

I.O.U.

The Voice of the Independent Oric Users' Group

Issue 9 - mid May 1986

EDITORIAL

Hi, my name's Dave Cheeseman and, as I'm sure you're aware, I'm producing this issue to give Gary a break. Thank's to everyone who sent me contributions, don't worry if they're not all used in this issue, they will be kept over for a later one. I've had a very busy month hardware-wise, and you may find these tales interesting:

Firstly, I purchased a Tandy CGP-115 'colour graphic printer' which is identical to the Oric 4-pen plotter in every aspect except buter casing. I do have a dot-matrix printer, but the main reason for the additional purchase was the price - Tandy are currently selling it at £49.95!! Seems too good to miss, but hurry if you're interested because they're apparently selling like hot cakes. They use a standard Centronics cable, ie any Oric printer cable should work.

Secondly, I have followed John Haly's lead in adding a second disk drive to my system; I opted for a Cumana 3" drive, as offered for use with the Cumana Oric Disk Interface (I use the standard Oric Microdisc). I obtained it via my local Cumana dealer who had never seen an Oric, and he managed to get it in a couple of weeks; it would have been days, but Cumana have production problems - some things never change, do they? Having removed the outer case to change the drive number from 0 to 1, the new drive plugged straight into the back of the microdisc (and the shop's BBC B) and worked first time! The joys of real disk-to-disk backups!! However, the inbuilt power supply proved noisy and caused the whole case to vibrate so I returned it via the same dealer, and there the trouble began! A replacement drive arrived within three days (we had phoned Cumana telling them of the return) and didn't work, either on my Oric or the shop's BBC so back it went. Cumana claimed not to have any more, and attempted to produce one good drive out of them. This arrived a week later, having been 'exhaustively tested', and didn't work! A phone call to the engineer revealed the problem - he said that the cable needs to be 'turned upside down' for the Oric drive to work on the BBC. What rubbish! We opened the drive, turned the cable over, and hey presto it worked on BBC and ORIC. It would seem that in the case of both replacements, Cumana had tested the drives on a BBC and then reversed the cables!!! Ho hum, so be warned if you buy one that fails to respond at all! I must say, though, that Cumana were extremely helpful, as was my local shop (DEPSON COMPUTER SYSTEMS, BLETCHLEY, BUCKS), and that the drive now works perfectly.

Still, enough from me, on with the magazine.

Dave Cheeseman

NEWSFLASH

Amongst several contributions from Allan Whitaker were some very interesting bits from Eureka Informatique, the new French owners of Oric. These were a brochure on the new TELESTRAT machine (their version of the STRATOS), price lists and descriptions of their other Oric products, and a copied review of their new Oric DOS called SEDORIC. They were provided by Ian Macpherson of EI, and, apart from his letter, are all in French though they are reasonably easy to understand even for a non-linguist like myself because of their technical content. I'm busy trying to translate the main details, perhaps for a later issue, but in the meantime here are some details from Ian Macpherson's letter about the TELESTRAT, included by kind permission:

"It's basic is extremely powerful & rapid (compiled as it is entered) ... it plugs directly into our French MINITEL (system - I think it's like our PRESTEL Ed.) and allows people to create their own database centre - all for £400 with a 3" double sided disk included."

viously it uses the modem (for use) in the Minitel (system) & this would
ve to be modified for England. The first shipments have just started
appearing & people seem very enthusiastic."

I'm not surprised! The system seems excellent value for money. It's a shame
that EI haven't been active in the UK market, but apparently they have more
than enough business satisfying the French market - that can't be too bad news
for us, at least they're unlikely to go bust! They intend to market it in the
UK once they have the modem sorted out. Perhaps if more of us write they may
offer us more support. Also of interest is SEDORIC, a new DOS that appears to
run on the standard Oric1/ATMOS Microdisc, but being more than just an
improved Oric DOS. I shall try to obtain more details about this.

