbling because of the illogical and confusing choice for pitch and roll. However, all the other keys were sensible enough.

The handling characteristics of the Phantom feel good and Mach II flight can be achieved very quickly. When in combat mode, your adversary appears as a delta-wing shape.

The enemy planes are based on two real life jets – the Soviet Mig 21 and Su 15 – and supposedly mimic their big brothers' accurately. I couldn't really tell, but they are certainly deadly

enough and quite intelligent.

The cassette inlay takes great pains to stress the fact that this is a proper simulator and doesn't rely on arcade sprites to depict the objects. Everything, we are assured, is calculated and drawn on the screen at the rate of 15 frames a second.

I must agree that I wouldn't consider a game to be a true simulator either if the landscape and objects were drawn as sprites. But no flight simulator does this, so I can't see why Doctor Soft makes such a big thing of it.

And I must take issue with the claim of 15 frames a second animation. The flicker is dreadful. The techniques rather than the Electron's slow speed are at fault here – the display is constantly being drawn and wiped again, resulting in it being blank for 50 per cent of the time.

Phantom Combat is a



good simulator, marred only by a flickering screen display and a brief manual. This is a program which probably only comes into its own as the dual computer BBC Micro version, but as a stand-alone Electron simulator it is a good buy.

Chris Nixon

Sound.....	2
Graphics.....	8
Playability.....	6
Value for money.....	7
Overall.....	6

Battling buzzards

Product: Skirmish
Price: £9.95
Supplier: Godax, 12 Chiltern Enterprise Centre, Theale, Berkshire RG7 4AA.
Tel: 0734 302600

IMAGINE a world in which you sit astride a giant ostrich and engage in medieval-style jousting contests with opponents riding giant buzzards. This is the setting for Joust, Atari's smash arcade hit.

It sets itself apart from most other games by taking the idea of a two player game one stage further – you play not only against another human player, but also against a number of other computer opponents. Thus half a dozen combatants can be on the screen at once.

Now we have Skirmish, a superb conversion of this arcade favourite. Once loaded, three landing stages

are displayed and you are invited to start the game.

I found that the player sprites look rather messy because of the crammed-in detail. Aside from this minor point, Skirmish faithfully recreates all the addictive qualities of the original.

The controls are simple: Left, right and flap. The last control causes your bird to flap its wings once. Press it repeatedly to hover and faster still to gain height.

Skirmish features three different types of computer controlled rider – the bounders, wearing armour, are fairly easy to defeat, the Hunters are more cunning and the Shadow Lords are almost impossible to dismount.

To win a joust you must fly into an opposing player making sure your lance is higher than his. A vanquished human opponent loses a life and reappears

somewhere else on the screen.

However, a computer opponent falls off his mount and turns into an egg, while his riderless buzzard flies off into the distance. You must grab the egg quickly or it will hatch, spawning a rider of the next grade.

If your lance is lower than your opponent's, you will die and your bird will fly mournfully away. You soon learn to fly to the top of the screen as quickly as possible, but even this commanding position is by no means safe.

When all the computer controlled riders have been defeated the next wave begins. Later stages add even more nasties: The lava troll that stalks along the bottom of the screen ready to grab any foolhardy contestant who comes too close. And the indestructible pterodactyl that flies

backwards and forwards until the wave has ended. The pterodactyl can appear on earlier waves if you take too long to dispose of your opponents – give it lots of air space.

Skirmish provides all the useful features that make all the difference to any good game: Pause/restart, sound on/off and quit game are all included. I can recommend it wholeheartedly – and it's even better if you have a Slogger Turbo board fitted.

It is one of the most playable games I have seen this year and will certainly lead to many late nights. To quote the loading commentary: Prepare to joust, buzzard bait.

Martin Reed

Sound.....	7
Graphics.....	7
Playability.....	9
Value for money.....	8
Overall.....	8

Quality compendium

Product: *Play it again Sam 2*
 Price: £9.95
 Supplier: Superior Software,
 Regent House, Skinner
 Lane, Leeds LS7 1AX.
 Tel: 0532-459453

THIS is Superior's follow-on to *Play it again Sam*, and once more we have four classic hits packaged together for the price of one. First on the twin-cassette pack is **Repton 3**, the sequel of the original diamond digging character game *Boulderdash* – also reviewed this month.

Repton 3 features the now famous little character who loves digging for diamonds. The object is to defuse a time bomb present in each of the 24 screens, but first every diamond in the screen has to be collected, as well as a fabulous golden crown.

The puzzles are many and varied, and there is also a

Stryker's run part 2 – there's a map to this in this month's Arcade Corner. *Stryker's Run* was one of my favourite games, but until now I hadn't played its sequel – and I was impressed with what I saw.

For a start, Commander Stryker's animated figure moves even more realistically, if that is possible, and he can even crawl on his belly to negotiate low objects.

The plot behind *Codename: Droid* is, yet again, to foil the evil Volgans in their plot for world supremacy. This time your mission is to secretly land on the planet Volga and steal their revolutionary new spacecraft – *Codename Z11* – from under their green noses.

To aid you, jet packs are to be found in various places to enable you to fly over obstacles and chasms. You also have a very sophisticated wrist terminal from which you can obtain lots of information about your current whereabouts.

To reach the enemy spacecraft, 12 levels of the complex must be descended. There are lifts, but you must first collect a



Repton 3

deadly fungus to avoid. This grows and grows until you are eventually swallowed up and the only way to halt its progress is to surround it with rocks.

On the flip side of cassette one is **Codename: Droid** –

security pass – which is only valid for transport either down or up one level.

Volgan guards abound and will shoot as soon as you approach them. To keep you on your toes, the further into the complex you

descend the tougher their armour becomes, requiring more blasts from your laser to turn them into nicely animated skeletons.

This game is much more complex than its predecessor and so much is involved that I can do no more than recommend you buy this compilation and find out more.

The second cassette is devoted to games by Kevin Edwards, who first hit the charts with his excellent **Galaforce**, nearly two years ago (doesn't time fly?), and it is now doing the rounds again on this compilation.

If you didn't buy *Galaforce* the first time round, you must not miss this opportunity to play what is, in my opinion, the best shoot-'em-up ever for the Electron and BBC Micro.

This praise is unqualified by any niggling moans. The game is sheer excellent programming, totally addictive and graphically stunning –

you'll never see sprites this big move so fast on your Electron again.

Wave after wave of different aliens sweep down upon



Galaforce

you in set patterns and the art of playing *Galaforce* is to memorise as many alien formation types as possible – if you don't, you won't last more than a few seconds in each zone.

I noticed that even the soundtrack has been faithfully copied from the BBC Micro version. Even though the Electron can't support more than one channel sound, the three-

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part harmony has been broken down, each part played in succession so you don't miss out on the full effect.

What surprised me was the scrolling star backdrop. I had assumed that its inclusion in the Electron version would slow things down. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The action, while not quite as blindingly fast as on the BBC Micro, still comes thick and furious. I think the compilation is worth the

cash for this game alone.

Moving on to the final offering on the reverse of cassette two, **Craze Rider**, I was slightly disappointed. This is Kevin Edwards' second game for Superior, but it is – pardon the pun – streets behind Galaforce.

Faced with a motorcycle racing game, I was all settled in for an exciting session. The credits looked promising, fading in and out nicely and with mounting anticipation I pressed Space to start the race.

It says in the instructions that you can knock other

riders off the track, and that this is especially effective during the crazy scramble at the start of each race.

Well, try as I may I could only hit one or two other bikes, because my acceleration was so lousy compared to everyone else's that I couldn't match speeds with any other riders until the race was well under way.

I dare say that devotees of this game will just say hard cheddar for being a useless player, but as someone who could consistently win the race in Revs on the BBC

Micro with a lap time in the top three best, I couldn't help but feel that there was something missing with Craze Rider.

Perhaps it isn't fair to compare a full racing simulation like Revs with what is obviously a knock-'em-off fun game, but it really lacked that satisfying feeling – for me, at any rate.

Chris Nixon

Sound.....	7
Graphics.....	8
Playability.....	9
Value for money.....	10
Overall.....	9

Spring into adventure

Product: Quest

Price: £9.95

Supplier: Superior Software,
Regent House, Skinner
Lane, Leeds LS7 1AX.
Tel: 0532-459453

RELEASES from Superior's stable are always to be taken seriously, and the latest game, Quest, is no exception. It is an arcade adventure – always one of Superior's favourite themes – in which you play the part of Walter Cobra, a clever but absent-minded young chap who has two favourite hobbies – exploring and inventing.

One day you stumble across a faded old map which shows the route to a buried object marked as the Golden Dragon. The starting point is a wishing well



located a couple of miles from your home.

The next day you amble over to the well and climb down it. Only after reaching the bottom of the well do you remember the map,

which is still at home. However, having come this far you decide to press on regardless, and so – according to the cassette inlay – begins the greatest adventure of your life.

The objective is to seek and retrieve the legendary Golden Dragon shown on the original map. In the process, 12 power crystals must be collected and you must destroy three reactors. Destroying a reactor is achieved by getting inside it and firing a stun grenade – one of Walter's little inventions.

You control Walter with three keys: Left, right and jump. He is equipped with another of his little inventions – a pair of jet boots which will only function in rooms containing large triangular objects called transmogrifiers.

A great deal of the game's strategy derives from how you use these boots. Some rooms are so lethal it is safer if you fly through them. But no transmogrifier means you have to build up enough momentum from a neighbouring location to literally coast across in free fall.

Scattered throughout the maze are eight computer terminals, which can be interrogated if you are carrying the right object and know the password.

I played this game for a

long while without ever encountering a terminal, let alone a crystal. This goes to show just how large the adventure is, and it should certainly keep the old grey matter buzzing for a long time.

Quest lacks the clean-cut feel present in some of Superior's other games. While remaining an extremely challenging and very stimulating arcade adventure, little things niggle me. The screens are very cluttered and sometimes it's not too clear just what is going on.

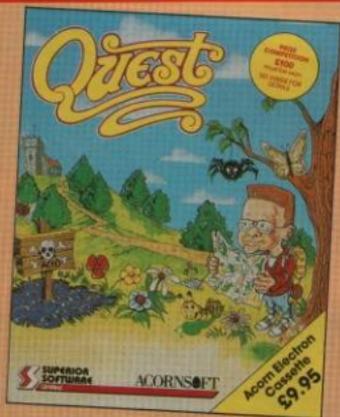
Some floors can look solid, but you will fall through them because the

screen seems to contain some actual program data, which lies across the bottom of the picture.

Summing up, Quest is a nice arcade adventure, following in the footsteps of Citadel and Palace of Magic. The addition of gimmicks like the jet boots and computer terminals keep the interest up and I can certainly recommend it for its addictiveness alone.

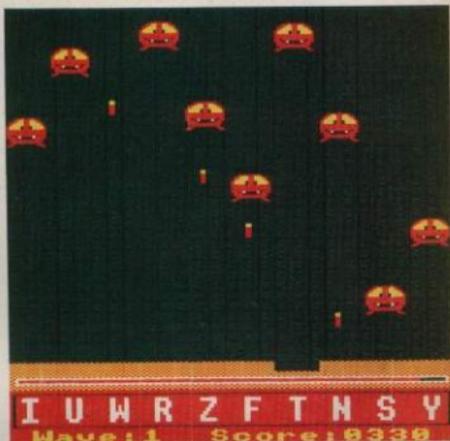
Barry Wood

Sound.....	5
Graphics.....	8
Playability.....	9
Value for money.....	9
Overall.....	8



Tackle typing terrors!

Improve your key bashing skills with **ROLAND WADDILOVE's** devious typing tutor



THIS fast and furious arcade shoot-'em-up is actually a typing tutor, and is designed to improve your hand-eye coordination and knowledge of the keyboard.

Unlike other tutors, this one is intended to be both fun and addictive, while teaching you important skills at the same time.

The game places you at the controls of a strategic defence missile silo and it is your task to save the Earth from hordes of marauding alien invaders.

These bug-eyed monsters appear out of hyper space and drop down through the

upper stratosphere toward the ground. Little do they know what is in store for them!

Underground are many missile silos, built for just such an invasion. Each has its own control button and pressing it sends a missile to meet the oncoming extraterrestrials.

The keys to press are printed at the bottom of the screen and change with every wave of invaders.

The first fleet of aliens descend slowly, but later ones move more quickly. You shouldn't experience any problems dispatching

the first lot, but the others may prove a little more difficult – it all depends on how fast you can hit the appropriate letters.

If any aliens land they explode leaving a large crater and the blast will reduce your energy – indicated by a horizontal energy meter just above the control keys.

There is a great temptation to cheat and simply hit every key on the keyboard as fast as you can. To prevent this, your energy is

reduced slightly every time you hit a wrong key, so accuracy is just as important as speed.

The whole game – apart from the instruction screen – is written in assembly language for speed.

Be careful when entering the listing as a single typing error could make the Electron hang up, or at least print an obscure and meaningless error message.

To be on the safe side, save the program before running it.

```

10 REM Typing Terrors
20 REM BY R.A.Waddilove
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 MODE AS:FX16
50 PROCAssemble
60 PROCInstructions
70 W:W:landed=37
80 REPEAT
90 PROCscreen
100 CALL code
110 UNTIL ?landed=0
120 VDU28,2,15,17,10,12:CO
LOUR 3
130 PRINTTAB(1,1)"You're d
ead!"TAB(2,3)"Another game?"
140 FOR I=0 TO 2000:NEXT:I*
FX21
150 IF INSTR("Y,GETS) RU
N
160 MODE 6
170 END
180
190 DEF PROCInstructions
200 VDU23,254,170,85,170,8
5,170,85,170,85
210 OSCLI"FX21:":*FX4,1
220 PROCbig("Typing Terror
s",350,1000)
230 PRINT TAB(0,5)"Alien i
nvaders are attacking the Ea
rth"
240 PRINT:PRINT"once more.
Your task is to save the"
250 PRINT:PRINT"planet fro
m destruction. You have 10"
260 PRINT:PRINT"missile ba
ses each controlled by a"
270 PRINT:PRINT"separate k
ey - printed at the bottom"
280 PRINT:PRINT"of the scr
een. Press a key to fire a"
290 PRINT:PRINT"missile."
300 PRINT TAB(0,20)"Press
SPACE to start...:"
310 REPEAT UNTIL GET
320 VDU22,5,23,1;0;0;0;0;
330 ENDPROC
340
350 DEF PROCscreen
360 COLOUR 1;:CLS
370 COLOUR 2:PRINTTAB(3,10
)"Get Ready...":TAB(4,12)"Fo
r Wave ";W;: "-"
380 COLOUR 129:VDU28,0,31,
19,26,12,26:PRINT TAB(0,26)S
TRINGS(40,CHR$254)
390 GCOL0,0:MOVE 16,116:DR
AW 16,40:DRAW 1264,40:DRAW 1
264,116:DRAW 16,116
400 MOVE 32,148:DRAW 1250,
148:MOVE 32,144:DRAW 1250,14
4
410 FOR I%=1 TO ?landed+1
420 ?(879C2+(I%*8)=80F:?(87
9C3+(I%*8)=80F
430 NEXT
440 GCOL0,3:MOVE 24,152:DR
AW 1256,152:DRAW 1256,140:DR
AW 24,148:DRAW 24,152
450 W:W:ks="
460 PRINT TAB(1,31)"Wave:"
W;:TAB(9,31)"Score:0000":
470 FOR I=0 TO 9
480 REPEAT as=CHR$(64+RND(
26)):UNTIL INSTR(ks,as)=0:ks
=ks+as
490 ?ks:ASC(as)
500 PROCbig(as,32+i*128,10
6)
510 NEXT
520 IF W:W:ks<4 ?speed=4-W:W:EL
SE ?speed=0
530 COLOUR 128
540 PRINTTAB(0,10)STRINGS(
60,"")
550 COLOUR 129
560 ENDPROC
570
580 DEF PROCbig(as,X1,Y1)
590 VDU5:MOVEX1,Y1
600 FOR I%=1 TO LENas
610 AT=6C000+(ASC(MID$(as,
I1))-32)*8
620 VDU23,255,141,141,AX1
,AX?1,AX?2,AX?2,AX?3,AX?3
630 VDU255,10,8
640 VDU23,255,AX?4,AX?4,AX
?5,AX?5,AX?6,AX?6,AX?7,AX?7
650 VDU255,11

```

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ICARUS

£9.95 cassette
BBC Model B, B+,
Master and Electron

£11.95 disc
BBC series:
5 1/4" or 3 1/2"



Split-screen action with different views for each player. When you are both in the same area the views are the same.

Crack the code to the forcefield, pass through the portals to raid the area of valuable credits, then head for the lift.

Now **TWO** can play – and experience ...

THE CHALLENGE OF A LIFETIME!

Starship Icarus is plummeting towards the sun, and the only hope of averting the impending cataclysm is for you to teleport on board, disable the master computer and regain control ...

This spectacular fast-action game has a unique split-screen which means that one player can complete the game on his own – or play simultaneously with a friend – to trigger the trigger-happy droids which infest the ship. With 20 levels of nerve-racking excitement, forcefields, mines,

electronic doors, emergency lifts, movable walls, and opportunities to build up your armour, blaster and health ratings, this is one game you won't complete in a few weeks!

There can be no doubt that Icarus, with its incredible one- or two-player action, is one of the most exciting games ever created for the BBC Micro and Electron.

Check it out for yourself – and take up the challenge!

Icarus is the result of six months' intensive work by Powerhouse Software, the programming team which developed the top-selling Durjanz. A full three months has been spent play-testing and fine-tuning to produce an addictive challenge with a gameplay that's really out of this world!



