ORIC

USER MONTHLY

with Alternative Micros

Keeping the Oric alive

AYLESBURY
ORIC MEET

*SATURDAY
18th JUNE*

10 'til late

Be there!!

T H E   E D I T O R I A L

HI FOLKS,
                 THE SUMMER IS HERE!

   LAST YEAR ABOUT THIS TIME I MENTIONED THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE TEND TO PUT
THEIR ORIC'S AWAY FOR THE SUMMER. I WAS PROVED WRONG AS THE SCENE SEEMED
TO GET BUSIER AND BUSIER. PROBABLY DUE TO THE GREAT BRITISH WEATHER.
   AS SOON AS THIS ISSUE IS PUT TO BED I WILL BE BUSY FINALISING THE DETAIL
OF THE 'ORIC MEET'. IT WILL TAKE ME HOURS TO TRANSPORT THE GOODIES THAT I
HAVE ACCRUED TO THE VENUE.   AS WELL AS MY OWN MASSIVE COLLECTION,MY
HOUSE/SHED/LOFT/GARAGE IS CURRENTLY THE RESIDENCE OF MANY ITEMS FOR THE
RAFFLE,FRANK BOLTON'S ROMANIAN APPEAL, AND OF COURSE THE NUMEROUS OTHER
ITEMS THAT PEOPLE HAVE ASKED TO PICK UP AT 'THE MEET'.
   AS I AM STILL WAITING FOR A COUPLE OF ARTICLES THEN I WILL PUT THE INDEX
TO THIS ISSUE ON THE BACK PAGE. I THINK YOU'LL ENJOY THIS ISSUE AS IT IS
QUITE VARIED AND INCLUDES AN INTERVIEW AND REPORTS ON LEICESTER AND NERJA.
   THE BACKLOG CONTINUES UNABAITED, AND I CAN ONLY APOLOGISE FOR NOT GETTING
ORDERS AND LETTERS OUT MORE SPEEDILY.

   AND SO FOREVER ONWARD.............

   WHAT'S THIS 'ERE THEN
   ---- - ---- --- ----

   BELOW YOU WILL SEE MATTHEW COATES'S (OR WAS IT TIM COLGATE'S?) SET-UP OF
ORIC GOODIES IN THE CUPBOARD UNDERNEATH HIS STAIRS. HE TELLS ME THAT HE
AND HIS WIFE GO IN THERE TO PLAY 'COLUMNS'.   WE BELIEVE YOU!!

   ALSO HERE IS YOUR MONEY OFF VOUCHER TO AN 'ALL FORMATS FAIR'.   LIKE ME
YOU'D PROBABLY RATHER FULL PRICE SO THAT BRUCE EVERISS MAKES MORE MONEY!!

STEPHEN HAIGH SHAREWARE
–––––––– ––––– –––––––––

   That's the guy to get PC Shareware from. Stephen sent me some examples of
his work, but unfortunately the are not compatible with my little PC-XT with
CGA. However, James Groom tells me that some of the games are based on
Stephen's Oric titles. For in 1984, stephen was one of the most prolific of
software writers for the Oric;producing: GHOSTMAN and GRAVITOR for Severn
Software,plus of course GREEN X TOAD,TRICKSHOT,and ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN
for IJK. The last title he wrote was AIR-SEA RESCUE for IJK,which appears to
of never got into the shops.
   Stephen is trying to find a copy of it,and if so we at OUM would love to
market it.
   OUM has now obtained sole rights to distribute Stephen's entire back
catalogue, and I intend to put GRAVITOR on the next OUMDISC.
   If anyone wants more details on Stephen's PC software,they should write to
him at: 43 Springfield Avenue, Knottingley, West Yorkshire. WF11 8BQ. (Tel:
0977 675 650).

   Elsewhere in this issue you will find an interview that James Groom
conducted with Stephen.

   A NEW GAME
   – ––– ––––

   Visitors to THE MEET will be the first to see the new game from Jonathan
Bristow,which he has been working on for a year. This Arcade/puzzle is an
original idea and is compatible with PASE (Altai) and IJK joystick
interfaces,as well as the trusty old keyboard.

   GOVERNMENT HEALTH WARNING
   ––––––––––– –––––– –––––––

 Arnt Erik Isaksen will be in London in July!
 (Arnt - that is a joke. In future all references to you will be marked
'joke' or 'serious').
    I will be only be to pleased to meet up with Arnt again. ("serious").
   As Arnt comes to London most years and misses the MEET, perhaps he could
try and give us 6 months warning next year so that we can all see him at THE
MEET. ("serious").

NERJA MAGIC

After winning the first prize in last year's raffle of a week in Steve Hopps's apartment in Nerja, I promised Dave "the man" Dick that I would let you all know of our experiences.

30th April - Rob Kimberley, plus wife Julie , daughters Gayle and Nickie, and son Michael left Gatwick almost on time for a two hour flight to Malaga. A very pleasant flight on an Excalibur Airways A320 Airbus, got us to Malaga on time, fed, watered, and ready for the next stage of the journey.....

Niza Cars, Malaga Airport. Picked up our Fiat Tipo, which we pre-booked through our travel agent when organising the flights. Turn left and zoom (well not at first anyway) up the road, to pick up the N340 road which runs all along the southern coast of Spain in both directions from Malaga. One wrong turn later we are heading in the right direction. The N340 starts as motorway, but reverts to single carriage way about half an hour down the road, and then we start on the interesting bit, following the coast through small villages and towns like Torre Del Mar, the wonderfully sounding La Caleta de Velez, Mezquittilla (sounds like an exotic drink), until we reach Nerja.

Nerja (pronounced Nerha, as "j" is pronounced "h", so make sure you really want that jam sandwich Dave!!), is about an hour and a half from the airport. Looking at the street map Steve sent it looks pretty easy to find, I think its down this road Julie.......

Navigation needs improving Robin!!!

Found it!!

The Bahia Apartments with convenient bar right outside the entrance! Apartment fine - thanks Steve!!. Arguments about who sleeps where. I don't mind, I'll sleep anywhere when I'm tired (but that is definitely another story).

The beach is just across the road from the apartment entrance, and down a flight of steps past yet another bar (you would be happy here big John!). The beaches down this coast seem to be predominately shingle, but underneath is sand, which kept young Michael happy, as he had brought his bucket and spade (and guess who had to do all the construction work?).

The weather during our stay was marvellous, with clear blue skies all week.

I could write pages and pages on our visit, so for those of you who prefer to scan your text, briefly our agenda for the week was as follows:-

Sunday   -   *Exploring Nerja, and down on the beach.*

Monday   -   ✳ *Nerja Caves (well worth a visit), plus beach.*

Tuesday   -   *Exploring the local area, plus beach.*

Wednesday -   *Visit to Gibraltar. Again well worth visiting, if you don't mind getting up early and driving 3 hours. Cable car to the top of the rock, fed the apes etc etc.*

Thursday   -   *Visit to Granada (about 2 hour drive), to see the famous Alhambra Palaces. A magical experience.*

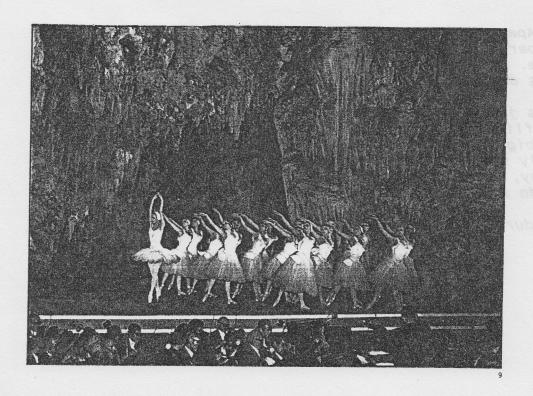Friday   -   *Beach.*

Saturday   -   *Fly back to a cold and wet England.*

In conclusion, a super week, much enjoyed by all concerned. I could have written far more, but why not check it out for yourselves, I'm sure Hoppsy would be glad to oblige!!

