

The Beds Computer Group Presents

Albert's Bi-Monthly review July 1990.

Monthly Note

First, many appologies, the company that print the magazine have just put up their prices a little more, pushing it just out of my reach, this means that for this month, I have hand printed the magazine, so if you sent in an article that had "Camera Ready" artwork or sketching, sorry but I cannot put it in this months magazine, this is also why this months magazine has no front cover!

On a brighter note, David and I have finished our first "For what it's worth?" article. This month we are concentrating on Commodore Business Machines (CBM). Also in the magazine this month is the Beginners guide to DOS, and the usual reviews. Making a comeback this month is also the Letters Page (Well about 7 of them actually Ed!). Also, for those of you that are good at them, a competition where you can win ZEXL, the latest game from Chris Cook + Friends.

The Amiga magazine? Well, I'm struggling on, however the Amiga I bought went BANG on me, so once again I'm Amiga less, so if you want an Amiga magazine, could someone lend me their Amiga for a couple of days?

Computer Shows. The 16 Bit show was on at Victoria this week, unfortunately I missed them, if you went to the show and would be willing to do a review, please do!

The Public Domain Catalogue. I have had a problem with PD, mainly I haven't got the money to buy any more, so, I will make you all an offer! If you have any of the following numbers (From the U.K Group) below, and send them to me I will offer you 1 game or utility such as Tubes for every 3 sides of Public Domain.

These are the numbers that I require:-

Goldsw	Grocerylist	Gardening	DAC Tunes	Musica Comp	Musica soft
178	180	186	192	193	195
196 musica	197 musica	199 body	208 demo	223 Tumbled	256 Font Asst
257	258	270	273	274	280.
Body	maclean	locust	Small C	MSDOS	B&B Area
				TCRM	Quaker
				copy	

I hope you enjoy the magazine,

Roy Prime.

Beginners Corner

The DOS is what makes the Einstein special, unlike the Commodore drives and many other home computers, using DOS and the Einstein, we do simple things that would need lots commands on other computers, so in this months Beginners Corner, I will attempt to explain to you what DOS is and how to use it.

DOS stands for Disc Operating System, you will find that all good systems use one kind of DOS or another, on the Einstein you will find it under 3 names, firstly there was Tatung/XtalDOS 1.1 (Tatung and Crystal Research part wrote it), then you will also find DOS 80 and SYSTEM 5. On the IBM you will stand a 99% chance of finding a version of MS/DOS and on the Amiga you have Amiga Dos, Cli and Shell.

How to you access DOS on the Einstein, simple, all you have to do is put a disc in drive 0 (Preferably the Master Disc), and switch on, or you could switch on your Einstein and insert the disc and press Ctrl + Break. All the following instructions have been implicated for single drive machines using the SYSTEMS MASTER disc that came with the Einstein.

Firstly, and most importantly, I think, is to learn how to format a disc for later use.

What is a formatter? A formatter is an organiser, it tells the computer that you have a disc, and you want to use it, the computer then prepares the disc. The computer "writes" tracks and sectors onto a disc. What is a track? Well imagine an apple pie (Yum, Yum Ed!), now imagine having a target painted on it, the rings of the target would make up the "tracks". What is a sector? Pick up the Pie again, and a knife and divide the pie into 9 equal pieces, now a sector is the bit in between the tracks. Back to the disc the disc has forty tracks and 9 sectors, so you have about 270 sectors on a disc, how does this help the computer? Simple! The computer recognises the sectors, and allows you to save data to them, before you format a disc it doesn't have tracks or sectors, so the computer can't do anything with it. Sorry if this sounds a little odd, but this was the only way I could think of writing about it.

Right, after all that this is how to format a disc:-

First insert your Systems Master disc in drive 0 and turn on.

When the 0: appears, type BACKUP and press ENTER.

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Beginners Corner

You should now see:-

DISC BACKUP & FORMAT V*.*
(c) 198* Xtal

* Means version
etc.

Press "B" for BACKUP
or "F" for FORMAT
or "X" to exit
Which (B/F/X)?

So, after getting the format menu, all you have to do is press "F" for format. You will now get this message:-

FORMAT DISC

Ensure that disc with desired
System tracks is in drive 0

Press ENTER to continue
or 'X' to abandon

Right. Some explanation. When it asks you to ensure that you have the desired system tracks, this really means that it wants you to KEEP your SYSTEM disc in drive 0. Press ENTER when you are ready. When you have pressed ENTER you will be told this:-

OK -- Format Drive (0-3)?

This is here to ask you which drive you want to format the disc in. In this article, I only have a single drive machine, so I want you to press 0 at this point.

Format drive 0

Press ENTER to continue
or 'X' to abandon

At this point you should ALWAYS remember to remove your Systems MASTER disc, otherwise you may find yourself reformatting that. When you have removed that disc, insert the disc that you want to format, when you have done that, press ENTER.

You should now see this is everything has gone alright.

0 1 2 3
0123456789012345678901234567890123456789
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Beginners Corner

The numbers that you should see now are actually the track numbers of your disc, when the computer is formatting you should see one F (F for format) appear below each number like so:-

```
0          1          2          3
0123456789012345678901234567890123456789
FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF
```

When the line is full with F's, this means that the computer has finished formatting, and now will verify the disc.

```
0          1          2          3
0123456789012345678901234567890123456789
FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF
VVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVV
```

If V's appear like this all the way along the line, this means that the disc is alright and ready to use, however sometimes this might happen if you have a bad disc.

```
0          1          2          3
0123456789012345678901234567890123456789
FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF
VVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVV
```

```
Verify Error
Press 'X' to restart
```

If this happens you can try reformatting the disc, however if this happens more than 3 times, I would throw the disc away.