MANDARIN SOFTWARE

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Adlington, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

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```

660 NEXT
670 VDU4
680 ENDPROC
690
700 DEF PROCassemble
710 DIM code 1200
720 osbyte=:L20A:oswrch=:L&
2BE
730 d%in=8
740 new=850:temp=852
750 columns=854:rows=855
760 temprows=856:speed=857
770 account=858:lcount=859
780 inkey=:854:wave=:858
790 delay=:859:landed=:85E
800 keys=:890
810 FOR pass=0 TO 2 STEP 2
820 P%code
830 [OPT pass
840
850 .start
860 LDA #0:STA wave:LDA #5
:STA wave+1
870 LDA #9:STY lcount 110
aliens
880 LDA #9:d%in:STA account
890 .loop
900 JSR BAF51:LDA #2A:ORA
#1
910 LDX account
920 STA aliens+2,X:STA ali
ens+4,X
930 LDY lcount:LDA keys,Y:
STA aliens+7,X
940 TYA:ASL A:ASL A:STA al
iens,X
950 LDA #0:STA aliens+3,X
960 STA aliens+6,X 1no ni
ssle
970 SEC:LDA account:SBC #di
m:STA account
980 DEC lcount:BPL loop
990
1000 .main
1010 JSR delay_loop
1020 LDA #9:d%in:STA account
1030 JSR input
1040 LDA landed:BEQ exit
1050 .loop
1060 SEI:JSR move.aliens:CL
I
1070 LDA landed:BEQ exit
1080 JSR fire
1090 LDA #8:T:L DY #8:L DY #8
:#8F:JSR osbyte
1100 TYA:BNE exit
1110 SEC:LDA account:SBC #di
m:STA account
1120 BPL loop
1130 DEC wave:BNE main
1140 DEC wave+1:BNE main
1150 .exit
1160 RTS
1170
1180 .input
1190 LDA #8:T:L DY #8:L DY #8
:JSR osbyte
1200 TYA:BEQ keyp
1210 LDY #8:JMP end.input
1220 .keyp
1230 TYA
1240 LDY #9
1250 .loop
1260 CMP keys,Y:BEQ end.inp
ut
1270 DEY:BPL loop
1280 JSR power
1290 .end.input
1300 STX inkey
1310 RTS
1320
1330 .power
1340 STY temp:STX temp+1
1350 LDA #7:JSR oswrch
1360 LDY landed:INX:L DY #21
B:JSR convert
1370 LDA #8:TA:STA (new),Y
:INX:STA (new),Y
1380 DEC landed
1390 LDY temp+1:L DY temp
1400 RTS
1410 .score
1420 LDA #7:JSR oswrch
1430 LDA #31:JSR oswrch:LDA
#15:JSR oswrch:LDA #31:JSR
oswrch
1440 LDY #2
1450 .loop
1460 INC digits,X
1470 LDA digits,X:CMP #ASC
#10:BNE sc.ok
1480 LDA #48:STA digits,X
1490 DEB:LPL loop
1500 .sc.ok
1510 LDY #0
1520 .loop
1530 LDA digits,X:JSR oswr
ch
1540 INX:CPX #3:BNE loop
1550 LDY account
1560 RTS
1570 .digits EGUS '0000'
1580 .delay_loop
1590 LDA speed:BEQ deLend:
STA delay
1600 .loop
1610 LDA #19:JSR osbyte
1620 DEC delay:BPL loop
1630 .deLend RTS
1640
1650 .fire
1660 LDY account
1670 LDA aliens+6,X:BEQ new
.miss
1680 LDA aliens+2,X:BNE mov
e.miss
1690 SEC:LDA aliens+5,X:SBC
aliens+1,X:CMP #20:BCS nove
.miss
1700 LDA #2:STA aliens+3,X
1710 JSR score
1720 .miss.off
1730 LDY aliens+5,X:LDA ali
iens+6,X:TAX:JSR convert
1740 LDA #0:LDX account:STA
aliens+6,X
1750 LDA #blank MOD256:STA
pdata+1:LDA #blank DIV256:ST
A pdata+2
1760 LDY #1:L DY #12:JMP pri
nt
1770 .move.miss
1780 LDA aliens+3,X:BEQ mis
s.off:SEC:SBC #4:.mm STA ali
ens+5,X
1790 TYA:LDA aliens+6,X:TAX
:JSR convert
1800 LDA #missdata MOD256:ST
A pdata+1:LDA #missdata DIV
TA pdata+2
1810 LDY #1:L DY #12:JMP pri
nt
1820 .new.miss
1830 LDA aliens+7,X:CMP ink
ey:BEQ put.miss:RTS
1840 .put.miss
1850 CLC:LDA aliens,X:ADC #
1:STA aliens+6,X:LDA #196:JM
P mn
1860
1870 .move.aliens
1880 LDY account
1890 LDA aliens+2,X:BNE new
.alien
1900 LDA aliens+3,X:BEQ ali
en.ok
1910 DEC aliens+3,X:BEQ era
se
1920 .start exploding
1930 LDY aliens+1,X:LDA ali
ens,X:TAX:JSR convert
1940 LDA #exdata MOD256:STA
pdata+1:LDA #exdata DIV256:
STA pdata+2
1950 LDY #4:L DY #17:JMP pri
nt
1960 .erase
1970 LDA aliens+4,X:STA ali
ens+2,X
1980 LDY aliens+1,X:LDA ali
ens,X:TAX:JSR convert
1990 LDA #blank MOD256:STA
pdata+1:LDA #blank DIV256:ST
A pdata+2
2000 LDY #4:L DY #17:JMP pri
nt
2010 .alien.ok
2020 INX aliens+1,X:L DY ali
ens+1,X
2030 CPY #197:BNE aok
2040 LDA #2:STA aliens+3,X
2050 JSR power
2060 .aok
2070 LDA aliens,X:TAX:JSR c
onvert
2080 LDA #sprdata MOD256:ST
A pdata+1:LDA #sprdata DIV25
6:STA pdata+2
2090 LDY #4:L DY #17:JMP pri
nt
2100 .new.alien
2110 DEC aliens+2,X:BNE wa
.exit
2120 LDA #0:STA aliens+1,X:
TAY
2130 LDA aliens,X:TAX:JSR c
onvert
2140 LDA #sprdata MOD256:ST
A pdata+1:LDA #sprdata DIV25
6:STA pdata+2
2150 LDY #4:L DY #17:JMP pri
nt
2160 .wa.exit
2170 LDY #0:LOD DEQ:BNE l
oop
2180 RTS
2190
2200 .aliens
2210 EGUS STRINGS(10)+di,CH
R801
2220
2230 .print
2240 STX columns:STY rows
2250 LDA #0:L DY #0
2260 LDA new:STA temp:LDA n
ew+1:STA temp+1
2270 .loop1
2280 LDA rows:STA temprows
2290 .loop2
2300 .pdata LDA #3000,X:STA
(new),Y
2310 INX
2320 LDA new:AND #7:CMP #7:
BEQ pb
2330 INC new:BNE pnext:INC
new+1:JMP pnext
2340 .pb
2350 LDA new:ADC #438:STA n
ew:LDA new+1:ADC #1:STA new+
1
2360 .pnext
2370 DEC temprows:BNE loop2
2380 LDA temp:ADC #8:STA ne
w:STA temp:LDA temp+1:ADC #8
:STA new+1:STA temp+1
2390 DEC columns:BNE loop1
2400 RTS
2410
2420 .convert
2430 LDA #0:STA new+1:TXA:A
SL A:ASL A:ROL new+1:ASL A:R
OL new+1:STA new
2440 TYA:AND #7:ADC new:STA
new:LDA new+1:ADC #8:STA ne
w+1
2450 TYA:LSR A:LSR A:LSR A:
ASL A:TAY
2460 LDA table,Y:ADC new:ST
A new:LDA table+1,Y:ADC new+1
1:STA new+1
2470 RTS
2480
2490 .table
2500 OPT Fntable
2510
2520 .blank
2530 EGUS STRINGS(17)+4,CHR8
0)
2540 OPT Fnsprite.data
2550 .missdata EQUW #3083:E
QUW #30830303:EQUW #3083:EQU
W #0
2560 ]
2570 NEXT
2580 ENDPROC
2590
2600 DEF Fntable
2610 FOR i=0 TO 31
2620 [OPT pass=:EQUW #5000+i
*1640:]
2630 NEXT
2640 .pass
2650
2660 DEF Fnsprite.data
2670 RESTORE
2680 sprdata=:PI:exdata=:sprd
ata+4*#17
2690 FOR i=0 TO 24+17-1 ST
EP 4
2700 READ as
2710 [OPT pass=:EQUW EVAL'W
'+as:]
2720 NEXT
2730 .pass
2740
2750 REM SPRITE
2760 REM X=4/Y=17
2770 DATA #010000,734342,7
86787,301003,690#0006,C1C1
E1E1,F0F0F0,F0F044
2780 DATA #000000,30787049,
F0F0F0,F01220F,F,640C0800,E
0CC2C,C0E046,60C080C
2790 REM EXPL
2800 REM X=4/Y=17
2810 DATA 100,2000100,10002
,100,2000,3040100,40300101
,2000410,4000000
2820 DATA 20000200,C0808C0
,20020,4,8,040008,000,8

```

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STAYING IN THE SHADOWS

HOPEFULLY some of you have already been dabbling a little, poking and peeking your hidden ram using the methods I explained in last month's issue.

If there is still some doubt about how to go about it safely, read on as I'll show you how to use the lower 12k of bank zero as a huge text storage area.

For those of you who missed Part I of the series, we are exploring ways of using the unused memory provided by Slogger's Master Ram Board, and you can still catch up with the action this month because the programs are fully self-contained.

The short piece of machine code from last month's article is going to stay with us for the duration of the series, as it is the central core of all the utilities I will be presenting.

And to keep things straightforward, I will be resorting to using machine code for other purposes only where strictly necessary.

Take a look at Program I. It is a collection of three short procedures, which when used together provide a sort of ram filing system.

Making sure that you are in 64k mode, type in Program I and save it. Don't try

to run it in its present form, as it is designed to be merged on to the end of an existing Basic program, and so must first be spooled to tape or disc.

Type *SPOOL ASCII and press Return, making sure you have a disc in the drive or a tape in the recorder. Now list the program, pressing Shift to scroll if necessary. When the Basic prompt re-appears, type *SPOOL by itself and press Return.

The program is now stored in Ascii format, ready for attaching to any Basic program which is to work in shadow ram and also needs

extra text storage space.

Program II is just such a program, so type NEW and enter the listing. When you have finished, rewind the tape if using one, and type *EXEC ASCII.

The recently spooled file will be added line by line to Program II in memory. Ignore any syntax errors which may appear.

You can list the program and see that Programs I and II are indeed merged. It would be wise at this point to save the complete program to avoid having to merge both programs again if something unfortunate should happen.

Program II is just a demonstration of how to use the procedures from Program I, but before you run the merged program an explanation of what Program I does is needed.

PROCassem assembles

```

10 REM String store
20 REM By Chris Nixon
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 REM
50 MODE 6:PROCassem
60 size%=50:FORL1=0T04
70 INPUTLINE"TEXT ",AS
80 PROCput(AS,L1):NEXT
90 PRINT:FORL1=0T04
100 PROCget(L1):PRINT$S
110 NEXT:END
  
```

Program II

our shadow ram poke and peek routines, and should be called with PROCassem at the start of any program using these procedures.

PROCPut stores any string in ram bank zero, using a similar method to the example listing from last month. The two parameters are the string to be stored and its ram file number.

The file number is very important. In order to be able to find your strings at a later date, a file number is needed to indicate where in bank zero ram they are held.

It works by assuming that a fixed record length is being used, which means the length of any strings stored is dictated by the variable size% - pre-set to 50 by Program II.

PROCPut places a string in the hidden ram at locations which are multiples of whatever value is currently in size%.

In this case the file number tells it how many chunks of 50 bytes must be skipped over before placing the string.

A carriage return character - CHR\$(13) - is added to the end of all stored strings, so PROCget knows when each one ends. PROCget

```

30000 DEFPROCassem
30010 DIV code% 100
30020 FORpass% = 0T025STEP2
30030 PH=code%:COPY pass%
30040 :put
30050 LDA #0:PHA:PLP:JMP #FB
FB
30060 :put
30070 PHA:LDA #64:PHA:PLP
30080 PLA:JMP #FBFD
30090 :NEXT:ENDPROC
30100 :
30110 DEFPROCput(SS,PI)
30120 LOCAL AS,XX,YY,LL
30130 IF LEN(SS) > size%:VDU
:PRINT"String too long":$S:
STOP
30140 ptr=size%*PI
30150 FORL1=1TOLEN(SS)
30160 XX=ptr%MOD 256
30170 YY=ptr%DIV 256
30180 AS=ASC(MID$(SS,L1,1))
30190 CALL put:ptr+=ptr%+1
30200 NEXT:AS+=1
30210 XX=ptr%MOD 256
30220 YY=ptr%DIV 256
30230 CALL put:ENDPROC
30240 :
30250 DEFPROCget(PX)
30260 LOCAL AS,XX,YY,LL
30270 ptr=size%*PX
30280 $S="":REPEAT
30290 XX=ptr%MOD 256
30300 YY=ptr%DIV 256
30310 AS=USR(get)AND #FF
30320 $S=$S+CHR$(AS)
30330 ptr+=ptr%+1
30340 UNTILAS=13:$S=$S+CHR$(
,LENS-1)
30350 ENDPROC
  
```

Program I

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Programming

◀ From Page 23

also needs you to specify a file number, which again is multiplied by the current value of *size%* to calculate the address at which the string is stored.

It then retrieves the string and places it in *SS* character by character until it finds the carriage return marker.

You can only change the value of *size%* to allow storage of strings up to 255 characters long, because Basic cannot handle strings bigger than this.

Remember that if the record size is too long, after 40 or 50 strings you may begin to corrupt the screen memory, which is just above our 12k storage space in bank zero.

This won't affect your program in the slightest, but it will disturb the strings stored in this area the next time anything is printed on

screen. Note also that changing the value of *size%* mid-way through a program is not recommended, because unless you are very sure of what you are doing you could corrupt previously stored strings.

Now you can run the merged program, which will ask you to type in five lines of text. When you have finished, all five lines will be printed again on the screen. Not very inspiring, you might think, and with good reason.

Program II really illustrates the power of the procedures in Program I, because no variables were used to store the five lines of input – apart from *AS* and *SS*, which are just temporary data carriers between the main program and the store/retrieve procedures.

You could adapt the program to store up to 245 different strings of 50 bytes

Shadow Ram Mini-Database By Chris Nixon - (c) Electron User

Main Menu

- 1) Search for an entry
- 2) Add a new entry
- 3) Delete an entry
- 4) Save data bank
- 5) Load data bank
- 6) Wipe current data

Select option (1-6):

each – even in Modes 0, 1 and 2.

Moving on to Program III, we have yet another way of utilising the procedures from Program I, in the form of a mini database which

uses bank zero for its storage space. Again, type NEW, enter Program III, rewind your tape and type *EXEC ASCII.

What you now have is a program which utilises the unused 12k in bank zero as a sort of ram disc. Although a touch slow, you should appreciate that it is entirely written in Basic.

The database allows up to 120 entries, each 100 bytes long. Use it for addresses, telephone numbers, filing your record collection or anything you like.

When you add an entry to the database, type it in as a continuous string; full-stops and commas are accepted, because of Basic's INPUT LINE command.

When you display an entry it will be neatly formatted, with no words broken over the end of a line.

Included in the database is an option to save the whole lower 12k of data to tape or disc.

To achieve this, the program uses simple sequential file handling techniques involving no more commands than OPENIN, OPENOUT, PRINT# and INPUT#. The real nitty-gritty is still performed by PROCput and PROCget.

● *That little lot should keep you going until next month, when I'll show you how to have two 12k programs in memory at the same time.*

