

COMMODORE FREE

A free to download Magazine dedicated to Commodore computers.

Issue 74



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Editorial

Hurray! The tapes have returned, and the magazine has slipped or lapsed an issue! So after a brief holiday Richard is now back with his Free covertapes, is it just me; or has anyone else missed this feature of the magazine?

Well I know it's not just me; and judging by the number of emails I received asking where have they gone!, also while on the subject "yes" we would love TAP files for the VIC, PET and even the c16/plus4 machines, you need to send these in to either myself or to Richard with some explanation about the included program; and if needed instructions on how to play and or use it, you must ensure they are copyright cleared or public domain as I don't want any nasty emails again.

For the people who wanted a Vic 20 issue

well it's not quite there; but this issue is very Vic influenced issue, with an "almost complete history" of the machine (I say almost; so this gets me out of trouble, I know Vic users are very passionate and just in case I missed something that was important. On that subject; If you feel I have missed an important VIC related event; please write in and let me know!) We have an interview with a VIC programmer called **Ghislain de Blois** and look at his latest game release, Vic followers will be well aware of his work. Speaking of his work, his current games compilation is on sale via the Psytronik website, you will see a news section for the game also under the Vic news. hey it's all free advertising for the Vic!

Doing the splits

Speaking of news; how do you like the news split into sections for the C64 Vic plus4 etc. do you prefer this rather than just a jumbled mess of news, personally I actually liked the jumbled mess of news, mainly as it meant I didn't have to work as hard separating it all out! Still I have had quite a few comments and suggestion on the separation of news to machine specific topics; so is it better this way, what do you think?

LOST GAME

We have a readers comment, most are not printable; but this one is a plea for help to locate a game, if you can help out with locating a copy then contact my good self and I will relay any messages to the reader, who is also a friend of mine! So although not a Vic dedicated issue it is I hope you agree very Vic specific issue, I did ask various websites for VIC and other commodore specific items but sadly received nothing back from them.

The news section celebrates 30 years of MIDI and 50 years of the audio TAPE, love it or hate it without tape we wouldn't have had Walkmans (other personal tape players were available at the time) and without walkmans we wouldn't have had iPods, well maybe anyway, and I am still not sure that's a good or bad thing !....

I Think now sounds like a good time to bail out and leave you to read the issue, heck if I carry on with this I may get lynched by some supporter or hater of some or other format

and or compact cassette carrying player manufacturer, anyway I would have less issue space for the magazine (editor jumps off his chair, and shouts Tallyho) in some vain effort to pretend he has bailed out, other member of the team look him over, presuming him mad and then ignore him!

Editor laughs and gets up, wondering why everyone is ignoring him

Thanks for reading

Nigel

Editor Commodore Free

www.commodorefree.com

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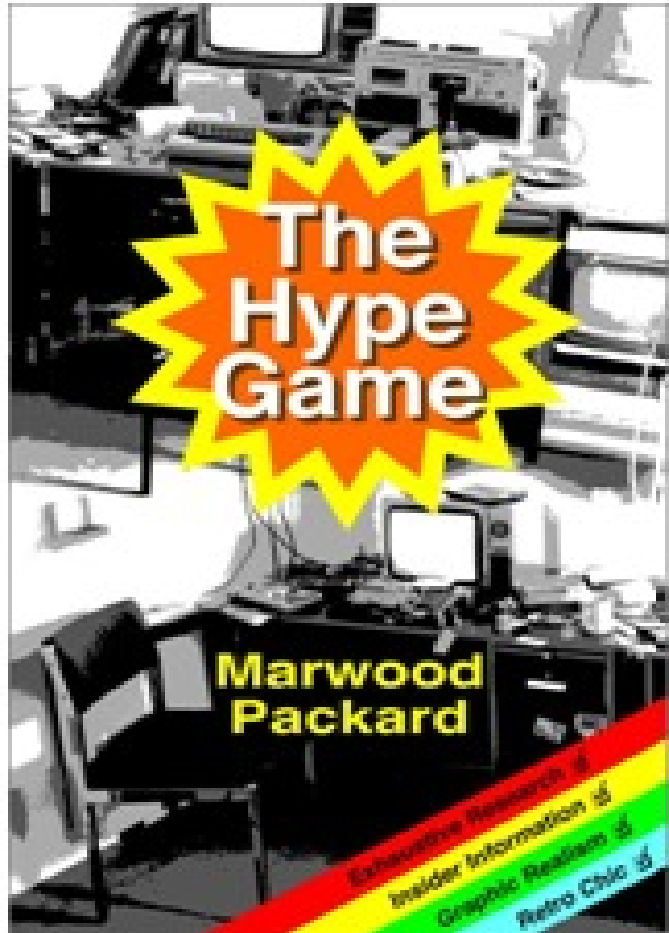




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LOADING ... PLEASE WAIT

Commodore Free E-Cover Tape #7

By Richard Bayliss

FEAST YOUR EYES ON THESE BEAUTIES:

1. PLAYABLE DEMO
2. EXCITING UTILITIES
3. FULL GAMES

Did you miss us the last two issues? I may have guessed you probably did miss us. Unfortunately, it just couldn't be helped. Good news however is that the favourite part of the magazine is back. The E-COVER TAPE.

This issue we have a couple of fun Sideways SEUCK games, one of which was written by Alf Yngve. The other which won

the 2013 SEUCK Compo. There is also a funny remake of a classic. You can even try out an excellent playable demo of an upcoming game by Psytronik Software, which we had kind permission to host on this E-Covertape. Finally a classic PD graphics tool, and to round off the tape. Something extra special for you, from me. Lock in and load :)

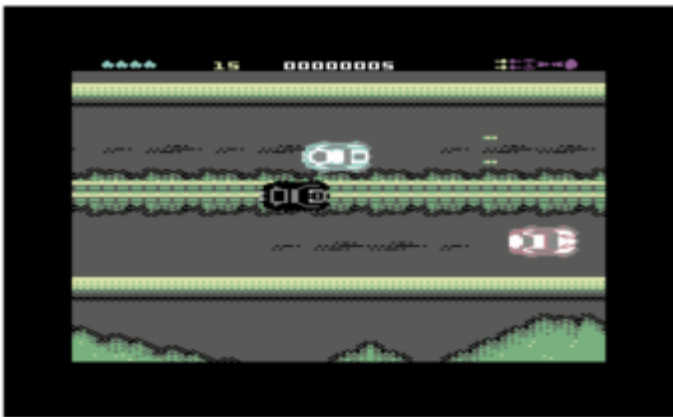
Vice Squad Demo

(C)2013 Psytronik Software

Programming: Achim Volkers

Graphics: Trevor Storey

Music: Linus / Viruz



This is a 1 level playable preview, in which will give you a taster of what it is like to be in an ultimate car chase. You are an undercover cop, who has been assigned by the Vice Squad to patrol the roads from the criminal gangs that think they rule it. Strap yourself in for a real bumpy ride

Using a joystick plugged into port 2, Your mission is to smash into or blast away black vehicles which are being driven by members of criminal gangs. You have a certain quota to shoot down before you can complete your mission. Since this mission is a fast paced mission try not to smash into the edges of the road, trees or buildings, otherwise your car will be wasted. Your car can be replaced, but if you smash too many of those, then you'll have to suffer the consequences.

Vice Squad should soon be available from Psytronik Software at <http://www.psytronik.net> as soon as the game has finished.

LOADER GAME TAPE MASTER KIT

(C)2013 Commodore Free, The New Dimension

Programming: Richard Bayliss, Martin Piper

Graphics: Richard Bayliss, Johan Janssen

Music: Richard Bayliss

To round up this issue's E-Cover tape comes an exclusive new utility called the **Loader Game Tape Master Kit**. This is a simple program that allows you to master your tapes using a high speed turbo tape loader. Also loads the games to tape using one of my two loader games which were used many times on TND games and contributor's releases. **Moo-Tilation** and **Happy Blocks**. With additional features which no other loader game had. You can still play the game after the program has loaded.

How to use:

The program is pretty much simple to use. Press spacebar on the TND intro to enter the program selector Pick one of the two loader games in which you wish to use on your game. Enter the file name for your game and parameters such as jump address, etc. Then start mastering. Make sure your disk file name isn't over 135 blocks else the tool won't work properly. Due to the compatibility issues of this loader sys-

tem this program will not work on BASIC programs. That means you will need to type in some code to initialize BASIC and kill loader parameters or just freeze your game with an Action replay cartridge. Programs must originally load at \$0801. The loader system itself will relocate it.

If you use crunchers or any programs which use SYS 2061 as the SYS address after loading (Most programs today use Exomizer) then use \$080D as jump address for your program. Have fun tape with your mastering :)



Night Raid

(C)2013 Alf Yngve

Programming: Alf Yngve (Using Sideways SEUCK), Richard Bayliss (Enhancements)

Graphics: Alf Yngve

Music: Richard Bayliss



From Alf Yngve, comes this stunning action packed game inspired by some classic combat games, such as Green Beret, Gryzor, etc. Although this is not a run and jump game. The game also features combat style music on the front end. Also two player control and scoring has been bolted together to one game which saves you having to change your joystick port to play each part.

The story so far:

A group of rogue marines are planning to set a big act of terrorism on to your own territory and city. After the alert, civilians just got escorted out of their homes and sent into prison camps. The terrorists also captured you and threw

you into a cell. Unknown to the terrorists you were wearing a tracker. So the allied forces sent in one of their best helicopters. Checked the radar signal, shot the guard from outside your cell. One of the marines arms a bazooka and blasts the cell in which you are free. You arm yourself with the guard's rifle with plenty of bullets and set off on a dangerous mission The NIGHT RAID.

Using a joystick in either port, you are the escaped captive, who is out to get revenge on the terrorists. Your mission is to raid their camps, and shoot anything that moves on sight. Watch out though the enemy forces never give up and are most definitely on the watch out for escapes. This game is split into two parts.

