



Software Aids for the Blind



Nigel Clatworthy, our speaker, with Val and David Radford at the Riverside

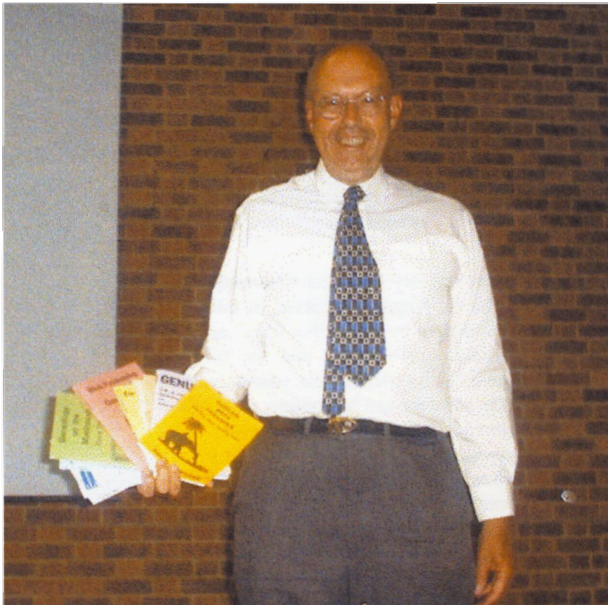
Inside this issue:

A talk with a difference was given recently by Nigel Clatworthy on helping the blind to use their computers. Nigel is involved in training sightless people to program their computers by using 'hot keys' on the keyboard. Part of the training includes touch typing and the use of software called Supernova, which enables the user to hear sounds as the keys on the keyboard are pressed. The software can be configured, so that the sound of the word that is formed can be heard by the user. Our Secretary, Christine Jenkins, was used as a demonstrator to type some words, but it was noticed that when Christine typed too quickly the computer did not respond. However when Christine typed slowly the voice recognized what was being typed. Nigel invited the members present to answer a simple quiz by asking all to write on paper supplied, what he was describing. It turned out that not many drew the exact picture of a house with a tree beside the house, as the instructions were not entirely specific. This illustrated that it is important that a blind person is given precise instructions in all I.T. training.

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FUTURE MEETINGS

1st November	Corel Draw Tutorial	Ian Capon
15th November	Microsoft Word Tutorial	Denny Linzmaier
6th December	Hot Key Productions/Ms Publisher 2000	The Editor
20th December	Christmas Party	Riverside Centre
3rd January	Windows Millennium Operating System	Denny Linzmaier
17th January	Backup Systems	David Broughton and Douglas Rankine
7th February	A.G.M. followed by Questions and Answers on hardware and software	Dennis Linzmaier
21st February	Introduction to Internet Usage	To be advised
7th March	Windows 98 Techniques	To be advised
21st March	Hardware Upgrades	Dennis Linzmaier
4th April	Problem Solving with your Computer	To be advised
18th April	Latest Computer Products	To be advised



David Hawgood pictured at the 'FamilyHistory' meeting

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP- COMMITTEE MEMBERS

3

Honorary President:

Sir Norman Echlin,

**Chairman:**

Dennis Linzmaier,

Vice Chairman:

David Broughton,

Treasurer:

Bob Groom,

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Christine Jenkins

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Hot Key Editor:

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Maggie Butler

Riverside Centre Liason:

Ian Capon

Meetings Reception Assistant:

John Atkin

Committee Member:

Marilyn Barrett

Committee Member:

Cliff Maidment

Disability Resources Co-ordinator:

Helen Edom



When it comes to computer hardware it never ceases to amaze me how and when the equipment will let you down.

Recently my LS 120 drive decided it had had enough and gave up the ghost. It decided it didn't want to read my LS 120 disks anymore and so I am now minus one piece of hardware. Also my SCSI 1.2Gb Maxtor hard drive gave up and refused to work after years of turmoil and hard graft. So I am now down to my remaining IDE hard drives and they are still comparatively new although I have been considering adding an extra hard drive to accommodate the numerous versions of Linux.

A computer friend kindly gave me a three fan cooler device to aid in the temperature control of my AMD 700MHz computer but on installing the device I found it was too noisy and a source of irritation every time I used my computer. Surely the manufacturers could have put a suppressor on the cooler to avoid the unnecessary noise.