See you all at the meet in June.

Rob Kimberley

BALLET
IN
THE
CAVES

Machine Code for the Oric Atmos (Part 36)   Peter N. Bragg

The Story so far
---------------- We have looked at essentials for machine code programming
and a small selection of useful 6502 Instructions appeared in Part 22 of the
series. Recent issues have looked at masking and shifting instructions and
last time we had a very superficial look at how those instructions can be
used to convert graphic screens from one machine to another.

It is some time since we had a working example to play with, so let's have
something that makes some practical use of what we have seen so far.

Take a shufti
------------- We talk about the Accumulator or a location containing a hex
value and we can use PEEK to read that value, but that's a bit inconvenient
for most purposes. A utility that could display any value, we care to fetch,
is useful and so let's have a look at one. It may not seem very ambitious,
but bear in mind that such small utilities are very essential as building
bricks for all kinds of software. They only have to be written once and can
then be called up with a single instruction and used time and time again.

This particular utility can be found in most computers. I wrote this version
for the Microtan as part of a core set of utilities that I subsequently
copied to and then used in the BBC micro, the Apple and the Oric, virtualy
unchanged. As you will appreciate, that saved a lot of software writing.

Show that Byte
-------------- The most common value used in our machines is one hex byte
(00 to FF) and we mostly work with this, or multiples of it, so this is the
value we need to be able to display. One hex byte consists of two digits,
each of which occupies four bits and is popularly known as a "nybble". When
we display a hex byte, we need two display codes, that is one for each digit.

To distinguish between the two digits, we label them "MSB" and "LSB", which
is an abreviation for "Most Significant Bits" and "Least Significant Bits",
respectively. The "MSB" is the first (highest value) digit and the "LSB" is
the second (lowest value) digit and they both run from "0" to "F".

Listed below, you will find a routine and subroutine, which can be entered
into the Oric in normal way, using your favourite assembler or hex loader.
If you put any hex value (00 to FF) into the Parameter Block at location
1001 and then CALL#1040, you find that the display codes for that value are
put into the Parameter Block at locations 1002 and 1003. Next time, I will
provide a simple demonstration routine to show how it can be used.

So how does it work ? The hex byte is in the Accumulator and we start by
preserving a copy. The main routine at 1040 - 1058, then splits the hex byte
up into two separate digits, the "LSB" and the "MSB". First it deals with
the "LSB". It does this by masking out the "MSB" to remove it and leave the
"LSB" only. The subroutine at 105C - 1066 can then translate that "LSB" in
the Accumulator into the appropiate display code. For numbers "0" to "9",
the display codes run from 30 to 39 respectively, so it is only necessary to
add 30 to the "LSB" value. Display codes for "A" to "F" run from 41 to 46
respectively, hence the need to add an additional 07 for these six letters.
The "LSB" display code is then saved in Param 1003 and a fresh copy of the
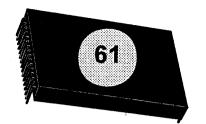original hex byte is now fetched for the "MSB" display code conversion.

The subroutine only deals with "LSB" digits, so the "MSB" is separated, in
the main routine, by shifting it right four times so that it pushes the
"LSB" digit out and takes it's place as a psuedo "LSB". That means that it
too can be processed by the subroutine, to produce a display code, which is
saved in Param 1002. We now have both display codes for the hex byte.

```
Oric                            Demo Routines                      25 Apr 94
----                            -------------                      ---------
[ CALL#1040 ]---------------[ Convert Hex Byte to Display Code ]-------[ / ]
                                ---Parameter Block 1001---
1001:           :               : Copy of Hex Byte to be displayed.
1002:           :               : MSB/1st character for display
1003:           :               : LSB/2nd character for display

                                ---Start---
       ....            ....      : Enter with hex byte in Accumulator

                                ---Convert LSB digit---
1040:8D 01 10 : STA 1001         : Save copy of Accumulator contents in Param 1001
1043:29 0F    : AND# 0F          :  and then remove MSB digit using binary mask
                                      to leave LSB only. (mask = 0F = 0000 1111 bin)
1045:20 5C 10 : JSR 105C         : Convert remaining LSB digit to Display Code
1048:8D 03 10 : STA 1003         :  and save it in Param 1003 for later use.

                                ---Convert MSB digit---
104B:AD 01 10 : LDA 1001         : Fetch copy of original Accumulator hex byte.
104E:4A       : LSR Accu         :  Shift MSB digit four times to the right,
   F:4A       : LSR Accu         :    so that the LSB digit is pushed out and lost
1050:4A       : LSR Accu         :    and the MSB replaces it, now as an "LSB".
   1:4A       : LSR Accu         :
1052:20 5C 10 : JSR 105C         : Convert "LSB" to Display Code (for the MSB).
1055:8D 02 10 : STA 1002         :  and save it in Param 1002 for later use.

                                ---Finish---
1058:60       : RTS              : Exit
          ---end---

[ CALL#105C ]---------------[ Convert LSB to Display Code ](sub)-------[ / ]

                                ---Start---
       ....            ....      : Enter with hex code LSB only in Accumulator.

                                ---Convert LSB to Display Code---
105C:18       : CLC              : Clear Carry Flag.
105D:69 30    : ADC# 30          : Add 30 to the LSB (OK for values "0" to "9").

105F:C9 3A    : CMP# 39+         : Test - is value outside "0" to "9" ASII range ?
1061:30 03    : BMI"1066"        :    No - so OK to skip to end of subroutine now.
                                      Yes - so it must be in "A" to "F" ASCII range.
1063:18       : CLC              : so clear Carry Flag again and
1064:69 07    : ADC# 07          :  add another 07 to value to produce
                                      the ASCII display codes for "A" to "F"

                                ---Finish---
1066:60       : RTS              : Exit (return to main routine with display code).
          ---end---
```

Next time, we can add a short demo routine to show this in operation........

RAMBLING

IN THE

ROM

61

Thanks for the good wishes Dave - my doctors promise me they'll have me fit for the Meet!

A big thank you to Brian Kidd for a bundle of Oric clippings from '83 and '84, the more so because each was annotated with the mag, issue and date. More grist to the Third Edition mill...

Rambling on...

As promised a couple of months ago, we now embark on the ROM string handling routines, which will take us through to around #D900...

D) THE TREATMENT OF STRINGS

1 - Evaluation and reservation

'STR$' (FUNCTION)

Bug: In V1.0 the first character is a #02 for a positive number, because of #E0D3.

Remark:
        the number is stored starting at #00FF instead of #100, because a string which starts in Page 0 is regarded as temporary (which must be the case for a number).

D4D8	JSR $CE7A	D593	JSR $CF06		Verify numeric argument
D4DB	LDY #00	D596	LDY #00		place the number in #00FF
D4DD	JSR $E0D3	D598	JSR $E0D7		and convert
D4E0	PLA	D59B	PLA		take return address off stack
D4E1	PLA	D59C	PLA		to avoid numeric verification
D4E2	LDA #FF	D59D	LDA #FF		(Cf. #D042/#D0CE)
D4E4	LDY #00	D59F	LDY #00		AY=string address
D4E6	BEQ D4FA	D5A1	BEQ D5B5		unconditional: and evaluate the string
D4E8	LDX D3	D5A3	LDX D3		
D4EA	LDY D4	D5A5	LDY D4		take pointer address
D4EC	STX BF	D5A7	STX BF		
D4EE	STY C0	D5A9	STY C0		and save it in #BF-#C0

D4F0	JSR $D563	D5AB	JSR $D61E	reserve a string of length A
D4F3	STX D1	D5AE	STX D1	save address of string
D4F5	STY D2	D5B0	STY D2	
D4F7	STA D0	D5B2	STA D0	and its length
D4F9	RTS	D5B4	RTS	

EVALUATE A STRING POINTED TO BY AY

Remark:

This is the central routine for the processing of strings; it compiles pointers in the pointer stack.

