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THE AMIGA® NEWS MAGAZINE

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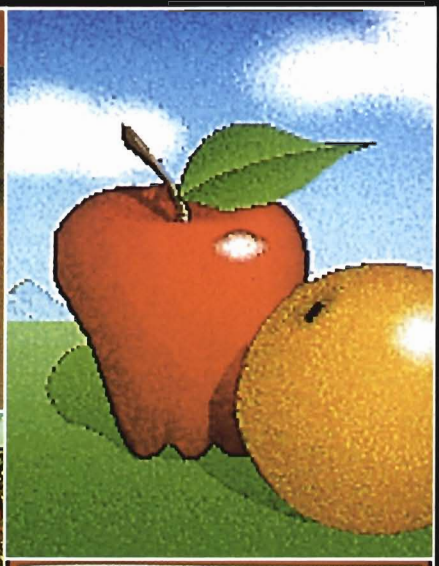
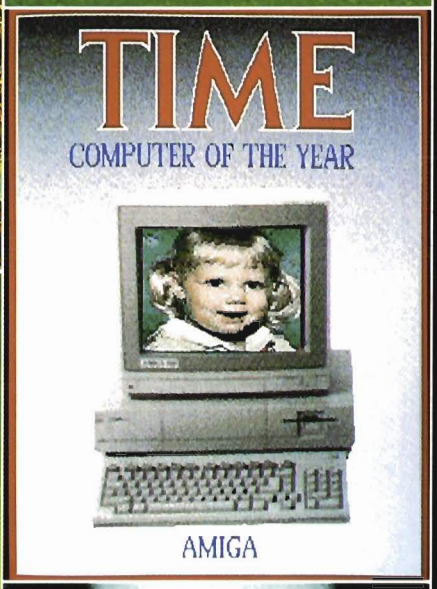
Premier Issue

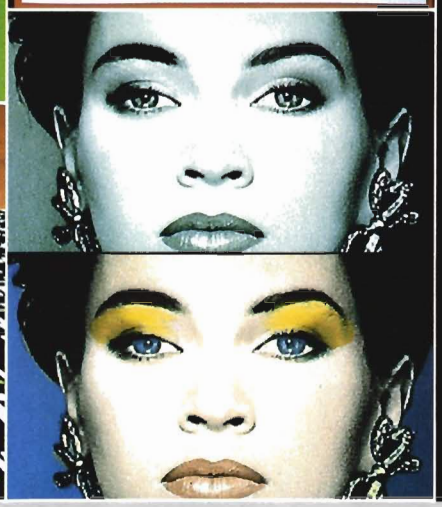
Fantasy Adventures:

FAERY TALE
ALIEN FIRES

Desktop
Publishing
Update







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SENTRY

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On Point

Notes from Editor Tom Bucklin . . .

A new Amiga Specific magazine has arrived! This new publication will bring you the latest news affecting the Amiga. Whether it's a new piece of software, hardware, or general news within the Amiga Community, the *Sentry* will be there to provide you with up to date information.

This is an "end user" magazine that has been specifically designed to meet the needs of you, the Amiga enthusiast. You may be using your Amiga in a variety of ways; strictly for entertainment, strictly for business; or some of both. I suspect that a high number of people fit into the last category. Even if you are "Wall Street Material," it's almost impossible to ignore the tremendous graphic and sound capabilities of this machine. I've seen many a wing-tipped professional sneak away to brush up on their golf game using *Mean 18*, or, in extreme cases, rescue the fair maiden from an unspeakable fate.

Such is the real power of the Amiga. It has cured many a person with "computerphobia," (that common ailment in which the subject experiences high levels of anxiety when approaching a computer keyboard). If left untreated, it can lead to "MS," a disease of the DOS which causes the patient to imagine that computing must be complicated, and that the most difficult to operate machine must be superior. The fact is that the most useful computers will be the ones that require the least knowledge from the user. After all, computers were originally designed with the purpose of alleviating the need to do tedious mathematical calculations by hand. I'm confident that the designers of the early computers would be proud to own an Amiga. It is the culmination of what must have been to them a futuristic vision of computing to come; the realization of a truly user friendly environment.

Probably the most unique feature about the Amiga is the concept of dual operating modes. There are many machines that require you to input commands from the keyboard, and some machines that were designed to work from within an icon environment. But a computer which incorporates both of these approaches is a novel concept to say the least. The Amiga has not only successfully merged these two modes of operation, but has been able to raise each to a higher level of performance.

In this issue, we review products like "Record Keeping for Small Business" and "Alien Fires", which demonstrate some of the business and entertainment possibilities of this machine. Also featured is an Amiga desktop-publishing industry update. Although in it's infancy, recent advances have brought about a practical level of desktop publishing for the Amiga. The announcement of "Professional Page" from Gold Disk promises power that will rival software written for the more traditional publishing computers.

There are advancements comming in other areas of development as well; such as new expansion peripherals, midi device support, and affordable hard disk controllers.

We've only scratched the surface of the potential for this machine. As the user base for the Amiga increases with the upcoming release of the Amiga 500 and 2000 models, the level of software engineering for the machine will increase as well. Companies like WordPerfect and Ashton-Tate are moving into the Amiga arena with products that have become industry standards on other machines.

As the stories unfold, the Sentry will be there to give you the news from the Amiga frontline.

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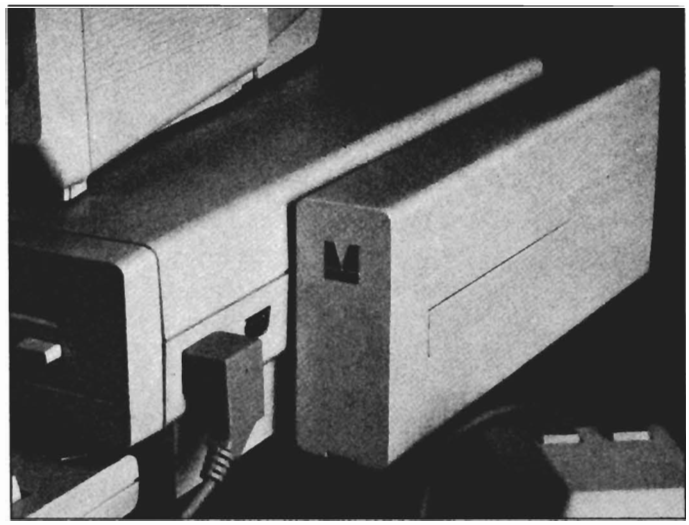

If you've owned your Amiga® for a while now, you *know* you definitely need more than 512k of memory. You probably need *at least* double that amount...but you might need as much as an additional two megabytes. We want to urge you to use **StarBoard2** as the solution to your memory expansion problem –and to some of your other Amiga-expansion needs as well!

It's small, but it's BIG–

Since most of you want to expand your Amiga's memory without having to also expand your computer table, we designed **StarBoard2** and its two optional "daughterboards" to fit into a sleek, unobtrusive Amiga-styled case that snugly fastens to your computer with two precision-machined jackscrews.

The sculpted steel case of **StarBoard2** measures only 1.6" wide by 4.3" high by 10.2" long. You can access the inside of the case by removing just two small screws on the bottom and pulling it apart. We make **StarBoard2** easy to get into so that you or your dealer can expand it by installing up to one megabyte of RAM on the standard **StarBoard2** or up to two megabytes by adding in an Upper Deck.

This card has decks!

The basic **StarBoard2** starts out as a one megabyte memory space with 0k, 512k, or one megabyte installed. If you add in an optional **Upper Deck** (which plugs onto the Main Board inside the case) you bring **StarBoard2** up to its full two megabyte potential. You can buy your **StarBoard2** with the Upper Deck (populated or unpopulated) or buy the Upper Deck later as your need for memory grows.

And you can add other functions to **StarBoard2** by plugging in its second optional deck –the Multifunction Module!

StarBoard2: functions five!

If we count Fast Memory as one function, the addition of the **MultiFunction Module** brings the total up to five!

THE CLOCK FUNCTION:

Whenever you boot your Amiga you have to tell it what time it is! Add a MultiFunction Module to your **StarBoard2** and you can hand that tedious task to the battery-backed, real-time clock/calendar. A small piece of MicroBotics software in your WorkBench Startup-Sequence reads the clock and automatically sets the time and date in your Amiga. And the battery *is* included (we designed it to use an inexpensive, standard AAA battery which will last at least two years before needing replacement).

THE FLOATING POINT FUNCTION:

If any one aspect most characterizes the Amiga it's *fast* graphics! Most graphic routines make heavy use of the Amiga Floating Point Library. Replacing this library with the one we give you with your MultiFunction Module and installing a separately purchased Motorola 68881 FPU chip in the socket provided by the Module will speed up these math operations from 5 to 40 times! And if you write your own software, you can directly address this chip for increased speed in integer arithmetic operations in addition to floating point math.

THE PARITY CHECKING FUNCTION:

If you install an additional ninth RAM chip for every eight in your **StarBoard2**, then you can enable *parity checking*. Parity checking will alert you (with a bus-error message) in the event of any data corruption in **StarBoard2**'s memory space. So what good is it to know that your data's messed up if the hardware can't fix it for you? It will warn you against saving that data to disk and possibly destroying your database or your massive spreadsheet. The more memory you have in your system the more likely it is, statistically, that random errors will occur. Parity checking gives you some protection from this threat to your data residing in Fast RAM. Note that the Amiga's "chip" RAM cannot be parity checked.

THE IMMORTAL MEMORY DISK FUNCTION (STICKY-DISK):

When you've got a lot of RAM, you can make nice big RAM-Disks and speed up your Amiga's operations a lot! But there's one bad thing about RAM-Disks: they go away when you re-boot your machine. Sticky-Disk solves that problem for you. It turns all of the memory space inside a single **StarBoard2** into a Memory Disk that will survive a warm-reboot! When your Amiga attempts to grab a **StarBoard2** in Sticky-Disk mode, a hardware signal prevents the system from acquiring the **StarBoard2** as FastRAM (and thereby erasing your files) –instead it is re-recognized as a Memory Disk and its contents are preserved intact. If you want to work rapidly with large files of data that are being constantly updated (such as when developing software) you can appreciate the Sticky-Disk!

Fast RAM –no waiting!

StarBoard2 is a *totally* engineered product. It is a ZERO WAIT-STATE design, auto-configuring under AmigaDOS 1.2 as Fast RAM. Since AmigaDOS 1.1 doesn't support autoconfiguration, we also give you the software to configure memory in 1.1.

Any applications software which "looks" for Fast RAM will "find" **StarBoard2.** And you'll find that your applications run more efficiently due to **StarBoard2** on the bus.

A passing bus? Indeed!

What good is an Expansion Bus if it hits a dead end, as with some memory cards? Not much, we think –that's why we carefully and compatibly passed through the bus so you could attach other devices onto your Amiga (including another **StarBoard2**, of course!).

The sum of the parts...

A really nice feature of the **StarBoard2** system is that you can buy exactly what you need now without closing off your options for future exapansion. You can even buy a 0k **StarBoard2** (with a one megabyte capacity) and populate it with your own RAM (commonly available 256k by 1 by 150ns memory chips). When you add **StarBoard2** to your Amiga you have a powerful hardware combination, superior to any single-user micro on the market. See your Authorized Amiga Dealer today and ask for **StarBoard2**

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICING:	
StarBoard2, 0k (1 meg space):	$349
StarBoard2, 0k (2 meg space):	$395
StarBoard2, 512k (1 meg space):	$495
StarBoard2, 1 meg (1 meg space)	$595
StarBoard2, 2 megs installed:	$879
StarBoard2, 2 megs & MultiFunction:	$959
Upper Deck, 0k (1 meg space):	$ 99
MultiFunction Module:	$ 99
also available:	
Standard 256k memory card:	$129
MAS-Drive20, 20 meg harddisk:	$1495
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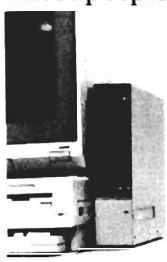

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Amiga News

EXECUTIVE CHANGES AT COMMODORE

by Steve Dock

Most Amiga fans will recognize Tom Rattigan as Commodore International's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). We've seen his picture and read his plans for the Amiga 2000 in Commodore magazines. He was featured in major articles in Business Week and the Wall Street Journal during early 1987. Rattigan was described as the youthful, former PepsiCo marketing executive who "turned Commodore around" with five consecutive quarters of profitability. Many of us breathed a sigh of relief when these positive press reports appeared. It seemed that Commodore was in good hands and that the new Amigas would be the cornerstone of the company's future.

Apparently, Irving Gould, Commodore's Chairman of the Board and largest stockholder didn't share this optimism. While Rattigan was painting rosy pictures of profit, Gould saw decaying US sales and lack of marketing success. This difference in viewpoint became very public with the forced resignation of Rattigan on April 16 1987.

By April 21, the Wall Street Journal, Investor's Daily, and other financial publications featured lurid articles describing Rattigan and Gould's power struggle. Rattigan filed a $9 million law suit against Commodore after he was escorted from his locked office by security guards. Each of these articles expressed concern about the future of Commodore, and the success of the Amiga now that Rattigan had been ousted.

Official Commodore spokespersons and terse press releases announced that Mr. Gould had appointed himself CEO, and production plans were proceeding on schedule.

The immediate future for Amiga is in the hands of a new team now.

Along with Rattigan, Nigel Sheppard, general manager of North American Operations and five other headquarters executives were dismissed. The next week fifty lower level administrative personnel were laid off at the West Chester headquarters.

All this will seem strangely familiar to regular Commodore watchers. It was only three years ago that Gould ousted Jack Tramiel from the CEO spot, contending that a more professional management structure was badly needed. Commodore floundered for a while after the Tramiel era. (Jack Tramiel has since bought Atari from Warner Communications and developed the Atari ST systems which compete with the Amiga). Gould tried out two other CEO's before he selected Rattigan. Many in the media drew parallels with Tim Scully, another former PepsiCo marketing exec, who restored Apple Computer to success.