I have always been under the impression that USB devices were the way forward but I have since discovered that my USB mouse and keyboard do not work in Safe Mode and therefore these devices are of no benefit to me and certainly not superior to my ball-less PS2 mouse and well used AST PS2 keyboard. I have incidentally noticed that my friend, who has Windows Me installed has a keyboard that shows up in his Device Manager with a yellow mark. The correct driver is then installed from the Windows System only to find that later after rebooting that the yellow mark returns in device manager. His keyboard does work but why the yellow mark? Also he has a Hauppauge WinTV card which refuses to operate. We have downloaded the latest drivers for the hardware and received instruction from Hauppauge regarding what to do to get the card to work but alas there are problems. Once the software is installed, the WinTV icon is clicked and the software is configured to show clear TV channels on his monitor but on rebooting and trying the icon on his desktop again the computer freezes and refuses to run. My friend has to reboot his computer to get back to normality. This surely is a frustrating experience.

As far as the marketing of hardware and software is concerned the various manufacturers do a good job of selling their products but why all the hype if the product is not going to last long or refuses to give up after a short time. A quality product should by rights last longer and with regard to my LS 120 drive, why is it so difficult to take apart to fix the problem? It seems to me that not enough care is taken in the production of the product and that the manufacturers are looking to enjoy the usual upgrades to a more expensive product. These observations are merely my own and may not be the same as other users.

On a more positive note I must say that my Logitech videoconferencing camera that sits on top of my monitor is a good product and thanks to Molly Mills and Arthur Wade I managed to have a conversation with them via Microsoft NetMeeting and MSN Messenger Service with full vision and sound.

Useful Websites

BrowserTune- — Check your Internet speed - <http://www.browsertune.com/bt2kfast/>
 WinBoost 2001 - Utility to configure Windows98/Me - <http://www.magellans.com>
 TweakDun - Enhance your Internet connections -
<http://www.pattersondesigns.com/tweakdun/>

H U M O U R

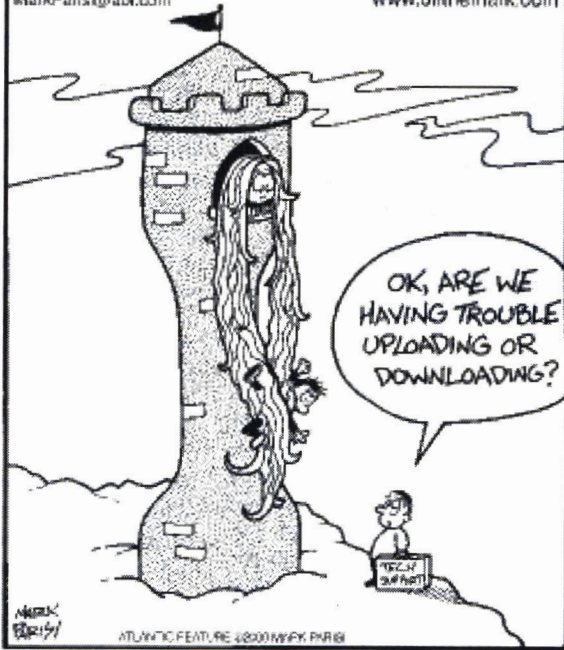
off the mark

by Mark Parisi

www.offthemark.com

MarkParisi@aol.com

www.offthemark.com



off the mark

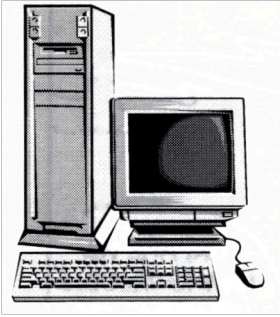
by Mark Parisi

www.offthemark.com

MY PRESENTATION IS IN FIVE MINUTES...
YOU DARN WELL BETTER HAVE THE
COMPUTERS RUNNING ON LINUX...



Still using Windows 95?



A story of the life and times of a 'low end' PC purchased in August 1996. It was originally supplied as an Intel Pentium (75MHz) with 16MB of RAM, a (for then) large 1GB hard disk, 8 speed CD-ROM and a standard 14 inch monitor. The OS was WIN 3.11. It was put to work using mainly DOS based accounting and office management software and the speed and space available were enough, at the time, for a basic non multimedia business set-up.