Part 1 - The ground battle

After the helicopter above broke you out of the cells. You plan a revenge attack on the terrorists. Simply by sneaking past them and blasting them with your rifle. Unfortunately the terrorists have backup and are keeping watch of your every step so you must shoot your way to freedom. To help gain stamina, pick up medical packs the more you pick up, the more likely you'll get an extra life back. As soon as you escape from the enemy camp it is time to enter the helicopter and get the heck out of that awful prison camp.

Part 2 - The air battle

You escape into the helicopter but find that you are being watched. So armed with bullets you must shoot the enemies airborne and grounded to avoid getting recaptured. If you make your escape from the air battle you will make it back to your HQ, where the rest of the allied forces will destroy the terrorist base, and you get back to your family. Good luck soldier!

Sheer Earth Attack

(C)2013 Gaetano Chiummo

Programming: Gaetano Chiummo (Using Sideways SEUCK), Richard Bayliss (Enhancements)

Graphics: Gaetano Chiummo

Music: Gaetano Chiummo

The second of two sideways SEUCK game creations comes a game with won the 2013 SEUCK Competition and also this version features the ultimate prize, a brand new front end, In game enhancements and much more. Making this game feel commercial release although it isn't. In game graphics are really nice and the loading picture is sweet.

It is the year 2261. According to the prophecy the Earth is going to be destroyed! The prophet didn't give many details except that the menace will arrive from the sky. The scientists are gazing at the stars but the army has its eyes on a civilized alien race which has started studying a new source of energy. They never threatened the Earth nor any other civilized planet around but what if this new energy has the power to rule the universe? So, the army's sending a space ship (along with a rotating combat module) out to space to seek and destroy this mysterious weapon. And, guess what!, the pilot is YOU!

You must fly through five zones:

1) **Deep Space:** this area is very easy to conquer; just beware of the yellow ships: they can fire at you!

2) **The Asteroid Belt:** an area full of flying rocks which can be shot or avoided. The most dangerous enemies here are some fast flying ships, which can easily dodge the rocks, aiming at your ship!

3) **The Bubbles' Belt:** Bubbles can be dangerous! Just destroy them before they start bursting... There are also some tough alien ships flying across this area.

4) **The Ruins:** in this small abandoned planet many space-birds built their nests and they will not let you pass so easily... You must also destroy the rocks that block your way.

5) **The Aliens' Base:** this military zone is filled with the best aliens' weaponry from cannons to space-fighters! At the end of this stage you'll find the result of their experiments a new source of energy which could be used to destroy the universe... but are we sure it would? Anyway your task is to destroy it... so, good luck!



Bionik Granny Returns
(C)2010 The New Dimension
Programming: Richard Bayliss
Graphics: Richard Bayliss, Johan Janssen, Kenz
Music: Richard Bayliss

This is the final version of the spin off tribute to Mastertronic Software's Bionic Granny It features various levels, bonus screen neat presentation and plenty of tongue in cheek fun. Even a remix of the classic Bionic Granny theme tune. Back in 1984, Granny was waiting outside the school gates waiting to clobber the brats that were responsible for making her life a misery.

Now 26 years later after her hard earned rest SHE'S BACK. The cantankerous old lady is on a little adventure which is to go out into town and pick up her pension from out of the local post office. Unfortunately for her the town's full of pushers and shovers. Not only is this TOO MUCH for her – she's very annoyed; so she dons her blue mac picks up her walking stick and gets ready to clobber the poor folk.

Using a joystick plugged into port 2 help Granny clobber passers-by to retrieve coins, Granny must clobber at least 5

passers before a coin appears as soon as 5 coins have been collected you have a mystery bonus stage to play. Can you help an old lady cross the busy road safely and collect your pension. If granny enters the post office and picks up her pension a bonus will be rewarded, If however you let granny get hit by a vehicle or enter an incorrect store then no bonus will be rewarded. Complete all 8 levels to win the ending.



ULTRAFONT+++
(C)1989 Public Domain Software
Programming:
Music: Jeroen Tel

This is a classic, but very handy graphics font editor In which allows you to create your very own 1x1 font editors, or use it to create 3 colour logos. The tool itself also contains wonderful music by Jeroen Tel inside the editor. Also a rendition of a classic Eric Clapton tune, Leyla by 20CC in the Knickers intro. The editor itself Controls are pretty much simple to use.

Joystick in port 2 controls:

Up: Move cursor up
 Down: Move cursor down
 Left: Move cursor left
 Right: Move cursor right
 Fire: Set pixel

KEYBOARD:

L – Load character set from disk / tape
 S – Save character set from disk / tape
 F1 – Slide single character to the Right
 F2 – Slide single character to the Left
 F3 – Slide single character to the bottom

F4 – Slide single character to the top
 F5 – Multicolour mode
 F6 – Hi-Res mode
 F7 – Copy single character to memory
 F8 – Paste character from memory

In multicolour mode:

SHIFT+1 – Change editor background colour
 SHIFT+2 – Change main character colour (Single + Mcol mode)
 SHIFT+3 – Change character multicolour 1
 SHIFT+4 – Change character multicolour 2



NEXT MONTH

On the next E-Cover Tape. We will be digging deep into the disk drawers to find yet more worthy Public Domain programs and/or exclusives. Maybe we could reveal some demos or music. Also to finish the tape we shall have something special for you as well. Next month marks the 5th anniversary of a classic title of ours. It will also be making its appearance on the E-Cover tape as well. Stay tuned.

Editors Comments

I notice we are running a Commodore 64 covertape and don't want to exclude anyone on another format, If you have a demo, tool or game on another commodore format or platform you are welcome to send that to either Richard or myself for inclusion on the magazine, please add a small write-up about the program. The most important thing is to ensure the software is your own and you are happy for it to be included on the magazine

SUMMER BLOWOUT!

Buy a copy of Run/Stop-Restore: 10th Anniversary Edition at retail price \$17.99 USD and get your choice of either Lenard's latest book, Skits For 2nd Hand Puppets or stay with Commodore and get his software package for only \$1.00 (USD) extra!

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Check it Out

Check Mate

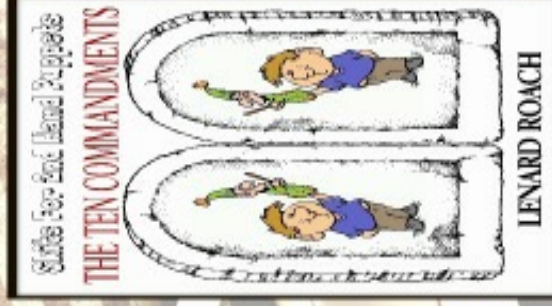
The Ledger

Money Manager 2K (written by Rex Dey)

Hurry!

This sale will only be going on from June 1st to September 30th, 2013

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READERS COMMENTS



From: "Wayne Womersley"
 To: "Nigel Parker" Subject: Commodore Free
 Date: Wed, Aug 7, 2013 11:17

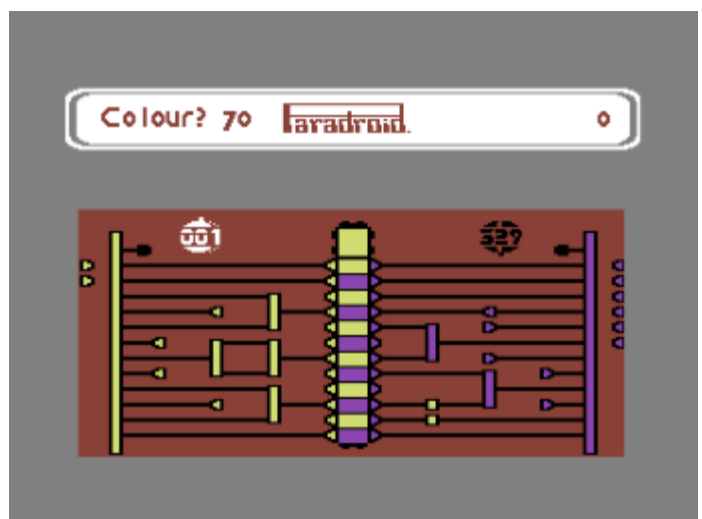
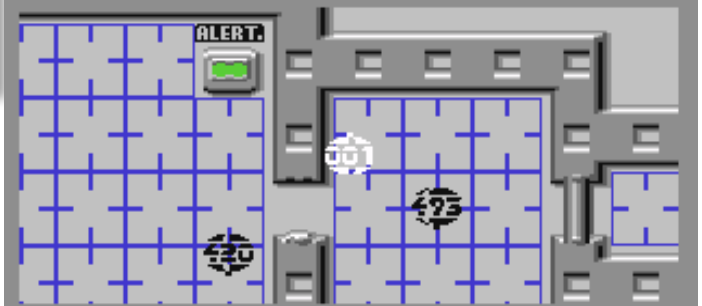
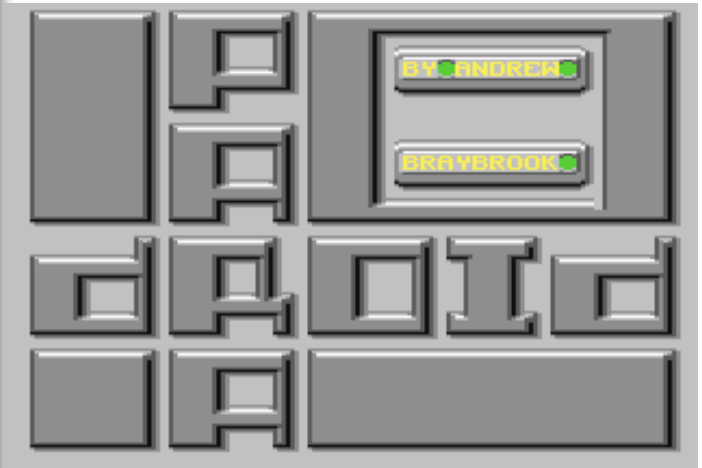
Hi Nigel, I First must apologise because I have been meaning to write some Cartridge Articles for you and unfortunately got into other things instead... The Good News is I have somebody interested in working with me on finishing a Game so all those years stuck up in my Bedroom drawing Graphics didn't go to waste - LOL :-> When we get to a Demo Stage we will send Commodore Free a Demo of course :->

Do you know of anyone who possesses a Heavy Metal Paratroid Cassette that they would like to sell - Would really like to Play it again...