Principal:

The length of the string is evaluated. Then, if the string is in page 0, that is in direct mode or a number evaluated by STR$, a zone is resered and the string transferred there.
In all cases the pointer is stacked in the pointer stack.

DF4A	LDX #'"'	D5B5	LDX #'"'	Take code for double quotes
D4FC	STX 24	D5B7	STX 24	
D4FE	STX 25	D5B9	STX 25	
D500	STA DE	D5BB	STA DE	
D502	STY DF	D5BD	STY DF	save start address as pointer
D504	STA D1	D5BF	STA D1	
D506	STY D2	D5C1	STY D2	and for reference in ACC1
D508	LDY #FF	D5C3	LDY #FF	initialise length
D50A	INY	D5C5	INY	next character
D50B	LDA (DE), Y	D5C6	LDA (DE),Y	take character in string
D50D	BEQ D51B	D5C8	BEQ D5D6	if 0, end (first end pointer)
D50F	CMP 24	D5CA	CMP 24	
D511	BEQ D517	D5CC	BEQ D5D2	
D513	CMP 25	D5CE	CMP 25	
D515	BNE D50A	D5D0	BNE D5C5	if neither of the two, continue
D517	CMP #'"'	D5D2	CMP #'"'	have we exited becuase of a '"' ?
D519	BEQ D51C	D5D4	BEQ D5D7	yes, jump, C=1
D51B	CLC	D5D6	CLC	no, C=0
D51C	STY D0	D5D7	STY D0	save length
D51E	TYA	D5D9	TYA	
D51F	ADC DE	D5DA	ADC DE	and add
D521	STA E0	D5DC	STA E0	and save the end address
D523	LDX DF	D5DE	LDX DF	
D525	BCC D528	D5E0	BCC D5E3	
D527	INX	D5E2	INX	adjust the high byte as well
D528	STX E1	D5E3	STX E1	and save as well...
D52A	LDA DF	D5E5	LDA DF	start address hugh byte
D52C	BNE D539	D5E7	BNE D5F4	jump if program or ROM
D52E	TYA	D5E9	TYA	if direct or decimal, A=length
D52F	JSR $D4E8	D5EA	JSR $D5A3	reserve a temporary string
D532	LDX DE	D5ED	LDX DE	XY=start address
D534	LDY DF	D5EF	LDY DF	
D536	JSR $D6F7	D5F1	JSR $D7B2	transfer the string to the reserved zone
D539	LDX 85	D5F4	LDX 85	stack: take the pointer
D53B	CPX #91	D5F6	CPX #91	is the stack full?
D53D	BNE D544	D5F8	BNE D5FF	no, jump
D53F	LDX #C4	D5FA	LDX #C4	yes, 'FORMULA TOO COMPLEX ERROR'
D541	JMP $C485	D5FC	JMP $C47E	
D544	LDA D0	D5FF	LDA D0	take length
D546	STA 00, X	D601	STA 00, X	and save on the stack
D548	LDA D1	D603	LDA D1	take address low byte

D54A	STA 01, X	D605	STA 01, X	and save as well
D54C	LDA D2	D607	LDA D2	and repeat for high byte
D54E	STA 02, X	D609	STA 02, X	
D550	LDY #00	D60B	LDY #00	address of pointer in XY
D552	STX D3	D60D	STX D3	
D554	STY D4	D60F	STY D4	and save new address of pointer
D556	STY DF	D611	STY DF	
D558	DEY	D613	DEY	Y=#FF
D559	STY 28	D614	STY 28	indicate string
D55B	STX 86	D616	STX 86	save old stack pointer
D55D	INX	D618	INX	
D55E	INX	D619	INX	
D55F	INX	D6IA	INX	calculate the new one
D560	STX 85	D61B	STX 85	and save it
D562	RTS	D61D	RTS	

RESERVE A STRING OF LENGTH A

Entry: A contains the length of string to reserve

Exit: If there is room, #A4-#A5 points to the start of the reserved zone, as does XY and #A2-#A3.
A is preserved.

Principle:
Easily stated. An attempt is made to place the string below the top of memory. If there is room, OK;
if not, it is necessary to try a reorganisation, which is all a bit desperate...

D563	LSR 2A	D61E	LSR 2A	indicate no reorganisation yet
D565	PHA	D620	PHA	save the length
D566	EOR #FF	D621	EOR #FF	and get complement
D568	SEC	D623	SEC	true complement (add 1)
D569	ADC A2	D624	ADC A2	subtract length from top of memory
D56B	LDY A3	D626	LDY A3	including the high byte
D56D	BCS D570	D628	BCS D26B	
D56F	DEY	D62A	DEY	in Y
D570	CPY A1	D62B	CPY A1	above the arrays?
D572	BCC D585	D62D	BCC D640	no, deal with the error
D574	BNE D57A	D62F	BNE D635	yes, OK
D576	CMP A0	D631	CMP A0	not sure: check the low byte
D578	BCC D585	D633	BCC D640	sure: no room
D57A	STA A2	D635	STA A2	store new address
D57C	STY A3	D637	STY A3	of the lowest string
D57E	STA A4	D639	STA A4	
D580	STY A5	D63B	STY A5	and also the address of the string created
D582	TAX	D63D	TAX	and address in XY
D583	PLA	D63E	PLA	recover the length
D584	RTS	D63F	RTS	
D585	LDX #4D	D640	LDX #4D	Index 'OUT OF MEMORY'
D587	LDA 2A	D642	LDA 2A	reorganisation done?
D589	BMI D541	D644	BMI D5FC	yes, hopeless: error
D58B	JSR $D595	D646	JSR $D650	no, try a reorganisation
D58E	LDA #80	D649	LDA #80	indicate it's been done
D590	STA 2A	D64B	STA 2A	(SEC:ROR would have been better)
D592	PLA	D64D	PLA	recover the length
D593	BNE D565	D64E	BNE D620	unconditional: try again

J.H.

MARSHALL'S MUSIC   (Eight Bit)
----=----=----=----

Remember harmonics - those things that a sound is composed of ? I may seem to keep going on about these things a lot, but as you will see, they are of extreme importance to the composition of sounds. Without them, everything would sound the same.

The scientific world used to think that harmonics were unimportant when it came to the tone of a sound. This has now been proved to be completely false. Any (natural) sound is the result of several harmonics sounding. Each harmonic has a definite impression on the overall sound produced. I have shown you how a string vibrates, effectively producing a range of different sine waves. These all combine to produce a complex wave.
It is now possible to produce a sound electronically that is a pure sine wave i. e. the only pitch is the fundamental, and there are no overtones. Other pure waves can be gradually added and the result can be viewed on an oscilloscope. (An oscilloscope is a device similar to a television that only has one, some times two, lines on screen. If you feed a sound into it you get a pictoral representation of that sound from which measurements can be taken.)
If we added tones that would be harmonics or overtones of the oringinal note we can see the shape of the sine wave distort. If you add the odd harmonics at precise amplitudes - (the height of the wave is the amplitude which corresponds to the volume produced) - we get a square wave. A square wave is therefore something that is rich in harmonics, and it sounds quite pleasant because of this.

Electronics, as well as being capable of producing pure sine wave sounds, are capable of producing square wave sounds. This is not made up of separate sounds as described above, but is produced directly as a square wave. The reason I've been telling you this is because this is exactly what the sound chip in your ORIC does. Clever little beast, eh !