The accounting software manufacturers moved from DOS to a Windows base. This prompted an OS upgrade to WIN95 plus a faster processor and a further 16MB of RAM were purchased. WIN95S was successfully installed, as an upgrade, and the day of opening the case arrived to reveal that the original processor was in fact an AMD Pentium equivalent, in spite of the sticky Intel labels on the case! The new Intel P166 replaced the AMD75 but the whole system became unstable because although the manual stated the motherboard would accept the faster chip, it clearly did not. This came to light after a few hours on the telephone to Microsoft support who patiently talked me through a couple of re-installs and registry backups. With the final diagnosis being the motherboard the old chip was duly replaced and all was operational again.

A new ASUS motherboard was purchased

along with an extra 32 MB of EDO R A M , the price having dropped. A letter of complaint was despatched to the PC's original supplier concerning the chip and duff motherboard details. To their credit they offered to replace the board, which I had by then already done, so instead they sent free copies of Office 97 and Works4. These proved very useful. All progressed well, the old 14400 modem was replaced with a 56K V90 model. A second parallel port was also added to accommodate the scanner which when used via the printer always insisted on printing a page even if scanning in text via the OCR software. The added benefit here was that this also doubled as the tape back up port.

Once again all progressed well, but the Windows based software grew and with additional applications the dreaded 'hard disk space low' warnings appeared. At this time a move up to a Pentium 233MMxX chip was made along with a larger cooling fan. A second hard disk, 3.4GB, was added, formatted as two partitions because of the WIN9S FAT16 2GB limit, to house the growing collection of 'bloatware'. This, incidentally, was still performing the same accounting and office management functions. To assist in usability the old 8 speed CD-ROM was moved to another machine and replaced with a CREATIVE 52 speed "turbo" unit. The 14inch monitor was replaced with a 17inch ADI model and for good measure an 8MB graphics card installed to free 4MB memory from the previous 'on board set up'.

The next 'must do' became replacing the original 1GB hard disk with a spacious 8.4 GB unit and upgrading to WIN98 with the benefits of FAT32. This presented a problem. I did not want to go through the whole clean install and re-installation of the software and data routine. I only just had enough room on the old disk to upgrade to WIN98, which would then allow the conversion to FAT32 and enable the full space to be used on the latest hard disk. The first idea was to use McAfee Uninstaller to



move software from one disk to another. This was successful and the WIN98SE upgrade carried out. The next step was to convert to FAT32 to then make a full drive copy to the new, over 2GB, disk. The WIN98 FAT32 converter would not proceed because of 'bad sectors' on the old disk so I was stuck with FAT16 and the 2GB limit. I partitioned the new 8.4GB disk to one usable 2GB partition. Armed with a copy of Drive Copy, I thought the old disk would be copied to the new disk, but no, the 'bad sectors' on the old disk (CRC redundancy errors) which SCANDISK had marked, proved impossible for the software to ignore. A call to a friend in the business gave me the tip that WINDOWS would 'copy itself. I replaced the original 1GB disk, added the new disk and a major drag and drop took place. The copy of the disk was made but it did not boot, so the WIN98 set-up was run from a boot recovery disk and the WIN98SE CD and all was restored. A week of using this set up presented no problems. The next step was to carry out the

FAT32 conversion and reclaim the full 8.4GB disk. To do this Partition Magic was enlisted and this worked first time doing 'exactly as it says on the tin'. The FAT32 conversion first and then a re-partition of the new disk to its full usable 8.2GB followed by the merging of the two smaller partitions on the 3.4GB disk. This is actually a copy of one partition to a folder on the first partition and then re-partitioning to one. The Drive Mapper function of Partition Magic corrects all the links. A point to remember here is to tell WINDOWS to preserve your CD ROM drive letter otherwise this will be 'moved' as well.

The benefits of these latest upgrades are more usable space now and later because of FAT32, more speed due to WIN98 and the faster disk access. The old 2.75-inch 1GB hard disk is retired. An added bonus is that due to the progressive OS upgrade I can still run the 16bit DOS programs! Installing these usually ends with a warning from 32bit WIN98 that they will not run. The current incarnation works well and has the disk space. It is not about to be upgraded to WIN ME edition!