Yours Faithfully
 Wayne

COMMODORE FREE

Wayne, no problem with the articles, I realise you have had other projects to work on. About the cassette, well to be honest I haven't seen this game in the flesh on tape, but if anyone does have a copy for sale (or to give away) they can contact me and I will pass on any details to Wayne, How's that! Of course now you owe me that article on cartridges and if you do find the game through a reader you owe me 2 articles as a finder's fee.



GENERAL NEWS

MICROMUSIC.NET CELEBRATES 14 YEAR BIRTHDAY

*Commodore Free**Here is what they had to say about the birthday celebrations*

dear micro_people

14 years ago, a bunch of young boys started a new online platform called micromusic.net...Happy happy birthday and all the best for the future! thanx for flying with us!

just a lil presi for you, dear memberz, download now:

Cyberstorm by Acidbeatz
news relief by aviel brown
hello pretty by Rico Z

we all meetz again on micromusic's microtalk! tell all your enemies & friendz on fazebuuk: we like!

if you're using SMART PHONES, you can also go to the following URL:

<http://micromusic.net/microtalkx> (this is the lightweight 'microtalk only' version of the website.)

we luv you so much, honestly! the micromusic team

<http://www.micromusic.net>

|| ||| | ||| | ||| | ||| |

lowtech music for hightech people

multimedia net_work_community_system

micromusic was brought to life in November 1998 by carl (gino esposto, zurich - Switzerland) and superB (michael burkhardt, basel - schweiz) under the code name "future-lab". the following months were used to define the project, program and finally put the website online in the beginning of august 1999. what was originally thought as a simple community website to get hold of low_tech_musik produced by low_tech_producerz for lovers of computer generated tunes via the worldwide web was developing fast into a highly complex websound_community_system using the latest internet technology.

Basically "musical research" is the most accurate description of the micromusic.net activities. Even though music produced on low budget equipment and retro computer games sounds was the focus at the beginning of the micromusic project, we always had far more in our minds than that! The internet is still in its first years and topics like how to build up 'special interest com-

munities', advanced real-time communication tools and highly optimized interface design were also quite important to us.

The micromusic crew realised a multimedia website which is unique on the worldwide web within less than 2 years. The very active and rockin' micro community counts almost 3000 people now and the quality of the uploaded low-tech tunes has reached a level which defines a new standard in the territory of low-tech music and online music communities.

online / offline

in the early days when micromusic went online with its website, it was thought as a pure online project, but by the end of the year 2000 it was quite clear to us that it will be more an online AND offline community project. In November 2000 a part of the micromusic core team went on their first micromusic club tour to Hamburg (MFOC, pudel club) and Berlin (WMF). Shortly before people from London organized the first micro meeting in real space. also micromusic was presented at the multimedia festival VIPER2000 in Basel, Switzerland and there was a second micro meeting in Stockholm end of December 2000.

Concerning the music,

micromusic also took the plunge to release a CD (MICRO_SUPERSTARZ 2000) presenting 17 artists from Switzerland, USA, UK, Germany, Russia, Australia, Japan, Sweden etc. a ROM data part on the CD takes care of the interactive groove and includes a visually attractive computer game, music tools & files and provides background info about the artists and their tracks. more releases - also on vinyl - are planned for the year 2001 together with our label partners from domicile (www.domizil.ch).



GENERAL NEWS

Non Functional Goodies

Commodore Free

How many times have you wanted to buy a brand new none working product you can get working yourself? Well if you fancy saving a few quid and are handy with a soldering iron then this could be a good site to look at any way listed below are the none functioning products and a description about what you are purchasing and why they are for sale.

Product:

- uIEC/SD
- 64NIC+
- ZoomFloppy
- EasyFlash 3
- 2364 ROM-el
- 23128 ROM-el
- uIEC/IDE
- XPander-3
- XPander-3 VIC

Product Description

We're sure you've clicked on this link, wondering why a company would openly advertise broken items for sale. Have we lost our sanity? Are we trying to determine the naivety of potential customers? Do we wish to inflict hours of frustration on classic computing enthusiasts?

Hmm, we won't discount those theories. However, our primary reason is much more mundane. Honestly, some of the items we receive from manufacturing do not work. In the beginning, when time was more plentiful, we diagnosed the issues with each non-working item and fixed them. But, as the product list expands, and time is needed for more valuable tasks, the box of non-working items waiting for diagnosis grows larger.

Something must be done. Since "crowdsourcing" is all the rage these days, we're going to crowd source this task. The effort goes like this:

1. There's a small "entrance fee" to this effort. We've listed all of our non-working items on this page at greatly reduced costs. This is done for two reasons. It allows us to recoup a bit of the cost to manufacture these products, and it also ensures we target people genuinely interested. So, to "join", you simply buy one of more of the items.
2. We mark the item as non-working, and ship it to you.
3. You figure out what is wrong with it. We'll provide schematics, firmware, etc., but we're not doing the debugging. We have no idea what ails these boards. Break out the scope and logic analyser and have at it. Note that we make no promises the unit is repairable. It's the gamble you're taking. So, if you buy one of these, assume the money is gone forever, and if the unit can be repaired, you can think of it as finding free money!

4. When the issue is identified, you fix it. We can't promise replacement parts, but if we have it sitting on the shelf and can send it, we'll try to do so. Don't count on it, though.
5. When the issue is resolved, you have a working unit. Enjoy. We'll support firmware upgrades and usage questions on these units just like any other. However, we're not supporting the unit misbehaving or replacing the unit if it fails at some point.
6. We don't mind you selling it to someone else, but you have to let the buyer know the constraints as well. Fair is fair. Remember, we're marking the units, so we'll know if it comes back to us.

(OK, so it's not exactly crowdsourcing, but that's our story, and we're sticking to it!)

Yes, the system could be abused, but our customers are not like that. Right? In any case, we'll keep at it until it fails to work, or we run out of stuff (which will never happen permanently, as there's always duds in each batch). Spare us the commentary on finding better manufacturers who can assure 100% working stock. We're pretty sure that's not possible, but even if someone else could do better, they can't do it at the prices we currently pay for manufacturing. The trade-off is fine. Even if we never sell a single broken unit, we're still satisfied with our manufacturing partner. They provide good quality at a great price, and we can pass that on to our customers.

So, if you love the smell of vaporized flux in the morning, leap for joy when seeing bus cycles displayed on your scope, and can convert logic analyser graphs of serial data into actual data elements, this store item may be of interest. If you have some cash burning a hole in your pocket and you have copious amounts of free time and great quantities of patience, click on that "buy now" button and await your borked treasure. However, if you need to search the web for truth tables for NAND gates (or even what a NAND gate is), can't understand the X10 switch on your scope probe, or burnt yourself in the last 12 months on your soldering iron, these are not the products you are looking for.

Notes

- The XPander-3 VIC technically works, but it has the following issues:
 - The switches to enable/disable power and IO signals are too close to the 22/44 pin connectors. Thus, cartridges with their shells will not fit. Relocating the switches under the PCB will address the issue
 - The 2 unconnected cartridge port lines were run to each expansion port. But, some newer VIC-20s and some cartridges ties those lines to various voltages or use them in special ways. Thus, they should be disconnected at each expansion port connector to prevent any possible damage to the VIC-20. We won't take responsibility for frying a VIC-20, so we're selling the current units as "broken"

<http://store.go4retro.com/non-functional-goodies/>

COMMODORE 64 NEWS

KICKASS CRUNCHER PLUGINS

Information from the Readme file says

****KickAss Cruncher Plugins****

makes it possible to crunch (pack) 6502 assembler code and other data compile-time with the MOS 65xx assembler ****[Kick Assembler](<http://www.theweb.dk/KickAssembler>)****. This is done by the means of Kick Assembler's plugin support, in specific ***Modifiers***. The current version has support for two of the most popular crunchers for the Commodore 64,

[ByteBoozer](<http://csdb.dk/release/?id=109317>) and ***[Exomizer](<http://hem.bredband.net/magli143/exo/>)***.

Download

You can find the latest version right here on GitHub:

<https://github.com/p-a/kickass-cruncher-plugins/releases>

Dr. Evil Labs

From: "Kent Sullivan"

To: <commodorefree@commodorefree.com>

Subject: Great article on CMD in issue 72!

Date: Fri, Aug 9, 2013 18:26

Hi,

I was one of the principals in Dr. Evil Labs. Not sure if you had heard that we have been blogging about the company's history on [commodoreserver.com](http://www.commodoreserver.com):

<https://www.commodoreserver.com/BlogView.asp?BID=22E95790589E42CF8BAA46C249B0FDE1>

The most recent entries are for the SID Symphony Stereo Cartridge. I will be updated the part 2 entry soon with more documents – scans of vintage product reviews and pictures of the different cartridge versions.

Earlier entries (accessible using the calendar on the right side of the page) cover the beginning of the company, Commodore 64/128 Kermit, and the *Imagery!* adventure game system. Future posts will look at the SwiftLink-232 and the sale to CMD.

