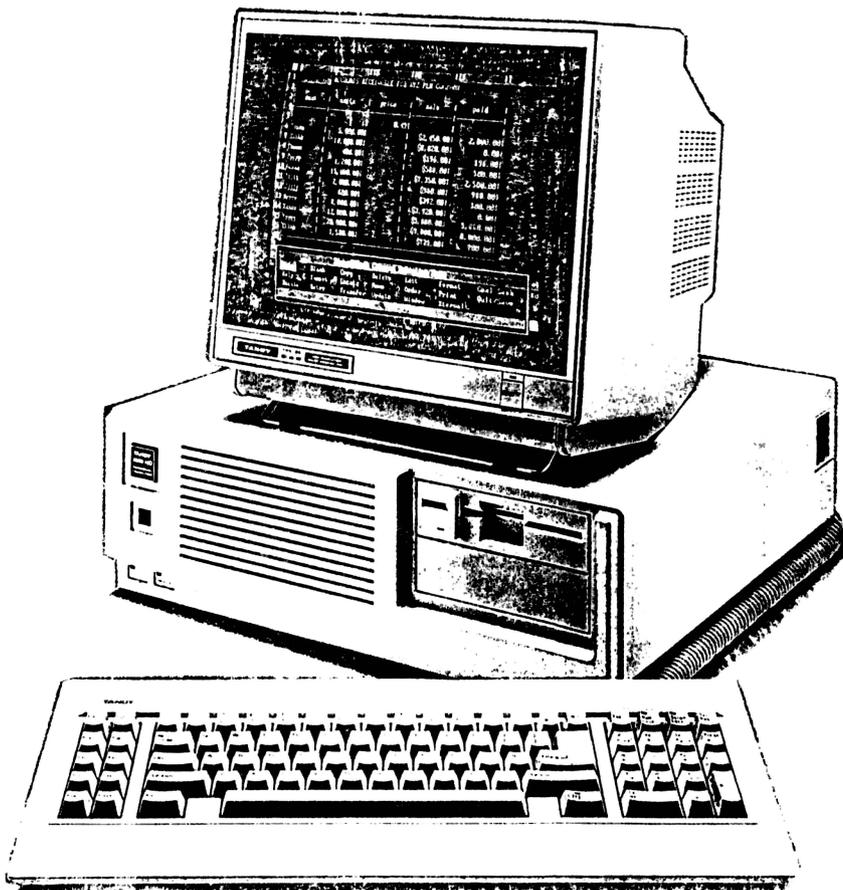# *NATGUG NEWS*

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE   *National Amstrad, Tandy*
&
General User Group

INFORMATION ON THE GROUP

Membership of the group is by subscription to the Newsletter which is published at regular intervals - application forms are available from the Secretary. Membership of the group is open to anyone with an interest in computers but special emphasis is placed on equipment within the Amstrad, Tandy, and MS-DOS range.

Details of the group's accounts and constitution are available from the Treasurer - please ensure that your requests are accompanied by a S.A.E.

Members requiring assistance with problems related to the machines specified should contact the P.R. Officer who will endeavour to put them in touch with possible advisers.

Sub-groups exist in many areas and their Secretaries are invited to forward details to our Editor/Publisher for inclusion in the magazine. The back page is being reserved for this purpose.

Public domain software libraries are maintained, in five separate collections: Model I, Model 4, CP/M, Amstrad and MS-DOS. Names of the appropriate librarians are available from the Secretary.   There is a copying charge of 1.00 per disk or tape. (also see Vol 8, Is. 10)

Back numbers of the magazine, in 6-month volumes, are available at the price indicated on the application forms.

The group has no paid Officers or employees, and the issue of the magazine depends on contributions from Members, who are also invited to submit responses to questions raised in the previous issues. To allow legible print, we prefer contributions to be submitted on 5.25" disk, direct to the Editor - ASCII files are perfectly acceptable but please indicate the disk format used (SS,DS,SD,DD, track count, DOS etc). Your disk will be returned (if you enclose an addressed label) normally within 7 days. The Editor will accept written or typed articles where members insist - publishing will depend on readability.

CONTENTS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TRS-80

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This is the month we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the TRS-80

EDITORIAL

To all the people who sent in articles for the last Newsletter,
thank you very much. I hope you have managed to read and digest it
all, and are now eager to read this one.

Before going any further, I should apologize to all for the
'problems' with my daisy wheel. I have not been able to print some
characters and I suspect that some Authors, like John Butcher, Brian
Edwards, Leo Knaggs and Geof Smith have squinted slightly when
re-reading their articles. I hope that in the future I will not need
to use the heavy pen.   I have not had any actual complaints, but never
the less I feel guilty.   All this was due to absence of the correct
characters on the print wheel I had used for the first two Newsletters
of my Editorship. I note that Geof asked somewhere back in maybe Vol.
7, Issue 8, if someone knew of a supply for ASCII print wheels. These
type of wheels are not easy to come by. Now the good news, after what
must have cost a fortune in people's time and effort - one professional
man in the south of England must have spent a whole morning phoning
around stockists, just to draw a blank - I now have a print wheel with
more of the suitable characters, these are {}\<>[] , one character it
does not have is a pound sign, (as standard ASCII), if no character is
in front of what appears to be a monetary amount, please read it as
pounds. I think the characters also have a better form to them.   Two
of the most helpful companies were:-

Camwil Communications Limited, The Old Mill, Mill Lane, Godalming,
Surrey. GU7 1EY. (04868) 4611:- Who also included with their
catalogue a complete print out of all the characters of every print
wheel. This company also customises print wheels and typeheads.

And the man who spent a great deal of time for no returns was:-
Albert Lilly, trading as Lilly Peripheral Services of 47 Horton Street,
Frome, Somerset, who also sells and services Epson printers, and
services teletype printers. He did sound most helpful. See also Sex
Notes.

        Whilst on the apologies, only three more, please forgive me Leo
for   not   putting   any   credits   at   the   end of your article
titled,"FORMAT/CMD and the DCT". (Page 38, Vol 9, Issue 1). I ran the
item off from the disk file and did not stop to notice that there where
no credits at the end, thank you Leo (Knaggs). Please contact Leo C/O,
Blandford Computers. Under LOCAL CLUB NEWS, please read Sunday, not
Monday, as the meeting day of the North East London Group. (Monday is
the day that venue supplies good meals, so I am informed). That demon
of a random month generator seems to have moved up into this part of
the world, last months issue should have been July not June. Just
staying with Local Clubs for a moment, would it be possible for someone
from each group to give me just a little bit of news about yourselves,
for printing into the Newsletter ?

        I have been taken to task for not clearly separating individual
items.   I hope I am learning, and will look to give a better layout in
future issues, space permitting. The reason for doing it this way with
the last issue was as follows:- We can post a Newsletter of up to 44
pages for 12p. then up to 64 pages for 20p. One double sided A4 sheet
making four pages. Now as Members are on a fixed subscription of 12.00
per year, if we output larger and larger Newsletters we can fail
financially by our own success, (larger Newsletters put up costs). As
a great number of Members had not renewed their subscriptions by the
time we sent out the last issue, we the committee, felt that we had to
send out a reminder to those members included with   the   last
Newsletter.   If one more page had been added to the Newsletter, the
cost of printing that page, together with the additional postage, would
have substantially increased that months Newsletters costs. I thought
it more prudent to -->squeeze<-- the Newsletter, than to incur that
extra cost. It would help your committee greatly, for more reasons
than the above, if Members would pay subscriptions before their renewal
date.   We would not understand why you should never want to renew your
membership, but should you ever decide on that, then please just drop
us a note before your renewal date.

I have now received two submissions for the Newsletter, which I have not included, as in my opinion (and others) they would have infringed a copyright. Can I beg members, if they have doubts, to check on this in the future, by maybe asking one of the committee. I don't like to see all the work that has been involved not able to be used and members disappointed. You can be certain, that any article taken from another magazine will infringe copyright. You saw in the last issue that NATGUG has been granted permission to reprint from "Micro Computer News".