```
10 REM Mini Database
20 REM By Chris Nixon
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 REM
50 ONERRORS0TO4040
60 MODE 1:PROCasen
70 PROCsetup:REPEAT
80 PROCmenu:UNTIL0
90 DEFPROCsetup:size=101
100 IFZ=69 ENDPROC ELSE Z
Z=69:AS=CHR$0:FORL=BT0119:P
ROCPut(AS,LX):NEXTZ:ENDPROC
110 DEFPROCmenu:PROCTitle(
'Shadow Ram Mini-Database'):
PRINTTAB(3,5):By Chris Nixon
-(c) Electron User:COLOUR
1:COLOUR130:PRINTTAB(16,18):
Main Menu:COLOUR3:COLOUR128
120 PRINT"SPC10") Search
for an entry"
130 PRINT"SPC102) Add a n
ew entry"
140 PRINT"SPC103) Delete
an entry"
150 PRINT"SPC104) Save da
ta bank"
160 PRINT"SPC105) Load da
ta bank"
170 PRINT"SPC106) Wipe cu
rrent data"
180 PRINT"SPC10:COLOUR2
:PRINT"Selected option (1-6):
":COLOUR3:REPEAT:G=GET:48:
UNTILG=0 AND 6<=7
190 ONGSOTO200,210,220,23
0,250,260
200 PROCsearch:ENDPROC
210 PROCadd:ENDPROC
220 PROCdelete:ENDPROC
230 PROCsave:ENDPROC
240 STOP
250 PROCload:ENDPROC
260 PROCwipe:ENDPROC
270 DEFPROCTitle(TS):LOCAL
LB:(0,10):PROCJustify(SS):REP
AT:UNTILGET=32:GOTO300
280 DEFPROCadd:PROCTitle(
ADD an entry):PRINT"REP
EAT:INPUTLINE Input entry",
SS:UNTILLEN$=size:PROCTit
le("Looking for a free slot .
. .")
290 LX=0:REPEAT:PROCTitle(L
X):LX=LX+1:UNTILLX=120 OR SS=
CHR$0:IF SS<=CHR$0 PROCTitle
("No free slots - SPACE for
Main Menu"):REPEAT:UNTILGET=
32:ENDPROC
300 LX=LX+1:PROCPut(SS,LX)
:ENDPROC
310 DEFPROCsave:PROCTitle(
'SAVE data bank'):INPUT""
Filename",FS:CH:OPENOUT FS
:FORL=BT0119:PROCPut(LS):PR
INT#CH,SS:NEXT:CLOSE#0:EN
DPROC
320 DEFPROCload:PROCTitle(
'LOAD data bank'):INPUT""
Filename",FS:CH:OPENIN FS:
FORL=BT0119:INPUT#CH,SS:PR
OCput(SS,LX):NEXT:CLOSE#0:EN
DPROC
330 DEFPROCwipe:PROCTitle(
'WIPE all entries - sure (Y/
N)?'):G=GET:IF G#="Y" PROC
title("Wiping - please wait
. . ."):AS=CHR$0:FORL=BT0119:
PROCPut(AS,LX):NEXT:ENDPROC
ELSE YDU:ENDPROC
340 IF ERR=17 RUN
350 PROCTitle("ERROR - Pre
ss SPACE for Main Menu")
360 REPORT:REPEAT:UNTILGET
=32:RUN
```


Feature

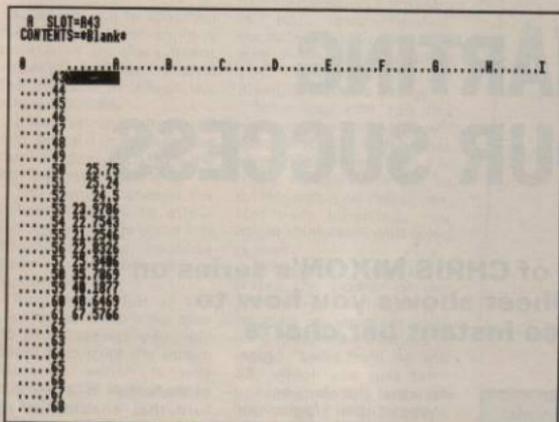


Figure 11: The sheet after using the replicate function

◀ From Page 25

it is impractical to set up more than four at once. We are going to use just two windows, one in which to display our bar chart and the other to provide a constant display of the top of the sheet.

The main reason for using windows in this case is that the bar chart display facility can only operate on whole windows, not individual slots.

As ViewSheet by default uses one window all the time, everything else on the sheet would appear as long strings of asterisks as well as our chart!

We neatly avoid the problem by partitioning our screen half-way down, with the lower half set to display slots in bar chart format.

There are other advantages to using windows — each one is capable of independent scrolling in any direction, while all other windows stay put.

This means you can be occupied in the top window, changing values and moving around, while the bottom bar chart display remains stationary, but will be updated in real time as you fiddle about.

Now on to setting up our bar chart. Before we start

work on the window setup, we must first use the profit mock-up table — which you have just entered — to create another table which will make up our bar chart.

The reason why we can't directly use the table shown in Figure 1 is that some of the values would go way off screen. What we need to do is create a second table where the results from the first are divided down a little before being displayed as a bar chart.

Move the slot cursor down the sheet to slot A50, and enter the formula: B30/3.5. You should immediately see the result, 25.75, appear under the cursor.

Dividing by 3.5 ensures that the finished bar chart will stay within the limits of the screen, unless the profits are made much larger.

In which case simply increase the division constant to four or more until the values look OK. The maximum displayable bar is 70 characters wide, so use this as your yardstick.

Now we need to copy this formula into A51-A61, using the same division formula. We could do this manually, slot by slot, but this is an ideal opportunity to introduce one of ViewSheet's most powerful fea-

tures, replication.

Replication is called in whenever you need to copy a block of slot entries to another part of a sheet. It is fast, very flexible, and once mastered you can build extremely powerful sheets in a very short time.

Press Func+1, shown on the keycard as Replicate. You are prompted at the top of the screen: "From - To?". At this point we must examine the way replication will interpret your answer.

You can replicate just one slot at a time, in which case you would reply with: slot1-slot2, where slot1 is the slot you wish to copy and slot2 is the destination. However, you can also copy a whole row or column at a time, and this needs a little more thought.

A contiguous group of slots is called a range and may lie either horizontally or vertically on the sheet. In our case we are interested in the vertical range A51-A61.

To copy slot A50 into all the slots in this range, we would reply to the "From - To?" prompt with: A50-A51A61. Look at this carefully and you will see how easy it is. We have simply entered the sheet reference for the slot we want to copy, followed by a dash, and the top and bottom slot references of our range.

Note the top and bottom of the range is run together with no space in between. This is vital to ViewSheet's interpretation of what we want to do, because replication can be applied in many different ways, and we need to be specific about what we want.

ViewSheet will attempt to copy the slot into the range as soon as you press Return, but will stop almost immediately with the query:

R:Relative, N:No change?
B30/3.5

The slot reference B30 is inverted black on white, and what ViewSheet is asking is



whether you want the reference to slot B30 to be copied verbatim or be adjusted relatively for each slot it is copied into.

If this sounds confusing, think about it like this. If you pressed N at this point, signifying that you want to copy the formula verbatim, then every slot in the range A51-A61 would contain the same formula. Not much use for our purposes here.

Therefore press R and the formula will be adjusted relatively through all of the slots into which it is being copied. The result is that slot A51 will contain B31/3.5, A52 will contain B32/3.5, and so on.

Viewsheets always highlights any slot reference found during a replication and asks you this question. You must answer with care, because in a complex formula some slot references may have to remain the same throughout the replication process.

So in case you haven't already done so, press R in response to the replication prompt, and after half a second or so all the slots in the specified range will be filled with the formula from A50, but adjusted properly for their different vertical positions.

Check Figure II, which

should be the same as your screen display at this point.

As I mentioned earlier, replication can take many forms, and we will cover the rest of them in later articles. Now we want to move on and create a twin-window display.

Press Func+2, labelled Edit Window on your keycard, and you will be greeted with the prompt "Window?". We first want to redefine the current window - which is number zero - so type 0 and press Return.

The current window definition will appear on the editing line, consisting of eight parameters printed below eight headings. The parameters control how wide and tall the window is, its position relative to others and various other functions.

With the arrow keys, move the cursor under the heading TopL, which is the slot reference of the current top left of the screen.

Overtyping the value shown with A30 and move beneath the heading BotR, the slot reference for the current bottom right of the screen.

Again overtype the value shown, but this time with I41. This should ensure our top window now only shows the figures entered previously from Listing I.

Now move to below the heading Opt. This part contains the various option settings of the window, concerning how it is displayed. Type T, then S.

This means that we want to disable both the Top and Side margins for that window, thereby tidying the screen and at the same time allowing more to be displayed. Press Return, and the new definition will be digested.

If there is anything wrong with it, such as an illegal parameter, ViewSheet will beep and list the definition again ready for editing, with the cursor under the offending parameter.

If the new window is accepted, the screen will change immediately to look like Figure III. Notice that there is indeed no top or side margin any more.

This is the usual practice with finished sheets, as it looks much neater and allows more of the window to fit on screen.

Press Func+2 again, and this time answer the prompt with 1 and press Return. Move under TopL and overtype the value shown with A50. Move under BotR and type A61.

Now move under the heading Cw, which stands for column width and type

70. This parameter controls the width of all slots in that window and can be used if you need to display more text or bigger numbers. We are using it to allow up to 70 asterisks to be displayed per slot.

The window will be only one column wide, but it will fill the screen from left to right.

Now move under the Opt heading, which should read: TS0. The 0 means that the window is currently off, which is the default state of windows 1-9. Overtyping this character with a C, which signifies that we want this window to be displayed in bar chart mode, and press Return.

Immediately you should have a screen that looks like Figure IV. Now you can see the year's profit as a much more readable bar chart. The exact figures are still displayed above for reference.

As you are inside window one at the moment, press Func+3 - Next Window - on your keycard. This key moves you from one window to another in sequence. As we only have two windows at present, it will act as a toggle between them.

Once in the top window, you can alter the values and watch the bar chart change as you experiment. You can, of course, scroll this window in any direction - even down to the location of the bar chart itself.

However, if you do this all you will see are the numeric values, because window zero is not set for bar chart mode.

Press Escape and save your new sheet, bearing in mind that not only will the current window definitions be saved along with the sheet, but also your current cursor position and the number of the window you were last in.

● Next month we'll replace the dummy profit figures with full monthly breakdowns, and see our sheet really come to life.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
22												
23												
24												
25												
26												
27												
28												
29												
30												
31												
32												
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34												
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37												
38												
39												
40												
41												
42												
43												
44												
45												
46												
47												

Figure III: The finished sheet

THIS puzzle was first put forward by the French mathematician Lucas around 100 years ago and presents an intriguing problem to the logically minded.

The game was originally played on a white wooden board using red and blue counters. Marked on the board were nine squares in a line.

The first four are occupied by four blue counters and the last four squares by red ones. Your objective is to swap the positions of the blue counters.

The moves are quite straightforward and there are only three rules to remember:

- Blue counters can only move right, while the red counters move left.

- If the square on the right of a blue counter or left of a red counter is vacant it can slide across.

- A counter can jump over one of the opposite colour providing there is a space beyond it.

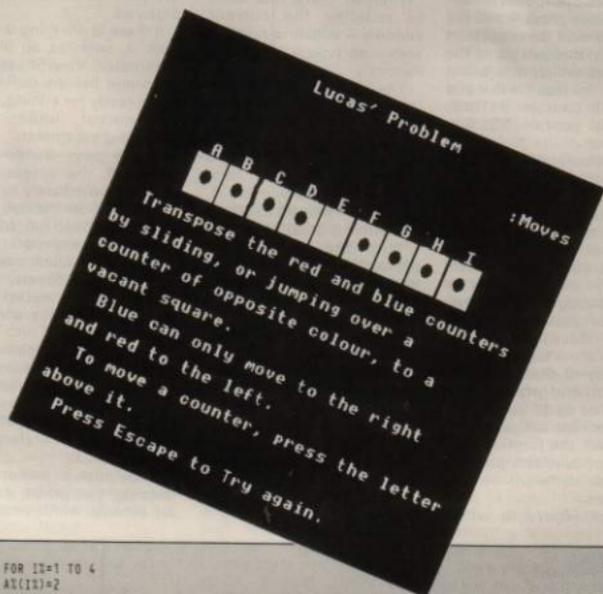
To move a counter press the corresponding letter above it. If you get into a situation where you cannot move, press the Escape key to try it again.

The number of moves are recorded and at the end you'll be told how many you took. The aim is to take the least number of moves.

My best is 24. Can you beat this?

LUCAS' PROBLEM

ARTHUR LINDON brings an old puzzle up to date



```
10 REM Lucas' Problem
20 REM By Arthur Lindon
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 ON ERROR RUN
50 MODE 1
60 VDU 23,224,60,126,255,
255,255,255,126,60
70 DIM AX(9)
80 VDU 19,2,4,0;19,0,3;0;
90 COLOUR 130
100 CLS
110 VDU 28,6,11,32,9
120 COLOUR 131
130 CLS
140 VDU 26
150 VDU 23,1,0;0;0;0;
160 GCOL 0,2
170 FOR I:=284 TO 1020 STE
P 96
180 MOVE I,732
190 DRAW I,640
200 DRAW I+4,640
210 DRAW I+4,732
220 NEXT
```

```
230 FOR I:=1 TO 4
240 AX(I)=2
250 AX(I+5)=1
260 COLOUR 2
270 VDU 31,3+I*4,10,224
280 COLOUR 1
290 VDU 31,3+I*4+19,10,224
300 NEXT
310 COLOUR 150
320 COLOUR 3
330 FOR I:=1 TO 9
340 VDU 31,3+I*4,8,13+64
350 NEXT
360 CNTX=0
370 COLOUR 0
380 PRINT TAB(13,1)"Lucas'
Problem"TAB(33,4)" : Moves"
390 PRINT TAB(0,13)" Trans
pose the red and blue count
ers by"
400 PRINT" sliding or jum
ping over a counter of"
410 PRINT" opposite colour
to a vacant square."
```

```
420 PRINT:PRINT
430 PRINT" Blue can only
move to the right and"
440 PRINT" red to the left.
To move a counter"
450 PRINT" press the letter
above it."
460 PRINT:PRINT
470 PRINT" Press Escape to
try again."
480 GCOL 0,3:MOVE 0,0;DRAW
0,1023;DRAW 1278,1023;DRAW
1278,0;DRAW 0,0
490 REPEAT
500 COLOUR 130
510 COLOUR 3
520 IF AX(1)=1 AND AX(2)=1
AND AX(3)=1 AND AX(4)=1 AND
AX(6)=2 AND AX(7)=2 AND AX(
8)=2 AND AX(9)=2 PRINT TAB(1
2,4)"You've done it in"VDU7
:G:GET:END
```