--Kent

COMMODORE FREE

For anyone wishing to read the blog its available from here

Prg2Sid 0.80 By iAN CoOG RELEASED

PRG2SID 0.80 (/) iAN CoOG/HVSC

Automatically attaches a PSID header to a ripped (prg) tune. Identifies some players and sets init/play accordingly, also patches the header/code if needed. Default init/play addresses are \$1000/1003 (actually loadaddress/loadaddress+3) and are set like that for all unknown players.

Usage: p2s <filename.prg> [new_load_addr]

Output name will always have input base name plus .sid extension, whether input name has an extension or not. If in-

<https://www.commodoreserver.com/BlogView.asp?BID=22E95790589E42CF8BAA46C249B0FDE1>

History of Dr Evils Laboratory

This blog recounts the history of Dr. Evil Laboratories, the creator, manufacturer, and retail sales of peripherals and software for the Commodore 64, including the Imagery! adventure game system, the SID Symphony Stereo cartridge, and the Swiftlink-232 cartridge.



put file is already a PSID/RSID file, won't be processed. You can override the loadaddress by specifying the new one as 2nd parameter, to avoid the need to cut the file manually up to the music file start address.

For example if you have an unpacked prg ranging from \$0801 to \$9fff generated

by UNP64, and the music is located at \$1000, use:

p2s your_unpacked_file.prg \$1000

New loadaddress must be contained between real loadaddress and end file address, and can be specified in decimal or hex (use prefix \$ or 0x). It will be ignored if the value is out of range.

<http://csdb.dk/release/?id=120896>

COMMODORE 64 NEWS



CODEBASE 64 Scanning the Keyboard the correct and non-KERNAL way

To view the full article and the Code go to this link
http://codebase64.org/doku.php?id=base:scanning_the_keyboard_the_correct_and_non_kernal_way

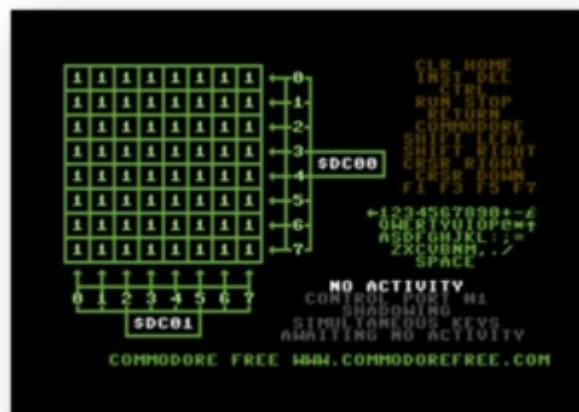
Scanning the Keyboard the correct and non-KERNAL way
 This routine is for the English Keyboard.
 The routine can easily be extended to handle Control Port #1 input.

Limitations

The technical limitation on the C64 Keyboard hardware is that not more than 2 keys may be pressed at the same time if you want to be 100% sure the result is valid. In some cases, three keys will work fine but whenever 3 keys form a right angle in the keyboard scan matrix, a 4th letter will appear. The combination "ABC" will work fine but the combination "ASD" will form such a triangle and the matrix will also report that the "F" key is pressed. Same goes for "ASF" which would incorrectly read a "D" the same way. In short, the C64 keyboard is not a piano where you can play chords and stuff.

Codebase doesn't allow binaries so you can download the program from here

<http://csdb.dk/getinternalfile.php/119347/KeyboardTest.prg>



UNP64 v2.30 - Generic C64 prg unpacker By Ian Coog RELEASED

Original source and idea: testrun.c, taken from Exomizer 2.0b7 by Magnus Lind. Converted to a generic prg unpacker by iAN Coog. Being a derived project, Exomizer' sources used for UNP64 are included and modified where needed. The idea is simple: to simulate the C64 memory/processor, run the program until it reaches the unpack routine, usually relocated to an address lower than \$0800, then to continue execution until the Program Counter returns to a normal address usually higher than \$0800. At this point, save all the memory. I normally do this process in emulators by setting breakpoints but an automatic program that does it for me is handy. PUCrunch and Exomizer 2.0Beta7 already have their own decrunch commands. This program should cover those 2 and almost all the remaining ones.

Main changes applied to Exomizer sources:

- Many undocumented opcodes added to 6502emu.c to unpack more packers/coders.
- Fixed handling of some opcodes (indirect JMP, JSR, BRK not stopping, ADC/SBC)
- Better sysline detection and parameter to force entry point.

TrilogicExpert/ActionReplay/SuperSnapshot5/FreezeMachine/Final Cart II & III scanner, should cover every known (to me) version.

- Action Replay 4 & FreezeMachine Split freezes are detected and a onefile prg will be generated. Then you can unpack the result or crunch it. Action Replay 4.x files are: loader "name" and 2nd file "1name" Unknown Cart files can be any name, 2nd filename is written in loader. Of course both files must be in the same directory.
- Scanners to get exact unpack address from MANY difficult unpackers. See Unpackers section later in this document for a list.
- Tries to identify also entry point in SYS-less packers.
- Added some memory init values before running. A C64 minimal environment I replicated so many unpackers can act as on the real one.
- Added handling of some Kernal calls which return modified regs.
- Simple \$01 banking implemented: writing to I/O area for example is handled only when RAM is visible there, else writes to I/O are skipped.
- Simple raster (\$d011/2) handling, enough to avoid hanging some unpackers (AR)
- Faked keyboard checks to bypass many intros/trainers.
- Warnings are given in Verbose mode if vectors from \$0314 are modified, so you'll know if an IRQ or something else should happen.

<http://csdb.dk/release/?id=120897>

http://csdb.dk/getinternalfile.php/119280/unp64_230.7z

http://csdb.dk/getinternalfile.php/119281/unp64_230_src.tar.gz

VIC NEWS

Realms of Quest IV: 4-Level Demo Version

Name: Realms of Quest IV: 4-Level Demo Version

Author: Ghislain

Released: September 1, 2013

Requirements: VIC-20 with 16K minimum memory expansion is required. 24K is recommended for better performance (for less disk usage) and greater 3D graphical perspective. A disk drive is also required.

Description: Demo version of the upcoming Psytronik release for Realms of Quest IV where the first four levels of the dungeon can be explored. The attached PDF manual is still a work in progress, but serves as a preview of how the printed version will look like when the whole game package is published.

The long-awaited follow-up to Realms of Quest III is almost completed. As I continue work on finishing Ultimate Quest for the Commodore 64 (intended to be on Side 2 of this Psytronik release), I make the first four Dungeon levels available to everyone.

Realms of Quest IV has the following features:

- 10 Dungeon Levels with various riddles, traps and NPC characters who can aid you on your quest (4 levels only for Demo Version)
- Over 100 monster graphic portraits (50 in Demo Version)
- 10 races and 12 classes to choose from as you assemble 8 players for your party
- 60 magic spells
- Over 135 items (weapons, armour, shield, gems, jewels, potions and scrolls)
- 3 game fonts to choose from

The enemy this time are the mysterious Time Lords who threaten the reign of the fairer creatures above the earth. Befalls thus you, brave adventurers, to battle the labyrinth below all our feet, and ensure for yet another generation, that the evils and chaos do not rise. How it can be so, that this peace last forever, none knows. All one knows, is in the Dungeon, lay riches, glory and the immortality of your name.

Download.

<http://realmsquest.blogspot.co.uk/>

Discuss.

<http://sleepingelephant.com/ipweb/bulletin/bb/viewtopic.php?t=6350>

YOUTUBE VIDEO.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTv_q8S3dig&feature=youtu.be



Beginning Assembly Programming on the Commodore Vic-20

by Lawrence Woodman

<http://techtinkering.com/2013/04/16/beginning-assembly-programming-on-the-commodore-vic-20/>

Created as a basic introduction to Assembly language programming on the Vic Lawrence shares knowledge that the beginners needs to be able to create a small HELLO WORLD program and then run it He also plays around with Screen colours and then gives further links for the interested reader

Lawrence says this

Here I will show you how to get started programming the Vic-20 in assembly language. I will not be teaching 6502 assembly language itself as there are better resources available and I will link to these. I will, however, be showing you what you need to get started, where some of the best resources are and I will be giving a few examples to whet your appetite



VIC NEWS

NEW VIC GAMES Boogieman, Exploria and Korque

Kurt Johns says

"I am posting all my games, but I will only point out a few I am most proud of."

Name: Boogieman, Exploria ,Korque

Author: Kurt Johns

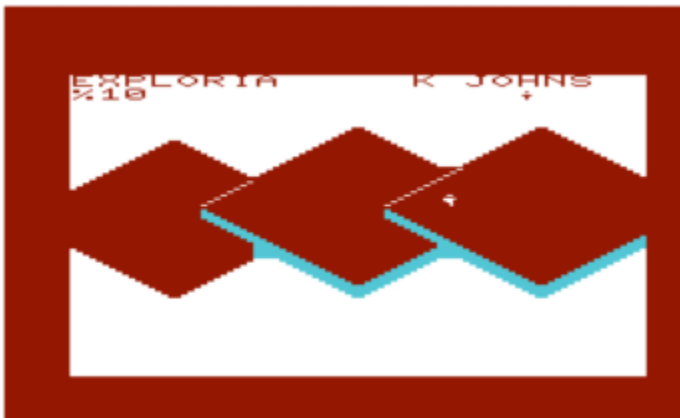
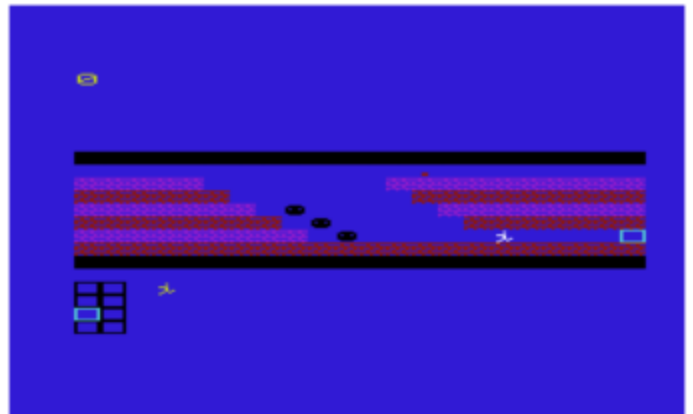
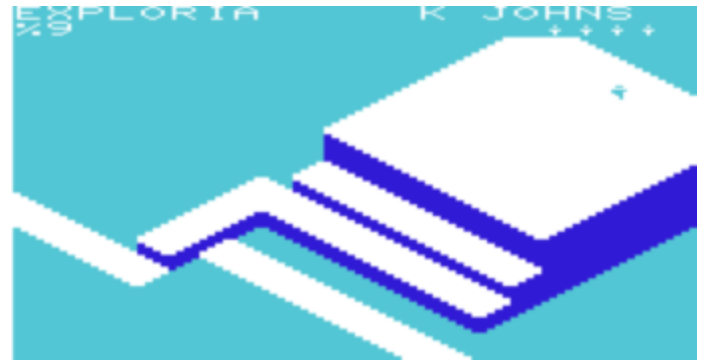
Released: 2013