On Sunday 14th June I visited a Radio Ham Rally and was fortunate to have purchased a "power supply" unit. This was being demonstrated on a stall running a 60 watt lamp, as an inverter - 12VDC to 230VAC - this is what I purchased it for at a price of 20.00. On getting home and opening the unit up, it had obviously been designed as an uninterruptable standby unit - mains in, mains out and facilities to charge an internal 12VDC sealed lead acid battery - the battery was missing. I fitted an external socket onto the unit to put 12VDC in, now I can sit in my vehicle, plug into the battery and run my Model 4P. This is now being input on the roadside whilst I have a moment, just north of Bolton, Lancs. I must now get a small sealed lead acid battery and put it into the unit for Swindon, then when whoever it is, pulls the plug, my 70K LeScript file won't disappear. Just for the record, I was very dubious when first switching the 4P on, as a little notice on the back of the 4P says "Amperage 0.46". Does not some law deem this to be about 108 watts ? The unit is only rated at 100 watts. I have fitted the 4P with two TEAC HD55 switchable 80/40 drives. When I eventually switched on, and using a not very accurate way of measuring, guess that the 4P is now taking between 50 & 55 watts. Is any member able to "guarantee" that if I disconnect the internal fan of the 4P, it will suffer no harm ? Or could a thermal device be fitted to switch the fan on, should the inside get too warm ? If so, at what temperature should the device switch on ? (This in order to save on battery power).

There is no further news re: Molimerx. (A Ball Pen with "Thank you ! Molimerx Ltd" on it arrived today - 17/07/87. Thank you, John).

Some members have said that they are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain copies of 80 Micro. The committee have written to

80 Micro, Northern Bytes and Misosys, asking if they offer any facility for us to bulk purchase their Magazines, we have also asked other questions, but more later. Now, would members please put any form of marking utensil to anything that can be marked (no large rocks please) and let me know if YOU would like to take up any one of these options if we receive favourable replies. The committee may have to make a quick decision of some kind, it would help to know how the membership feels, remember you are uncommitted at this time. Whilst doing that, and to save your postage, would you also let me know if YOU would be willing to attend a Sunday workshop, if held in the West Midlands sometime next May '88. We do need uncommitted support at this moment, to decide if we should book the venue. I will publish results of the above.

If any Member has any suggestions, such as alternate venues, or on any other theme, and would like your committee to follow it up, please get in touch with one of us.

Update. BLANDFORD '87. Please make a note in your diary for Sunday, 16th August 1987. See also SEX NOTES, last issue and advert this issue.

Update. Swindon Oct. '87. The Wiltshire Hotel has agreed to quote an all-in price to those people wishing to stay over until the Monday, please ask when booking. 'Mac' has now left to take charge at another hotel. See also advert this issue.

Update. Repeated from the last Newsletter for the Benefit of all the new Members - & Welcome to you. The promised article about the Model I Double Density Adapter Kit has arrived. This is three pages of A4 paper from an American Magazine, Computer Digest, Dec. 1985, which includes schematics and photographs. This article, for which we have permission to distribute, shows how to convert a Tandy Double Density Kit, to operate as a PERCOM Doubler. The committee have decided that this would be too involved for us to publish in the Newsletter, so would those people who are genuinely interested, please send your request, to me please, Editor. Together with a large S.A.E., and include two 20p coins (40p) taped to some card, (this to cover the cost of photocopying) we will hope to return a good photostat copy. No S.A.E., no return. Thank you Nat. for the trouble you have taken.

Further to this is a detailed article on building a double density adapter for the Model I or Video Genie and 5.25/8" disks in the recent issue of Northern Bytes, Vol 7, Number 5.

I hope to include in future issues some zaps to LDOS 5:1:4a, LDOS 5:3, TRSDOS 6:x and LS-DOS 6:3:0, which have been requested by some of the members. As I have no idea of what I am letting myself in for, (number of requests and workload wise). I will say that this next offer goes with no guarantees and no promise of turn-round times, but I would hope no longer than two weeks. If any member has seen zaps mentioned in the Newsletter or elsewhere, this includes those given by Leo last issue, and is unsure of how to implement them to his own disk files, if you send me a SYSTEM DISK with those files on which you want zapped, saying what format; LDOS, TRSDOS 6:x or LS-DOS, (Sorry the NEWDOS 80 people, I do not have sufficient experience of the DOS, do we have another volunteer ?), the disk is, density and number of sides, together with a written/typed listing of the zap to be done, sufficient return postage and addressed label (members only please), I will try to carry out that zap or zaps. Backup copies only please, for the obvious reasons. One thing to consider when receiving a disk which has been written to by another disk drive, is that should you not be able to read that disk, try it in another drive before doing anything else. The members of the committee have found this works with disks they have exchanged. Can someone now explain about which alignment is "wrong" ? Please mail your disks in a suitable container. I have now received three disks, which because of the way they were mailed, had had the sleeve 'squashed' onto the disk, the disk would then not turn. Send to the Treasurer for Disk Mailers. Your Hon. Sex. has volunteered to apply ZAPS to NEWDOS80 disks, thank you David. Please post direct to him. I have to warn members, and please be understanding, not to "cry wolf" to often on this one, this comes from both of us. We expect your learning curve to progress.

I ask on behalf of all the membership, that if any member, having asked for help of any kind, then subsequently should be fortunate to receive an answer due to his membership of NATGUG, would that member then please give the whole of NATGUG the benefit that help received ? You may help someone who is just having the same problem. Or you might see the answer to a problem that has just manifested itself to you. Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation.

This is an unsolicited request on behalf of our PRO. I know he would like to go to Blandford, but because of the distance, shanksies are out of the question and Mr. Beeching took away his other form of transport to that town. Could anyone pick John up (I hope you agree with this John), from any main line station on route and return him to same. Any kind person contact John direct please.

What about some answers to all those questions, too numerous to ask again, asked by various members of your committee since the March AGM, either in the last two Newsletters or other papers sent out. I believe that collectively, the Committee have had the great total of one answer.

On Friday, 17th July, I had a meeting with two Directors of Tandy UK @ Bloxwich, this was a very positive meeting. The following are brief points to come from that meeting.

1).   We have been advised, subject to proof approval, that NATGUG can
      have leaflets/membership forms available in Tandy Stores for
      distribution.

2).   NATGUG will receive: Press Releases, Updates, Patches and notices
      of Special Offers.

3).   There could be certain Tandy Stores made available for Local
      Group meetings. Please contact the Secretary.

4).   I am a new member - nearly four years - but from reading back
      issues of NATGUG Newsletter, I don't believe Tandy & NATGUG have
      come as close as we are now. I would be happy to be corrected.

From my vantage point of Editor and putting together all the 'feelings' gained from telephone calls and letters received, also from seeing all the "renewals of membership" from lapsed members, I feel confident in saying that NATGUG is on an 'UP'.

Thank you again for reading NATGUG Newsletter and for taking an interest in us. Gordon Collins, Editor, **.

SEXNOTES

What a super job Gordon did last month (with YOUR help, of course) - 60 pages ! At this early stage (July 8th) I can only hope that that will become the norm ! Well done, keep it up.

I think that Anon's letter, particularly his opening comments, was a very good illustration of the difficulties experienced by the Committee in striving so hard to be all things to all men.   On one hand we have Members feeling that they and their Model 1 machines are no longer cared for, whilst on the other hand those Members who have moved on to later machines wonder why we spend so much time on the Model 1 !   Well, we intend to look after the Model I's for as long as we are asked to, but we do have some very good news for the MS-DOS user - DAVE's COLUMN is on the way !   Dave Holman, of Dotwriter and CP/M fame, has promised to produce a monthly series dedicated to the new systems (and did you know that in the US Tandy is the largest of all the "clone" producers ?). Hopefully Dave's Column will restore the balance in the Newsletter between the different systems.

Talking of restoring a balance, and harking back to the good ol' days, do you remember when every issue of NATGUG News contained a 'slanging' match between Laurie and Leon concerning the merits of different Assemblers ?   I never was really certain who won that battle .... !

We are deeply indebted to Leo Knaggs and Bill Jupp this month. Bill, who until quite recently traded as Microcomputer Applications at Blandford, has had a clear-out of old stock and our Leo promptly stepped in with a full cheque book to save an assortment of goodies for YOUR benefit. Firstly we have an assortment of cassettes which Bill gave to the Group, and these are available FREE, first-come first-served, to those who send me 30p postage for each tape they want. The titles are: Editor Assembler Plus, Bridge Partner, Super Nova, Sargon II, Defense Command, Stellar Escort, Galaxy Invasion, Robot Attack, and Meteor Mission 2.

Secondly, we have purchased a quantity of assorted "Mystery" books - mystery in the sense that that was their title when published (at around #20 each). I am still waiting for Leo to unpack them and

give me the titles and quantities, although I understand that we also
have a few copies of Electric Pencil 2. Like the cassettes, these are
all BRAND NEW, unlike the cassettes they are going to cost you FOUR
POUNDS EACH plus postage. If you are interested then ring me on 0373
72739 but be prepared for the ansaphone. Thank you, Bill and Leo. (We
WILL reimburse you, Leo - one day !)

