

ISSUE No. 1 early April 1984/5

EDITORIAL

AT LAST! a real chance for Oric users to help each other to keep interest in their machines. Over the past six months I've watched the sad decline of Oric Products International which, as we all know, culminated in its recent collapse. For many of us the real collapse came some time ago: the appearance of new software has fallen to minute levels; the availability of Oric software in the shops is negligible; most of the computer magazines have ceased to print listings for the Oric. I cannot really believe that sales of the Oric-1 and Atmos were that low-it's noticeable that whilst the computer magazines fall over themselves to tell us how many hundreds of thousands of Spectrums or C64's have been sold or even to point out that tens of thousands of Q.L.'s and Dragons have been sold we never hear how many Oric computers are around in the U.K. .

In an attempt to partially rectify matters I decided that it was time that there was an independent Oric user group. My background, for those of you who are remotely interested, is as follows:-

I am a first year undergraduate at the University of Salford on the Joint Honours in Science course. I am currently studying Economics, Chemistry and Computer Science and have to drop either chemistry or computers at the end of the year - bet you can't guess which one I want to drop. For the record I'm currently 18 and I am of West Indian descent.

The success or failure of the user group will depend upon you the members. I'm relying upon as many of you as possible to contribute - the whole point of a user group is interaction. This first newsletter is just a taste of what is possible. Lets make issue 2 a bumper one.

Gary Ramsay

RESPONSE:- your views, hints and problems

The response to my letter in issue 103 of Personal Computer News was both encouraging and varied. I received letters from school students, students, businessmen, employees and retired gentlemen. Unfortunately it seems that there are no female Oric users out there. These facts would seem to prove two things

- 1) Home computers are not just the preserve of the under 16 whizzkids and games players.
- 2) there are not enough girls and women in the world of computing.

Anyway I thank you all for replying and here are some points raised in the replies that might interest you

~~B. J. Hall of Exsoft, a local Oric Supporters Group from Blackpool, informed me that there is actually quite a lot of Oric software and sent me a long list to prove it!. Exsoft have managed to copy the Oric-1 rom onto a 16K EPROM enabling Atmos owners to run those programs for the Oric-1 which are otherwise incompatible. Naturally the same can be done with the Atmos rom - is any of this legal? I wonder. If you are interested why not contact D.J. Hall, 38 Colwyn Avenue, Marton, Blackpool, Lancashire - and don't forget to keep us informed.~~

K. Crowley of Bury, Lancashire would like to know if it is possible to replace the c.p.u. chip with a CMOS 6502 to take advantage of the extended instruction set. To tell the truth I don't know anything about the CMOS 6502 but I'm sure that someone out there does.

Steve Hyatt of Bradford, W. Yorkshire tells me that he has written a word processor almost entirely in Basic!. What's more it is reasonably fast and sounds quite powerful. I'm sure that we all want to know more about this achievement, Steve. Steve has also built his own RS232 interface, again something users will be interested in.

Steve also has a problem with Tansoft's Forth:-
;LLIST PON LIST POPF; gives false carriage returns in

the middle of lines. Also ?Terminal inside a DO-LOOP causes a total crash each time. Does anyone else have these problems?.

~~Two gentlemen from Lancashire were so frustrated by the lack of support for the Orics that they set their own small business to do just this. Financial and General Computing supplies hardware, software of all types and books. If you are interested write to FGC, 20 Meadowcroft, Euxton, Chorley, Lancashire. PR7 6BU. Their prices seem competitive so why not give them a try. You can also telephone (02572) 70088 outside office hours and ask for Mr Smalldon.~~

Steve Spink from Sutton, Surrey sends these tips:-
Inserting DOKE#1B, DEEK(#FFFC) at the start of a program causes a cold start if any attempt is made to stop the program.

POKE 48035,0 'rubs out' the CAPS sign on the status line by putting a black ink attribute in front of CAP S.

The following is from the Atmos manual but some Oric-1 owners will not have had access to this:-

RAM location:

24E controls delay for keyboard auto-repeat

24F " keyboard repeat rate

for both the above POKE a number from 1 to 4 into the location (1=fast).

26B holds the PAPER colour (+16)

26C holds the INK colour

27E controls the no. of rows on the screen

Write to:- Gary Ramsay,
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Burnage,
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To get Issue 2 send an S.A.E. of appropriate size and a cheque/postal order for 35p, crossed and made payable to me. This is to cover production costs. I aim to dispatch Issue 2 in 4-6 weeks time. If, for some reason, this is not possible I will return your cheque/P.O..