Requirements: Unexpanded VIC-20 for Boogieman & Korque

3K expansion for Exploria

Description: Boogieman is a maze game, Korque is a platform game Exploria is a ... hmmm ... exploring game

Screenshot:



There are 31 titles here. Download & More:

<http://www.softboxmetal.com/aj&kj.html>

Not only can you download the files as TAP format but you can also buy the titles from the website as real tape games with covers etc.



VIC NEWS

THEATER OF WAR TRILOGY (COMPILATION DISK) FOR THE UNEXPANDED VIC-20**Author:** Ghislain

Theatre of War is a gripping trilogy of turn-based strategy games for the unexpanded VIC-20 by Ghislain de Blois, author of the popular Realms of Quest RPG games. As well as the three 'Theatre of War' games this compilation also contains a bonus selection of arcade games (see below for complete list).

The Theatre of War trilogy features three complete campaigns to play - WW2 Eastern Front, WW2 Pacific Theatre and WW1 Western Front. The games put you in command of military units and allow you to recreate battles from the first or second World War.

Select your units, deploy your forces, and let battle commence!

The Premium Disk version of Theatre Of War is presented in a 5.25" plastic disk case and features full colour glossy cover artwork by Steve 'STE'86' Day. The floppy disk is packaged in a full colour glossy disk sleeve with a full colour label.

THEATER OF WAR DISK CONTAINS:

- THEATER OF WAR I (WW2 Eastern Front)
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- BREAK FAST II
- FACE VERSUS HEEL
- MAGITOO
- OLYMPIC DASH
- SPACE WARZ
- STREET BATTLE
- VICROLEAGUE WRESTLING I
- VICROLEAGUE WRESTLING II
- WORM OUT

Note: All games are compatible with the unexpanded VIC-20!

To buy a physical copy of the game on disk with instructions printed on the cover inlay all of which is placed inside in its very own plastic jewel case, go here

http://www.binaryzone.org/retrostore/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=87_95&products_id=612

Go here to get a lower-priced budget disk-only version (with a loose printed instruction sheet)

http://www.binaryzone.org/retrostore/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=87_95&products_id=613

Discuss here <http://sleepingelephant.com/ipw-web/bulletin/bb/viewtopic.php?t=6594>

See the Commodore Free reviews later in this issue for more details



AMIGA NEWS

AROS Vision 2.0 online based in Magellan

On the download-page you can download version 2.0 of AROS Vision.

The Highlights include:

Based on Magellan (SAS Version)
 AREXX integrated (Regina)
 Snapshotter
 OWB (AROS Version), Netsurf and AWeb integrated
 Updated System files
 Hotkeys added (description on download-page)
 Filetypes for the most important picture and sound formats including AVI
 Packer-support
 and much more

download:

http://www.aros-platform.de/html/dis..._download.html



AMIGAKIT SECURES AMITCP 4 DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

AmigaKit Secures AMITCP 4 Distribution Agreement

[AmigaKit](http://www.amigakit.com/), <http://www.amigakit.com/> long-standing Amiga computer retailer and developer of the [EasyNet](#) software has secured a distribution agreement for AMITCP 4 with the developers, NSDi. The deal will result in AMITCP 4 being available once again for commercial sale integrated into the forthcoming EasyNet Professional Edition package.

[EasyNet](#) is a modern Internet networking package for Classic Amiga computers, which also provides a feature-rich front end for AMITCP. Existing users of the standard EasyNet will be eligible for a future upgrade package to the Professional Edition.

Managing Director of AmigaKit, Matthew Leaman, commented: "We are pleased to once again support the Amiga and bring new software developments to market. EasyNet will continue to be upgraded over the next few months and beyond, re-affirming our commitment to our customers and product. The inclusion of AMITCP 4 into this package will strengthen the application and give users more functionality."

Tomi Ollila of NSDi commented: "We, the creators of AmiTCP/IP are pleased to see there is nice market for the Amiga machine and operating system that has taught us so much during its existence and we hope this agreement with AmigaKit makes it even better."

<http://www.amigakit.com/>

AEROS for Pi beta 4

A new upload beta 4 based on Deadwood's stable ARM ABI. The ARM AROS builds where a kind of "ABI work in Progress". This fact hindered the possibility to aim for the AROS ARM build as developer.

Now everyone can start porting apps to AROS for ARM.

Registered users can check www.aeros-os.org Everyone else should check for the public version.

Due to some failures there it is no rc1 but a beta4.

New in beta4:

- based on stable ARMhf ABI from Deadwood
- Includes Contrib stuff like
- DEMOS, GAMES, Wazp3D, OWB (the old version and not tested/buggy), Screenrecorder, DOPUS (not Magellan)
- Deadwood compiled lx for ARMhf so launching Linux stuff from AROS side is working as before (it lacks a lot of Linux applications from the last release.. feel free to use

[synaptic/aptitude/apt get](#)).

www.aeros-os.org



AMIGA NEWS

100th issue of Obligement magazine

The following articles have been added to the website of the French Amiga/MorphOS magazine Obligement (<http://obligement.free.fr>) during the last few months :

- July/August 2013 news.
- Old articles from Amiga News 23 to 36 : report: AmiExpo 1991 Berlin, review of Excellence! 2.0, review of Scala, file: Amiga mice, review: Bars & Pipes Professional, report: CeBIT 1991, hardware: A2088XT, etc.
- Interview with Trevor Dickinson (manager of A-Eon Technology).
- Interview with David Taddei.
- Hardware: Mediator PCI 1200 TX.
- Review of NetSpeedometer et NetDock.
- Review of Silly Putty.
- Review of Amiga Revisited 2011.
- Review of Tracker Hero.
- Review of Lure Of The Temptress.
- File: Roger Dean and its Psygnosis' productions.
- Tutorial: how to draw watermarks with Art Effect 4.
- Tutorial: network share with SMBFS under MorphOS.
- Misc: book "101 Jeux Amiga".
- Special quiz about The Settlers.

Articles in English:

- Interview with Trevor Dickinson (manager of A-Eon Technology).

It's the 100th issue of Obligement which was available in different forms since its birth:

- 6 issues in paper (1997)
- 7 issues in Scala (1998-1999)
- 7 issues in Blitz Basic AGA (1999-2000)
- 2 issues in AmigaGuide (2000)
- 14 issues in Blitz Basic RTG (2000-2002)
- 14 issues in HTML (2003-2005)
- 50 issues directly online (2005-2013)

Rendez-vous on <http://obligement.free.fr> for this nice reading. All translations are welcome. Please contact David "Daff" Brunet for more info.

**New software releases by OnyxSoft**

OnyxSoft are releasing two software updates! ZoomIT, ZoomIT.pobj

Updated program

- ZoomIT v1.3 - (MorphOS, OS4, OS4, AROS_i386) A MUI-based magnify/zoom application.
- Removed the requirements for CyberGraphX (shall work even on non-RTG hopefully).
- Added Türkçe translation (Thanks to Serkan Dursun).
- Added Español translation (Thanks to Dámaso Domínguez).
- Removed Scale Mode
- Removed Colour Mode
- Removed Magnifications above 1000%

NOTE-1 : AmigaOS4 binary cross compiled and untested IRL.
NOTE-2 : AROS binary built via hosted variant and untested on native AROS-installation (Icaros etc.)

New program

ZoomIT.pobj v1.0 - (MorphOS 3.2+) ZoomIT.pobj is a small panel object created for MorphOS 3.2 or later.

- First release. =)

If you don't feel like contacting us but still like to contribute then OnyxSoft homepage has a Donate button not too far away

<http://www.onyxsoft.se/>

**An oldie but goodie Zomco's parody of Kefrens's legendary Amiga demo "Desert Dream".**

Zomco's parody of Kefrens's legendary Amiga demo "Desert Dream". This parody won the 7DX 2010 Demo Party Wild Compo. Many people in the Amiga community don't even know this parody exists, well now you do!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYpLZhkkyRs>

If you have been living under a rock for the past 20+ years and have never seen the Amiga version of Desert Dream that runs on the humble 7Mhz Amiga 500 you can watch it

here. The game seems to have aged especially the music.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i48TYQJusDU>



AMIGA NEWS

AMIGAOS 4 NEWS: SKETCHBLOCK 2.2

SketchBlock 2.2 is available from os4depot
<http://os4depot.net/index.php?function=showfile&file=graphics/edit/sketchblock.lha>

Major Changes In SketchBlock 2.2

Selection Masks- It's now possible to mark areas of the image as selected and use these areas as mask for painting, etc. There four new tools to assist with this.