```
550 REPEAT
540 KX=(GET AND 223)-64
550 CNTX=CNTX+1
560 PRINT TAB(30-(CNTX<10)
,4);CNTX
570 UNTIL KX=0 AND KX<10
580 COLOUR 131
590 IF AX(KX)=2 PROCmove(1
,2) ELSE IF AX(KX)=1 PROCmov
e(-1,1)
600 UNTIL FALSE
610
620 DEFPROCmove(OX,CX)
630 COLOUR CX
640 IF AX(KX+OX)=0 AX(KX)=
0:AX(KX+OX)=CX:VDU31,3+KX+4,
10,32,31,3+KX+4+3*02,10,224
ELSE IF AX(KX+OX)=3-CX AND A
X(KX+2*OX)=0 AX(KX)=0:AX(KX+
2*OX)=CX:VDU31,3+KX+4,10,32,
31,3+KX+4+6*02,10,224
650 ENDPROC
```

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Sit astride a giant blue ostrich and engage in exciting futuristic jousting contests against opponenwts riding giant green buzzards.

This superb one-or-two-player game features beautifully animated sprites, with a plabability that's second to none.

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— *Hac-Man, The Micro User, March 1988*

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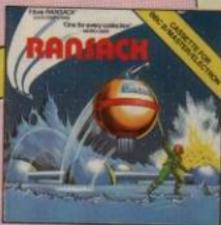


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- *Ian Waugh, Electron User, January 1988.*

Suitable for	Product	Format	RRP	Special reader offer	YOU SAVE	Offer including subscription	YOU SAVE
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TO ORDER TURN TO THE FORM ON PAGE 53

WHEN Acorn first designed the Electron it was always intended to be capable of supporting up to 16 roms at once, just like the BBC Micro.

Therefore the BBC Micro's operating system was duplicated (almost) in full on the Electron ready for this eventuality, despite the fact that the standard machine was provided with no spare rom sockets.

So it wasn't until the release of Acorn's Plus 1 expansion that roms could be added to the Electron, and then only by the use of rom cartridges.

These were – and still are – relatively expensive and only two dual-rom cartridges could be inserted into the Plus 1 at one time.

Since then several companies have produced sideways rom and ram boards to fill the gap left by the rather limited Plus 1 – you'll find a full review of them in the February 1987 issue of *Electron User*.

At one time a separate external rom board was available, but the manufacturers have since ceased production. This has left Slogger providing possibly the only Electron rom board, in the form of its own version of the Plus 1 – the Rombox Plus.

Now, for the first time, comes the Advanced Plus 6, or AP6 – a unit which not only allows up to six roms to be inserted into the board, but will also accept ram chips in any of the sockets.

Standard static ram chips can be bought cheaply and fitted into the sockets exactly as if they were roms.

This provides the ability to load rom images from disc into the ram chips – known as sideways ram when used in this fashion – as and when needed.

Here they will be treated as physical roms by the Electron, and once loaded rom images will remain in ram until the power is turned off. (It's worth noting that the extra ram can't be used for Basic programs.)

This allows you, in effect, much more than just the Electron's 16 rom maximum, without having to physically insert and



More room for your roms

CHRIS NIXON looks at the new Pres Advanced Plus 6

remove rom chips – a potentially damaging task if repeated frequently on the same roms.

What's more, sideways ram provides the perfect environment for writing your own roms, if you are so inclined.

This isn't as difficult as you may think – anyone with a smattering of 6502 machine code knowledge can write a rom, using some of the many books on the subject as tutorials.

We published an article on how to write your own rom in the February 1986 issue of *Electron User*.

The AP6 is quite a breakthrough for its designers, Pres, and as the unit is mounted unobtrusively inside an existing Plus 1 it reduces the number of gadgets hanging off the back of your Electron.

The only snag is that you must already have an Advanced Plus 1 from Pres in which to place the AP6.

Owners of the original Acorn Plus 1 will have to either set soldering iron to PCB to make the necessary alterations, or they can add £7 (plus VAT) to their order

for a complete upgrade service. Of course the old Plus 1 must be posted with your order if going for the upgrade.

The unit is a marvellous piece of design, strong, neat and compact, and it won't crowd the Plus 1 to the point of overheating.

Each socket is easily accessed with a screwdriver for removing roms, unlike some boards where delicate capacitors always seem to be in the way.

Using static ram chips in place of roms/eproms is achieved by simply inserting them in any of the sockets, but they must be 32k chips rather than the cheaper 8k ones.

The AP6 worked perfectly and I was able to use all my Electron roms indiscriminately in any of the six sockets, with no problems.

One point worth noting: If you have the Acorn Plus 3, only five of the six sockets will be available for other roms. Owners of ACP's own disc interfaces will not be affected, as these sit in the Plus 1 cartridge slots.

Coming soon from Pres is the AP7. This is an enhance-

ment for the AP6 which will provide two 16k banks of battery backed sideways ram with full write-protect option.

This will mean that while the write-protect is on, rom images will remain in the machine after the power is switched off, and will be – to all intents and purposes – permanent roms.

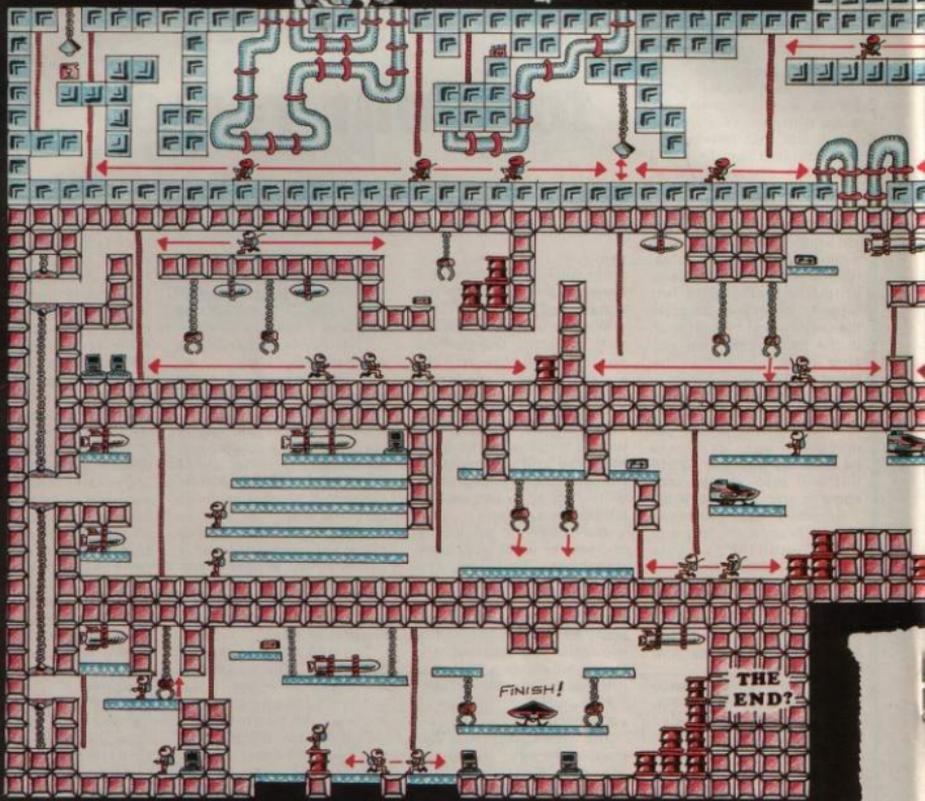
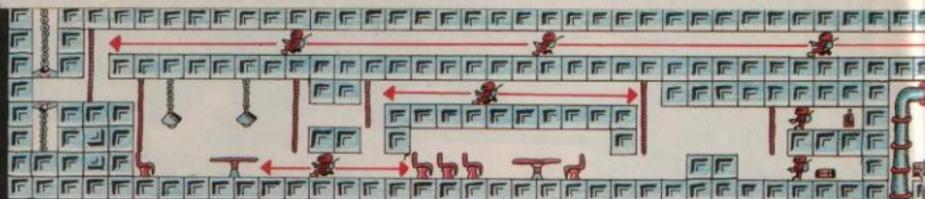
Some links on the AP6 board are provided in readiness for the AP7, and these are simply changed over when you fit the new board.

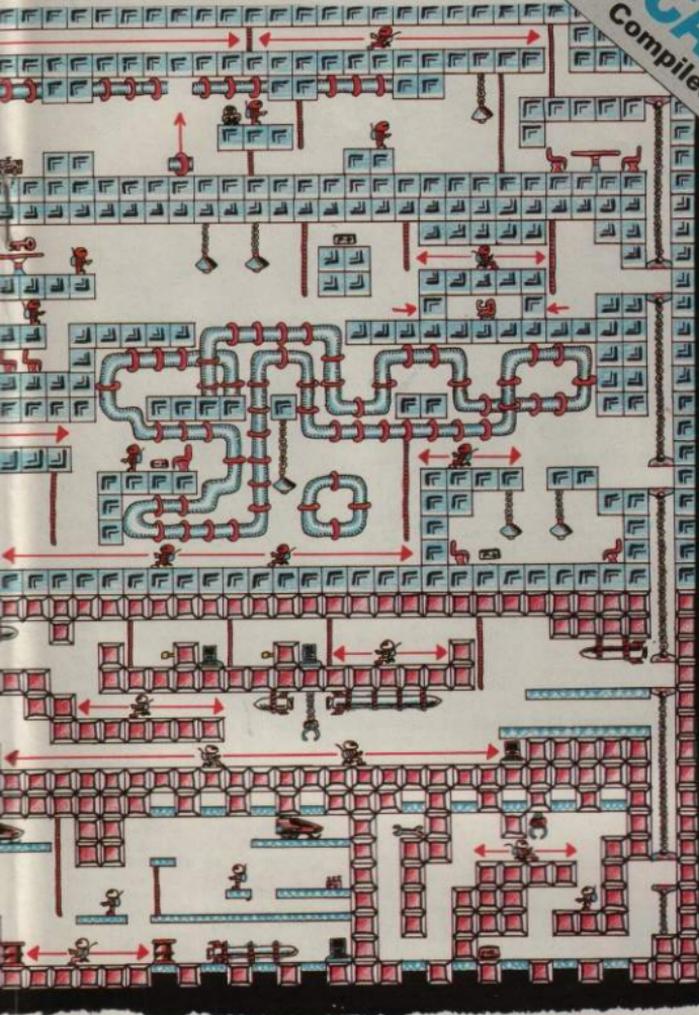
Overall, the AP6 is an excellent unit, providing for the first time in one package all the aspects of sideways ram and ram expansion facilities your Electron needs.

Together with the AP7, the AP6 will make your Electron just about as powerful in the sideways ram/ram department as can be imagined.

If you are a serious Electron user and don't already have the facilities provided by the AP6 in other forms, don't hesitate – buy it.

Product: Advanced Plus 6
Price: £37.95
Supplier: PRES, 6 Ava House, High Street, Chobham, Surrey GU24 8LZ
Tel: 0276 72046





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-  Energy cell
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-  Rom, navigation
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-  Remote activator
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-  Computer disc
-  'Herbert' droid
-  Fuel for jet-pack

**STRYKER'S
 RUN**

Part 3

The Map

**CODENAME
 DROID**



By *Top Morgan*



**SUPERIOR
 SOFTWARE**
EST. 1977

WE have been looking so far at different ways of printing sprites and have developed quite an array of machine code print routines, including ones that will move sprites in front and behind other objects on the screen.

We'll leave this topic for the moment and see how the screen displays for large multi-screen arcade games are created.

The techniques used in both this and next month's article will show how top-selling games such as Superior Software's Citadel, Palace of Magic and Repton are written.

As you'll know if you've played these games, there can be up to 100 beautifully drawn screens featuring superb graphics. So how are these all squeezed into the Electron's small memory? A single Mode 5 screen is 10k, and two is 20k, and on top of this of course, room must be left for the program itself.

As I promised last month, I'm going to show you a powerful method of compacting Mode 5 - or Mode 2 for that matter - screens into as little as eight bytes.

Enter and run Program I to see the technique in action. Tap the spacebar to flick

Pouring gallons of graphics into the Electron's pint-sized memory

In Part 4 of his sprites series **ROLAND WADDILOVE** shows how to create multi-screen games

through the screens - there are five in all, though many more could easily be put in.

They are labelled *scr0*, *scr1*, *scr2* ... in the listing, and each consists of two EQU statements. So how is it done?

Each screen is built up from blocks five bytes wide by 32 bytes high. As the Mode 5 screen is 40 bytes wide, eight blocks will fit neatly across the screen.

And as there are eight bits in a byte, each row of blocks can be stored in a single byte - each bit set indicating the presence of a block. The

screen is 256 bytes deep so we can fit eight 32-byte high blocks down it. So there are eight rows of eight blocks all stored in just eight bytes of data. Simple when you know how.

This means you could fit 128 Mode 5 screens in just 1k of ram. And assuming the code for an arcade game takes around 5k, you could easily squeeze well over 1,500 screens into memory.

The chunk of assembly language at the start of the program - lines 340 to 470 - decodes the compacted screen data and decides whether to call *print* to draw a block or *blank* to print a blank space.

It's worth examining how the screens are stored. You'll see a table of pointers at line 510 holding the address of each screen.

The screen number is used to index into this table to find the real address of the screen data - stored in lines 580 to 620.

The main problem with Program I is the lack of variety and the chunky blocks making up the screen display. There is only one type of block and that's brick - fine if you like hundreds of screens made up of bricks, but it can get a bit monotonous.

You could design a different type of block, but the screens would still be made

up of this single type. What is needed is a slightly more advanced technique that will allow us to add variety.

Enter and run Program II. There are only two screens this time - though you can add many more - but they are far more complex than in Program I. Tap the spacebar to flick between them.

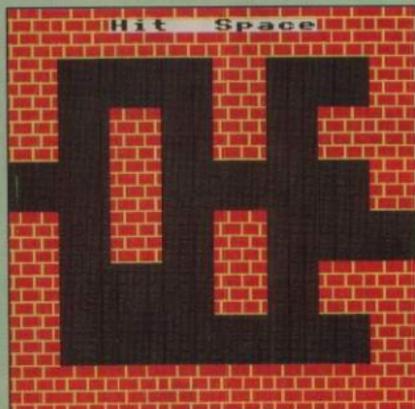
The screen data is stored at the end of the listing, so take a look at this first. What I have done this time is to use 4 byte wide by 24 byte high blocks.

Exactly 10 blocks will fit across the screen and there can be 15 different types. The reason for having 15 block types is that we can fit the numbers zero to 15 in one nybble.

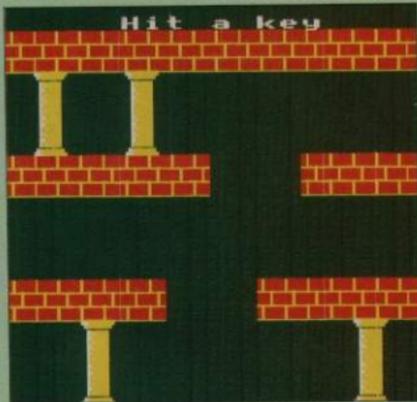
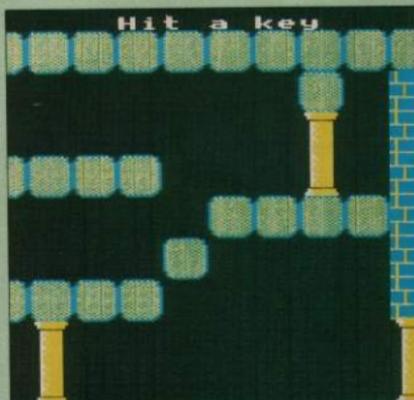
There are two nybbles in a byte, so we need five bytes per row of blocks. We can also fit 10 blocks down the screen - leaving a couple of spare lines for the score, lives, energy and so on - so this makes a total of 50 bytes per screen.

Although this is not as compact as Program I's screens, remember that each screen in Program II can be made up from any combination of 15 types of block.

This program gives us far more variety and some quite complex screen displays can easily be built up -



A typical screen from Program I



The two sample screens included in the demonstration routine - Program 11.

at the expense of a few extra bytes of memory. Still, you can fit 20 screens in 1k of ram, or well over 250 in an average length arcade game.

You'll see a table of pointers to screen addresses in the listing starting at line 980 and the screen number is used to index into this. Although there are only two entries, you can add as many as you like.

There's also a 96 times

multiplication table at line 570. This is because each screen block is made up of 96 bytes of data and each entry is used to index into the sprite data table to pick out the correct block for printing.

● Next month I'll continue with the same theme of maps, but move on to scrolling ones like those used in Ravenskull and the Repton series of games.

Special: Arcade game creator

All the programs from this series revealing the secrets of writing fast-action arcade games have been put on a special cassette (£3.95) and disc (£4.95). On it you'll find everything you need to create your own machine code games.

The programs include:

- A Mode 5 sprite editor for designing your own multicoloured characters.
- A selection of fast print routines that will move sprites both in front or behind other objects on the screen.
- Map generators that will squeeze a Mode 5 screen into eight bytes.
- Scrolling maps.
- Score print routines

...and much more. This is an offer to no aspiring games programmer can afford to miss!

To get this great offer, use the order form on page 53.

Program 1

```

10 REM Maps 1
20 REM By R.A.Waddlove
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 PROCassemble
50 MODE 5:VDU23,1,0;0;0;0
;:=FX16
60 COLOUR131:COLOUR0
70 AX=0
80 REPEAT
90 CALL @900
100 PRINT TAB(5,13)'Hit Sp
ace'
110 AX=(AX+1)MOD 5
120 UNTIL GET=FALSE
130 END
140
150 DEF PROCassemble
160 map=850
170 addr=851
180 xcount=853:ycount=854
190 taddr=855
200 index=857
210 FOR pass=0 TO 2 STEP 2
220 PX=@900
230 C OPT pass
240 SEI
250 ASL A:TAY \screen+2
260 LDA table,Y:STA screen+
+1:LDA table+1,Y:STA screen+
2
270 LDY #858:STY addr+1:LD
Y #800:STY addr
280 STY index
290 LDA #8:STA ycount
300 .yloop
310 LDA addr:STA taddr:LDA
addr+1:STA taddr+1
320 LDY index
330 .screen LDA @3000,Y:ST
A map
340 LDA #8:STA xcount
350 .xloop
360 ASL map:BCC bloop
370 LDA addr:STA new+1:LDA
addr+1:STA new+2
380 JSR print:MP skip
390 .bloop
400 LDA addr:STA bloop+1:L
DA addr+1:STA bloop+2
410 JSR blank
420 .skip
430 LDA addr:ADC #5#8:STA
addr:BCC ml:INC addr+1:.ml
440 DEC xcount:BNE xloop
450 LDA taddr:ADC #4#8:STA
taddr+1:MOD256:STA addr:LDA taddr+1
:ADC #4#8:STA addr:DIV256:STA add
r+1
460 INC index
470 DEC ycount:BNE yloop
480 CLI
490 RTS
500
510 .table
520 EQUW scr0
530 EQUW scr1
540 EQUW scr2
550 EQUW scr3
560 EQUW scr4
570
580 .scr0 EQU0 @21AB89FF:E
QU0 @FF8180AB
590 .scr1 EQU0 @84D591FF:E
QU0 @EFAS81BF
600 .scr2 EQU0 @F59581FF:E
QU0 @80000000
610 .scr3 EQU0 @89ABA9D0:E
QU0 @FF19185E
620 .scr4 EQU0 @6F1185FF:E
QU0 @8794B581
630
640 .print
650 LDA #brick MOD256:STA
ploop+1:LDA #brick DIV256:ST
A ploop+2
660 LDY #4
670 .loop
680 LDY #5#8-1
690 .ploop

```

Turn to Page 36 ▶

Programming

◀ From Page 35

```

700 LDA brick,1;.new STA #
500B,Y
710 DEY:BPL ploop
720 CLC:LDA new1:ADC #40
:STA new1:LDA new2:ADC #1
:STA new2
730 LDA ploop1:ADC #40:ST
A ploop1:BCC p1:INC ploop+2
:p1
740 DEX:BNE loop
750 RTS
760
770 .blank
780 LDX #4
790 .loop
800 LDY #5*8-1
810 LDA #0
820 .bloop
830 STA #5000,Y
840 DEY:BPL bloop
850 CLC:LDA bloop1:ADC #8
40:STA bloop1:LDA bloop+2:A
0C #81:STA bloop+2
860 DEX:BNE loop
870 RTS
880
890 .brick
900 OPT Fndata
910 ]
920 NEXT
930 ENDPROC
940
950 DEF Fndata
960 RESTORE
970 FOR IX=0 TO 5*32-1 STE
P 4
980 READ a$
990 [ OPT pass
1000 EQU EVAL("E"+a$)
1010 ]
1020 NEXT
1030 =pass
1040
1050 REM Brick
1060 DATA F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,
40404040,F0404040,F0F0F0F,F0
0F0F0F,F0404040,F0404040,F0F
0F0F,F0F0F0F,20202020,F02020
20,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,20202020
20,F0202020,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,
40404040,F0404040,F0F0F0F,F0
0F0F0F,F0404040,F0404040,F0F
0F0F
1070 DATA F0F0F0F,F0404040
,F0404040,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,2
0202020,F0202020,F0F0F0F,F00
F0F0F,20202020,F0202020,F0F0
F0F,F0F0F0F,F0404040,F04040
40
10 REM Maps 2
20 REM By R.A.Waddilove
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 PROCAssemble
50 ME S:VDU23,1,0;0;0;0
;
60 PRINT TAB(6,1)"hit a k
ey"
70 AX=0
80 REPEAT
90 CALL 8900
100 VDU19,1,1+3*(AX AND 1)
;
110 AX=(AX+1)MOD 2
120 UNTIL GET=0
130 END
140
150 DEF PROCAssemble
160 map=850
170 addr=852
180 xcount=854
190 ycount=855
200 index=856
210 new=870
220 FOR pass=0 TO 2 STEP 2
230 PX=8900
240 [ OPT pass
250 SEI
260 ASL A:ATY
1 screen+2
270 LDA table,Y:STA map
\map address
280 LDA table+1,Y:STA map+
1
290 LDA #800:STA addr
\screen address
300 LDA #65A:STA addr+1
310 LDY #0:STY index
\map byte index
320 LDY #10:STY ycount
330 .yloop
340 LDA addr+1:PHA:LDA addr
r:PHA
350 LDA #5:STA xcount
360 .xloop
370 LDA addr:STA new:LDA a
ddr+1:STA new+1
380 LDY index
390 INC index
400 LDA (map),Y
\get map byte
410 PHA
420 LSR A:LSR A:LSR A:LSR
A \left block
430 JSR print
440 LDA addr:ADC #4*8:STA
new
450 LDA addr+1:ADC #8:STA
new+1
460 PLA
470 AND #80F
\right block
480 JSR print
490 LDA addr:ADC #8*8:STA
addr:LDA addr+1:ADC #8:STA a
ddr+1
500 DEC xcount:BNE xloop
510 PLA:ADC #(3*8140)MOD25
6:STA addr
520 PLA:ADC #(3*8140)DIV25
6:STA addr+1
530 DEC ycount:BNE yloop
540 CLI
550 RTS
560
570 .mult
580 EQUW 0
590 EQUW 1+96
600 EQUW 2+96
610 EQUW 3+96
620 EQUW 4+96
630 EQUW 5+96
640 EQUW 6+96
650 EQUW 7+96
660 EQUW 8+96
670 EQUW 9+96
680 EQUW 10+96
690 EQUW 11+96
700 EQUW 12+96
710 EQUW 13+96
720 EQUW 14+96
730 EQUW 15+96
740
750 .print
760 ASL A:ATY
\sprite+2
770 LDA mult,Y
780 ADC #sprites MOD256
\set data
790 STA ploop+1
800 LDA mult+1,Y
810 ADC #sprites DIV256
820 STA ploop+2
830 LDX #3
840 .loop
850 LDY #31
860 .ploop
870 LDA 83000,Y:STA (new),
Y
880 DEY:BPL ploop

```

This is one of hundreds of programs available FREE for downloading on

MicroLink

In addition to these many BBC Micro programs in the MicroLink library will also run on the Electron.