Anyone out there using a Teletype printer ? If so, you might be
pleased to hear about Albert Lilly, trading as Lilly Peripheral
Services here at Frome; he covers the whole South West of England
servicing these machines. He also repairs all Epson printers and can
be contacted on 0373 52654, and we want to tell everyone just how
helpful he was in trying to get special printwheels for Gordon's
daisywheel. Help & service like that are so appreciated that we just
had to give him a mention, and we hope that Members will be able to
find out for themselves just how helpful he is. Lilly Peripheral
Services can be found at: 47 Horton Street, FROME, Somerset. BA11 3DP.
Albert is also a Radio Ham, his call sign is:- G8 VGI.

Going back to last month's Newsletter. Our MAL correspondent asks
about Newdos 80 v3.0 - well, I have a note from Apparat which clearly
states that there ain't no such thing ! The last issue was 2.0 for
floppy, and 2.5 for hard disk, and my guess is that someone has
personalised his copy by zapping in that 3.0. MAL also asks about a
database for Model 1 and whilst it isn't simple in the normal sense of
that description, I would recommend Datawriter which I picked up
second-hand and used for quite a while. I liked both the versatility
and bomb-proofing of this program (which I used, for example, to
produce the 80-Micro index). The problem that I found with Databases
was that it wasn't until after I had spent an awful lot of time typing
in entries that I found out just what I wanted the program to do - and
in that respect Datawriter never failed me.

You might know of a magazine called MicroMart which includes
amongst other things the ACC Club News. Over the last 4 issues they've
been kind enough to mention NATGUG three times - unfortunately all
incorrect ! They promise that the next issue, due out just before you
should be reading this, will be correct !

I had an interesting 'phone call last week which suggested that maybe we will see an official Tandy presence at Swindon in October. In view of the high number of referrals that the Group is getting from Tandy customers nowadays it does seem that we've achieved recognition at last.

80-Micro for June arrived too late for comment last month. Articles therein for MS-DOS users include: First steps to 8088 Assembly Language, Custom Character Generator, and how to change the inaccessible back-slash to the normal slash as a dos delimiter character. For the Models III/4 we have a Model III Memdisk, DOS functions from within Superscript, Improved 6.2 backups, three more fonts for the DMP printer, and Rules of Bank-Switching.

Does anyone have for sale an Alternate Source "public domain" disk which has all the mods for NEWDOS ?

SEE YOU AT BLANDFORD - SUNDAY AUGUST 16th

David Washford, 6 Houston Way, Frome, BA11 3EU 0373 72739
P.S.
David phoned with the news of the recent promotion for Dave Holman, you are all invited to join in with the congratulations. Well done, Dave .... Dave hopes to be at Blandford, but will then be off on a long 'holiday'. Be safe Dave, we look forward to your monthly articles.

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MSDOS Monthly - by Dave Holman

An open Forum on MSDOS and associated subjects.

This forum is brought to you as a result of a conversation that I had with Dave Washford recently (a non MSDOS user). I had thought of writing a series on MSDOS similar to the one I did for CP/M, which is now reprinted for the group and available for the princely sum of 2.00. However I realised that this was something which I could churn

out over the period of a few months and then it would all be over. Yes
I know you are probably thinking that once produced it would generate
lots of enquiries to test my knowledge, but since the CP/M series
initial publication not one enquiry has come my way. Surely the series
was not that comprehensive.

        Therefore in order to keep the pot boiling a Forum similar to
"Daves MSDOS Column" in 80 Micro is what I hope to achieve. At the
last Swindon meet a number of questions were asked of me and since then
I have asked myself some questions, so this first issue will contain
those questions and, I hope the required answers.

        After much discussion it was suggested that I receive the
questions to the Forum and publish the answers, if I know them, in the
same issue.   This will prevent those long waits for the all revealing
solution to that ticklish little problem. The nature of my work
prevents me from being easy to contact directly, either by phone or
mail, so I am using my mother's home address as a forwarding address so
that no matter where in the world I may be I will receive your queries
and hopefully be able to process and answer them quickly. So all
queries should be sent to the following address:-

Dave Holman, 160 London Road West, Bath, Avon. BA1 7QU.

        I am sorry that personal visits to that address will bear no
fruit nor will telephoning because although my whereabouts are known;
for very good reasons my mother will not be able to pass it on.   If
this sounds over melodramatic, I am sorry but those of you who know me
will certainly know why and this method is preferable to being referred
to as Anon.

        So without further ado lets get down to the first question.

        Will I be able to transfer my data from my Model I/II/III/IV to
an MSDOS machine ? That has to be the $64,000 question, however here
goes.

        I still have my Model IV and used various utilities on it to
transfer all of my DATA, and MOST of my BASIC programs to MSDOS. How
was this achieved ? Well the answer to that lies in the upward

compatible nature of the Tandy series. For example lets take an
example of a basic program that I wrote in the days of my Model 1 Level
1. I first transferred it to Level 2 BASIC using a supplied utility.
Once I had purchased a Model IV I used another utility to transfer it
to both Model III and Model IV format. The names of these utilities
escape me at the moment and are not that relevant to the question
posed. Next I transferred them to CP/M using one of a number of
utilities for this purpose. From here on the courses open to transfer
to MSDOS are manyfold. Existing utilities such as TRSCROSS will
transfer DATA direct from Model IV format to MSDOS format.
Alternatively if the DATA is in CP/M format then it can be transferred
to MSDOS by using CONFIG to set up one of your Model IV CP/M drives as
either an MSDOS one, or as a CP/M 86 drive. The former did not work
for me as my Amstrad did not seem to recognise the MSDOS format made by
CONFIG. Some warnings:- MSDOS is 40 track double sided double density
as standard, although it is not impossible to find other drives in use
under MSDOS. If you have a single sided drive only then the DATA must
be transferred to a single sided disk format under CP/M 86, which is
the 16 bit version of CP/M. My Amstrad machine when running under
DOSPLUS, a compatible version of MSDOS which also reads CP/M 86 disks,
was able to read CP/M 86 single sided disks formatted on my Model IV
and containing the DATA transferred by using CP/M SWEEP. This meant a
fairly slow method of moving the DATA but did mean that I did not have
to buy any of the proprietary transfer programs.

I should add that only DATA and BASIC programs saved using the
"A" option can be transferred using this method. As to the transfer of
programs, this is virtually impossible unless the source code in the
form of a language such as PASCAL or C is available, and even then it
not 100% certain that it will run. For those of you who have been
using CP/M on the Model IV or for that matter the Model II, there is in
many cases no need to transfer programs as most of the existing
software is available on MSDOS, subject to your willingness to buying a
second copy. For example WORDSTAR, DBASE II, SUPERCALC, LESCRIPT and
MULTIPLAN are all available under MSDOS. Many of them with advanced
features and improved capacity.

There must be much simpler ways of ensuring that your much
beloved first BASIC program stays with you for life, but it would very
likely be impossible on any series of machines except the Tandy. I am

proud to say that I have been able to keep my first program right the
way through.

     There is probably a lot more to the transferring of programs and
it could well for the subject of a separate article, hopefully by
someone else.

     Next I was asked about directory trees in MSDOS ?

     Firstly I had better explain what a directory tree is. It is so
I am told similar to the user areas of CPM. This I would tend not to
agree with as user areas were more like separate directories which
effectively masked off other programs held on disk. The MSDOS tree is
more like a series of linked directories and is found to be most useful
on hard disks.

     Imagine a 20 Meg hard disk with many hundreds even thousands of
programs on it. A simple DIR command will result in screenfuls of
filenames whizzing past your eyes. To overcome this at the highest
level of use, called the ROOT directory, there should be a series of
lesser or sub-directories displayed which can be called up from the
root. Lets look at an example. Imagine a Hard Disk that contains
WORDSTAR, DBASE and SUPERCALC.