Colin Boon

McAfee VirusScan/Uninstaller, Powerquest Drive Copy, Partition Magic and Windows98SE upgrade all obtainable from local suppliers, hardware from PC Consultants Ltd, Ryde or Novatech:-

www.novatech.co.uk

JOKE TIME

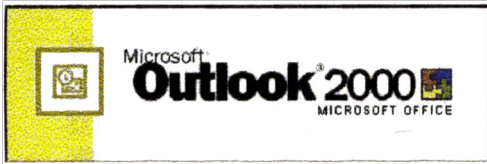
A man stopped at a florist shop after work to pick up roses for his wife. As the clerk was putting the finishing touches on the bouquet, another man burst through the door, breathlessly requesting a dozen red roses. "I'm sorry," the clerk said. "This man just ordered our last bunch."

The desperate customer turned to the other man and begged, "May I please have those roses?"

"What happened?" the first man asked. "Did you forget your wedding anniversary?"

"It's even worse than that," the second man confided. "I crashed my wife's hard drive."

Thanks to Sally-Ann Garrett for this



MICROSOFT OUTLOOK-2000

by Douglas Rankine

Part 1

Introduction

Outlook 2000 is part of Microsoft Office, a comprehensive suite of programs built for, as it says, the office. Most people use the program for sending and receiving emails and little else, and never really explore its flexibility in other areas. Yet it comes as part of an integrated package, with flexibility as the keynote, which only Microsoft is capable of producing so expertly. The latest edition comes highly integrated with Access as the database package, Excel, the spreadsheet and accounting package and the latest MS Word processing software. It is particularly focused on using the Internet as one of its mainstays of communication. From the Outlook window, you can gain access to any of those packages and more. Setting it up for email use is easy, importing and exporting data is easy, saving files and backing them up is easy, and it also has a basic fax facility. It has so many features, that they are too numerous to mention and will take most people quite some time to master. However like Windows, many of the features are synonymous with the Windows Operating System and other Microsoft products.

Set-up

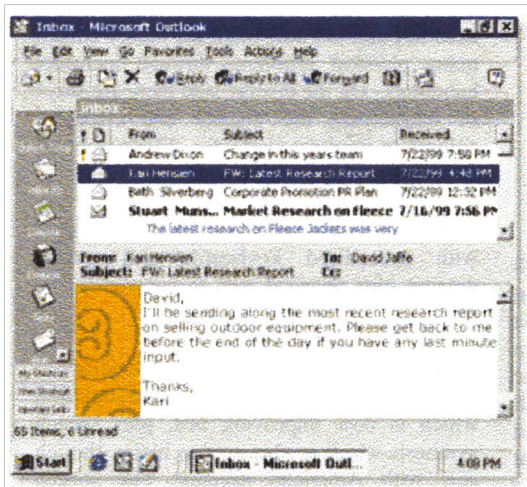
You will need the two Microsoft Office 2000 compact disks. It costs around £200 to £300 for the software, depending on where you purchase it, though a number of companies offer it as part of a package for purchasing a computer from them. All you have to do is pop the disks into your compact disk reader and it will run automatically. There is

custom set-up for more experienced users and the basic set-up for beginners. It can take up to an hour to install, depending on the speed of your compact disk reader and your central processing unit, but the instructions are minimal and easy to follow. It will check out whether you have enough room on your computer, and you do need lots of room, about a gigabyte or so on your hard disk. But that is no hardship these days, as hard disks and computer memories come down in price and increase in size and speed.

If you use the basic set-up it doesn't install certain wizards and help features and it can be annoying to have to put the cd back in again and install them later, before you can use the facilities. That is why it is better to install the lot at the beginning.

Starting Outlook

Let me say at the outset that I will mainly be dealing with Outlook and how to use it, the other packages in MS Office are topics in their own right and can be dealt with at a later date. Before starting Outlook, make sure that you back up your Internet and email accounts, address books and telephone dial up connections, though there is little chance of losing them, it is always safer to do so. Starting Outlook is easy, once it is installed. You just click on the Outlook icon on your desktop in the same way as you start Outlook Express. You can even arrange it to start automatically when you boot up your computer. It will then ask you if you want to make it your default email system. If you click yes, it will offer to import all your Internet telephone connections, your Internet accounts and your address books and also all of your email folders and emails from your other email software. It really is as easy as that! I don't know about all other makes of email software, but it certainly imports Outlook Express data with no problems. If you are already familiar with Outlook Express, then you will find using Outlook for sending, receiving and storing emails no



both men and women equally!