```

890 CLC
900 LDA new:ADC #640:STA n
ew
910 LDA new+1:ADC #81:STA
new+1
920 LDA ploop+1:ADC #32:ST
A ploop+1
930 LDA ploop+2:ADC #8:STA
ploop+2
940 .p1
950 DEX:BNE ploop1
960 RTS
970
980 .table
990 EQUW scr0
1000 EQUW scr1
1010
1020 OPT FNsprdata
1030
1040 .sprites
1050 EQU S:STRINGS(96,CHR$0)
1060 OPT FNsprdata
1070
1080 ]
1090 NEXT
1100 ENDPROC
1110
1120 DEF FNsprdata
1130 RESTORE 1220
1140 FOR IX=0 TO 4*4*24-1 S
TEP 4
1150 READ a$
1160 [ OPT pass
1170 EQU EVAL("E"+a$)
1180 ]
1190 NEXT
1200 =pass
1210 REM Brick
1220 DATA 20202020,F0202020
,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,20202020,F
0202020,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,F0
F0F0F,F0404040,F0404040,F040
40

```

```

840,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,4040404
0,F0404040,20202020,F0202020
,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,20202020,F
0202020,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F
1230 REM Pillar bottom
1240 DATA 0,0,FAFCFCFB,F0FC
FCFB,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,0,0,0
,0,FCFBFA,FCFCFBFA,F0F0F0F
0,F0F0F0F,0,0,0,33331111,F8
FAFB,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0F,F0F0F0
0,0,C0C00000
1250 REM Pillar top
1260 DATA 11113333,0,F0F0F0
F0,FAFCFB00,F0F0F0F0,F0F0F0
0,0000C0C0,0,0,0,FBFCFCFB,FC
FCFBFA,F0F0F0F0,F0F0F0F,0,0
,0,0,FBFCFBFA,F0F0F0F0,F0F0
F0F0,F0F0F0F0,0
1270 REM Stone
1280 DATA 20162503,205A205A
,AS5A50F,AS5A55A,AS5A5A50F,
AS5A55A,864A8680,AS4BA5A4,2
05A205A,205A205A,AS5A55A,AS
5A55A,AS4BA5A4,255A205A,1122
516,AS5A55A,FSKA55A,AS5A55A
A,FSKA55A,AS4BA5A4,80C864A
1290
1300 DEF FNsprdata
1310 RESTORE 1480
1320 scr0=PX
1330 scr1=PX+50
1340 FOR IX=0 TO 1
1350 FOR YX=1 TO 10
1360 READ a$
1370 FOR XX=1 TO 5
1380 [ OPT pass
1390 EQU EVAL("E"+LEFT$(a$
,2))
1400 ]
1410 a$=MID$(a$,3)
1420 NEXT
1430 NEXT
1440 NEXT
1450 =pass
1460
1470 REM Screen 1
1480 DATA 1111111111
1490 DATA 0303000000
1500 DATA 0202000000
1510 DATA 1111100011
1520 DATA 0000000000
1530 DATA 0000000000
1540 DATA 1111001111
1550 DATA 0030000030
1560 DATA 0020000020
1570 DATA 1111111111
1580
1590 REM Screen 2
1600 DATA 4444444444
1610 DATA 0000000401
1620 DATA 0000000801
1630 DATA 4444000201
1640 DATA 0000044411
1650 DATA 000400001
1660 DATA 444400001
1670 DATA 0300000003
1680 DATA 0200000002
1690 DATA 1111111111

```

Program 11

This listing is included in this month's cassette tape offer. See order form on Page 53.

WE constructed a simple anemometer for measuring wind speed last month, and considered a simple Basic program which could be used with the hardware to calculate the approximate number of revolutions per second.

We also found the major problem with such a simple program is that it hangs up when no pulses are coming into the PB input.

The solution is to use events—the interrupts of the Electron. An event is an occurrence, such as the completion of a conversion of the analogue to digital converter, which can cause the Electron's 6502 to leave what it's doing and run a second program.

The clever thing is that once the second program has completed its activities the 6502 can take up where it left off on the first program, hopefully with no ill effects.

The first program is said

Happy event to tame the wind

JOE PRITCHARD continues his series on building the Electron weather station

to be interrupted by the event, and the second one is often called an interrupt service routine, as it often carries out some particular task in response to the event.

It should, however, leave all the CPU registers with the same values they held when the routine was entered, and on the Electron

should take no more than a couple of milliseconds to complete.

One event supported by the Electron is the interval timer crossing zero event, where an interrupt is generated by an interval timer when it reads zero. This is accessed using osword 3 and 4, and is incremented 100 times a second.

To generate an event after, say, five seconds we set the timer to -500 and start it off. Five seconds later the event is triggered and all we need to do is write a routine to use this event.

The program listed here shows how I've used the event just described to solve the problem we had last time when no pulses are coming in.

The counting loop is in Basic, but the REPEAT...UNTIL loops now check the value in address &70 as well as the status of the PB line.

The event is used to ensure address &70 is set to

hold a value of one after five seconds, and this exits the loop even if a full rotation of the anemometer disc hasn't occurred.

How does this work? Let's take a quick look at the program. Lines 50 to 70 initialise the number printing format, set up the machine code and set the screen mode.

Lines 80 to 180 form the counting loop, similar to the program we saw last month. The only difference is the presence of the ?&70 at the end of lines 100, 120 and 130.

It also prints "Still Air" if the time-out caused by the event occurring finished the loop, rather than a revolutions count.

Line 90 kicks off the event timer by calling PROCevent_on, and line 160 disables it by calling PROCevent_off.

Lines 200 to 540 assemble the machine code. The label

```

10 REM Pulse Counting
20 REM By Joe Pritchard
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 :
50 PROCassemble
60 @I=620209
70 MODE 6
80 REPEAT
90 PROCevent_on
100 REPEAT:UNTIL(ADVAL(0)A
ND3)=10?&70=1
110 TIME=0
120 REPEAT:UNTIL (ADVAL(0)
AND3)=00?&70=1
130 REPEAT:UNTIL(ADVAL(0)A
ND3)=10?&70=1
140 T=TIME/100:IF ?&70=0?
1/ ELSE T=0
150 IF T=0 PRINTAB(6,10)'
Still air!
ELSE PRINTAB(6,10)T;' Rev
s. per Second
160 PROCevent_off
170 UNTIL FALSE
180 END
190 :
200 DEFPROCassemble
210 DIM code% 100
220 DIM clock 20
230 FOR pass=0 TO 2 STEP 2
240 P%=code%
250 I
260 OPT pass
270 .event_service
280 PHA
290 PHP
300 LDA #1
310 STA &70
320 PLP
330 PLA
340 RTS
350 :
360 .event_on
370 LDX #clock MOD 256
380 LDY #clock DIV 256
390 LDA #4
400 JSR &FFFF1
410 LDA #14
420 LDX #5
430 JSR &FFFF4
440 RTS
450 :
460 .event_off
470 LDA #13
480 LDX #5
490 JSR &FFFF4
500 RTS
510 :
520 J
530 NEXT pass
540 ENDPROC
550 :
560 DEFPROCevent_on
570 !clock = &FFFFEDC: cl
ock% = 0
580 old_event=?&220
590 old_event1=?&221
600 ?&220=event_service MO
D256
610 ?&221=event_service DI
V256
620 ?&70=0
630 CALL .event_on
640 ENDPROC
650 :
660 DEFPROCevent_off
670 ?&220=old_event
680 ?&221=old_event1
690 CALL .event_off
700 ENDPROC

```

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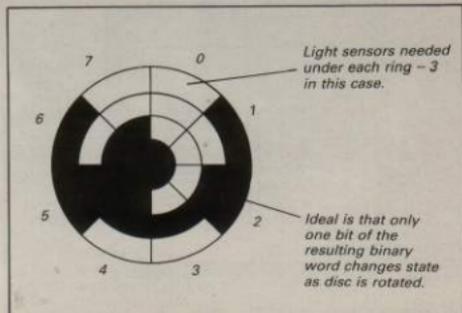


Figure 1: Grey code

Hardware Projects

◀ From Page 37

event_service is our interrupt routine. The processor status register and the accumulator are stored on the stack.

The contents of &70 is set to one and the registers are restored before the routine finishes. This is only called when the interval timer reaches zero.

Lines 360 to 440 are responsible for setting up the clock using *osword* 4 and then enabling the relevant event using *osbyte* 14. Lines 460 to 500 disable the event using *osbyte* 13.

Lines 560 to 640 are responsible for loading a five byte block of memory *clock* - with the value -500. The interval timer counts up from this value and generates the event when crossing zero.

The usual contents of &220 and &221 - the event vector - are copied into the variables *old_event* and *old_event1*.

The event vector is reset to point to the *event_service* routine. Finally, a call to *event_on* starts things up.

Lines 660 to 700 disable the event and restore the normal event vector contents.

Running this program will cause the routine to exit every five seconds with the message "Still Air" if it was

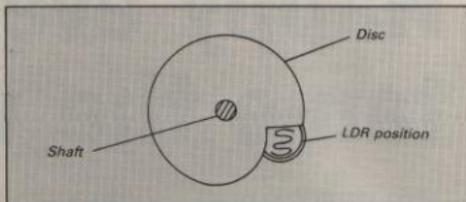


Figure II: The specially shaped disc

caused by the time-out. Otherwise the count of revolutions per second will be displayed.

If you're interested in a more general application for this program you could write the counting loop in machine code as well, which would allow recording of higher rates of revolutions. However, as it stands it should be suitable for most locations, even in Basic.

The anemometer is a little awkward to calibrate into km/h (mph for the traditionalists), and so is really only useful for comparative readings. If anyone comes up with a calibration method for the anemometer please let me know.

Wind direction

Converting wind direction into an electronic signal isn't easy. Most methods use something called a grey code shaft position encoder,

shown in Figure 1.

The problem here is that four separate digital inputs to the computer are required. This isn't too much of a problem on, say, the BBC Micro, where we've got an 8 bit digital input port.

However, on the Electron we don't have such a luxury, so we have to use a different technique.

The method I used uses a specially-shaped disc and an LDR/light bulb combination, as shown in Figures II, III and IV.

As you can see, the disc is shaped like a cam rather than a circle. At different positions of shaft rotation the disc will cover a different amount of the LDR surface, and so will interrupt the light falling on it to a greater or lesser degree.

Thus the resistance of the LDR will be dependant upon the position of the shaft. If we connect the shaft to a wind vane the resistance of the LDR will be related to the position of the vane, and hence wind direction.

This method is not as accurate as the one shown in Figure I, but is cheaper to set up and does not require four digital input lines. (In a couple of month's time I'll be building a 6522 VIA port for the Electron, and anyone interested might like to try the grey code method then).

The preset resistor in Figure III forms the other half of a potential divider, turning the resistance into a voltage in the range 0 to 1.8 Volts.

We need to provide a light source for this project, as the LDR/disc assembly

really needs to be boxed for protection. I used a torch bulb - 6V, 40mA - and ran it from the 5V output of the Electron Plus 1.

Remember that the bulb will get warm, so it should be mounted a few centimetres away from the disc/LDR, but close enough to provide sufficient light. You should also consider putting ventilation holes in the box.

The only complication with this method is the shaping of the disc. It needs to be opaque - thick plastic card or cardboard will do the trick.

It's a good idea to cut a disc out in thin card first and try rotating it on the shaft to

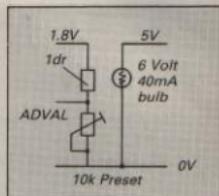


Figure IV: The circuit

get a reasonable voltage change as the shaft is rotated.

The software for testing the wind vane can be a simple loop to read values back from the ADVAL channel to which you've connected the potential divider output.

Rotate the shaft and disc, and make sure there is a reasonable voltage change over the whole rotation. The preset resistor can be adjusted to bring the voltage into the middle of the zero to 1.8V swing that can be recorded by the ADC.

The full software to convert readings from the windvane into directions will be given next month, when I'll also pull together the different parts of the weather station project.

● I'll also provide a simple program to monitor all the hardware interfaces and display results to the screen or printer or save information to a file.

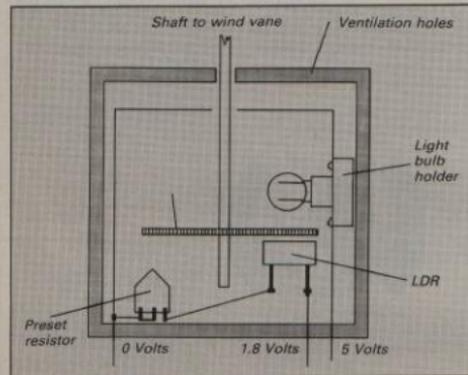


Figure III: Wind vane circuit

LION'S LAIR

Get your words in alphabetical order with this fun educational game by **STEPHEN and ANDREW WEIR**



LION'S Lair is a great game for children who are learning to spell, and up to four can play at once, making it much more fun.

A number of friendly lions have wandered on to your screen, each with a name printed below it. The idea is to arrange the lions in alphabetical order, and as the game becomes more difficult more lions begin to appear.

Each player is allowed up to three mistakes before dropping out of the game, eventually leaving just one player as the winner.

At first just two lions will

be on your screen. Using the spacebar, move the two large arrows until they enclose the lion whose name comes alphabetically first.

Press Return to select that one as your choice, and its name will appear at the head of a list shown at the bottom of the screen.

Next, move the arrows to enclose the second lion and press Return again. Its name will appear below your previous selection.

If you have chosen correctly, a large tick will appear at the bottom right, otherwise you will be rewar-

ded with a large cross. Two more lions will appear and the game continues until you have completed half a dozen screens or so.

Now you will have three lions to deal with, and eventually—if you are a very good speller—six will appear together.

If you can survive to the end, you can record your

name in the high score table among the names of a few feline friends.

The game is thoroughly error-trapped and you can't select the same lion twice. Full instructions are printed at the start, and there is even a little background tune which you can turn on and off by pressing the 1 key.

PROCEDURES

assemble	Assembles machine code
instructions	Prints instructions
get_names	Gets the players' names
lion	Prints a lion
tune	Plays a tune

```

10 REM Lions Lair
20 REM By Andrew and Step
hen Weir
30 REM (c) Electron User
40 REM
50 GOSUB70:REM Initialise
60 PROCmain
70 REM Initialise
80 in=0
90 MODE5
100 sound%=1:code=6980:PR
OAssemble
110 rfx11,0
120 rfx220,1
130 rfx282,48
140 rfx4,1
150 ON ERROR MODE6:REPORT:
PRINT at line %:ERL%:END

```

```

160 ONERROROFF
170 DIMname$(5),level%(5),
score%(5),question%(5),wrong
%(5),his%(1,2),pos%(5,6),wor
ds$(200),word$(6),answer%(6)
180 RESTORE200:FORI=1TO5:
FORJ=1TOI:1:READpos%(I,J,
J):NEXT:NEXT
190 RESTORE210:FORI=1TO10:
:READhis%(I,1),his%(I,2):NEX
T
200 DATA4,6,4,5,6,1,3,7,9,
1,3,5,7,9,1,2,3,7,8,9
210 DATATopcat,1000,Fluffy
,900,Purr,800,Leo,700,Tigger
,600,Paws,500,Rumtum,400,Mac
avity,300,Mistoffolees,200,6

```

```

us,100
220 VDU23,140,170,85,170,8
5,170,85,170,85
230 RETURN
240 DEF PROCsprite.data
250 DIM left$(24+2,right
$(24+2),lion$(6+8+2)
260 RESTORE1090:PROClocate
(lion)
270 RESTORE1180:PROClocate
(left)
280 RESTORE1210:PROClocate
(right)
290 ENDPROC
300 DEF PROClocate(loc) LO
CALbyte,data.count,offset,x,
y:READx,y:1:locx:=1(loc+1)ny:
loc:=loc+2:byte:=D:REPEAT READ

```

