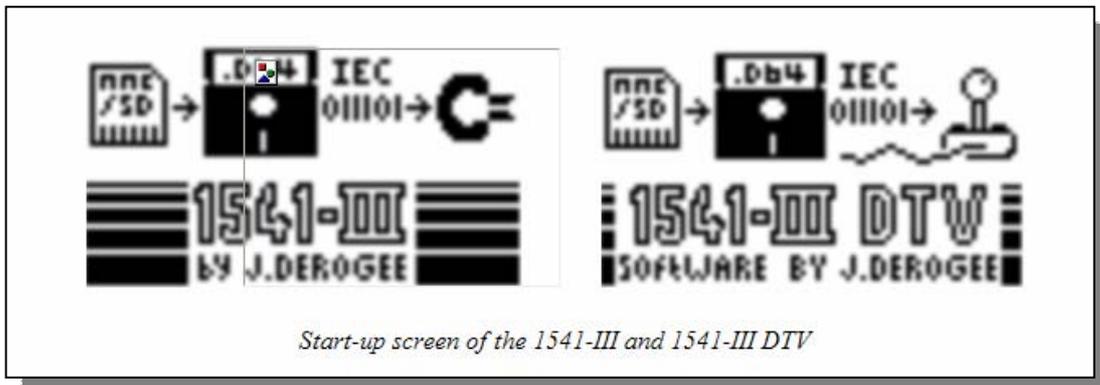


Commodore Free

Issue 13 October 2007

Free to download magazine dedicated to Commodore Computers
Available as Text Html PDF and Commodore 64 D64 disk image
www.commodorefree.com



Start-up screen of the 1541-III and 1541-III DTV



Editor

I have again been busy revising so the issue will feel a little rushed and rough (although many people claim its always that way) The weather is now in the UK. at least back to normality rain with the occasional rain and some days we get rain and wind and a bit more rain.

But then out of the blue we have a fine sunny day, it only lasts for a few hours so we have to make the most of it with everyone setting of at the same time and heading to the beach. The motorways blocked and after 3 hours you make it to a beach Full of people then spend another couple of hours looking for somewhere to sit for a picnic but in the back of your mind you thing "must set of soon to avoid the traffic" so you jump into the car speed of the the motorway and find everyone else has had the same idea and the motorway is full, couple of hours later you get back home unpack and it starts to rain for a week.

It does make you wonder why anyone would want to live in the Uk, but I suppose with the world all doomed from global warming and ready to burn up any second then anywhere on the earth could be a bad place. The thing that always cheers me up is someone coming out with a gadget or software item that proves other people wrong, a demo most would think impossible, hardware that couldn't be made or some other none producible item.

This seems to be the Theme for old Commodore systems at the moment making the impossible possible.

Finally I caught up with the new owner of 8 bit designs Charles Gutman and the inventor of the Commodore 1541-III, Also read about how the Doom clone Mood was created – Hey stop reading this it's the boring boarding bit turn the page.

Thanks Nigel
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HOW CAN I HELP COMMODORE FREE

Ok the best way to help would be "write something about Commodore" (yes for the observant I spelled the company correctly this time) _grin seriously though articles are always welcome,

WHAT ARTICLES DO YOU NEED

Well they vary contact me if you have an idea but I am looking for Tutorials – (beginners and Expert)
Experiences with Commodore
Why I love Commodore machines
Interviews – maybe you have access to a power user

Thanks Nigel
www.commodorefree.com
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NEWS

PROTOVISION NEWS SEPTEMBER 2007

ADVANCED SPACE BATTLE MUSIC COLLECTION BY ROLE

Not long ago, JSL had the idea of releasing the tunes for Advanced Space Battle by Yogibear as an official music demo. And so it happened: The collection contains all eight tunes of the game Advanced Space Battle by More.Gore and Protovision in one file, along with the single files are on the disk. The whole thing was coded by NEO and Stirf, while JSL and Shake took care of the graphics. The music collection has been released under the ROLE flag at the Primary Star 2007 party which took place from 10th to 12th August 2007 in Reusel, Netherlands.

Grab the collection at CSDb and visit the games section of the Protovision homepage for details on Advanced Space Battle.

Advanced Space Battle music collection CSDb entry:
<http://noname.c64.org/csdb/release/?id=51652>
Information on the game Advanced Space Battle:
<http://www.protovision-online.de/games/asb.htm>

AVAILABILITY OF MMC64 AND RETRO REPLAY

Both the MMC64 and Retro Replay are out of stock. The manufacturer has confirmed that there will be new editions of both, but unfortunately it is still unsure when that will happen. It could be weeks or even months. More information as soon as we receive it.

1000 ORDERS SHIPPED VIA PROTOVISION ONLINE SHOP

It is time for a little anniversary: Around one month ago, on 22nd August 2007, the Protovision Online Shop reached the magic number of 1000 shipped orders!

Software news for hardware we distribute:

NEW MMC64 PLUGINS (FAST MMC64 D64 READER AND REU PLUGIN)

At last a faster and more reliable D64 reader for MMC64 has been released. Reads a disk side in about 80 seconds instead of almost 10 minutes. The archive includes versions for the C64 and C128. The C128 version is slightly faster (5 seconds). At the moment the plugin will only work with FAT16. Get it at CSDb.

CSDb entry:
<http://noname.c64.org/csdb/release/?id=52431>

Download:
<http://greg.geekmind.org/d64read/d64read-20070903.zip>

Changelog:
<http://greg.geekmind.org/d64read/ChangeLog>

Lemon64 thread:

<http://www.lemon64.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=24397>

hannenz has released a REU Plugin for MMC64 that can dump and restore your REU contents from or to

a dump file on the SD/MMC card. Currently it works on FAT16 only. Head to the CSDb for it.

CSDb entry:

<http://noname.c64.org/csdb/release/?id=52707>

Lemon64 thread:

<http://www.lemon64.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=24440>

Please give the authors some feedback! Thanks!

NEW MMC64 DEMO: MAIN-#2 INVITE BY FAIRLIGHT

At Stream 2007, Fairlight released a Main-#2 invite. It was coded by Hollowman while Zabutom composed the music. Main-#2, coupled with the Data Airlines Festival, is going to take place from 1st to 4th November 2007 at Espace Julian in Marseille, France.

Check the party homepage at
<http://www.mainparty.net>.

You can download the invitation demo from CSDb at
<http://noname.c64.org/csdb/release/?id=53728>.

An MMC64 version is available as well.

0XPAIN 1.2 RELEASED

Oxidy/Fairlight released a new version of OXPaint: version 1.2. OXPaint (formerly known as WDSstudio) is a tool for creating C64 graphics under Windows. It supports RR-Net: There are options for transferring pictures to C64 or 1541 and a small CodeNet GUI.

New in v1.2:

The following features were added: undo, recent, line, continuous line, circle, different pens, fullscreen preview, integration with BMP2SpriteConverter. Several bugs have been fixed. Renamed to OXPaint due to change of group.

For more information and download visit the OXPaint homepage or CSDb.

OXPaint homepage: <http://www.oxidy.com/OXPaint>

CSDb entry:
<http://noname.c64.org/csdb/release/?id=52822>

<http://www.protovision-online.de>

NEWS

Tulip wants to buy Commodore back!

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2007/09/27/tulip_wants_commodore_back/print.html

Tulip sold the rights to the commodore name to Yeahronimo Media Ventures in 2004 for 22m euros

Tulip is planning to make a bid of 1 dollar per share making the company value worth 81m dollars

Commodore Super computer

> I would like to print about this item "The Commodore 64 Parallel Super-Computer" in the free to download magazine www.commodorefree.com Can you let me have any more information about the project

Hi Nigel.

Well, we are still working on it. We're finalizing the design and several prototype configurations have been tested. We have secured sixteen Commodore 64's thanks to Robert Bernardo of the Fresno Commodore Users Group, so we think we have all the hardware we'll need.

I hope that by the middle of October we'll be mostly done with the build and will use the remaining time before the VCF to finish the software.

Sellam Ismail
Computer
Festival

Vintage

SCACOM Issue 2 released

Issue number 2 dated (October 2007) of the new German language Commodore format PDF magazine SCACOM. Is available for download

Content:

rendering pictures - part 2 / feedback / interview with C16 Chris / information / background image 1541-II / interesting things / Commodore award / Tulip wants Commodore stocks back / disk cover / computer stories / Did you know? / 10 reasons / pictures

Available for download from
www.scacom.de.vu
or c64-mags.de.

CCS64 v3.4

CCS64 v3.4 - Per Håkan Sundell has released a new version of the Commodore C64 emulator. The emulator runs on Windows Pc with DirectX 9.0 and is available for (98 / ME / 2000 / XP). There has been a lot of bug fixes so more games and demos run without problems.

<http://www.computerbrains.com/ccs64/>

VICEplus v1.0

The logo for VICEplus features the word "VICE" in a blue, pixelated font, followed by "plus" in a yellow, pixelated font.

Version 1 has been released from the Vice this is based on version VICE 1.22

VICEplus is the Versatile Commodore Emulator Plus. Its most important extension over VICE is support for the C64DTV as well as a few general bug fixes and improvements.

Binaries available for:

- * Win32 (Windows 9x/ME/NT4/2K/XP/2K3/Vista)
- * MacOSX
- * MSDOS
- * BeOS
- * QNX
- * Solaris
- * Minix
- * Amiga based and derived systems

<http://viceplus.wiki.sourceforge.net/>

Vintage Computer Festival East 4.0 Video on youtube

> I'm proud to announce that the first 2 parts of the > Vintage Computer Festival East 4.0, starring CBM engineers Chuck Peddle, Bil Herd, Dave Haynie, Bob Russell, and a slew of admirers, is now up at <http://www.youtube.com>

Just type in the search for hazydave and then look for VCF East 4.0 1/4 and VCF East 4.0 2/4.

The last two parts are now up on YouTube -- 3/4 and 4/4.

Hoxs64 Updated

Hoxs64 is a Commodore 64 emulator for Windows with DirectX 9 (Oct 2006) or higher

Features

Cycle based CPU, CIA, VIC and SID.

1541 Disk drive.

Tape deck.

Full screen mode.

Configurable keyboard and joystick.

TAP PRG P00 D64 G64 FDI T64 file support.

<http://www.btinternet.com/~hoxs64/>

READERS COMMENTS



Taken from Various messages from Lord Ronin in response the the letter from Lee about Beginners guides

>>>SNIP>>>

Though that would be a good thing, for the future. Such is not the impression I gained from Lee's letter. Nor the aspect that I feel on many lists and chats.

You are the man that is ineterested in the C=. For some unknown reason. You have gained it from the attic, father, uncle, grandfather, jumble sale etc. Now what the smeg do you do with it? You have seen things on the net and the web with your newer platform. Heard about the fantastic 8 bit system, But what can you personally do with it? Turn it on and see the blue screen.

The above is the level that I am talking about. People that are entering for the first time, like I and the members of the users group. Or returning after a decade of messing with other machines. As a few of The long distance members of the users group are doing. Bypass for the moment emulation.

I understand Lee's comments. As the echo what I was saying in 93 when I joined the local group. What does this thing do? So I suggest that I start out with

that sentiment in mind, do a series of rank first time, on the KB turn it on and go from the blue screen to ... sort of articles. Written for the first timer, the absolute beginner in mind. Questions on the use of advanced basic, ML/ASSM, in-depth gear head talks on the

additives. That just drives the newbie away. As it doesn't make any sense. I know electronics from the 60s and 70s. Not the new stuff. We barely had transistors in the field. In fact we jargoned the ICs of that time as centipedes. Because of their size and the legs. Trying to explain what you do, based on your background, would be a loss. As you would need to retro it to when I last worked in the field.

Language here is the big part. When dealing with the diverse people that want to go to the C=. A word association that I give to illustrate this point is the word "disk". First thing that pops in my mind is a 33 1/3 LP or for you in the U.K. an EP record. What popped in your mind for that one word?

What I am suggesting is a series of article, that can possible be compiled as a separate disk. Just for the first timers. Reason for this is based on what Lee stated and my own experiences. On lists and especially in the #c64friends chat. You want some beginner info. Don't bother asking. People there, well they have been in the system for a couple of decades. They forget what it was like looking at that screen. Filled with wonder and excitement. They had the resources, today these are limited, and people don't know where to find them. What I think is needed is a primer for the beginning C= user. Sine that is my level of use. I offer to start it off. When it goes past me. Others can access the idea and add to it.

>>SNIP>>>

That returns me to Lee's letter. REally I am seeing more and more from that letter and my own experiences that there is a need for an absolute ground "0" introduction to the C=. I mean how many people that score up the C= have access to the users manual? Most that I have bought for re-sale are missing the manual. That is also the first thing that my local U.G. members use for programming and familiarity lessons.

Saying that I am working on an idea for a test on an example article. My hope is that I can find a way to UL it to you. If that works, the article will be ion 80c Ascii. Translated by Geos Wrong is Write. I can then make fiels of the original to send to you to pass to AI in stock/standard PET in 40c. Well it is an idea that needs help from Rod and Galynne.