Another Message that you may get:-

When you press ENTER after you have selected the drive you wish to format, you might get the following message.

```
Already Formatted
Continue anyway (Y/N)?
```

This means that the disc you put in the drive has already been formatted, to format press Y, otherwise press N to stop.

In the September Issue I will concentrate on DOS commands such as DISP and ERA.

A Review of the Panasonic KX-P1081 Impact Dot Matrix Printer

Specification:-

Printing Mode: Draft, NLQ, Dot Graphics.

Character Set: 96 ASCII characters
96 Italic ASCII characters
31 International characters (10 countries)
32 Italic International characters (10 countries)
64 Block Graphics
132 IBM-PC special characters
82 Italic IBM-PC special characters

Dot Alignment: Draft 9x9 N.L.Q.18x18

Characters per Line/Inch:	Pitch	CPI	CPI
	Pica	80CPL	(10cpi)
	Elite	96	12
	Semi Compressed	120	15
	Compressed	137	17
	Pica Elongated	40	5
	Elite Elongated	48	6
	Semi Compressed Elongated	60	7.5
	Compressed Elongated	68	8.5

Printing Speed: Draft Pica 120 CPS
Draft Elite 120 CPS
NLQ 24 CPS

Printing Direction: (Draft & NLQ) Bi-directional.
Bit Image Left to Right.

Paper Feed: Tractor feed with fanfold paper.
Friction feed with single sheet.

Paper Used: Fanfold (continuous) Width 3 to 10 inches.
Single sheet Width 4 to 9 inches.

No. Of Sheets: 3 max. Total thickness 0.01 inches

Head service life: 100 million characters in draft mode.

Ribbon: Seamless ribbon
3 million characters in draft mode.

Dimensions: 403x286x115mm
(W.D.H.)

Weight: 6kg

Operation Mains
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A Review of the Panasonic KX-P1081 Impact Dot Matrix Printer

The Panasonic K X-P1081 in its own technobabble 'is a durable, highly reliable dot matrix printer'. It has a small 'footprint' and can sit quite easily on top of Albert so benefits from a cover when not in use. It's colour is similiar to Albert as well.

First impressions are that the KX-P1081 is solidly built and a well made piece of equipment as it's weight may suggest. I have no reason to change this initial impression either. The machine looks neat as if a lot of time has been spent at the design stage with no requirement for bits to be tacked on at a later stage.

What I particularly like about the printer is the way that the tractor feed does not protrude above it's general exterior dimensions. It seems a more substantial arrangement than many I have seen and because of its position, is less susceptible to damage. The printer ribbon too, has a novel feature in that when the print becomes faint, by pushing a pointed object into a recess marked 'hole', a further supply of ink is made available to the ribbon, thus extending the ribbon life.

To insert paper, ensure that the printer is off-line (not talking to the computer) and feed in the paper part way with the paper feed selector in the friction position. The printer will grip the paper and rotate it about half way round the platen. If the paper is not sitting squarely, by moving the paper feed selector to the tractor position, the paper can be repositioned. A three position switch on the top face of the printer selects software programmable commands, N.L.Q., or Compressed printing.

Communicating with Albert is through a parallel Centronics interface with printer cables readily available from good Einstein stockists.

Access to the print head is simple to get to by removing one L shaped cover and the clear perspex top. Although the paper width is restricted by the distance the tractor feed can be adjusted, paper widths of up to 10.5" can be used with the friction feed which just leaves a larger margin on each side when printing.

The hand book supplied with the machine is good with many examples, in BASIC for the user to try out. I have not experimented with all the available programs but that will come, eventually.

Disadvantages of the printer include its slowish N.L.Q. output and its 1K memory buffer, both of which I do not find a problem as the machine is not holding back production deadlines. If this is a problem, kits are available which will increase the buffer capacity.

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A Review of the Panasonic KX-P1081 Impact Dot Matrix Printer

Why did I buy a machine like this? Well I wanted a printer but could not justify (to myself let alone my better half) purchasing one which would perhaps be unsuitable for any business letters I may have to write. I therefore set my sights on a Near Letter Quality printer well below the two hundred pound mark. As the price of this one was dropping due to the introduction of a newer model, and seemed sturdier than competitive Citizen models, naturally I was interested.

One of my computer friends bought the KX-1080 for his work and thoroughly recommended it. He even persuaded the local computer shop to stock the 1081 with notable success.

Available from £170 or less, the KX-p1081 represents good value for money.

40 COLUMN GRAPHICS

By Ted Cawkwell

Many newcomers to the Einstein have been puzzled to find that some of the graphic symbols on the keys simply do not come out right on the screen. The explanation is simple; the graphic symbols are derived from an 8 x 8 pixel square as used in 32 column mode, whereas the 40 column screen uses vertical rectangles of 8 x 6 pixels. The result of trying to print an 8x8 graphic to the 'normal' screen is that only the first 3/4 of the character appears. In cases where the entire character is in the final 1/4 (eg G/sh/5 or G/sh/A) then nothing whatever appears on the screen.

If CLS32 is used first then all the graphics are complete. However, a 32 column screen of mixed graphic and alphanumeric characters looks 'stretched out' due to the letter spacing being too wide, so it is often desired to use graphics on the normal screen.

It is easy to take the direct route and just use * or = in both row and column and both are very commonly seen, although the DRAW command is sometimes used to make boxes and compartments.

