

# Einstein Magazine

& ALL MICRO NEWS No.111



**THE CHRISTMAS PLATES**  
THE GRAPHIC found in all the newest styles  
by H. MORELL, 17 and 18, Green St., Andrew St.,  
Birmingham, W.C. London. Manufacturers and  
importers of all kinds of Picture Frames and Decorative  
Mountings, from millions but always in stock.  
Every plate for the trade and exportation. The  
entire Block of Patterns sent free for 3 penny stamp.

**COPIES FOR OIL PAINTING**  
**ORIGINAL DESIGNS IN OIL**  
COLOURS—Flowers, Birds, and Landscapes  
Sent in any part of the United Kingdom on  
wire by post. Please for Five Shillings in Deeds  
Copies for Murals, Plasters, Pencil Work, and other  
Designs, etc. Lists on application to FREDERICK  
TOWERS, 7 one Art Depot, Finsbury, London.

**UMBRELLAS**  
FOR  
**PRESENTS.**  
REASONABLE AND SEASONABLE  
DURABLE AND PROCURABLE.

**SANGSTER AND CO'S**  
Establishments  
140, REGENT STREET,  
75, CHEAPSIDE,  
94, FLEET STREET,  
10, ROYAL EXCHANGE.  
N.B.—Children's Umbrellas for Presents.



**Beetham's**  
**Glycerine**  
**AND**  
**Cucumber**

It is the Most Perfect Preparation  
for Softening and Beautifying  
THE SKIN ever produced.  
ITS EFFECT IN REMOVING ALL  
ROUGHNESS, REDNESS, CHAPS, &c.  
IS ALMOST MAGICAL,  
and by its use THE SKIN  
is rendered  
**SOFT, SMOOTH, AND WHITE.**  
and protected from the ill effects of  
FROST, COLD WINDS, & HARD WATER.  
No Lady who values her COMPLEXION  
should be without it at this Season of the Year.  
If used after Dancing, or Visiting Housed  
exposures, it will be found to be  
DELIGHTFULLY COOLING and  
REFRESHING.  
(For the NURSERY it is INVALUABLE,  
as it is perfectly Harmless.)

**"ALWAYS FAIR"**  
BOTTLES, 12, 18, 24, OF ALL CHEMISTS AND PERFUMERS.  
SOLE MANUFACTURERS  
**M. BEETHAM and SON, Chemists, Cheltenham.**

## "DERMATHISTIC" CORSET.

BROWN'S PATENT.



"The actual  
wearing out of  
such a Corset as  
this becomes  
an absolutely  
impossibility."  
—Lady's Pic-  
torial.  
—  
PRICE 5/11  
All Colours.  
PROTECTED BY LEATHER

ELEGANCE, COMFORT, DURABILITY.  
Ladies should note that the genuine article is stamped  
BROWN'S PATENT "DERMATHISTIC" on the Back.  
Of Drapers and Ladies' Quillets throughout  
the Kingdom.

## ENGRAVINGS.

All the New Engravings after  
MILLAIS BRITON RIVIERE | ALMA TADAMA  
SIR F. LEIGHTON  
Are now ON VIEW at  
**THOMAS McLEAN'S GALLERY.**  
1, DAVENPORT.

MADE WITH BOILING WATER

**EPPS'S**  
GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

**COCOA**  
MADE WITH BOILING MILK

## A SPECTACULAR CHRISTMAS GIFT. PASTA MACK.



(Registered) TRADE MARK  
OF ALL CHEMISTS AND PERFUMERS.  
Wholesale Agents: G. H. BROWN, OLSOBY,  
JARRITT, and Co. London, W.  
Sole Manufacturer: H. MACK, Ltd., &c.



EDITORIAL

Tony Adams

John Marriott rather took me to task for sending out EM No.110 "so soon after EM No.109", saying that "this will encourage Others' expectations of my capabilities"! I find this puzzling. Surely everyone already knows very well how superbly capable I am? In any case, I was simply bringing the late-running EM back to its usual quarterly publication schedule. This - as you are all no doubt well aware - is timed to coincide with the change-over between the Summer and Winter Timetables of the Algoma Central Railway's 296-mile passenger train service from Sault Ste Marie to its junction with the Ontario Northern Railway at Hearst, as so many of you have told us how absolutely essential you find this information in planning your personal travel arrangements. As EM.110 went out 2 months after EM.109, and John plus several others of you have made it clear that to wait more than two months between issues of EM causes you severe withdrawal symptoms, my response to John is "Rhubarb!"

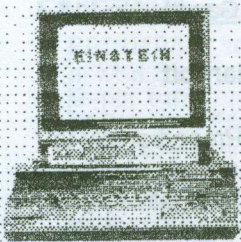
On a more serious note, this issue introduces a change of title. For some time it has been very difficult to buy a new Einstein TC01 computer from Marks & Sparks, Dixons, the Gardening Dept of B&Q, Burton's The Tailors, or the Tesco/Sainsbury "Once They're Gone You've Flipping Well Had It" departments, and we can no longer sustain EM as a separate publication on the diminished subscriber base which has resulted. However, merging EM with the extremely popular "Elastic Sided Boot Fancier's Gazette" has resolved this problem by raising our circulation from under 3 to over 3 million regular readers. In merging the two mags we have retained both titles alphabetically, so your Einstein will still get first priority if we're over-run with material for publication, with elastic sided boots getting whatever space is left.

Are you running a laser printer or photocopier? The toner is frightfully expensive, isn't it? - even though laser printers are much cheaper to run than inkjets, whose special ink is priced like liquid gold. Chris Coxall has found a toner refill kit supplier which looks as though it can reduce your costs dramatically. Contact him for details. We'd tell you ourselves, but we can't read the phone number from his hard copy!

John Marriott reports that he doesn't know of any surviving computer clubs in Devon - has the Spectrum group based in Plymouth given up, John? - and that there are no longer any computer shows in his area since the very best (at Paignton) was taken over by CB radio people. He says that crook traders selling duff kit moved in and ripped the punters off, so next year even honest traders sold nothing and gave up.

As I worked out way back in 1990, you get some honest traders at computer shows, but all too often it's the same kit, the same risk of duds and the same lack of come-back as at a boot fair, but at much inflated prices. Maybe this reflects the inflated stall charges at shows? When you can buy a good working Pentium for a fiver at a boot fair, John, with all the bits that hang off it and good software on the hard drive, what's the problem? Did that include a colour monitor? What, no laser printer? But it makes it hard for Steve Potts (and anyone else like him) who takes his Einstein to shows to let everyone else see just what a wonderful beast Elroy is in action.