```

data:ifdata=>byte?loc+data
310 ifdata=>18EAbcount,dat
a:=FORoffset=1TOcount:byte?LO
c:=data:byte:=byte+1:NEXT ELSE
byte:=byte+1
320 UNTILdata=>9:ENDPROC
330 DEF PROCAssemble
340 oswrch=BFEE:osword=&F
FF:news&70:rows=&72:colunns
=&73:temp=&74:place=&76
350 FORpass=&70STEP2:PX=c
ode:TOPPass
360 d STAB:LD#410:LDX#A
ND255:LDY#DIV256:JSRsword
:LD#0:STA:;.d LD#23:JSRsw
wrch:LD#1:ORA#224:JSRswrch:

```

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) :VDUS,18,0,0:MOVE200,1000:P
ROCBIG(“Roaring Scores”)

1800 VDD4,17,128:FOR1X=1T01
0:VDU17,2,31,0,4,13+2:PRINTW
15(12,1);VDU17,3,31,20:LENH
15(12,1);+12+2:PRINTH(12,1)

2):NEXT:VDU17,1,31,3,31:PRIN
T(PRESS SPACE BAR);ENDPROC

1090 REM Lion

1100 DATA 8,3,56

1110 DATA 4,-1,11,0,16,1,16,1,

-1,5,0,40,48,112,88,64,64,9

6,50,36,112,37,66,5,80,5,18,

32,-1,14,0,16,17,-1,7,0,1,18

37,82,165,90,165,90,165,123,

226,186,49,112,112,240,210,

240,188,240,97,112,225,218,2,

25,18,165

1120 DATA 98,180,90,180,56,

-1,5,48,16,18,10,33,48,48,11

2,112,112,225,218,180,124,24

8,80,64,37,90,165,90,165,90

165,90,165,120,180,121,241,

233,226,230,247,247,240,240,

225,90,165,90,165,90,180,120

240,120

1130 DATA -1,10,240,180,240

180,120,180,240,120,240,240

240,224,224,128,-1,4,0,16,1,

61,90,165,90,165,90,165,218,

240,252,254,254,118,252,248,

240,225,240,225,90,165,90,16

5,210,180,120,-1,14,240,180,

248,180

1140 DATA 240,180,90,33,16,

48,114,116,0,8,16,37,90,165,

90,165,90,165,240,240,240,22

5,90,165,90,165,90,165,90,16

5,90,165,74,164,72,4,-1,4,0,

-1,9,128,192,192,224,240,240

,240,210,180,240,180,120,210

,240,240

1150 DATA 240,0,0,0,8,72,16

5,90,165,90,165,90,164,74,16

5,90,165,90,165,90,165,74,16

4,72,132,72,128,-1,14,0,16,1,

6,97,-1,7,240,224,192,12,128

0,-1,0,-9

1200 REM Right arrow

1210 DATA 3,24

1220 DATA -1,11,0,119,252,2

40,252,119,-1,11,0,68,68,102

,102,119,117,117,116,252,240

,240,240,252,116,117,117,119

,102,102,68,48,-1,9,0,136,13

6,284,196,238,196,284,136,13

6,-1,0,-9

1230 REM Tune data

1240 DATA 52,52,0,52,52,0,52

,0,52,68,0,68,80,80,80,0,80,

68,52,52,52,68,68,68,0,68,0,

68,0,68,68,68,48,48,48,0,68,

48,32,32,32,52,52,0,52,52,0,

52,0,52,68,0,68,80,80,0,80

,0,68,52,52,52,68,68,68,68,

32,48,48,48,52,52,52,52,0,52

,52,0,0,0,0,0,0

1250 DATA -9

1260 DEF PROC Tune READP:IF

1=9:RESTORE 1240:READP:IFUP

ing1: pitch=1+pitch:4:IFpitch

>34:pitch=1

1270 IFp=BSOUND1,0,0,TELE

1FSOUND SOUND1,-6,pit+50:pit

cht,3ELSE SOUND1,0,0,3

1280 ENDPROC

1290 REM Name data

1300 DATA Cleo,Leo,Bill,Bob

,Suzy,Jack, Jill,Jackie,Bob,Ja

ne,Hans,Anne,Abel,John,Mike,

AVIS,Andy,Burt,Bret,Carl,Cut

ie,Brad,Ross,Rob,Joe,Ron,Jack

,Dick,Fred,Kate,Jan,Joe,Pete

,San,Ben,Rick,Joan,Anna,Sara

,Nik,Tia,Pat,Phil,Dave,Matt,

Len,Wal,Hank

1310 DATA Tom,Evan,Kim,Jose

,Zico,Tony,Paul,Mark,Russ,Gu

,Ejen,Elia,Liz,Emma,Jodi,Kat

h,Paws,Tigs,Rolf,Ralf,Rana,T

odd,Lisa,Judi,Lyn,Harry,Marg,

Mink,Alli

1320 DATA Phil,Katie,Steve

,Craig,David,Timmy,Nicky,Car

lie,Harry,Billy,Janie,Dave,Ni

col,Derek,Peter,Chris,Sarah,

Brant,Brett,Heath,Jimmy,Kel

h,Kerry,Franz,James,Penny,Je

rry,Kylie,Mitch,Miles,Davis

,Piper,Elton,Ken

1330 DATA Fran,Trudy,Shena,

Kaye,Fiona,Tania,Sofie,Kelly

,Sven,Kana,Beniz,Terry,Terri

,Nikki,Simon,Jason,Frank,Rob

yn,Robin,Oliver,Lynne,Sandy,H

elen,Miria,Megan,Karen,Lewis

,Cassy,Peter,Marc,Wayne,Will

Y,Zane,Will,END



Tania

1128,-1,6,0,128,72,132,74,16

0,10,128,0,0,128,8,128,0,1

6,48,48

1160 DATA 112,112,112,240,

1,4,224,96,-1,6,112,24,224,

164,192,72,132,72,-1,4,12,

8,-1,17,0,64,4,88,133,90,165

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Adventures by Pendragon

TWO new adventures have appeared on my table this month and both deserve a mention before I sit down to the enjoyable task of reviewing them.

First to arrive was the new Elk Adventure Club release entitled *Axe of Kolt*. As with Larry Horsefield's previous two escapades with *The Quill*, this adventure has to be loaded in a number of parts.

However, there the similarity to *Magnetic Moon* and *Starship Quest* ends. *Axe of Kolt* is a mini epic of Middle Earth fantasy, and as such is a world away – pardon the pun – from his two science fiction classics.

The *Axe of Kolt* is a magical weapon forged more

New adventures are on the way

than 200 years ago by Magor the sorcerer. The hero, Kolt, had wielded it when he vanquished the Xixon – an evil race of reptilian men who invaded the kingdom of Hectate.

Now the axe is needed again, as the Xixon have returned to wreak their revenge. The axe was buried along with Kolt when

he died, and the location of his tomb has long been forgotten.

Your task soon becomes apparent as you set out on your journey to recover the axe. This adventure is not quite in the Robico league, but at only £5.95 it should not be missed by any discerning buyer.

The second goody to be

dropped in the courtyard was the much awaited sequel to *Suds*, titled strangely enough, *American Suds*.

This is another four part adventure which pokes fun quite cleverly at *American Suds*.

The experience begins with a plane journey which parodies the classic film,

Readers' Hall of Fame

Rick Hanson – Robert Hales

Here is the final sequence needed to complete this adventure which was unfortunately omitted from the September 1987 issue of *Electron User*:

Return to the top of the ladder and go E, E, N, N, E, E, S. To open the door in the alcove, type in the numbers from the church. Open the next door with the screwdriver. Kill Garantz with the razor – don't use the gun. Victory is yours!

Enthar Seven – The Boss (continued from last month)

We now begin the final phases of this eternal quest. Equip yourself with the oar, Y shaped twig, vial of poison, flask filled with water from the washroom, fan and pair of pliers. You should now teleport to sector five, the desert.

Carefully divine your way through the desert taking care not to make one mistake. The fan and flask are simply insurances against making such a mistake in this arid maze. You will soon descend a flight of steps which lead to a river bank.

Hide in the hedge from the hunters in the canoe. While in hiding, you will discover a teleport bracelet which should be worn for the remainder of the game. If you remember the instructions contained in the manual you

found earlier in sector two, you will be able to put the bracelet to good use.

Once the hunters have disembarked you can steal their canoe and paddle it through the rapids. When you crash land you must remember to gather all your belongings together and replace the bracelet on your wrist.

Journeying North East in the swamp will lead to a ramshackle hut which has a padlocked door. The pliers can be used judiciously to cut the chain. Inside the hut you will discover a muffler which will prove invaluable in the final stage of this adventure.

A trek South East in the swamp will lead to a carnivorous plant which must be poisoned. You may then surmount the steps which lead to the teleport chamber.

Next month, our year-long solution comes to its end.

Village of Lost Souls – Peter Youde

Leave the ring of stones and deal with the thieving dogs. E, NE, IN, UP, GET HAMS, DOWN, OUT, DROP HAMS. Collect the bow and arrow to kill the thieving bird. SW, E, N, IN, IN, GET ARROW, OUT, OUT, SW, S, E, SW, S, SW, GET BOW.

Get the chalice from the nettles by the river and when bird appears, fire the arrow then drop the bow. NE, N, SE, N, N, N, IN, IN, E, N, N, E, GET CHALICE. Go and fill the chalice from the church font. W, S, S, W, OUT, OUT, SW, S, SE, IN, FILL CHALICE WITH WATER. Use the water to

Airplane. You then have to deal with the mega-stars of Dallas and Dynasty and the assorted rag-bag of American cops.

Captain Gorilla of the Kill Street precinct may pose an explosive problem.

A classic puzzle is how to get rid of the mice in the mansion in part three of this adventure. The answer is simple, but excruciating.

Just get the flute from the music room, go to the kitchen and give it to the German chef who is polishing a pie. The pie wiper from

Hamelin will then get rid of the mice for you!

If you can suffer a pun as bad as that, the humour in this adventure will have you falling off your chair. At only £4, American Suds simply cannot be missed.

Further news on the Topologika front is equally good. The company is offering its disc-based adventures at the following discounts: One adventure at £9.95, two at £15, three at £20 and four at £22. I suggest that 5.25in disc drive owners start saving their pennies now.

An excellent new educa-

Turn to Page 44 ▶

Problems Solved

Michelle Hurds, Ann and Peter Youde, Tom Johnstone and Bob Purder are stuck at various points in Riverdale's howler, **Suds**.

Michelle should stone the crow and use the Yorkshire pudding to cross the lake in part one of the adventure. Ann and Peter must erase the Equity card in the Abduction Street section. Tom would be wise to wear the chamber pot at the Cross Eyes Motel.

Bob should pray to keep the vicar happy at Emeroyd Farm. In the Dead Enders section of Suds he must give Mrs Favour a curry in order to curry favour.

Sarah Smart of Hinckley cannot get into the spaceship in Superior's **Stranded**. I think you must GO AIRLOCK and PICK LOCK to achieve this, Sarah.

Daniel Lippet must drop a

treasure and say **STEAL** (whichever treasure was dropped) to get out of the desert in Micropower's **Adventure**.

He should also avoid the Valley of the Shadow of Death in Kansas City's **Ferryman Awaits**. Have you seen the special I did on this adventure in the March 1987 issue of *Electron User*?

In Robico's special 64k version of **Island of Xaan**, Michael Williams and John Townley must persevere if they wish to break free of the chains.

Finally in **The Hunt**, Andrew Learmouth must find a way to foil the lasers if he is to travel in safety along the East-West corridor near the market. This is one adventure where I found that drawing a map was essential to survival and progress.



put out the burning hut. OUT, N, N, SW, E, THROW WATER. Enter the hut to find that a field must be ploughed, then start collecting the parts of the plough. IN, OUT, W, GET SHARE, NE, S, E, SW, S, SW, E.

Take the plough to the smithy for repairs. GET PLOUGH, W, NE, N, SE, NE, E, SW. Leave the plough and share here and go and get something to light the forge with and the tools to repair the plough.

DROP PLOUGH AND SHARE, NE, NW, SW, N, N, NW, W, S, S, S, SW, SW, GET STAFF, NE, NE, N, N, N, NE, E, E, S, NW, IN, GET BELLOWS, OUT, SE, E, NE, E, SW, IN, IN, GET HAMMER, OUT, OUT.

Attach the bellows to the forge then light it. ATTACH BELLOWS TO FORGE, WAVE STAFF, LIGHT FORGE. Fix the plough then find something to pull it.

REPAIR PLOUGH, NE, NW, SW, W, IN, NE, UP, UP, UP, GET YOKE, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN, SW, OUT, E, NE, E, E, N, W, S, GET REINS, N, E, HARNESS OXEN.

Philosopher's Quest - John Tipper
(continued from last month)

Go down and map the M.E. passages until you find the workman. Return to Piccadilly Circus, picking up the portrait on the way. Go West, drop everything you are carrying and go West again. When you cease to exist think, then move East.

Collect your belongings and return West. Go West

again and retrieve the ancient book by Socrates. Now go to the shop and drop any treasure you are carrying. Assuming you have the matches and bottle of ink, go to the beach, go West, get the driftwood, return East and venture South into the sea. Swim downwards until you reach the seabed, then swim South until you reach the wreck.

Enter the wreck South East, open the cupboard, enter and get the slipper, leave and return to the entrance to the wreck. Go South West into the dank corridor, find the octopus and drop the bottle of ink. When the octopus swims away get the chest and leave.

Once outside the wreck go North and allow yourself to be swallowed by the whale. To escape from its belly you must light a match and travel in the opposite direction to the drift of smoke until you reach the gold tooth.

Light a match once more and set fire to the driftwood, GET the TOOTH before you are coughed out of the whale's mouth.

Go to mid-depth for every five moves you make in deep water and spend one move at this depth. Swim to just below the surface and then East until you reach the beach.

Return to the shop with the last bits of treasure and you will have scored 249 points. To gain the extra point simply say BLACH!

This solution is for the Acornsoft version of this adventure. It will not prove successful with the new enhanced Topologika version.

Adventurer's Glossary (continued from last month)

Gas: You will need to wear some kind of protection against it.

Gem: Surely a treasure.

Ghost: Can be helpful or dangerous.

Giant: Usually friendly, and can be helpful for carrying heavy loads.

Gladiator: You will need to fight and defeat him.

Gloves: Wear them when handling anything which might be dangerous.

Gold: Can be as a bar or in a bag, but nearly always a valuable treasure or part of a monetary system.

Grill: You will need to open it or saw through it.

Guard: He must be bribed or paid. If not, you will need to find some other way past him.

Gun: Might need a silver bullet if it's a werewolf that you are hunting.

◀ From Page 43

tional disc based adventure from Toplogika is **Giant Killer**. It costs a pricy £18, but is a superb aid to teaching maths to 10 to 14 year olds.

In response to my challenge to readers to complete **Sphinx Adventure** in the minimum number of moves, I have received some intriguing replies.

Jane Forbes sent in a fantastic theoretical solution which would enable an adventurer to complete the game in only 253 moves. But honours have to go to Quillaquest who has dissected the adventure and

provided a 14 page solution.

It provides two routes which will conclude the game in 229 or 195 moves involving an ingenious cheat. The crux to Quillaquest's thesis involves the pirate and the water bottle which need careful experimentation to enable the cheat.

I cannot possibly reproduce all of this magnum opus, but am now able to answer almost any question you care to pose about **Sphinx Adventure**. A suitable prize is now winging its way to this anonymous character.

Until the cheats don't prosper, happy adventuring!



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QUEST is a large arcade adventure I began programming about 18 months ago. It features a young lad called Walter Cobra who goes in search of the mysterious Golden Dragon.

Most games of this type tend to use either Mode 2 or Mode 5. I wanted Quest to be different from others on the market, so Mode 1 was used.

This gives very fine detail, but unfortunately is limited to four colours. However some pretty effects are possible by dithering.

This is a technique where alternate pixels are plotted in different colours. Due to the low resolution of most monitors and TV sets they run together to give another colour.

The palette was switched between screens to brighten up the game even more.

The BBC Micro version uses interrupts to keep the colours at the top of the screen constant, but despite trying several techniques this could not be achieved on the Electron.

This interrupt, and the hash at the top and bottom of the screen, are the only differences between the two versions.

Electron users might be interested to know that the game was just as difficult to fit into a BBC Micro as it was

Quest

TONY OAKDEN reveals
the problems he found writing the arcade game we review on Page 16

into the Electron.

There are many different types of animal in Quest. Each has a different appearance, and in addition they also have individual characteristics and behaviour patterns.

This posed problems due to the limited amount of memory available, so certain routines had to be shared by different sprites.

Take the small robots which bounce off the walls: They use the same collision detection routine as the man, but because they are smaller the routine needs different parameters. This

worked very well – except that they also bounced off the man. To solve this problem a method was needed to make them attack if they were touched.

The game already contained a proximity detection routine, used by the bats to detect the man if he got closer than about 10 pixels. The robots use the same routine, but again, they use different parameters.

One feature peculiar to Quest is the ability of certain animals to move freely between screens – ghosts and robots both move on and off screens.

The robots always start at the same place when you enter a screen, but they will sometimes come on to a screen while you are trying to negotiate an obstacle.

The ghosts will follow you between screens and are quite intelligent.

The idea is to try to tie the action on different screens together, giving the feel of a complete game rather than a series of individual screens.

All animation is controlled via a series of flags and parameter blocks. When a new screen is drawn, all the flags are cleared and if a particular animal is needed a flag is set and the corresponding parameter block initialised.

The structure of the animation routine is very simple:

- The keyboard is scanned.

- The man is moved accordingly.

- Any other animated characters are moved.

- Has the man reached the edge of the screen? If he has, draw the next screen.

- Has he run out of energy? If so, end the game.

- Loop back to the start.

Because there is more action on some screens than others, a method was required to run the animation at a set speed. I eventually did this by resetting TIME to zero at the beginning of the animation loop and then checking to see if it was less than eight at the end.

If it is, the program waits until TIME is greater than eight. The Basic equivalent is:

```
TIME=0  
(animation loop)  
REPEAT  
UNTIL TIME >8
```

This locks the animation at a maximum of one frame every 0.08 sec, or 12 frames per second. By varying the time limit, different effects are possible – that is how the Time Warp feature was created.

The resultant game is, I hope, a good blend of well animated characters and interesting patterns. However, the code is a nightmare of nested loops and subroutines.

A good analogy would be a swan, which from the bank



The first screen of the game

appears to glide gracefully along, but under the water has huge ugly paddles frantically churning away!

The map, is made up from an 8 by 10 grid of screens. The address of the data for each screen can therefore be calculated, eliminating the need for a look-up table.

This made designing the game very difficult, as each section of the map has to connect and the puzzles had to be spread out, with many challenging animated problems in between.

Each screen is built up from 15 blocks on a five by three grid. This is a rather coarse way of doing the job, but by using one byte per block 256 possible shapes are available. For example, block number two is a solid square, while 17 is the elephant.

In fact only numbers 0 to 63 are defined, 64 to 127 use the same data as 0 to 63, but are inverted. Numbers 128 to 255 use the character set.

By having two passages in one block it was possible to build some very complex mazes. If you play the game on a standard size monitor there is something like 50 feet of passages in the ghost maze alone.

Each block is built up from an eight by eight grid of characters. These are the smallest element, and con-

sist of things like the bricks, leaves and metalwork.

Again there is a total of 256 possible characters, but only the first 64 are defined as data. The next 64 are inverted, and by EORing the character with a striped mask additional shapes became possible.

Some of the objects in the game, such as the key handles and cross, are also used to create interesting effects.

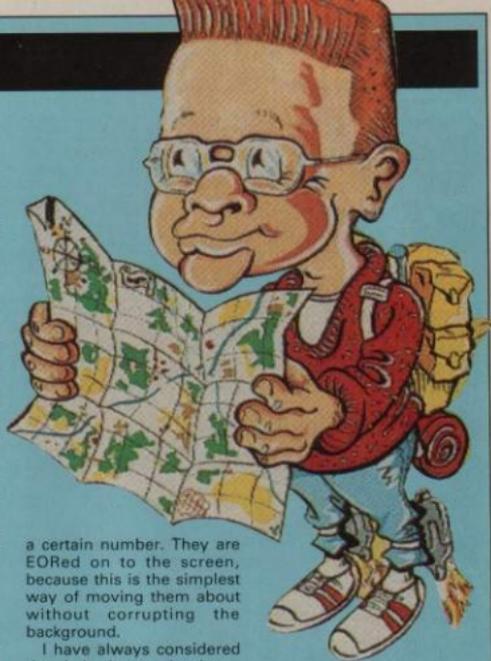
Finally, the operating system routine for drawing triangles was incorporated, but an undefined graphics number was used to obtain the striped effect.

A small utility was needed to design all the shapes and sprites used in the game. There did not seem to be any suitable commercial packages available, so an editor was written in Basic.

The sprites and other objects were initially designed on paper and then modified. I was particularly pleased with the caterpillars and ghosts.

As the sprites are printed on the screen a routine was included which doubled their height, allowing the display of nice big sprites.

Unfortunately, the Electron is not fast enough to draw a lot of large sprites in Mode 1, so they are automatically drawn at normal height if there are more than



a certain number. They are EORed on to the screen, because this is the simplest way of moving them about without corrupting the background.

I have always considered that it is the puzzles in an adventure which make the game interesting.

Quest was to have as much variety as possible. I particularly wanted to avoid the situation where every puzzle is solved by simply taking the appropriate object to the correct place.

Wherever possible extra animation was included when a puzzle was solved. A good example is the elephant, which has to be moved to get into the next section of the game.

I wanted the elephant to actually move out of the way rather than simply disappear.

The sprite animation routine could not be used because of the beast's size and the way the data is stored. So a fast software scroll was used to actually move each byte of the elephant in turn, one byte to the right.

This worked very well and the same routine was used with several other objects.

Another puzzle I was keen to include was a time-related one. To do this a real-time clock was needed. It runs independently of the game and uses the interval timer crossing zero event to generate an interrupt every

60 seconds.

The routine works by resetting the interval timer to -6000. It is incremented by the operating system every 0.01sec, independently of the game.

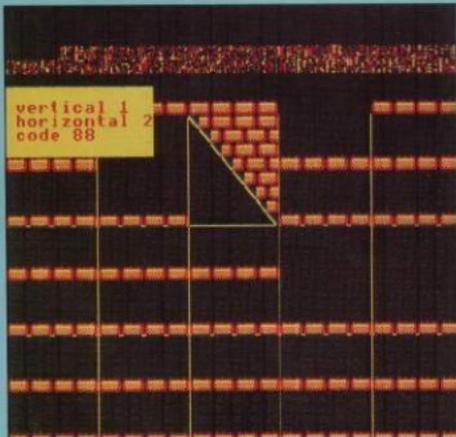
As it crosses zero an interrupt is generated which passes control to an interrupt routine which resets the timer to -6000 and increments the clock. Control is then passed back to the main program.

Several objects in the game have to be used correctly. The program allows them to be dropped and picked up again at almost any point.

This was quite tricky and meant having to keep track of their position and also make sure they were dropped in a sensible place - not floating in water or in mid-air.

This meant I had more scope for problems involving lateral thinking. I also had a lot of headaches trying to make sure the player could not get into areas of the game by using objects in a way I had not expected.

Eight passwords have to



The screen editor

Turn to Page 48 ▶

Feature



	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
0									
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									

EDITING SPRITE 2

Switched colour ?3

0=00000000
 1=11111111
 2=22222222
 3=33333333
 4=44444444
 5=55555555
 6=66666666
 7=77777777
 8=88888888
 9=99999999
 BLACK
 RED
 GREEN
 YELLOW
 BLUE
 MAGENTA
 CYAN

The sprite designer

4 From Page 47

be found to log on to the terminals. I had a lot of fun deciding what these terminals should do – and I think some will bring a few surprises.

My favourite puzzle is the music room. This is, I believe, the first musical puzzle ever included in an Electron arcade adventure.

To get the organ to play a true scale was rather difficult. The pitch of each note is stored as data and as the man moves over the keys his position is used to calculate which note is played.

Most of the sounds use envelopes, and a small editor was used to define them. This made it easier to get some quite interesting effects. However, the sounds are, by necessity, very simple and I hope unobtrusive.

I have played Quest all the way through on several occasions and can finish it with the game clock showing 12.06 – about 1 hour 10 minutes real time.

There is plenty of energy available in the game, and providing you stop and think, all the screens can be negotiated without losing too much.

The underwater section is perhaps the hardest, as

there is a severe time limit. The secret is to put your head up in the air pockets as often as possible.

The game was programmed on an Acorn Electron with Plus 1 and Plus 3 expansions. With the Plus 3 active the amount of free memory is very limited, so I used ACP's sideways ram and E00 DFS to get PAGE back to E00.

The whole system was generally very reliable, but I did find one or two minor bugs. Trying to save files to disc in Modes 0 to 2 sometimes resulted in disc errors. This could be due to the reduced speed of the system.

Some data is stored in the screen memory and I had to save in these modes. To get around that I used a technique I saw in *Electron User*, where the operating system is temporarily forced into Mode 6 to increase the processor speed.

I also used this technique to speed up the machine while it is drawing the screens.

When developing a game like this, the source code has to be loaded, modified, assembled and the resulting object code saved back to disc.

The modified source code then has to be saved and the new object code reloaded



with the rest of the game in order to test it.

If there are any problems – and you can bet your disc drive there will be – the source code has to be reloaded and the whole operation repeated.

On a bad night I would do this perhaps 100 times, so cassette tapes would be completely useless, and the discs and drive had to be as reliable as possible.

One important lesson I learned while working on Quest was always to keep at least two backup copies of the game. I would also recommend using good quality discs for the main backup at least. I also try to rotate them to avoid over working one disc.

On the BBC Micro Mode 7 can be used for assembling machine code. This leaves about 28k of ram for the source and machine code.

On the Electron, Mode 6 must be used instead, which reduces the amount of ram available.

One dodge to get round this is to assemble the code into the screen memory. Set 0% to &6000, P% to the start address of the machine code and use OPT 4 to 7.

You can see the machine code being built up on the screen, and it leaves extra space in the program area for the assembler text. But remember to turn off the cursor.

Quest is my first serious

game, and I must admit it nearly drove me to the point of despair. At one stage last year I decided to give up altogether and sell my computer in order to buy an Amiga.

I actually placed the adverts, but then changed my mind and decided to press on and see what happened.

I sent the game to Superior Software just after Christmas and they immediately wrote back to me. Since then I have worked solidly on it every night to get it debugged and versions finished for the other machines in the Acorn range. Superior lent me a BBC B, and were most helpful with suggestions and advice.

I aim to stay with the Electron for a few more games at least. I feel the machine still has a lot of potential and is only now being programmed to its limits.

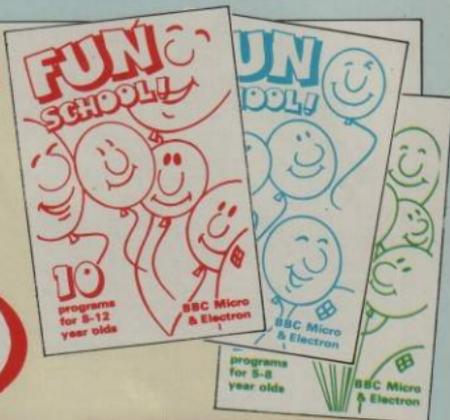
I am already planning the sequel to Quest and hope to have it finished later in the year.

I have worked out a way to cram even more into the micro and have devised some devious puzzles to keep Walter amused.

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Electron User July 87

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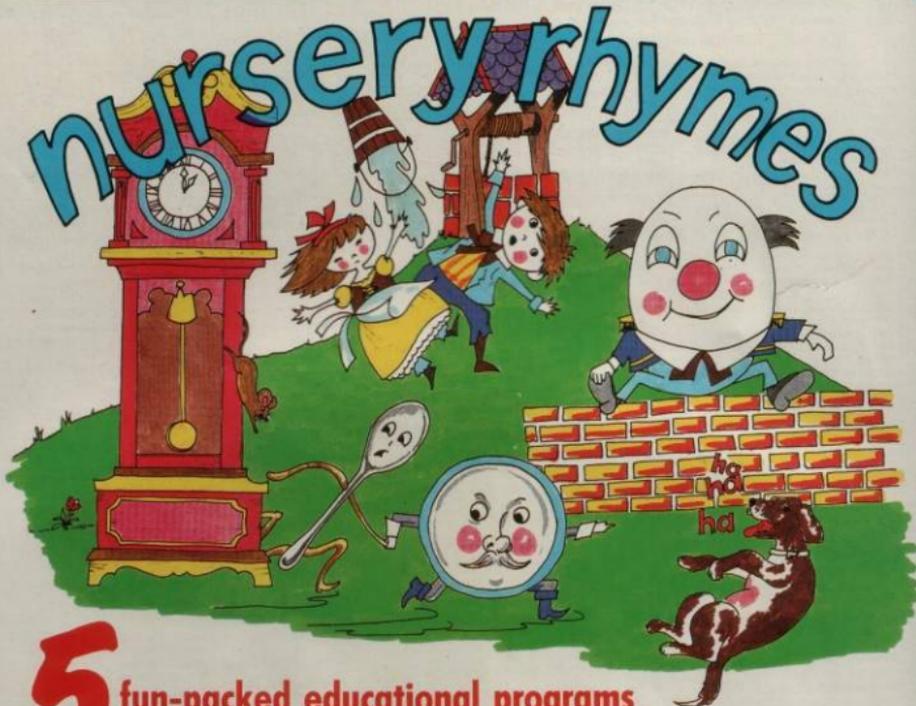
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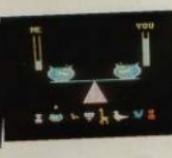
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TO ORDER PLEASE USE THE FORM ON PAGE 53

YOU may or may not have seen an episode of Tomorrow's World, screened just over a year ago, in which a unique method of producing colour on black and white televisions was demonstrated.

There is no inherent reason why the same technique can't be used on an Electron with a black and white TV or monitor to produce full-colour text and graphics, and David Sharpe shows you how.

If different parts of the screen can be made to generate a particular frequency of interference fringing, the optic nerve has no choice but to perceive that part of the screen as a colour.

The secret lies inside the Electron's ULA chip. Frame flyback occurs 50 times a second and it is possible to alter the palette for certain colours at every pass using a set sequence — thereby producing subliminal interference patterns.

These, if properly

COLOUR EMULATOR OR LINERS

adjusted, can reproduce all eight colours — albeit rather faint and shakily — on a black and white TV.

These will be changing so rapidly that the brain cannot react adversely to the flickering, as can be the case at discotheques.

Of course, the utility will still only function in modes with more than two colours, so Mode 0, 3, 4 and 6 are out. Mode 2 is the best with eight steady and eight flashing colours.

Type in the listing, save it before running, and use CALL &90 to activate the utility.

```

10 REM Colour Emulator
20 BX=6900:FOR YZ=0 TO 7:REA
DAS:FOR LI=0 TO 23:7BX=VAL('B'
+MID$(AS,LI+2+1,2)):BX=BX+1:
NEXT: NEXT
30 DATA A9878550A98985512
07009203109A93200009A9A9855
0A9
40 DATA 098551A91120EEFFA
000092901A000E0920EEFF20700
9CE
50 DATA 000910E7A91420EEF
F20E7FF42E77FA020009A9000
550
60 DATA A9098551A00009A00
19150207009CE000910F1A0C8A20
0EA
70 DATA EACAD0F8800F620E
7FF2E7FF42E77FA0000150C92A
007
80 DATA 20E3FFC047209A01
30000000002A160117000A20000
000
90 DATA 00000053796E3687
26F6E697369A6E720554C41202E2
E2E
100 DATA 2A4041204841212004
17072696C20466F6C21202A000
102
  
```

HELICOPTER

```

1 REM Helicopter
2 REM By A M Waite
3 REM (c) Electron User
4 MODE 2:VDU 23,1,0,0;0;
0;19,15,1;0;AX=0:PROCprint(
440,312,400,0.1):PROCprint(1
040,412,100,1):GCOL 0,15:PRO
CHel:PROCVDU:END
5 DEFPROCprint(X,Y,X1,X2,
C):VDU 29,X1,Y1:MOVE 0,R1*C
:FOR N=0 TO 2*PI STEP PI/24:
AZ=AZ+1:IF AZ=13 AZ=1
6 GCOL 0,AT:MOVE 0,0:PLOT
  
```

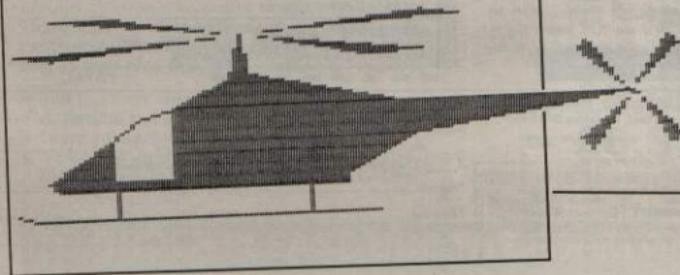
```