During his eighteen months as CEO, Rattigan built the desired professional management team, calmed Commodore's rattled bankers, and presided over the introduction of the Amiga 1000. In December 1986, Rattigan was rewarded with a five year contract guaranteeing him at least $400,000 per year. Mr. Rattigan must have been pleased. He began a publicity campaign which featured his own success, as much as Commodore's.

Obviously, something happened between December and April. Officials at Commodore initially stressed a personality conflict between Gould and Rattigan as the reason for the sudden

(continued on Page 28)

Alien Fires: *Dateline - A.D. 2199*

by Tom Bucklin

The opening Screen of Alien Fires

"You are sent into the distant future to a small planet at the edge of the known universe called Galaxy's End by the Timelord Elders. You are in search of a great man known only to you as Samuel Kurtz, scientist and creator of an awesome device — the use of which your Timelord Elders believe, threatens to twist the very fabric of time itself.

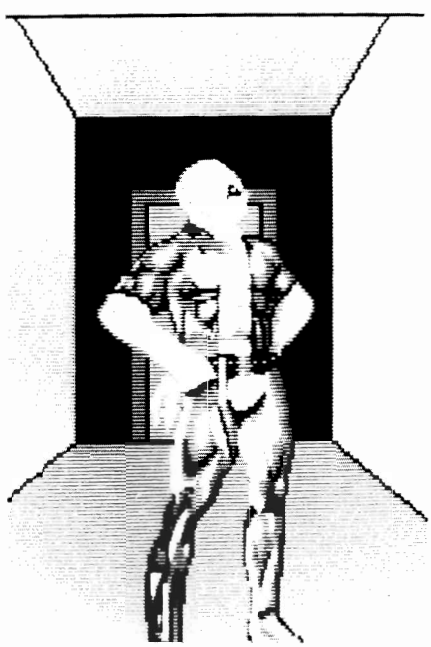
"Your mission: to find the mysteriously vanished Samuel Kurtz and destroy all traces of the time-transportation device which he has begun work on, thereby proving yourself worthy of the recognition of the Timelord Elders.."

So begins your journey into the fascinating world of ALIEN FIRES, the new graphic role playing adventure from JagWare. This state of the art creation is bound to be one of the more sought after offerings in entertainment software. Along with detailed illustrations of over 32 characters, game play is accompanied by numerous segments of the digitized musical score. ALIEN FIRES simultaneously brings together some of the superb (and largely untapped) abilities of the Amiga.

Consisting of 2 disks and requiring a minimum of 512K/ Kickstart1.2, the program boots from the Workbench prompt. (does not go to the Workbench screen) Although it is possible to play the game with one drive, there will be a continuous onslaught of requests for disk swaps as you play the game. This is due to the constant need to access the sound and graphic files contained on "Disk 2". However, if you have expanded memory, you can copy disk 2 into ram. The manual states that the program is set up to look for disk 2's contents in ram. This option will greatly speed up the loading sequences with a one or two drive system. This is a good example of the type of flexibility that should be built into ALL programs for the Amiga.

Have you ever had a program that you enjoy using, but you're fed up with having to wait through a long title screen with no apparent means of escape? Not so here! The file that brings up the "ALIEN FIRES" screen (definitely worth seeing by the way) is named "Intro". By renaming this file to "Intro.bak", the program will skip all the title screens and proceed right into game play.

In the adventure, you play the part of a Timelord; those mythical travelers who transcend the barriers of time. Porting themselves to different eras, they look after mankind by altering or



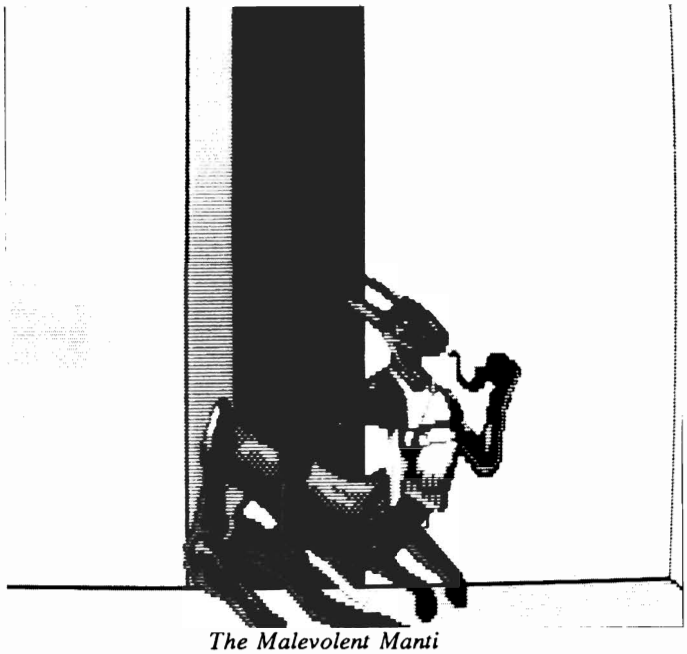
'Mech'

preventing past or future events. An unusual feature of this role is that you can define your strengths and weaknesses by means of creating custom characters. From the opening Timelord menu, you can determine strengths in areas such as fighting, diplomacy, dexterity, and quickness. It will become apparent very soon after your first adventure that choosing the right combination of character traits is vital if you are to survive your ordeal.

With character in place, you find yourself looking out a porthole into space. You must hit one of the cursor keys to proceed onward and begin your journey. Once inside, you can acheive movement in one of two ways. Pressing a cursor arrow key will move you in the coresponding direction. There is also a control panel located in the upper right corner. By clicking on the appropriate icon you can control functions such as mobility, speech, and general interaction with people or objects. Once familiar, these functions have single letter keyboard equivalants that can speed up the selection process.

As you begin to explore the corridors, you are greeted by a variety of strange looking characters. Not all of these characters are friendly. (to say the least) If you are encountering the character for the first time, it will usually speak to you without prompting. It is entirely up to you to determine if this character possesses any valuable information, and how you are going to get it. With some characters, asking the right question alone will yield an important tidbit. In other instances, you will need to give them something to get them to part with their knowledge.

If you meet a really mean character, they will almost immediately begin combat. This will bring up the combat screen where you must quickly choose to fight, dodge, or panic. You can also initiate combat by simply positioning the cursor over the character and clicking the left mouse button. However, this is generally not advisable. It is best to think of these characters as a community because some of them are friends with each other, and none has a short memory. The combat session continues until your character (or your opponent) runs away or dies. If you die in the combat, you must appear before the Elders in their chambers where they will either resurrect you or tell you that you blew it once too many times. If the later, the game will end and you will have to reboot to try again.



The Malevolent Manti

The animation as you alter your direction is fairly smooth. With each click of the mouse, you turn in the designated direction about 45 degrees via a number of quick progressive steps. If you're the impatient type like me, you can hold down the shift key as you hit one of the cursor arrow keys, and the intermediate steps will be eliminated, allowing you travel the whole distance in one step.

Sooner or later, you will encounter an elevator. This elevator is an important part of the game for two reasons: first, it can take you to different areas you may need to go to solve your quest; secondly, it is here that you encounter the copy protection routine that asks you to type in a word from the manual. Although the manual is small, it is very important that you count your words correctly when being asked for a specific location; as the lines are not numbered. Failure to get it right in two tries will result in the game ending. This is regardless of how long it took you to find the elevator, so caution is advised.

As you start to become proficient at this game and reach the different areas, the variety and attitude of the creatures you en-

(continued on page 12)

Escort 2 —

As Amiga software becomes more elaborate, the need for additonal memory becomes great. Expansion Technologies provides the ***Escort 2,*** a two- slot expansion chassis to meet this need.

The Escort 2 is a vertical steel case 9 inches tall, by 9.5 inches deep and 2.2 inches wide. The box is painted to approximate the Amiga shade of tan. Escort connects to the Amiga 86 pin expansion port and stands about halfway to the top of the monitor. The chassis is small enough to leave both mouse connectors uncovered.

Escort is more than a memory expansion box. The additional

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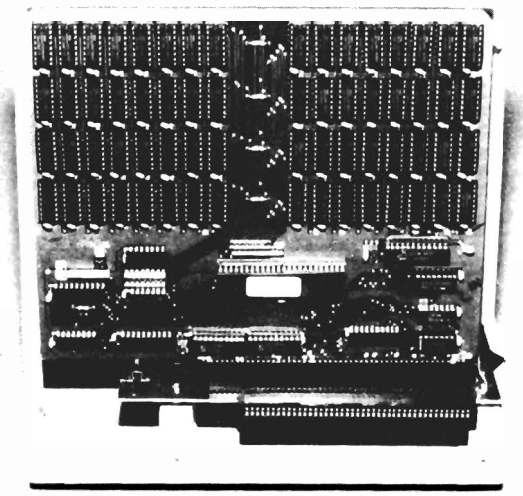

The view inside Escort reveals the 86 pin pass-through bus and two arrays of static RAM.

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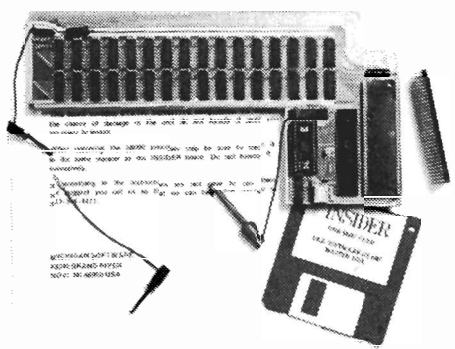

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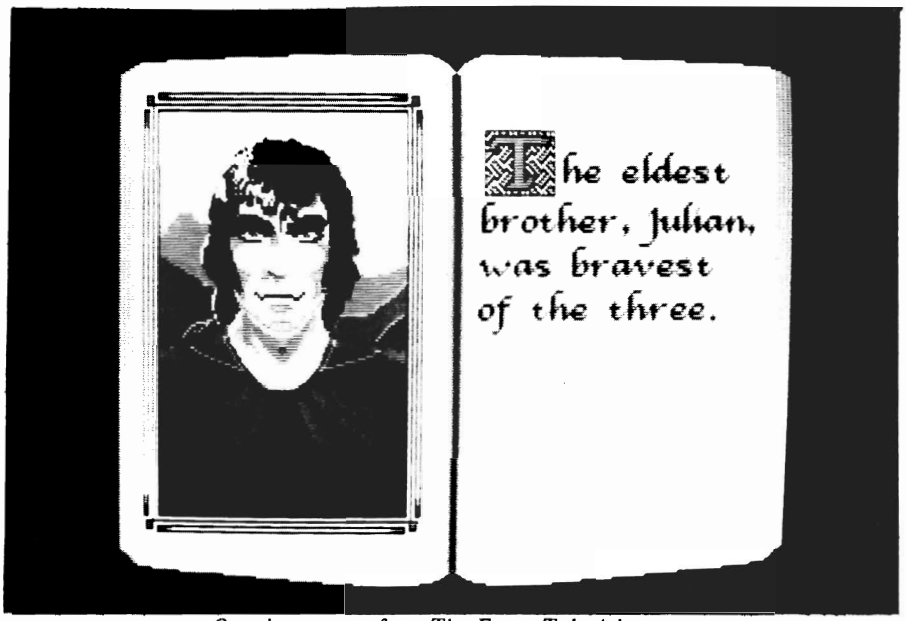
The Faery Tale Adventure

— *A Review*



Opening screen from The Faery Tale Adventure

By Norman Schutzman
(Stormin' Norman)

There are many types of adventure games. Text adventures leave the most to your imagination. Although scenes are usually described in great detail, each reader will draw upon his or her own inner thoughts to derive the actual "picture". A text adventure is like reading a book, but a book you must interact with. One drawback of this is that you may miss an important detail since, unlike a book, details are not "given" to you. You must actively seek them out, and you may miss something crucial to the plot simply because you didn't "look" there. Another drawback is that text adventures use a "parser". You must talk to the program in words or phrases the parser "knows". While a parser may have an extensive vocabulary, it can be very frustrating when you know what you want to do, but simply don't know the acceptable words to tell the program to do it.

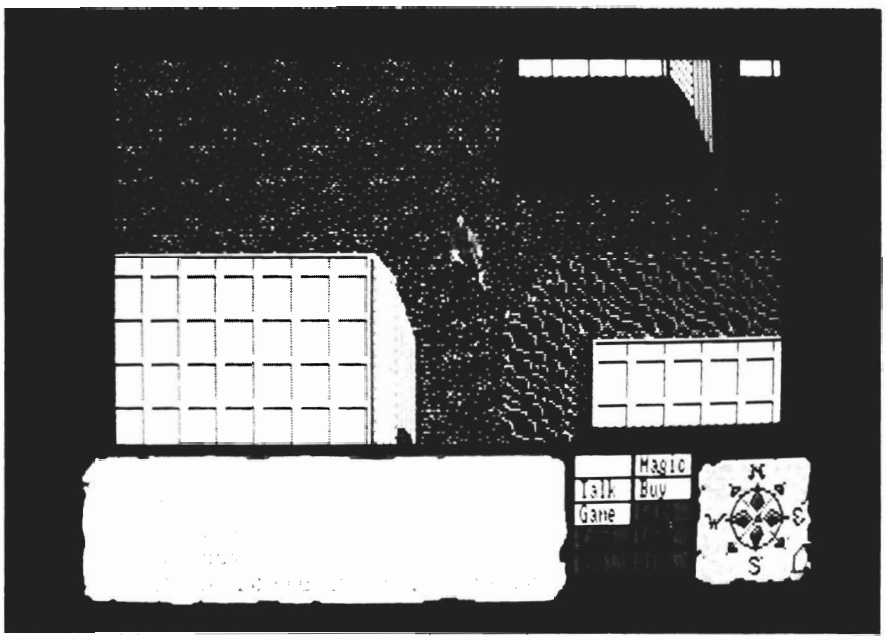
Another type of adventure is a combined text-graphic adventure. Adding graphics to text you can now actually see what is going on. This helps out your imagination considerably. The graphic artists can now "take you" to places you have never been before, since you are not limited to using your own experiences to "paint" the scene. However the text is still limited to the words known by the parser.