Electronics can also produce triangular or 'sawtooth' waves. These are made up of odd harmonics like the square wave, but at different amplitudes and so sounds different. The difference between these two types of wave can be heard by building the small electronics project I will soon give you details of. This little device also has a means of producing vibrato. There are two types of vibrato - pitch oscillation and frequency oscillation. When you build the project see if you can tell which is used.

Because the sound chip in the Oric does not give any control over harmonics, it is not a synthesizer. To synthesize, or emulate the different sounds produced by different musical instruments, you must be able to control the harmonics used. The tone of an instrument can change with changes in volume. This can be because at lower volumes the amplitude of the upper harmonics is so low that they can not be heard. As the volume increases the amplitude of the upper harmonics increases so that they come into the audible range. This can easily be heard in brass instruments. Played softly they have a soft, warm sound. Loudly, they are more 'buzzy' and produce that well known parpy sound.

Only a few home computers had a sound chip that could be described as a synthesizer. The Commodore 64, Enterprise and the Yamaha CX5 are the only ones I know of. Most computers nowadays rely on samples to reproduce the sounds of specific instruments.

Get your soldering irons ready for next month !

Muso

UKEUG (einstein user group, magazine and software library)
A E Adams, Ivy Cottage, Church Rd, New Romney, Kent.TN28 8TY

INTRODUCING THE U.K. EINSTEIN COMPUTER USER GROUP

The Einstein was launched in June 1984 as a home computer
(to business computer standards of design and construction)
& is believed to be the first "home computer" to be designed
round an integral disk drive and CP/M-compatibility, rather
than having this added as an afterthought.

The Einstein was an instant success, and user groups sprang
up all across the country. Most have long since vanished or
ceased to be Einstein groups, but the South Eastern Einstein
User Group evolved in late 1985 into a national group under
the title of THE UNITED KINGDOM EINSTEIN USER GROUP, with a
regular newsletter and an embryo software library.

UKEUG built up to a peak membership in 1988/89, with a
monthly magazine in place of the newsletter, a large public
domain software library, also commercial software and repair
services. Since then (with the Einstein long discontinued)
the user group has been in gradual decline as new users have
perforce had to buy Amstrad PCW or IBM-compatible machines
instead of Einsteins. This decline reached the point that by
mid-1993 the user group had become defunct, contributors to
the magazine (and users of the software library) had
dwindled to almost none, the magazine was losing money hand-
over-fist, and the Einstein show was about to fold up.

At this point the magazine and defunct user group came under
new management with long experience of running special-
interest groups successfully on a shoestring (or less!), who
realised that with Windows 3.1 conquering all it surveyed in
the IBM-compatible world, a cascade of obsolete hardware and
software was swamping the second-user market, and bringing
personal computing within the reach of many users who would
never have been able to afford or justify it in the past.

The typical new Einstein owner is now a novice user who has
been given (or bought cheaply at a boot sale) an Einstein
with no monitor, no manuals, and only a couple of program
disks. Such users need the mutual support of a user group
much more than in the past; and the user group, magazine and
software library are in the process of being vigorously
reorganised & reactivated (with hardware and software
upgrade projects being organised) to meet the needs of this
new generation of Einstein user into the next century, as
well as the needs of more experienced and better-equipped
Einstein owners.

The user group exists to encourage and facilitate mutual
support for Einstein owners, and all are welcome within it.
An S.A.E. to the address above brings details & sample magazine.

READERS LETTERS

DEAR DAVE,
        it may be of interest to readers that Clive Bellaby (Editor of the WACCI magazine for the Amstrad) has a stand at most of the ALL FORMATS COMPUTER FAIRS,and has various items of hardware and software for sale. The best of the venues for these fairs is probably the National Motorcycle Museum in the West Midlands.
 I have been to three of these (generally held on a Sunday), and although they do get crowded,it is well worth a visit as there are three halls,and dozens of stands of computer goodies each month e.g.: unbranded 3.5" discs (100%) guaranteed) at 5 pound for 20, 100 capacity lockable disc storage boxes at 2.99 (similar to those in ARGOS at 8.99).
 Other items available include: monitors, disc drives,printers, P.C's, software for various computers (alas not for the Oric),books,modems,power supplies etc. etc, both new and used at mostly reasonable prices.
 Those interested in attending a fair should get there prior to the 10 a.m start as the car parks fill up quickly. the next two fairs at the Motorcycle Museum ar June 26th and July 17th, and who knows - you might be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of Bruce everiss "coining it" in at the entrance.
Sorry I can't make the MEET.
Look forward to the next OUM DISC,which is always of interest to us.

        - CHRIS EVANS (Northampton).

DEAR CHRIS,
        nice to get your letter. I'm sure the info. will be of interest.
I have re-produced the money off voucher to the Fairs elsewhere in this issue (photocopies acceptable).
                                        - DAVE

DEAR DAVE,
        cheque enclosed for another year. Keep up the good work with OUM. Content & presentation have improved tremendously under your editorship.
My 5 Orics are in regular use. My three 12 year old sons are enthusiastic users. John and Giles are mainly games players,while Peter is a keen basic programmer. I like it when all three have got FRIGATE COMMANDER or ORICTREK loaded and their Dad (me), gets called from one to another witness exciting progress. Best of all I like to take over (if I get a chance).
- Pat McNeill (Lincoln)

DEAR PAT,
        nice to hear of your family exploits. It's a pity that you are not bringing the lads to the MEET,as it would be a great day out for them,and also part of the 'learning curve'.
I would love to see what Peter is up to with his programming work. Don't forget that we have new software available on cassette. I'm sure that your game playing sons would love for you to invest in the likes of COLUMNS for them. If you see my old friend John McKay then please pass on my best wishes - I believe he is really into War games nowadays.

        - DAVE

DEAR DAVE,
        just a short letter to say how much I liked the new style of OUM. It was nice to see the little Icons and the new style page numbers. I enclose 3 books for prizes at the MEET.
 Sorry to hear that you have been having trouble with your Amstrad Notepad. Although I've never used one,it seems to me to be an upgraded version of the Cambridge Z88. I've been in contact with a Jack Lawrie who runs a free help-line for Z88 users. Now my problems with transfer from Z88 to PC are partly solved. He also gave me details of an Aylesbury based company who sell books,real disc drive units etc for the Z88. They also sell books on the Amstrad Notepad.
 I no longer own a Z88 as I was spending too much time on transferring data to the PC. I have done a swap for a 89MB IDE hard drive for my PC. I have bought a Zenith Z181 portable PC to replace the Z88. I paid 60 pound for it. If any other readers are thinking of buying a portable then may I suggest that they consider one of the older PC comaptibles. I have seen a few old Zeniths,Compaqs and Olivettis for sale recently at prices comparable with Z88s and Amstrad Notepads.
                        - Robert Crisp (Leeds)
DEAR ROBERT,
            an interesting letter as always. I have took the Amstrad Notebook back for a cash replacement. I have since bought an Amstrad 6128,which is also on the way out of the door. I should of listened to my instincts,which tell me that Amstrad is crap!
Latest purchase is a PC-XT. Using this with WORDPERFECT I hope to improve the layout of OUM,though I shall still remain faithfull to WORDSPEED and EASYTEXT for the Oric whenever possible

            - DAVE

WELL NOT EXACTLY CORRECT.

NOT EXACTLY NORTH,BUT TO LEICESTER.NOT EXACTLY YOUNG EITHER.

DAVE DICK AND I,SET OUT FOR THE WILDS OF LEICESTER THE WEEK AFTER EASTER.ARMED WITH OUR PASSPORTS AND PHRASE BOOKS,WE CONSIDERED OURSELVES READY FOR ANYTHING.