Rectangle Select - drag with mouse, press space bar to select.
 Ellipse Select - drag with mouse, press space bar to select.
 Flood Select
 Colour Select

It's also possible to create a selection mask from the alpha channel of a layer....

Layer Thumbnails
 There now a thumbnail in the layers list.

Transform Plugins
 Pixel transforms are now true plugins. Also added Saturate

tionAdjust and GradientFill, RadialFill, and Ripples filters.
 New Toolbar Images
 Martin "Mason" Mertz has contributed some great new toolbar images and a splash logo. Thanks Mason!

Macro Recording
 All (well nearly all) actions can be recorded into a macro, which can then be run or edited as needed.

Some bug fixes
 See the changelog for details.

Enjoy!



Vampire 600: FPGA A600 Accelerator Preorder

News from Djole

<http://www.majsta.com/>

Ok now is the time to investigate how many people are interested in Vampire 600 so I can determine how much boards to produce. If you are interested send me Mail.

Price: 90Euros + shipping

What you get:

CPU: FPGA emulated MC68000 or MC68010 or partially emulated MC68020(your choice)
 Performance: More than 6Mips
 Memory: 64MB of FastRam (Zorro III space)
 Autoconfig: 32MB(for now)
 PCMCIA friendly: Yes

You will be informed that your order is placed by mail and listing your name in the picture attached to this topic. Sending accelerator boards will take place hopefully next month and according to the mentioned list. When your board is ready you will receive PayPal invoice to your mailbox. If you don't want to be listed just say in the mail. About guarantee don't worry I don't intend to leave I'm here to made significant influence on Amiga scene, remember :) Other components like OSD, loading Kickstart from MicroSD card and PS2 mouse support will be provided later with core upgrades so I suggest everyone to buy USB blaster programmer because I don't intend to stop at 6Mips :) Board will not have PS2 and MicroSD sockets because they are unusable inside case so we will find a way later to bring them out with another small PCB. I forget to say that all of those who had some contribution in this project will have another price or no price at all...

UPDATE: August 8, 2013

Now board is 32MB autoconfig. But, haters gotta hate. It is just interesting to me what I read on various forums. There are so much people who would like to see all of this fall down, and never see real success. Why? Just so they can say "I told you that all of this will be failure". I don't know the reason for all of this but those days I realized one thing. That Amiga is not destroyed just because company died. Amiga is destroyed by developers and resellers wanted to earn huge money from Amiga name. Like vultures various people are sending me bunch of mails wanting to increase price of the boards and to resell them. Proposal prices about 200Euros :) Let me say this. If I ever seen that someone sells this card for some incredible high price I will stop him by putting tons of boards for sale at manufacturing cost. No more exploiting Amiga scene from now!!! Here is what I said one of the supporters of this project yesterday. Yes I received lot of mails for some proposals. Resellers, manufacturers all of them wanna make money and increase price and benefit from this. I will fool them all open-sourcing everything. I will survive alone and do everything alone and my work will be free and I will send lot of boards for free to people and PCB also. I'm waiting just for another money transfer from my government. I'm in a mission remember. With true Amiga spirit.



AMIGA NEWS

AMIGAOS 4 NEWS: AMISYSTEMRESTORE R1 BETA7 RELEASED

the 7th public beta of AmiSystemRestore has been release
 Downloading it: You can download it from OS4Depot.net.
<http://os4depot.net/?function=showfile&file=utility/misc/amisystemrestore.lha>

Details of the changes:

* BUG: Fixed a nasty bug, where a (deleted/changed) soft link in the Sys: partition to a folder somewhere, could cause AmiSystemRestore to delete everything inside that folder. This could easily happen if RunInUAE was installed on Sys:.

* BUG: The GUI would crash if you attempted to manually delete a restore point which contained a soft link.

What is AmiSystemRestore?

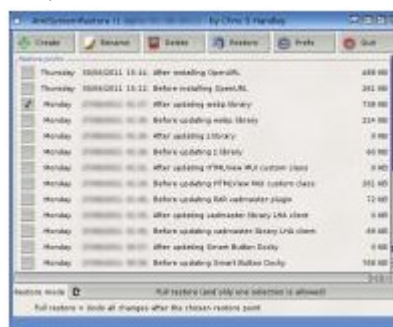
AmiSystemRestore aims to give AmigaOS4 a similar ability to Window's very useful System Restore. What it does is create Restore Points, which act as snapshots of your SYS: partition (where the OS is stored). If anything changes on your SYS: partition, then you can roll it back to the time of the snapshot.

Why would you want to undo changes to your SYS: partition?

Well, if you install a new program (or update an existing one), you have no idea if any new libraries (or other changes) will have problems that may break existing programs. A badly written installer might even replace libraries (etc.) with older versions!

AmiSystemRestore allows you to undo all recent changes (whether or not they were done by the installer), and return SYS: to an earlier point in time. Knowledgeable users can be more selective about which changes are undone, with the warning that they need to know what they are doing!

If you are installing something using AmiUpdate or the official Installer system, then AmiSystemRestore will automatically create Restore Points for you (and Ringhio messages should notify you of this).

**Interview Glenn Corpes**

Interview with Glenn Corpes, author of Amiga titles like Flood, Syndicate & Populous. The interview is in Spanish but various websites exist where you can translate the text, or even by using Google translate

<http://amigatronics.wordpress.com/>



COMMODORE 64 MOON MISSION GAME REVIEW

Written in BASIC this game may have already put a lot of readers off however loading the d64 the game opens with a title screen with the words CIA standing for Commodore is Awesome



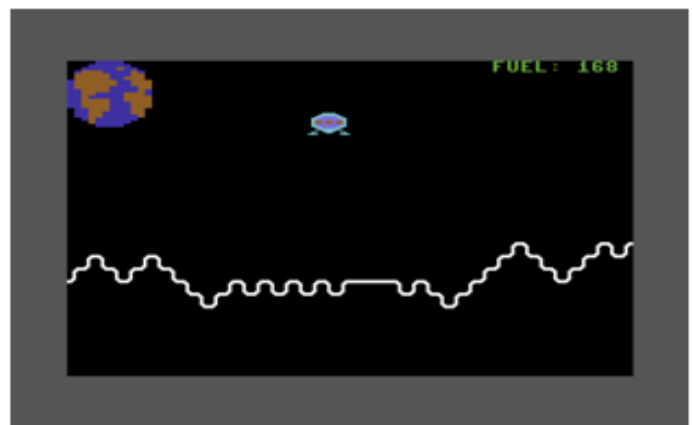
Surely it's briefed as isn't debriefing removing ones under garments? Anyway after the briefing or removal of our under garments has been successful the screen shows the control method and asks us to select a level



Soon the screen clears and we are presented with



The game then starts



Moon mission title screen the credits say the game is by Paulo Garcia and the music by Pievspie, the music is quite surreal more random than an actual tune as such, subtly space like an it fits the game or sets the scene nicely.

It's really what you expect a basic program to be, it's quite responsive but ultimately the game is written in basic, albeit with an upbeat sound track, you can hit run-stop at any time to list the program out for this it could be used as a training or teaching aid for anyone wanted to dabble in commodore BASIC

Pushing return we are briefed of de briefed about our mission

The game play is all done to death, you have thrusters and need to land the craft on a flat surface of course you have limited fuel and need to land safely before this is depleted.



<http://csdb.dk/getinternalfile.php/119993/MissionMoon.d64>
<http://csdb.dk/getinternalfile.php/119992/MissionMoon.zip>

Gameplay	3/10 because it's in BASIC it's slow to respond	Overall 3.5/10
Graphics	3/10 functional	
Sounds	3.5/10 interesting theme it does grow on you	

COMMODORE FREE REVIEW OF THEATER OF WAR FOR THE UNEXPANDED VIC 20



Information from PSYTRONIC software

The Theatre of War trilogy features three complete campaigns to play - WW2 Eastern Front, WW2 Pacific Theatre and WW1 Western Front. The games put you in command of military units and allow you to recreate battles from the first or second World War

Select your units, deploy your forces, and let battle commence!

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Theatre of War is a gripping trilogy of turn-based strategy games for the unexpanded VIC-20 by Ghislain De Blois, author of the popular Realms of Quest RPG games. As well as the three 'Theatre of War' games this compilation also contains a bonus selection of arcade games (see below for complete list).

printed on the reverse. The floppy disk is packaged in a full colour glossy disk sleeve with a full colour label. The compilation is also available as a Budget Disk release which features the floppy disk packaged in a glossy full colour disk sleeve with colour disk label and a printed instruction sheet.



COMMODORE FREE REVIEW OF THEATER OF WAR FOR THE UNEXPANDED VIC 20



THEATER OF WAR DISK CONTAINS:

- THEATER OF WAR I (WW2 Eastern Front)
- THEATER OF WAR II (WW2 Pacific Theatre)
- THEATER OF WAR III (WW1 Western Front)
 - BREAK FAST II
 - FACE VERSUS HEEL
 - MAGITOOL
 - OLYMPIC DASH
 - SPACE WARZ
 - STREET BATTLE
 - VICROLEAGE I
 - VICROLEAGE II
 - WORM OUT

Note: All games are compatible with the unexpanded VIC-20!



I decided to review the 3 main titles under one heading
Theatre of war game review

theatre of war
theatre of war 2 (the pacific)
THEATER OF WAR III (WW1 Western Front)

Well one thing is for sure, you definitely get value for money the hard part now is how to rate this, I decided to mark the

WAR package as a whole rather than individually but I will do mini reviews on all the games just for completeness, Starting then with the war games trilogy; as this is the main part of the package with (as I see it) the other games adding as a bonus or filler items, of course you select the game you want from a nice title screen

Loading theatre of war



The game loads and you can select the options of either reading the instructions or a 1 or 2 player game or play the game with alternate graphics, starting the game with a single player (yes I am without friends again) we are taken on a turn based strategy screen viewed from the top although the men and tanks seem to be drawn from the side. It's a standard layout for this sort of game the graphics look good and the screen updates are surprisingly quick, but with the game programmed in a mix of machine code and basic you would expect the game for the main part to be snappy! Sound is just a set of bleeps and you need some time to read the manual and digest what you need to do, it's a valiant effort.