# Einstein Magazine

**& Elastic Sided Boot Fanciers Gazette**

**No. 111**

Einstein User Group Secretary and Einstein Magazine Editor/Publisher: A E ADAMS

Editorial/Administrative Address: 12 Dunstall Close, St Mary's Bay, Romney Marsh, Kent. TN29 0QY

## IN THIS ISSUE:-

- 1 = FRONT COVER - Design "borrowed" from CPMUG 1982 journal
- 2 = EDITORIAL - Our publication schedule, Merger and new title for your favourite magazine, Cut your laser printer / photocopier toner costs  
Any computer clubs / shows left in your area?
- 3 = CONTENTS FOR THIS ISSUE - You are reading it right now!
- 4 = John Marriott - PROPORTIONAL PRINTING
  - 4 = Errata in previous article, who these articles are intended for, object of writing them
  - Introducing PROCEDURES in BASIC PROGRAMMING
  - Screen dumps need 9-pin, not 24-pin dot matrix printers
- 5 = Screen dump to Samsung 24-pin printer using GDUMP and 1.31
- 6 = ditto using CTRL-B and PRNT CHR\$(2) under SYSTEM 5 (DOS 2)
- 7 = GDUMP to include in modified floppy disk boot tracks
  - First line of GDUMP machine code checks if printer is online
- 8 = SCNPRNT3 to perform GDUMP function under SYSTEM5/DOS2
- 9 = SLICE3 (EM 110) as modified for use with Samsung 24-pin printer
- 10 = CHARLIST and CHARFONT - explore the construction of TC01 fonts
- 11 = FILEPRNT prints output file from SLICE3
  - TEST runs the help files as a simple example of a disk magazine
- 12 = LETTER from Les FOSKETT, ponders on the part railways have played in his life
- 13 = Dave WILLIAMS - more QBASIC programs. Educational game for the youngsters
- 16 = John Marriott again, looking back on .... The demise of ISCA, the programmers' club, becoming a program user rather than a programmer, getting involved with EM/EUG, getting old and becoming "not an economically viable unit" in NHS terms, the reality of living in the idyllic West Country, and lots of other stuff.
- 19 = P R BUDD reports briefly on his Z80 CPU board project building
- 20 = Tony Adams - THE ROMANTIC AGE OF STEAM - What the reality was like.
- 22 = Are you a "New Man"? Or is this just another name for a gelding? The evidence.
- 23 = Electric milk floats for a tram service to Ilfracombe? Here's steam in action instead!
- 24 = Come to Sunny Skegness by the Great Northern Railway for your 1908 holiday.



**Proportionally updating?**

**John Marriott**

More grovelling apologies, but in my major rewriting of "Proportionally up yours?" I forgot to carry forward the important little bit of advice, of either renaming your Tasword text file to <filename>.OBJ - or alternatively you can save it in Tasword with the .OBJ extension. Another point to note is that Tasword expects to have its text files on a 40T/SS disk, so if you're running an 80T/DS boot drive ( ... thanks to the Holy Grail article in EM) with TASWORD.COM on it, then the way to get round that is, at the DOS prompt 0:> enter (say) 3:<e> (if 3: is your 40T/SS drive's identity) and then at 3:> enter 0:TASWORD<e> which will load Tasword from 0: but keeps drive 3: as your default drive to load/save your files on your 40T/SS disk. DON'T try changing drives from inside Tasword - you WON'T recover!

Like all developing programs, things tend to mutate - and <PROPORT> is no exception. On this point, some of you may well have "experienced" the "procedural language" of the BBC-B era. Now I don't want to get into a dispute with anyone on this, but I reckon that was the biggest load of hype foisted on the gullible - a memory hungry way of abusing the GOSUB/RETURN simplicity. My mini-programs in EM110 were to ensure that a "block" element of a larger program would work - i.e. each is a procedure.

Digital Research (on the Amstrad CPC6128) had a way of getting round RAM deficiencies by trundling "blocks" of programs (procedures) off and onto its "B:" drive - which usually meant that a section of RAM was "over-written" time and time again - and there it is again in my programs.

Well, our Editor has suggested that I am writing for EM's Experienced Programmers rather than for Novice Users. I'd prefer to say that I am trying to "extend a learning curve" to "Prospective Programmers" with something which is also aimed at "General Users and Readers", whilst at the same time reinforcing my own "learning and skills" ability - so like our Editor, I don't do "...owt for nowt, ...

... I have "suggested" to Tony that about 5% of EM's Readership will actually key in those programs, with only one letter of "query" landing up on his Editorial Desk - and me thinking that's a good response. Cynical, maybe - but despite "knowing" that, here's an update!

Having managed to lay hands on a Samsung 24-pin dot matrix printer with a "proportional" mode, the first thing I learned was that a screen dump was YUK! - as shown below. The reason for this is that the pins are too "light" - and you really do need the "heavier" pins that you get on the 9-pin printers.



PRINTERS - You can do a screen dump with either <GDUMP> or in Xtal System5's XBAS <ctrl><B> but I'll say "early EPSON 9-pin type only" as I can't test that - well, I have with a HP510 & HP560C Deskjets, with garbled rubbish - and I don't know the printer's code to switch it to "Epson emulation", if they can. A "width table" can be derived from the following BASIC line "FOR C=33 TO 127:C\$=CHR\$(C):PRINT MUL\$(C\$,10):NEXT<e>" with your printer set Proportional Mode. This should be printed out in "ragged column" - you might even be able to "count the dots" per character, but you'll get some idea of YOUR printer's font widths. Nearly forgot - in TASWORD set the margins to <0> & <64>, <R/J> <W/W> <Ins> to <off> as you don't want any padding <spaces> at this stage. You can develop <paragraphs> and such like by using rarely used characters such as "&#x<>" to modify the "x" & "y" plot values, but ALWAYS use a "copy disk". Yes, that TASWORD file - rename it as <fileXT.0BJ>, which is the "start" of that "Family name" group. Learn by YOUR mistakes - have fun.  
John Marriott 1.8.2003 01392-469206

<Q> TO QUIT <R> TO RUN

## Screen dump to Samsung 24-pin printer using GDUMP and XtalDos 1.31

Also, whichever printer font was used, when a "sliced" text file was actually printed out in proportional mode, in some places in the document the result was good, but in others it was worse than in, say, 12 characters per inch 'standard" mode. I put this down to the simple fact that the "fonts" were really mimicking a typewriter's mechanical font rather than a "dot addressed" font - which the modern PC gives. I'll use the excuse here that <PROPORT> was intended only as a "dot addressed" screen dump for the Spectrum and that as a "bonus" I've extended a sub-program to allow a sliced file to be directly printed out as a "normal" text file - but it's still YUK!

**ED:-** John has supplied sample print-outs (which we don't have space to reproduce here) of a small text file printed in Elite 10 & 12 cpi and in Courier, Elite, Gothic and Roman proportional. The point he's making isn't clear to me, unless it's the extremely ragged right edge, which is probably unavoidable without a lot of fine-tuning and adjustment of the programming. To my mind the major cause of visually unacceptable results is that the space character seems to be an "EM-space", whereas it needs to be adjusted to give an "EN-space" - half the width - to be visually acceptable. Incidentally, in this sample text file John says that he used Elite as his default font because he doesn't have Arial - the preferred typeface for this publication's text - available on his printer. The default "font" in most computers/printers is "Times Roman" - a serif style - with a confusing plethora of almost-identical sans-serif faces (for copyright reasons).



*On Windows computers the most usual is "Arial", though you will also encounter "Swiss". On John's printer this variety seems to be called "Gothic" - which it certainly isn't, but the name reflects the attitude of Victorian letterpress printers, who were so used to encountering exclusively serif typefaces that they called non-serif typefaces "Grotesque" - by which name the major typefounders marketed them until Eric Gill made plain, simple and easy-to-read non-serif typefaces popular in Underground posters, notices, station signs and documents between the wars.*

This brings me to the "problem" of obtaining a screen dump. In Xtal System5 XBAS with the <ready> prompt then pressing <ctrl><B> does just that, except you get the WHOLE of the "graphic mode" screen display - which isn't at all what you want. After a lot of "non-productive" time and thought I worked out that the simple inclusion of PRINT CHR\$(2) within the BASIC program sorts that problem out, as shown in the print-out below.