HEADING THROUGH MILTON KEYNES INTO UNKNOWN LANDS, OUR FIRST HAZARD WAS TO BE THE GREAT BRITISH BREAKFAST.(NOT THE ONE ON THE T.V.,BUT THE GIANT MOUND OF FOOD, WHICH I MANAGED TO CONSUME IN A TRANSPORT CAFE).ARRIVING ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF LEICESTER, HAVING FOLLOWED FRANK BOLTON'S WONDERFUL INSTRUCTIONS,DAVE DECIDED THAT NOW WOULD BE A GOOD TIME FOR A LAP OF HONONOUR AROUND THE RING ROAD.GOING ROUND IN CIRCLES APPEARS TO BE ONE OF DAVE'S FAVOURITE HOBBIES,ESPECIALLY IF HE CAN GO TOTALLY IN THE WRONG DIRECTION AT THE SAME TIME.

ANYWAY,WE FINALLY ARRIVED AT FRANK BOLTON'S,TO WHAT I UNDERSTAND IS HIS TRADITIONAL GREETING:"HOW ARE YOU? HAVE A DRINK. " I WAS FIRST INTRODUCED TO A LARGE BOTTLE OF SPANISH BRANDY,WITH WHICH I IMMEDIATELY BECAME GREAT FRIENDS, AND THEN TO LUIS (FRANKS AID,ASSISTANT AND FRIEND). TWO DAYS OF SPANISH AND ENGLISH LESSONS,GREAT LAUGHS AND MUCH DISMANTLING AND RE-ASSEMBLY OF ORIC KEYBOARDS AND DISC DRIVES HAD BEGUN.

WE UNPACKED THE BOOT OF DAVE'S CAR AND FRANK MOVED INTO A LARGER APPARTMENT.ORICS,DRIVES AND LITTLE BOXES OF STRANGE UNMENTIONABLE BITS WERE TRANSPORTED INTO FRANK'S,UP TILL THEN,TIDY HOME.LUIS A GREAT YOUNG SPANISH LAD,WITH A LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF SILLY ENGLISH ORIC USERS,STOOD AND SCRATCHED HIS HEAD.AS IT TURNED OUT LUIS KNEW MORE ABOUT USING THE ORIC, ESPECIALLY " LORIGRAPH ", THAN I DID.

BACK TO THE STORY.WE TOOK A TRIP INTO TOWN FOR SOME MORE BITS AND SET ABOUT BREATHING LIFE INTO A LARGE PILE OF ORIC KEYBOARDS,AND MODIFYING ORIC-1'S TO ATMOS'S.THAT WAS MY JOB WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF LUIS WHO SOON PROVED TO BE A WIZZ WITH A SOLDERING IRON AND FAR BETTER AT ELECTRONICS THAN ME.HAVING LEARNED ALL THAT I COULD FROM HIM,I MOVED OVER TO SEE WHAT DAVE COULD TEACH ME ABOUT EXCUSES FOR ORIC DISC DRIVES NOT WORKING.WE DISCOVERED QUITE A FEW THAT I HAD NOT HEARD BEFORE, BUT STILL MANAGED TO GET SEVERAL UP AND RUNNING.

ONE OF THE REASONS FOR OUR TRIP WAS TO TRY TO LEARN A BIT OF SPANISH.OTHER THAN "ANOTHER LARGE BRANDY POR FAVOR".LUIS SPOKE VERY GOOD ENGLISH AND I DID MANAGE TO PICK UP FEW WORDS BUT I LEARNED MORE ABOUT ENGLISH FROM FRANK IN THE TIME I WAS UP THERE,THAN IN ALL MY YEARS AT SCHOOL.THAT ENDED THE FIRST DAY.

DAY TWO,MUCH THE SAME AS DAY ONE WITH A COUPLE OF NOTABLE DIFFERENCES.IN THE MORNING AFTER A LARGE BREAKFAST COOKED BY OUR GOURMET CHEF LUIS,IT WAS DECIDED TO TAKE A TRIP INTO TOWN FOR MORE BITS AND TO LOOK FOR A COMPUTER SHOP SELLING GAMES FOR DAVE'S SON MATTHEW'S MACHINE(NOT,I NOTE AN ORIC. DAVE I SUGGEST YOU CHANGE YOUR SON FOR ONE WITH MORE TASTE). ARRIVING IN TOWN I CONVINCED DAVE THAT I HAD FOUND THE IDEAL PARKING SPACE AND WE SET OUT TO LOOK AROUND TOWN.ON RETURNING TO THE CAR MUCH LATER,DAVE CARRIED OUT THE TRADITIONAL LEICESTER PARKING TICKET DANCE,WHILE I HID ROUND THE CORNER.WE HAD PARKED IN A BAY WITH A THIRTY MINUTE WAITING LIMIT AND THEN GONE OFF FOR TWO HOURS.

ON RETURNING TO FRANK'S HOUSE IT WAS DECIDED TO UPGRADE FRANK'S SELECTION OF DISC DRIVES FOR HIS OWN SYSTEM.THIS PROVED TO BE POSSIBLY THE HARDEST JOB WE HAD.PART OF HIS SYSTEM WAS HOUSED IN A " B.B.C" DISC DRIVE BOX(VERY PRETTY)BUT FRANK WANTED TO USE THREE DRIVES(3",35",5.25");NOT POSSIBLE IN A BOX OF THAT SIZE.SO SOME MODIFICATION WAS REQUIRED.THE PRETTY BOX WAS DISMANTLED AND PILES OF WIRE PULLED OUT,DISC DRIVES WERE LINKED IN VARIOUS COMBINATIONS, BUT ALTHOUGH THEY ALL WORKED INDIVIDUALY, THEY WOULD NOT WORK TOGETHER,UNTIL IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE LEADS LINKING THEM WERE TOO SHORT,AND SO ADJUSTMENT WAS REQUIRED.THIS WAS CARRIED OUT WITH THE AID OF LUIS AND SOME SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT FROM HIS KITCHEN; AND SUPRISE, SUPRISE (WHERE'S CILLA!) IT WORKED. SO NOW FRANK BOLTON CAN CLAIM TO BE THE ONLY PERSON IN BRITAIN TO HAVE A THREE DISC DRIVE SYSTEM SUPPORTED ON THREE TINS OF MEATBALLS AND ONE TIN OF SPAGHETTI.AT THIS TIME HAVING DRUNK ALL HIS BRANDY, WE DECIDED TO LEAVE.

THANKS TO FRANK BOLTON AND LUIS FOR A VERY FUNNY AND INTERESTING TWO DAYS.

THIS TRIP DID HAVE A SERIOUS SIDE AS WE MANAGED TO ASSEMBLE SEVERAL WORKING SYSTEMS FOR FRANKS SCHOOL IN ROMANIA AND HE HOPES TO TAKE OR SEND THESE OUT SOON.

- BOB TERRY

ROMANIAN APPEAL

Thanks to Ron Key's generosity, the Frank Bolton Romanian Appeal is now 25 pounds to the good.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONTACT LIST

DAVID GOODRUM's TELEPHONE should read: 0702 710891

RON KEY now also has a 3.5" drive.

FRANK BOLTON is again the owner of a 'BBC.B'

DAVE DICK now has an OPUS PC-XT,c/w 20Mb hard drive + 5.25" & 3.5" drives.

ENCHANTED

Thanks to David Goodrum for passing royalties gleaned on his text adventure "ENCHANTED" to OUM funds. The adventure will appear on a forthcoming OUMDISC and OUM funds will be boosted by about 15 - 20 pounds.

GAMEINIT

If you wish to format an 82 track double sided disc to Sedoric Gameinit standards and are using the update sent out on a recent OUMDISC; then don't forget to type - GAMEINIT:A.   If you just type - GAMEINIT , then you will still get a 42 Track Single Sided format.