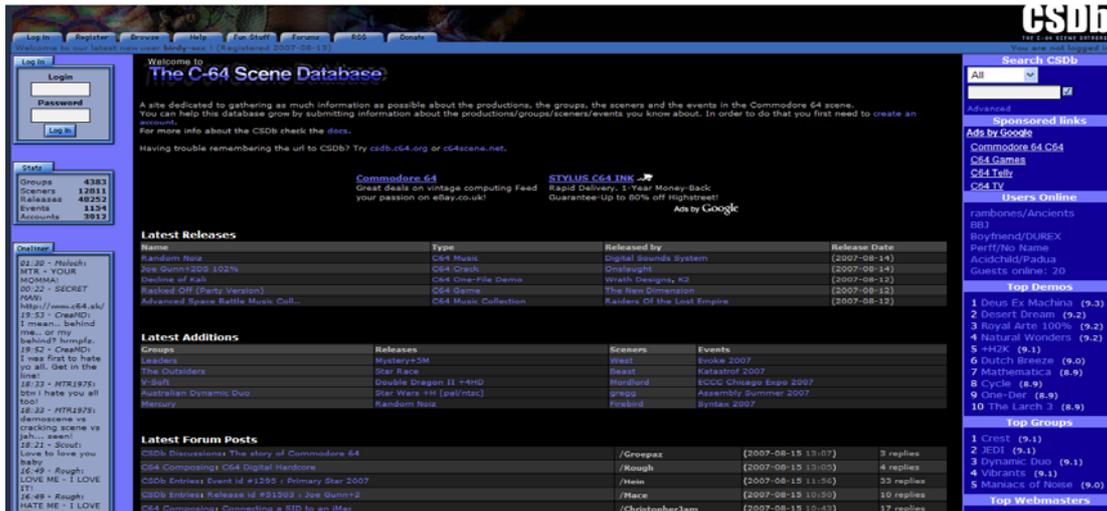
BCNU
Lord Ronin from Q-Link

Thanks to everyone who contacted me about beginners guides it does seem that many a real beginners guide I will start a guide next month for the real beginners the point of view that you received a machine from a friend and have never seen it before what can it do how does it work etc

Thanks for everyone for there comments
Regards
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Interview with Klaus Andersen Commodore Scene Database (CSDb)

By Commodore Free magazine
<http://noname.c64.org/csdb/>



Q. Please introduce yourself to our reader?

A. Hi. My name is Klaus Andersen (aka Perff), and live in Aarhus, Denmark with my girlfriend & cat. I got my first C64 in 1987, and have been coding ever since. In the early days I was rather isolated, so my only inspiration was from intros and the few demos that "accidentally" tagged along with the games I got my hands on. In 1994 I met with Ghost rider of No Name, and at The Party 4 I joined No Name and started to produce for real. Actually I didn't produce that much, but I guess most of you have heard about M.O.O.D. :) While studying Computer Science at Aarhus University (1996-2003) I got a part time job as web developer (PHP/SQL), and got some free hosting at the place I worked. I wanted to use what I've learned, and the new hosting spot for more than just our No Name website, so I began working on the idea for CSDb in spring 2001.

Q. Please tell our reader about "the Scene 64 Database" What were the original intentions of the project?

A. I wanted to make a place where as much information about the C64 scene could be gathered at one place, with heavy cross references, so it would be easy to see who had made what and which groups they were members of. Inspired by IMDb I decided to make a site where it was the users who provided the info. I got Kilroy (our webmaster in No Name at that time) on the project as my skills in designing website is very poor. I coded, he designed. (Later on he started coding as well.) Also other members of No Name helped with ideas. We named it the C64 Scene Database (CSDb).

Q. How many people maintain the project?

A. Originally we were two coders. Me and Kilroy. After a few years he left, so now I'm the only coder left. KBS and Cyberbrain have been active as

Admin's since the beginning. That's about it.

Q. Our reader may be asking why create such a database, what was the motivation behind the idea?

A. Back in those days (late 90's) I thought it was rather difficult to figure out who was who and made what. There was websites with bits and pieces of information on this, but I thought there was missing a place where it all was put together.

Q. Are all the database entries added by volunteers?

A. More or less yes. To begin with we got hold of SAL (Sceners Addy List), and used the information about sceners in that to start it up, but except that the database was more or less empty when we went online.

Q. Has the idea/project changed or evolved over the years?

A. The basic idea about the project has always been the same. To make an open database where the users maintain the info in it, and use it. It has however evolved quite a lot I guess. A lot of new features have been added over the years. It's a bit less open now than it was to begin with, as people can lock entries. Later on we got some "trusted" users who had more permissions than others to help us keep the database clean, and now we've got official moderators taking care of all that.

Q. The "open" nature of the database makes it difficult to moderate – what have been your worst experiences?

A. There have been quite a few episodes that I don't like to think back on. I guess my worst experience was one time when a user decided to delete as much as possible. When I found that out I got pissed and acted so fast that I accidentally hit the wrong button, deleting the user AND the backup of all the deleted entries. :((That system is now changed so that won't ever happen again). That caused several 100 entries of the most popular demos; groups and sceners to totally disappear from CSDb. Luckily people were

willing to add this info again. :) Then there has also been episodes with people like Wanderer and Nata/Bamu and the like, where I, rightfully I guess, was accused of inaction to solve the problem. This is why we started the moderator team to avoid similar problems in the future.

Q. Would it make sense to create a companion database for games – the companies, programmers and artists?

A. Hm. Perhaps? It's not something I plan on doing, but if anyone would do something like this, I'll be happy to cooperate with them, and create ways of sharing info and linking between the two sites.

Q. What have been your favourite additions (of any sort) to the database since it began?

A. Hm.. Don't think I have such a favourite.

Q. How much of your time does the database take up, in an average day/week/month?

A. It's not very often that there goes a day when I don't check CSDb out to see what is happening, but the time I spend on it varies very much. Some times it's just a few minutes a day. Others it's several hours. I just checked the stats. It says I've been online on CSDb for almost 2500 hours. Dividing that up over the aprox 2000 days CSDb has been online, that comes to a bit over 1 hour a day on average. :) (The top users have been online for 3350 hours! I'm only in 5th place)

Q. Would you think of adding an online emulator (like the Java JaC64 one) to the database pages, allowing people a brief look/listen to items in The database?

A. Though about it, but only briefly. I guess this requires that the files people upload would be in specific formats like D64, T64 or something, and There is no quarantine to ensure that people upload in that format. Personally I don't think it takes that much time to hit the download link, and let your OS open the file in your favourite emulator. :) (Of cause you should transfer it to the real thing for the true experience! :))

Q. How big is the database now, in terms of kilobytes of data?

A. The latest backup in txt-format is 267 MB. On top of that comes about 350 MB of screenshots /scener photos and some MB of code. Additionally there is 2.7 GB of files which people have uploaded.

Q. Have you ever thought of creating a DVD of the database?

A. The idea has crossed my mind, yes. But I think that there might be to much work in it, that could be better spent on other things. Also CSDb is online, and continuously updated, so I don't see the big use for such a DVD+ it would be outdated the moment it was made.

Q. Can you tell our reader about the use of colour, Can the colour scheme be changed by the user?

A. The colour scheme was made by Kilroy back in the early days. We decided to go with the classic blue C64-colors with a black background. The colour

Scheme can not be changed by the user. At least not yet.



Q. Has the amount of new information slowed down or is it the opposite?

A. The first years it was rather stable. After about 3,5 years something happened, and people started to add even more info almost doubling the amount of new entries per. day. This speed of new has more or less stayed the same, even though it's slowed a bit down. On average there are currently 30-40 new entries added per day. You can see the stats on <http://noname.c64.org/csdb/funstuff/entrystat.php>

Q. What can our reader do to help out with the Scene Database?

A. Sign up for an account, and start adding/updating info. :) Remember to take a look at the help/docs first. A donation would also be nice, as the hosting is no longer free. :)

Q- The Mood project was a superb effort to recreate a 3d game environment on an unexpanded Commodore 64 are there still plans to maintain this project or release the source code, also have you thought about using additional hardware like the Super cpu, or even a Commodore 128 version in 80



columns, Many people still think Doom is impossible on the 64 but this project at least gave us hope

A: Even though the project has never officially been declared dead, I doubt that I'll get around to make a full game out of it. Actually M.O.O.D started out as a demo effect for Obscene Code. As I saw it was possible to add a few monsters etc. I had a potential game. We released some previews, but after that, and proving that a 3D texture map game was possible on a plain C64, I was kind of satisfied. Even though there were plans for additional levels, and putting it all together to a game, I had a hard time finding the time and motivation for it. :(I have thought about releasing the source code for it, and I might just do that one day. But don't expect a lot of documentation or level designer tools! :) There have been suggestions to use additional hardware to make an "improved" version of M.O.O.D, but I don't want to do that, as it is against my original idea of making it for the original hardware.

Commodore Scene Database

F.A.Q. (Frequently Asked Questions)

<http://noname.c64.org/csdb/>

Where do you get the information from?

This is a 100% user based database. We get all the information we catalogue from users who, as we, see the importance of preserving as much information as possible on everything concerning the C64 Scene.

Who's responsible for this?

We cannot take responsibility for the content of this database as all information is submitted by users. But if you find something you have a problem with in the database just let us know and we will take a look at it.

Can I help?

Yes! You can help this database grow by contributing information about yourself, your group, your group's releases, parties you've been to, etc. etc.

I want to add some information. How do I do that?
To add information you first of all need a CSDb account. If you don't already have one, get one here. Then you need to log in, and from your personal userpage you can now add information.

Why do I need to register?

Because of the amount of information we get into CSDb there is no way that we can actually check if the information is correct. Therefore we have to log who enters what into the database in order to spot and kick people who is filling crap into CSDb.

I don't want to register. How can I add information?
You can't!! You can try to ask some of the people who are already registered to do it for you. We however recommend that you register no matter what. We only need your E-mail and we will NOT abuse it for anything.

I forgot my password to CSDb. What can I do?
Click here and enter the E-mail you used when signing up for CSDb. Your password will then be mailed to you.

Who gave you permission to include me in your stinkin database!? Information about who was/is a part of the scene is considered public information, so you might find yourself here if you have or had any relation to the scene.

However, personal information like real name, address, phone, E-mail, photo, etc. is of course strictly personal and you are of course in titled to remove any such, or contact the CSDb admins and we'll deal with it.

I found some wrong/missing information in the database, what to do? To update information you need a CSDb account. When you are logged in with your account you can change information by clicking the Update button at the bottom of every group/scener/release/event page.

What is this maintainer / "locked record" all about?
Anyone can maintain a record in CSDb. This means that only they can edit the information for that record.

If you want to change information in a locked record you should contact the maintainers of that record (send them a CSDb private message, or email them),

and ask them to correct the information, or add you as a maintainer for that record. If they don't answer, or reject your request you mean you are in titled to, you can contact the CSDb admins and we'll look into it, but only then.

Please note that you should only set yourself as a maintainer of records that are somehow related to you (your scener record, your group record(s), releases you are credited in etc.).

And only if you really don't want others to add or update information in those records. You should also note that when you are maintaining a record, you have the responsibility to make sure that the information is correct and full.

Someone deleted an entry. What can I do?
If you find an entry in CSDb missing, which you know should be there, and think this is a mistake - or if you by accident deletes something yourself, you can contact the admin.

We keep backups of all deletions, and can restore records that are deleted. There are some people doesn't want there scener-record to be in CSDb, or perhaps their releases, so if this is the case we will not restore the entry.

I see people posting active links in CSDb, but <a href doesn't work? All html-tags are filtered in CSDb which means that you can not write html-codes and expect them to be parsed. However if you write an url (starting with http:// or ftp://) CSDb will automatically convert this into a link.

There are also some special CSDb-tags which you can use to refer to records within CSDb. Read more about that in the Usage of CSDb section.

Project: 1541-III

<http://jderogee.tripod.com/project1541.htm>

How it all started:

I wanted some extra hardware to fit the big 'hole' inside my SX64. That hole was created by the previous owner who liked some additional buttons (reset, device selection etc.) and replaced the complete disk storage compartment for an ugly "glued on" front plate.

Also the extra hardware I would like to build must be compatible with my other CBM machines (C16 and VIC20) and the usage of .D64 files seemed like an obvious choice. Therefore an IEC based device with standard DOS commands. So no extra software or cartridges and D64 files can be found all over the internet... Strangely at that point in time this did not exist. So I decided to build it myself, from scratch.

Therefore I had to learn the IEC-bus principles and low level command structures and since these docs are rare, I had to build my own (PC-based, LPT-port, VisualBasic6.0) logic analyser first.

Also how files are stored on a MMC/SD-card, how to access these files, how to interpret .D64 files, how to interpret real IEC-bus commands etc... Fortunately the FAT16 code could be reused from another project.

Having only one or two hours each day, it took me a year to come this far. But I like the results and what it can do, I'm very proud of it and this is only the beginning.

Allmost 1.5 years after the initial start of the project, I finally managed to build the 1541-III inside my SX-64 and although it looks VERY retro (with those big switches and large red reset button), I'm pleased with the result. Mostly because it helps me to keep a tidy workspace and I can take it with me whenever I want to show the project. A happy end after all...

Project: 1541-III

This project got a lot of attention on the Commodore show Feb. 18, 2006. The prototype is build inside an old mouse joystick switchbox. It made me realize that the 1541-III project is very interesting for other commodore fans as well. Therefore the project has been transformed into an "already assembled kit".

For those who are interested read the how it all started. The prototype holds a 2 line character LCD, but during further development of this project it quickly became clear that a 2 line char LCD could not hold all the relevant info in a convenient way. Therefore the Nokia 3310 display (PCD8544, cheap, small, graphical, 84x48pixels) completely replaced the character LCD in this project. The final design changes have resulted in a version smaller and easier to construct.

What it does:

The 1541-III is a PIC microcontroller controlling an FAT16 MMC/SD card with .D64 files. It is connected to the Commodore via the standard IEC bus. The circuit as a whole behaves like a 1541 disk drive

(therefore the name 1541-III). The MMC/SD card contains D64-files (or normal .PRG files). The user can select one .D64 file with standard LOAD"\$",DEVICE commands. Once a .D64 file is selected it can be accessed like it was a real 5 1/4" floppy. The nice thing of this solution is that you can download these D64-files from internet to your MMC/SD card without the need of extra tools or cables.

Because the 1541-III doesn't need to be inserted into the expansion port or require additional software or kernel it will work on every commodore computer (and even the hacked C64 DTV) that has an IEC-bus. It has been successfully tested on the following machines: VIC 20, C64, C16 and Plus4 since the C64 is the most common 8-bit IEC machine this page will be written out of the C64 perspective.