     On booting up and asking for a DIR the root directory would
display:-

Volume in drive C is MSDOS 00001
Directory of C:\

```
1512        <DIR>       11-04-87   15:35
DBASE       <DIR>       25-03-87    7:31
SUPERCAL    <DIR>       25-03-87   15:04
AUTOEXEC BAT    201     26-06-87   19:16
COMMAND  COM   23612     9-02-87   17:16
CONFIG   SYS     91     28-06-87   16:00
```

     6 File(s) 14046848 bytes free

The last three files are actual files on the root directory and
their file sizes are indicated in the second column. The first three
files have the annotation <DIR> in the second column and this is an
indication that a lower directory level is available. Typing CD
SUPERCAL at the MSDOS prompt will transfer the user to the Supercalc
directory and any DIR request would now display the following:-

```
Volume in drive C is MSDOS 00001
Directory of C:\SUPERCAL

.            <DIR>       25-03-87 15:04
..           <DIR>       25-03-87 15:04
TUTORIAL     <DIR>       27-08-86 23:00
BARPRICE CAL     5760    28-02-87 19:22
BUDGET   CAL     2304    22-05-86 20:45
ECHO     COM       16    22-05-86 19:32
ELECTRIC CAL     5632     7-05-87 22:23
FONT     DAT    46336    29-08-86  7:56
INSTALLS COM     7296    22-05-86 12:12
MAINTAIN COM    14080    22-05-86  1:09
MORTGAGE CAL     3840    29-06-87 21:11
PETROL   CAL     2816    15-02-87  8:50
SALES    CAL     2432    27-02-87 13:52
SC3      COM    40448    27-02-87 18:44
SC3      OVL    33920    29-08-86 23:57

                    .... etc
```

The first two entries are dummy directory entries that refer to
the current directory and the next higher level directory
respectively. The next entry is a lower level subdirectory containing
a tutorial on Supercalc. It can be accessed by typing   CD TUTORIAL.
To go back up one level type   CD ..   and you will back up to the
SUPERCAL directory. To return to the root type   CD \   and you are
taken directly back to the top level. Directories are similar to
having separate drives in that normally a program cannot be accessed
from another directory without detailed knowledge of it's location.
For example to access Supercalc from the Root you would need to type
       \SUPERCAL\SC3   this would attempt to run the program but would
probably not find the relevant overlays. To overcome this there are 2

commands PATH and APPEND, these tell the computer that if a file and it's overlays or data cannot be found on the current directory search the others specified. It takes the Format:-

PATH \SUPERCAL to find COM or EXE files

or

APPEND \SUPERCAL to find data files

These commands can be built into your AUTOEXEC.BAT file so that they are automatically performed on booting.

There is a lot more to directories so if you want to know please ask.

Finally a few quickies.

Can I run Dotwriter on an MSDOS Machine ? No, but son of Dotwriter, FONTASY, is available from the same firm ProSoft. It is based on Dotwriter but as yet I have not been able to use old fonts although ProSoft obviously converted theirs as many fonts are similar. A review would be welcome. I have to admit I am a user and if no-one else is forthcoming I will probably end up reviewing it.

How can I route a directory to a disk file ? Simply by typing DIR > DUMMY.DAT where DUMMY.DAT is the disk file to contain the directory information. Typing DIR >> DUMMY.DAT will append the directory to an existing file, here is scope for producing a directory file of all your disks.

Why does my Adventure program display lots of garbage symbols ? This is because the file ANSI.SYS is either not present or has not been called in on booting. This file supplies certain standard screen displays although it does slow the computer's speed slightly. It should be present on any disk where this garbage, for example:-

27[03[3$[Enter Your Command

occurs, in addition the line DEVICE=ANSI.SYS should be

contained in the file CONFIG.SYS, not in the file AUTOEXEC.BAT. It can
be placed there using any word processor or text editor that can write
ASCII files.

That's all for this edition, please ask away and I will try to
answer your query, I am no expert but with all your questions coming at
me I will soon be forced into becoming one, and so I hope will you.

Good Luck and Happy Computing.   Dave Holman

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Model 1 Notes

Despite all the earlier fuss from members, the only requests that
I've received over the past two months for help with Model 1's have
been for information on the megabyte memory board, so I'm taking the
liberty of changing to detailing some of my personal experiences with
the Model 1, mainly in BASIC programming.   I would never consider
myself to be particularly competent as a programmer but because my
efforts HAD to work I've scrounged help and tips from various sources,
and some ideas might be of help to others. I must apologise if any of
these ideas are disk Basic only - it is now 5 years since I used Level
II and at my age, (he can still lift a heavy one pint glass ... Ed.) I
can no longer remember all the differences !

I think everyone would agree that the biggest single pain in
BASIC is the garbage collection 'freeze' that happens when using
strings. The bigger, and more important, that your program is then the
worse that these delays become. I found that a tremendous achievement
could be made by initialising empty strings, of the correct length, and
then LSETting the data strings into these. Examples should speak more
clearly than words - this one also demonstrates the Newdos Igel:

```
10 CLEAR5000:DEFINT A-X:DEFSTR Y-Z
20 OPEN "D",1,"MAILLIST/DAT","FF",90
30 INPUT"ENTER RECORD NUMBER REQUIRED (999 TO END) ";A
31 IF A=999 THEN 100 ELSE 40
```

```
40 GET 1,A,5000
50 PRINT YA
60 INPUT"IS THIS CORRECT (Y/N) ";Y:IF Y="N" or "n" THEN 30
61 IF Y<>"Y" or "y" THEN 60
70 LPRINTYA:LPRINTYB:LPRINTYC:LPRINTYD:LPRINTYE
71 FOR AA=1TO4:LPRINT" ":NEXT
80 GOTO 30
100 CLOSE:END
5000 B%,(24)YA$,(20)YB$,(20)YC$,(14)YD$,(10)YE$;
```

A small program like this would not be likely to cause much trouble but in real life the program would be much larger and there would be more manipulation of the strings in the program and if run for a while there would be the inevitable delays whilst BASIC rearranged string pointers etc. Following advice given to me, I changed that program to:

```
10 CLEAR5000:DEFINT A-X:DEFSTR Y-Z
11 REM ****************************************
12 REM THESE STRINGS MUST BE SET TO MAX LENGTH
15 ZD=" ":ZE=" ":ZB=ZE+ZE
16 ZC=ZB:ZA=ZD+ZE
17 REM ****************************************
20 OPEN "D",1,"MAILLIST/DAT","FF",90
30 INPUT"ENTER RECORD NUMBER REQUIRED (999 TO END) ";A
31 IF A=999 THEN 100 ELSE 40
40 GET 1,A,5000
45 LSETZA=LEFT$(YA,24):LSETZB=MID$(YA,25,20)
46 LSETZC=MID$(YA,45,20):LSETZD=MID$(YA,65,14)
47 LSETZE=RIGHT$(YA,10)
50 PRINT ZA
60 INPUT"IS THIS CORRECT (Y/N) ";Y:IF Y="N" or "n" THEN 30
61 IF Y<>"Y" or "n" THEN 60
70 LPRINTZA:LPRINTZB:LPRINTZC:LPRINTZD:LPRINTZE
71 FOR AA=1TO4:LPRINT" ":NEXT
80 GOTO 30
100 CLOSE:END
5000 B%,(88)YA$;
```

On another matter, I have long used PRINTUSING strings to print
out pounds and pence "correctly". . If you are printing a single line
then that is fine, but it is very embarrassing to print out an invoice
of maybe only two or three lines together with a total that, whilst
formatted most beautifully, is glaringly inaccurate by an infuriating
one penny ! Rounding routines are somewhat complicated to perfect and
so I am indebted to Lewis Rosenfelder (Basic Faster & Better) for this
DEFFN: (DEFine a FuNction, a predifined operation)

```
10 DEFSNG Q-T
20 DEFFNQ(Q1)=FIX((FIX(Q1*1000!)+SGN(Q1)*5)/10!)/100!
```

   program lines call & manipulate variables and produces, say, T1 as a
total figure

```
500 TA=FNQ(T1)
```

 TA will now be "fixed" to two decimal places and further embarrassment
eliminated !

        David Washford.

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==
                        From :- J. H. Jeffery.

        CONGRATULATIONS ON THE FANTASTIC PRINT QUALITY OF THE NATGUG
NEWSLETTER, AND I SEE MODEL I AND MODEL III ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.

        However to things I like about these models, good keyboards with
numeric keypad and good simple programs like Scripsit and Visicalc,
however (traitor) I find myself using my Q.L. more and more in spite of
its poor keyboard and dodgy microdrives, why :-

1). Lack of memory expansion, with the Q.L. I simply had to plug in an extra 512K, making 620K in all, when dealing with spreadsheets this makes all the difference as only about 15K is available after loading Visicalc. I seem to hear we can tag on extra memory but are we talking about Model I or Model III ?

2). Due to lack of memory we cannot use Supercalc, and after using Supercalc or even Q.L. Abacus, Visicalc just does not have the versitility we expect, such as different column widths and sort facilities.

3). Even the old standby Scriptsit is not so easy to use as Quill and lacks easily defined printer codes - I know members have written these but they do not appear at the top of the screen to remind forgetful people like me of the options available. If there is a version that has these options let me know.

4). I do know which data base would be preferable for the III and have in the past written for my own particular purposes, but I do find it best to use a fairly common one (you've guessed it - Archive) and with the PC's getting cheaper I feel it would be better to start on DB/III, so is there a similar one in the Library or on the market for the Model III ?

I see John Kilpatrick has increased the versitility of his Model 4, with the XLR8er, is there a way of doing something similar with the III ? Incidently for the record we have Model I, Model III (both 48K), Q.L. 640K with disc drive, Amstrad 6128 with single disc.