CALLING OCCUPANTS OF INTERPLANETARY CRAFT

Amateur Radio enthusiasts can contact Oric enthusiast Alan Bowers. His Callsign is G8FWF

CLONE

BRIAN KIDD IS WORKING ON AN 'INTERTRON' CLONE FOR A FUTURE OUMDISC.

THE NEXT OUMDISC

I HAVE HAD TO PUT A HOLD ON THE RELEASE OF THE NEXT OUMDISC FOR A SHORT TIME. THIS IS DUE TO LACK OF TIME - NOT ENOUGH HOURS IN A DAY. THE BACKLOG OF LETTERS,ORDERS,PRODUCING OUM,ORGANISING THE MEET,LEARNING TO USE 'DBASE IV' & 'WORDPERFECT', PLUS OF COURSE A FEW DAYS ON THE SOUTH COAST (BET IT RAINS) HAVE ALL TAKEN TIME.
THE OUMDISC IS PRETTY WELL ADVANCED AND I HOPE TO COMPLETE AND DESPATCH IN JUNE OR JULY.

THE GRAND RAFFLE

AS WE GO TO PRESS,WITH THE MEET JUST OVER A WEEK AWAY, WE HAVE ALREADY SOLD 55 POUNDS OF RAFFLE TICKETS - A MARVELLOUS RESPONSE. AS A THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BOUGHT AND ARE NOT ATTENDING I AM GOING TO DO A PR-MEET DRAW.
OKAY ANN (THE WIFE) - "PICK A NUMBER BETWEEN 1 AND 55".   " 46 " - SHE MUTTERS.
AND THE WINNER IS ..... ALAN BOWERS.
ALAN WILL RECIEVE SOMETHING OF USE TO HIM VERY SHORTLY.

M O R E   R E A D E R S   L E T T E R S

DEAR DAVE,
                    further to my prvious letter,I have now resolved the problem
whereby I couldn't load tapes when my new Cumana Disc interface was up and
running. The problem only occured when I used the machine in one room of the
house. The cause was a bad earth connection on a wall socket. The cassette
o/p was os hummy that the i/f stood no chance of finding phase modulated
intelligence. So the Oric can be used as an earth detector too - better than
dropping it!
 I have now disposed of the Microtan. Am currently going through the attic
and shack and am thus slowly generating a fair bit of surplus gear that may
be of interest to readers. This time I've got an MCP40 in well used
condition,and bits of ICL's (ill fated) One-per-Desk computer to dispose of.
 Hope the MEET goes very,very well.
                                            - Alan Bowers (Ryde,I.O.W)

DEAR ALAN,
                    sounds like you had the ghost of SINCLAIR in that room.
 Anyone interested in Alan's latest batch of goodies should contact him
direct.

                                                            - Dave
==

DEAR DAVE,
                    thanks for the last OUMDISC - TETRIS GB is superb.

                            - David Goodrum (Leigh-On-Sea)

DEAR DAVID,
                    I'm   sure   Jonathan Bristow will be pleased with your
favourable report. It seems to me that most Oric software writers nowadays
are more interested in giving pleasure to users than making money from their
efforts. If they had wanted to of make money then they should of got out of
the Oric fraternity a long time ago. I'ts nice of course to see them earn a
few pounds and may even act as a training ground for the future when they
move onto other machines,if they so wish.
                                                        - Dave
==

DEAR DAVE,
                    for the record, I recently acquired a BBC computer with dual
40/80 switchable drives (5.25"),although right now I'm mystified as to why!
 I have very little software for it and nothing at all that's disk based. In
fact I can't use the drives at all on it as it didn't come with a master
disk,which would hold the formatting routine. Ironically,almost all the rest
of the DOS commands are held in ROM. The drives will work quite happily with
the ORIC however they,are pretty noisy.

                                            - Denis Bonfield (London)

DEAR DENIS,
                    you are not the only one to have acquired a BBC recently.
Frank Bolton has also succumbed. Mind you, he had good reason, as he had
many text files stored on disc when he had a BBC previously. Write to Frank
or John Hughes and they may help you out. I can't give them your address as
you expressed a wish for your address not to go on the CONATACT LIST.

                                                    - DAVE
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A N D   T H E R E   A R E   M O R E

DEAR DAVE,
                  I wonder if you could help me (again) regarding printers.
I have been given the use of an EPSON LX 400 printer. Having tried it out,
I find it prints text perfectly,but I am unable to find a way of printing
pictures from the HIRES screen. Any ideas? (otherwise I will be buying all
your MCP printer pens).
   NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: a follow-up letter from Ian states: "Since I wrote
last, I also wrote to EPSON. They said I need an ESC/P Printer Driver for
use with LX/FX printers. Can you supply?"

   With regard to John Hurley's keyboard problem. It happened to me about 5
years ago. After cleaning key contacts there was very little difference. I
de-soldered the cable from the keyboard,shortened it,and then re-soldered
it. This worked perfectly well until recently when it went again. This time
I had to replace the cable and plug as it could not be shortened any
more,and it is again working perfectly.
 Wouls it be possible for you to print a keyboard map in a future issue of
OUM,and could you send me a diagram of printer lead connections?
                                             -     IAN   BRADBURN
(Middlesbrough)

   DEAR IAN,
                 what you need is an EPSON HIRES SCREEN DUMP. PEACHSOFT
produced such a product in HI-COPY. I will have a hunt through my software
to see if I have a copy. The other option is LORIGRAPH,whereby you save the
screen to tape (or disc for disc users). You then run LORIGRAPH and load in
your own screen. You then have many options which you can perform e.g. Edit,
Invert,Fill,Add Text etc and then print. MASTERPAINT is another commercial
product that will be of help.

   Thanks for the tips on the keyboard. I know John is still having problems
and hopefully these can be put right at the MEET.
   Rather than publish a keyboard map, I will send you a copy of the one from
a recent issue of the CEOMAG.
 Pin-outs for printer are shown on page 284 of the ATMOS manual.

                                             - DAVE

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   THE LETTER (S)
   ─── ──────

IN THE LAST ISSUE OF OUM I SENT A MESSAGE TO ARNT ERIK ISAKSEN ASKING IF
HIS LETTER WAS MEANT TO BE SERIOUS OR HUMOROUS. I HAVE SINCE HAD A REPLY.
 I SPENT MANY HOURS CONSIDERING WHAT TO PRINT AND IN THE NED DECIDED TO
PUBLISH BOTH LETTERS IN FULL. I APOLOGISE FOR TAKING UP SO MUCH SPACE,BUT
FEEL THAT ARNT'S THOUGHTS AND MY REPLIES NEED TO BE AIRED.
   OVER THE NEXT FEW PAGES ARE RE-PRODUCED BOTH OF ARNT'S LETTERS AND MY
REPLY VIA OUM.

   I WOULD APPRECIATE YOU (THE READERS) TO GIVE YOUR OPINIONS ON THE TOPICS
COVERED. I DO NOT WANT TO TURN THIS INTO A WAR,BUT IF THINGS HAVE TO BE
SAID THEN LET US GET EVERYTHING OFF OUR CHESTS.

Lillestrom 21st of April 1994.

Dear **ＤＩＣＫ** !

Mind Madnez

First of all, I think it is a little bit RIDICULOUS of you to tell Richard Farrell that **MIND MADNEZ** is expensive for an Oric title. Considering the fact that I have put a great deal of time and effort into making this game, I don't think so. As far as I know, two copies have been sold. Then my royalties so far are three pounds, and expences (to send the game to England, packing etc.) have been about two pounds. Let's say I have put about hundred hours into making the game (which is maybe less than the truth) and the profit is one pound. This means I have earned one penny per hour of work. I do of course not make programs for the Oric because I want to earn some money, but let's put the "one penny per hour" in a perspective. Let's say you deliver milk 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This means that you would have been paid 88 pounds a year (if you had survived). What about that OLD, RUDE, BIG DICK??