The Calendar

The Calendar not only gives the date, but reminds you of all those things that you have to do, it is basically a diary, but having the advantage of being electronic, it beats paper pages anytime, allowing you to navigate in it like a helicopter pilot, going back and forth, looking from a distance, going in close, pitching and yawing, hovering or landing wherever and whenever you choose. All it depends on is the skill of the pilot! It can be used to set reminders too, such as

birthdays, or recurring events, like club meetings. Never again will you turn up on the 5th Wednesday of the month, at the Riverside, only to find that the only number crunching you will be finding out about, is how to line dance, or historical dates in your family history. It will remind you too about onerous tasks such as filling out one's tax form, and paying the bills. You can set it up so that when you schedule a meeting, for instance, where lots of people are attending, it can do it all automatically by email, the emails being sent out and coming in from the members and showing when they will be available to participate. It is really a very versatile time management system, allowing you to work out your week, month or year, telling you how much time you have available, or how much time you have spent on a particular task. It can be set up to keep a record of the time spent on a project, on what tasks have yet to be done, of how far the project has proceeded, and most importantly, in conjunction with Excel, it will tell you how much money you should charge the customer, accurately displaying the time, and the bill, when it was sent, when it should be paid, and last but not least, when it was paid into your bank!

Personal Folders

When Outlook starts it will go to "Personal Folders" at the top of the <folders> pane, as the default position, but you can arrange for it to go to your Inbox, or any other folder in the pane. Below "Personal Folders" comes the <Calendar>. When you highlight this then a calendar box comes up with the day's date, and appointments, and another two little calendars with the present month and the month following. Times are broken down into half hour stints, the calendar can be changed to show a five day working week, or a 7 day week, for those who don't have a Saturday and Sunday as a day of rest. It has a monthly outlook too and it has a <Task Box> a lovely flexible feature which allows you to put all those little jobs which are impossible to give a date to, but have to be fitted in to your workload at some time in the future, things like painting the garage, or mowing the lawn, or doing the hoovering. Microsoft thinks of everything, targeting

To be continued



AbilityNet Talk- 29 September.

An extra meeting was held on 29th September for all those interested in making computers accessible to the disabled. Pamela Hardacre from AbilityNet came to give a very competent demonstration of the facilities that are available these days for all kinds of disability ranging from hand movement problems through to total blindness. It is often not appreciated just how rewarding it can be to a disabled person to discover how computers can immeasurably improve their life style. There is nearly always something that can be found to help most disabled people.

AbilityNet is a charity whose aim is to make the benefits of using computers available to disabled children and adults. They are of particular interest to our own Computability section of the club who provide Isle of Wight resident's with computers on loan to start them off in acquiring computer skills.

Many simple aids for keyboard and display use are available in Windows without any extra cost in the Accessibility options that can be found in the Control Panel. (If not installed, they can be added to the installed components from the CD-ROM.) These provide adjustments to the keyboard repeat timings and aids to overcome the need to press two keys together when this is physically not possible. There are also many key equivalents to mouse usage (Pamela was

keen to point out how often the mouse causes many physical problems through incorrect handling). On the display side there are ways of magnifying the display and changing colours to improve visibility. These were all demonstrated by Pamela.

AbilityNet augments these built-in features with specialised keyboards and mouse devices plus physical aids to support limbs, etc.

Pamela then went on to demonstrate particular software for speech recognition which is now improving fast, plus speech synthesis which is also getting better, though still with American accents! The speech synthesis program Jaws was shown which will read out words from the screen and can be made selective so that it reads out only the parts that are needed in response to speech or keyboard input.

Many stories were told where disabled people had become extremely versatile in using some of these aids which was very encouraging to the care workers who introduced and helped these people get started.

The Computability section of the club would like more volunteers to be available in different areas of the Island to help teach the basics of computing to disabled persons. Training will be given. If you would like to help, please contact our Disability Coordinator, Helen Edom (see page 3 for details). The section is also on the lookout for people who might benefit from our services.

David Broughton

Interesting DOS Programs

If you are interested in DOS software and other DOS related information, you can find freeware and shareware programs at the website address as follows:-

<http://www.opus.co.tt/dave/index.htm>

Some Notes on Disk Storage

by David Broughton.

These notes apply to the Microsoft operating systems, including DOS, Windows and up to Windows 98 but not beyond.