Because the circuit is based on a PIC microcontroller and not a fancy FPGA or 65xx processor it will never act 100% the same as an 1541. This is the main reason why fastloaders will not work as on a real 1541. Still it is an affordable alternative for using .D64 files on a real commodore computer. Because things can always be better... the 1541-III is capable of upgrading its firmware (using an PC with HyperTerminal and RS232 port). AND... since the firmware (programmed in C) of the 1541-III is released as open source software, everybody can develop new features. Or otherwise download the latest version of the firmware from this website.

For developers and hackers...

The main idea behind this project is open source. Giving away the source code development on IEC based devices is encouraged. The hardware of the 1541-III is set up in such a way that it can be re-used for other applications other then the 1541-III itself. For instance the PIC has several unused pins that can be used as ADC or I/O so an oscilloscope or digital voltmeter for your C64 can be build. Or it can be the base of an IEC-based network drive so you can connect your CBM computer to a network. And instead of a disk you'd access files on your network. But (off course) this all would require some serious firmware development.

A more interesting side project that can achieve a near 100% compatibility is using the 1541-III electronics as a replacement of the real 1541-drive mechanics. Mimicking the GCR datastream and keeping the 65xx of the real 1541 the ultimate upgrade would be within reach. The 1541-III PCB is already prepared for this task but requires some extra serious firmware development (and soldering skills for making the required connections inside your 1541 drive).

Current features:

Some pictures of the information that can be shown on the 1541-III's LCD. Loading flimbo's quest

Required power supply:

The best option would be a datasette connector to interface to the cassette port, but since this connector is difficult to obtain an alternative would be drawing power from the cartridge-port, this way a connector can be made from PCB material only. And since the 1541-III is not (yet) compatible with most cartridges (final cart., power cart, etc.) this should not be a problem. For those who wish to keep the cartridge-port free they have to sacrifice a datasette in order to get the connector. Down below is an overview of option to steal power from your precious C64.

Finally, for everyone who doesn't like to draw power from their precious computer an alternative is always an additional stabilized 5V DC power supply.

1541-III : Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Some MMC/SD-cards do not function on my 1541-III

A: FAT-16 (with a 512 byte blocksize) is the only type of file system that the 1541-III can work with.

A: Subdirectories are not supported, and should not exist on the card as they may confuse the FAT-algorithms.

Q: When I try to put some files on my card windows says that a new file cannot be created on the media, but I don't have reached the 512 files maximum yet. What's wrong?

A: When you try to save files that are longer then 8.3 (8_characters_for_the_name.3_characters_for_the_extension), FAT-16 requires more space for these filenames. Meaning that you only store up to 512 files in the root directory as long as you make sure that all files are according the 8.3 format.

Q: Why can't I update the firmware using the MMC/SD-card?

A: Writing a bootloader that reliably uses the MMC/SD-card is a very complex task. First of all, you have to make sure you support all cards correctly and bug-free... if you don't, how would you update to the new firmware version if you only have non-functional MMC/SD-cards !?!? Currently it seems that all kinds of cards are supported, but that's what I thought in the first 6 months of developing the 1541-III. Untill I used a Sandisk RS-MMC card. It did not even initialise !!! It appeared after intensive research that Sandisk DID NOT, I repeat, DID NOT follow the general protocol that support to be a standard... (This still makes me mad, what's the use of standards). So after I "accepted" that Sandisk did not respect standard protocols and that there are still people who 'wish' to use their products (basically because they are a big player that overwhelms the memory card market), I decided to write a recovery routine that handles these kind of cards with an alternative initialisation sequence.

Second: the MMC/SD-card bootloader routines would take a very large amount of extra program memory space inside the micro controller.

Third: overwriting the bootloader application using the bootloader itself, is not possible, so if a bug is found inside the bootloader application you have to

reprogram the entire microcontroller using expensive programming equipment that a normal 1541-III user will not have.

By the way, never ask my opinion about Sandisk, since they tend to do all sorts dirty tricks on CompactFlash cards as well. And funny enough nobody seems to be aware of these problems; even the distributors of these cards will deny this, simply because they claim that they never heard of these problems before. And that's because normally developers use the cards in a non embedded application, using windows or UNIX drivers that are developed by other big players who ARE informed by Sandisk since they DO have the money to be connected to the "SD Card Association" (www.sdcard.org). A 'membership' to such a association would cost a lot of euros every year, just to be informed by other who wish not to follow the specs of the association (do you still get it). This makes it very very difficult for a someone who just wishes to implement MMC/SD-card support in their hobby projects.

Q: My D64 filenames seemed to be messed up, only the first few characters are visible

A: The 1541-III can only handle 8.3 filenames. Filenames that are longer then 8 characters and/or have an extension longer then 3 characters are stripped down to the 8.3 filename format. The files are not damaged and only the stripped down filename is shown. You can access these files as normal. Although not required, for clarity it is best to use only the 8.3 filename format.

Q: My contrast settings do not change when I press the darker/lighter-buttons (no MMC/SD-card placed in 1541-III), why?

A: The 1541-III uses recycled nokia 3310 displays, some display feature an automatic contrast regulation. This means that the display automatically compensates for the contrast drift due to temperature. When you attempt to change the contrast setting of such a display nothing happens. Fortunately the contrast of such a display does not need to be changed, since it is always 'perfect'.

Q: Are there any 'tricks' regarding the implementation of the save routines.

A: Basically the routines work the same as the real routines in the original 1541 and 1541-II, with a small exception... The directory entry is written to disk AFTER the complete file has been written. The real drives write to the directory entry several times. The only difference that you might experience is that if you shut-down/reset the CBM computer system before the file write has been finished, that the D64 file has less free blocks but no unclosed file in the directory entry. But shutting down the system during write is never a good idea. Therefore this solution is accepted

Q: When I load a file or directory from my 1541-III it suddenly resets.

A: When you connect a second drive to the IEC-bus (a printer or a real 1541 drive for instance) make sure that these are switched ON. During the loading process the charge on the IEC-reset line changes (briefly) to a level that triggers the sensitive 1541-III's reset circuitry. Solution is simple, turn the other devices ON or remove them from the chain.

Project: 4K-pixel beamer

The 1541-III project has evolved and a new and better display has come up. This LCD is from an old nokia telephone and can be bought new on marktplaats or eBay for a few euros. With some small modifications this display can be used as an frame inside a slide-projector. Since I did not have a slide-projector I decided to build one myself. Also I needed this project to free my mind (due to some medical problems regarding my wife and newborn son). So in order to prevent writing bugs, I decided to build a small spin-off I could use for my next presentation at the commodore meeting in Maarsen.

What it does is simple and I'm very pleased with the result. The projector projects the image of the 1541-III's display onto a wall or screen so it can be seen by more than one person. And also it draws attention to my project in a simple way...

The display that's producing the picture with it's reflective foil still in place

The beamer open. As you can see from left to right: the transformer (230V->12V), the 50W halogen lamp, the rectifier and fan. The fan is driven with 9V instead of 12 to reduce the noise, the airflow is still sufficient.

Then two sheets of thin glass to isolate the heated air, then a credit card sized fresnellens (sold as an portable unbreakable magnifying lens years), the LCD (84x48 = 4032 pixels) obtained from an old nokia phone (the reflective foil had to be removed and wires soldered directly to the LCD's controller). Then last but not least a lenses from an unused magnifying glass. The total cost was under 20 Euros. If you try to replicate this, build cardboard versions first, this works quickly and saves a lot of mathematical effort. I can assure you, working with low cost materials like these the trial and error method is much faster than the theoretical.

The splash screens of the 1541-III project now the size of a normal bedroom-door Now you can see why this project is called 4K-pixel beamer.

The main screen of the 1541-III, here you can see the : File index number/total number of files on card, name of currently selected .D64 file, after reset no file is selected therefore all actions refer to the root directory, 2 empty lines that do not really have a final definition (currently it states the processed command), a progress bar (show loading status), device-id (8 or 9), current track, current sector



Interview with Jan Derogee creator of 1541-III

<http://jderogee.tripod.com/project1541.htm>

Q - Please introduce yourself to our reader

Hello, I'm Jan Derogee. I'm an electronics engineer. The C64 was my first computer and a while ago I needed a project that I could fill my time and the hole in my second-hand C64SX with, the 1541-III was just that project.

Q - How were you introduced to computing?

As a kid I just wanted a machine that I could tinker with and build things for, but the first years i was only simple basic programs and games... lot's of. The C64 was switched on everyday and it thought me a lot...

Q - When did you first come across the Commodore Brand?

My sister's boyfriend had a C64 computer and it was an easy source for software... so I wanted a C64.

Q - Please tell our reader about the 'project 1541-iii' what does it do for the user

The 1541-III is the missing link between .D64 files and a 25 year old computer without the hassle of cables of difficult PC-tools. And because it is a hobby project it can always be better, many years of tinkering ahead... the perfect project for me and because others like it so much it encourages me to keep making it better.

Q - Was there a version 1 and 2? or is this reference to the 1541 version 1 then came a redesigned version 2?

The 1541-III is named 1541-III simply because there already where the 1541 and the 1541-II, because i wanted my project to be the next logical step in IEC drives i named it the 1541-III, by naming it 1541-III it became a name that people could easily remember, a small bonus I did not think of when I started the project, simply I never expected that anybody else wanted it...

Q - Can you talk our reader through the design process?

When I started this project I did not knew anything about the IEC-bus, but how difficult could that be? What a mistake that was. Although I still pleased with the IEC-bus concept, it is a very difficult concept when you start digging deeper, it are the details that are difficult to figure out.

Because it is a bus, it is difficult to see what device/computer is doing what, so monitoring the IEC-bus with a logic analyser is not really useful, but since good documentation is difficult to find...

Monitoring the bus is the only option. But since i did not have a logic analyser, i decided to write some software for my PC's parallel port and that should do the trick. It has helped me out a lot, but still a lot of

Questions are not answered, but I'm still learning. Then after knowing how the bus works, you still have to handle the medium itself... MMC and SD-cards, HELL it was HELL. The documentation of this is very clear and although not all information is available for

free there is info to be found. But when you start coding software that uses a card MMC or SD you start to discover that every manufacturer uses his

own variation of the MMC standard and you start wondering why the standard was invented. Scandisk was the worst. But after a while coding for all exceptions you discover that it only works if you test all situations for all sorts of cards...

So I've bought a lot and borrowed some from work and some users where very friendly in sharing there results... and finally it resulted in a stable situation where most of the cards are excepted (again I'm learning the hard way).

Well then there is the DOS, simply because the DOS commands are required for using the device. I decided I'd take a shortcut and implement only the LOAD and SAVE commands, this makes it a lot easier since you do not have to handle all the independent dos commands as long as you mimic the behaviour of a real drive a small detail that is now causing trouble, simply because my little shortcut prevents me from using the 1541-III with the Prophet cartridge, because the P64 uses low level DOS commands instead of load (regarding directory reading).

This behaviour is nothing special but it does requires a complete rewrite of all my open-close-etc command handling inside the 1541-III. Ohhhh and off course I wanted to use a nice display I first uses a 2 line character LCD, these are easy to obtain but they cannot handle a lot of characters.

So I decided to use a cheap nokia display that is very small, cheap and holds a lot off info and is completely graphical, the result is very nice and i decided to not support the char LCD anymore.

Then .D64 decoding, this was very easy. D64 files are an exact copy of the 5 1/4 disk format, so when you open up any disk drive book, you know how to decode a D64. But still there are a few details that are not described in any book but do need to be handled correctly.

And so every little detail and step is solved and learned about with the end result a 1541-III. Regarding the FAT driver, i was fortunate, I could copy it from another application (saving me a lot of work).

Q - How can our reader obtain such a device, do you sell them

First I started the project as a DIY project, but to help-out those who are not skilled technicians I

decided to sell some complete assembled units. And suddenly nobody can handle a soldering iron any more. So my first batch was sold within no time at all. Although it took me quite a while to solder all those little PCB's test them, drill, vile and glue taking up all my spare time.

Then a lot of people registered for the second batch which now more then a year later is finally being handled within the end of 2007 (if nothing comes between). This is the last batch because some components are hard to get and I'm not a company I have a life also, this project is taking up all of my spare time and that's not good... socially.

Q - I notice you used recycled nokia phone displays was this an environmental decision?

Nope, purely practical. Since using a display that is produced in such large quantities. It should be easily obtainable and cheap. An ordinary character LCD holds less characters, uses more current, is bigger, requires more wiring and is cannot display graphics. The nokia LCD beats the char LCD on all fronts. And off course because the nokia display is very small it can be glued in the case very nicely without noticing that it is an recycled old telephone display.

In short, the nokia display is perfect for this project. Ohhhh... and ehhh off course the environment was indeed a very important part in my decision <smile>

Q - You mentioned your design is 'open source' so others can make modifications and sell completed units

Correct, I designed this project for myself and I consider it as a great compliment that others are liking the project and want to use it. So if they want to build it and sell it... go ahead. But please mention my name and keep it compatible if you add some changes. By building more units that use the same firmware, bugs are detected more quicker and solving them should be easier.

I consider it an positive point that more people are using it and having fun with it. Example is pyrofer, these guys made a perfect DTV version of the 1541-III hardware. It is compatible with the 1541-III itself and therefore it uses the same software. It helped me in finding a lot of "bugs" (nasty word) and by reading the forum I've learned about a lot of detail I'd otherwise never would have thought about.

Q - Would you be upset if a commercial company started manufacture of the devices?

Only if the did not ask me first...There are a lot of users wanting the 1541-III and I could never build a unit for all of them, so I don't see what's wrong in a company building 1541-III's. My goal is building a useful device for the commodore computer.