A third type is the all graphic adventure. Here text is replaced by options within the program which let you choose actions. No clues are provided as to what you must do, but the program provides the correct "syntax" for you. This is like the difference between reading a book and watching color television, especially since music and sound effects are usually provided.

The fourth and newest type, the animated adventure, is almost like living the part of your character in real life. Faery Tale breaks new ground in this area. The movement in Faery Tale is unbelievably smooth throughout all 14,400 screens of the kingdom, and through the other areas as well. You have complete control of your character as you guide him throughout the story. He convincingly walks and fights; moving arms and legs. He even tells you when he cannot do such things as walk through walls by looking at you and shaking his head. All this contributes to the feeling of actually being in the Faery Tale. Other

programs tried to achieve this effect, but fell short when each screen was loaded and interrupted the action.

The plot is not an unfamiliar one for adventurers. It is a cold eerie morning in the town of Tambry. Even colder than the morning are your bones, for you are about to embark on a quest that will be the greatest and most dangerous feat of your life — If you still have a life that is. One night as the village slept, an evil Necromancer, dark and hooded, moved through the village. He was followed by an army of grotesque corpses and skinless skeletons. Raiding the town, killing the people, and generally doing what monsters love to do best. Together with a band of "goblinmen," they soon left the town void of life as we know it.



Julian's home town of Tambry

As your father lay dying he pleads for you and your two brothers to save the rest of the kingdom. He explains that if you can recover the Talisman, it would drive the evil ones away and protect the people forever. The Talisman is a small carving of a bull believed to contain a spirit too powerful for any undead creature to endure. Of course, your father has no clue as to where the Talisman can be found.

As you start on that fateful morning, you are Julian the eldest and bravest of the three brothers. Hopefully, you are a patient brother, since you must now embark on a journey which may take you through the entire kingdom of Helm. This is no easy feat since the kingdom (or play area) is an unbelievably impressive 144 screens tall by 100 wide. Yes that's 14,400 screens! The terrain includes forests, deserts, snow covered mountains, lakes, castles and villages. There are other play screens which will take you through buildings, underground caverns, mazes and even the astral world, bringing the total number of screens to over 17,000!

So while you are still in the village, collect all that you can from the shops and homes, check the map which is supplied in your game packet, decide on a direction, and go to it!

Once you begin your quest, the fun never ends. On your journey you will come across numerous artifacts to help you on your quest. Each token can be used only once, but possesses great powers to help when you need it. Some objects help with navigation, transportation, control of time, seeing in the dark, seeing hidden objects, and spells. You will also find keys and weapons which you usually have to fight for. Along the way you will come across many characters. Some are friendly, and some whose only joy would be to gaze on your lifeless body. When you meet friendly characters you can talk to them and receive clues of great value. When you come across the latter you have less to think about; kill or be killed! After you kill them, a search of the body (if there is one remaining) will more often than not reward you with a weapon or key which you will need later.

Eventually, if you are good enough, and lucky enough, you will find the Talisman. Of course, having saved the Kingdom, you marry the Princess, and live happily ever after.

Something I have never seen

before is the multiple control provided in Faery Tale. You can use either the joystick, mouse, or keyboard for control, and all at the same time. Use your favorite to walk and attack in any of eight directions, and the program will respond quickly and convincingly.

On the bottom of the screen is a display of your Bravery, Luck, Kindness, Vitality, and Wealth. This area also shows a running commentary of what is happening in the game. These "scores" are important to your game play since they enable you to perform different feats. Next to this display is your command list. Here you can choose to take an object, use it, give it to someone else, list the objects you have, or look for hidden objects. There are commands which enable you to use the magic items you collect along the way, commands which let you to speak to other characters, commands which allow you to buy objects from vendors. There is even a menu that will permit you to pause a game, turn the music or sound effects on or off, and save a game or load a previous one.

A word about the packaging. Microillusions did a great job. I always throw the package out and keep those items on the inside which help with using the program. This time I'll keep the package. When I'm trying to decide what I'm going to spend my HARD earned money on, I want the package to tell me just what I will be buying. The front cover of Faery Tale is flashy enough to catch anybody's eye (a colorful picture of a ferocious dragon attacking our hero). But even more important, the back cover has six full color screens of the actual program, and a nice description of the play field. Also, and most important "what you see is what you get!" Some companies include screens written for a different computer than yours.

Inside, are very clever and fanciful photos of David Joiner and Terry Karney. David is the person responsible for the programing, the screen art and the music. Pretty impressive huh? Terry isn't listed as contributing to the program itself, but he and David staged some really neat photographic scenes at a REAL castle for your enjoyment.

The most outstanding feature of Faery Tale is its over 17,000 screens with continuous smooth scrolling.

Also included is a map of the Kingdom, so you can navigate and plan your route. A small book telling the "Faery Tale", is accompanied by a set of instructions on using the program, as well as some hints. You need the map to start your adventure since the map contains " key words" which you must type when you boot the program.

Faery Tale is copy protected, so you must be very careful with the program disk. Fortunately Microillusions has built in a safety factor by performing all saving and loading from a second formatted disk.

My major disappointment is the ending scene. Obtaining your goal leaves you with only a few lines of text and a blank screen. With the outstanding graphics and music throughout Faery Tale, it doesn't seem fair to skimp at the conclusion.

I highly recommend Faery Tale Adventure if you like adventures. Microillusions has made almost full use of the Amiga. The graphics are outstanding, and the play action is extremely lifelike. Music is also used to heighten the excitement. The original music is not only very entertaining, but changes continuously as different actions take place. The most outstanding feature of Faery Tale is its over 17,000 screens with continuous smooth scrolling.

The only other things I would like to see improved are the sound effects, (some digitized sound would be good) and more challenging or diverse feats. However, Microillusions has packed this program with quite a lot to offset this. Faery Tale will bring you excitement for a long time to come and it will take you weeks just to explore all the land.

Faery Tale Adventure:
MicroIllusions
17408 Chatsworth St.
Granada Hills, CA 91344
(800) 522-2041

Requirements:
512 K Amiga
1 Disk Drive.

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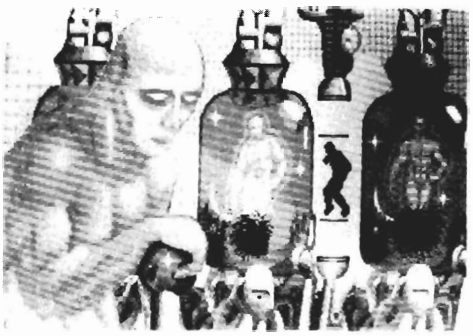
Alien Fires

(continued from page 7)



Elder's Chamber.

counter will begin to change. What used to be somewhat humanoid looking lifeforms have turned into a sordid lot of multi-limbed, conflict seeking, aliens. You will also begin to encounter a larger quantity of objects to secure, some of which are vital to your survival. Clicking on the hand icon will allow you to gather the items you find along the way into your inventory. You may examine your inventory list at any time by pressing the right mouse button.

Sometimes, it is better to quit while you're ahead. If you are so inclined, the sleep option has been included. By clicking on the sleep icon, you can save your adventure/character to your own formatted disk. This disk needs to be named AF_CHARS in order for the program to recognize the saved information. When you resume your game. You simply click on the resume a previous adventure option. A list of all saved adventures will appear, at which time you have only to choose the one you wish to resume.

I was very impressed with ALIEN FIRES, and feel that it will lead to some changes in the way that developers view graphic adventures. With programs like this in circulation, consumers will learn to expect more and more out of the programmers. This trend will come as no surprise to the knowledgeable community, being well aware that the majority of the past programming has fallen short of the real potential of the Amiga. Even with the level of sophistication in ALIEN FIRES, it is certain that additional features, such as animation of various characters, will be a part of future adventures. (Jagware plans to make this the first of several adventures. Each episode will take place in a different era involving a new quest).

The folks at Jagware have really put some time into creating a challenging adventure. The program has been written to be non-linear, providing you with many hours of futuristic fun. I enjoyed entering the various rooms and trying to negotiate my way out of some pretty hairy situations; I'm sure you will too!

Alien Fires:

Jagware
(800) 267-1904

REQUIREMENTS:

512K Amiga
Kickstart 1.2

Record Keeping for Small Business

— First Impressions

by Steve Dock

First impressions are supposed to be lasting. Wow! This new "accounting" package sure gets off to a great start. Record Keeping for Small Business (RKSB) is packaged in a gray glove-leather-like executive case with pockets and memo pad. The elegant case contains a disk, a 14 page manual, and the author's home telephone number!

RKSB is Aimed at the owner/manager who does his or her own accounting. All businesses need to keep financial records but; an owner/manager has special requirements. He or she needs to use financial information to make business decisions. A manager is losing money when taking care of the books.

RKSB performs all standard accounting functions without the need for accounting knowledge or jargon. It is constantly up-to-the-minute, and packed with useful reports. Every aspect of RKSB is directed to helping you manage your business, in contrast to producing accounting statements. Of course RKSB does produce the standard CashFlow, Balance Sheet and Income statements as well.

What makes this software so different, so impressive, is the *intelligence* evident in every screen. Charles Anthony, President of Nimbus, has incorporated standard accounting practice behind the scenes of his package. By avoiding the words "debit' and "credit", and substituting practical everyday terms, he has given us back control of our financial destiny.

Gentle coercion best describes the program flow. The very first time you boot RKSB, you are presented with the General Accounts screen. You must enter basic company information before any other work begins. Enter your company name, address, fiscal year end date, and beginning bank balances. This screen, like all the others can be aborted by pressing the ESC key. To save the data and continue, press the F10 key. Your company data is now present in all invoices, statements, and reports.

By substituting practical everyday terms, he has given us back control of our financial destiny.

The next window you see is the Activity Date window. You must set the date by clicking on arrows. This date is automatically entered in any transactions during this session. You can set the activity date to a past date, in order to make changes or additions. Click on ACCEPT DATE. From this point on, you will be guided by "Mini Menus" which present tasks in a logical order.

You will notice that three screens are stacked, one over another. The three modules of Record Keeping for Small Business are always simultaneously active. You can instantly switch from Sales/Receivable, to Purchases/Payable, to General Accounts by clicking the back/front gadgets. Each screen is a distinct color, Burgundy for General Accounts, Blue for Sales, and Gold for Purchase Accounts. Anything you type will appear black, while the items controlled by the program are white.

For me, financial record keeping begins with sales. So the first screen I tried was Sales/Receivable Accounts. Here a "Mini Menu" presented me with a few options: New Customer; Existing Customer; Edit Customer Info. Logically, I would need to begin with a new customer. One

click, and a blank form presents itself. The top half has lines for Name, Address, Zip, and Phone. Press F1, and the cursor moves to the lower half, where you enter any outstanding balance. Nothing more to enter, so press F10, and a blank invoice appears. (As with each RKSB screen the function keys are reproduced at the very bottom for reference).

The form looks like a statement you would send to a client. The top half already contains my company name and address, today's date, the customer name, address, and an invoice number! The cursor is positioned in the column for item description. Press return to move to the amount column. Press again, and move to the rate column. Type in a dollar figure and several fields on the form are instantly updated. The item cost is immediately computed by multiplying amount by rate. Invoice totals and total due are calculated, including any outstanding balance you may have entered earlier. These totals continue to update as you complete each line. Sales tax is also taken care of on the form. You can print now, or wait for end of day processing. Now thats the way to run a business!

I've used RKSB for a few days now, and can't wait to complete a full month. Reports are always there when I need them, and can be printed with a click of the mouse. Data entered in one module is automatically passed to the next. Every screen behaves in the same fashion, making the learning curve very short. You can't goof up by quitting the system until all logically related transactions are complete. Nimbus deserves high praise for this fast, practical, and intelligent software.

So far this system delivers what it promises - complete financial record keeping without the need to read manuals, or be an accountant. Stay tuned for an upcoming comparison feature between some current (and forthcoming) business record keeping packages.

Record Keeping for Small Business:
Nimbus
Box 1433
Rancho SanteFe, CA 92067
(619) 944-3453

Requirements:
512 K Amiga
1 Disk Drive

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But this is just the beginning! All the source code is provided — more than 4,000 lines of Amiga Basic and nearly 1,000 lines of C. The documentation explains how everything works and, along with the program listings, will lead you from simple Basic routines to advanced programming techniques such as:

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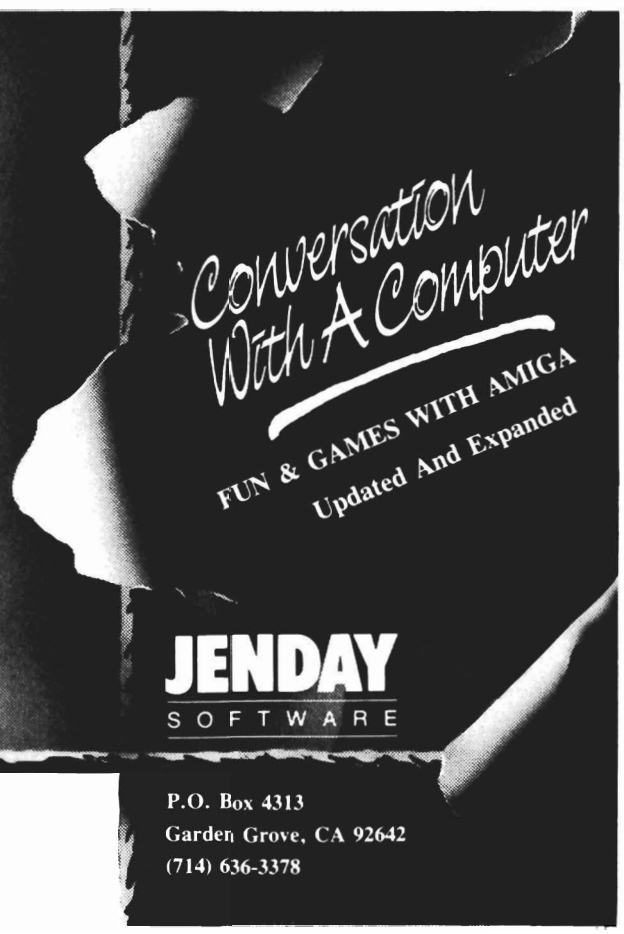

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Kermit

Amiga to IBM Mainframe File Transfer

by Geoffrey S. Mendelson

Now that you've gotten your AMIGA wouldn't, it be nice if you could work on it at home, and then transfer your data to the mainframe computer at work. You could just log on to the mainframe,and use the AMIGA as a terminal; transfering files from the AMIGA to your mainframe.