Files are stored in blocks of bytes. These blocks are called clusters (also known as 'allocation units'). Clusters vary in size from as small as 512 to as large as 32768 bytes, depending on the total capacity of the disk. Each cluster is numbered. Files that use just one cluster have that cluster number recorded in the directory entry (Windows terminology refers to directories as 'folders'). Files of more than one cluster have the first cluster recorded in the directory entry with links to all subsequent clusters stored in the File Allocation Table (FAT). The FAT keeps a record of all clusters in use with linkages from one to the next. Special numbers are used to denote free space, end of linked list and bad clusters (i.e. unreliable for data storage).

The minimum storage you can use is one cluster, even if you have only one byte in a file. The other bytes of the cluster are wasted space and cannot be used.

Directories (except for the root directory) are a special kind of file and require one or more clusters just like ordinary files. The root directory is different. It's at a fixed location and has a fixed size. As it cannot expand, it is wise not to have too many files and sub-directories in it.

When a file is deleted, its directory entry is marked as deleted and the clusters the file used are allocated to free space where they can be reused by other new files. Because the



directory information to the first cluster is still present in the directory entry, it is sometimes possible with special software to recover the file, especially if it does not occupy more than one cluster. Longer files can sometimes be successfully recovered by assuming that clusters after the first are to be found sequentially on the disk (excluding clusters allocated to other files). This will be true if the disk is not too fragmented.

If another file is created in the directory where a previous file was deleted, the old file's directory entry may be re-used. This will make the original file almost impossible to recover. The only way would be to examine every free cluster on the disk for likely-looking data that could be identified as belonging to the original file.

In Windows, the technique of recovering files described above is impractical because Windows does a lot of background housekeeping that is forever creating and moving files around so that it becomes unlikely that the old data is still on the disk.

Continued on page 12

COMPUTER QUIPS

Computer Expert: someone who can take something you already know and make it sound confusing.

The function of a computer expert is not necessarily to be right but to be wrong for more sophisticated reasons.

Edward Phillips

Thanks to Exley Publications

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP

The club meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at
The Riverside Centre in Newport at 7.30 pm. All levels of experience and knowledge are
welcome, from novice to expert.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Membership is £12 per year but if you join for 2001 in November 2000 the subscription
is only £10.

Please send this completed form with your cheque (made
payable to "The Isle of Wight PC User Group") to:
The Membership Secretary, IWPCUG, #####.

Title _____ Initials _____ Surname _____

Forename _____ Date of birth ____/____/____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Job _____ Employer _____

E-mail address _____

Special Interests/favourite software _____

Associates:

You may add here the name(s) of other person(s) as Associate Members who live at the same
address (Associate Members do not pay a subscription) or an organisation that you
will represent:

I hereby apply to become a member of the IW PC User Group.

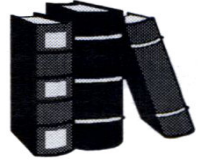
I agree to abide by the constitution.

DATA PROTECTION ACT, 1984. I agree that any of the details given on this form maybe held
on the Group's database and may be disclosed to any other member of the Group. I undertake
that such information concerning another member of the Group will not be disclosed to a non-
member except with the further permission of the member concerned.

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____



PRIZE PUZZLE CORNER
NOVEMBER 2000
 by David Broughton



PRIZE PUZZLE FOR NOVEMBER

The puzzle this month is a program on the CD-ROM Cover Disk called ADD99. You will find it in the directory ALLPUZ\ADD99. There are 21 puzzles/games on this CD-ROM that include all previous Cover Disk puzzles from 1994. New members may like to have a go or play some of the games that have been programmed. Each program is in its own sub-directory having the same name as the program. Thus the program ADD99 is in the subdirectory ADD99 which is in the main directory ALLPUZ. (Read 'folder' for 'directory' if the word 'directory' is unfamiliar to you.)

There is a text file in the main directory ALLPUZ named ALLPUZ.TXT which lists all the programs, when they were issued, a brief description and several explanatory notes.

As usual, a secret word is given on successful completion of the puzzle that you can send to me, David Broughton (see page 3 for address), for entry into the prize draw. The closing date is 6 December 2000.

RESULTS OF THE SEPTEMBER PUZZLE

This puzzle asked for the numbers | to 9 to be placed in circles forming a triangle with each side adding up to 20. There are many solutions. One solution, for example, is:-
 5,8,3,4 / 4,7,2,1,6 / 6,9,5.