T 85,RX+SIN(N),RX+COS(N)*C:N
EXT:VDU 29,0;0;:ENDPROC
7 DEFPROCVDU:FOR N=1 TO
12:VDU 19,NX,0;0;:NEXT:REPE
AT:FOR N=1 TO 12:IF NX=1 VD
U 19,12,0;0;
8 VDU 19,NX,1;0;VDU 19,
NX-1,0;0;:NEXT:UNTIL FALSE:E
NDPROC
9 DEFPROCHel:MOVE 440,5
12:MOVE 420,412:PLOT 85,460,
412:MOVE 1040,412:MOVE 340,3
12:PLOT 85,340,412:MOVE 800,
412:MOVE 680,312:PLOT 85,340
,312:MOVE 700,412:MOVE 440,4
62:PLOT 85,340,412:MOVE 340,
412:DRAW 290,400:DRAW 240,37
0
10 MOVE 150,312:PLOT 85,2
40,312:MOVE 150,312:MOVE 160
,300:PLOT 85,600,312:PLOT 85
,600,300:MOVE 100,270:DRAW 1
20,260:DRAW 650,260:MOVE 550,2
300:DRAW 250,260:MOVE 550,2
60:DRAW 550,300:ENDPROC
  
```

HERE is yet another excellent demonstration of palette switching techniques from A.M. Waite. A helicopter complete with whirling rotors is the finished effect, and the spinning blades are extremely realistic because they appear to have proper perspective as they turn.

There is a short wait while the main rotor and the stabiliser are drawn using all 16 colours in Mode 2. Finally the helicopter's body is drawn.

Now sit back to watch the amazing animation.



MICRO MESSAGES

The micro that outgrew Acorn

I RECENTLY spent several informative hours looking through three years of Electron User, right from the first edition I bought in January 1985.

It seemed quite strange in those early magazines to find names now so synonymous with the Electron to be missing – names like Slogger and Advanced Computer Products. Could there ever have been an Electron without them?

ACP first appeared in the August 1985 issue with a full-page advertisement for ADT – how things have moved on since then.

In the January 1986 issue I found my own letter to Micro Messages entitled Growing into giant oaks, a reference to the potential of what was still, at that time, a very small Acorn.

The Electron has indeed grown into a mighty oak and its growth makes for an extraordinary story.

Recently I was able to attend a small exhibition of Slogger products for the

Electron at Newbury in Berkshire.

I was amazed at the number of enthusiasts who attended the exhibition and the many miles they had travelled to get there.

You would have thought a new computer had hit the market – was all this for the humble Electron?

Who would have envisaged, way back in 1983 when the first Electrons hit the shelves of the high street stores, that the machine in 1988 would not only be going strong, but still expanding – certainly not Acorn!

The November 1985 issue of Electron User led with the headline: Electron production continues. Brian Long, the then new managing

director of Acorn gave the assurance to Electron User that "we are not ceasing production of the Electron".

When asked if the machine would be supported by Acorn in the foreseeable future, Brian Long replied: "Of course".

Well, Brian Long has come and gone, and taken his false promises with him. As an enthusiast said to me recently, "Who needs Acorn anyway?"

New names, with a proven dedication to the support of the Electron, have appeared. John Huddleston of PRES, the team at Slogger and Gordon Cameron of PMS.

Later, Chris Rudge of Project Expansions and John Wilke of Jafa Systems

have added their own brand of inventiveness and initiative.

With such a list of enthusiastic entrepreneurs, is it so surprising that the Electron continues to expand in such an exciting way?

We can all remember those letters and telephone calls to Acorn which on many occasions remained unanswered.

How different today when a telephone call to any of the major supporters of the Electron will usually bring an immediate response, an answer to an enquiry, but above all an enthusiasm for the machine which is infectious, presented with courtesy and often humour.

There have, however, been disappointments. We saw in the February 1986 issue of Electron User the invitation to talk to the world through telecommunications.

At the time the comms package available was too expensive for the majority of users, and it did not really catch on.

Some, myself included, did explore this new world of communications through Prestel, Micronet and Micro-Link, and have been sold on it ever since.

It is good to see at long last that comms packages for the Electron are becoming less expensive, thereby allowing other

A Cautionary Tale

Young Kevin bought an Acorn
From the shop just down the road.
He knew all of the simple stuff,
Like Chain and List and Load,
But although he had a User Guide
He never thought to look inside,
So Kevin's idea of a dream
Was zapping monsters on the screen,
And moving little graphic frogs,
Manipulating graphic dogs.

He soon got sick of Hopper,
Space Invaders and that lot,
So he planned a trip to Woolworths
Just to see the stuff they'd got;

When suddenly, out of the blue
He woke up in the night,
He'd been struck by an idea;
Some new programs he would write.

So he sat down and he fiddled
'Till his brain and fingers numbed,
His back and neck were aching
And his television hummed.
After three weeks of this exercise
He'd got nowhere at all, so
He smashed up his computer;
Threw his Acorn at the wall.

So the moral of this story
(If a moral is supplied), is:
"Before you start to program
You should read the User Guide!"

— Rob Lad, Northallerton, North Yorks.

Turn to Page 56 ▶

users to access viewdata systems and bulletin boards.

Among my few disappointments is the fact that Electron User has not included a small section in the magazine centered around this whole field.

For although the amount of users on the systems are as yet small, I am quite sure that numbers will increase—especially if more information is given.

These points apart, as users we have much to be grateful for—not least to those magnificent men on their Electron machines, who so actively support this amazingly tenacious computer.

Thanks also to the Electron User team, that has the privilege of bringing the news together and informing us of what is going on in the Electron world. — T. Dunkerley, Reading, Berkshire.

Peripheral puzzle

I RECENTLY bought an Electron with which I am delighted. However, I didn't find the User Guide too helpful, as it gave little information on how the basic unit could be extended for using disc drives, printers and other peripherals.

Even the Advanced User Guide isn't very specific on these points.

My problem is—and I am sure other enthusiasts have experienced the same difficulty—how do I expand my system, and with what?

Your publication is excellent, but with a proliferation of suppliers advocating anything from a Plus 1 to a Rombox Plus and beyond, it is difficult to know which way to jump.

I wish to use a 5.25in single disc drive which I have acquired, but as my knowledge of computers is very limited, I would welcome any comments from you or your readers, who themselves must have been similarly

ALL programs printed in this issue are exact reproduction of listings taken from running programs which have been thoroughly tested.

However on the very rare occasions that mistakes may occur corrections will be published as a matter of urgency. Should you encounter error messages when you type in a program

they will almost certainly be the result of your own typing mistakes.

Unfortunately we can no longer answer personal programming queries concerning these mistakes. Of course letters about suggested errors will be investigated without delay, but any replies will only appear in the mail pages.

perplexed when they first entered tentatively into the world of computers. — George Lynch, Edinburgh.

● The subject of expanding an Electron is one which seems to have caused problems for a lot of readers. In the near future we hope to run a feature containing hints and guidelines for adding peripherals to an Electron, together with basic explanations of what certain products do, and why they are necessary.

For the time being however, you can find many articles in back issues of *Electron User* covering a wide range of products in some depth.

To answer your more immediate problem, to connect your 5.25in drive to your Electron you will need two products. First you need to attach a Plus 1 or Rombox Plus, which provides interfaces for a printer and joystick, together with two rom cartridge sockets.

It is the rom cartridge sockets that are needed, because the Advanced Plus 4 or Pegasus disc interface sits inside either socket and has a cable connector into which you can plug your disc drive.

The Plus 1 unit is available from Advanced Computer Products and costs £49.95. An alternative to the Plus 1 from ACP is the Rombox Plus from Slogger, which offers much the same features and costs £54.95.

The Plus 4 disc interface is available from Advanced Computer Products, price £79.98, and Pegasus is available from Slogger at £74.95,

You are therefore looking at a total cost of approximately £135 to interface your disc drive.

Satisfied customer

I WOULD like to take the time to thank you for your fast and efficient mail order service, and for the excellent *Electron User* magazine you produce. The magazine is varied, balanced and supportive to the needs of Electron owners.

As there are no Electron dealers in New Zealand your advertisements are the sole source of add-ons and are to be highly praised. Thanks again, and continued success for the rest of 1988 — A. J. Carroll, Wellington 4, New Zealand.

Odd little error

I HAVE just been going through the programs on February's cassette, and have found an error in *Odd One Out*.

I find that after 15 questions, and before any winner has been found, I get the message Subscript at line 380. I have listed this line, but it appears to be as printed in the magazine, and the version on the other side of the cassette yields the

same result.

I am afraid that my programming skills are not up to sorting this one out, so I hope that you will be able to publish a correction in due course, as this game looks to be a useful addition to the selection of programs for my class of seven year-olds.

By the way, I am looking forward to trying *Rainbow* with them next week. Thanks for a good magazine. — Mrs Pauline Clayton, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield.

● Thank you for pointing out this error to us. The bug crept in at the last minute as a new enhancement was being tested, but the hard fix used to test the enhancement — which actually causes this error — was not removed before publication.

To correct the program fully, list line 150 and find the part which reads:

```
done$(15)
```

which you can find immediately before the RESTORE command. Change it to:

```
done$(max%)
```

and all will be well. Our apologies for any inconvenience this has caused.

Ram Board games

IN the February 1988 issue of *Electron User* Martin Reed suggested that arcade games could be released for use with Slogger's Master Ram Board, making full use of the extra 32k on offer.

However, this is, I believe, not so simple. Arcade games, unlike adventures, usually poke the screen memory directly. This is not possible when using the Ram Board or a second processor.

All graphics commands have to be executed legally, thus greatly reducing both the game's speed and any advantage which the additional ram provides.

If I am wrong, and this problem can be overcome,

then I must urge people to write to the software houses and show them what a lucrative market this could be.

It would be easy to include 64k enhanced versions of a game on the same tape or disc as the standard version. — Peter Davey, Reading, Berkshire.

● While it is certainly possible to read and write to the extra 32k in the Master Ram Board — see Part II of Chris Nixon's shadow ram series in this issue — it must be said that sprite handling, for example, could never be quite as fast as normal.

For those of you with the E2P second processor from PMS, there is a legal osword call which allows byte transfer across the tube.

Again it's not quite as fast as accessing the screen directly, but with tightly-written code this technique is certainly practical.

Look at the Master 128 version of Stryker's Run, for instance. Most of the Master's 64k of sideways ram is used to store the scrolling background — and there is no discernible difference in speed from the original version, although a special call must be used to access data stored in this way.

Letterhead upgrade

MAY I thank you for your excellent Letterhead Generator program from the March 1988 issue of Electron user.

However, when I ran the original program I found that the cassette filing system messages were being saved as part of the screen. Therefore I have added a new line 35 to divide these messages while the program runs.

I also found that when the program ended after the print routine, or after quitting, the cursor keys did not return to their normal function.

So I have added a new procedure, PROCnormal,

ALTHOUGH I seldom use View for writing programs, since they cannot be tested, I often use it for editing. However, tape users obviously cannot use the Strip program given in the article, as it has two files open simultaneously.

But there is an easy solution. As your strip routine (sounds naughty!) clearly demonstrates, the first five spaces on a Basic line are reserved for the line number.

We can therefore instruct View to search for and replace a carriage return and the next five characters with just a carriage return:

```
CHANGE/"C"?"?"?"?"?"?"/C/
```

This effectively removes

which will reset the cursor keys and turn the cassette messages back on.

From the short listing shown, add all lines other than 650 and 810 to the original program.

If you have a Brother M-1009 printer, add lines 650 and 810 as well. They contain extra VDU codes which allow the program to work properly with this printer.

```
35 *OPT 1,0
180 IF G=32 PROCnormal:END
190 IF G=31 PRINT TAB(0,5)
STRING$(40,""):PROCscreen.d
unc:PROCnormal:END
650 VDU 2,1,27,1,65,1,8,1,
27,1,50
810 VDU 1,27,1,65,1,12,1,2
7,1,50,3
840 DEF PROCnormal
850 *FX4
860 *OPT 1,1
870 ENDPROC
```

Ravenskull revisited

WITH reference to the map for Ravenskull Level 2, published in the December 1987 issue of Electron User, I have spotted a mistake in an

View editing with tape

all the line numbers, except for the first, which for some reason appears indented. Thus tape users need no longer be denied the pleasure of View editing.

By the way, I think you should also have mentioned that any Basic lines longer than 132 characters will have their ends chopped off.

Referring briefly to your answer to my letter in the same issue concerning the Mandelbrot set, perhaps you could remind your readers that in a high resolution mode you can fool the Electron into thinking that it is in Mode 6 with:

```
?&F07=630
```

The picture goes haywire,

but the program will run at twice the speed. When the picture is finished, a simple:

```
?&F07=8282
```

will restore the screen to normal. In INKEY command could be used to toggle between the two states — shades of the ZX-81!

Finally, there was an answer to the reader with the power socket problem in Micro Messages a few years back. The socket wobbles slightly and this cracks the copper on the PCB.

The solution is to thicken this area with some solder after first scraping off the green solder resist. This also happened to me. — Phillip A. Bender, Sunderland.

otherwise excellent map.

A red scroll is shown in the key as a speed scroll. Although this scroll is also marked on the map, it doesn't actually appear until level four. — Andy Johnson, North Cotes.

Electron on the airwaves

I HAVE an Electron with Master Ram Board, a Plus 1 and ACP's Advanced Plus 3.

My first question involves interference with an FM stereo radio, whenever the computer is in action.

I have had two Electrons, and the first had no accessories apart from a First Byte joystick interface. Now it has been replaced due to an irreparable fault, and the interference continues.

This therefore cannot be a problem unique to one faulty Electron. The radio and computer are plugged into separate ring mains, and different TVs have even been tried.

Can you give me a

method for preventing this interference, other than not using the radio at the same time as my Electron?

My second question: Is Slogger's T2P3 tape to disc converter for the Plus 3 compatible with my AP3? — S. Payne, Spixworth, Norwich.

● Unfortunately there is not a lot that can be done to cure your noisy Electron. We have come across this problem several times before, and all of the usual cures for unshielded RF emissions are impractical when it comes to implementing them on an Electron.

For instance, the standard cure of carefully wrapping the main board in baking foil is very dodgy — even if short-circuits were avoided by first wrapping thin foam around the PCB, the Electron would certainly overheat.

One thing you could try is to shield all your cables fully. There may be enough current to induce a magnetic field in the wires, which in turn may be interfering with your radio's reception.

To answer your second question, T2P3 does indeed work with ACP's Advanced Plus 3.

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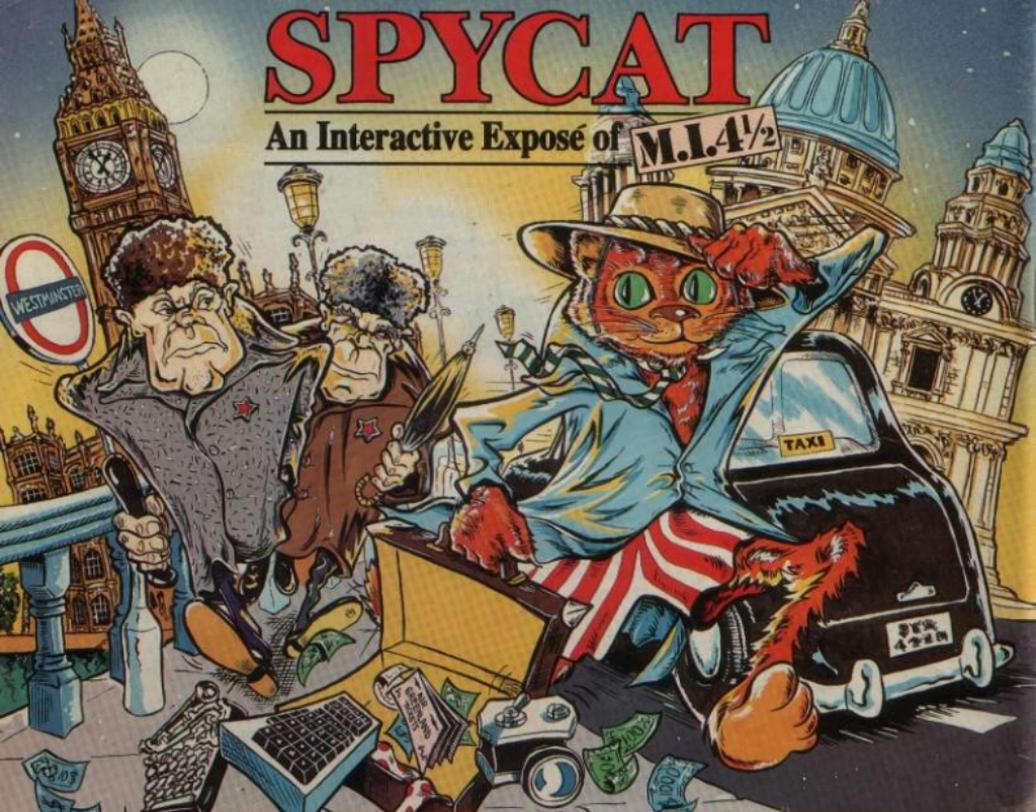
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ALL ORDERS DESPATCHED WITHIN 24 HOURS, BUT PLEASE ALLOW 7 DAYS

SPYCAT

An Interactive Exposé of

M.I.4½



The London Skyline Viewed from Blackhall



Outside No. 10 Downing Street



Meeting the P.M.



Waiting to see "M"

All the Thrills and Intrigue of the World of Espionage

Spycat is a skillfully-written arcade adventure game which takes place amongst the corridors of power in Blackhall, Downing Street and the M.I.4½ underground surveillance complex.

You play the role of Spycat: a cat with a purpose. You are devoted to spending your life embroiled within the fascinating but dangerous arena of professional secrets. It's a good career — full of security; and when you retire you can always supplement your pension by emigrating to Greenland and publishing your memoirs.

The game features nearly 100 different scenes, with 30 different objects — including computers and passports — to locate and employ in appropriate ways. An icon-driven control system is used to orchestrate your manoeuvres and actions. There are secret passages to discover, and hatches and lifts to assist your progress. Guest appearances are made by: the Prime Minister and the spy-chiefs "G" and "M".

Spycat is a thoroughly captivating game. To complete the adventure, you will need to use clear logical thought as well as fast reactions and arcade skills. Your life as an undercover cat may not be easy but it will always be exciting!

BBC Micro Cassette	£9.95	Acorn Electron Cassette	£9.95
BBC Micro 5¼" Disc	\$14.95	BBC Master Compact 3½" Disc	\$14.95

(Compatible with the BBC B, B+ and Master Series computers)

PRIZE COMPETITION

The first prize in our competition is a specially-produced ESPIONAGE KIT (worth over £400) comprising: quality prism binoculars, a mini camera, a mini cassette-recorder, invisible ink pens, and a book on codes and ciphers. There are 20 congratulatory certificates for runners-up.

To enter the competition, you must complete the game and write to us describing the final messages that you receive.
Closing Date: 31st July, 1988.

SUPERIOR SOFTWARE
Limited

ACORNSOFT

Dept. C 7, Reagent House, Skinner Lane, Leeds LS7 1AX, Telephone: 0532 459453

Please make all cheques payable to "Superior Software Ltd".



24 HOUR TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE FOR ORDERS

OUR GUARANTEE

- All mail orders are despatched within 24 hours by first-class post.
- Postage and packing is free.
- Faulty cassettes and discs will be replaced immediately. (This does not affect your statutory right)