The Croft, 11 Rowan Drive, Kilburn, Derbys. DE5 OPG (0332) 881239

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TRS 80 to MSDOS
by
John Miller

Well, every one said that some time it would happen, though as a TRS 80 user of long standing I was very cynical. But with the cost of clones coming down, and my need to get a CAD system including digitiser and plotter for producing publication-quality diagrams for my research, I have finally taken the plunge.

MSDOS is not quite the bogey everyone makes it out to be, and with the aid of a good "front end" like XTREE (similar to DOSTAMER) to take away the pain of the syntax and make multiple file operations easy, the transition has been fairly simple. I have an AT clone, 80286 running at 10 meg with 1 meg RAM, a 20 meg hard drive and a 1.2 meg floppy, costing £1295 + VAT from Elonex - and a very fine machine it is. The 14" HiRes monitor is excellent, and I use a Hercules Plus mono graphics card which gives 720 x 348 pixels. The Hercules card is an industry standard, and virtually all programs support it. It came as a considerable suprise, therefore, to find that GW-BASIC from Microsoft does not - and that provided some problems. However, for the benefit of other members, and because Hercules-compatible cards are commonly sold with IBM clones, there are two solutions. First, Epson have licenced GW-BASIC and produced their own version which supports the Hercules card in the Epson PC+: this is available from Northwest Computer Supplies, 82 School Lane, Didsbury, MANCHESTER M20 ORY for £95. It is well-documented and the graphics commands work on Hercules and EGA (colour) cards, without any cumbersome machine language routines in HiMem which you might also see advertised.

A second, and very interesting, alternative is TRUE BASIC from Grey Matter. It costs about £125, and is a complete interpiler system from the men who wrote the first BASIC, and represents their ideal. There are some extraordinary powerful statements, such as the ability to read and write whole arrays to and from disk with a single command, device independent graphics and many other enhancements. True Basic is a completey structured language, and needs no line numbers (but you can have them if you wish). In my view it is better than ZBASIC, but you do need to buy the runtime module if you want to compile stand-alone EXE programs.

One reason that many people fight shy of upgrading from TRS to MSDOS is their investment in software. Well, there is now an answer to that problem too: the folks at Hypersoft have produced PC Four, which not only emulates a Z80 but also convinces a program that it is running under TRSDOS with 4 disk drives. Assemblers, debuggers and even BASIC programs can be run. Scripsit, Visicalc etc all run, and Allwrite will be supported soon on the next upgrade, as they have to write in a few more DOS calls. It has only just arrived, so I haven't had time to evaluate very much yet. One observation is that the emulation slows things down somewhat, but then I have been blazing away at 10 Meg and had quite forgotten what 4 meg looks like! Hypersoft also provide Hypercross, an excellent program for transferring between TRSDOS, CP/M and MSDOS in a huge variety of formats, including good BASIC translation if you need it.

Now I'm left with quite a bit of hardware and software, as listed below. If you are interested in an item, please give me a call and ask about availablility or function. As everyone must realise, support for the TRS80 market is getting very small: virtually non-existent over here since the demise of Molimerx. In any case, I have always dealt directly from the States, but even there the flood has nearly ceased. Therefore, this is a good opportunity to pick up some material to run on the Model 3 or Model 4 which will keep them going for some time.

HARDWARE - I have a brand-new, unused Micro-Labs HiRes graphics board complete with GBASIC support software. This is a much better board than the now unobtainable Tandy one; for example it can display text and graphics screens simultaneously. It cost me £125, but I offer it for £85 + postage. NB the board is for a NON-GATE ARRAY Model 4 (most of the ones in the UK). It is very easy to fit - just plugs into a socket, no soldering needed, with excellent instructions and a wide range of demo programs.

SOFTWARE - The following items are original diskettes, not copies, and are fully documented.
    BIZGRAPH - comprehensive suite of graph plotting routines
    including bar, pie, line and scatter graphs with keyboard or DIF
    file input. Model 4, in GBASIC for Micro Labs Graphics Board.
    £20.

DRAW - excellent HiRes drawing program for Micro Labs Board. £20.

GPRINT - dump HiRes graphics screens to any printer - fill in a screen form giving printer characteristics: example Epson and DMP routines included. £15

TOURNAMENT CHESS - for Micro Labs HiRes board. Plays an excellent game and has a superb display. £15.

DOTWRITER 3.0, Model 4, DMP/OKI printers - the unique Prosoft program for proportional, kerned printing in a variety of fonts. £25.

LETTERSET DESIGN SYSTEM - Model 4, DMP/OKI printers - design and manipulate DOTWRITER fonts. £25, including book listing PROSOFT fonts.

FONT DISKS for DOTWRITER 3.0 - 8 wire (e.g. Epson) on one side, 7 wire (DMP) on the other. Disk 1 - Simple Letter Quality, Disk 2 - Formal Letter Quality, Disk 10 - Headline, nostalgia, Disk 15 - Headline 19th Cent, Modern. £10 each.

LABLMAKR - superb label printer and data base, including cassette type. Model 3 only. £5.

DOSPLUS 3.5 - reliable and very fast Model 3 DOS with excellent manual. £15 inc. postage.

DOSPLUS 4.0 - mostly TRSDOS compatible, complete with MZAL editor/assembler - worth it for this alone, but BASIC is better than LSDOS 6.3 BASIC; other excellent utilities: very fine manual. £25 inc. postage for the big manual.

PRONTO (now PRO-WAM) - 128K Model 4 or 4P - pop-up resident diary, database, calendar etc. £20.

Mister ED - applications for PRONTO (above) including text editor, screen editor, memory editor and others. £15.

PRO-SAID - text editor for Model 4, 4P, ideal for writing

programs, uses 128K if present; customisable.   £15

PRO-ESP - Model 4/4P utilities including RD40 (read 40 track disk in 80 track drive), ALTDISK and ALTLD (very much quicker way of setting up a RAMDISK and its contents than TRSDOS gives), Mod 3 to 4 BASIC conversion, function key definer, minidos, various filters etc.   £15.

SUMUP - 128K Model 4 or 4P: pop-up calculator, takes very little RAM, works on DOSPLUS unlike Pronto.   £10.

DOSTAMER - Model 4 or 4P: you can't be without this superb program for managing your files and DOS operations.   Customise your own commands, comment all your files and more.   £20.

MTERM - TRSDOS 6 or DOSPLUS - a very fine and quick COMMS program, much more friendly and efficient than LCOMM etc. Includes binary transfer.   £15.

ZORK 1 - Model 4.   The game that started adventures.   £5.

VISICALC - Model 3.   The spreadsheet that sold the micro!   £15.

ZBASIC 3.0 - Model 4.   Fast compiler with enhanced commands: source code protable to almost any computer; hires graphic commands compatible with Micro Labs Board.   £25.

MULTIDOS - Model 4.   Interesting, this one: runs in Model 3 mode but with Model 4 speed and screen; has very enhanced BASIC but doesn't work with many Mod 3 M/C lang. programs.   But it can read and write to just about every DOS, including NEWDOS in most formats, and thus is worth having just for this.   Lots of utilities including RAMTEST.   £12.

MULTIPLAN - Model 4.   From Microsoft.   Runs best when overlays placed in RAMDISK on 128K machine, using ALTLD/CMD from PRO-ESP (above).   £25.

BASIC FASTER AND BETTER - Book and 2 disks; many super short cuts and programming techniques; no need to type in the listings. £12.

BASIC DISK I/O - book which complements above and adds indexing and other fast disk access techniques.   £10.

DOS RANDOM ACCESS VOLS 1 and 2 - J. MULLER; the complete survey and proactical program-building guide: a must if you use Random files.   Listings in MS BASIC for TRSDOS, CP/M and MSDOS machines.   £15 the pair.

MODEL 4 TECHNICAL REFERENCE MANUAL - you need this, since Tandy isn't interested any more!   £10.

NORTERN BYTES - about 20 issues (to date) of this invaluable newsletter, full of programs and tips - essential for NEWDOS users but with plenty of Model 3 and TRSDOS 4 lore and programs. £6.

MISOSYS QUARTERLY - a new (1986-7) publication from the writers of TRSDOS 6 and LSDOS 6.3 with all the patches, hints, programs etc.   This is essential for TRSDOS 6 users as Tandy will not support the DOS any longer.   4 thick issues (one to come) for £10.

LITTLE BROTHER - for MSDOS only.   Despite its awful name, this database program is excellent: I have used it on the TRS as my bibliography for years, and it was extremely easy to port all the files straight to MSDOS.   Now I need a database that will handle graphics as well.   £25 including LBMAINT file maintenance utilities - cost more than twice as much!