I find this especially useful, since there is no spelling checker on the mainframes I use. In order to transfer files to and from your AMIGA you must be able to do two things:

1. Log on to your mainframe from the AMIGA.
2. Be able to run your own pro grams on the mainframe.

You will need two types of software. First, find a terminal program that supports the KERMIT protocol . I have had the most success with the AMIGA KERMIT program. (Several other communications programs include KERMIT as a transfer protocol.) AMIGA KERMIT will support file transfer, and also will emulate a DEC VT100 terminal. For your mainframe, you need a version of KERMIT for the particular hardware and operating system you are using.

Wait a minute, I'll bet you thought KERMIT was a frog. The KERMIT file transfer program was in fact named in honor of KERMIT The Frog. KERMIT was developed by Columbia University, and has been placed in the public domain. Since KERMIT is usable by anyone who does not charge for it, KERMIT has become almost universal in its application. KERMIT versions are available for most computers, both micros and mainframes.

KERMIT can be obtained by several methods. All versions of KERMIT can be gotten for a small fee from COLUMBIA University. If a friend of yours has KERMIT, you may legally copy it. If your users group or favorite bulletin board does not have KERMIT Please give it to them once you get it.

The mainframe version also can be gotten from COLUMBIA. It may be obtained from the hardware vendor of your mainframe. Generally, they will deny KERMIT'S existence, as they sell a file transfer package for their particular brand of computer. If you ask them to ask around they will usually find someone with what you want. It just takes a little perseverance and patience.

(continued on page 35)

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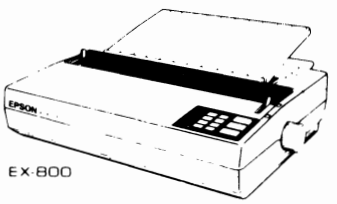

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Graphic Tablet Comparision

Given the graphic preoccupation of most Amiga owners, some of you will soon be needing a graphic tablet.

Read on if you would like to improve the quality of your Amiga art.

Easyl does it!

by Tom Bucklin

The Easyl digitizing tablet from Anakin Research enables you to produce drawings with traditional writing materials while displaying the results on your monitor screen. The product comes with the pad, (an 8 1/2" by 13" low profile oak framed drawing surface), a 9 1/4" X 1 1/2" X 6" metal chassis that plugs into the expansion port (pass through included), a program disk with the necessary drivers - utilities, the Easyl drawing program, a teflon-tipped drawing instrument, four registration pegs, and a spiral bound manual. Easyl is a pressure sensitive type of graphic input tablet. It's constructed so that light drawing pressure will not produce an output to the screen. An LED on the interface box lights when output pressure is reached, giving you a visual indicator of the graphic output. This feature enables you to sketch out what you want on the tablet, then by adjusting your pressure, retrace the best version of it for editing and storage as an IFF file.

In order to use the pad, you must first install a software "driver". The installation process is very simple, and can be accomplished just by clicking on the appropriate icons from the Workbench screen.

The driver is a program (provided with the Easyl) that allows the Amiga to accept input from the pad. Most hardware add-ons require this kind of set-up. A good example would be the case of expanded memory beyond 512K. If you just plug a board onto the expansion port, it does not become part of the existing electronics. A software driver (which has been written into Kickstart/Workbench 1.2) is necessary to configure the new hardware with the many existing processes.

The Easyl drivers exist in several different forms covering the whole gamut of applications. There is a separate set of drivers to support either 1.1 or 1.2 Kickstart (1.2 recommended), as well as "general" and "Pro" drivers.

The general driver has been designed to work with every application where the mouse is cur-

rently used. The driver exists in four parts entitled: Leftdriver, Rightdriver, LLeftdriver, and RRightdriver. These represent the various configurations that are available to the user. The Rightdriver and Leftdriver are the mouse emulation drivers. When using the pad with one of these drivers, drawing pressure on the pad must be combined with holding down the appropriate switch on the pad frame to simulate holding down the left mouse button. Since this can become a little tedious over a long period of time, the RRightdriver and LLeftdriver can be used in place of the standard drivers. For those who want a drawing medium that most simulates paper and pencil, these drivers would be preferable. Once installed, pressure from the point of your drawing instrument alone will produce output to the screen. The general driver can be removed from memory by pressing the keystroke combination Control-shift-alt with the left hand, and right shift with the right hand.

The purpose of the Left and Right drivers is to provide a way for the user to orient the command strip on the side of his preference, while retaining a "right side up" image. (more on the command strip later) Without this option, positioning the pad in a different direction would result in the top of your drawing surface being the bottom of the monitor screen, or vice versa.

The general drivers allow the whole pad surface to be mapped onto the whole Amiga screen, and occupy about 8K of memory; not much of a consideration when being used as a general mouse substitute. However, in situations where memory is already tight, (DPaint in hi-res mode on a 512 machine), 8K could be disastrous. It is, however, time to recognize that in order to use many present and future programs to their full effectiveness, memory expansion of some type will be necessary. Most software companies are already anticipating this evolution, and are modifying their programs to take advantage of memory beyond the 512 chip ram addresses.

The Prodrivers exist in the same configurations as the general drivers, but they occupy 30K of memory. The main reason for the larger size program is due to the built in sizing option. This option allows you to utilize the full drawing area on the the pad, while being able to choose the size and location of the affected area on the screen. Once installed, you call up the Pro Driver window by pressing the keystroke combination Control-Alt-Alt.

NOTE: *it is important to try to size your window before you begin your drawing;* as calling up the window over an underlying picture will cause that portion of the picture to be erased after closing the window. This is a weak point we hope will be solved in future Pro driver enhancements. If a drawing is already in progress, and you find a need for sizing the window, you can always go to a non-active screen first, (Dpaint's spare screen, the underlying CLI or Workbench screen) do your sizing, and then return to your work screen. However, due to the fact that you can size AND move the Pro driver window to any location, it becomes a guessing game if you need to make the resized window fit into a predetermined space.

The registration pegs can be used to create animation cells. Once attached to the frame by means of their self-adhesive backing, the pegs provide a way to achieve a consistent registration between frames. By using a sheet of paper with punched holes along one side, you can establish your animation positioning. It can also be quite useful for resuming a single drawing. The pegs can be used to hold templates you make up for using the Easyl as a touch command device with a particular program.

Although the pad can provide a high sampling rate, (250 coordinate pairs per second) Anakin states that this rate is somewhat crippled by the need to simulate the sampling rate of the mouse. In order to provide a means of using the pad at full sampling rate, and take advantage of some other special features as well, the Easyl drawing program has been developed. This 69K program provides a drawing/painting environment, and while not quite a DeluxePaint, it does introduce some special features native to the pad.

The first of these these features is the command strip. This strip, positioned vertically along one side of the frame, consists of a series of colored boxes and letters. By touching the appropriate box, you can perform functions such as color changes, fill opera-

Easyl does it! —
(continued from previous page)

tions, and saving to a spare screen. Although this function is primarily designed for use with the Easyl drawing program, we have found that orienting the strip along the right side (by using the rrightdriver) will also allow you to activate some of the tool selections from DPaint. The program is menu driven and includes some of the standard options such as screen resolutions, brush selections, and editing. The thinning option assures that drawing on the pad will produce uniform size lines regardless of the speed with which they are drawn. Using the orientation option allows you to use the pad in a vertical position (portrait mode), or in one of the horizontal (landscape) modes.

If you intend to make a change of resolution, make sure to save your work first. A change of resolution within the Easyl program will result in the loss of your memory stored image.

For the most part, our primary objections were focused on the software and its lack of sophistication. The inability to bring up windows without erasing the image underneath is one area we hope that Anakin attends to in the next enhancement. On the hardware side, it is important to mention that the Easyl control chassis configures beginning at address 200,000. This could conceivably create a conflict if you have another peripheral that configures at that address. Check with Anakin before you

(continued on page 33)

KURTA PenMouse +

by Steve Dock

The PenMouse + by Kurta is an alternative graphic input device which is much better suited to drawing than the Amiga mouse. My PenMouse arrived in a glossily printed box clearly labelled "For the IBM PC/XT/AT." With more than a little fear I opened the package anyway. Inside were two sealed envelopes. The first contained a 5 1/4 inch floppy diskette and manual for the IBM PC. Fortunately the second held a 3 1/2 inch diskette and Amiga manual. Obviously the same Kurta PenMouse works on the IBM and Amiga.

The PenMouse system consists of several parts; the driver software called PenCraft, a PenMouse + users guide, an 6 inch long pen which contains a radio transmitter, an 8 and 1/2 inch by 11 inch graphic tablet, and a connector for the Amiga's serial port. All components are very professional in finish and seem well made and durable.

Installation is clearly detailed on page 3 of the PenCraft manual as well as on a one page cardboard stock insert. Start with the Amiga powered off. Attach the Kurta adapter to the serial port then connect the telephone type cable to the back of the adapter. Now power up your Amiga and insert the PenCraft disk when prompted for Workbench. Open the disk Icon and click on the PenCraft Icon. Voila! Your PenMouse is installed with its default configuration.

Now the fun begins. Press the Pen down once on the pad surface to activate it. Watch as the screen pointer moves around following your movements on the graphic tablet. You don't even have to touch the tablet! The Pen will transmit its location accurately up to 1 inch above the surface. Moving the screen pointer directly from place to place on the screen is fun, but its soon time to try drawing with the PenMouse.

The Pen portion of the PenMouse + is about 1/2 inch in diameter with two flattened sides to serve as finger grips. The body of the pen incorporates three switches. The nylon tip is a pressure sensitive switch which emulates the left Amiga mouse button. The pen barrel also has two small blue switches close to the tip. Pressing either switch emulates the right Amiga mouse button. This information appears on page 7 of the PenCraft manual. Now we know enough to try out Dpaint with a PenMouse + .

Once started, the Pencraft driver will remain active until a sys-

tem reset, so all that's needed is to start Dpaint. After opening a CLI window I typed "Run Dpaint" and sat back. As soon as the familiar drawing screen appeared, I moved the PenMouse on the tablet and attempted to reproduce my signature. Not much happened. Yes the crosshairs moved across the screen, but no lines were drawn. I tried again this time with a bit more pressure on the tablet surface. Sure enough, a smooth tangle of lines and loops appeared on the screen.

Although the PenMouse does not require pressure on the tablet to transmit its location, the switch in the pen tip emulates the left mouse button. Therefore it must remain pressed down as you draw just as the left button of the mouse must remain pressed. In order to make good use of the PenMouse one more technique needs to be learned. Moving the pen to point at Dpaint's menu is swift and direct, but pressing down to select a menu item while simultaneously pressing one of the pen barrel switches takes a little practice. (The Amiga mouse remains active along with the Penmouse, so you may decide to use it for pointing.) Still in all I was drawing with the new PenMouse within 15 minutes! I have since used PenMouse successfully with all resolutions of Dpaint, Aegis Images, Aegis Draw, Dynamic Cad, and Prism.

The superiority of the PenMouse is especially obvious when sketching freehand curves and diagonal lines. What is a chore with the mouse is simple and natural with the PenMouse. Use of the PenMouse has certainly not improved my limited artistic skills, but it has made drawing easier. Another advantage of using PenMouse is the screen pointer. PenMouse moves the pointer directly from place to place. The normal Amiga mouse moves relative to its last location, and may take repeat movements to get where you desire. The screen location transmitted by the PenMouse is precise and repeatable. You move to any point on the screen at once.

For me the most impressive capability added by the PenMouse is tracing. By placing a drawing, photograph, advertisement, etc. on the tablet I can trace its outlines and shading. It's then a simple matter to fill in areas with color and add a new image to my IFF collection! Its not quite DigiView, but PenMouse tracing can become quite adictive. Tracing does bring out one limitation of the PenMouse. Although the tablet is 8 1/2 by 11 inches the active drawing area is only 6 by 9 inches. The active area maps to an entire Amiga screen so you are limited to tracing 6 by 9 inch objects.

The Pencraft software can be easily copied to other disks or started prior to booting other applications. While it is running Pencraft transmits the coordinates of your mouse to your application. It sends 37.5 points per second. This is more than adequate to produce smooth and precise curved lines in the Amiga high resolution mode.

The PenMouse + is the entry level in a series of Kurta graphic input devices. The Kurta Series One, Two and Three go up to large scale drafting size and cost thousands of dollars. All of the Kurta products use the same PenCraft software. An installation program is provided on the Kurta diskette. This program operates with familiar Amiga menu and mouse selections. However, almost all of the options are not applicable to the PenMouse. You can slow down the Baud rate, reduce the resolution, or reduce the active area of the PenMouse, but none of these choices will improve performance. For once the default configuration is the best. When running, PenCraft uses 21 K of Amiga memory. It should not interfere with many application programs, but once its started the only to stop it is to reboot your Amiga.

While the PenMouse product is very useful, there is some room for improvement. First and foremost the PenCraft software should be updated to enable user selection of mouse button emulation. I would prefer to use both buttons on the pen rather than pressing the pen point for left button action. This is certainly technically feasible, but will of course depend on Kurta's commitment to improving PenCraft. I would also encourage Kurta to add a serial port pass-through to the PenMouse adapter. In its current configuration the PenMouse hogs the serial port forcing you to disconnect your modem in order to use PenMouse. An alternative is to purchase a serial data transfer switch and cables. The switch will allow you

(continued on page 33)

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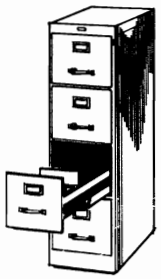

ACQUISITION - 'The Ultimate Database'

by George Graves

You have probably seen the advertisements. Big! Bold! Full page! "The Ultimate Database for the Amiga". It's been just over a month since I received ACQUISITION, one of the first "production" copies in the U.S., fresh in from England, not on anyone's shelf yet.