The computer opponent is a little dumb but seemed to have more firepower to make up for its stupidity, game play is turn based so you deploy your men then the computer deploys, then you move your men then the computer moves its men. The computer thinking time is rapid so you are not left twiddling your thumbs, lovers of these games will overlook any criticisms, its nothing new but well implemented and although doesn't push the machine to its limits it does provide a rather playable war inspired game.

Part 2 sees us in the pacific

This time we have only 3 options they are 1 or two player game and an option to read the instructions, one thing that is neat in the instructions is that all they all show the character are listed with their strengths and weaknesses, we view these one at a time on screen like a sort of top trumps playing card (I am sure other style top trump playing cards are available and of course I wouldn't advertise for legal reasons unless I was paid to do so) anyway It's a neat idea and also makes you wonder what sort of shoe horn system was used to squeeze all this data into the machine. At random you see a pane fly over the play area, one time it's your side then the enemy with the word AIR STRIKE, these strikes can

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Part 2 sees us in the pacific

This time we have only 3 options they are 1 or two player game and an option to read the instructions, one thing that is neat in the instructions is that all they all show the character are listed with their strengths and weaknesses, we view these one at a time on screen like a sort of top trumps playing card (I am sure other style top trump playing cards are available and of course I wouldn't advertise for legal reasons unless I was paid to do so) anyway It's a neat idea and also makes you wonder what sort of shoe horn system was used to squeeze all this data into the machine. At random you see a pane fly over the play area, one time it's your side then the enemy with the word AIR STRIKE, these strikes can knock out you or the opponents men, you can't do anything but sit watch and pray!

Oh when you move your character turns white to show its been moved, the character to move shows in light blue with your other characters in dark blue, so you can easily see who has or hasn't moved and what moves you have left, the number of moves is determined by the character itself that you placed on the board, if you don't want to move one time you press space and it moves on to your next character! once you hit the enemy base (denoted by their flag) you move to the next round.

Western front 1918

Well it's more of the same 3 options again 1 or 2 player and read the instructions cracking on with a 1 player game (yep still no friends) it's all more of the same different graphics and countries and of course plot, you have different characters I think I have said all I need to in the other parts of the review.

SCORES

Well I would love to have some music on the title screens but I suppose what would you need to cut out to fit this into memory, the sounds are sparse and just blips but you could argue that nothing more is needed

Graphics	4/10 static but well drawn	Overall 7/10
Sounds	2/10 just a blip here and there and some white noise explosions	
Gameplay	7/10 nicely implemented	

I would like to see the computer gain more logic, but the games are well executed also you have to take into account if you like this sort of game or not, now I am not a turn based war games player and it took me some time to get used to the game play but it isn't a game I wouldn't play again, and with a real friend to play with and a few drinks on a cold rainy night this has some real mileage to it

Comments

A nice set of games that are a worthy release on their own, many will wonder how the VIC's memory wasn't blown to fit all this game play into a small programmable area, could do with better computer logic on the one player game and also a little snappier screen updates anything else would

need a memory upgrade, but some animation and music would enhance the game

Breakfast II

After a short intro picture we press space to move on and have options to play the game or read the instructions, so after a quick read I am ready to go!

Instructions

launch the moving colour blocks with the space bar. score points by having blocks land next to other blocks of different colours. you lose a life if a block touches another block of the same colour. you also lose a life for failing to launch a block after three tries. you can score even more points by using collared blocks that are of higher value.



colours are listed in order of their value from left to right.

stay focused. always make sure not to hit any blocks of the same colour. a bonus life will be awarded to you every 1000 points.



So let's see then

You have a moving block that goes across the bottom of the screen, once it hits the side it changes colour and come back across the screen if you press the space bar it launches the block upwards till it hits the top of the screen or another block on screen and then sticks there. If you miss sending the brick and it hits the screen side 3 times you lose a life (you start with 3 numbered ZERO to 2)

once you lose all lives the game ends. The game is a sort of breakout meets columns/Tetris clone although it does seem quite original in its design by that I mean it's not a complete rip off of either game. One thing to note is that the game is fast, but the in game sound is again rather minimal with just some beeps and random noise when you lose a life.

You also lose a life if you have 2 blocks of the same colour side by side, stacked one on top of other, it's such an easy concept and like all the best created easy concept designs, its rather more ish. The limited graphics and sound don't detract from the game. However the game is so difficult as

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knock out you or the opponents men, you can't do anything but sit watch and pray!

Oh when you move your character turns white to show its been moved, the character to move shows in light blue with your other characters in dark blue, so you can easily see who has or hasn't moved and what moves you have left, the number of moves is determined by the character itself that you placed on the board, if you don't want to move one time you press space and it moves on to your next character! once you hit the enemy base (denoted by their flag) you move to the next round.

Graphics	2/10 it's a coloured block although they are different colours	Overall 4/10 strange Tetris / Columns / Breakout clone
Sounds	2/10 some bleeps	
Gameplay	5/10 infuriating but in a good way	

Pressing F1 we are invited to "get it on" so on we get then! The ring appears and again we need to press F1 to start the game. The game shows the ring and a side on view of the characters, it's quite plain and we don't see any spectators or any extra graphics to enhance the scene.

When you press a move the name appears on the bottom of the screen which is a nice touch, it's basically waiting until the screen border turns green then deciding on what Function key to press and hoping it's good enough to reduce the enemies power somewhat
Sound is just bleeps with bleeps to signify the bell,

Graphics	3/10 not to much realism but its colour	Overall 3/10
Sound	1/10 just a few bleeps	
Gameplay	2/10 just gets a little oaring pressing a key	

Well what could you add, in game music would be nice and maybe some bonus articles like in Breakout/Arkanoid that cause the block to slow down or allow you to change its colour, however its simple addictive and fun. But maybe it has limited last-ability (if that's a word)

FACE VERSES HEEL

Now this does sound interesting Pro wrestling on the Commodore VIC 20

The instructions Read like this;

tonight's the night! you will walk that aisle, and wrestle the great champion of the squared circle. you have 5 minutes to vanquish your foe to reclaim the heavyweight title.

The game concept

You have 4 moves that are executed with the function keys f1 to f7, you can execute these moves when the Screen border goes green, the moves start with f1 the easiest and work up in toughness up to f7

The moves change depending on how you have a hold on your opponent or where he is for example down on the floor, the list is in the readme so you need to study this before you begin you battle.



Summary

Not that new idea, and the whole thing plays a little like a type in listing, minimal sound and dull gameplay, its one player only. The whole thing just doesn't work.

magiTOOL

About

magiPROG is an ML assembler that uses decimal numbers. Use the following format when you program:

```
ASL      Accumulator
LDA #255 Immediate
LDA Z255 Zero Page
LDA Z255.X Zero Page,X
LDA Z255.Y Zero Page,Y
LDA $4096 Absolute
LDA $4096.X Absolute,X
LDA $4096.Y Absolute,Y
RTS      Implied
BNE @4096 Relative
LDA (255X) (Indirec,X
LDA (255)Y (Indirec,Y
JMP (4096!) Abs Indir
```

also lets you save programs which are stored with the PREFIX: P.*

The MEMORY USED for saving your work is 6656 -7679

SINGLE KEY COMMANDS:

Assemble Disassemble Run Load Save ZExit

The following programs list the commands that you can use on screen.

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magiCHAR (PREFIX: C.*)

Build 8x8 custom chars for your own programs.
MEMORY`USED: 7168 - 7679

magiDRAW (PREFIX: D.*)

Make 64x96 multi-colour graphics. Use SYS 6016 to display the images. MEMORY`USED: 5888 - 7679

magiSONG (PREFIX: S.*)

Play and record music with a piano keyboard.
MEMORY`USED: 7424 - 7679

Now not being too hot a programmer I can't really comment on the actual assembler the character tool is useful though, and can be used to create a custom character set with easy access to rotate mirror and flip characters and design things to perfection, oh and of course it allows you to load and save your creations to disk!



Draw

This is a screen drawing program

The help file lists the following commands

1. background colour
2. border colour
3. character colour
4. auxiliary colour
- <- . change colour
- B . draw box
- C . draw circle
- D . draw line
- E . erase the screen
- F . fill area
- G . go home position
- H . set home position
- Z . return to menu

SPACE - draw pixel

So you can edit and save your creations for use in your applications it's a useful pixel editing tool although it does run "Very" slow so you need patience to create a masterpiece,

Magi Song

Magi Song is the music creation tool!



This is a step time recording program, the main problem is you can't actually edit your tune if you make a mistake, but rather you have to re-record the whole tune again, also adding a space is just a space you can't specify the space duration or even note length, so any tune will sound; well robotic at best, you have the ability to change voices and have some preset sounds at your disposal, this is better than nothing and easier than poking data into memory, but it could do with more work, so to at least make some form of editing mistakes.

One nice feature is the POKES accessed by F7, but you should be able to edit them somehow, unless I missed something it's just a list of poke comments corresponding to the tune/music you have created!

Over all a useful tool for the casual programme, it's not in any way perfect but as an all in one tool for the VIC it works relay well.