I received answers from Michael Hodge, Alan Mackenzie, John Bownas, Peter Greenhaugh, Rob Webb, Peter and Dorothy Woollerton, Rosemary West, Dennis Linzmaier and Ken Cameron. That was a very good number of entries. Rob Webb was the first to be randomly chosen but he was not a member, which was unfortunate because I like to see new names, and I like them to win. The second name to be drawn was Dorothy Woollerton who received the £5 book token. Well done all and better luck next time to the losers.

The Isle of Wight PC User Group

welcomes all owners and users of
 IBM Compatible Personal Computers.

It is a group which seeks to exchange ideas
 and seek new information.

Our meetings are informal on the **first and
 third Wednesdays of each month at The
 Riverside Centre, Newport, 7.30- 9.30 pm.**

The first Wednesday has usually a formal talk
 whilst the third Wednesday is more informal,
 geared to the new user and aims to help out
 members with specific problems.

Membership is £12 per year.

This journal, "**HOTKEY**", is produced
 every month.

Visitors are welcome.

If you would like to know more about us, either
 come along to one of our meetings or
 contact one of our Committee Members on one
 of the numbers on page 3.



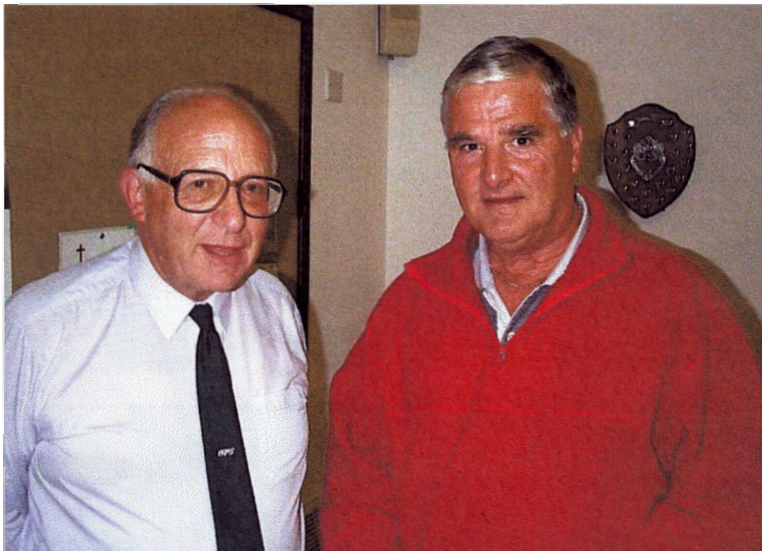
What is FlashGet?

FlashGet is specifically designed to address two of the biggest problems when downloading files: Speed and management of downloaded files.

Speed - FlashGet can automatically split files into sections or *splits*, and download each split *simultaneously*. Multiple connections are opened to each file, and the result is the most efficient exploitation of the bandwidth available. Whatever your connection, FlashGet makes sure all of the bandwidth is utilized. Difficult, slow downloads that normally take ages are handled with ease. Download times are drastically reduced.

Management - unlimited numbers of categories for your files. Download jobs can be placed in specifically-named categories for quick and easy access. The powerful and easy-to-use management features in FlashGet help you take control of your downloads easily.

<http://www.amazesoft.com>



Michael Hodge and Geof Hughes at the recent 'Sound Bytes' meeting

MEMBERS NOTICE BOARD

**This Board is FREE to members
Please use it!**



FOR SALE

COMPUTER DESK

Black Wood
Approx. 4 ft. long x 2 ft. wide,
with 1 shelf and pull out drawer
for keyboard

£15 (incl. Vat)

Contact -
John van Daal
Tel: #####

FOR SALE

COMPUTER

Dell Pentium 200 MHz with 32Mb RAM
plus USB, Soundcard, S3 Videocard
and 3Gb Hard drive
£195

15" Monitor - £50
Speakers - £12.50
External 56.6 V90 Modem - £50
Additional RAM - £1 per Mb

NB: All above prices are inclusive of vat.

Contact - Dennis Parkes
Tel: ##### (h)
(warehouse)
07880##### (mobile)

FOR SALE

Microstar MS 6191 Motherboard
(3 PCI and 1AGP) with built-in
Creative 128 Soundblaster Soundcard
and environmental audio for gaming
£40

Contact - Andy
Tel: #####



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