I can still remember as the salesman rattled off the capabilities of this data base package: maximum field size of ten megabytes; maximum ten million fields per record; maximum of 100 million records in a file; maximum file size of one gigabyte. Sorts can be done on up-to sixty-five thousand fields. Records may be selected with up to sixty-five thousand selection criteria. There is no limit to the number of files in the system.

Data may be specified as alphameric, numeric, date, time or logical types. Fields may contain these elements as well as IFF data such as pictures. Expressions may be entered in data fields. And Acquisition comes with a complete programming language with over 200 commands.

This might really be it; the first "breakthrough" data base product for the Amiga. A product which separates this special machine from all the rest. The possibilities of a fully programmable relational database system get me really excited.

Acquisition, developed in Guildford, Surrey, England and produced for world-wide distribution by Taurus Impex Ltd., is in my opinion the most promising piece of software for the Amiga to date. It uses the graphics and multiprocessing capabilities of the machine. It appears to be a state-of-the-art relational data base capable of handling color images with the same ease that most prior packages handle dollars and cents. It has flexibilities that make its practical applications virtually limitless. Screens can be designed that are absolutely beautiful. No other software to date can boast of the package of features that it offers. It even talks. And, it's only $299.

This might really be it; the first "breakthrough" database product for the Amiga.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of Acquisition is the integration of Graphics into the system itself. Fields may be placed upon graphic backdrops; data entry and display screens may be drawn with tools in Acquisition; or created in a program such as DeluxePaint.

A very powerful example of this is the checkbook demonstration which comes with the package. In that example, data is displayed on the image of an open checkbook. The checks in the book have the same background texture as actual checks. This makes for a striking visual presentation.

The Acquisition package is a manual in a gray loose-leaf binder, two diskettes, a dongle and a registration card. The whole whole thing fits into a gray slipcase.

Acquisition consists of seven distinct sections: Settings, Creating, Bridging, Pasting, Filing, Linking, and the Acom programming language.

SETTINGS sets system-wide parameters. It is this screen which describes where system output goes; when housekeeping functions are to be performed (weekly, daily, whenever the system needs them done, etc.); deletes unwanted files; changes the names of commands; makes disk backups; etc.

CREATING is used for database definition. Use of this screen is relatively straightforward, since at least the first cut at screen lay-

out is automatic. Creating is the key to the system. Fields may be created which are not stored on the database, but exist in memory only. Fields may also be created with an instruction stream attached That instruction stream will be executed when data is entered and the results will be stored into the file. Which happens to be wonderful, if you need to perform data encoding and decoding, or encryption of fields.

The next section of Acquisition is entitled *PASTING*. Here graphics, speech and other features are added. Text may attached to any field, and will be spoken by the Amiga narrator functions.

The *BRIDGING* program defines accesses to and between files. Files have two types of access "SYSTEM" and "RELATIONAL". System accesses are those which depend upon data only in the file being accessed. Each file is required to have one System path (Index) which contains unique information. *Bridging* can create additional System paths.

In addition, Bridging creates paths which join two files. The true power of a relational data base is this ability to join files in whatever combination needed. Joining is simple and, as with all other functions in Acquisition, accomplished from attractive graphic panels.

The *FILING* program is the database retrieval module. It is also where you enter your data into the system. Filing is simple, straightforward, easy to use, friendly and generally a very creative package.

The *FILING* program resides on a separate disk from the Creating and Bridging programs. To switch disks, you must open a drawer of utility programs, and double click on the Change Disk Icon. You will be prompted to swap disk several times. Apparently Acquisition doesn't support the use of RAM: or DF2: .

Surprisingly, *FILING* is the module which is dongle protected. If Taurus feels the need to copy protect Acquisition, why wouldn't they protect the Creating module? That would lock up the ability to build databases, but not the ability to share creative applications with associates.

The *LINKING* section is used for the definition and generation of reports. On the basis of my testing, this facility seems to be a listing generator. A full fledged report generator which can generate invoices, bills, checks and the like may be there, but I haven't

(continued on page 29)

Why Buy Amiga* Expansion Products That Limit Expansion?

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Desktop Publishing Update: ***Amiga Sentry just received the specification sheet for a new product from Gold Disk Inc. In light of concerns raised in the following review, we deemed this new announcement to be significant enough to justify reproducing it below. Look for further information in a coming issue!***

Professional Page TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Major Components

The Professional Page integrates full-featured word processing, precision typesetting, bitmap/structured graphics, and powerful page layout capabilities in an easy to use, comprehensive desktop publishing system.

Word Processing

- Full featured WYSIWYG editing using mouse or keyboard commands.
- Left, right, center, and flush justify (with user controllable word and letter spacing) modes.
- User definable tabs.
- Text block manipulations including cut, paste, copy, style, and colour.
- Search and replace with optional query.

Hyphenation

- Algorithmic (with user definable exception dictionary) or discretionary hyphenation.
- Suggested hyphenation of any word may be requested.

Text Handling

- Automatic text flow from box to box, column to column, and page to page.
- Automatic text run-around for graphics or other, user specified, boxes.
- Ability to flow text around irregular shaped graphics.
- Page numbering may be done automatically and the "continued to/from" linkages for articles is maintained by the system.

Text Import

- Text may be imported from Scribble!, TextCraft, TextCraft Plus, ProWrite, WordPerfect or generic and IFF TEXT formats.

Typesetting Features

- Font sizes up to 127 points.
- Text styles consist of bold, italic, underline, outline, shadow, and combinations.
- Automatic and manual kerning. Text may be manually kerned in 1/100 of an em space. Automatic kerning uses tables specific to each font.
- Tracking allows adjustment of spacing between a selected range of letters in increments of 1/100 of an em space.
- Absolute, relative and automatic leading with accuracy better than 1/1000 of a point.
- Other features include paragraph spacing, availability of em, en, and thinspace characters, and baseline shifts of single or range of characters.

Graphics

Both bitmap and structured graphics are supported. Graphics may be scaled and cropped both visually (click and drag) or numerically (for greater control) and may be placed anywhere on the page.

Bitmap Graphics

- Up to 256 colours or 4096-colour HAM mode.
- Colour images are displayed onscreen in 16 level grey scale representations.
- Bitmap graphics may be imported from any package supporting the IFF file format (Deluxe Paint, Deluxe Paint II, Aegis Images, GraphicCraft, etc.).
- Printed as black and white halftone images with user definable screen density and levels (constrained only by output device resolution).

Structured Graphics

- A full set of tools for creating/editing structured graphics: lines, rectangles, circles, arcs, ellipses, free draw, polygons and bezier curves.
- Variety of line types, weights and colours are available.
- Variety of fill patterns and colours are available.
- Structured graphics may be imported from Aegis Draw.
- Structured graphics are printed in the full resolution of the output device.

Document Specification

- Page sizes may be US letter, legal, A4, B5, or user specified up to 17"x17".
- Up to 999 pages per document limited only by main memory.
- Master pages for recurring design elements. Independent masters may be specified for odd and even pages.
- Move and delete pages.
- Automatic or manual page numbering.

Page Composition

- Complete control over page composition using an intuitive and flexible user interface.
- Ability to integrate text and graphics.
- Text or graphic boxes may be resized or repostioned at any time both visually or numerically (for greater control).
- Boxes may be bordered, shadowed, or textured in a variety of linestyles and patterns.
- Boxes may be transparent or opaque with full control over hierarchy.
- Boxes may be grouped for easy positioning.
- Ability to view facing pages simultaneously.
- 4 levels of magnifications including size-to-fit. All operations function in any magnification mode.
- All measurements in inches, centimeters, or pica.points.
- Tools include rulers, grids, grid-snap, column/margin indicators, and box outline indicators.

Printing

- Output on any PostScript device including popular laser printers and Typesetting machines.
- Thumbnail printing where entire document is printed in reduced size on a single sheet as a story board.
- Draft printing, only the text is printed for quick output.
- Automatic tiling for oversized pages with user specified overlap.
- Custom Page Design Studio where any page may be rotated, sized, moved, reflected, and combined with any other document page on the output page.

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LaserScript

by Steve Dock

With the release of LaserScript by Gold Disk, Amiga Desktop Publishing has finally arrived. Yes I know, PageSetter was released in December 1986 and Publisher 1000 was released in May 1987, but neither of these products provides Adobe fonts, full and multiple page manipulations, page masters, and PostScript support. Without these capabilities PageSetter, etc. are merely Desktop Publishing simulations.

LaserScript is sold as a 'PageSetter Module" which is to say, that LaserScript is not intended as a stand alone application. Your newsletter, booklet, or, advertisement will still be edited, and composed using PageSetter. However, LaserScript will enable you to add sophisticated effects and direct your results to a "Postscript" laser printer or Linotype typesetter. The difference in the quality of the finished product is amazing.

Laserscript consists of one diskette, a manual and a plastic book-type package. The software is shipped on a 1.2 Workbench disk, and is started by clicking on the Laserscript program Icon, which looks like a laser printer (of course). Since I usually test-drive a new piece of software before opening the manual, I was somewhat disappointed by Laserscript at first. There are just three screens with a few button and text gadgets to manipulate. Not much excitement at first, but there are several exciting effects waiting on those screens.

A twenty-four page "User's Guide" is included with LaserScript. The guide was written, edited, composed, and "typeset" using PageSetter and LaserScript, and is a good indicator of the product. However, the User's Guide is somewhat dull. Only the cover shows any sign of the polish possible with Desktop Publishing. I'd guess that a much more elaborate reference guide is in progress for latter releases. The current LaserScript documentation is sufficient, but sparse and lacking in examples.

LaserScript is only useful if you own or can secure use of a POSTSCRIPT compatible laser printer. The Apple LaserWriter is the most popular of the postscript printers. However, there are many other companies offering similiar printers at much lower prices. The Apple can be purchased for about $4000 if you find a good deal. I suggest you check out local colleges and universities which are Apple hotbeds. Another alternative is to cart your machine to any of the copy shops that provide laser printer output services (usually around $1.00/page). This behavior is sure to confound a few MacIntosh partisans and maybe even open up some eyes to what the Amiga can really do!

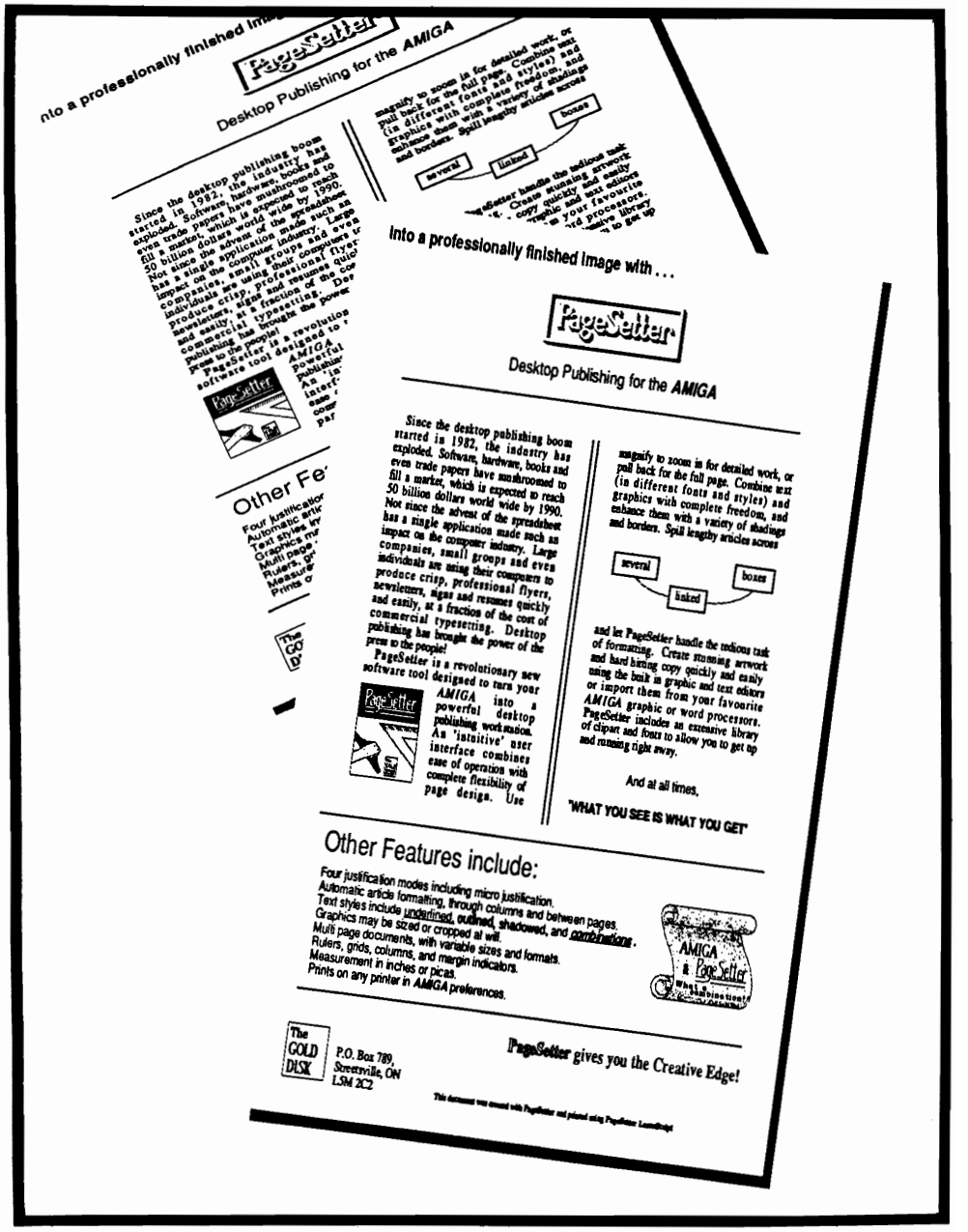
In order to obtain high quality results from LaserScript, you must create your PageSetter pages with the Adobe Fonts included on the LaserScript disk. The normal Amiga fonts are bitmapped and not known to the Postscript system in the laser printer. This means that when they are printed by an Apple Laserwritter or QMS PS800 they will not look very good. The Adobe fonts supplied by Gold Disk include Times, Courier, Helvetica, and Symbol in a variety of sizes. Documents produced with these fonts will look familiar, since these typefaces are widely used in all segments of the publishing industry.