If anyone wants a copy of the specs and review, send me a stamped addressed
envelope and I will oblige, but remember it's in French - please don't write
unless you really want to see it, otherwise I'll be spending a fortune
photocopying - the important details will appear in IOU (eventually!).

News from OPEL: details are being formulated of a disc drive which provides
not only Oric microdrive compatability but 80-column text and CP/M capability
(on a 6502? Ed.). Watch this space!

Apparently OPEL have a thriving overseas market ("5,000 Atmos computers in
Yugoslavia") and are actively developing new products for the Oric computers.
Can't be bad!!

News from Gary: there are currently 60 subscribers to IOU, and about 75 copies
of issue 9 will be sold. There are 2 members in Ireland, and one each in
Sweden, Netherlands and Australia! All the used stamps from your letters to
him are collected for a medical research charity. Nice one!

HIRESOFT run a Oric/Atmos library with over 150 titles on their current list.
The hire charge is £1.20 for 14 days per tape, plus 24p P&P. Their address is:

113 Broomfield Road, Marsh, Huddersfield, HD1 4QJ

RESPONSE

Ronald Croft writes with several queries about cassette handling, prompted by
dealers claiming that cassette problems are always the fault of the Oric and
never the cassette player - yeh, I've been told that too; don't you believe
it!

Ronald wants to know what the nominal cassette input and output impedances and
voltages are, and also the frequencies and waveforms used for recording. He
also disputes the claimed nominal baud rates of 300 and 2400, saying that his
tests show values nearer 274 and 1778. Any comments?

Also from Ronald, details of an alternative Oric Atmos ROM from that
disassembled in the Advanced User Guide. The ROMs are marked MEXICO A (the
originals are JAPAN ORIC BASIC V1.1) and the PCBs Oric 1 Issue 3, and appear
in serial numbers about 230000. The changes are mainly in the header section,
and are as follows:

E4B6	8E B1 02	STX	#02B1	E4CD	9D 93 02	STA	#0293,X
E4B9	A2 09	LDX	##09	E4D0	EB	INX	
E4BB	20 C9 E6	JSR	##E6C9	E4D1	D0 F1	BNE	##E4C4
E4BE	9D A7 02	STA	##02A7,X				
E4C1	CA	DEX		E8E3	EA	NOP	
E4C2	D0 F7	BNE	##E4BB	E8E4	EA	NOP	
E4C4	20 C9 E6	JSR	##E6C9				
E4C7	F0 0A	BEQ	##E4D3	E8FE	EA	NOP	
E4C9	E0 10	CPX	##10	E8FF	EA	NOP	
E4CB	B0 F7	BCS	##E4C4				

Allan Whitaker asks if anyone else suffers from cursor images being left on
the Author screen when moving the cursor around, or if anyone knows a fix for

My copy doesn't suffer from it, or at least I can't get it to at present, so I can't pass it over to you.

David Waller makes a very interesting offer; his wife, a retired typist (due to motherhood), is prepared to type in any listing which members find too daunting. He will then de-bug the program before returning the listing with one slow and one fast copy on tape. He has an Atmos, so the listing would have to state 'Atmos Compatible' unless it is purely in BASIC. They would charge a nominal fee.

Anyone interested should write direct to David at the following address, enclosing the listing and their telephone number; he will get in touch and discuss cost and feasibility.

DAVID WALLER, 19, Lay Garth, Rothwell, Leeds, LS26 0TW

David also continues the Cabbage Patch saga:

POKE #1659, #15 doesn't work properly and the program will eventually crash. Try the following DOKEs, after DOKE #9C, #2470:

DOKE #1644, #EE16	DOKE #1650, #8DBB	DOKE #165C, #8D03
DOKE #1646, #1685	DOKE #1652, #1685	DOKE #165E, #1684
DOKE #1648, #85AD	DOKE #1654, #8EBD	DOKE #1660, #8D8D
DOKE #164A, #C916	DOKE #1656, #AD16	DOKE #1662, #4C16
DOKE #164C, #D0BF	DOKE #1658, #0308	DOKE #1664, #1683
DOKE #164E, #A902	DOKE #165A, #086D	

If there are vertical columns of apples in the cabbage patch, enter (as a direct command):

```
X=#2058:REPEAT:POKEX,165:X=X+1:UNTILX=#2078:POKE#2067,#7F
```

There should now be 30 apples on the first screen. Other useful POKEs:

To reset high score to zero POKE#2198, #30

For extra lives POKE#1D31, number of lives

For fewer apples on 1st screen POKE#1D0F, number of apples less 1

To slow game down POKE#1D0A, 100(normal), 110, 120 etc., I prefer 130.

