

I.O.U.

The Newsletter of the Independent Oric Users' Group

ISSUE No. 17 - late September 1987.

EDITORIAL

Yes, it's that time again. Time to apologise for another late issue. This one is later than even I expected it to be because I've been getting used to full-time employment. This means far less free time available during the day than I've been used to for the past five years of school and university. Predicting this problem, I tried to find someone else to do the issue but everyone that I asked had something else on so I gave up on that front. I need volunteers to prepare future issues especially now that I am working. In particular, after working at a terminal for much of the day I am not always willing to use my evenings for the I.O.U.G., after all I am human. All that you need is a bit of time to spare, which can be quite easily spread over a couple of weeks, and some means of getting the originals typed or printed on A4 paper in a good enough quality to be photocopied. If you think that you might be able to help then please write to me to this effect, indicating which approximate times of the year within which you expect to have the most chance of being able to prepare an issue. I am quite willing to continue to find the time for administration if I receive help with compiling the issues.

Since issue 16 I have had the sad, for Oric owners, news that FGC is to cease trading. Allan Whitaker told me some time ago that he had spoken to Ken Smalldon, the proprietor of FGC, who had expressed doubts about the continuation of his business in the light of drastically reduced sales. This is not at all surprising because the numbers of new Oric owners over the months are negligible and there's been little in the way of software of worthwhile quality. The loss of FGC is particularly bad news because I am sure that most of its customers, and that includes myself, would agree that it rightly has a reputation for quick, fair service at very reasonable prices. I would like to thank Mr Smalldon for his support for the Oric. Having met him once and talked to him several times on the telephone I know that his involvement was inspired firstly by his enthusiasm for the Oric computers and only secondly by the profit motive. Of course FGC wasn't run on a full-time basis, so I trust that Mr Smalldon still has his other work to keep him busy.

Gary Ramsay

NEWSFLASH

As mentioned in the editorial, FGC is to cease trading but in the meantime its final price list contains some very good prices. For example:

Chopper £4.25, Manic Miner £4.50, Megabase £8.50, The Quill £9.50.

There are also some good reductions on FGC's own releases. On the hardware side there is the Cumana 3" disc drive with interface for the Atmos at £143.95.

The final price list is valid until 31st December, 1987. From December 27th surplus stock will be sold at clearance prices. See later list for address.

Back issues were mentioned as a possibility in issue 16. Unfortunately as I couldn't get anyone to prepare this issue I didn't find the time to give the matter proper consideration. I guarantee that I will give a definite answer as to whether or not information from past issues will be made available in issue 18.

An enterprising Business Development Manager from the TSB wrote to me a while

back about their new Speedlink banking-by-phone system. He asked me about the possibility of supplying a list of members living in the East Lancashire area, that is Chorley, Blackburn, Darwen, Accrington, Burnley, Nelson and the Rossendale Valley. I'm not in the business of encouraging unsolicited mail to group members, so I decided to let you make up your own minds.

The system enables users to pay bills, transfer funds between accounts and obtain "up-to-the-minute" balances by sending tones down the telephone line to the TSB's "On-Line-Real-Time" computer system. If you would like more information then write to:

TSB England and Wales, District Office, The Guild Centre, Lords Walk, Preston PR1 1RE.

or let me know of your interest by Friday 16th of October and I'll send your address to the above in the s.a.e. that came with the letter from the TSB .

The I.O.U.G. has received publicity through the User Groups page in the August and September issues of Personal Computer World. Unfortunately my clear request for a s.a.e. was omitted and so about half of the enquiries that I have received have not contained an s.a.e. A low rate of follow ups to my replies has meant that I have not recovered the cost of most of the stamps that I have used, which were purchased out of group surplus funds.

I recently received a letter from the Co-operative Union Ltd. concerning the National Institute of Co-operative Computing's Conference for Computer Clubs and enthusiasts. This is to be held at Stanford Hall, near Loughborough in Leicestershire at the weekend of the 16-18th of October. I only received the letter on September 19th so it is very short notice, but basically there are a number of proposed workshops. These include a MS-DOS and PC workshop, trying out various UK on-line systems, adventure game writing, word processing, and a beginners workshop. The cost is £45 for anyone not affiliated to the NICC. This includes meals and accommodation at Stanford Hall. Places are limited. For more information contact:

Mr Len Booth, Officer for Member Education, Co-operative Union Ltd., Education Dept., Stanford Hall, Loughborough, Leics. LE12 5QR tel. 050-982 2333.

Mr Simon Caspels of Caspell Computer Services contacted me about his firm's business of providing computer consumables. They sell paper, disks, ribbons and accessories via mail-order to individuals and organisations. A couple of interesting sample prices quoted were

60 gsm listing paper, 11 x 9.5 inch at £5.17 per 1000 sheets
3" Amstrad CP2 disks at £20.83 for 10.

To these must be added v.a.t. at 15%, postage and packing is free for disks and £2.00 per order for paper/label orders. Discounts are negotiable for bulk orders, so if any members are interested in grouping together to see if they can get a good deal then send me a s.a.e. by October 16th and I will put you in touch with one-another.

Caspell Computer Services, 43 Emerson Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 1Q5 tel. 0202-682087

RESPONSE

Dave Edwards of Widnes in Cheshire has been checking out the cost of ribbons for the Amstrad DMP-2000. The best value in terms of price per ribbon set against the minimum order came from:

Micro Media Computer Supplies, FREEPOST, Rydal Mount, Baker Street, Potters Bar,