The User's Guide clearly describes three alternative methods to use the Adobe fonts from within PageSetter. The easiest method is to boot your Amiga from the LaserScript disk. Then start PageSetter by inserting that disk and clicking on its Icon. When you ask for a font Pagesetter will read the *LaserFonts* direc-

tory. As usual the actual font(s) selected will be used on your PageSetter screen. Another method, is to copy the fonts from LaserScript to Pagesetter using the Copy command or a File Manager program. The last technique uses the Assign command to *assign Fonts to LaserScript:Fonts*.

Now you are ready to use the new LaserScript fonts to compose a PageSetter document. You can even print to a dot matrix printer with the new fonts. Once you have saved your Pagesetter document, its time to try out LaserScript.

Very soon after you click on the LaserScript Icon, a file requestor appears. You must select a PageSetter document file to proceed. Next, you will select either the Standard Print or Custom Print option. If you click on Standard Print, you will very quickly see a new screen. The Standard Print screen contains requestors for the name of your PageSetter file, the beginning and ending page, the number of copies you wish, and the output device (eg., serial or parallel). You can print your document as soon as you have entered its name by clicking on the PRINT button. LaserScript pauses for a minute, and then sends a stream of PostScript commands to your laser printer. You can direct the LaserScript output to a disk file for 'offline printing' if desired. The resulting disk file contains standard ASCII data, and can be examined by using Ed or TYPE. You can even transfer this PostScript file via modem to another computer which is attached to an appropriate laser printer.



Sample output shows how Laserscript allows for multiplexing, rotating, and scaling of the same or different full-page images in the step between composition and printing.

PostScript requires a Motorola 68000 CPU and at least 1 megabyte of memory in the laser printer. The PostScript page description language also resides in ROM inside the printer. When the LaserWriter receives printing commands, PostScript interprets them, calculates the vectors needed to produce the letters and graphics requested, and produces the necessary pattern of dots on the laser device. Quite a bit more internal processing needed than your dot matrix printer.

Although the Apple Laserwriter is capable of printing eight full pages per minute, if many differ-

ent fonts or graphic images are included, the printing may take fifteen or more minutes per page! However, the finished product is worth the wait. Each letter is uniformly black, the curves are round, and no "jaggies" can be seen. The Clip-Art included on the PageSetter disk doesn't show as dramatic an improvement. That's because it wasn't drawn in 300 dots per inch resolution.

You can begin to use the customizing features of the program by clicking on the Change Defaults box. A new screen will appear with more gadgets for coordinates, scale, rotation, shadow, and outline. You can change the length and width of the output page, scale your PageSetter pages in the X or Y dimensions, add border or shadows, and rotate the entire page from 1 to 360 degrees. Once you set the appropriate dimensions, scale factors, and effects, you can save these settings as a "form". Of course, forms can be loaded and reused. I was especially impressed with the ability to specify different formats for EVEN and ODD pages. By setting the rotation angle to 90 degrees, you can produce 'Landscape' or sideways pages. Each of these options applies to the entire PageSetter document, whether one or many pages.

In the center of the Change Defaults Screen is a white rectangle, which represents the current LaserScript page. Your Pagesetter page is represented by an orange box on the white rectangle. The box is empty however. You must wait for the printed copy to judge the results of your tinkering. Naturally, you can move the orange box by clicking on it and dragging with the mouse. You can slide part of a PageSetter page off the LaserScript page if you want to. You can stretch or shrink the page too. Manipulate pages with either the mouse, or by typing in the gadgets to the right of the screen. All of this in the standard print section.

If you select exit, you will quickly be returned to the initial screen. Here you can choose the "Custom Print" option. This screen is very similar to Standard Print. All of the same gadgets and capabilities are here, plus six new ones. The ADD PAGE gadget lets you place more than one PageSetter page on the LaserScript page. You may position, scale, and rotate each page to produce striking effects. The sample included on the LaserScript disk shows

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Rattigan

(continued from Page 5)

dismissal. But by May 4th, as reports of Commodore's third quarter 1986 earnings appeared, "highly placed", Commodore spokesmen blamed the poor performance on Rattigan. During the quarter ending March 31, 1987, Commodore's total sales had dropped to $169.5 from $181 million and profit was a very thin one million dollars.

Although he was hired as a marketing expert, Rattigan had concentrated on cost cutting to reduce expenses and raise profits. Though he was CEO of Commodore International, Rattigan's responsibilities were limited and concentrated in the US. Now, the recent decline in revenue was blamed on very poor US sales. Gould himself reported that over 70% of revenue came from overseas operations.

Further efforts to discredit Rattigan have appeared in the Computer Press. The cost reduction program which led to Commodore's turn around has been credited to the Dillon Reed investment bankers who were hired by Commodore's banks! Rattigan and Sheppard have also been accused of killing the LosGatos Amiga team. This group which designed the custom chips and much of the operating system which makes the Amiga so unique, had been trimmed repeatedly during 1986 and finally shut down March 31, 1987. (Amiga design and engineering is now done in West Chester). Rattigan has even been accused of "IBM-ness". Reportedly against Gould's wishes, Rattigan imported the German built PC-10 and PC-20 IBM compatible machines into the US. These systems sell well overseas where Commodore has an established dealer network. Gould supposedly believes that the unique graphics and power of the AMIGA should be the foundation of US marketing efforts.

Gould has fought hard for the Amiga, including law suits with Atari, and large stock exchanges with the original Amiga owners. He is supposed to be a backer of the Amiga 2000 and was reportedly involved in creating the German version of the 2000. Delays in completing the US version of the 2000 have also been cited as part of the decision to dismiss Rattigan. There is even speculation that Gould wanted keep the LosGatos team together as well.

The immediate future for Amiga is in the hands of a new team now. Mr. Gould has stated that he will continue as CEO for as long as he deems necessary and that increasing US distribution of the Amiga is a high priority.

Gould has made at least two key high level appointments. Alfred Duncan is the new General Manager of US operations. He is a former Commodore employee who has worked with Commodore's Canadian and Italian operations. Duncan left Commodore and was recently President of Victor Computers.

Richard McIntyre is the newly appointed US Sales Manager. McIntyre will be in charge of bringing some life into the stalled marketing and sales activities. He is a long time Commodore employee who was formerly was manager of the very successful Canadian operations. His challenge will be even greater then Duncan's. A marketing program must be developed to overshadow the impression of a company in chaos. The Amiga 2000 must be positioned as a unique productivity tool while the Amiga 500 is positioned as the powerhouse for everyone. Many eyes will be watching as McIntyre tries to find dealers for the 2000 and mass outlets for the 500.

Hardware and software developers for the Amiga have been shaken by these developments. Some developers will miss Rattigan's accessibility and positive public profile. With their success tied to the success of Commodore, they can't be happy with the negative publicity surrounding Rattigan's exit. However, most existing developers are continuing their efforts and hope that better times are just ahead. Other companies who are deciding whether to produce for the AMIGA market will probably adopt a "wait and see" attitude.

The new team at Commodore deserves its chance. The Amiga 1000 is still the most versatile and powerful microcomputer available in the US. We expect the Amiga 500 will soon broaden the base of ownership and encourage a flood of new developers. The Amiga 2000 should be the platform for a host of specialized vertical applications which should lead to broader acceptance in the business community.

We only wish that Gould and Rattigan had resolved their conflicts in a less dramatic fashion.

Acquisition
(continued from page 22)

found it.

Nearly half the 300-plus pages of documentation are devoted to the ACOM programming facility. ACOM instructions may be attached to various elements of the database. Fields may have "streams" of instructions up to 255 characters in length linked to them. That is enough to do many things with a field. "Macros" are longer programs which can be written in an on-screen requester. Entire "programs" may be written in ACOM but they will be limited by the lack of PROCedures, arrays and local variables. These programming features are to be offered as an add-on Module. This "module" sells for the equivalent of $80, but you can still do quite a bit with the the standard program.

My use of Acquisition has discovered some problems with the documentation and operation of the software. When I first explored the package, I found a README Icon. In this file there was some instructional information, an explanation of an undocumented program, mention of some additional features, etc. There was also information about purchase of extra dongles (about $50 U.S.) At the end, the README program instructs you to press "P" to print or "E" to end. I Pressed "P". And the instructions printed out, and then they printed again, and again, and again, and again.

Then I made my "Master Data Disk" . The "MAKE" process worked fine but failed at the end when copying a new startup-sequence into itself. Just another little mistake on someone's part. Next I began to put up a simple application. Since the manual uses "Book" and "Author" files, I thought it would be nice to try that. My first try at the Creating module worked well, until I tried to save my database definition. No go, and no help in the manual. Instead I had a requester on the screen that said "SET PATH BEFORE operation". That same day I got to try Acquisition support.

When I called, I was greeted pleasantly and informed that support hours were from 11 to 3. Unfortunately, like many Amiga owners, my machine is in a different place from my body during those hours. (Acquisition does not have an 800 number).

I did get technical support, and was told that I was not entering the name of the index in a field marked INDEX at the top of the screen. If the error message had said "Fill in the INDEX field", the service call would have been avoided.

I was also informed that Release 1.3 of Acquisition is due in June. The representative warned that I might have difficulty with the documentation until then. He also mentioned a tutorial which is sent to everyone who mails their registration card.

To call the five-page document I received a tutorial is stretching. This material does mention the first problem I encountered, and it does solve some of the more serious mysteries about the package. But, I would have prefered some simple examples that made use of some of the more common features of the package. Ah, the pitfalls of documenting a complex product.

One serious omission I discovered, is the lack of a way to delete a database once it has been created. A serious bug which I found was the Icon That Ate My Program Disk. The is the MAKE Icon used to create a new data disk. I clicked and followed the disk swapping instructions. The next thing I saw was a message that my system disk was being formatted. There should be protection against this sort of thing built into the system.

So far I think Acquisition has great potential, and is visually exciting. However, the present documentation is not up to the level of the software's capabilities. Free updates will not make up for the dashing of high hopes on rocky documentation.

I also think that a $300 product should have area code 800 help lines. I recommend that you invest your "Acquisition" money in stocks and bonds while waiting for the new, improved documenation. But in the meantime, get a demonstration of this unique product, you'll be glad you did.

ACQUISITON:

Haitex Resources
208 Carrolton Park
Suite 1207
Carrollton, Tx. 75006
(214) 241-8030

REQUIRES:

Minimum of 512k
2 Disk Drives
1.2 KickStart

Dynamic CAD 2.3

— A practical Sampler

by Don Broussard

Release 2.3 of Dynamic Cad became available in May, 1987. Some of the many improvements include: Better documentation, comprehensive online help, more plotter drivers, and an expanded symbol library. A menu on the right side of the display was added with release 2.1. This gives you a choice of using Dynamic Cad as a mouse or keyboard oriented system.

Dynamic-Cad (DC) is one of the most powerful CAD systems availalble for *any* microcomputer. Features like 8191 levels, 29 line drawing commands, database support, symbol and part libraries delight the specification shopper. The power of this program can be used productively by many Amiga owners.

DC requires both keyboard and mouse in its advanced line drawing functions. First use the mouse to place the pointer where you want to start a line. Next type "EL" to start the line. You can type other letter commands to change the weight or line ending. Change to one four line weights by hitting the M, N, O, or P key while you're in the middle of the main line command. These can be useful for highlighting something in your drawing. Now Move the mouse to the ending point for your line and press the left button. At first this may seem complex, but it soon becomes second nature.

Using this method, you can create dashed lines, dogleg lines, split lines, lines with a 45 degree arc at one end, lines with two 90 degree arcs at each end, and free form lines. All these variations are selected by one or two letters. DC also has commands to draw arcs and circles. These work in the same manner as line drawing commands. Surprisingly Dynamic-Cad does not have any box or rectangle commands. In order to draw a box you have to put lines together. Fortunately, DC provides features such as grids and 'snap' to help with boxes and other objects you will build. If you create an object and need to use it again, DC will let you save it as a object known as a "Pseudo."

All this probably adds to the impression that Computer Aided Design is something you see on TV with drawings of AirWolf or the newest car of the year or that the only people who can use CAD are scientists and engineers. Not true. Anyone who likes to draw pictures of houses, robots, boats, cars or anything else would enjoy drawing on a CAD system. With a CAD system, you can draw to the exact dimensions you want while all your lines will be perfectly straight, and your angles sharp. Using DC your lines can have a rated tolerance of .0001 inches. Lets assume you were going to design a new room for your house. Load up Dynamic-Cad, and using the Parameter menu, set the numeric display to inches. Now, you will be able to draw lines in scale . Set unit size to 10,000. Since DC units are 10,000 to the inch this gives you an invisible 1 inch ruler. Type 'M' to turn measure mode on. Then start your first line and you will see the X and Y coordinates of the cursor at the top of the screen.

As you move the mouse to draw your line it moves 1 inch each step. This makes it easy to draw the exact length you need. Click on the LINE Icon at the top of the Mouse Menu, move your pointer to the drawing area, and click to begin your line. Hold down the left button and move the mouse while watching the coordinates at the top of the screen. When the number 6 appears, press the left mouse button again. You have just drawn a perfect scale 6 foot long line.

Measure mode is just one of the commands that help you make a very accurate drawing. If you need help making your lines meet you could set grid and line snap on in the Parameters menu. Then when you point every line

will snap to the grid. The grid can be set to snap to every unit or as fine as 128th of the unit size.

One of the most powerful features of DC is *Grouping*. You first select an area of a drawing and define it as a group. You can save, rotate, or move it. As you work you may save parts of the drawing and then bring them back later in another drawing. The only trick is that you must have at least one symbol in the group. DC uses a symbol to serve as the center point of a group, even if the symbol is a space. It provides a large library of symbols on disk. Every symbol can be called up into your drawing by typing its Identifier (A to I) and its letter. The DC manual includes a chart of all symbols in the appendix. You can type SA to produce a blank symbol if needed.