In fact, many graphics are usable in 40 columns and some interesting effects can be obtained. The following programme which I call 'FRAME' shows the sort of borders that can be printed:-

```
10 REM ****FRAME****
20 REM PRETTY FRAMES IN 40 COLUMNS
30 REM Ted Cawkwell 984 1/6/89
40 CLS:INPUT"INPUT CHARACTER ";A$
50 PRINT@8,4;MUL$(A$,24);@8,15;MUL$(A$,24)
60 FOR X=5 TO 14
70 PRINT@8,X;A$;@31,X;A$
80 NEXT
90 PRINT@15,18;"AGAIN? Y/N":Y$=INCH$:IF Y$
  ="Y" THEN RUN
100 END
```

Try using the % or & characters or the graphics on the O,K,L or 1/4 keys, in fact try them all, some interesting patterns turn up. Try graphic/space but do NOT try " - the machine hangs up, wonder why? Remember, your input is into a string A\$?

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40 COLUMN GRAPHICS *By Ted Cawkwell*

The bones of the above programme could easily be used in a programme for an opening screen, for your favourite home-brew game say. The only lines needed are 50 to 80 and could be concentrated into one line, with the required character used instead of A\$. If a different character is wanted for the vertical lines (as in a thin line box) then it is used instead of A\$ in line 70.

The size and shape of the rectangle is adjusted by changing the PRINT@ values as appropriate. A 40x24 grid is helpful - I use 1/10th inch graph paper because the default value TAB settings at every 10 columns are more easily seen than on 1/8 graph paper. PRINT TAB can be very useful when laying out a screen.

To take this simple programme even further, variables could be declared for the characters and print positions and the routine used several times to put boxes within boxes for instance, introducing the different values at appropriate points in the building up of the final screen.

Colour can easily be brought to play. Try adding to the original programme:-

```
20 T=RND(15):IF T=0 OR T=1 THEN T=15
30 BCOL 0:TCOL T,0
```

BCOL 0 is the transparent background and the characters change colour randomly at each rerun. If you decide to change BCOL be prepared for the odd blank screen if the random TCOL happens to come up the same! Don't panic just hit any letter then <ENTER> followed by Y <ENTER> and you should be back in business.

In an actual screen building routine of course each change of colour has to be attended to separately by preceding the word, say, with the appropriate colour commands and following it with commands to return to normal colour. Tedious, and I must say I would be interested in a routine to make it easier. Certainly, I have found it easiest to work on a transparent background when using different coloured words. But then, I don't use colour very much. Perhaps someone who does might take this up?

The Auction

FOR SALE

Mono monitor. Is in good working order, and works well in both 40 and 80 column modes. £30

For Sale, due to lack of space, 1 Oric 1. In mint condition, still boxed with an Oric Printer, also in mint condition, with lots of software, and about 6 different kinds of manuals including games and assembly programming, there are even some C.A.D and business programs! £40

102 key keyboard, in good working order, selling because I need the space £2

1 Green Screen monitor, badged Honeywell, Any offer accepted.

If you want to offer me on any of above things, please give me a call on 0525 210868. (After 6.30pm)

For What it's Worth?

Since 1979 designers have been trying to make the "Perfect" home computer, one which covers all aspects of home computing (i.e Small Business, Finance and Arcade games) while entertaining, all at a low price! From this many computers have been designed and almost as many have failed. In this article and the ones which follow it David Thompson and I (Roy of course! Ed) will try to show you what happened to the price and future of machines which are still available, new or second hand. To start off with, we will pick the most common machines such as Commodore, Sinclair, Amstrad, Acorn and Atari.

One of the most famous and successfull home computer manufactures is Commodore Computers, for the edition of for what it's worth we'll take a close look at Commodore from the past into the present, with maybe, maybe a brief look into the future!

To start , here's a list of the 8 bit machines in order of age, oldest to the newest:-

- 1: Commodore PET
- 2: Vic 20
- 3: Commodore 64
- 4: The C16
- 5: The Plus 4
- 6: Commodore 64 C
- 7: Commodore 128
- 8: Commodore 128 D

A point of interest from David just before we continue with the reviewing, the Commodore 64 C is just about the only 8 bit machine now available (As new) and still being manufactured.

The Commodore Range

1: The Commodore Pet.

This machine was virtually exticnt (Went from a PET to a Dinosaur eh? Ed!) before the home market really caught on (Around 1981). The different types of Pet were all compatible with each other and all as bulky as each other. The standard machine (4000 series) came with 1 mono monitor + one large keyboard and a data recorder.

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For What it's Worth?

The Commodore Range

1: The Commodore PET. (Continued)

There were other versions of the same thing, but they all managed to do virtually nothing (the 6000 series) , the major change was the introduction of the disc drives. These were 2 8" drives stacked side by side, and in the case measured 20 inches across. Add this to the 15 inches for the CPU, and you have got one very heavy and large machine. It was possible to make this machine a COLOUR machine, however the kit to do this wasn't very helpful and after reading the instructions you might decide that you wished you were an engineer! The memory was regarded as acceptable in those days, however by todays it would be laughed at. The Maximum after upgrade would be 64k.

Desirability:-

Without any software supplied with the outfit the machine is useless (Apart from being a rather large doorstop Ed.).

With software that suits your requirements (About as likely as finding a working pay phone in London Ed!). The value is about £5

With lots of software and a data recorder it is worth about £12

With lots of software + 8" drives the system is worth about £15 - £20 (The previous owner might pay you if you take all the junk, Cough! I mean hardware, Ed!)

2: The Vic 20.

The Vic 20 was the first FULL colour computer made by Commodore and it was aimed specifically at the younger generation. I.e Kids!