Steve Brunton of Gainsborough, Lincs. has sent in an utility for those of you with printers.

```
59990 REM*****
59991 REM TEXT SCREEN DUMP <ctrl>P *
59992 REM *
59993 REM Steve Brunton. March 85 *
59994 REM*****
59995 REM
60000 HIMEM #97A0: MEM=#97A0
60010 READ DTA:REPEAT
60020 :POKEMEM,DTA: MEM=MEM+1
60025 :TT=TT+DTA: READ DTA
60030 UNTIL DTA=-1
60035 IF TT<>#2893THEN PRINT"ERROR IN DATA":END
60040 DOKE#24B,#97A0:POKE#24A,#4C
60100 DATA #8,#78,#48,#8A,#48,#98,#48
60105 DATA #AD,#9,#2,#C9,#A2,#D0,#A,#AD,#8,#2
60110 DATA #C9,#9D,#D0,#3,#20,#C0,#97
60115 DATA #68,#A8,#68,#AA,#68,#28,#40,#EA
60120 DATA #A2,#1C,#A9,#80,#85,#0,#A9
60125 DATA #BB,#85,#1,#A0,#0,#B1,#0,#C9,#20
60130 DATA #E0,#2,#A9,#20,#20,#C1,#F5
60135 DATA #CB,#C0,#28,#D0,#F0
60140 DATA #A9,#A,#20,#C1,#F5
60145 DATA #A9,#D,#20,#C1,#F5
60150 DATA #18,#A5,#0,#69,#28,#85,#0
60155 DATA #90,#2,#E6,#1,#CA,#E0,#0,#D0,#D4
60160 DATA #A9,#38,#8D,#09,#2,#60
60170 DATA -1
60200 REM
60210 REM For Oric-1 replace #C1,#F5
60220 REM in lines 60130,60140,60145
60230 REM with #7E,#F5
60240 REM replace 60040 with
60250 REM DOKE #231,#97A0:POKE #230,#4C
```

Steve isn't 100% certain about the last change but if this is not the right method of intercepting the RTI instruction on the Oric-1 then I'm sure that someone will put him right in the next issue.

To use the program it must be RUN and then NEWed. It is interrupt driven to dump the TEXT screen to a printer whenever (ctrl)P is pressed.

Book Reviews

1. THE ORIC-1 COMPANION

Bob Maunder (LINSAC £6.95)

This book appeared in September, 1983, so is of limited use to Atmos owners. It is aimed at those Oric-1 owners who wish to know their machines thoroughly. It is certainly no use as a beginners guide, but is adequate as a reference guide. The book is split into five sections: BASIC summary, BASIC reference guide, the screen display, program organisation and the Oric-1 ROM. This last section is particularly useful, since it is a full (uncommented) ROM listing. Atmos owners can make use of this if they write software using ROM routines and wish to make it run on both machines. This is the only book I know of which contains such a listing for the Oric-1, and is almost worth getting just for that.

2. ORIC ADVANCED USER GUIDE

L. Whewell (ADDER £ 8.95)

The advanced user guide certainly lives up to it's name - there is no messing around introducing BASIC keywords here! The Oric hardware is covered in detail, with separate chapters on the 6502, 6522 and the 8912 sound generator. Storage of programs and data is also dealt with thoroughly, and is well explained. The Oric disk drives are even covered, although the main part of this section seems to be a list of the DOS commands.

By far the greatest section is the complete commented listing of the v1.1 (Atmos) ROM. This is well laid out, and is an invaluable aid to assembler programmers. The appendices include a list of ROM entry points, with the corresponding v1.0 (Oric-1) addresses, as well as covering zero-page and page 2 allocation. This book is of great value to serious Oric-1 or Atmos owners, and is highly recommended. Steve Brunton.

SUPPORT the I.O.U.G.

Welcome to readers of HCW , and thankyou to all of you for writing.

It is some weeks now since I wrote to HCW and in the time I have produced issue 2. This contains articles on program design and assembly language and a utility for people with an assembler as well as the regulars and is available now.

Issue 3 will be out in the second week of July. Amongst other things it will contain details of how to get a tape based software list from another user. I will also be taking good advantage of my summer vacation to contact Oric supporting software houses and retailers with the view of obtaining a deal on behalf of the group. Please support the I.O.U.G. , if the group is to grow and widen its scope it must have strong support in its early stages.

I hope to hear from you all,

Gary .