Has anyone managed to convert WAYDOR and HOBBIT to disk yet? I'm hacking furiously at both but with little success!

I.O.U EXCHANGE

Sell or exchange, Oric-1 48k software:

Velnor's Lair (Quicksilver, Atmos compat.) £3 inc. pp; Grail (Severn, Oric-1 only) £2 inc pp; Invaders (PSS, Oric-1 only) £2 inc pp; Loki (Joe the Lion, Oric-1 only) £2.50 inc pp; Island of Death (Ocean, Oric-1 only) £3 inc pp; Oric-mon (PSS, Oric-1 only) £2 inc pp; Extended Basic 1 (Severn, Oric-1 only) £2.50 inc pp

Matthew Shakeshaft, 47, Newton Road, Ashton, Preston, Lancs, PR2 1DY

ISSUE 10

Gary is aiming to distribute issue 10 between June 21st and July 5th. Please allow at least a week after the latter date before querying about non-receipt of your issue. expected cost is 40p. People ordering the issue individually should send payment - cash or cheque/P.O. - plus an A5 s.a.e to reach him no later than June 14th to:

I.O.U.G., c/o Mr.G.Ramsay, 1, Kingsway Cres., Burnage, Manchester, M19 1GA.

DESCRIPTION DETAILS

First class postage - £2.85

Second " " - £2.65

In both cases also send five A5 self-addressed (no stamp) envelopes. Covers a maximum of 5 issues, production costs permitting.

N.B. An A5 envelope is approx 210x148mm or 6"x8.5"

Cheques can be made payable to I.O.U.G.

Items for consideration for publishing should also be sent to Gary.

NOTE TO EXISTING SUBSCRIBERS

Do not send in your renewals until Gary asks for them. If your first subscribed issue was 6, then issue 10 will be your last in the current subscription.

DISK NEWSLETTER

Being restricted in space, it is not practical to fill the newsletter with purely disk-related matters. Is there demand for a separate Disk Newsletter for those interested? It may be just a couple of sheets and would be produced separately, though Gary has offered to copy and distribute it along with I.O.U. Alternatively, it could be produced on disk and distributed by interested persons sending me a disk, which I would return with the newsletter on it. Comments please to:

Dave Cheeseman, 13, Huntingbrooke, Great Holm, Milton Keynes MK8 9DF.

COMPUTER CONTROL OF CASSETTE MOTOR by Allan Whitaker

The Oric-1 and Atmos computers have the ability to control the motor of any cassette deck with a remote socket (usually labelled REM). The facility requires that the cassette lead has pins 6 & 7 of computer's cassette port connected to the contacts of a 2.5mm jack plug. It doesn't matter which pin is connected to which contact of the plug.

The device within the computer that switches the cassette motor on and off is a reed relay. Unfortunately the current rating of this relay seems to be too low for certain cassette decks.

I originally had a Keisho KC-2510C cassette deck which operated fine with my Atmos. However, I recently bought a Ferguson 3CT1 deck and I found that after a while I lost the computer control. It is now apparent that the contacts of the reed relay inside the computer have welded together thereby enabling the cassette motor permanently.

To rectify the problem I shall buy a higher rated reed relay and fit that to my computer. So if you are experiencing problems on your cassette deck consider the switching current required by the cassette's REMote socket. It may be that you have the same problem as I.

REVIEWS

Land of Illusion, TANSOFT, Reviewer: Joseph Gleeson.