Q - How do you feel with the other 'clone' projects Using your design guides, i guess it makes you feel Good because after all you gave the design away

Correct... it motivates me greatly. And it keeps me going regarding improving the firmware.

Q - Why did you give the design away what prompted the decision

The C64 was my first computer and a lot of good memories I have to thank this machine. During my

first presentation on the HCC Commodore Gebruikers Groep show in Maarsse, I found out that I was not the only one who wanted such a device, so the most logical things was publishing the whole design on the internet, for all who want to build it, go ahead and please... have fun with it.

Q - What is open source?

In my opinion open-source is making your source code available, so everyone can see how it works and learn from it or improve it, helps fixing bugs or alter it to suit your personal needs. I.o.w. giving it away to everyone who want to have it. I expect that people who use it and alter it will notify me in some way, or at least this is what I would do when I find something on the net and want to use it.

Q - Did the device need amending to work on other commodore machine like for example the Commodore 16 or plus 4

The vic20 has a smaller screen then the C64, so I tinkered some with the directory routines in order to make it display more nicely. Other then that it required no special coding. But mainly there are not many vic20 or c16/plus4 users using the 1541-III or at least they are not reporting bugs.

There is a small problem with the C128 in C128 mode, for some reason there are some problems during start-up. But I think it has something to do with my "shortcuts" as described earlier.

Q - Did you come across any 'design features' (rather than calling them bugs) of the IEC protocol

To be honest, there is not much documentation on the IEC bus, there is one document written by Jim Butterfield (which was considered to be the most sacred document of all, due to its clear way or writing).

The things that weren't described in that document could not be found elsewhere so the things I found out where all unknown and I guess there are some "design features" between them, but since I did not know they should not exist I do not care in finding them the hard way.

Q - What's next then is there more of these device Designs to come from yourself or are you happy with the hardware as it is

The 1541-III stays unchanged his in order to maintain 100% compatibility with the current firmware. Maybe in the far future there will be some spin-offs using the IEC routines, but I can't think of a short term application.

Q - I notice on the website that a kit is available for purchase but you are so busy that user will have to wait a long time to receive such kits due to you having little time, so your design is more a reference than a purchase item can you comment

Correct, and my spare time was also the main reason in publishing this project in such a way that people can build one themselves. So indeed it is not really a purchase item.

Q - So the project is really a labour of love and a design guide rather than a product to purchase off the shelf

Correct indeed. But I want to make sure that everyone understands that this is a very nice DIY project (for the skilled technician).

Q - Haven't you thought about approaching someone else to mass produce the design?

Yes, but I know it will never make me rich and I do not intent to make myself slave of my own hobby project...

Q - With the age of Commodore hardware I guess there will be a time when all units will fail, from a Personal perspective I wanted to hand my Commodore machines to my young son so he can experience the thrill of computing, do you think one day Commodore machines will fail and be beyond Reasonable repair

Yep, this is a fear that I keep in mind constantly, fortunately there are a lot of people coding FPGA versions of the C64, VIC20, etc. (even the AMIGA by Dennis van Weeren is a great example).

This keeps the hardware alive in some sort of way. But personally I think that the retro computing is something that will last for another 25 years tops. Most people who are retro computing now are people, who started with such a computer when they were young,

These people will get older with the same age as their machines and by the time the last C64 dies retro computing will not be as big as it is now and the hardware itself will not be required any more as there are plenty of alternatives regarding emulators on PC's or FPGA versions.

But honestly, I love the attention retro computing has now. And when I attend to a commodore meeting and I start my good old C64 and I connect my drive... I feel young again (considering I'm 33), when life was only fun and almost without problems (the only problems were finding enough empty disks).

So to be honest, I hope retro computing stays for at least another 50 years! And when my C64 dies, I guess I have to redesign the part that is broken using modern components.

I hope my answers are not too long and that they are capable of publishing.
Good luck with your article.
Regards, Jan

PS: regarding my personal status:
I was born in 1974, making me 33 years old.
I'm married and have 3 kids.
A son 4.5 years old,
a daughter 3.5 years old,

a son 1.5 years old.

You can imagine that they require a lot of time and that they do not always understand their daddies passion for "old computers". They are my main "project" and motivation in life.

They can amaze me with the simplest things, they can frighten me with a single move, they put my patience to the test without knowing it, they ask questions I'd never thought off, they drain my energy and make me fall a sleep before my head hits my pillow, then wake me before my alarm-clock does. But most off all they give me strength, a simple smile or thanks, the kiss goodnight, the hug before daddy leaves to go to work or reading from the bed-time-story-book before they go to sleep. Those are the things that make me happy.

1541-III related projects:

1541-III DTV

The 1541-III stripped down to a version perfectly suited for use INSIDE the C64-DTV. A great idea made into a real product by Pyrofer. This is a project that uses the 1541-III's source-code on a slightly different PCB in order to suit the C64DTV. For info, updates and support about this project refer to

Pyrofers website :
<http://www.pyrofersprojects.com/15413.php>

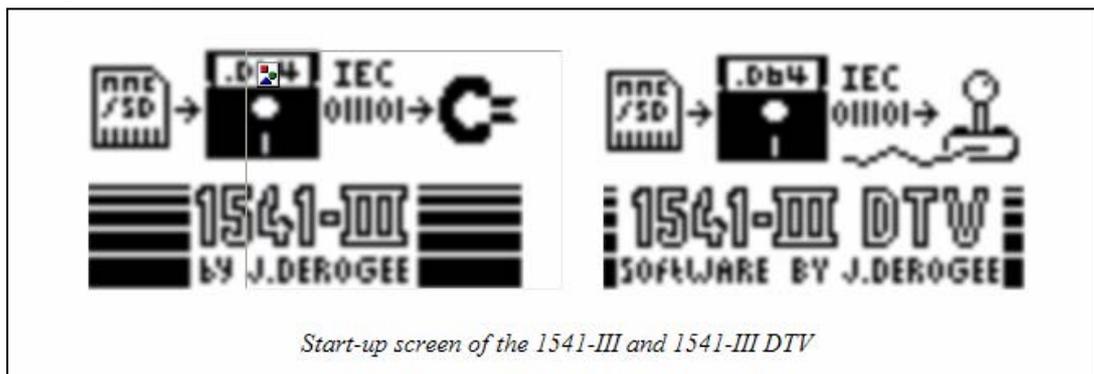
Pyrofer also has a very useful forum which is worth visiting, even if you do not have a DTV:

<http://www.pyrofersprojects.com/forum/index.php?sid=e0ce333e3c4e6494995b5c2d30868bc1>

MMC2IEC

Lars Pontoppidan has made an AVR version the 1541-III DTV. This version is has very few components and is easy to rebuild. His project's development was stimulated by the 1541-III project and is rewritten especially for the AVR microcontroller. Read all about it at his website and be amazed by this tiny PCB that will easily fit into your C64DTV. For info, updates and support about this project refer to

Lars's website :
<http://pontoppidan.info/lars/index.php?proj=mmc2iec>



8-Bit Designs Catalogue

<http://www.8bitprodserv.spaces.live.com>

BNC Splitter Cables

Here's a couple of BNC Splitter Cables for those of you that are running BNC related hardware. \$20.00 Sounds like a fair deal for BOTH of them.

C-128 VIDEO RAM UPGRADES!

Update your FLAT 128 to the FULL 64K of VIDEO RAM so you can utilize it with "MAVERICK," or other utilities that can make use of it. \$30.00 +S&H

Tandy Printer Cable

Here is a ribbon cable for the tandy brand of printers. \$10.00 EACH

Various Commodore Chips for Sale/Trade

I have a stockpile of Commodore chips for sale or trade for those that need them. Call for specific chips and prices.

1541 Drive Device Switch Installation

I also install device switches for the 1541 disk drives for those that may be in need of this service. \$20.00 EACH

Joysticks

Assorted joysticks that are all TESTED AND GUARANTEED 100% FUNCTIONAL. Most are \$5.00 EACH (Call for specifics)

Commodore REU Upgrades

Service for upgrading your 1700/1764 to the FULL 512K (1750). \$25.00 EACH

Tandy Communicator Plus Cable

Cable for connecting your Tandy's internal modem directly to the wall jack for internet access. \$10.00 EACH

S-Video Cable

S-Video Cable for use on devices that support S-Video. \$5.00 EACH.

QUAD PORT PLUS

The "QUAD PORT PLUS" is a "NEW PRODUCT" that has been added to the 8-Bit Designs line. It is a box that plugs into the serial port on the computer and gives out 4 serial ports all being simultaneously resetted by a single reset switch. Price- \$25.00

Memory Chips

Set of 8 Memory Chips for the Commodore 64/128 Lines of Computers. \$5.00 FOR SET!

128 RGB Cables

Here are the 128 RGB Cables that have become harder and harder to find in recent years! They give the 128 user the "TRUE" 80 Column display that's usually found on PC's. PRICE-\$20.00

Serial EXT. Cable

The Serial EXT. Cable is used when a user runs short on connecting a serial device. PRICE-\$15.00

HD81 EXT CABLE

The HD81 EXT Cable is useful when you need an extension to the power supply for the CMD-Hard Drive, or the Commodore 1581 Disk Drive. PRICE-\$20.00

The Universal Video Module

The Universal Video Module allows the Commodore user to make use of the "stock" A/V cables that are so ever flooding the market these days. It also has S-VIDEO capabilities and an audio input for use by someone with the software know-how. PRICE-\$30.00

+4 Edge Connector

The +4 Edge Connector is used whenever a user needs to use either a VIC, or a C-64 cassette recorder on a +4 (the +4 cassette recorders are RARE!). PRICE- \$20.00

Serial Bus Reset Switch

The Serial Bus Reset Switch is a simple but handy device that allows a user to reset the I/O Ports on the computer whenever "lockup" occurs. Nice little unit for being "cheap." PRICE-\$15.00

Serial "Y" Adapter Cable

The Serial "Y" Adapter Cable is useful when a user uses up all the serial ports and needs to connect a new device. Just a simple splitter cable for the Serial Port basically. PRICE- \$20.00

User Port Commander

The User Port Commander is a user port interface that is "backwardly" compatible with Geocable. It has many marvellous "extra" features that make it a ONE-OF-A-KIND device! PRICE- \$40.00

Serial Cables

COMMON Commodore Serial Drive/Printer Cables! If you need one, just let me know and I will get one rigged up for you on request. PRICE-\$10 (3Ft), \$15 (6 Ft), \$20 (10 Ft)

+4 Joystick Adapter

The +4 Joystick Adapter allows a +4 user to implement the use of an Atari/C-64 joystick controller on a +4 computer. PRICE-\$20.00

The Village BBS, and its History By Lord Ronin

At this moment in time. We can't welcome you to The Village "where you and your days are numbered" {G}. As it isn't up and running for the reason that the HD mech is in the hands of Maurice Randall for data recovery. Since that is taking a spell <fire ball spell would be nice> We are recreating the BBS from Scratch. Was only up in one form or another for 11 years.

Lets back up a bit on this one. A quiz I made for members of the local users group, asks the question of "What is the name of our first BBS?" Really this is a trick question. The first BBS was on a 64c with jiffydos, one 1571 and a 1581. Running the PD release of Color64.

At the most it lasted one month. Called the £ MicroSkirt. A reference to a skirt I bought for a girl in London on Carnaby <sp?> street in 1969ce. Don't ask any more about that, or the rating of this mag will go up to "R" for certain if not "N-17" {VBG}.

The next BBS ran Omni 128 and was a part of the Omni World Hub, with even a contact to the German Omni 128 board. Now that one was called the £ 2 10s 6d Vacuum Tube.

Pronounced as "Two Pound ten and six Vacuum Tube". A tribute to my recently deceased Brit Cit mother and my time in electronics tech. Ran that bugger on a 500 MB CMD HD, with a 14.4 US Robotics modem. Had a few games, as that was All there was to install.

Created the message bases for C=, Amiga, Geos, User Group and of course for the Role Playing Games crowd in the users group and through my shop. When that died in January of 2000ce, ah because the author of the prg did a split on us and left us high and not so dry. And no I never did get all I paid for in the distribution. I needed something else. Dr. Video had for a time been pushing the Centipede system. OK I DLed the version from the site, and then...

Welcome to the Village. A vastly superior system than Omni. 300 files per file area rather than 100. 1,000 line for msg over the 200. One frelling lot more games for the players. Right then, lets compare, ah around 20 on Omni and most where CG only. 105 on Centipede <10 more if I can refund a disk that was given to me by the old HubOp> 85% of them are playable with C=, Ansi and Ascii.

Hey even non C= users can change colour and use reverse video. OK I don't follow the RAW part for sounds. But I iz jist da dum ork lamer in any case.

Lets not get into the problems of bringing over the files from one system to another. OK it is easy to take the mess in Mcopy. But now things have to be catalogued in sub partitions on the hard drive. Not too big of a problem right? You don't know me and

Subdividing things into their smallest bits. {VBG} No the big problem is that in Omni in regards to The code for the up loaders comments for the file it starts off with the pound sterling symbol. Great, except that is the MCI code thingy for Centipede.

Guess who has to rename all the up loader comments from the Omni system to the Centipede system that uses the "@" symbol. Ah like 2500 files had to be

renamed. Thankfully it was done in JiffyDos. Using the @r0:newname=oldname method. Was a nice BBS, I was learning more things as I went along. Got many a fixed PAL to NTSC crack from the MHI crew and Mad Max. In fact we had around 3,542 files for downloading.

Must tell you that the regular callers were in the Empire games more than any other game section. Message bases where a direct port from the old BBS. Before the close of the BBS. We had 4 PBEM <Play By Electronic MAil> games running. Doing weekly turns. Was getting about 3-5 calls a day.

Not great, but as the last BBS in the entire county. Pretty frelling good. Had more long distance callers than had local callers. Add to that, they weren't all just members in other states and countries who were a member of the ACUG.