The first VIC was supplied with a small 9v power supply, which powered a data recorder (via the computer) and the computer itself. The colour display was to either a colour monitor or to a standard colour Tv using an external modulator.

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For What it's Worth?

The Commodore Range

2: The Vic 20. (Continued)

The second VIC was supplied with a dual power supply similar to the Commodore 64. The modulator was similar to the early model, but not compatible without internal adjustment (On the early model, the modulator was black, on the later model, Chrome).

The Vic is worth more in sections i.e power supply, tape recorder being used for Commodore 64, modulator being sold off as spares as these are always breaking down. The only good point about this machine is for youngsters to be able to load ROM cartridges for instant access to simple games and puzzles. The existing memory is 3.5k expandable in stages by cartridge by additional 5k, 8k or 16k or motherboard which could take 6 16k cartridges (rare!) (Otherwise known as a large lego set! Ed). The Vic 20 had only one joystick port, however Commodore was wise and chose the Atari standard (A small 9 pin "D" plug).

Desirability:-

Usefull for families with young children, otherwise much too out of date.

Without Software early models £18.
" " " " later models £24.

With software early models £25.
" " " " later models £30.

3: The Commodore 64.

This must be called the computer that made Commodore and was competing with Sinclair for the home computer market.

The Commodore 64 was fitted with a 6502 microprocessor chip (like the Oric 1) and it ran at a leisurely 3.5 mhz (about 3.5 times the speed of a ZX81). The computer contained an internal modulator (Unlike the VIC 20). The Data recorder is similar to the Vic data recorder (and is called a C2N!) and is also powered via the computer like the VIC data recorder. The Commodore 64 has one of the best sound chips on all 8 bit computers, the only snag is that programming it is like re-writing the Doomsday book, and just as thrilling! The 64 had 2 joystick ports, both standard Atari ports.

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For What it's Worth?

The Commodore Range

3: The Commodore 64. (Continued)

Programming in BASIC on the Commodore is almost impossible and you will find that most beginners give up after about 3 minutes! (Stick to your Einstein Ed!), for example in one magazine (The April edition I might add Ed!) there was a 4 page listing for a program which would increase the speed of commercial software, however being the April issue, the program was about 500 lines of DATA statements and POKES, when run you got the following messages:-

Please place game in data recorder and Press SHIFT RUN/STOP to load, when you did this you were played a small tune followed by another message saying...

Found...APRIL FOOL!

Software

Tons of software on tape, disc and ROM cartridge still being released and possibly still will be for some time at a resonble price.

Desirability:-

It is a reliable machine sought after by all types of people.

A standard Commodore 64 second hand with a selection of software (It is almost impossible not to get a Commodore 64 without software, they always will be trying to palm you off with some junky game when you buy one Ed!). Including Software between £70 - £80.

A Commodore 64 with a drive + software could set you back about £150 - £160 (Second hand!).

Please note, no matter how much software you pile on when trying to sell a Commodore 64, it does not affect the price much.

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For What it's Worth?

The Commodore Range

4: The C16.

This computer was easily recognised by it's black case and black power supply. It was incompatible with Commodore 64 software etc but it was compatible to a degree with the Commodore + 4. The C16 was designed to replace the ageing Vic 20, but alas never took off due to the success of the Commodore 64.

The C16 had 16k memory (12k was usable in programming in BASIC). Expansion packs were made, however they were extremely rare, however if you owned one it wouldn't help because no software was actually produced to use the extra memory. The processor was a 7501 and a 6502 base processor (Like the Z80a is the base processor on the Einstein), the U.K version runs at 0.89 mhz ("Faster than a speeding snail", as quoted by Your 64 & Vic 20 magazine). We believed that Commodore made a mistake by changing the joystick interface making it independent from any other system except the Plus 4.

Desirability:-

Unfortunately for Commodore, the public refused to accept this system.

Valuation without software £8

Valuation with games (looked simualar to early Spectrum games in quality i.e. Hungry Horrace!). £12

The Plus 4.

Originally called 264 by Commodore, and was intended to sell at £250 (Was obviously packed in gold leaf Ed!). By the time that the machine hit the shops, it was called the "Plus 4" and the price had lowered. The machine uses the same processors as the C16, therefore would run all the games designed for the C16. The Plus 4 had a built in Wordprocessor, unfortunately, what you typed in you could not save, unless you went out and paid £199.95 for a 1541 drive! (And thats the cheapest type!)

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For What it's Worth?

The Commodore Range

The Plus 4 (Continued).

Commodore had originally intended this machine to be the bridge between the Business computers, and a games machine (Like a cross between a Elephant and a flea Ed!).

The Plus 4 series had the same horrible joystick interface as the C16. The Plus 4 was intended to replace the Commodore 64, but the software houses and the public were still very happy with the Commodore 64, the Plus 4 was doomed to fail. As the C16 was a failure the Plus 4 took over from it.

Desirability

This machine is really a hobbieist's machine, for those people who couldn't quite make it to the business world and those people that could afford 2 machines, one business machine a games machine (but still a failure!).

Valuation without software £10

Valuation with software £15 (If you are lucky enough to find any Ed!).

The Commodore 64 C.

As Commodore couldn't kill off the Commodore 64 with the Plus 4, it had to introduce another computer (The need to improve image and sales!), Commodore decided to upgrade the now Ancient 64 and was redesigned in a new slimlined case. The machine was otherwise almost identical, and is fully compatible with all previous Commodore 64 software and Add + ons. This machine was now accepted by the Public and soon became the No.1 Christmas 8 bit computer, and still is to this day.