Don't send me the three pounds for the two copies of Mind Madnez. Let this money cover the cost of the 4th OUM disc. Anyway, you must be the **8th wonder of the world**. I didn't know that it was possible for one man to collect so much garbage to put on one single disc. To tell it with one word : **IMPRESSIVE**. I buy these discs and other new software to contribute to the world of Oric and to encourage programmers to write even more garbage. Compared to old mass-produced software such as garbage like Jogger, Starfigher and other, Mind Madnez is expensive. But I hope that Mind Madnez is a little bit better than those titles. If not, Mind Madnez must be withdrawn from sale on the day you receive this letter. Included in the price of Mind Madnez (4.50) : A 3" disc (value 2.00), postage, contribution to the OUM funds and 1.50 to encourage me to write more cheap titles for the immortal Oric. This calculation says it all. Buying Mind Madnez means that the buyer gets a disc; contributes to the OUM and encourages me to write **BRAIN-KILLER** (which should be more frustrating than delivering milk) or **PICTRIS** (what can this be?), and he does at the very same time get a playable game (Mind Madnez) that takes hours to complete (115 levels). I know that you got frustrated already on level two, so........ (well - you see - I can be even ruder than yourself. Oh no. Do you have any idea for how to get rid of this bad habit?? Sorry, I forgot that you taught me how to become Mr.Rude. Do you think that I am ruder than yourself?)

IMPORTANT MESSAGE : I no longer want royalties for Mind Madnez. As a part of a new marketing strategy. 1.50 must be donated to the thousands of homeless people in the city of London. Don't dare to put this money in your own pocket..... This is my contribution to the English society. I hope you like this idea and that you advertise for Mind Madnez and mention that my royalties are completely donated to charity.

NHL Icehockey Manager

Why do you use the SEEK command to find the PAPER/INK colours in this game? First of all, I believe there are just a few of these colour commands in the "huge" listing (PAPER0 and INK7 if I remember correctly). The screens with colours are loaded seperately and the colours are set with ESC codes. If you want to change the colours, you must load the files "NHLGS1-9.COM" and "NHLIN1-8.COM". The files for the screens that come up when loading a new or saved game are not on the disc I sent you. Sorry.

Don't bother about changing the "F..." words since the names of players and teams are saved in the MC. If you change these words, you will likely damage these names at the same time. Isn't it a better idea to send out a warning instead of making bugs in the game??

Disc systems

Ståle Eikebråten certainly wants a working disc system for his Atmos. He wonders if an Amiga 1010 external 3.5" disk drive can be used with an Atmos and interface. What does a complete system cost : Atmos, interface, 3.5" drive and PSU? Please write to him when you get the time....

Also how much is the price for a 3.5" drive and PSU now? I am also thinking about getting a 3.5" drive and connect it to the Opeico system. Please let me know.

Alternate computers

A shop in Oslo advertised Sanyo PC XT's (notebooks) for 395 kroner (about 36 pounds), but I wasn't fast enough to get one. It is certainly old technology (but the Oric is much older) but the price was impressive though. Sanyo produced notebooks with colour screens, BASIC and 5.25" drive but no harddisk. Too bad I didn't get a 6th computer in my collection. Maybe I will in the future......

In the March OUM (issue 79) on the Alternate Micros, an Amstrad CPC 464 base unit + tapes and a Microtan 65 would be sent to whomsoever pay the postage. Are these items still available and what would postage be to Norway (boat mail).

THE END

Please give me the address to BULL ELECTRICAL so I can ask for their catalogue. I also want to know something about English names. A name told something about the owner of the name in the old days, for example was mr. Smith working as a smith. What about DICK? Did they have constant er...... Just a joke!!

Yours sincerely,

Arnt Erik Isaksen

Arnt Erik Isaksen.

Lillestrøm 24th of May 1994.

Dear Dave.

First of all, I received the latest OUM today. My letter dated the 21st of April was partial meant to be humourous. Remember however that humour is relative, due to individual differences between people. Cultural factors, personal factors, social factors etc. decide what kind of humour one thinks is fun. Sorry if you didn't like my sense of humour and felt that my letter was only ridiculous. Some of my humour is seen in this letter, for example irony and extreme overstatement. However, I must admit that your sense of humour is not so much fun all the time either. If you look in issue 80 (April) on page 6 in your reply to Richard Farrell (the seven last lines of it), you can see your own "attempt at humour". I did not laugh when I read it, as it just seemed ridiculous. Do you think that Mind Madnez is rubbish too? This is a natural conclusion of saying that I have "written the rubbish SNES games". Is Richard Farrell the only one who has enjoyed playing Mind Madnez? Why did you say that it seemed like a good game when you saw the preview, as it now seems that you think Mind Madnez is completely rubbish and that Richard Farrell is the only one able to make a nice review of it for CEO - without lying. I look at this reply to Richard Farrell as a sarcasm against me. As you can see, humour is relative. I will no longer attempt at humour, laugh or smile...... This was not an attempt at humour!

I will rewrite some parts from my letter dated April 21st

(Get ready for my serious points.)

Mind Madnez :

I do in fact think that it was ridiculous of you to tell Richard Farrell that Mind Madnez was expensive. I feel that a program I have put effort into making should have some value. As I conclude, the price of 4.50 includes a disc (value 2.00), postage, packing and OUM funds (about 1.00) and royalties (1.50). It is a fact that two copies sold (royalties 3.00) covers the costs for me to send the game over to England (about 2.00), which is a profit of 1.00. The royalties paid the 4th OUM disc, which supports the OUM. As the royalties make only a symbolic value for me, I think it is best that royalties for any more copies sold are given to charity. I have been in London three times, and I have in fact seen quite a few homeless people. (It is homeless people in Norway too, but it would be more practical for you to give possible royalties to charity in England instead of Norway.) I am against new Oric games at give-away-prices, which seem to be a trend. I think the charity sollution is a nice thing to do. To be more specific : If any more copies of Mind Madnez are sold, please send/give the money (1.50 per copy) to the Salvation Army. Please let me know if you do not think this is a good idea.

My statement that the 4th OUM disc included only garbage was an overstatement. It is however a fact that I find much of the software too simple. Tetris GB and the music, "Smoke on the Water" and "live and let die", were great. I had "Champion Reversi" and the Galactosmash intro from before. The rest is, to say the truth, more or less useless to me. Instead of complaining, I can tell you what I want to see on future discs : Digitized screens, exciting demoes (something like the MM intro) and more music (Sonix or machine code pieces that can be used in my own programs, something similar to

Monthy Mole).

The parts of my letter concerning NHL Icehockey Manager, disc systems and alternate micros were serious.

I will not joke about your name anymore - please forgive me, Dave.

New letter

I mentioned two games in my last letter, "Pictris" and "Brain Killer". I have the best idea for "Pictris", which is similar to Tetris : Pieces of a picture are falling down and must be placed correct to build the complete picture - another brain teaser. The good part is that the pictures will be of digitized quality (maybe). As I am very busy at the moment (exams finished on June the 16th), I believe that I will not have the time to program on it, as a summer should not be spent with a computer. I have had two exams so far, and I have three more to go. It feels that I have done quite well on those completed. In the days to come, I will have to study a lot. I have not used the Oric since the Easter holidays when I visited Ståle.

I will travel to London again during my summer holidays (first half of July). I can maybe get to Aylesbury again so that we can play on the Oric once more. I will give you more details about when I am travelling to/from London as soon as possible.

I hope that you think this letter is serious.

Yours sincerely,

Arnt Erik Isaksen

Arnt Erik Isaksen.