But in December of 2005ce. The HD stopped working. In January 2006ce Maurice Randall said he could give it a look see, after his first test. Said that one of the heads had locked in an unused space. Data should be intact.

He was going to strip out an exact same model for the heads and then data transfer to another HD. I am still waiting for that to be sent to me. Only has the BBS, my Geos, Whels, Wave, PostPrint, user group library and other such non important things. Like all the SceneWorld disk mags. Since we were/are the official SceneWorld BBS.

That brings us to today. A great guy who goes by the handle Eddie the One on the IRC, has upgraded my BootRom to the latest version. I had been using a 4.5GB mech at the time. He replaced that for me. Sadly it went out on me.

He was able to find out in some sort of verification trip. That 25% of the mech thingy had gone bad. So I am getting another one, well it takes time to ship from the east coast of the states to the west coast. He was able to save all the work that I had started upon in the recreation of the HD.

Oh what he is getting for all of this, well nothing was asked for. But he is going to be a long time member of the Anything Commodore Users Group CBM Reg. #447

When it is back in my hands and work reaches a point that I can open the board to callers. The Village

<yes it is a reference to "The Prisoner" show from the 60s> will be open again at the same number. But lets Leave that till I can offer something to the callers. Ah but will it have you may ask. As much as I can recreate from the last one. Same PBEM games in The message bases. Most of the same msg bases, as I had them on a scratch paper that I found, mind you can't find what I am looking for, just other stuff. {BG} Games will be set up again and the different menus for them created.

A few pretty pretties will be added. Most of the regular members I remember their numbers. These will be reset for them. File area is what will take the longest. As every file must be tested, and these are coming form a large collection of over 3,000 41/71 disks a few hundred 81/FD disks and a handful of about a dozen CDs. Some are from other boards that have folded.

Most come from disks that I have bought in lump sums over the years. Disks will be catalogued, UL comments written down for them, and then in some form compressed. Large ones are usually in a .D64 and then I use the pasi system to zip them. In order for a caller <we term them decker> can put that file on a 1541 disk for storage.

Long process that must be done again. But it is a labour of love and I am just a bit peculiar in the head anyway. Board will be open 24/7, well unless there is another caller on line. Only takes one at a time. Have a dedicated number for it and at this point in time for my Inet work. Runs or will run on a 1084S monitor, along with a 128Dcr that has Jiffy Dos, coupled to the SCPU with a full 16MB or Ram. Tied into a CMD HD controller with the 4.5GB mech. Plugged into a FD-2000, mixed with a 1581. Through the HD controller I will again be able to look at CDs with the CD Rom Commander. And now we will be running at least at 28.8bps with the option at the moment of going to around 33. That last part isn't stable.

Sure at this time it isn't up and will be weeks of work to make it barely presentable to the public. However it may be the last know dial up C= BBS in the states. For certain it is the last one in Oregon that I can find. Yeah we could go to telnet as well.

But that isn't at this time something that I can afford, financially or mentally. When it is ready I will be announcing the re-opening on the different lists. Theme is of course C= but also Role Playing Games. Mind you that the head SysOp is anovertalkative, exceptionally biased guy. {VBG}



BBS {Lord Ronin from Q-Link}

Flickering light from the monitor dances over his expectant face in the darkened room. His mind is full of plans and plots for this session. Fears too are seen to no-one on his face. Is anyone else on at this time? Will he make it before his opponents? Are those files up now in the file areas? He sits and waits. Yes! he almost says aloud, as the modem makes the squealing sounds that he anticipates. No busy signal this time around.

Heaven is just a few keystrokes away. The screen appears in 16 colours. He sees the familiar Shadowrun SAN [System Access Node] icon. Last time he read that a new entry screen was being made, and now he sees it, with a matrix city scape from that game. He is now asked if he wants Commodore Graphic, and that is quickly followed by a request for information on if he wants it to be 40 or 80 column. Making his selections with trembling hands. Hoping that he is able to enter the games before his opponents. He waits and at the prompt line, changes from his mundane existence into the decker known as "Neon Samurai". Handle typed in, then the usual message about just putting in his account number would be faster. Now he must carefully type in his password. A closely guarded secret. Looking around and seeing only the gold looking eyes of the cat. Watching him closely. Neon Samurai takes the last step in making his true identity known to the cyberworld. Ah, here is the message from the last caller, they call them deckers on this board. Great it is one of the Sys Ops. Vixen, the main Sys Ops girl Friday. She handles the files, and her statement is to check the news file for the recently released files. He wonders if he should look at the news first or go to the games. While he waits, he finds out that he has mail. Looking at the list, he sees that there are some form letters from the Sys Ops on prospective changes to the message bases and file areas. Nothing too important, just stuff

That is presented in case the news isn't read. Oh oh, there is a message from one of his opponents. Looking at the time and date. He worries at the content of the message. He should read it now he thinks, he only has two hours of online time. Might give him an idea for how to fight this guy in the game. Opening the mail he suddenly...

Choose your ending
<A> Phone line goes dead
 That cat jumps on the keyboard and disconnects Neon Samurai
<C> "Villy, to the dinner table you should be going, it is Passover". Comes from his mother.

OK A & B have happened to me. Me mum, well I was 45 when I started calling the BBS scene, and running my own one. She was also 400 miles away from me. But from the above you can get the idea that I spent way too much time, or not enough time, playing 1st Ed. Shadowrun as well as being on a different BBS systems. The purpose of this little drivel of mine is to present the world of the almost forgotten BBS scene.

Would you believe that there are people in the computer world of today, people that in my home town who are taking computer classes at the high school, the college and even at the Job Corp centre. Taking these classes for a career in computer work. Who never heard of a BBS? True man, I meet them in my game store. When I tell them about a BBS. They seem to think that this form of telecommunication is a new and great idea. So then what is a BBS and what does the smeager do in the first place?

The where and when of the start of a BBS is lost to me in space and time. I understand from things that I have read and heard over the years. That this grew out of the mega corps method of contacting their individual computers to the central one for data sharing. I have heard also that they worked at incredible speeds. 35bps is one of them. I can't swear to that but I can attest to seeing a setting on an old BBS for as low as 75baud.

Like many other things in the computer world. The truth is lost in myth and legend. Goes something like this in the legend, so take it with a bag of salt for accuracy. Somewhere along the line in the mid 70's. Before the Pet and Apple stuff. Back when you had to assemble the computer onto the actual circuit board. Somewhere along this time frame. Some computer electronics geek. Found a way to connect over the phone lines, at a price that was comfortable to the pocket book, a home computer modem.

Anyway that is the legend, and it grows from there to this next part. Which I can attest to having spoken to people that claim they were in on these styles of computer access over the phone lines.

At first it was just contacting the other guy. A simple term programme and a set time to call. Some of the modems had to be hand dialled to make the connection. I have seen in some old books, the type where you had to dial and then put the transceiver unit in the cradle. Shades of that show VR5 several years ago. But about all you could do was send text messages to each other. Now does that sound old school with the cell phones of today and text messaging {BG}?

Along the way a method of being able to keep these messages was found. In order that other callers could read and comment. This is how the term Electronic Bulletin Board, came to be coined. Shortened down later to just BBS, with the S standing for System. Because that is all you could do, read what was already posted on one topic and make a reply at the end of it.

Personally I have never seen one of these boards. The closest that I have come to that one is a BBS called FRPBBS <IIRC>. That one was 40c Commodore GFX, and at best 1200baud. There where 10 message bases for your topics. As I remember the initials stood for Fantasy Role Playing BBS. As that was the main and about only purpose for the board. A DM would contact the Sys Op for a game he wanted to run. Then be assigned one of the 10 areas. Each was secured with a sort of password. Making entry only to those that where registered for that game. Creating at most 10 areas for PBEM games<Play By Electronic Mail>. This has a big disadvantage.

That disadvantage was that only Commodore 40c mode PCs could access this BBS. Not that this is a big thing to me, the guy that thinks all the world should use 128s and nothing else. {EG} But it is an irritant when you can only log onto a BBS if you are running the same computer as the BBS. That is what a lot of them where for the different PC platforms at one time. Platform specific to just one system. Back to this in a bit.

Well according to the people I spoke with over the years. The ability to create different topic areas was created. Today we call these, generally speaking, by the term "message bases" Where a main topic is created or a theme of a topic, right an example is needed. GEOS on my BBS is message base area #5. Only a Sys Op can

create the main area. Sub areas, such as in this example, GeoWrite, GeoPaint, GeoPub and others. Can be created by Sys Ops or high access level <read that as trusted> callers. These have subs to them, where the average caller can start a new thread on the subject. Yeah sounds a bit complicated I know. Lets not get to the hub networking stuff.

OK that out of the way. Another reason, and to the guys I spoke with, the important of all reasons for a BBS. Getting files, OK if you think we are speaking of pirate stuff here, you are right. The guys I spoke with where copy freaks. Somewhere along the development, a way to send the data from a disk was discovered. I understand that it was at first a manual system. I mean that you had to swap disks to send or receive the data. Then press the proper key for your terminal programme. Both for sending and receiving. Today about all you need to do is make certain that your protocol is the same as the BBS. Before you start to DL or UL <DownLoad and UpLoad> files.

Games are an important part of life. They are also an important part of a BBS. I've run three different Commodore BBS systems. Been the games Sys Op for non Commodore Boards. In this area where I live, the games are more important to the callers than the file areas. Now then I don't know what was the first game on any BBS. I do know that the most popular game in the 80s was Empire. There are many versions of Empire. Some are expansions of the older ones that I have seen. Some are rewrites with more features. Others are copies of one that has a lot of new names and story. But still primarily the same engine. I may be called on this one. But my biased opinion is that games for the other BBS platforms, such as Legend of the Red Dragon, and Usurper. All draw heavily from the basic concept of Empire.

Games themselves are really a mutated form of a message base. Well when you look at the Basic programme line that is what I felt. You enter information in regards to the situation. Like replying to a message. A result happens, like an answer to your message. OK and the fact that the games and the message bases as well as the mail, generally will use the same writing editor programme to some degree. Past all of that they are fun, and are limited only by the imagination and the programming skill Of the creator. Yeah I am trying to learn how to write them myself. But that is another and longer story.

Mail as mentioned above. Now that is a growth out of the messages posted. A private e-mail to and from specific BBS users. Unseen by anyone else. Well not exactly true. I had a file that was taken from some Supreme Court <USA> ruling that basically said the Sys Op was liable for what happened on his BBS. That is why there isn't real private e-mail. Sure no one but who you sent it to can read it, Except for the Sys Op. Who is running the BBS. And yeah, I do spot checks on mine. Because of some smeaghead sexual predators that where in the area on the other boards. Anyway, what the mail programme can do is different for each BBS. I have one now that will allow quoting. The one I used previously didn't.

Now lets put this together. We have message boards. These are like mail lists on the Inet. We have mail, also like the Inet. We have online games, and again that is like the Inet. We have PBEM games, and that I can most assuredly say is like the Inet. Since I just received an invite today to play in one. We have file areas. Sort of like doing a web hunt for specific things of interest. Hmm see any similarity to the 30 some odd year old BBS concepts to the Inet? {BG}

What we don't have is pop ups. Nor are we usually infected with virus and Trojan horses or worms. Gotta

make that a bit general at this point. As I run a C= BBS. A good Sys Op will check each of the files that are uploaded by the users to his board. Before he releases them to the public.

Just in case they have these nasty things. In my case, I don't run the heretic windrone system. The files that I have for that system are old ones. That I inherited from a multiplatform users group. Who ran a Commodore BBS.

There can be adverts on a BBS. Generally these will be found in a login and the log out. Simple screens that are made by the Sys Ops. On mine, I have at the logout, the different clubs and the game store for the fact that they are the ones that sponsor the BBS. I will say that in an old magazine I read about a programme to create adverts fro the BBS, and sell the time/space for them to your local businesses.

Thankfully it doesn't work on a C= I suspect. On the heretic boards. I have seen a series of adverts done in ansi for local businesses. But a quick press of the space bar gets one through them, at least on the systems that they were using.

Well today a BBS is forgotten by many. Unknown by a greater number, and still a fantastic invention. One of my sayings for a local BBS is that you can meet at the grocery store, the guy that you just whacked out in a game. Hard to do that on the Inet.

Even the telnet BBS boards, there is something that is more personal and friendly. I used to be on some of the C= and Amiga ones in the past.

OK there is a down side to the BBS scene in the old days. A lot of them where out there. I mean that I live in a county of 36,000 population. At one time there where 15 boards. I was on most of them in some form or another. This doesn't count some of the nearby but still long distance ones. One can spend their entire day on the boards at that time. Sending and receiving files. Hey I remember reading a story about the light speed of 300baud. But even at 2400.

You can spend a lot of time grabbing files and using up disks. Even with all the inventions of Arcing, SDA ing, Lynx, Library and others of that time. Not to add the Zip and .D64 things of today. People spent an ungodly amount of time during the night on the boards. I recently spoke to a guy that did just that in his teen years. He now does that with the Inet and chat rooms.

So then what use is there for a BBS today? I can't answer that for you. Not because I am being secretive. No it is because the answer is personal just like the reason a guy put one up in the first place. Sure there are many a reason. Groups can use it as a communications thing.

Friends can play games that way over distance. People of similar interests can join together in their interests. There are thousands of reasons for starting a BBS. Which today are the same reasons for calling one. Mainly I can say it is a specific thing. A thing of very tight and alike interests.

Or call it a Special Interest Group. My board is going back online. This board is support for the members of the Anything Commodore Users Group <CBM Reg #447> A support place for those that play dice Role Playing games. <RPGs> Fans of Geos and well you get the idea. A Commodore and RPG themed board. Far away from the influence of the www and the Inet. Or as we said in the 60s, we aren't plastic or corp. Just simple, clean, and pure. Well as much as can be expected with the bias of the Sys Op. <BG>

Interview with Charles Gutman 8 bit designs

<http://www.8bitprodserv.spaces.live.com>

Q - Please introduce yourself to our reader.