Please feel free to call me about any of these items on 031-667-5938, or write to Dr. J. Miller, 28/5 Causewayside, Edinburgh Eh9 1QB. Happy Computing, whatever the machine!

MODEL IV DISASSEMBLER

I do not know whether you saw J. C. Sprott's Model IV disassembler in 80 Micro some time ago. I typed it in and have used it several times, but it has a few disadvantages. If you use it without a printer it scrolls and you do not have time to look at it, but the main trouble to my mind is that because it is in Basic you cannot disassemble programs in the lower part of the memory without moving them. If you do this the jumps and branches look odd.

I recently needed to disassemble a program which lives at $25A8 to $3160, and in the end I wrote a modified version which displays the temporary address in column one, but the true address in column two, and the branches are correct. It also stops every 22 lines when the printer is not used, and does a page feed after 60 lines when printing.

If anyone is interested I would be happy to send a listing if they will write to the address below.

On a different matter, my Epson printer, now some six or seven years old, suddenly lost the tails to all the lower-case letters. With much daring I removed the printhead, and inspection showed that there was a deposit of ink on the lower wires. I washed this off with methylated spirits, all tails are now waving again happily.

M. C. Matthews   5a, West Walks   Dorchester   Dorset   DT1 1RE
(0305) 64464

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PRESTEL

In rather a thoughtless way I have left my Prestel number in the heading of my letter sent to the Editor with my last contribution. The result was that the Editor wanted me to do a write up about Prestel. Rather an unwise request as a perusal of my previous contributions clearly shows that I can write pages of general waffle but no

technicalities.   The trouble is that after some seven years of playing
with micros I still don't know my computer elbow from . . . . ! When it
comes to communications and Prestel there are many things which always
baffled   me   and   one   of these is the difference between bauds and bps
(???). Bits per second are obvious as it is the transmission speed but
baud ?? Something to do with the variations of wave, I think. Anyway
regardless of my lack of knowledge I will try to say something about
Prestel.   How many Group members belong to it ? Because sometime ago
after my move to the Hebrides and before breaking my leg (which kept me
away from the computer for quite a while) I included my Prestel box
number in my article and invited contacts. The result - nil !

        BT calls Prestel a videotex service implying that they provide
pictures and text, which are transmitted over the telephone lines and
displayed either on a TV set or computer terminal. In fact Prestel
holds hundreds of thousands of data base pages, mainly provided by
independent specialists (Information Providers or IPs for short) which
is another way of describing people who are after your money either by
a direct charge for access to their information or by advertising. In
addition to that there are messaging and telex services.   The Prestel
services can be broadly divided into messaging, City, banking, travel,
farming, education and general information, news, views and reviews
collectively described as Focus. Prestel computers are linked in pairs
all over the country so one accesses either of two computers at all
times.

        There is also an extension to Prestel called Micronet. This is a
service purely for the computer user but, I am afraid, not for Tandy
users.   Computers catered for are BBC, Spectrum, C64, Amstrad (CP/M+
version), PET, Apple and IBM and clones.   A new group for Amstrad
PC1512 is also now forming.   Services provided by Micronet can be
broadly classified as communications, shopping, software (public domain
and commercial), technical help and the editorial section aimed at
keeping computer users up to date.

        We all know that, should we contemplate joining Prestel, we will
require additional hardware and software and we can more or less
estimate these costs.   But how much does the actual use of Prestel
cost ? There are different charges involved in this communication
business. Firstly there is your BT bill for use of telephone.

Connection charges to Prestel are allegedly made at the local rate in most of the UK but this needs checking depending on the locality in which you live. After that start the Prestel charges. These are 26.00 pa for Prestel and 40.00 pa for Micronet payable quarterly, i.e. 16.50 per quarter for both, Prestel and Micronet. If one wants to use Prestel on Mondays to Fridays between 0800 hrs and 1800hrs and on Saturday between 0800 hrs and 1300 hrs there is a charge of 6p per minute (all other times free) so, obviously, anyone using Prestel just for the hell of it should avoid these times. Then we come to page charges and these can vary from 2p up. What they really can be I have no idea as I never use charged pages, unless I get into them by mistake. The appropriate indexes display the cost of pages so one is warned in advance. On top of that annual fees may be required for use of some services such as, for example, British Library BLAISE. To use that one has to be a registered member of BLAISE at the cost of some 300.00 + pa for an individual. Bank of Scotland has me rather puzzled. They provide banking on Prestel. One can view the account at any time, make payments instead of writing cheques etc. For that service they charge a hefty fee. Why one may ask ? If the computer does things for them and they don't have to bother with clearing cheques surely users of this service should pay less then a normal user. I spoke about it to the local Bank of Scotland manager and he told me that those using Prestel for banking get better interest which is all very well if one has plenty of money but most of us (especially computer users) live on a shoe string.

Having decided to join Prestel anyone taking the first step into communications will have to get some extra hardware. Firstly RS232 capable of a split baud rate is required. Prestel operates on 75/1200 rate (I think this is called V23 standard) which means that it sends at about 120 characters a second but receives at about 7 characters - if you are lucky. There is quite a bit of work going on Prestel these days and not so long ago I was waiting for about 3 to 6 seconds to have a character echoed on the screen and my 1512 was beeping at me constantly telling me that the buffer was full. There is also limited access to Prestel in V21 (300/300) standard in London. This one provides text only and no pretty pictures. You won't get pretty pictures on TRS either whatever service you use. Tandy RS232 is capable of a split baud rate, characteristics completely ignored by TRSDOS 6 Comms program, so there is no problem there and owners of

Model 4P already have one anyway. Next there is a modem or acoustic
coupler. After a short experience with an acoustic coupler I have
bought WS3000 and, as prices of modems are coming down, a decent modem
is the best option. Modem requires the new type of telephone point to
plug into. In fact, any married member with teenage daughters should
seriously consider having a separate telephone line installed for
communications. Have you ever tried to punch the keyboard with a
chorus round you of Dad/HIM monopolising the telephone again ? So you
think you will avoid that by installing an additional BT socket in your
den and using modem with the doors locked. Ha, have you ever seen the
VDU whilst during transmission the boss or daughters keep lifting
receiver to check whether Dad/HE is still at it ? So, if you are
married etc it is either separate BT line or do it after they all have
gone to sleep.

     So now you have a computer with RS232 and a modem and you have
obtained grudging permission from the boss to start yet another craze
and all you need now is something to make it all work. You guessed it
- some software. There is plenty of it on the market, mainly for 16bit
computers and some for 8bit. The trouble is that any usual type of
communication software won't do. Your software has to be capable of
setting RS232 to 75/1200 speed and dealing with all the funny
characters sent by Prestel. Until one of our Group experts in Northern
Ireland wrote a Prestel terminal program for Model 4 there was really
nothing for us Tandy users. This program can be obtained from
Blandford Computers at a very reasonable price - 27.30 including
postage and VAT in Feb 86 - and it is an excellent program - as good as
anything that can be provided for a computer with very limited graphics
ability and no colour. What you actually get is three programs and
some samples of pages saved for viewing. There is a Prestel terminal
program, to view saved pages and a Basic program which permits
customisation of the terminal program including auto-logon. The
terminal program provides for a selective saving of pages. The manual
is very comprehensive.

     For owners of IBMs or clones there is really a plethora of
programs including Sage Chit-Chat which can be bought as one package
with a modem. I would recommend Multicom program which has great
variety of facilities and reproduces fairly faithful Prestel pages in
colour.

Anyone with the necessary hardware and software can try out Prestel and Micronet before joining. All one needs to do is to get from Freefone Prestel the number of the computer and log on by using 4444444444 (ten 4s) as identity number and 4444 (four 4s) as password. One is given then a conducted tour through certain pages and an option to leave a joining message. Or, alternatively, personnel on Freefone Prestel will advise how to join. The address of Prestel is:

Prestel, Telephone House, Temple Avenue, London.   EC4Y OHL

and one can write directly there too. In due course forms arrive, one completes them, sends them off and finally there is the notification of membership together with customer's handbook and a Prestel directory.

The notification of membership contains several items of information. Firstly there is the telephone number of the computer to be accessed. It is wise to double check this. My notification gave me the correct names of two computers but wrong telephone number. Then there is your identity number (10 figures). This number has to be entered on log on but otherwise it should be kept confidential and not disclosed even in correspondence with Prestel. After all you don't want other users to run up charges on your account - do you ? You are also allocated your initial password, normally four figures and you are advised to change this as soon as possible. Passwords can be changed at any time and should, in any case, be changed from time to time. Page 920 is used to change the passwords. You remember that the Prestel computers work in pairs - don't you ? It is possible to have different passwords for these two computers but it is not possible to change the password on both computers at the same time. Passwords can only be changed on the computer which is accessed at the time. Passwords of 0000 are discouraged and Prestel notified not so long ago that anyone using this password will be forced to change it. Finally there is also the account number consisting of nine numbers. This number appears on the quarterly accounts, must be quoted in all correspondence with Prestel and is also used as mailbox number.