Desirability:-

This machine is sought after more than any other 8 bit machine.

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For What it's Worth?

The Commodore Range

Valuation with software (As we already said, it is impossible to buy a 64 or 64C without some junky game or 200! Ed!). New Price, £149.99 (The Hollywood Games Pack or the World Cup 90 Pack, both the same price, but with different junk, oops I mean games Ed!).

Second Hand Price. £95, with software.
" " " " " " with drive £170.

The Commodore 128.

The Commodore 128 is in fact 3 computers in one box. The Commodore 128, was in fact the first Commodore home computer to have a Numeric keyboard as standard (The style was later used for the Amiga 500). It could operate in Commodore 128 mode, Commodore 64 mode (Compatible to the Commodore 64 range software) and CP/M mode. Software actually produced to run in 128 and the CP/M modes was very limited. The machine is no longer in production.

Desirability:-

It should be better in theory than the 64 and 64C, however not much demand due to lack of 128 software.

Valuation with software £100
" " " " " " and a drive £175.

The Commodore 128D.

Was similar to the 128 in function except it had a built in power supply, and a built in 5.25" drive and also a very noisy cooling fan! It also had a detached keyboard, rather like a PC. This was a very portable machine, (You didn't have the problem so much of lots of leads like the 64!). This machine died very quickly, with only a limited number made with a price tag of over £400.

Valuation with software £180.

The future of Commodore 8 bit. Depends upon support from the software houses and will the chainstores still have Commodore 64C's at Christmas? Otherwise NO future in the 8 bit market. Commodore and the 16 bit? Yeah that's another story....To be continued!

ZEXL

No, Before you ask, I don't know how to pronounce it, however I will do my best to review it for you!

ZEXL is the long awaited game from Chris Cook and Colleagues, it is a very fast shoot 'em up in reality, however have a read and tell me what you think!

You have been chosen for the ultimate mission - to protect the gate of Zexl. Using the latest hyper-spacial construction techniques, two plasma tracks have been fabricated close to the gate on which your ship can run. These tracks also provide a new enhanced teleport system allowing your ship to switch between tracks without the time delay normally associated with teleport systems. Your task is to fight off attacks from hostile beings trying to close the gate and choke off shipping to the planet Zexl. The gate is lowered by special 'construction' ships which fly towards the gate, lowering it further on each attack. To protect the construction ships, special squads of defence fighters accompany the ship to the gate. Once a construction ship has lost all its defence fighters it will retreat and re-attack with renewed defences. Construction ships are very unstable and cannot be shot under any circumstances - they will de-stabilize and destroy any ship between the tracks, including you!

Due to an unfortunate security leak during the construction of the plasma tracks, the enemy had time to place patrol units on the tracks which your ship must avoid, these units will destroy your ship upon impact, but may be shot at from the opposite track for a bonus. During later attacks, the enemy will place 'mines' between the tracks in an attempt to destroy your ship. These mines have the ability to locate your ships position if it is destroyed, so be ready for an immediate mine attack if you lose a ship.

That is roughly what the game is about, it is very easy for the first few levels, however as it progresses it gets harder therefore better.

Valuation:-

Graphics	100% Definatly the best thing about the game.
Sound	35 % Not anything worth listening to.
Playability	70 % Easy once you have played it a few times
Instructions	100% You have just read most of them.
Overall	65 % A nice game, but it does get a little boring after you have played it for a while.

Bargain Basement

Key *Shand* = Second hand software / Hardware. (Tried and tested 100% ok)

NEW = New pieces of software / Hardware.

Einstein Hardware and Software

Description	Normal Price	Offer Price.
Starbase	:£10.00	:£ 7.00 *SHAND*
Sprog	:£10.00	:£ 7.00 *SHAND*
Hyperball	:£10.00	:£ 7.00 **NEW**
Jump Mania	:£10.00	:£ 6.50 **NEW**
ZEXL	:£12.99	:£ 7.00 **NEW**
The All Star games pack	:£ 9.95	:£ 8.00 **NEW**
Tubes Mouse software. Version 5 (Including a keyboard version)	:£15.99	:£ 6.00 **NEW**
Tubes Version 5 update	:£ 2.00	:£ 2.00 **NEW**

Hardware, Media and Books.

Description	Normal Price	Offer Price.
Einstein TC01 Single drive in V. Good Condition no software or manuals.	:Varies	:£65.00 *Shand*
FLEXIDOS Rom.	:£39.99	:£15.00 **NEW**
Tatung TM01 Colour monitor in good condition	:Varies	:£100 *Shand*
Phillips Computer Monitor 80. Green Screen Mono monitor	:£45.95	:£35 *Shand*
80 Column Card	:Varies	:£60 **NEW**
Sharp 3.5" Drive inc PSU and leads	:£137.95	:£80 *Shand*
Einstein Ram Drive 256k	:Varies	:£90 **NEW**
Video 1000 mono monitor Medium Res Mono monitor.	:Unknown	:£30 *Shand*

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Bargain Basement

Maxell 3" Discs (Each)	:£ 2.50	:£ 2.20 **NEW**
Maxell 3" Discs (10)	:£22.00	:£20.00 **NEW**
Ribbon Refresh	:£ 7.95	:£ 7.00 **NEW**
Sanyo Black & White Tv	:Unknown	:£10.00 *Shand*

The Einsteins have been tested on ALL the ports, including mouse, printer port, external drive port, Tatung Pipe, both Analogue ports and the RS 232C Port.

Postage, I'm afraid that I now have to add P + P to items mentioned above, and they are put into the following areas.