WANTED

2 VOLUNTEERS, OR 1 MAY SUFFICE.

TASKS:

1) TO TAKE OVER THE EDITORSHIP OF O.U.M FROM "OLD, RUDE, BIG DICK."

2) A HIT-MAN TO TAKE OUT ARNT!
   BULLETS SUPPLIED, QUEUE STARTS
   BEHIND THE FRENCH!

APPLY TO: MATTHEW DICK (SON OF 'OLD' DAVE DICK).

When I recieved Arnt's first letter I was somewhat upset to say the least. Having recieved his follow-up letter I feel it is time to reply,not just to Arnt, but to all readers.

MIND MADNEZ
---- ------

I reveiwed it as I saw it and never was of the opinion that it was rubbish. Regarding it's price - I stand by my opinion,though can see your point of view. However,prior to OUM releasing titles you would of been financially worse off. I believe Allan Whitaker used to pay 10% in royalties,thus a 4.50 title would of gleaned 45 pence. I think that in Scandinavia as in some other European countries the cost of buying leisure goods (e.g. computer peripherals) is expensive, and I therefore agreed to pay you 1.50 per copy. I believe your initial request was for 2 pounds per copy.

You will be pleased to hear that Mind Madnez has sold 6 copies now,which proves to me that the old adage "any publicity whether good or bad is fruitful" is correct. Perhaps those who bought the game could let me have their views on it.

I have no intention of tracking down the addresses of charitable causes on your behalf. I will send you the royalties due and let you give to the charity of your choice when you come to London. You might even like to give it to one of those poor beggars on the streets,who at the end of the day jumps into his Porsche and says "thank you very much"!

Regarding the rubbish SNES games - this was a joke and I am sure every other reader realised it.

Regarding your statement: "Don't dare to put this money in your own pocket". I find this most offensive. The running of OUM has cost me a fortune over the years. I have hundreds of pounds of money tied up in cassette stock that I will never get back.   A couple of years ago there was a phantom withdrawal from the OUM bank account of 200 pounds. I said nothing in OUM, but just replaced the money from my owmn pocket so that the magazine could survive. If you think that I would pocket a couple of pounds of your money then you are sick!

OUMDISC #4
------- --

Your statement that the disc was GARBAGE was the most hard to swallow.

It must, I know, hurt the contributors to the disc. Included must be yourself who sent in OUM TOWERS!

Nearly everyone agrees that TETRIS GB was great and worth the 3.50 for that alone. You may of seen GALACTOSMASH, but many of newer readers have not. You may want more musical demos, but not all of our readers have SONIX. Not all the readers have CHAMPION REVERSI, and those that do, won't have it in English. Were the utilities from DR.RAY garbage? Should we tell Tony Clark that his first try at something for the ORIC is garbage? I could go on and on. Of the 28 programs I have tried to find a mix so that at least half will be of interest to everybody. I have had no other complaints regarding the disc from others. I have had many good responses to it. If others thought it was garbage then they should write and not keep quiet about it. I am always ready to listen to ideas. The disc is for all. Whatever is sent to me will find it's way onto a disc and requests for certain types of programs will be kindly looked at.

NHL ICE HOCKEY MANAGER
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It is all very well for you to say to send out the program as it stands,with the swear words in and just to give a warning. But as I am responsible for a disc that is used by children as well as adults, then I feel I must have the last say. If I were to send an OUMDISC to a reader,who then gave it to his 8 year old daughter to load and then found she was mimicking the bad language, then I would be in serious trouble with her parents. I will decide what to do with the game at a later stage.

DISC SYSTEMS
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Over a year ago I wrote to Staale and told him the prices that he asked for. I did not recieve a reply. I have not the time to go over the same ground all the while.

MESSAGE TO STAALE: A new Atmos is about 35 pounds from Steve Hopps. A Disc interface is about 45 pounds from Steve.   A new 3.5" drive is about 25 pounds,whilst a PSU is about 10 pounds. Then allow about 5 pounds for leads.

This is a grand total of about 120 pounds, excluding postage. If you want to purchase at these prices then please contact me.

Regarding the Amiga drive - I think this would work with the Oric. Perhaps someone could verify this.

ALTERNATE COMPUTERS
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The Microtan has gone, and so I believe has the Amstrad base. If it hasn't then perhaps Alan Bowers could write to you direct.

SUMMING UP
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You have had your say, and I have had mine. Now let's bury the hatchet and get back to Oric-ing.

THE   BACK   PAGE - ALMOST

That's almost it for another issue.
Next time around we will concentrate more on the games side and some listings. James Groom has been busy going through back issues and has come up with the definitive guide for gamesters - all the cheats and the help. This booklet will be sent out with the July or August OUM.

And now to the INDEX:

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BULL ELECTRICAL

Bull of 250 Portland Road, Hove ,Sussex. BN3 5QT. (Tel: 0273 203500, Fax: 0273 323077), have just sent me their latest catalogue of super savers.
Included are:Geiger Counters (50 pound), Acorn Electron Power Supplies (99 pence - YES - 99 pence), IBM PC Case and 60W PSU (9.99), Commodore Microdrives (2 pound), Spectrum +2 PSU (2.50), Commodore C64 Games Consoles (5.99), and for the warmongers amongst you - 4,200 metres of Guided Missile Control Cable for 14.99.

BULL ELECTRICAL have now opened new premises in Wolverhampton. This is a retail outlet only - no mail order. The shop is known as WALTONS and · is situated at 55a Worcester Street. Telephone number is 0902 22039.
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CONVERTS

Just about to go disc based are Gerry Amato and James Groom. Both will have Cumana Interfaces. James will be using a 3.5" drive, whilst Gerry will be on 3" or 3.5".

JULY OUM

Articles for inclusion in the July issue to be with me by 28th June at latest please.

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THE INTERVIEW

Now if you flip the page, you can read the interview that James Groom conducted with Stephen Haigh.

1. How did you first come to use or become interested in the Oric?

While at Sheffield University in 1984 I wanted a machine that I could learn
BASIC and machine code programming on.   The Oric seemed the best machine
available at a reasonable price.

2. What programs did you write for the Oric?

Over the following 2 years I wrote 6 games for the Oric 1/Atmos.   These were:
Green X Toad, Trickshot, Attack Of The Cybermen, Air-Sea Rescue, Ghostman and
Gravitor.

3. Why did you choose to write the programs that you did?

I wrote these games because they were my favourite arcade games.

4. How long did it take to write the programs and what problems did you
encounter?

Each game took around 3 months to complete. The main problems were caused by
only having a tape recorder as the storage device. The source code was so large
it required multiple tapes, and they are not the most reliable media.

5. Was writing Oric programs profitable?

The games were fairly profitable, but it wasn't the driving force.   I had
written Green X Toad and Ghostman before I even considered selling them.

6. Did you have any unfinished Oric projects, or programs that were never
released?

No.

7. Do you still have any Oric equipment or paraphernalia today?

Yes, I still have my Oric 1. I'm afraid it has tended to be ignored recently,
as most of my attention has gone into working on my 486 PC.

8. What have you been doing since you stopped working with the Oric?

Since 1987 I have been working as a programmer mainly on IBM PC's.   In 1991 I
got the urge to bring my games up to date utilizing the improved PC hardware.
Ghostman became Ghost Gobbler and Trickshot became PC 8 Ball Pool.   Snooker,
Galaxians, Defender and Battle Zone followed. I have released all these games
as shareware and the response has been very encouraging.

9. What are your fondest Oric memories (or nightmares!)

My fondest Oric memory is walking into W H Smiths and being quite surprised to
see Green X Toad stood on the shelf.   My worst memory is burning the midnight
oil trying to keep control of the program while assembler blocks are split over
4 tapes.