So there you are all ready and eager to go and explore the exciting world of videotex. The procedure for starting varies with the type of equipment. If you went for an easy option such as a Hayes compatible, intelligent modem with Multicom program all is easy. You

just press a key and you are shortly in without any bother of entering identity numbers and passwords because Multicom has done it all for you.

If you have an intelligent modem (Hayes compatible) with a number store and you use the Blandford Computers program, you type ATD and a number in the telephone store or the actual phone number and you see the logo etc (you have customised the program for auto log-on, haven't you ?) but then you have to enter your password manually.

But your modem may require manual dialling or you may have an acoustic coupler. You must dial manually. Prestel, on connection, will send an enquiry signal. This starts with a carrier tone (very high pitched) and then the pitch changes. As soon as the carrier sound is heard the modem must be switched on-line or the hand set placed in the acoustic coupler. If the Prestel program is not configured for auto log-on Prestel will re-send the initial page asking for the identity number, followed in either case with the enquiry for the password. As typing of ten figures without an error is not an easy task for anyone attempting communications for the first time auto log-on is definitely recommended.

The log-on successfully completed the customer is welcomed, told which computer is accessed and the last time this computer was used. If there are any messages for the customer he/she is advised to press 0 for new messages.

Once in, where and how to go ? Prestel Customers Handbook and Guide to Micronet give some useful numbers and the directory gives them all. Very comprehensive directory it is and I never could find anything in it that I was looking for. One can also access from the first page A -Z guide and one can move through the series of menus to reach the desired page, or one can ask for it straight away. Prestel uses * to start a command and # to end it instead of return/enter and these two keys are used frequently. Tandy Prestel program assigned * to F3 and # to <enter>. The line feed, which is not needed for Prestel but may be required for the modem is shifted <enter>. To call a page by number one would enter *(page number)# (to change the password *920#). It is advisable to make a note of any interesting pages one may stumble on. After years of quips

about lack of keyword access Prestel has introduced keyword access as
well.   It does not work very well as database is not searched for the
keyword and access is limited to page titles only. Most of my attempts
to search by keyword finished with a message 'no such keyword - see
page . . . ' whatever it was. Sometimes a page is distorted. In such
case *00 will re-display a page without any charge in the case of
chargeable page. **   is useful to correct any mistakes in command or
to remove any annoying message from Prestel and to obtain access to the
command line.

        What does one use Prestel for ? Well, one does not use it to
find out the vacancies on motorail for one thing. I tried last year
before moving to the Hebrides but the Motorail pages at the time had
not been updated for three months. A clerk at Euston has told me that
the 'damned' machine has broken down again. What puzzles me though is
why it has not been repaired for three months ? Another thing you
cannot get on Prestel is the Australian Pools results.   Living in a
place where there are no pools' collectors - one has to rely on a
standing forecast - and where in any case pools are regarded as just
one degree less evil than murder and where Sunday papers arrive on
Tuesday late in the afternoon how can one know whether one ought to
claim ?   If anyone has discovered Australian Pools results on Prestel
would they please, please let me know the page number (pretty fast
please).   Otherwise there is a lot of information and some of it quite
good. If one lives near big centres one can shop by Prestel, there are
pages of travel, details of different countries (holiday adverts
really), Ladbroke do telebetting, insurance, assurance, etc, firms
advertise, share quotations can be viewed (at a price of course) and so
on. Prestel Index, now sent to all customers every two months together
with a magazine called Connexions (not a spelling mistake), contains
some twenty pages of four columns of subject and page numbers with
generally one line in each column for subject and page number.

        Many of us though use Prestel for contacting other users or
accessing public messaging facilities. One can leave personal messages
(MBXs) to other users by typing from Prestel page 77 their account
numbers and then, when the intended recipient is identified by name,
any text followed by #, which ends the input. One is then asked
whether to send the message or not.   Arrows keys move the cursor
through the text sideways and up and down and there is no delete. One

has to overtype any errors. No wonder there are many typos in the messages both private and public. If it takes a second or more to move the cursor one space, as it can do, it is not worth correcting errors if the message is meaningful. I use page 77 to communicate with my friend in NI and find it very useful.

Of the public message boards there are many both on Prestel and Micronet. Anyone can read public messages and post them. Those on Micronet are better than on Prestel but a lot of stuff is very juvenile or intended to pull a bird. Imagine the conversation on one of the boards - "Zeb's here", "Hallo Zeb, Dave", "Hallo Dave, Zeb" and so on. On another board "Four TAs require four hunky males . . . . ", "What's TA ?", and so on. Many messages are vulgar but some are also funny like the one I saw some time ago "Train looking for a tunnel". Micronet is doing definitely better. There are technical queries and answers, dynamic displays, celebrity chatlines etc. One can also send and receive telexes through Prestel and the charge at present is 50p to send and none to receive. Very useful facility that.

Some of the IPs provide more informations about goods and services they are hawking on their own computers. Access to such computers can be had through the Prestel Gateway service.

Well, a lot more can be said about Prestel and in fact those interested can turn to the Personal Computer World of a couple or so months ago and to an excellent article by Peter Tootill. He was much more factual about Prestel. Now the question is - is it worth it ? Well, I don't know the answer. My friend talked me into this, as he later talked me into joining Micronet and again into buying a PC1512. His enthusiasm seems to break through my old army attitude of never joining anything and never volunteering for anything. I am still a member and am likely to remain one. To start with I was accessing Prestel quite frequently but the novelty has now worn off and sometimes weeks pass without me logging on. Of the benefits of Prestel, apart from contact with my friend, there were hardly any though I must be fair and admit that I managed to get MacBraynes brochure of sailings to Harris via Prestel but things I could not find are legion.

So you have been warned. You know what to expect and as you waste money on computers anyway, you will probably join Prestel as

well. There is a lot of work going on Prestel now and we are promised
that the whole system will be modernised, improved, etc. So maybe you
should join after all. And, if you are a member my MBX is 474873644
and I would be pleased to hear from any Group members.

                    ANON. Somewhere up North.

<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

        I had a telephone call from ANON to say that he had received his
returned disk, posted Wed. p.m., received Fri. a.m.. I can not get
service like that across Birmingham.   Thank you for the above and
thanks for the call .... I hope members who are on Prestel will
now try to contact ANON.

        I welcome the information given above, it has started my insight
into Prestel and may lead into my being able to receive EMail, hope I
can make the Blandford lectures on Modems. Is there a member who is
local to me, who also has enough time to give me help and guidance to
set this up ? Before doing that, and before spending all the money
involved, it would be nice to know how many members would use the
facility. Any answers please ? Peter, do you have a copy of your
article for me please ? Are we allowed to reprint any portion ?

        ANON had also asked if I could read MS-DOS disks - his article
arrived on a CP/M (wordstar) disk. I have a Model IV, using that I
copied the files across to LS-DOS 6:3, then took the liberty of
reformating the disk in MS-DOS format and copied the files back from
LS-DOS 6:3 to the MS-DOS disk, plus a letter of thanks. ANON was
phoning to say that he had read the disk O.K.

        .... Now how much is that Prestel terminal program, plus Os.
tax ?

        I still have two disks that have not been returned, one from a
member in Wiltshire, and one from a member in Berks. (This is one I am
having problems with and may have to contact the member). All other
disks have been returned, thank you,   Ed. **.

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2 - EG400 disk drives
1 - Canon 4106 disk drive

Software:-
TRSDOS 2.3a and 2.3b
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Trakcess - disc track editor ect.
Diskaid - disc sector editor.
Database Management - simple database.
Interdictor Pilot - quite a good game.
Sargon 2 - chess.

Books:-
The Custom TRS80 and other mysteries.
Microsoft Basic Decoded and other mysteries.
TRSDOS 2.3 Decoded and other mysteries.
Machine Language Disc I/O and other mysteries.
Introduction to TRS80 Level 2 Basic and computer programming.
Intermediate Programming for the TRS80 (Model 1).
TRS-DOS and Disc Basic Reference Manual.

Please contact:- John Moseley, 10 Whirlowdale Crescent, Millhouses,
                 Sheffield. S7 2NA.   Who is open to offers.