- 1: Monitors, Printers and Computers + £10 (Insured Delivery).
- 2: Disc Drives, 80 Column cards etc. £5 (Insured).
- 3: Small pieces of hardware i.e Ramdrive and also cans of refresh £3
- 4: Boxes of discs (10) £2
- 5: Single discs and games 50p

Phone first to make sure I still have the item you want in stock! Leighton Buzzard (0525) 210868.

Please Make all cheques payable to R.Prime

Letters Pages

As you know, I always want letters, and if I can't help, is there anyone out there that can? Andrew McRobbie comes first with some problems...and some solutions!!

Dear Roy,

Further to our telephone conversation last Saturday, I have two efforts for the magazine, providing they are suitable. One, a review of my faithful Panasonic KX-P1081 printer and two, a program which is useful if you have a Scalextrix Set. The latter I did in a fit of pique as a shop assistant sold me the incorrect bits when I was adding to a standard kit. In addition, I have also added a competition for the magazine which should be straightforward enough as I've taken out the difficult bits. It is not really anything to do with computing but if it is given to those people who watch a lot of TV, with any luck we computer buffs may have some peace for a while.

Yours sincerely,

A.C. McRobbie

Problems

I have DOS 2.02 which I think came from one of the shows I went to. Anyway, this DOS works fine for most of the aforementioned games but on Tasword it refuses to save, crashing before it reads the directory. What is the problem here?

My Basic has a few bugs in it.

Further to Ted Cawkwell's article on page 13 of Albert Monthly, the Hold command doesn't work the way indicated in the manual but if you Hold a line number leaving out the comma, it works OK. Furthermore, if you load a program and Renumber it before Merging the held one, any Gosubs are completely mixed up in the held portion.

When the <> command is combined with OR, The machine ignores it. The program TEST.XBS illustrates this. Just run the program the way it is then try it with the REM statement removed in one line and add REM to the previous line.

As Albert's are few and far between up here, I haven't been able to establish whether it is the Basic or the machine which is at fault.

The Editor is strange at times. Load TEST.XBS, clear the screen then LIST the program. Overtyping the first line of the program with 15 and press Enter. Using the cursor keys, move up to the LIST command at the top of the screen, then press Enter. Line 15 is then included. If you then do a CTRL U (delete to end of line), only part of line 15 will be erased.

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Letters Page

How does one go about saving an array with all its data in Xtal Basic? In the Oric it was quite easy but in Xtalbasic!!!

It is some source of annoyance to me that I cannot copy Grafdraw and use it on 5.25 disc. This means that I have to continually use the master disc. Can you help? I have copied Grafdraw.000 to let you see if your program is the same as mine.

Grafdraw should be able to load ASCII files then print them out. This doesn't appear to work, as in 40 cols the where is a space where each page should be joined. In 32 column mode the last two characters are removed. Refer to the enclosed sheet.

Is this a bug again?

I have a feeling that the Grafdraw program I bought has had a few bits added to it as one of the programs refers to disc drive 2 & 3.

The programs listed on the disc are:-

SIDE 1

GRAFDRAW.COM	GDSETUP .COM	GDFONT .GDR	TUTOR1 .GDR
TUTOR2 .GDR	TUTOR4 .GDR	GRAFDRAW.000	32CFONT .GDR
TUTOR5 .GDR	TUTOR .GDR	40CFONT .GDR	CARTOON .GDR
SERIFONT.GDR	OLDFONT .GDR	GRAFDRAW.INF	JAZZFONT.GDR
GDOTOSC+ .COM	TUTOR3 .GDR	GDPAGE .GDR	GDSCRNLD.OBJ
SC1 .MEM	JIM .GDR	FONTGDR .GDR	SC9 .GDR

SIDE2

DM0 .GDR	DEMO .GDD	FRED .GDD	DM1 .GDR
DM2 .GDR	DM3 .GDR	DM4 .GDR	DM5 .GDR
DM6 .GDR	ICONS .GDR	GDSHOW .COM	GDSHOW .DOC
JIM .GDD	GRAFDRAW.INF	GDFONT .GDR	

HINTS

I ran into a problem with P.D. Forth. I found that none of my definitions would load when following F83.DOC instructions.

I should point out that the following assumes you have a standard Einstein and have followed the simple instructions to obtain 40EF83.COM as a stand alone program. This means that the this version of Forth is in 40 column mode instead of 80 and mv instruction describe the 40 column system.

To get round this problem of non-loading :-

From DOS, type 40EF83 <CR>.

When Forth is loaded, the last line before the cursor should read:- 40 Col Einstein version Feb 88. To create you own file2 blocks (2x1024 bytes in size) with a filename called TRIAL, type:-

2 CREATE-FILE TRIAL.BLK <CR>.

The disc drive should operate and when it stops you should see "ok" printed on the screen. If your filename is more than eight characters only the first eight are shown on screen plus .BLK of course. Now type:-

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Letters Page

1 EDIT <CR>.
Forth comes back with the message:-
enter your id...

The F83.DOC program tells you that the ID is a ten character string. To get past this, type in some letters but enclose them in brackets. ie (ANDREW) <CR>. NB The space after the W isn't necessary but looks neater. The "open bracket" followed by a space tells Forth that a comment follows and continues until a "close bracket" is reached, rather like a REM in BASIC, the bracket being a predefined "word" in Forth. Each "word" MUST be separated by a space.

My problem was that if I used the password suggested in F83.DOC, I could use the editor ok but loading was impossible once you had saved the file, therefore none of the new definitions worked. For some reason using brackets within the password works.