A final bit on <SLICE> - the TC01 needs a <carriage return> command, which is the value <8D>. EPSON 9-pin type printers can be DIL switch set for <LF=LF+CR> if the paper doesn't <line feed>. As I've not got such a printer I can't test this - but you may need a "catch" e.g. IF A=<8D> THEN A=<8A>, try it and see what happens. There's not much to say about <CHARPLOT.XBS> for it gets a character from the new ASCII font, plots it to the screen & etc. When it finds the <shifted 0> marker it then uploads VRAM into RAM and saves it off with the "family" name. The <SCNLOAD.XBS> loads a selected "screen file" into RAM then downloads it into VRAM. If you "write out" all the "width" figures in <PROCHAR.OBJ> file and save it off i.e. SAVE "PROFONT.OBJ",<80000;&83000> you can do a simple BASIC "PEEK/UPOKE" (BASIC Reference Manual - VRAM Map) and you have a strange, yet not strange ASCII set. You could do it with <PROCHAR.OBJ> but you get some "funny dots" along within the letters - THINK!

#### System 5 screen dump to 24-pin printer using CTRL-B and PRINT CHR\$(2)

So simple - and hands up those who knew that BUT didn't bother to let EM/EUG know? There is one point and that is to do with "Aspect Ratio", or width to height ratio with what you see on screen to what is printed out, so you might try "ordering" your printer to change that by "sending out" to it before the screen dump command  
PRINT\*1;CHR\$(&1B)+CHR\$(&41)+CHR\$(&08)<e> which sets the line spacing to 8/60'. With DOS 1.31 the answer was - but wasn't - simple.



0:MOS

MOS 1.21

Ready

&gt;R80009800

&gt;T81708230

8170 DB 20 E6 1C FE 10 C0 2A [ f.~.@\*

8178 9A FB E5 2A 9C FB E5 21 .{e\*.{e!

8180 BF 00 22 9C FB 21 00 00 ?.".{!..

8188 22 9A FB E5 DD E1 E5 FD ".{e]ae}

8190 E1 DD E5 06 09 21 E1 E2 a]e..!ab

8198 7E CF 9F 23 10 FA FD E5 ~0.£.z)e

81A0 0E 01 C5 CF C7 C1 28 01 ..EOGA(.

81A8 37 CB 11 FD 2B 30 F3 79 7K.]+0sy

81B0 CF 9F FD E1 DD 23 DD E5 0.}a]E]e

81B8 F1 B7 28 E2 DD E1 01 F8 q7(b]a.x

81C0 FF FD 09 3E 0A CF 9F FD .}.&gt;.0.}

81C8 E5 E1 01 BF 00 09 38 C1 ea.?.~8A

81D0 3E 1B CF 9F 3E 40 CF 9F &gt;.0.&gt;@0.

81D8 E1 22 9C FB E1 22 9A FB a".{a".{

81E0 C9 0D 1B 41 08 1B 4B 00 I..A..K.

81E8 01 FF FF FF FF FF FF FF .....

81F0 FF FF FF FF FF FF FF FF .....

&gt;

Incorporating <GDUMP.OBJ> - LISTING ABOVE FOR YOU TO KEY IN - into <SCNPRINT3> - LISTING ON NEXT PAGE - resulted in difficulties under Dos 1.31 - I'm not sure if it is my TC01 (ex-Xtal employee) or simply a case of "no one's tried using it this way, yet" - but going through bits and pieces I stumbled across Stuart Marshall's solution of incorporating GDUMP into the DOS 1.31 tracks, which would give you the equivalent of PRINT CHR\$(2) but as CALL &E270. It is quite easy to modify a COPY - BUT PLEASE, NOT THE ORIGINAL!!! - of your DOS 1.31 disk. In MOS do R80009800<e> then M8170<e> then enter the list of figures as far as -and including - &81 E8 followed by the termination <dot>, then W80009800<e>. To test, reboot into XBAS and type some graphic keys then CALL &E270<e>. If your printer's not on line the first block of machine code checks and returns to BASIC, rather than freezing up.

*EDITOR'S NOTE to Stan Gibbs: Does this provide a solution to your 1995 query, re how you can incorporate this feature into your Einstein XBAS progs, as you can when programming in BASIC on your Sharp MZ-700 computer?*

Stuart Marshall suggested using CLEAR &E26F in your BASIC program as a way of "protecting" this machine code - but I've had no problems (yet?) from omitting it. Whilst on "problems", I may be experiencing one of those 'errors, without being an error' - for in a screen dump I get a continuous vertical line to the left edge, and using a screen dump "taken" from a Commercial Program has a similar "line" except this has the BIN\$ code of &A and &D - the codes for 'line feed and carriage return' so does the TCOI have a similar "fault" that the ORIC had of 'hidden' attributes at the start of each screen "text" line?

```

10 CLS:REM SCNPRINT3 John Marriott 7
/2003
20 RST:CLEAR &8000:DIR:PRINT
30 PRINT "WHAT SCREEN FILE TO LOAD E
.G. MYSCN.OBJ":INPUT A$
35 IF RIGHT$(A$,1)<>"J" THEN A$=A$+"
.OBJ"
40 POKE&8000,0:POKE&A000,33,0,128,17
,1,128,1,0,25,237,176,201
50 CALL &A000:LOAD A$
60 POKE&A000,62,0,211,9,62,64,211,9,
33,255,127,1,255,255,35,3,120,31,31,31,2
54,3,200,126,211,8,195,14,160
70 CALL &A000
80 PRINT CHR$(2)
90 PRINT&1;CHR$(&1B)+CHR$(&40)
100 CLS40

```

**SCNPRINT3 (see previous page) - use with System 5 (Dos 2), NOT Dos 1.31**

In the Samsung <SLICE> program (slight changes to <SLICE3>) - **LISTING NEXT PAGE** - the "width table" covers all the fonts found on that printer with LI 30 & LI 40 value of <N> compensating. This raises the possible program development that should you only want to print a "sliced" Tasword text file to printer, longer "proportional" lines can be had by increasing the value of <N>. Experiment by selecting say IF N>370 then varying it +/-3 and at this stage don't "slur" words together but create <spaces>.



In the program listings the <£> should be the <#> character, but I'm reluctant to try the 'key menu' of the Samsung printer, for whilst I've got its "User Guide" I've some bad memories of the same system on Epson printers. Hopefully I'll Boot Sale source an early Epson manual which'll expand on the printer "codes" in the Samsung manual more fully.

```

10 REM SAMSUNG file slicer/test
20 CLS: CLEAR &8000: POKE &8000, 0: POKE &
A000, &21, &00, &80, &11, &01, &80, &01, &00, &19
, &ED, &B0, &C9
30 CALL &A000
50 LOAD "SAMSUNG.OBJ"
60 N=0
70 W$="04244455233442424444444444422
444455555555345565555555656554343424545
43552352654554435564543234"
80 T=&8000: M=&8800
90 CLS: PRINT@5,5;"SLICING TEXTFILE A
T    WAIT!"
100 A=PEEK(T): PRINT@25,5; HEX$(T,4)
110 IF A=&40 THEN POKE M,A: GOTO 210
120 B=VAL(MID$(W$, (A-30), 1)): N=N+B
130 IF N>350 THEN 170
140 N=N+1: IF N>350 THEN 170
150 POKE M,A
160 T=T+1: M=M+1: GOTO 100
170 T=T-1: M=M-1
180 A=PEEK(T): IF A<>32 THEN 170
190 POKE M,&D: N=0: GOTO 160
200 GOTO 160
210 SAVE "SAMSNP.RN.OBJ", &8800, M

```

**SLICE3 (see last issue) AS MODIFIED FOR USE WITH SAMSUNG 24-PIN PRINTER**

The program listings of <CHARLIST> and <CHARFONT> - **ON NEXT PAGE** - show you how the standard TCO1 font is constructed and may give you ideas on your own font, or "moving" the character one pixel to the left if you prefer the TCO1 font, incorporating its "widths" into W\$ of <SLICE3> and also <PROCHAR OBJ>. The latter is one of those "coming in on the blind side" kickers - continually "been there".