A- Well my name is Charles J. Gutman and I have been in the computer/electrical/electronics field now for over 15 years! I first became acquainted with electronics in High School where they were offering their first year of Electronics classes, which I eagerly enrolled in. From there, I took the second semester class, and then transferred to another school where I enrolled in Auto Mechanics instead. Little did I know that my electronics background would come back my way again many years later. :);)



Q - Please tell our reader about 8-bit designs.

A- 8-Bit Designs is a company founded in 1993 by a guy named Michael Hunter up in Alaska, U.S.A. The reason for this, I think, was to support those interested in the older 8-Bit types of computers. He must have seen the need and the lack of support for those that were still interested in using these "older" machines. So he met that need by designing, producing, and selling these nifty products and services from his home in Alaska. (If this is incorrect, please contact me and let me know, Michael).

Q - Do you have electronics qualifications?

A - As mentioned previously in my introduction, I have 1 year of electronics "THEORY" under my belt, but what I haven't yet mentioned was that in 1995 I ran a electronics, automotive, and appliance repair shop in the back of my home until my divorce ended that in 1997 (4 years of experience). Then I was employed by a CB Shop in Arizona where we diagnosed, upgraded, repaired, and installed many types of electronics devices (mostly CB's) from radio's to tracking devices and computer video conferencing interfaces. (There's another year of experience)

Q - Can you tell our reader how you first came across the Commodore brand name?

A- Came across for the first time, or the first time I actually used one? The first time I ever seen one was back in 1981 when I saw this HUGE MAINFRAME computer sitting on this desk at a DMV (I think, it might have been a Social security office). It had clear resolution and big, hard, black keys and a green display. Little did I know what kind of computer it was, nor did I know that it would one day become a classic of ALL CLASSIC'S! Obviously we are speaking of some type of PET computer. :);):)

The first time I ever "USED" one was when my neighbour invited me over to play some video games on his "NEW COMPUTER." So I walked over and found it plugged into the back of his television. It was the first time I EVER TOUCHED A C-64 Computer! ;) A couple years later when I was in the U.S. Navy, one of my supervisors was selling his 128D for \$300.00 with ALL SUPPLIES!! Naturally I purchased it and was VERY HAPPY with its performance. This

Was the first computer that I ever ACTUALLY OWNED!!!

Q - So you purchased the company from Michael Hunter is this correct?

A- Nope. I knew who he was when I first bought a 4-IN-1 Printer Interface from him back in 2003 for my C-64 that I was running GEOS on. I also knew that he was selling the business due to his daughter being born and wanting to spend more time with his family. It wasn't until 2005 that I found out that the owner of C64DIEHARDS.COM was the "New Owner" of the 8-Bit Designs lines of products and services. He only owned it for about a year or so before he started taking "offers" in the Google Comp.Sys.CBM Group for "OWNERSHIP" of some of the individual products (Yes, unfortunately he BROKE UP THE COMPANY FROM IT'S PRODUCTS).



Well after many negotiations, and much time and deliberating we finally came to an agreement that resulted in a FIRM CONTRACT that stated that I am the SOLE OWNER OF ALL 8-BIT DESIGNS PRODUCTS, LOGO's, CONTRACTS, SERVICES, and all other assets either stated clearly or unstated, but ASSUMED. Once the contract was PAID IN

FULL (in 2005), I am now working on making new products and offering new services to the community.
> At first, the discussions were for only 3 of the many products (User Port Commander, Bus Reset Switch, and the Serial-Y Adapter Cable) that were under the 8-Bit Designs property, but in the end, I ended up with 80% of the property, and as such, I am the NEW SOLE OWNER!

Q - What is the best product you sell (in your opinion)?

A- The User Port Commander. That's actually the reason that I agreed to purchase the business in the first place was because I loved this product! It just came along with the Bus Reset Switch and the Serial-Y Adapter Cable in the "initial negotiations," but after the FINAL AGREEMENTS were reached, I was also given the +4 Joystick Adapter, the +4 Card Edge Connector, the Power Pro 250 HD Power Supplies, the Tandy Printer Cable, and The Tandy Communicator + Modem Cable. In addition to these, there are a variety of other "SPECIAL CABLES" that I have "CUSTOM MADE" for individuals requiring specific needs for their applications. So depending on what your requirements are, I can make them according to your needs.



Q - I purchased a User Port Commander from you and its a superb product! Can you enlighten our reader to the devices use?

A- Well what is is, "INITIALLY" is a printer interface that's BACKWARDLY COMPATIBLE with GEO Cable for use within GEOS/WHEELS environments. However, it's much, MUCH MORE THAN THAT! It also has a toggle switch on it that allows the user to swap between BASIC V7 128 MODE and GEOCABLE MODE, a 5 VDC TAP for allowances to connect other 5 VDC Devices to your system without having to use up your computer ports. It also has a SYSTEM RESET SWITCH for the Commodore 64 Users and a I/O RESET SWITCH for the 128 Users. Finally, it comes with it's OWN SPECIFIC DRIVERS on a disk for allowing the user to make their UPC User Specific! Overall, this is the BEST PRODUCT that I manufacture for a variety of reasons...

- #1) It's easy to make
- #2) It's affordable
- #3) It's VERY FLEXIBLE!
- #4) It has GEOS USERS in mind
- #5) and finally, I have LOTS IN STOCK!

Q - Have you had much user feedback about your Products?

A- No, but I hope to now that people are finally getting familiar with me and my products. I went to a few meetings to make myself known in hopes of establishing my reputation and recreating 8-Bit Designs under MY OWN IDENTITY!

Q - Do you have plans for more designs?

A- As a matter of fact, I currently have 3 "NEW" Products! The Universal Video Module, The Quad Port +, and the C2N16 Adapter. For information on these fabulous new products, take a look at my website. They give specific descriptions, uses, prices, and availabilities of these, and all the other products that I offer.

Q- Do you just support Commodore 8 bit machines?

A- Um, no, but I DO PREFER staying 99% COMMODORE (as these are the machines that I have come to know and love over many years).

Q - Many people want an adaptor that is a 1 box device allowing you to connect a C64 or C128 to a TFT monitor, also with the C128 operating in 80 column mode, have you thought about taking up the challenge to design such a device or modify off the shelf components to create such a device?

A- Actually, NOT SPECIFICALLY THAT DEVICE, But I have been thinking about and taking many suggestions on the possibilities of manufacturing other hardware devices. FOR example: Many people have suggested that since the source Code for Warp-Speed is now in the PD that I should take on the task of re-manufacturing it once more. So I have! I am currently 30% completed with the designing of the circuit board prototype. I hope to have that completed by the end of the year and hopefully by next summer have a bunch of BLANK PCB BOARDS sitting here awaiting the EPROM's to be programmed so we can distribute them to the public. I am also checking into the 1541 8K ROM UPGRADE FOR THE RAMBOARD for use with Maverick!

In addition, I am looking into the LCD PROJECT and the ATA/IDE HD Projects as well. So you see, there are many things that I am "looking into" at the moment, but if you tell me what it is, "EXACTLY" that you would like me to build (PLEASE BE SPECIFIC so I am clear on what it is), I would more than happy to "investigate" it's feasibility and get back with you after a full review of my options.



Q - Do you repair machines?

A- Of course! I diagnose, repair, and EVEN UPGRADE (if you supply the chips to me) the C-64, C64C, C-128, C128D,+4, and the C16 machines. I would love to get into PET repairs, but just don't have anything to go by here for references.

Q - How would our reader get in touch with you? (now is the chance to plug the website)

A- You can contact me using any one the following options:

EMAIL: shifty_butch@hotmail.com

TELNET BBS: masterskingdom.dnsalias.org

WEBSITE: <http://www.8bitprodserv.spaces.live.com>

OR>

Charles J. Gutman
9590 Acacia Ave. #3
Fontana, CA.
92335 U.S.A.

Q - I notice you prefer Cash or bank transfers why cant you accept something like pay pal?

A- I am in the "process" of establishing a bank account where I can do that. Also in the "VERY NEAR FUTURE," I will be acquiring a "pay-as-you-go" credit card where the client can just send the money to the credit card and I can ship out that way. Please keep in mind, however, that these are BOTH WORKS IN PROGRESS so there are NO GUARANTEES except for either international post office money orders, or a MoneyGram/Western Union money transfer. The problem with these methods are that they are VERY EXPENSIVE, however.

Q - Have you thought about setting up a stall so People can purchase directly of the site - or approached someone like protovision for sales of your devices?

A- Funny you ask that question as in all reality, Protovision APPROACHED ME LAST YEAR about that matter! I really don't know what has happened since as I have heard hide nor hair from them on the matter. I DID SEND them an email the other day though asking what had happened as I DO WANT some of their stuff too! I had a stand set up at the COMVEX in Las Vegas this last month, but hardly anyone came by.

A few people did and I was able to sell a few things, but overall it wasn't worth the time, trouble, cost, and labour invested in it; so I won't be going back anytime soon until I get a guarantee of SOME PROFITS so I can at least cover my costs!

Q - I am a little confused by the "The Universal Video Module" what is its purpose and what benefits would it give me over a standard video cable?

A- LOTS! It's a plastic box that offers the following Audio/Video enhancements to the user....

#1) It offers the user the opportunity to use "STANDARD A/V CABLES on the Commodore Computer (which is good as they are readily available and very low cost).

#2) It "splits" the audio out signal to give the user a "STEREO EMULATION EFFECT."

#3) It utilizes the NEVER BEFORE USED AUDIO IN PIN from the DIN PLUG making allowances for programmers to modify, create their own, or change audio on pre-created programs or self-made programs (I think that this is one of the "COOLEST" features on it)!

#4) and FINALLY, it utilizes the S-VIDEO OUT OPTION for those that want to connect to HIGH QUALITY VIDEO DEVICES such as large screen televisions, or LCD Monitors!

THE BONUS: ALL COME WITH A FREE S-VIDEO CABLE (A \$4.99 VALUE) !!!!

Q - I have printed in this issue your current Catalogue so if our reader want to purchase an item what is the procedure he needs to follow?

A- Just contact me at any one of those contact points above, and I will be more than pleased to explain anything I can to you and help you in any way I can.

Q - Forums can be quite aggressive, and I notice your name has cropped up with some less than flattering comments, does this upset you?

A- Gotta admit, at first it did, but that was when I was still "NEW" to the scene and there was a lot of "FEAR" and "UNCERTAINTY" to the stability of me and the the 8-Bit Designs continued existence. I also happen to believe that some of those "flame wars" were caused by a bit of "jealousy" towards me for not "GIVING AWAY" the work of my hands (God says in The Bible that a workman is worthy of his hire) to those in the group. So I just tell everyone the same thing, "You know where I am if you want something." So I don't pay the negative no mind anymore....

Q - Have you anything you would like to add?

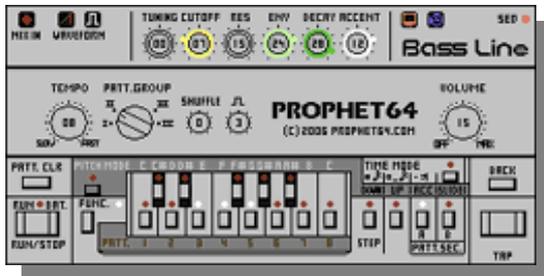
A- Well it's been an honour and a pleasure getting this invite to share with all of you today. It's even more so as the scene over there is MUCH GREATER than it is over here! So I'm much obliged. I just want to wish everyone over there a good day, many blessings, happiness through all their days, happy computing, and most of all..... LORD BLESS!

Apostle Ramswell (Charles) >8-Bit Designs

<http://www.8bitprodserv.spaces.live.com>

Prophet 64

Although the guys didn't want to give interviews to Commodore Free magazine about their product, and as yet they have refused all interviews from any magazine. I did manage to ask a few questions about Prophet 64 cartridge and so here is a brief history



about the project

Hi Nigel!

Q – Will there be more information about the project so readers can get more of a history

A - Well, the idea was to have some brief info on the 8bv site but it looks like it won't be up and running until much later this fall. To ease your curiosity until then I can give you some quick facts based on your questions:

Q – What gave you the idea to produce a cartridge with the software, also why produce such software for what would call an outdated machine?

A - Prophet64 was originally the same program as the free trial mono synthesizer, created back in 1996. 2004 the software was awakened and released publicly and after another six months two spin-off versions had seen the light of day too. With such a great response the Cartridge could be realized carrying an old vision of a C64 sequencer, bringing the whole thing into the business it is today.

One could say that the lack of decent music applications for the C64 platform prompted this project. It's weird that the C64, much remembered for its audio, never had any programs developed that targeted musicians. (Notice how the terminology used in our apps are the same as for commercial synthesizers and software as opposed to total incomprehensible tech-talk used in numerous "trackers").

The usage of this product is probably dominated by chip-musicians I guess. Fact is we had never even heard of the phenomenon until people in the genre made us aware of it.

There are no production problems. We have had two interruptions in our sales so far and they were due to delivery problems. I can't really get into more details at the moment; I hope the site will provide more answers in time. Best regards
/Robin Eriksson, 8bit ventures

Information about Prophet64 taken Directly from the Prophet 64 Website

Modern music applications for your 80s computer!

Prophet64 is a suite of very user friendly music applications for the Commodore 64 platform. Designed to hook up to modern MIDI equipment with either DIN-sync or third party MIDI interfaces, it makes your old computer become a highly useful music tool.

The software is distributed on a hardware cartridge that plugs right into the back of your C64. No disk or tape loading, just plug and play!

The Cartridge contains the whole suite of applications.

You can read more about them in the links on the right side bar.