Once you have done this, the first 8 lines (0-7) of the first "SCREEN" are listed (fifteen are available per screen) with the cursor flashing at the bottom of the screen. Above the flashing cursor you will see "0 ^" to enable you to edit line zero - not unlike the old ZX81 arrangement. To choose a line, say line one, type:-

1 T <CR>
and the zero will be replaced by the number, one.
To place definitions or comments, type P (with at least one space after it), then away you go. eg.

P (FORTH EXAMPLE) <CR>
2 T <CR>
P : HELLO ." Welcome to the world of Forth " ; <CR> After each line has been successfully entered Forth should say 'ok' on the screen.

To list a screen type:-
1 LIST <CR>

The first 10 lines of screen one are listed with the cursor flashing beside line 10. Pressing N <CR> will list from 5 to the fifteenth line, while B <CR> brings you back again. If you want to save your work, type DONE <CR> and the message "modified" will appear as the disc drive is running. If you load the program again, every time you type in HELLO, the computer will add 'Welcome to the world of Forth'

WIPE <CR> will clear the work from the screen.
Should you find yourself facing an "open error" when opening a file, try pressing CTRL C then open the file again. Typing A: will allow you to open a different file. If you have a means of printing out the following files then do so as I find frequent reference to them is necessary.

1 F83TUTOR.BLK
2 WELCOME.BLK
3 EF83.DOC
(Continued Next Page)

Letters Page

Reference is also made to the book by Leo Brodie entitled Starting Forth and I have found this book very helpful. A quick dash to the local library established two available copies plus a more advanced book by the same author so it may not be necessary to buy one. When the annual library sale was held at the beginning of this year, both Starting Forth & BBC Basic on the Z80 were for sale at the horrendous price of 30p each.

You have indicated that you would like suggestions as to the content of future editions of B.E.U.G. or Albert Monthly.

What about some articles on Bulletin Boards and Modems? eg. What are the advantages and disadvantages?

I would like to be able to read more reviews on available software. The fact that software and hardware is not available locally is very annoying. This is where the shows are a boon for demonstration purposes.

Have you any simple Forth programs which can be used to compare with a BASIC equivalent?

Using the Glentop Assembly Language Course, I have come across errors on the first paragraph of page 2-4. 0106 hex does not equal 272 denary, but 262 denary. Similarly, 0105 equals 261 and not the 262 quoted. This is repeated in the fourth paragraph on the same page and of course mucks up the remaining tables in that particular chapter in the book.

If you have inadvertently bought non-standard paper, by setting up the paper length in BASIC using PRINT#1: CHR\$(27) + "C" + CHR\$(0) + CHR\$(n); where n = page length in inches, type DOS from BASIC, then TASWORD to load from DOS. When Tasword is loaded, the page length is not altered. This works with a Panasonic KX-P1081 printer. You can of course re-define the function keys to suit while using Tasword. This may also be possible with other wordprocessing packages.

Right, one thing at a time.

1: DOS 2.02 gave me a few problems with TASWORD as well, as far as I can see, TASWORD only really likes standard 1.31 DOS, I have TASWORD working on 2.05 DOS however, and that works fine. you must always remember though, that Tasword can only be used on standard 3" drives or Silicon drives, not 3.5" or 5.25" drives, so if your 2.02 dos has been set up for other drives, that might be the reason for it not working.

2: I don't really know much about saving arrays (I try to avoid them when possible), so if anyone does, please write in!

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Letters Page

3:I have not had this problem with GRAFDRAW, it always seemed to work fine for me! However if you send me your disc I will have a look at it for you, and see if I can find the problem.

4:As I said, send me the disc!

Dear Roy,

Perhaps you could advise me with this, It concerns the Speculator add on. Is it possible to use it to load data from cassettes other than the Spectrums? From saved data from a Memotech computer for example. I don't know if you have any interest in the speculator but if not perhaps someone in the membership could help. I have tried with no success to load data from this source but I need to know more of the information concerning the transfer rate etc, or am I wasting my time?

Yours,

Jim Coyle.

.....

As far as I know, the Speculator will only allow you to use the one source, that being the Spectrum, I may not be the best to decide this seeing as I do not own one, however if anyone else would like to write in and tell me?

Dear Mr. Prime,

I bought a copy of TASWORD with TASPRINT and it's fonts. Unfortunately I don't seem to be able to use the fonts. Do you have any experience in this matter? Any assistance you could give would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Ryder.

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(Continued Next Page)

Letters Page

First you need to turn the font, this is done by typing shift and the ^ key next to the text you want a different font (2 keys right of the 0 key).

To use the fonts, all you have to do now is use the function keys. F0 for Lectura F1 for Median etc. To switch the fonts off, just type shift ^ again.

If you still have a problem with this, please give me a ring and I will explain it in more detail.

This is a quick letter, with a nice little program from Matthew Saint. See what you think!

Dear Mr. Prime,

This is a copy of the program I sent you. It was in it's first stages of development then in BASIC but I left the Einstein version and carried on in 'C' on a HP9000 mini. I have 'C' for the Einstein but the scatter will not work with it. It is relatively easy to convert this effect to text or to irregular objects by firstly scanning them with point.