     Would the person who phoned and spoke to my wife with reference
to my advert in the last issue of the Newsletter for 2 off EG400 disk
drives, please phone again. The member who had phoned previously and
said he would be purchasing these items, has now phoned to say that he
does not now want them. They are still for sale. Gordon Collins, Ed.

READER'S FORUM

THIS IS WHERE YOU ARE INVITED TO ASK ALL THOSE QUESTIONS THAT YOU HAVE
NEEDED ANSWERS FOR, OR TO MAKE ANY COMMENTS, OR .... ???

FROM: 50, Gardner Close, Eastern Avenue, LONDON. E11 2HN

Dear Gordon,

.... (This is not the complete letter. Ed. **)

.... re: The local group that may meet at
Northwick Park Hospital, LONDON, you could try asking Richard Marks.

        Word   processors   .... there are so many to choose from, each
in turn was studied and experimented with for quite a long time, added
to that, one has to remember all the codes and commands spontaneously,
so as to make all work at will.   The conclusion being, now I
automatically fall back on what I'm using now, COPYART, because it's so
simple to use. .... Yours, A. Nathan. (Nat)

        Nat also asked to be put in touch with anyone that uses Electric
Pencil.   Would anyone using that Word Processor, please contact Nat.
(Nat, read Sex Notes quick, also note Tandy's venue offer).   An item
that Nat supplied was a 1984 listing of TRS-80 user groups, thanks
Nat. I will see if I have time to list them in this issue, if not the
next, and ask if anyone knows if these still meet. Ed. **.

FROM: 40 Edinburgh Drive, Ickenham, Uxbridge, Middlesex. UB10 8QY
Tele: (0895) 639802

Dear Gordon,

        As a newcomer to the world of computing, I've only had a Model I
'Clone' type computer since October, I am learning fast and am writing
to you in the hope that you will either be able to put me in touch with

expert advice or, publish extracts of this letter in the Newsletter in
the hope that one of your readers can offer advice.

      (A request followed for a photocopy of the Model I Double Density
Adapter Kit, see Vol 9, Issue 1. The request and 40p has now been sent
to the member with the original for him to process, as also Mark
Austin's request for the same. Ed. **)

      Re London Model I User Group. As you enquired in the June
Newsletter. I would be interested in joining a group if it were based
to the west of London. You mentioned such a group at Northwick Park
Hospital, this is quite close to me and if such a group does exist then
I would appreciate my name and address being forwarded on to them.

      Re LDOS 5:1:4. Can anyone please advise me of a possible patch
to enable LDOS 5:1:4 to accept dates after they are due to expire later
this year ?

(Roy Soltoff in The Misosys Quarterly Vol 1, Issue iv, page 3, writes:-
There will NOT be a 5:3 release of LDOS for the Model I.   However,
before the end of the year we will be making public a set of patches to
accommodate Model I LDOS users. These patches will de-activate the
Directory file dating and extend the DATE$ dating to accept dates
through 1999. Ed. **)

      Re Advice on Databases. The main reason for my letter is that I
am looking for a DATABASE system that is capable of having at least 3
files with the ability to cross reference from one file to another. As
a member of a Cine Club which has a library of members films for
exhibition at various shows to other clubs etc., it is my
responsibility to organize these shows and keep records as to which
club that we visit has seen what films.   I need a 'Filmfile' with
Title, Maker, Duration, Gauge, Availability etc., - 10 fields - A
'Clubfile' with details of Club Name, 2 x Contact names and address,
Venue etc., - approximately 25 fields - and then a 'Showfile' which
keeps track of what films were shown to what club on what date.

      From this information I then need to be able to ask the computer
the following:-

    1 List all films, currently available, that have not been seen by this club since --/--/-- (date). (NB. Not all films are currently available.)

    2 List all the dates of shows to this club.

    3 List in alphabetical order, with dates, all films seen by this club.

    4 list, screen by screen, in reverse date order, (ie, latest show 1st) each show to this club with films in projection order.

I have listed only a brief outline of the type of Database system that I am looking for and any advice that can be offered will be greatly accepted.

Thanking you for all your help and also for such an interesting Newsletter.

Yours sincerely,   John James

(John also supplied a layout covering the above description. Would any member able to help John please contact him direct. Ed. **)

FROM: c/o, Merz & McLellan, Amberley, Killingworth,
      Newcastle upon Tyne. NE12 0RS

Dear Gordon,

Barry wrote to me again, letter dated 14/07/87. As Barry lives in Zimbabwe he would not have seen Newsletter Vol. 9, Is. 1, at that time.

Part of his letter goes: .... While reading through the copies of NATGUG Newsletter I find almost all the articles refer to the use of non-Tandy software and as such are of little use to me personally. In Zimbabwe computer hardware and software is just not available. (I know

of Commodore 64's with no monitor and single disk changing hands for
600.00, and a BBC 'B' with disk but no monitor for 1200.00.)

Barry also mentions what his current projects are.

Kindest regards,................................... Barry Thrippleton.

Barry,

Since writing in the last Newsletter I have booted VisiCalc up on
my Model 4, in Model III mode using LDOS 5:3. That version of VisiCalc
is V1.20Z.   On boot up, it shows memory capacity as being 23K. I now
no longer use this version as the Model 4 VisiCalc will use all 128k of
memory - when available - in Model 4 mode and boots up with memory
capacity of 90K.

Re LLIST'ing Basis programs. Possibly look at saving in ASCII
and then using a word processor.

Re non-Tandy software. Start off by writing to Misosys for their
catalogue, address as Vol. 8, Is. 10, Page 6.

FED is a file zapping program from Misosys, which can also be
used as a disk zapper as well, this is the best of this type of program
that I have used and comes free with LDOS 5:3.

Misosys's Mark III and Mark IV collection is very good value for
money.

You seem to have 'supply' problems, would you like to write to
me, detailing what they are and how we might overcome them ? You
mention 80 Micro, so you must have a supply for those ?

Regards, Ed.

Re: The member who askes about Superscripsit file rescue mentioned in
·Vol. 8, Iss. 11/12, P. 9, I can only point you to the 80 Micro issue
detailed. To reprint would infringe copyright. Ed. **.

FROM: 12 Seymour Road, Chippenham, Wiltshire. SN15 3NH

Dear Gordon,

May I thank you, and apologize to anybody who has been waiting
for my Windows Software for the Model 4. It has all eventually been
published, you can find it in Volume: 8 Issue: 7, with an extra bit in
Volume: 9, Issue 1. Please note that the original software was written
on the Model 1 and can be found in Volume: 6 Issue: 6 (Dec '84).

Just for the record, this year as part of a project team I have
written another windows system, but this time for MS-DOS. The windows
were to be used in the Multi-Tasking environment and so are a great
deal more complicated than the version I did for the Tandy. (Even
though I did work out some of the code on the Tandy).

Now does anybody know, or can they provide, a 68K simulator
program for CP/M to go along with the Public Domain 68K assembler
program. I have to do some 68K programming and do not happen to have a
68K system laying around to debug the coding on ? (By the way 68K is
the abbreviation for the Motorola 68000 CPU chip)

.... P. Knaggs.

Peter, Thank you for all the other articles. Peter has agreed that I
can print these over the next couple of issues. Ed. **.

STOP PRESS

Thank you Roger and Gillian (Storrs) for a very pleasant time at
your Disco and Barbecue, I was dissapointed not to have met more NATGUG
members there.

I beleive that we now have an MS-DOS library listing. More
details next issue. (Just had the phone call and this issue will be off
to the printers in two hours time. 20/07/87. Thank you, Ariella.

A BIG <<< THANK YOU >>> TO THE MEMBER WHO HAS OFFERED TO
SPONSOR SOME NATGUG ADVERTISING.

LOCAL CLUB NEWS

BOURNEMOUTH

Meets First and Third WEDNESDAY at Kinson Community Centre at: 7.30pm.
Ring Carl Rabe on (0202) 730617

CHELMSFORD

Meets first WEDNESDAY of each month at 7.30pm. Contact: Richard Creak,
Woodcote, 59D Little Baddow Road, Danbury, Chelmsford, CM3 4NT
(0245) 413725

MILTON KEYNES

Meets alternate Sundays, October to March. Contact Brian Pain on (0908)
564271

NORTH EAST LONDON

N.E.L.80; 77 Old Church Road, Chingford, LONDON. E4 6ST. Meets first
Sunday every month.

SUDBURY

Meets second Wednesday at:- 3a Gainsborough Street.   Contact: John
Kilpatrick on 0787 79504.

BLANDFORD   16th August 1987. (See Page. 22)

SWINDON WEEKEND   The next meeting is scheduled for October 16th-18th.

If your club is not mentioned above then its your fault, not ours !
For your FREE advert, write with details to:- Gordon Collins, Editor.