1 REM CHARLIST runs through the CHARACTERS stored in VIDEO RAM - John Marriott 6/2003

```
10 K=32:T=6400
20 CLS
30 PRINT "CHARACTER ";(CHR$(K))
40 FOR X=0 TO 7:C=VPEEK(T+X)
50 PRINT BIN$(C,8);" ";HEX$(C,2);"
VRAM &";HEX$(T+X,4);"/DEC";(T+X):NEXT
60 T=T+8:K=K+1:PRINT:PRINT "      <ANY KEY> OR <SHIFT><BREAK>"
70 X=INCH:IF X=0 THEN 70
80 PRINT:GOTO 30
```

1 REM CHARFONT shows you how a CHARACTER is built up & where stored in VIDEO RAM - John Marriott 6/2002

```
10 CLS
20 PRINT "INPUT CHARACTER ";:C$=INCH$
30 PRINT C$:C=ASC(C$)
40 X=C-32:X=X*8:X=X+6400
50 FOR T=0 TO 7:L=VPEEK(T+X)
60 PRINT BIN$(L,8);" &";HEX$(L,2);"
VRAM &";HEX$(T+X,4);"/DEC";(T+X):NEXT
70 PRINT:PRINT"AGAIN Y/N? ";:A$=INCH$
$:IF A$="Y" THEN RUN:END
```

Whilst I have had some reasonable success in obtaining "right hand justification" in <SLICE4> (NOT included!), a simple case of "swapping" the <space> value with a little used <character> with a "pixel width of a space, plus one pixel", then a further <character> & etc., and then "trapping" these <characters> during the <CHARPLOT> program to increment the X-axis accordingly, with <FILE PRINT> - **LISTING ON NEXT PAGE** - this would not work unless the "horizontal tabbing" command to the printer was invoked - and to be frank, this is beyond the intended scope of <PROPORT> for the TCO1 - again, as I've said in an earlier EM (or letter to Tony?) due to the difficulty of catering for different printers, font widths, what have you.



```

10 REM FILEPRNT This is a test file
to print a <file>PRN.OBJ file from <SLIC
E3>

```

```

20 CLEAR &8000
30 LOAD"SAMSNPRN.OBJ":REM put your o
<file>PRN.OBJ here
40 PRINT#1;CHR$(&A)
50 N=&8000
60 A=PEEK(N)
70 IF A=&D THEN A=&A
80 IF A=&40 THEN A=&13:PRINT#1;CHR$(
A):PRINT#0;"PRESS <SHIFT><BREAK>":A$=INC
H$:IF A$="" THEN 80
90 PRINT#1;CHR$(A);
100 N=N+1:GOTO 60

```

```

1 REM TEST runs the 4 HELP files as
a simple example of a disk magazine JOH
N MARRIOTT 8.2003

```

```

10 CLEAR &8000:J=1
20 POKE&8000,0:POKE&A000,33,0,128,17
,1,128,1,0,25,237,176,201
30 CALL &A000
40 IF J=1 THEN GOTO 130
50 IF J=2 THEN GOTO 140
60 IF J=3 THEN GOTO 150
70 IF J=4 THEN GOTO 160
75 IF J=5 THEN GOTO 170
80 POKE&A000,62,0,211,9,62,64,211,9,
33,255,127,1,255,255,35,3,120,31,31,31,2
54,3,200,126,211,8,195,14,160
90 CALL &A000
100 PRINT#15,22;"<ANY KEY>"
110 A$=INCH$:IF A$="" THEN 110
120 GOTO 20
130 LOAD"HELP1SCN.OBJ":J=J+1:GOTO80
140 LOAD"HELP2SCN.OBJ":J=J+1:GOTO80
150 LOAD"HELP3SCN.OBJ":J=J+1:GOTO80
160 LOAD"HELP4SCN.OBJ":J=J+1:GOTO80
170 CALL 0

```



EINSTEIN Magazine and Elastic Sided Boot Fanciers' Gazette No.111-12

Letter from W L Foskett, 7 East Street, Denbury, Newton Abbot. Devon TQ12, 6DL

Tony - Many thanks for Einstein Magazine No.110, just received and the note you enclosed with it. Yes it is a long time since you took on the running of the mag and user group. I think this must have been about the time I joined.

I have kept up my membership mainly because I admire the way you have carried on though thick and thin and deserve some support. However, I am afraid that the ideas no longer come to me as they once did. I am over 80 now and although I still dabble as much as I can it doesn't come easy any longer.

Also, my beloved wife died last year, and I find that no longer have any real interest in life. My wife was always my main interest in life, and my interest in computers and in electronics always came second. I now have to force myself to carry on, and when my time comes I hope it's quick. By the way, I detest football - in spite of my Son-in-law being President of Devon clubs - so there's no fear of that from me.

I don't know which PC you referred to in your note, but we often used to go to car boot sales. I never could resist the computers on sale there, and I ended up with a lot more of them than I can remember. My main concern was not so much in using them, as in what was "under the bonnet". I'm keying this in on my trusty old Compaq 386/33. It knows I'm boss - unlike the new Dell with bells and whistles on, which thinks it bought me and not the other way round.

Re the Einstein Magazine articles on railways, these made me realise how they have played a large part in my life. My father worked all his life on the Southern - in the Goods office at Holborn, and during the war at Waterloo.

My father in-law was a signalman in charge of - among others - Norward, near Penge, on one of the busiest lines out of London. I was offered a job on the railways too on leaving school, but I turned it down flat.

At the end of August 1939, as a member of the Territorial Army, Summer Camp had just ended, and guess what? I found myself called up and set to guarding the Southern Railway between London and Elmers End for a time, then on a roving patrol all night over Blackfriars road bridge and back over the railway bridge, making sure that all the men on guard duty were awake. Then came Dunkirk, capture by the Wehrmacht, and POW days.

The German army used to contract POW's out to various industries and I soon found myself on a party at Opelm in Oberschlesier. Our main task was to load wagons with sand, but we did our best to help the German war effort by filling the axleboxes with sand too. This made them run so very much better!

Later, doing odd jobs at the station, our efforts to convince the German railway staff that they were inevitably going to lose the war was much enhanced by our not



only having a ring side seat of the Great German Army victoriously advancing into Russia with their shiny new equipment, but also of their coming back in bandages, with arms and legs missing, and with their equipment battered beyond repair or smashed to pieces.

Possibly this was the reason why we were suddenly moved on?

After the war I moved to Australia with my wife and family, but even here, in 1948, one of the bosses of the Western Australia Railways tried very hard to talk me into joining up with the railways again. I declined.