1. Generate ordered array.
2. Swap elements in array randomly.
3. Display as an ordered array.

Yours faithfully,

Matthew Saint.

```
0 Rem M. Saint 1990
10 BCOL 0:CLS:GCOL 11
20 COUNTER=0
30 X1=0:Y1=0:X2=30:Y2=30:Q=2
40 FOR X=X1 TO X2 STEP Q:FOR Y=Y1 TO Y2 STEP Q
50 COUNTER=COUNTER+1:NEXT:NEXT
60 DIM PX(COUNTER),PY(COUNTER)
70 COUNTER=0
80 FOR X=X1 TO X2 STEP Q:FOR Y=Y1 TO Y2 STEP Q
90 PX(COUNTER)=X:PY(COUNTER)=Y
100 COUNTER=COUNTER+1
```

(Continued Next Page)

Competition Time

This competition was sent in my Andrew McRobbie, who gets an ZEXL game for his work.

TELLY ADVICE! How much attention do you pay to the adverts?

Here's YOUR chance to prove yourself and win ZEXL, the latest game from Chris Cook.

Simply identify the PRODUCTS from the catch phrases listed below and you could WIN ZEXL.

EG. W.I.L.M.H.T.M.H. = WHEREVER I LAY MY HAT THAT'S MY HOME
so the answer would be Tay Houses. Easy-but frustrating!

<u>ABBREVIATION</u>	<u>CATCHPHRASE</u>	<u>PRODUCT</u>
1) A.A.B.T.L.L.M.T.	_____	_____
2) O.S.H.T.A	_____	_____
3) F.C.B.W.S.	_____	_____
4) Y.C.G.B.T.A.K-F.F.	_____	_____
5) D.P.M.D.	_____	_____
6) M.O.T.A.R.	_____	_____
7) O.Y.T.D.N.E.W.D.	_____	_____
8) W.H.A.H.I.E.B.	_____	_____
9) T.C.I.F.	_____	_____
10) A.F.O.F.I.J.E.T.G.T.K.A.T.	_____	_____
11) N.C.A.I.B.	_____	_____
12) T.M.T.M.T.	_____	_____
13) I.A.A.U.T.A.B.S.	_____	_____
14) F.T.F.F.F.	_____	_____
15) T.T.T.V.V.T.T.V.T.	_____	_____
16) P.L.P.	_____	_____
17) C.C.C.T.T.B.O.G.	_____	_____

Competition Time

18) I.Y.A.G.A.G. _____

19) B.B.O.L.K.T.C.O.A.G.C.D. _____

20) A.F.T.M. _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

The rules are simple, the first person to write back with the RIGHT answers wins the prize. I will announce who won in the August issue.

Credits

I would like to thank for this publication, me (I don't think that is allowed Ed!). Ted Cawkwell for another wonderful article and Dave Thompson for his help (many a Thursday night) getting our For What it's Worth article together, and finally my Mum for cursing and correcting my terrible spelling.

Please Note. All articles in this magazine are copyright (c) 1990 Beds & Bucks Computer User Group. If any other group would like to use an article, all you have to do is ask!

Help-line

If you have any queries on the magazine, or software or the Einstein in general, here is a list of people that you can now contact.

Adventure Games, Pascal, Musical Applications.
Josef Karthäuser, 17 Manor Close, Abbots Ann, Andover
Hants, SP1 7BJ.

Basic, Wordstar.
Jonathan Lloyd, 8 North View, Eastcote, Pinner,
Middlesex, HA15 1PE.

Forth.
Michael O'Brien, 23 Freshwater Close, Luton, Beds

Tas-Sign, Tasword and XBAS and evaluation of
computers. Roy Prime (See Backpage).

Buying and selling of computers and evaluation of
computers, hardware and software.
David Thompson. Luton (0582) 412 542.

Eprom Programming, Video Arcade Equipment and Infocom
Adventure Help.

Steve Demant, 17 Quarry Road, Headington, Oxford, OX3
8NT. Telephone (0865) 63744.

Want some free PD. If you think you can review it,
then you can have it for FREE. Just tell me what you
want and I will send it to you on a FREE 3" disc.

Call Roy Prime on (0525) 210868 for more details.

Adverts Form

You may advertise all your computer needs free in the magazine.

Simply fill out the form below, and send it to:-

ADVERTS,
Mr. R. Prime
17 Bury Rise
Tilsworth
Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire.

LU7 9PR.

Tear Here.

Tear Here.

Name
(Please use capitals throughout)

Address

.....

Telephone Number and area code

Time to call from (AM/PM)
(Please cross out either Am or Pm)

Please enter the text of the advertisement in the gaps provided below.

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57	58	59	60	61	62	63
64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77
78	79	80	81	82	83	84
85	86	87	88	89	90	91
92	93	94	95	96	97	98
99	100	101	102	103	104	105

Backpage info

Alberts Bi - Monthly Review

Correspondence regarding the group except Public Domain software should be sent to:-

Mr. R. Prime
The Beds Computer Group,
17 Bury Rise,
Tilsworth,
Leighton Buzzard
Beds. LU7 9PR

All cheques for software, manuals, books etc from the bargain software page and auction page (Unless stated otherwise) should be made payable to R.Prime.

Correspondence regarding Public Domain software to:-

Mrs. C. Prime (Same address)

Please note. You can now send off for Public Domain software on the following format of discs.

3.5" Double Sided 80 track.
3 " Single Sided 40 track

Make all cheques for Public Domain software payable to Mrs. C. Prime.

Pd. Prices. £1 per Order (One 3" disc side).
£4.50 for 2 orders including 1 new 3"
Maxell Disc.

How to submit Articles.

You may submit articles on 3" disc using the following Wordprocessor formats:-

Wordstar WP80 VDU25
Tasword. WP40 or ASCII Standard.

If you have any queries regarding any of the above you may telephone 6pm and 9pm Monday to Friday and 5pm and 10pm weekends.

Roy Prime. 0525 210868.
Chris Prime. 0525 210868.