To initiate a group move, click on the GROUP Icon in the Mouse Menu. Now move the pointer to the upper left corner of the area you want to move and click the left button. Move to the bottom right corner of the area and hit the left button again. You have just defined a group. Position the pointer over the symbol that you want to use as the center point and press the left button again. Move the cursor to the new position for the group and press the left button once more. The group will move to that area.

Line Dimensioning is another feature you will want to use in your drawings. Dimensioning in a CAD program is the ability to have the program automatically label the length of a line with arrows and numerals. To use line dimensioning click on the ENTER Icon to enter the EDIT mode and click on the LINE Icon. Move the mouse close to a line and press the left mouse button. The line will be highlighted. One more click and move the mouse to where you want the dimension line to appear. Type either 'V' to display the dimension vertically or 'H' to display it horizontally. Type 'C' to compute the proper dimension and like magic, neat lettering and arrows will clearly label the line. The choice of vertical and horizontal dimensioning is provided tomake your drawing easier to read. Line dimensioning is easy to use, but is a very powerful feature.

Dynamic-Cad (DC) is one of the most powerful CAD systems available for* any *microcomputer.

Dynamic-Cad's alpha sizing gives you a wide range of alphabetic sizes for use in each drawing. Drawings look professional since the Leroy font used in professional drafting is standard. You select the size of the font to be used from the parameters menu. Default size is 140 thousandths of an inch but letters can range from 80 to 200 thousandths high. You can add labels at any location by clicking on the letter 'A' in the mouse menu. Type the text you wish and end with a return. The text will become attached to the cursor. Move the text to the desired location and press the left mouse button to place it.

You may want to add small details to your room plan. Dynamic-Cad's zoom feature is perfect for this. Select the ZOOM option by clicking on the Magnifying Glass Icon. Click the left mouse button in the upper left of the area you want to enlarge, then click in the lower right of the area. DC will rapidly redraw the contents of the area much enlarged. Use lines, arcs, add text as needed then return to the original scale by clicking on the Magnifying Glass and type R.

Lines, dimensions, text, groups, and arcs are the building blocks for your drawings. After you become comfortable with these basics, you can open the manual and learn the benefits of layers, pseudos, etc. For now select save from the PROJECT menu and get ready to print your drawing.

Dynamic-Cad can print or plot to a wide variety of output devices. If you have a dot-matrix printer, select printer setup from the plot menu. Select your printer and then click on PRINT. You will be asked to choose from three options. 'Print AMIGA Screen' uses the preferences printer-device to produce a screen dump. 'Print Dynamic-Cad Screen' uses DC's own printer routines and produces much higher quality output. 'Print Dynamic-Cad Total Drawing' prints high quality sections that can latter be assembled into the entire drawing.

You can count on MicroIllusions continuing to improve Dynamic Cad. My suggestions include the ability to move an arc or circle once it is drawn. Next would be the additon of box drawing. It would also be handy if you could rotate a group without having to save it first as a Pseudo. Finally, it would speed up my work if you could use keyboard entry to directly specify the length of a line.

In some ways, using DC's mouse menu is similar to using Dpaint or Aegis Draw. However, dimensioning, scale drawing, professional lettering and special line endings are visible differences between CAD and Paint programs. If your drawings tend to be more technical than artistic, start saving and put Dynamic-Cad in your disk box.

Dynamic Cad:
MicroIllusions
17408 Chatsworth St.
Granada Hills, Ca 91344
(818) 360-3715

Requirements:
Minimum 512K Amiga
2 Disk Drives

LaserScript
(continued from page 27)

three pages scaled to produce a 3D effect. Three new gadgets work to give flexibility with the multiple page effects. You can make the current page transparent, place it behind or in front of other pages by clicking on a gadget.

The other gadgets control which output page you are working with. You may return to a previous page or begin work on the NEXT page. Every action you select will be carried out very quickly. The authors have also included many "Are You Sure" requestors, whenever an action may delete work in progress.

LaserScript even includes a program to produce new font sizes. This goodie will let you create a 48 point or 4 point font! To start MAKEFONT simply click on its ICON. Next, you must type the name of the font to be resized and a name for the resulting new font. Click on START, and you will see each letter and character as its processed. Exit the program, and you will have a new font size to use.

MAKEFONT produces standard AMIGA bit-mapped fonts by mathematicaly scaling the source font. The results may be jaggy or out of proportion. The Adobe fonts can also be resized, and when printed on a PostScript printer they will be smooth and in proportion no matter how scaled they are. This is the major benefit of the PostScript system.

LaserScript worked flawlessly during my trials. Setup was simple; a standard serial cable and a flip of the switch on the LaserWriter. In fact my University hosts were impressed with the speed of the LaserScript-AMIGA combination. Apple systems typically operate at less than the 9600 Baud which the Laser- Script disk comes preset to. The implementation of PostScript included within LaserScript was also judged very good.

LaserScript comes close to adding all of the missing Desktop Publishing features to the Amiga. Advanced text manipulations, such as smart hyphenation and individual line justification are still lacking. It would speed things up if PageSetter was integrated with LaserScript, and the full page manipulations were "What You See Is What You Get" (WYSIWYG). Desktop Publishing systems on other microcomputers also offer more formatting options, and use a scrolling screen and variable magnification for ease of use.

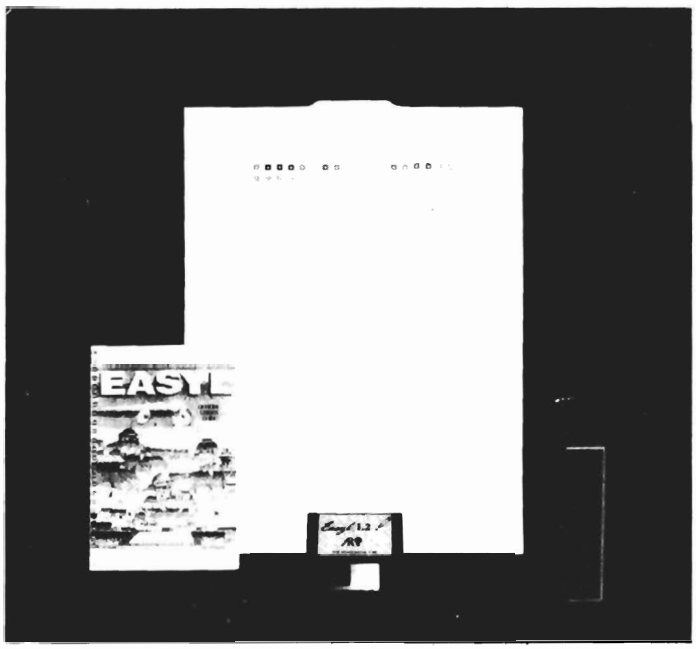
These missing features are software limitations, and not inherent in the Amiga. It is only a matter of time before the full potential of the Amiga is expolited for Desktop Publishing.

And Gold Disk continues working on additional products for the Amiga. A disk of additional Adobe fonts is due soon, as well as a module for the Hewlett-Packard laser printer. Based on my experience with LaserScript, I expect these products to continue to improve the state of Desktop Publishing on the Amiga.

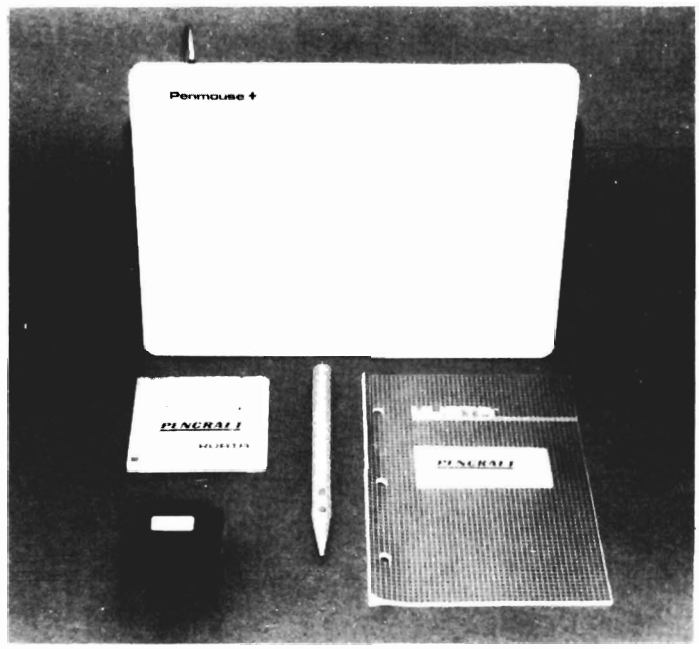
LaserScript:
GOLD DISK
P.O. BOX 789
Streetsville, Mississauga
Ontario, Canada L5M2C2

REQUIREMENT:
512 K Amiga
1 Disk Drive
KickStart 1.2
PostScript Laser Printer

Choose your tablet . . .



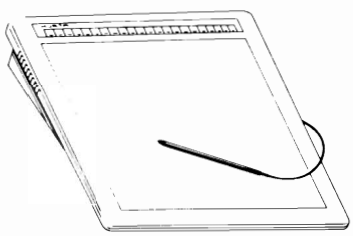
The Easyl, by Anakin Research



Penmouse + by KURTA

Easyl does it! —
(continued from page 18)

purchase an Easyl to make sure there is no conflict.



All in all, we were very impressed with the abilities of the Easyl. It performed well whether positioned on the desk or lap-top, and worked flawlessly with the variety of mouse supported programs we tested it on. For the professional art-

Penmouse +
(continued from page 19)

to keep the PenMouse and modem installed, and select one or the other as needed. The next item may seem petty, but the tablet should have some means of fastening a sheet of paper to it. Masking tape does the job but shouldn't be needed on such a quality product. Finally, it would also be nice if PenCraft could be turned off by some 'HotKey' action.

I was impressed with the professionalism of the Kurta organization. I called Kurta in Phoenix Arizona with a problem and was quickly connected with a knowledgeable and helpful person. It seems that the PenMouse tablet must be grounded through the serial port connector. If your Amiga is plugged into a grounded outlet and your serial port is properly constructed, the PenMouse will perform well and consistently. My system was not grounded and this caused erratic results. I first used the PenMouse by holding it on my knees which provided the needed ground! Since the power outlet has been properly grounded, the tablet works well on any surface. I also experienced double screen pointers occasionally. The Kurta representative explained this one too. Since

Easyl does it!
(continued from previous page)

ist, or the serious doodler, the Easyl offers a means of conveying your creations to the computer screen without having to chase a mouse.

The Easyl:

Anakin Research, Inc.
100 Westmore Drive,
Unit 11C
Rexdale, Ontario, Canada
M9V 5C3

1-(416)-744-4246

Penmouse +
(continued from previous page)

the PenCraft software does not interfere with the normal Amiga mouse driver, contention can develop if the mouse speed selected with Preferences is set at its highest setting. Some of my applications did use this setting. Once Preferences was adjusted, PenMouse and the Amiga mouse coexisted perfectly. The value of a service oriented firm was reinforced by this conversation.

I'd certainly recommend the PenMouse + to those Amiga users who draw often and feel uncomfortable with the mouse. A mouse is a great pointing device but very awkward compared to a pencil. The PenMouse + gives you back the ease of use of your pencil at a reasonable cost. If your use of the Amiga could be enhanced by tracing then a graphic tablet such as PenMouse + is a must.

Kurta PenMouse +:

Kurta Corporation
4610 South 35th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85050
(602) 276-5533

Which graphic tablet is for You ? Both products work well with a wide variety of software. Both are well made and free of serious bugs. However they differ in size, method of interface, softkeys, sampling rate . .

	EASYL	PenMouse +
Drawing Area	8 1/2 by 11 inches	6 by 9 inches
Interface	Expansion Port	Serial Port
Soft-Keys	Yes	No
Registration Pegs	Yes	No
Larger Pads	No	Yes
Sampling Rate	250 Points/Sec	37.5 Points/Sec
Resolution	1024 by 1024	200 Points per In.
Price	$499	$340

The retail price favors the Penmouse by $140, however the larger size of Easyl may be well worth the difference. The feel of the tablet is extremely important and subjective. If at all possible, find a dealer or friend where you can test-drive before you buy.

Kermit

(continued from page 15)

Kermit is based on the concept that you have two KERMITS running at the same time. The LOCAL KERMIT is running on your AMIGA. The REMOTE KERMIT is running on your mainframe. You will have to enter commands at various times to each. You can tell them apart by the prompts they give you. The AMIGA KERMIT will prompt you with "C-KERMIT>". The mainframe KERMIT will prompt you with it's name. For example IBM CMS KERMIT will prompt with "CMS KERMIT>".

If your computer supports echoing, (full duplex) check to see if the mainframe KERMIT turns it off during file transfer. If not, be sure to log on in half duplex mode. If you use echoing during file transfer, KERMIT will get confused. If you are using an IBM mainframe you should set: parity to even, duplex to half, characters to seven data and one stop bits. These can be set up using Amiga PREFERENCES. Another method uses KERMIT commands like SET Duplex Half. You can place the KERMIT commands in a file called ".KERMRC" on your disk.

Start KERMIT by entering the command KERMIT from the CLI. Kermit will prompt you with "C-KERMIT>". Enter "CONNECT". You will now be using KERMIT as a terminal. Log on to your mainframe as you normally would and start the mainframe KERMIT. Usually all you have to do is type "KERMIT".

To upload a file from the AMIGA, enter the command "RECEIVE" to the remote (mainframe) KERMIT. The remote KERMIT will ask you to escape to the local KERMIT, and send the files. Enter a CTRL \ and the letter C. The local KERMIT will now take over control, and respond with "C-KERMIT>". Enter "SEND", and the name of the file you want to send. You can send more than one file at once by using wildcards. Note that the wildcards are the UNIX wildcards, and are different than the ones you are used to using with AMIGADOS. When you are done, enter "CONNECT". You will now be CONNECTed to the mainframe again.