Re John Marriott and the tram lines, he was very lucky when he ran his bike tyres into the rail grooves and only came away with bruises. At the age of 14 my best pal got caught in the tram lines, he finished up under the wheels of a tram. He not only lost both his legs, but his mind as well. As far as I remember it was at Penge, but I don't like to think about it.

Anyway, I must be boring you stiff. If you really want to know more, my story is due out from the printers any day now. A copy is yours for free if you are sufficiently interested. Well, I'll leave you in peace now.

Regards, Les

**ED:- Gosh, yes please, Les. Boring? - it's absolutely fascinating!**

---

### Technical Stuff:

### BASIC PROGRAMMING

Dave Williams

We've persuaded Dave Williams to come up with some more of his BASIC programs, in listing form, as you say that life just isn't the same without them. Dave has sent us a stock to keep you busy for several issues ahead, and he says that he can find us even more if we need them.

Dave went over to using a PC some years ago, so these lovely little programs are all written for QBASIC on the PC, but looking through the old correspondence files from a decade ago, it looks as though many of them have Einstein equivalents.

We've test-run this batch of programs from Dave using QBASIC under MsDos and Windows '95. They are great fun under MsDos, and even more so under Win'95. If you have a PC running under MsDos you should find QBASIC lurking in the DOS directory. If you are running Windows'95 you should find QBASIC lurking on the master disks (or CD) in a folder called OLDMSDOS. Run it from there, or drag it across to your desktop - or wherever else suits you best - and run it from there.

If you'd prefer to really burrow deep into Dave's programming in order to learn just how he works his magic rather than spend your time keying it in from the listing and then trying to find and rectify all your keying-in errors, you can have it on disk, ready to load and run on your PC, and experiment with, if you send a 3½" disk to St Mary's Bay, with your name, postcode, suitable protective packaging, and return postage. If



you can't find your copy of QBASIC, or if it or the help file is corrupted, just say so & we'll put a working copy on the disk so that you can copy it back to your computer.

```

REM *****
REM *      EDUCATIONAL GAME FOR THE YOUNGSTERS      *
REM * by D Williams for UKEUG written in QBAS  9/2003 *
REM *****
1 CLS : CLEAR : SCREEN 9: COLOR 15, 0: DIM A$(70), T(70), N(70), B$(70)
DRAW "C15BM96, 90 R440D155L440U155": DRAW "BM99,93R434D149L434U149"
DRAW "BM96,90E10R440NG10D155G10": REM Top & RH side.
PAINT (110, 88), 6, 15: PAINT (538, 110), 6, 15: REM Colour for above.
DRAW "C15BM360,124R64D17L64U17": REM RH box.
DRAW "BM200,124R64D17L64U17": REM LH box.
DRAW "BM214,208R194D17L194U17": REM Bottom box.
DRAW "BM214, 166R194D17L194U17": REM Centre box.
DRAW "BM39,265R555D59L555U59": REM Instruction box.
PAINT (100, 150), 4, 15: REM Colour red box.
DRAW "C15BM6,5R627D339L627U339": PAINT (7, 7), 3, 15
DRAW "C15BM175,41R273d15L273U15": REM Title box for heading below.
LOCATE 4, 23: PRINT " DO YOU RECOGNISE THESE WORDS ? "
T$(1) = " Contained in the L.H. box are a number of green letters which, when "
T$(2) = " rearranged, will form a word that is quite well known. We invite "
T$(3) = " you to type in the R.H. box the word you think it is then key Enter."
FOR A = 1 TO 3: LOCATE 19 + A, 6: PRINT T$(A): IF A = 3 THEN COLOR 14
NEXT
FOR A = 1 TO 70: READ A$(A): NEXT: M = 0
FOR A = 1 TO 15: READ N(A): READ B$(A): NEXT
FOR A = 1 TO 15: FOR B = 1 TO 70: IF B = N(A) THEN B$(B) = B$(A)
NEXT B, A
S$(1) = " The first letter is "
S$(2) = " My choice is "
S$(3) = " Is correct - "
FOR F = 1 TO 70: B = INT(100 * TIMER): RANDOMIZE B
5 T(F) = INT(70 * RND) + 1: Z = T(F)
FOR G = 1 TO F: IF G = F THEN 10
IF T(G) = T(F) THEN G = F: GOTO 5
10 NEXT G: COLOR 14
LOCATE 23, 22: PRINT "[ To clear screen - type C then Enter ]"

L = LEN(A$(Z)): C$ = "": W = 0
FOR A = 1 TO L: B = INT(100 * TIMER): RANDOMIZE B
15 T(A) = INT(L * RND) + 1: C = T(A)
FOR G = 1 TO A: IF G = A THEN 20
IF T(G) = T(A) THEN G = A: GOTO 15
20 NEXT G: D$ = MID$(A$(Z), 1, 1)

```



```
Z$ = MID$(A$(Z), C, 1): C$ = C$ + Z$: W = LEN(C$): C$ = UCASE$(C$)
NEXT A: IF C$ = A$(Z) OR C$ = B$(Z) THEN 35
```

```
LOCATE 10, 27: PRINT SPC(7); : LOCATE 10, 47: PRINT SPC(7);
COLOR 10: LOCATE 10, 27: PRINT C$: COLOR 14
IF L > 5 THEN COLOR 15: LOCATE 13, 28: PRINT ; S$(1); D$; " ": COLOR 14
LOCATE 10, 47: LINE INPUT "", N$: N$ = UCASE$(N$): L = LEN(N$)
IF L > 6 OR N$ = "C" THEN 1: REM Clear screen.
```

```
LOCATE 10, 47: PRINT N$: COLOR 15: K = 0: IF N$ = "" THEN 30
IF N$ = A$(Z) OR N$ = B$(Z) THEN LOCATE 13, 29: PRINT ; S$(3): K = 1
30 IF K = 0 THEN LOCATE 13, 29: PRINT ; S$(2); : COLOR 10: PRINT A$(Z); " "
COLOR 15: IF K = 1 THEN M = M + 1: LOCATE 13, 43: PRINT M; "/"; F: BEEP
LOCATE 23, 22: PRINT SPC(40); : COLOR 14
SLEEP 1: LOCATE 16, 28: PRINT " Press Enter to repeat "
32 COLOR 0: LINE INPUT "", L$
FOR G = 13 TO 16 STEP 3: LOCATE G, 28: PRINT SPC(24); : NEXT G
35 NEXT F: BEEP: GOTO 1
```

```
REM *****
DATA
SHEET,SAND,WALK,BIRDS,SKY,CLOUD,POTATO,HEAVY,PAPER,CLIP,APPLE,REPAIR
DATA
COAT,HAIR,SHOPS,KNIFE,FORK,SPOON,PENCIL,FLOWER,COLD,GARDEN,GRASS
DATA PENS,CLOUD,RAIN,WINDOW,SING,SAVING,TEETH,ROAD,PATH,SCHOOL,FATHER
DATA
MOTHER,ROSES,PAINT,FINGER,TABLE,CAT,FISH,SHOE,HORSE,COWS,SHEEP,OTTERS
DATA
WEEK,YEARS,MONTH,DAYS,RING,BACON,MONEY,TEACH,MONDAY,GIVEN,WORDS,HEL
P
DATA
LADY,SEEDS,LAWN,MOTOR,PUSH,SPIN,SLEEP,BLUE,WHITE,WHEEL,STAND,CARPET
DATA 22,DANGER,51,GRIN,54,CHEAT,57,SWORD,64,PINS,28,SIGN,42,HOSE,38,FRINGE
DATA
39,BLEAT,36,SORES,43,SHORE,55,DYNAMO,40,ACT,18,SNOOP,65,PEELS
REM ***** END *****
```

## GAME.BAS

This is really a spelling game designed to keep the kids amused though I'm sure the parents will also enjoy using it. Spelling was never my forte so my own copy is in regular use. A full scale model for use by the mums and dads should reach Tony late sometime in 2004/5 - unless of course someone beats me to it. Why not you ?