With an array of music software that mimics modern and classic sequencing devices through versatile user interfaces, Prophet64 opens the door for everyone who wishes to explore the world of the legendary audio circuit (the "SID") in the Commodore computers.

Instead of collecting dust in the closet, you can put your C64 at work right beside the synthesizer rig in your studio today! Add some in-fashion bleeps and blops to your latest track, an extra bass flavour, an additional lead sound or why not an 8-bar break with Rob Hubbard drums?



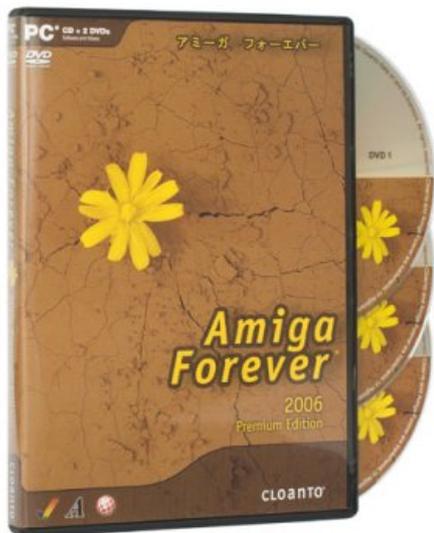
The possibilities are endless.

<http://www.prophet64.com/>

Amiga Forever Premium Edition CD Cloanto

www.amigaforever.com

Amiga users are probably aware of the name "Cloanto" as being the creators of the excellent paint package for the Amiga called "Personal Paint" claiming amongst other benefits support for the now



standard "Amiga Datatypes"

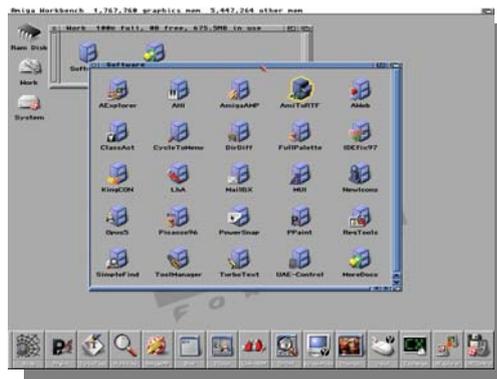
Cloanto have been long time Amiga software developers since 1987 and released the first version of Amiga Forever emulation software in 1997 to the amazement of many users. Many thought emulating the Amiga to be impossible, but as with everything time and machine power moves on quickly to a point where the emulation is now almost flawless. So what then is Amiga forever you may ask yourselves and what is emulation software? Amiga forever is an Emulator or a software package designed to act as a real Amiga running on an IBM PC, the software will run nearly all 68k Amiga software including Amiga Workbench and most games and demos. Cloanto are unique in offering a full and legal version of the Amiga Boot rom and Workbench disk files.

The boot ROMs available within the package range from version 1.3 to version 3.0 and workbench versions 1.3 to version 3.0 all licensed from the relevant owners of the files and legal to use. The Premium edition is packaged in a neat DVD style box containing a CD rom of the emulation software boot rom and workbench files and 2 DVD's containing videos that are relevant to the history of the Amiga computer. The DVD is copy free and region free but Recorded in NTSC format, Pal countries should have no problem playing the files as 99.9% of DVD and Televisions can cope with both PAL and NTSC formats on the fly. The disk is available from Cloanto

directly or various Amiga retailers, I found www.amigakit.com selling the premium edition for £33.99 + Post GBP various versions are available with a basic download option of the emulator and workbench files from Cloanto's website www.amigaforever.com for a reduced price, there are other download options available, but check the website for full details.

REVIEW

Taking the first disk out of the case and inserting into your PC switching on the machine will boot into a customised version of Linux then start the emulation and boot into a customised version of Amiga workbench version 3.0. I did have some problems with this version not recognising my USB keyboard and mouse.



Note the Toolbar at the foot of the screen with quick links to various applications and utilities, all ready and preconfigured. .

Booting your pc

Start your pc as normal and then insert the Amiga forever disk the pc should then Auto start the disk bringing you to the title menu,



you can now select the version of Workbench you wish to start although the options from here are only workbench 3 or workbench 1.3, also possible is booting one of the demos listed on the tabs at the top of the screen

The software is built around UAE and Win Fellow (Amiga emulation software) However the real power of the software lies in the fact you can install the emulation software then run it from the PC without using the disk, this improves speed and performance of the emulation software. Another bonus of installing the software is that you could save out customised versions of your Amiga setup for troublesome games and demos or just favourite configurations.

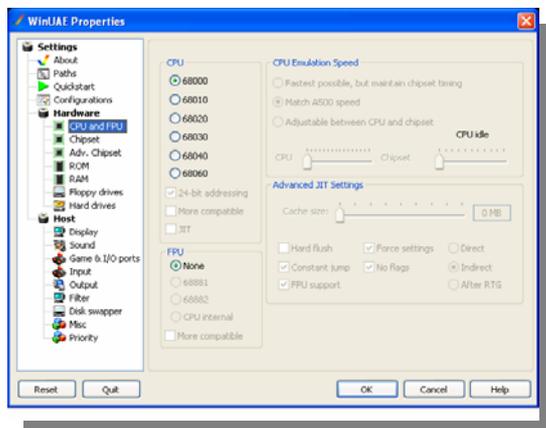
UAE and Winfellow have been available for a number of years and are indeed still available as a free download from the respective websites, HOWEVER the Amiga kick-start and workbench are copyrighted

and so are not distributed with the download, unlike the Cloanto's Amiga Forever where everything is neatly packaged and in one box ready to use. The emulation software has been developed over many years and improved; the Amiga hardware has changed over the years, unlike say emulation of a Commodore 64 where the basic hardware remained static for a number of years and let's face it isn't going to change any time soon. Many Amiga programmes for example require certain versions of workbench and custom chips to be in the hardware before the software can run, also the amount of memory and even the peripherals attached could cause the application to fail. This is fully handled through the emulation software.

For anyone who has used Emulation software the basic's are the same as something like WinVice set the options then load a disk image, Of course for running applications as opposed to games and demos, we have a full workbench system customised by someone who has actually used an Amiga, various handy tool bars and must have applications are already installed and ready to use to no need to hunt around for PD software to get the system running. One thing you will need is the disk creating as disk images or ADF files, a quick goggle will show this is easily possible.

Once my system was installed and ready to run I was surprised to find I could access all my Windows network mapped drives from the Amiga environment, this meant I could create documents then save them over the network onto my windows system. To any one used to multi-format system this is a real bonus especially when you aren't expecting it to work

Cloanto package even included the "Picasso" software for high end graphics cards to obtain the full benefit from your attached PC screen, I tried the software on a spare laptop and it worked without



problems obtaining very high resolution and colour depth that even my Amiga 4000 would be jealous of also with the software installed and running under windows I had no problems with USB keyboards and mice unlike booting from the CD rom and running the "live version". As way of another bonus the package contains a customised version of Directory opus version 5, with almost the whole back catalogue of cloanto's software thrown in for free this is a very comprehensive package I look forward to the next version to see what could possibly be improved, but do hope USB emulation has been added to the customised Linux version To my knowledge only Coanto has the rights to sell workbench in this way through emulation software Even things like the processor and whether you have a 68060 or a basic

68000 processor's so we can cover almost any machine from and Amiga 500 to an Amiga 4000 the options are a little overwhelming at first, but the menu system is easy to use.

Premium edition DVD contents

The launch of Amiga 17 mins

Sampling sounds
Multi-tasking
Impressive launch demo's
Emulating and IBM pc and running lotus 123
Boing ball demo
Andy Warhol and Debora Harry creating a portrait (the interviewer says to Andy what machines have you used before Andy says None except this one the crowd gasps")

Jay Miner peach 49 mins metacom 1989

Jay introduces various commercials
Video clips from 1975 of the 2600 video system
The Atari 400/800
About moving to work on pacemaker systems
The start of the Amiga
Jay says he wanted to work on a machine that could play flight simulators
How the design was purchased under Ataris nose by commodore

Jay miner interview 9mins

The birth of the Amiga
Computers in society
Working for a pacemaker company

The history of the Amiga
Description of Amiga
The story of the making of Amiga
Staff layoffs

Amiga Scrapbooks (various Amiga photos of staff)

Inside Commodore

Guided tour behind doors
Tour of the Amiga Assembly plant and packing rooms
Meeting some of the staff from the "back offices"

Death bed vigal

The last days of commodore
AAA board shown to be real
Last party and layoffs
Chicken lips song
History of the Speedbumps
The Amiga Unix software
The hilarious story's of property passes to get items in and out of the company (one staff member had a pass for an electronic item very funny but sadly showing a business failing)

David Hyne interview

How he started working at commodore on the Plus 4 and 128 How he bought an Amiga 500
Made the 3000+ with DSP and new graphics chip
Worked on the ECS graphics system
Questions where is Amiga going

The Feature list of the package is vast here are just some of the features (taken directly from the website)

Both the Online Edition and the other versions of Amiga Forever contain the following items:

Preinstalled Workbench 1.3 environment (for compatibility with older games and other software) and Workbench 3.X environment (for productivity,

internet access, etc.), running on top of a powerful JIT-enabled Amiga hardware emulation which also supports Amiga custom chips, RTG, SCSI, TCP/IP, AHI, up to 512 MB of Zorro III RAM, virtual memory, MIDI, native x86 code, etc. More...

Preinstalled games, and support for downloaded games

Preinstalled demos, including more than 10 original "First Demos" by Amiga, and support for downloaded demos

A multitude of carefully-preinstalled quality Amiga applications, which include the AWeb browser (great for cross-browser testing), TCP/IP support tools, Personal Paint 7.1c (paint, animation and image processing software, includes GIF/LZW license), special version of CacheCDFS CD file system, AmigaAMP media player, DirDiff (file synchronization and replication software), AmiToRTF (to convert texts from Amiga to Windows formats), MailBX (to convert Amiga mail archives to Microsoft Mail, Outlook Express and Exchange Server), drag-and-drop LhA, print spooler, Directory Opus 5.5 (courtesy of GPSoftware), TurboText (exclusive latest version with bug fixes), MUI (shareware version), KingCON, FreeWheel, PowerSnap, ToolManager, ReqTools, etc. Compatibility with "Amiga OS 3.5"+ icons, NewIcons and MagicWB icons

New and fully-licensed Picasso96 RTG software (not a shareware version), maps Amiga graphics requests directly to fast x86 calls and powerful low-level DirectX functions (Windows version of emulation)

Amiga Narrator and Translator speech synthesis components (made available for distribution with the Amiga operating system for the first time since 1991, when Commodore-Amiga's licenses expired)

Latest versions of WinUAE and WinFellow tested and supported by Cloanto (non-Windows versions included and/or available too)

Launcher window with one-click controls

Amiga Files software and folder to support future Windows systems

Software Director for easy and privacy-conscious emulation news and updates

And just in case some inaccuracy came into my review here is some information lifted from the website

ROM and Operating System Files in Amiga Forever TOPIC

Q: Does Amiga Forever include all ROM and operating system files ever released?

A: Amiga Forever includes ROM and system disks between version 1.0 and 3.1, including 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.04, 2.05, 2.1, 3.0 and 3.1. Beta versions (e.g. "1.4", which was then released as 2.0), and versions released only for a specific type of hardware (e.g. the relatively buggy 2.00 which worked only on the A3000, or a special version of the 1.3 operating system to support the A2024 monitor) are not included. These items have been licensed to Cloanto by the successors of Amiga Corporation (formerly Hi-Toro) and include newer developments by Cloanto and by other third parties.

Amiga Forever includes a preinstalled Workbench 3.X environment (newer than 3.1), and includes or supports operating systems not originally released by Commodore (e.g. AROS), as well as hardware diagnostic systems and operating systems not originally meant to run on Amiga hardware. For space reasons, the Online Edition of Amiga Forever includes only version 1.3 (bootable floppy disk image) and 3.X (preinstalled Workbench plus application software), which are in general sufficient to run both old and new software. The Amiga Forever Plus Edition contains additional versions of the ROM and operating system files.

The licenses for certain third-party files which were originally bundled with the Amiga operating system, such as the Basic programming language and the speech synthesis software were not renewed by the successors of Amiga Corporation (formerly Hi-Toro), and are therefore in part missing in disks released after a certain date (e.g. in version 1.3 of the Amiga operating system as shipped with the Amiga 3000 in 1991). The licenses for more recent items, such as some fonts used in newer versions of the operating system, also expired a few years later. Nevertheless, Cloanto was able to license some of these original components, such as the speech synthesis software, directly from the copyright holders, and to include them in Amiga Forever.

Cloanto placed a high priority on preserving and respecting the original look, feel and compatibility of version 3.1 of the operating system as it was released before its development team ceased maintenance of the operating system. Nevertheless, Amiga Forever also includes internally developed or fully licensed additional preinstalled components, such as system patches, GlowIcons, TCP/IP, RTG, etc. Amiga Forever contains instructions on how to disable such add-ons without affecting functionality, if so desired.