This is an original graphics adventure written totally in basic. The response time is satisfactory as is the time for drawing the full colour HIRES pictures. Nine of these are included. Many weird things exist, an example being mushrooms which when eaten make you fly to your ultimate death. Sound effects are good with the river being a good example; the volume increases as you approach it's bank. The vocabulary is quite small and slightly limits the adventure for people used to the Hobbit. This adventure will provide a stiff challenge to most people.

Ratings: Originality - 8 Playability - 6 Graphics - 6
Sound - 7 Value - 6

Trickshot, IJK, Reviewer: Joseph Gleeson

This is a simulation of the game of Pool and the 1st time it has been implemented on the Oric. It was written by the Author of Severn Software's HOSTMAN. Graphics are satisfactory but do not exploit the Oric's potential. Attention should have been given to the colour of the balls and table, but this may only be personal preference. The movement is realistic and smooth, but the maximum strength of shot is not sufficient. The scoring system is novel and makes the game very playable. The sound of the balls is also realistic. I would recommend this game to all pool players.

Ratings: Originality - 8 Playability - 7 Graphics - 6
 Sound - 7 Value - 6

Velnor's Lair, Quicksilver, Reviewer: M. Shakeshaft.

This D&D type adventure game is Oric-1/Atmos compatible. The object is to penetrate the Black Wizard Velnor's defenses and surprise him before he is metamorphosised. The dangers along your journey are the most ghastly guards of all sorts of creatures, the cunning traps which are set, and the poisonous creatures. At the start you choose to be Priest, Warrior or Wizard, and proceed to enter the strange Labyrinth of Mount Elk. Some other features of the game are fighting monsters, casting spells, save game facility, inventory and state of health display. I have not managed to complete the game as it is quite difficult.

Ratings 7 out of 10

SIDEWAYS PRINTING on ORIC/TANDY 4-PEN PRINTER

Frank Day sent in a very useful program to allow 80-column printing (sideways!) on the 4-pen printer. The 'chunks' produced can then be manually 'cut and pasted' and finally tidied by photocopying. The printer is used in plotter mode and all instructions need to be sent in STRING expressions, especially if a computed value is sent. Program lines 40-60 perform this function. You can read more about this unfortunate 'bug' in Bob Maunder's 'THE ORIC-1 COMPANION', page 171. Double strike variations are also possible with and without a small shift; the complete line is overprinted in this case. Omit lines 47,56,57 for single strike only. Also, each line of text input should be preceded by " if spaces and/or commas are required. Atmos users should omit the CALLs in lines 55 and 65.

```

10 CLS:PAPER3:PRINT:POKE131,91
15 PRINT"  QUIT=E":A=1
20 LPRINT CHR$(18):LPRINT"M50,-300"
25 LPRINT"I":LPRINT"Q3"
30 INPUT A$
35 IF A$="E" THEN GOTO 70
40 B=A*20:IF B>440 THEN GOTO 70
45 B$=STR$(B):C$=RIGHT$(B$,LEN(B$)-1)
47 E$=STR$(B-19):
   F$=RIGHT$(E$,LEN(E$)-1)
50 D$=STR$(LEN(A$))
55 CALL#E6CA:LPRINT"P";A$
56 LPRINT"M";F$;",";D$
57 LPRINT"P";A$
60 LPRINT"M";C$;",";D$
65 A=A+1:CALL#E804:GOTO 30
70 LPRINT CHR$(17):END
  
```

PROGRAMMING HINT

To print a value in a fixed field size with leading zeroes:
 - add the value to 10^n when n is the size of the field
 - convert this value to a string & use RIGHT\$ to extract the n digits

```
eg. 10 PRINT RIGHT$(STR$(10^Y+X),Y)
```

if value X is 84 and size Y is 5 then the printed value will be 00084

ENDPIECE

Wow, doesn't Gary work hard to get these issues out! I thoroughly enjoyed it, hope you do too. C'mon, lend a hand! Cheers, Dave.

iaug?