R.I.P. – The ISCA Club (July 1982 – Feb 2.2003)

John Marriott

It's strange how we remember some periods of our life as very positive, productive, even rewarding – yet in our heart we know that this era has passed, leaving us reluctant to acknowledge that it is over and gone for good. As for the ISCA Club – well, it came into being, born of an Ideal, an Ethos to encourage Programmers, and to help those less fortunate than ourselves...

...and if anybody mentions "Charity..." I'll puke!

At its final meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2003, the remaining ISCA Founder Members/Club Officials regretfully acknowledged the fact that the time had come to disband by utilising the remaining cash balance of £30.00 to celebrate its circle of birth, life and inevitable death with some cheapish bottles of wine, gently warmed in a pan of hot water for 5 minutes in order to "enhance" the bouquet and smooth the roughness of the plonk. It was perhaps fortunate that those attending "The Wake" were not fewer in number or the remaining cash greater, for the following morn reminded us rather forcefully that plonk always has an after-bite, and had we consumed more that word "puke" might have been quite literal.

ISCA had always prospered without the need for Annual Subscriptions and such like – perhaps a reflection on the fact that some of us had been in the Services, with its methods of "acquiring" by unofficial means what was not readily available through official channels – but even so, at one stage we had over 300 8-Bit "free loan" computers out – even a smattering of Ataris, Amigas and Amstrad 1512s / 1640s – with a number of Einsteins flitting their way through, for they were good fund raisers, much under-rated. Sadly, every local EUG Club seemed to die almost as quickly as it came into being. The cost of the 3" disk, let alone its software, placed it outside the Club's financial abilities. About nine years ago we had to seriously re-examine the Club's role due to the fact that half the Club's Founder Members had to move to a new MAFF/ADAS site in the Midlands and it was decided to "rationalise" the Club's computer stock (mainly 5.25" 360K D/S disks/drives) and thanks to the Micro Mart and their free adverts, literally everything went very quickly, and to the "leaving" Members credit, they donated their "share" to the re-vamped ISCA Club.

Tony bought a stack of those disks, but it turned out that most of them were infected with the "V-Sign" virus, which had been unknowingly imported from my Sons' school as my "eldest" (bored to tears...) went through the whole stock of disks after running some of the school disks...

...a seemingly harmless virus – but there were 3 versions, all writing to various "functions" on the disk, with one of them not being erasable, rather like one called "Stoned" - which would not allow the computer to reformat any disk with it on (Swine!), but scissors cured that problem!

About now. Big Blue decided not to be too pedantic about the "Clones" ripping off its Operating System as it now recognised that sticking a finger into the Titanic was a



bit pointless as they focused more and more on "Corporate Installations" with profitable service/maintenance contracts -which placed more and more distance between the "old". 8-Bit computers and the PC - the 16-Bit 286 quickly following suit as the 386SX and the 386DX crowded in.

Just as suddenly, the bottom fell out of the Chip Market as chip prices tumbled - memory hungry programs proliferated, screaming for faster and yet faster CPU's - hail the 486 and the 486DX/2 66Mhz chips, SVGA, video accelerator cards and Windows 3.1/3.11 with Dos6.22 - which meant the "size" limit on the hard drive was well and truly past...

...and a Shareware DTP program called Spinnaker running in Dos Mode on my Apricot 386 suggested that my Spectrum+3 was not long for this World - you could now write your "masterpiece" in Tasword PC and just "pour" it into Spinnaker, where "auto-formatting with hyphenating and proportional characters" connected to a bog-standard 9-pin dot matrix printer produced output which was as good as any local newspaper. So without realising it, I'd moved from a Programmer to a Program User.

Jumping back to Tony and those 5.25" disks -he sent me a copy of EM and even looking back, I was impressed for what I took to be a "limited distribution Fanzine" - rather like some of the Spectrum Fanzines I sent "copy" to - or "articles" in English. So I sent him a rewrite which ought to have gone to a Spectrum Fanzine - if it hadn't folded! And yes, as ever, with every Fanzine - the desperate plea for more input from its Readers. Which has been echoed by every Editor since B&H took up the mantle from Tatung, and then EUG Clubs across the Country - the World?

As most of you will have gathered, a couple of years ago (...just where does Time go?) I reached the age where one gently but swiftly moves from Importance to Impotence, with the Magical Age of 65 meaning "automatic senility" - and all that money you've been salting away into a "retirement pension" instead of wasting(?) it on wine, women and song, even Foreign Holidays and exotic cars - now works against you as "others" who actively partook in the "Live for Today" ethos now "dip into" the Social Fund which

my continued Income tax deductions pay for (Yes - the "System" is carefully set up to ensure that Tax Breaks are always to the benefit of the Chancellor of the Exchequer...) - and with the Devon Council Tax taking a 18% hike for 2003/4 plus South West Water's 10% hike, both year-on- year above inflation rises - Spain, Portugal, America - even India - now has a greater attraction than I would ever have believed possible.

And for those of you who still have that quaint old notion that the West Country is "thatched cottages with roses growing round the door, cream teas and inter-bred yokels" you're in for a shock. Most of the South East appears to be relocating here, causing house prices to rocket, whilst wage packets of the "Indigenous Population" remains at Third World level...



...bugger! But at least that's better off my chest? But it brings me to now, today. For some years I have had a twice-yearly evaluation of "...where do I go from here..." with a lot of my "Working life Collection" of tools, manuals, records, what have you finding their way to the Dump, as nobody else appears to have a use for them - ZX81's, Spectrum 16/48K's, BBC Compacts & etc., with 9 good 24-pin dot matrix colour / b&w printers being binned - soon to be followed by some HP jet/laser printers, as their replacement ink cartridges cost more than say a basic Lexmark printer - welcome to the "disposable-disposable Society", bugger the fact that nothing's wrong with it - cost is all.

Some of the decisions I made - I'd lie if I hadn't found some of them a little sad, tearful, as I "looked at" an item and remembered its association, its friendship, imagining better times now gone for ever, even the "snarls" as tiredness of repeated emergency call-outs shortened our fuses...

...the embarrassed silences, half-hearted apologies when we knew that it was the fear of that apology being rejected which stopped us from open-heartedly admitting that we were "pillocks" - yes, when you're carrying out work which can reach out without warning, bite you, really hurt you, probably kill you - you must be able to trust that other person 101%, rise above personalities, political ideals, life styles. By now, some of you will be reading between the lines - for by the time this is (hopefully?) published by Tony, my remaining Einstein computers & etc. will have found other homes, for I have decided to retain only my current AST Bravo PI90 running Windows 95, MS Word7 and Publisher 3.13. OK, I have the MESS emulator for the TCO1 (though I wouldn't even classify it at Beta level yet, but...) should I need to check TCO1 "program functioning" - much the pity it isn't to the standard of Lunter's Spectrum 48K-128K emulator, even a BBC one I have, yet...