To download a file from the AMIGA, enter the command "SEND", and the name of the file you want to send to the remote (mainframe) KERMIT. You can send more than one file at once by using wildcards. Note that the wildcards are the wildcards used by your mainframe operating system, and are probably different than the ones you are using with AMIGADOS. The remote KERMIT will ask you to escape to the local KERMIT, and receive the files. Enter a CTRL \, and the letter C. The local KERMIT will now take over control and respond with "C-KERMIT>". Enter "RECEIVE". When you are done, enter "CONNECT". You will now be CONNECTed to the mainframe again.

You can now send or receive more files if you wish. To exit the REMOTE KERMIT, type "QUIT". After you have quit Kermit, logoff the mainframe. Enter a control \ and the letter C. The local KERMIT will now take over control and respond with "C-KERMIT>". Enter "QUIT" to return to AMIGADOS. You may notice that KERMIT is slower than XMODEM, or other MICROCOMPUTER file transfer protocols. This is due to restrictions placed on data transmitted and received by a mainframe. Since the mainframe does not spend all of it's time waiting for your packet of information, and doesn't process it immediately, there can be delays within the program as well.

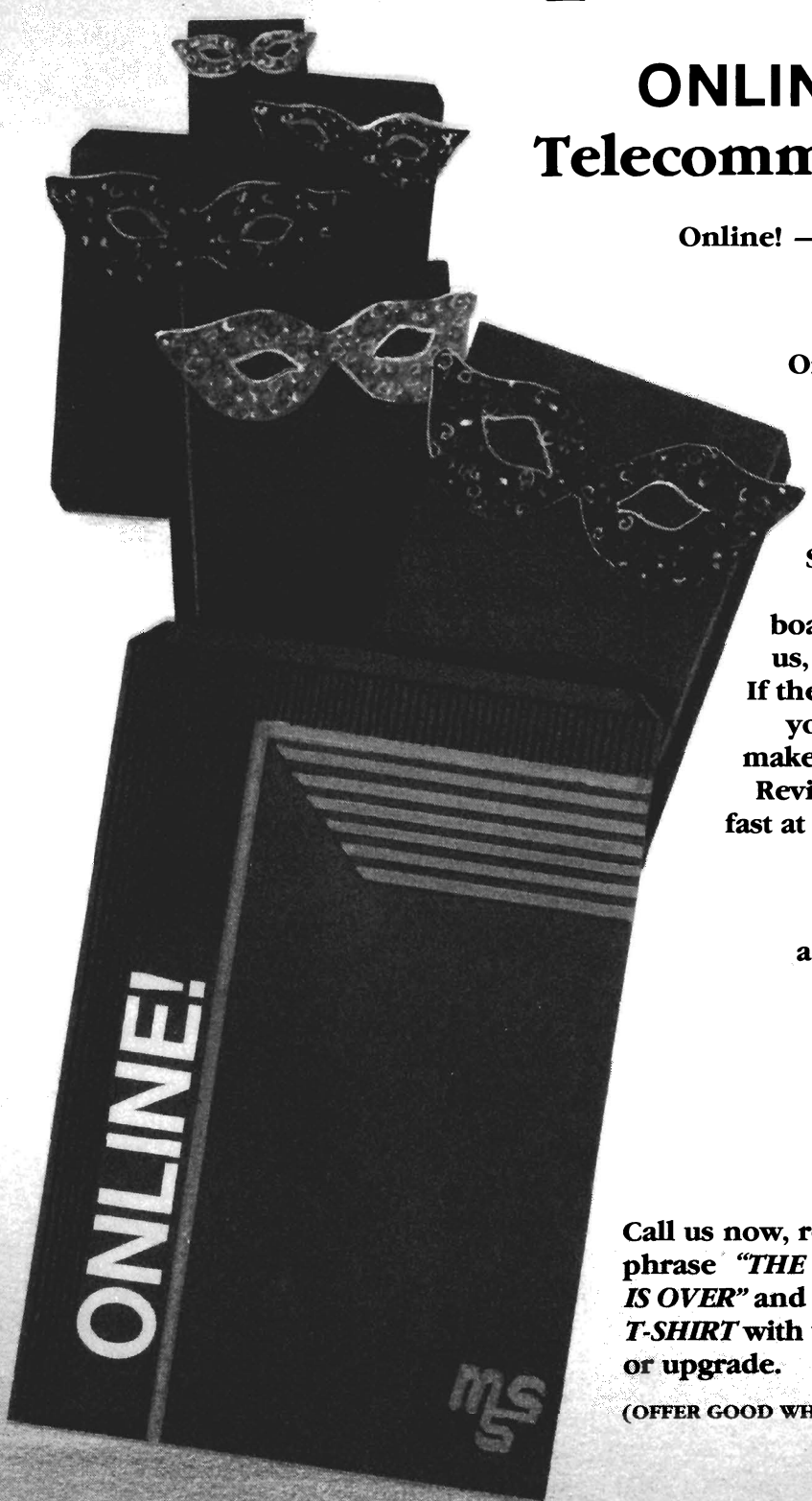
However, in many cases, KERMIT is the only way to transfer files between your AMIGA and a mainframe. If you have an older microcomputer (besides the AMIGA), you may find that KERMIT may also allow you to transfer the microcomputer data to the AMIGA.

Notes:

The original developers of KERMIT give YOU permission to USE and distribute KERMIT as long as: 1. You don't charge for KERMIT (A nominal distribution fee is ok.) 2. You give credit where credit is due. To the original authors, etc. 3. You are requested to use KERMIT only for Peaceful and Humane purposes.

If you have questions on where to get a mainframe KERMIT, you may contact the author through this magazine. Please limit your requests to IBM versions if you expect more than "Here's a tape. . . goodluck."

The Masquerade Is Over



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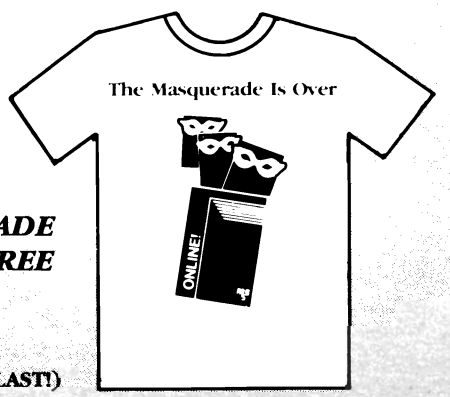

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™ of Electronic Arts

Escort 2
(continued from page 8)

slot has several features which encourage installation of a hard disk controller. A removable back panel provides access to the chassis for connection of cables.

Escort 2 provides 2 megabytes of memory expansion plus one 100 pin Zorro compatible slot.

Expansion Technologies is working on a hard-drive controller card which will be priced around $300. This same opening can be used to supply power to the bus return or to the expansion slot.

The expansion slots are constructed on a printed circuit board with an 86 pin pass-through of the Amiga bus. Slot 1 *must* contain the Expansion Technology two-megabyte ram board. This board includes circuitry to make slot two 100-pin Zorro compatible. Therefore, you can use the second slot for any Zorro compatible add-on board.

Power for slot one is provided by the Amiga, and is fully buffered. In the default configuration, the Amiga also powers the second slot. A jumper between the two slots can be removed to activate the external power supply jack. (When this jumper is removed, the second slot is no longer powered by the Amiga).

The memory board uses 256K ram chips, has no wait states, and will autoconfigure with Kickstart 1.2. You can purchase the board without memory installed if you wish to populate it yourself. If you do install your own ram chips, you use DIP switches to configure as 512K, 1 MB or 2 Mb.

Escort 2 stands vertically alongside your Amiga.

Expansion Technology also supplies the Survivor recoverable ram-disk software on its disk of memory utilities. Recoverable ram disks retain the data stored in them, even through a system reboot. This makes the Survivor software very useful when downloading to ram or developing software.

The Escort 2 memory expansion works well and is competively priced. The quality of the boards and chassis is excellent. High quality means you can look forward to years of dependable service.

We look forward to testing Escort 2 with a hard-drive controller and other Zorro boards.

ESCORT 2 :
Expansion Technologies
46127 Landing Pkwy.
Freemont, Ca. 94538
(415) 656-2890

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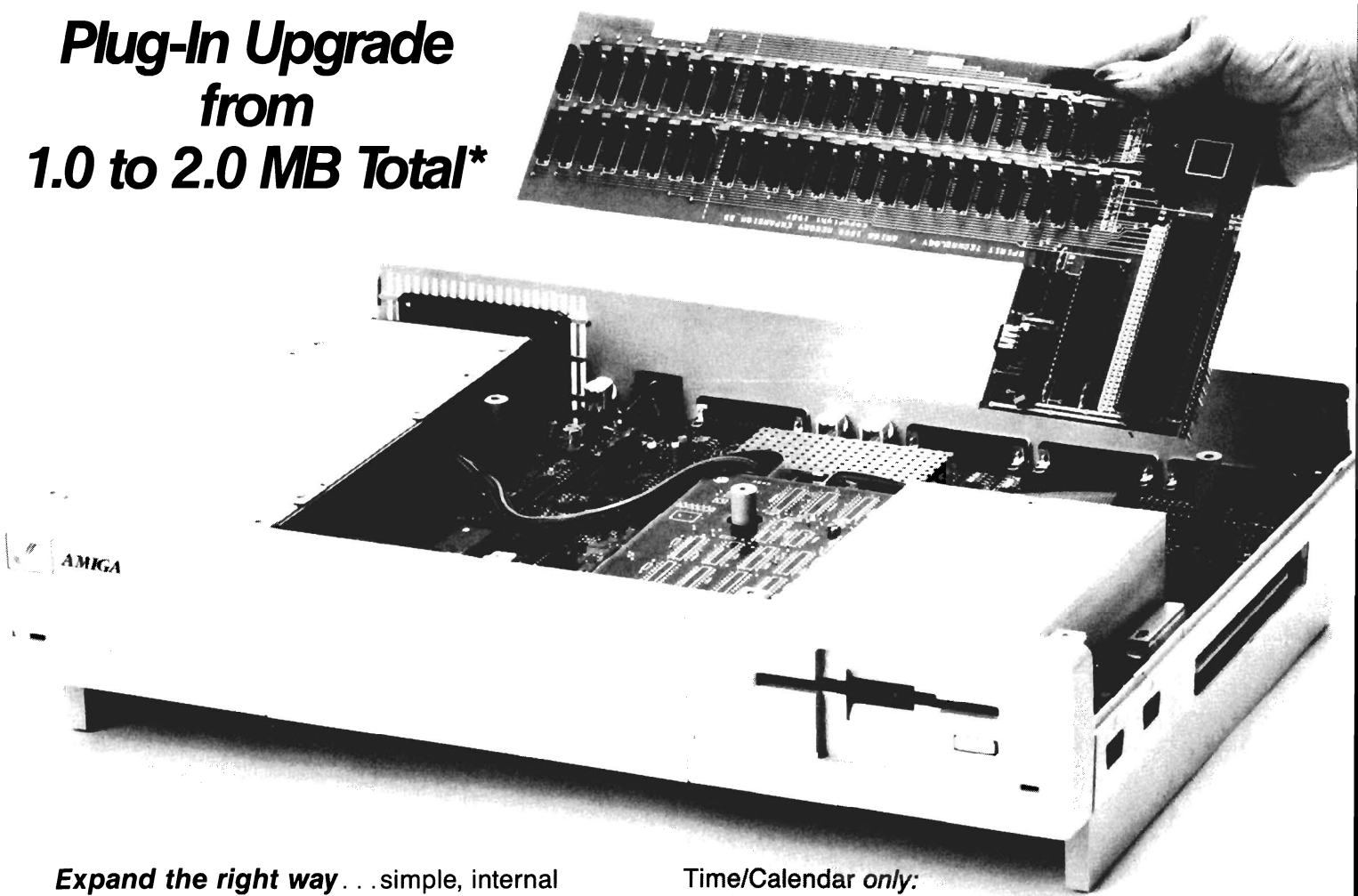

Expand the right way . . . simple, internal plug-in mounting leaves your side expansion port free to add other peripherals. Also, the internal Time/Calendar does not use a joystick port.

Memory Expansion Features:

* Zero Wait-State
* No Cuts or Soldering Required
* Full Auto-Configuration
* Lithium Battery Back-Up for Time/Calendar

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DRAM Memory *with* Time/Calendar:

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#ST-10	1.0 MB	$499.50 List
#ST-15	1.5 MB	$599.50 List

**Memory expansion from 1.0 to 2.0 MB includes AMIGA 1000 512K RAM.*

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#ST-TC Time/Calendar including Battery Back-Up $59.50 List

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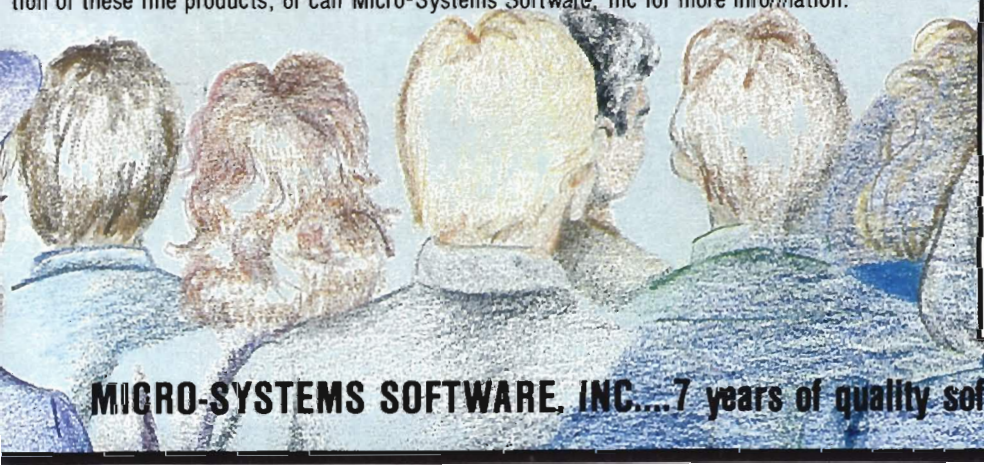

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