Last note

I tried Amithlon and had a bad feeling about Amiga forever, but to the less technical users this is an excellent package because the setup and configuration is already done, if you run the emulation direct from CD you have the bonus of changing settings without them being saved so you can experiment with full freedom, knowing you can go back to the default setting with just a reboot, for the more demanding user installing there package from the disk give almost infinite compatibility with the real machine. Of course the real question is can you tell its emulating the machine and to most users they wouldn't know. So you now have your Amiga Laptop, customise the case with a fancy logo and pretend this is a new machine from Commodore

Although on the Cd there is no direct to run the software within a linux or Mac os environment the configuration and workbench files can be utilised with the Uae but you will need to go to the Uea website to manually download the application I liked the package very much and I have heard that a new version is in the works, I am sure the USB compatibility problem from booting up the Cd will be addressed and look forward to the extra futures (although nothing has been disclosed at this time)

Review Commodore Free Magazine

HexFiles part 8 By Jason Kelk

<http://www.oldschool-gaming.com>

Okay, so last issue we were looking at \$D018 and how it controls where our screen and character set data are held in the C64's memory and most of you (I hope) will have noticed that the highest place I said we could put a font was \$3800 and the highest place for a screen \$3C00, yes? Similarly, because the sprite data pointers can only have a maximum value of \$FF and each sprite is \$40 bytes long, the last sprite is at \$3FC0. This is because, the VIC-II chip arranges the memory into four chunks of 16K, on powerup, the C64 is pointing to video bank 0, which runs from \$0000 to \$3FFF, and at the screen at \$0400 and a font at \$1000. This, incidentally, is why our examples have all had music sitting at \$1000, the VIC-II can't "see" this RAM under there for sprites, characters or screen data because a copy of the ROM character set is there, \$1000 to \$17FF for the upper case font and \$1800 to \$2000 for the lower.

The easiest way to imagine it is with two pieces of paper. The first has a piece of code written on it and is placed on a desk whilst the second has a picture drawn on it and is held a small distance above the first. We, pretending to be the processor here, can look at the first piece of paper by putting our head underneath the second, but the VIC-II looks straight down and from this angle the first is totally obscured. This technique is called "shadowing" and, although it appears to be adding a limitation to how we use the memory, it actually makes life easier for us in that we can still actually use the memory in some way rather than it being locked off for the characters. We'll come across more examples of shadowing in a different form in a later article.

But back to our initial line of thought, how can we use one of the other three blocks of 16K for our graphics? After all, if we use a bitmap picture (more on those a little later) we need about 9K of space for it, there's only a limited space in bank 0, what with \$0000 to \$0400 and \$1000 to \$2000 being unavailable to us. This is where \$DD00 comes in to play. One of \$DD00's jobs is handling this very problem, the lowest two bits are used to point VIC-II at the correct place. If we just put a value of \$03 into \$DD00 nothing happens because, oddly, \$DD00 actually refers to the first bank as \$03 and the last as \$00. So if we want to use bank 1 (\$4000 to \$7FFF) we can do so by setting \$DD00 with \$02.

Changing into bank 1 is the equivalent of adding \$4000 (16384) to all of our character, screen and sprite data pointers. If we just change into bank 1 with no other changes made to the VIC-II we end up looking at a screen at \$4400 and a font at \$5000. Since there is no shadow of the ROM font in bank 1 that means we just see a mess. And more importantly, we have the entire 16K to ourselves! And similar rules apply to banks 2 and 3, except that bank 2 starts at \$8000 and has a second copy of the ROM font at \$9000 to \$9FFF and bank 3 starts at \$C000 and has the video chip sitting at \$D000 to \$E000. We can write to this memory, but it requires a little trickery and, since using it is a lot more complex, I won't cover this until later. But bank 1 is the most commonly used bank for graphics since it's all ours with absolutely no strings attached by the C64, so for

now we're going to frolic in this new pasture and not worry about the rest.

Now we've got a play space, time to introduce something new to fill it with in the form of bitmaps. Remember I mentioned them last time as well? Right, first off, there are a number of different editors out there, all with different memory layouts. During the planning for these articles, there was some discussion about which would be best to use for our purposes and we've decided to use the format set down by the editor Vidcom. In general a bitmap is split into two parts, the actual picture (which is 8,000 bytes of data, since 40 characters across times 25 down times 8 bytes a character comes to 8,000) and we're only allowed to put this in either \$4000 or \$6000 in this bank (and the same rule applies to the other banks, the bitmap can only start at a multiple of \$2000).

The second part is the colours, with a monocolour bitmap we get two colours every 8x8 pixel square of the picture and these can be represented by the two halves of a byte; \$F4 for example will be light grey (\$F) and purple (\$4). This means we need 1,000 bytes of colour for a monocolour bitmap. Multicolour is different, we get the same system for defining two of the colours, but the \$D800 colour map is also available as is the background colour, since multicolour bitmaps work in the same way as multicolour characters with two bits working together to make a colour value of \$0 to \$3. This means we need a total 2,000 bytes of colour data, one for the screen and the other for \$D800. Vidcom arranges its files like this:

\$5800 to \$5BE7 - colour data for \$D800 onwards.
\$5C00 to \$5FE7 - colour data for wherever the screen is.
\$6000 to \$7F3F - bitmap.

We're going to take advantage of this. Because any of the sixteen screens in bank 1 can be used as our screen we're not going to bother copying the data from \$5C00 to \$5FE7, oh no. We're going to tell the VIC-II to look there for its screen, and by a coincidence... oh look, here's our colour data! Now, if you download and unzip the sample data there's an example picture included called tropique.prg and a piece of source that I want you to open called pic_show.asm. It should look like this:

```
.incbin tropique.prg

*= $0900

; Black border and screen colours
lda #$00
sta $d020
sta $d021

; Set VIC-II to bank 1
lda #$02
sta $dd00

; Turn on bitmap mode
lda #$3b
sta $d011
```

```
; Turn on multicolour mode
      lda #$18
      sta $d016

; Point the screen at $5C00 and the font at $6000
      lda #$78
      sta $d018

; Copy from $5800-$5BE7 to $D800-$dBE7
copycol   ldx #$00
          lda $5800,x
          sta $d800,x
          lda $5900,x
          sta $d900,x
          lda $5a00,x
          sta $da00,x
          lda $5ae8,x
          sta $dae8,x
          inx
          bne copycol

; Stop but don't exit to BASIC
loop      jmp loop
```

Start it up and, if it's all typed up correctly, a nice picture of a girl and some stone columns should appear! There's also a file in the archive called pic_demo.asm and, as the filename might suggest, this is a demo based on the previous code we've looked at and the picture viewer. This source isn't documented, but the majority of it is code we've already covered quite extensively so you should feel pretty comfortable with it - but there have been a few alterations made so they need a little explanation; one change makes the scroller faster and therefore more readable, the other extends the length of the message itself so it's no longer limited to 256 bytes.

Lets look at how the scroll is sped up first; open the pic_show.asm source and look for the label scrloop (it should be line 127) and there is an LDY #\$00 just before it; since the Y register isn't used during the scroll movement routine, it's being put to service as a counter to call that code more than once per frame. If you page onwards a little to the label dontmove, there's this;

```
iny
cpy #$03
bne scrloop
```

And that's what speeds the scroller up; the routine is called, Y gets incremented and we go back to scrloop until Y reaches 3. Changing the value can speed up or slow down the scroller accordingly, so it's worth having a little play to see how it looks, on average moving two to three pixels a frame tends to be readable when the text is the size we're using here.

The other modification is a little more involved and before I start explaining how it works a little disclaimer is probably in order; the technique below is called "self modifying code" and is, generally speaking, considered bad practise by just about every programming course, teacher and book. However, it's very effective and faster to use most of the time and, since I use it personally in preference to the more fiddly "proper" methods, it's covered here.

Previously, we've been using a label called messcount to indicate where we are in the text, that has been totally removed for this code. Instead we

have this routine after the loop to shift all the characters to the left:

```
messreadlda message
      bne textok
      jsr reset
      jmp messread

textok      sta $5c27

          inc messread+$01
          bne nohibyte
          inc messread+$02
```

So, looking at this new routine it reads from the label message (which is where the scroll text is stored, at \$2800 in memory for this code), checks it's not a value of \$00 and puts the new character onto the screen. If the accumulator does contain \$00, a subroutine called reset is called and the code jumps back to the LDA again to get another byte. Now, some of you are thinking "hang on, that just reads the same byte over and over again" and on it's own you'd be right, the two INC commands after textok are what nudges the LDA on so it reads the text.

How does that work, then? Well, if we look into the memory where the LDA message is stored, it will look like this; \$AD, \$00, \$28. The first byte \$AD is the actual LDA command, whilst the second and third bytes are the address, in this case pointing to \$2800 since the C64 insists on storing the lower byte of the address first. The two INCs change the address, the first one changes the lower byte (the one that starts as \$00 in this case) upwards so the LDA itself steps through memory a byte at a time, whilst the second INC only takes effect at the point when that byte reaches \$00 again; it bumps the higher byte of the address up so the scroller can go from \$28ff to \$2900. Finally, we need a little look at reset (near the end of the code) as well:

```
reset      lda #message
          sta messread+$02
          rts
```

This subroutine simply resets messread so that it points to the first byte of the text, the first LDA/STA pair sets the lower byte of the address, the second LDA/STA sets the higher, so the code at messread gets changed to \$AD, \$00, \$28 regardless of what it was previously. This subroutine is also called a little before the CLI in the setup code to make sure that the program behaves itself if someone stops and restarts it and without that call in the setup the text would continue where it left off!

Have fun playing with the code, changing the speed of the scroller and so forth and generally seeing how things work. For the next installment we're going to be starting a whole new project. As usual, if you have any questions to ask then contact me and I'll see what I can do but, for now, goodbye!

The source code for the routines above can be downloaded here www.oldschool-gaming.com/files/c64/hex_files/part_8_files.zip>downloaded here for easier reference.

Commodore Free would like to thank Jason for permitting the reprinting of the article

Could Sid chart?

We have, all heard the current charts and whatever you geographical location, in my opinion most of the music is dire. If this is due to my age or just that music has become stale I am unsure. Apart from the usual remixes of old classics, and the usual drum n base remixes, I find little that excites me or begs me to "buy it now".

In my frustration I went back to an MP3 player filled with Sid tunes, I know I am not alone; I know many Commodore users have Mp3 players with SID tunes. I then decided to put the tunes through a little reverb to fill them out, and then split the signal to a pseudo stereo image using external processing devices the results were great, fat stereo SID tunes booming down my headphones.

I listened to something recently on the radio I forget the name now, but it was little more than bleeps with some guy reciting a poem over the top I think the "tune was" thou shall kill something along those lines.

I then went back to my recording and decided to take a couple of SID tunes add a real drum section and a little reverb and filtering and compression to add punch, I then utilised a home made kludge to make the whole sound stereo and save the file back to my MP3 player. Now I finally have something to listen to, fat base a heavy drums, Sid purists will now be gasping in horror but I am on a project so please excuse me.

I don't want to take 1 SID tune on its own and say this is the best because I reworked a couple of tunes and hey they all sound great to begin with. Someone is going to get upset here and say the originals were far better, I agree the SID sound is good but wanted to appeal to a more open market. Maybe the Commodore 64 and sid profile would be improved if a "real tune" actually made its way into the charts

I am not in the process of ripping someone off for a copyrighted sid tune I just wanted to make the point that with a little work many of these older and indeed new sounding tunes can be "radio prefect" certainly the ones I have been playing with would easily be welcomed in the local club. Sadly this is why I am not offering the files I worked on for download, because they were a personal test and I don't want to be at the end of a copyright war with some demo coder.

Of course the Sid tune would need to be original so no one would get upset maybe even donate the money made to charity as a gesture of good faith from the community.

I have in the past listened to many SID tunes on my Hi fi as I am sure most of us have done, and I thought this would sound great in a club,

So maybe a challenge here then for someone to take a SID tune (you own the copyright for or even better a brand new tune) and with the minimal amount of External processing have the tune enter the charts. There are various hardware items to use 2 sids so stereo is possible from a basic machine.

Hasn't it all been done before? well I remember a group had so it was claimed just 2 Commodore Amiga 500's chained together over the serial port to keep the timing of the machines, and they made a

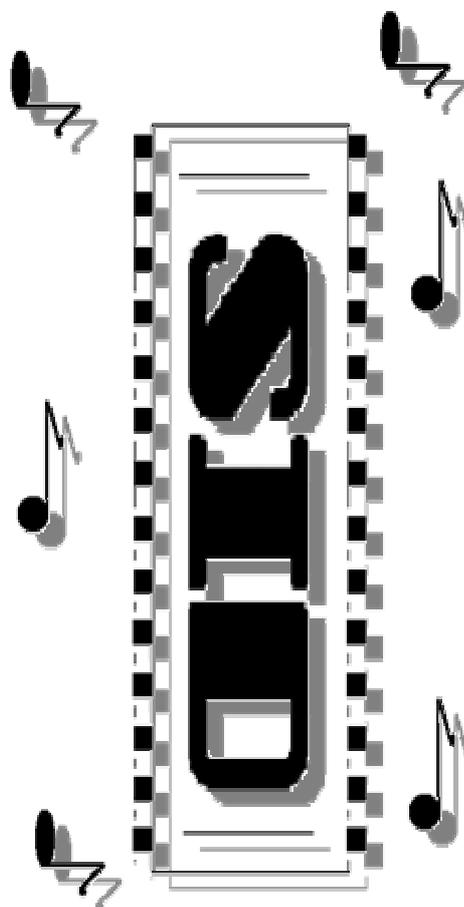
Tune using just these machines as instruments, that managed to get into the UK top 40 but I cant ever remember a SID tune entering the Charts of any country.

Now with things like the Prophet 64 and Stereo SIDS we could have a worth contestant to the Charts.

So there is a challenge for anyone with the right contacts, have a SID tune with the minimal amount of external processing enter the charts, any takers or would you like to correct me and name a tune that charted that was entirely created on the Commodore 64

Yes we had Zombi nation or whatever they called themselves taking a riff from lazy Jones and other people have samples SID sounds and indeed most of a SID demo to create a tune but not a whole; Commodore 64 produced tune without any external instruments.

If enough of a Buzz was created and the tune downloaded enough then it would be possible without the expense of creating a CD, a few bands have recently via the web created enough of a download frenzy that the music entered the chart before they even created a CD or even the cover artwork.



THE END

Commodore Free is a Free to download magazine dedicated to Commodore machines available to download as Text, Html, PDF and Commodore 64 Disk image