...and yes, I actively dislike emulators, especially running on "foreign" keyboards, but it's "horses for courses" and 75% is better than nothing? Sadly, this means my unofficial "help line" is no more, as I haven't retained any manuals, circuit diagrams or programming material - and whilst I shall not (won't) be submitting any factual program material, if you (EM Readers and Editor!) don't mind me doing the odd "Stocktaking" article from time to time, then that'll be okay by me. Whilst I feel that I've had the best years in computing, and I won't count the "brush" with one that I had in 1957 on demob from the Royal Air Force, a great big "Multivac" type in an air conditioned basement room with about as much "power" as a 16K Spectrum, perhaps an Atari 400XL on a good day - my first ZX81 in early 1982 started me on a Voyage of Discovery which will never ever be repeated in my remaining life.

Time - the new ideas, re-appraisal of existing ideas, the chance to share those ideas and honestly question my own values, the advantage of admitting where and how I was wrong without some Smart Arse saying "...I told you so..." - well, you can guess that I've not made that, my decision, lightly...



...anyway - my decision, not yours - so remember, it is your Computer Club - the Einstein User Group with its own magazine, which needs your input, even a letter, a "One liner", some controversy, some input to ensure a "spread of interest" - and the continued sustainability of the EUG & EM.

This got added following a letter from Tony (it seems like deadly lime mortar dust containing horse hair contaminated with Tetanus spores doesn't agree with him all that much!...), in part of which he suggests that some of our correspondence interchanges (slander & libel included?) are published as a way of encouraging EM Readers to comment, dissent, write meaningless rubbish - even reveal their innermost faults - sorry, thoughts - so yet again Tony was one jump ahead of me - damn!

**Question asked by a husband whose wife had just commented  
on his uselessness, stupidity, sloth and idleness,  
with women being the intelligent sex**

**"...if you're so intelligent, why did you marry me?.." -OUCH!**

A Happy Xmas to you all, but do take a few minutes to send in some facts, ideas, memories and/or reflections of your own on life, so Tony doesn't have to stuff you like a turkey on a diet consisting almost entirely of "The World According to John Marriott". Otherwise, what happens to you when I run out of waffle for Tony to print?

---

Membership Renewal Form Supplementary Information:- "I have recently built a Z80 project CPU board with a clock frequency of 2MHz and 64K of memory (32K of which can be EPROM). Also I have built a programming interface unit and written the driving software for it to be used with the Einstein. This enables me to edit the memory contents as well as load program files into the project CPU. I am currently working on an Analogue MIDI Sequencer, which will use this project CPU board. I have built the circuits used in the sequencer on Breadboard so as to optimise both the hardware and the software. So far, I have done the analogue to digital converter, the display circuit and the timing and tempo generator".

P R Budd, EUG 887

We asked Paul if he could let us have further information on his projects to share with you in the mag, but had not heard back from him when we closed for press. If Paul's projects are of special interest to you and you wish to contact him, please write to him at 44 Wentworth Way, Harborne, Birmingham, B32 2UX WITH S.A.E.

---

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!** It's now 10 years since the user group and magazine moved from Ipswich to Romney Marsh. To celebrate this anniversary - and as an early Xmas present - we're giving you this issue as a free gift. Of course, if you've sent in a contribution that we've printed this time, you get a membership credit for that too!



"THE WONDERFUL AGE OF STEAM" - The reality.

Tony Adams

It is fashionable nowadays to enthuse romantically about "The Wonderful Age of Steam" and to wish to be able to return to and live in it. However, most of what is said and written about "The Wonderful Age of Steam" is complete and utter drivel – a romantic fool's paradise – perpetrated by ignoramuses who either weren't there when it was everyday reality, or who were there, but not at the coalface where it was all too real. In reality it was usually dirty, unromantic, unhealthy and physically exhausting, sometimes downright dangerous, and all too often potentially lethal.

John Marriott remembers "his" steam engine with fondness and regret, but he was in charge of a stationary engine, working regular hours indoors, and so for him it was not so very different from the unrealistic conditions in which "puffer nutters" play trains today. However, playing trains is all they do. They grossly distort the reality of the past, and they filter the reality of history through rose-tinted glasses.

In the "Wonderful Age of Steam" you were lucky if you owned a second-hand bicycle. There was no TV, or central heating, and you carried a heavy glass-jar "accumulator" to the garage or electrical shop once a week to get it charged if you wanted a few hours of listening to "the wireless". Most hospital wards were "septic wards" cos there were no antibiotics, thick grey-yellow smog killed off thousands of people every winter, coal was hewed out by hand in seams so thin that only a very skinny man - or boy - could get in there with a pick without getting jammed solid, pit disasters were frequent, with major injuries and fatalities, platelayers got killed off every week when they couldn't see an oncoming train because of the steam of one going the other way - and in winter being out all day or night to fog-signal remote or busy semaphore signals was an arduous high-risk occupation which few of these modern "steam romantics" would want to have to endure more than once - if that.

"The Romantic Age of the Steam Locomotive?" The reality is that they were dirty, dangerous, acutely uncomfortable, and all too often fatal to work on. For those who remained in the loco links after the transition to diesel, 95% were only too glad to see the end of the brutal working conditions that steam imposed on them, and to be effectively promoted to a nice clean office job whilst still being in charge of the machine that hauled the trains. Even before diesels, the attraction of well-paid factory jobs - as compared with the hardships of working steam locomotives - was such that if you started on a Monday morning as an engine cleaner, by the Friday of the same week you were likely to be pressed into service as an acting fireman on a mainline passenger train, so desperate were the railways for anyone who was prepared to tolerate the conditions on the footplate in the postwar steam era.

I was there, and in "The Wonderful Age of Steam" you quickly developed special skills or you were in real trouble, but the working conditions were appalling, and the romantic fools who want to return to that age never ask for the working conditions that those "at the pitface" had to endure in "The Wonderful Age of Steam".



In the enclosed cab of a tank engine in high summer you prayed for the refreshing coolness of a turkish bath. Or you were stuck in a remote refuge siding on the high fells, miles from anywhere and exposed to the full blast of a winter blizzard at 4am on Christmas morning, with the previous day's express trains still struggling to get through and already running half a day late. You had given up on your freight train and were simply trying to keep the wheels and motion of your engine free enough to be able to work light engine back to the shed once the line was clear. The line was being signalled double-block due to the almost-zero visibility where the telegraph lines were still up, and was being worked by pilotman elsewhere. Like you, the signalman at your remote siding had been due off duty 14 hours earlier, but there was no hope of relief, and he would just have to stay on duty "until the exigencies of the service permitted". Your firing shovel was your only way of clearing the snow from your engine's wheels and motion. It wasn't ideal for this, but was all you had. You had no choice, because if you couldn't get your engine out onto the main line once the line was clear, and back to the shed - this would probably take another 12 hours and all the coal and water you had left - you would be stuck there until you froze to death, unless the "bobby in the box" let you take refuge with him.

It was 4am on Christmas morning, you had been due to book off duty 12 hours ago, it would likely take another 12 hours to get your engine back on shed and book off - once the line was clear and the "bobby" could let you out onto the main line - and the best you could hope for was that you would make it back home before midnight came and it was already Boxing Day. Meanwhile, you froze almost solid, trying to keep the wheels and motion clear of the wind-driven blizzard of snow, and back on the footplate you steamed and roasted your front while your back became a solid block of ice in the howling draughts round the tarp lashed between engine and tender, or your back roasted while your front suffered brass monkeys disease.

And you thought nothing at all of this. It was just another turn of duty on the footplate in "The Wonderful Age of Steam", when personal comfort and convenience simply had no place in your working life. "The exigencies of the service" were all that existed. So my viewpoint is this. We are and we were well rid of "The Wonderful Age of Steam", and if romantic fools want it back, my response, if I were God, would be that they are welcome to it back if they want it, but on 2 conditions:-

1. That they do not impose it on anyone else, and
2. That they live the reality of it, warts and all. They don't have the right to pick and choose.

My suspicion is, that in common with those who were actually "at the pitface" in "The Wonderful Age of Steam", if they experienced the reality of what it was actually like, and given a choice of living then or now, 98% of the puffer-nutters and romantic rose-tinted-spectacle idealists would very quickly consign steam to the scrapyard.

"The Age of Steam" was very much like being married to the current editor of EM. "I wouldn't want to have missed the experience, but I'd never volunteer to do it again!"



Are you one of these "New Men" who the rabidly aggressive "feminists" rant on about turning all the "real men" into? The EM editor has long suspected that these "New Men" are not actually men at all, but have been "got at" with a razor blade and turned into men with no balls, but we now have actual proof of it - they are selling ladies panties for men, clearly marked "menswear", which couldn't possibly fit men unless they'd "had the operation" and had their wedding tackle surgically removed. The evidence came through the post as a birthday present. Here is the proof:

Dear Auntie Pat,

Romney Marsh, Kent.

Thank you for the lovely birthday pressie which you sent me. Granny let me open it early cos she wanted to use the plastic envelope to send Lissa's rabbit back home before you go on holiday to where the Leprechauns live. I hope the parcel gets to you safely and the Post Office doesn't deliver it to Darlington, thinking that you're returning your old unwanted telephone, as printed on the outside of it.

Granny says that I am not allowed to wear girls knickers or ladies panties, even if they do say MENSWEAR along the top of them, so she has decided to wear the ones you've sent me herself. This is OK with me, as I didn't know what to give her as an Xmas pressie from me.

Granny and I are everso puzzled why you are buying ladies panties for me to wear, and why they claim to be for men. We can only think that they have must have been designed by a lady who has led a very sheltered life and has never seen a man with no clothes on, and who thinks that the only difference between men and ladies is that men's breasts don't grow as big as ladies. Do they sell bras for men too?

When we had a "Gents Outfitters" in New Romney we found out that everything they sell doesn't have an English name, only an American one. So they don't sell weskits, cos they are called vests. They don't sell vests, cos they are called singlets. They sell ladies panties for men who are designed with sideways-on dangly bits - like Chinese ladies, I'm told - which they call Y-fronts. I don't know what they call the ladies panties for men which you bought for me.

Proper underpants for men are called boxer shorts, but the last time Granny got some for me at Ethel Austin, they were made of pinstripe material for men who couldn't afford a business suit and could only afford the underpants. I think they must have been for Cambodian or Vietnamese peasants who only worked as businessmen on one or two days a week and were everso little and skinny cos they only had rice to eat, cos they were just about big enough to fit a 7-year-old English boy. When I want to put them on, Granny has to help me, and I can only get them on with her help if we use the shoe horn with the long handle which my Granny used to use to get into her riding boots when she was a beautiful young girl with golden flowing hair reaching right down to her eighteen-inch waist. She had lovely cornflower-blue eyes, too.

Granny says to tell you that we've posted Lissa's bunny rabbit from New Romney post Office in a standard parcel today, so if it doesn't arrive before this letter, it should be with you soon after.

Lots of Love and Kisses X X X X X X X X X X X

from Anthony

---

It's a bit early, but we won't get another chance until after it's all over, so  
**HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND ALL THE BEST TO EACH OF YOU IN 2004**



In EM 109 Chris Coxall suggested that a passenger service could have been maintained on the Ilfracombe - Barnstaple line after it was closed as part of 'The Beeching Cuts' by using a fleet of electric milk floats to run a "tram service". I don't think Chris has thought this idea through properly, but here's an account by Geoff Wren (which we found in the journal of the Nth London Society of Model Engineers) of a footplate trip on the line at about the time Chris travelled on it.

In my younger days I got a lot of footplate runs. I simply asked the footplate crews if I could ride with them. This was the case in the 1950s when my wife and I - plus my friend Charles and his wife - stayed on a farm at Mortehoe in Devon for a holiday.

Mortehoe is a small settlement on the old London and South Western branch from Barnstaple to Ilfracombe, which must have been about the sleepest on the Southern Region.

One day the girls wanted to sunbathe on the beach, so Charles and I said we'd drop them there and go on the train up Mortehoe bank. There's a station at the top - Mortehoe itself. We took the Barnstaple train from there. We hadn't decided how far to go and we hadn't got any tickets. 'When we see a pub near a station, that's where we'll jump off,' I said. We were not disappointed and as we alighted a porter was on the platform, so we enquired when the next train back to Mortehoe was due. 'Half past two,' he replied. 'The Atlantic Coast Express.'

'That'll do nicely,' I said.

After a very pleasant lunch we went back to the station to catch the 2.30, I said to Charles that I'd love to go up the bank on the engine, and when we stopped at Croyde Bay I went up to the driver and asked him if there was any chance of going up the bank with him. 'No, there's too many people about.' But after a short conversation about 'steamers' he relented, 'Go on - hop on.'

The locomotive was Battle of Britain class number 34066 Spitfire, with an air-smoothed casing. We had a good run and eventually stopped at Mortehoe. 'Are you getting off here?' asked the driver. I said I was and he added, 'I'm on this turn all week, so if you want to come again just come along.'

A few days later we were all having breakfast and deciding what to do that day. I asked the ladies if they would like to go into Barnstaple to do some shopping! They thought this an excellent idea and we packed some food for a lunch afterwards on the beach. At about one o'clock, Charles looked at his watch, 'I think it's about time for your train, Geoff.'

'Train - what train?' enquired Jean.

'Well - I'm going on the engine up the bank again.'

I stood on the station, waiting, and hoping it was the same driver as before. It was, and as the train slowed to a halt the cab door was opened and I hopped on. 'Want to take, her up the bank?' the driver asked.

'OK but can I whistle first because my friends are on that bridge?'

'Go on.' And so away we went for another interesting run although I can't claim to have done much more than handle the regulator. The driver asked me if I knew what engine this was. I wasn't quite sure what he meant because obviously it was Spitfire again. 'It was driver True's, the one that was in the Lewisham smash in 1957.' He continued, 'It was rebuilt in its original form and brought down to Exmouth shed and it's now one of our best engines.'

At one point on Mortehoe bank I asked the driver if he could make the reading on the steam chest pressure gauge equal the boiler pressure gauge reading. Without hesitation he shoved the regulator wide open and shoved her into full gear and there was just 10lb difference between the gauges! 'There we are,' he said. 'Bulleid was no fool, was he?' At the top of the bank he, said, 'I'll take over now because it drops down to Ilfracombe and the station is on a 200ft cliff!'

When we got down to Ilfracombe, Jean and the others soon arrived, and we all ended up on the footplate in the station. As you can imagine, the driver was a smashing chap - a real West Country man, only too pleased to do all he could for us. 'It's nice to see people who are interested in our work,' he said. What happy memories.





The Jolly Fisherman poster, which appeared in 1908, advertised Great Northern Railway day trips at a cost of 3s from King's Cross to Skegness. The character has become synonymous with the town.