SCORES

Well it's difficult to score and obviously doesn't count as a gameplay options so overall I score the application 7/10 a useful

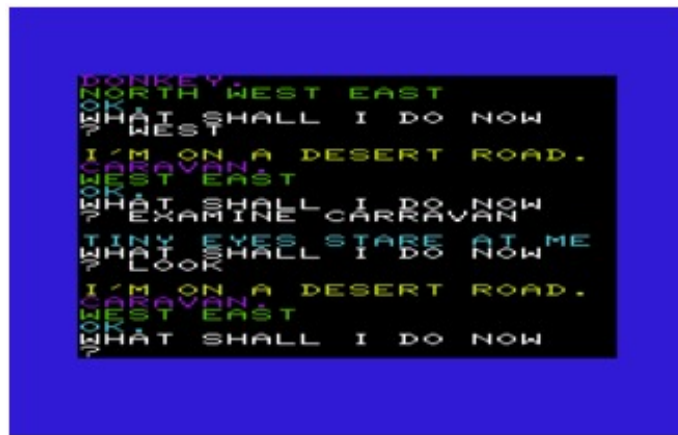
Olympic Dahs

On yer marks get set go.....

Basically you move the joystick in the direction of the arrow on screen to race your man along, of course you need a joystick plugged in to follow the on screen arrow! From what I have read this was part of a series of games based on the Olympics but the others were never finished.

The screen is quite sparse, you see only the track and the distance markers and of course the main character who is competently animated, rather than just floating along the screen. The sound is also lacking and to be quite honest it's not really much of a game. All you do is compete to better your score over 100 meters. The meters are marked along the bottom of the screen with the latest record and your current time at the top of the screen.

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Graphics	4/10 the runner is quite nice	Overall 3/10
Sounds	1/10 nut much happening here	
Gameplay	3/10 with a group it could be fun to beat the record	

Not too much of a game and obviously added as a filler to the package

SPACE WARZ

May the fourth be with you!

in a universe millions of light years away, a bad evil galactic empire has plans for a super deaf star that can destroy a whole planet....

Led by princess Lela, rebel forces have concocted a half-baked plan for you to fly to this fortress, get rid of darf vader so that the rightful dudes can once rule again as the supreme dictators...

To play, you type one or two word commands when the computer asks "what shall I do now?"

the first word is always a verb and if a second word is used, it is to do something with an object.

For example "GET BOOK"

help - lists commands

look - to see the room

get xxx - to grab item

inventory - shows all items you're carrying.

drop xxx - remove item from your inventory.

examine xxx - take a closer look at object.

north south west east: used for moving around

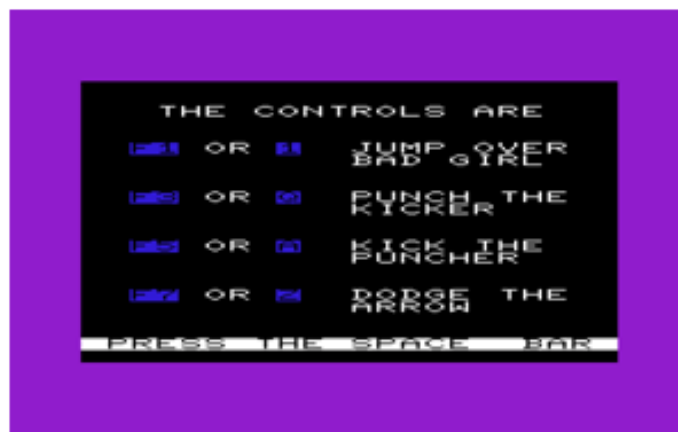
quit - to restart game

A fairly nice adventure game for the VIC and the text colours make it easy to see whets happening on screen also if questions are asked and what the answers were are coloured differently to differentiate the question from the answer. Of course as its text only! I suppose that's why it's called a text adventure! There isn't much you can review other than the interpreter itself and as its quite simple as you can only really enter 2 words with limited vocabulary. Still the game is very playable, if you're not a fan you may get frustrated quite quickly, if you aren't a fan of these games then you wouldn't play it would you !

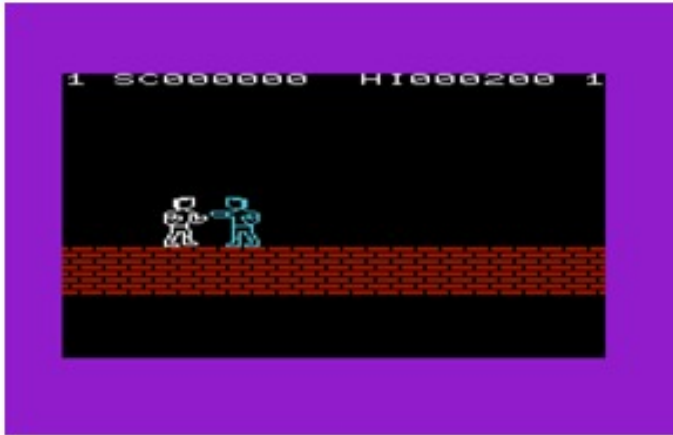
Graphics	2/10 mainly for the different coloured text	Overall 5/10 passes the time well nice implementation
Sounds	0/10 didn't notice anything	
Gameplay	5/10 if you like these games you will love this	


STREET BATTLE

the bad dudes have kidnapped your girlfriend ! Using your hand to hand combat skills, you must pursue them thru the streets and rescue her. Make sure to perform the right move against the right enemy or you'll die. when your girlfriend approaches, do not attack her so to complete the level.




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to fight hulk logan 

for the world title. there's a 5 minute time limit.
use these keys to move your wrestler around the ring.



Try to make contact with your opponent when he is weak
 for your best chance to gain advantage. a pin is attempted when executing a finishing manoeuvre. *g o o d l u c k !!!*

The game basically involves pressing the right key as the enemies come close to you, pressing the wrong key or performing the wrong move means death! Also performing the move to early or pressing the key to early will also mean death! It's difficult but I am sure you will find some form of system to work out what move should be done and where or when, I found the game quite frustrating really!

So basically you are a yellow dot and have to move around the ring chasing a red dot, However it does get better so keep reading! Like you I was somewhat underwhelmed with the initial instructions but persevere there is a game in here!

The idea is sound, but as this is a mix of programming styles with BASIC thrown in to the equation it tends to be quite slow. The animation is good although it's quite limited as the characters seem to glide and not walk due to the lack of animation in the walking department! However the punches and kicks are well animated and I like the outlined men, sadly again the sound is rather minimal



Graphics	4/10 some nice animations	Overall 4/10 nice idea but needs more work
Sound	1/10 some blips and white noise	
Gameplay	4/10 just remember the keys	

VICROLEGUE I

World heavyweight wrestling on the unexpanded Vic that's got to be pants hasn't it ?

Ok yep doesn't look that much 2 dots on screen in a blue square, but as you move into position and take advantage of your weak time in the opponent and then finally meet up for a fight move

Well as the tile screen loads and some music plays (that sounds like it's been written in step time using the MAGI-TOOL applications which I guess all the games on this compilation have.

Well its more random notes than an actual tune, with just a single channel playing . It does have some good points but I can't think of them at this moment..



I press space bar to advance and then am presented with the options for f1 to play or f7 instructions
The instructions are a must I think so I press f7 to read.

Instructions

ladies & gentlemen!!in the main event of the evening, you are in control of vic= flair



COMMODORE FREE REVIEW OF THEATER OF WAR FOR THE UNEXPANDED VIC 20

You get these cute animation screens, ok it's no mortal combat but the idea is actually sound
Talking about sound you just get some white noise for the fighting moves
Despite all I have said the game is intriguingly playable, an interesting idea around the machines limitations.

Graphics	6/10 some nice animations	Overall 5/10 nice idea but I think it still needs more work and polish
Sounds	4/10 music (as such) and in game white noise	
Gameplay	5/10 not bad	

Summary

You would think after reading the instructions that this game was rubbish, but the idea to work around the machine limitations makes for quite a playable game, with a couple of friends round for a death match it could add to gaming night more than make one!

VICROLEGUE II

Ok so this must be a sequel, maybe the polish has been added and the game tidied up!

Well the music is just a random If it's not the same as part I, I couldn't really decide, and the title screen looks the same apart from the colours so let's hit f7 and read the instructions

So basically it's the same as Vicrolegue 1 same idea similar instructions and controls, So without more of a build down, pressing F1 will let us play the game

Fight!

Not sure if they say this in wrestling but ..

Well the main fighting screen is the same to align your dot when the enemy's energy is low



The graphics have changed to digitised mono pictures, to be quite honest the original looked far better, because the images are small they are difficult to see and the line art animations seemed to fit the small screen better, I know its technically more advanced but it seems to be a backwards step to me. Of course if they were full screen digitised pic-

tures then they would be more clear but of course they wouldn't fit on an unexpanded Vic 20 which I guess is the point! Sounds are the same and so is the rest of the game play

Graphics	5/10 I preferred the animations	Overall 4.5/10 nice idea but I think it needs work
Sounds	4/10 music (as such) and in game white noise	
Gameplay	5/10 not bad	

Summary

Well the upgrade added digitised animations but I personally don't think they add to the game I preferred the original version!

WORMOUT

Starting the game gives 3 options

- 1 worm out 1
- 2 Worm out 2
- 3 3 para-trooper

Ever the anarchist I select option 1 for worm out 1

The instructions say

by system iiii c1988

Press any key to fire missiles at the space worm before it consumes the earth's shield that protects it from the meteor swarm. You get a bonus if you can hit the worm's head.

You also get bonuses for cities still standing after the meteor swarm at the end of the round



It's not a new game by any means and reminds me of the type in listings you used to see in magazines. So basically the "worm" (that is a line of coloured blocks) moves across the screen and drops a line as it reaches the screen edge wrapping around. Your job is the shoot the worm doing so reduces its size by one block, the other blocks around the

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missing block you have shot will squeeze up to shrink the worm and remove the gap in its missing part. Quite interesting with other options that I don't want to spoil, not a stretch of the machines capabilities by any means but very playable.

Graphics	5/10 basic but functional	Overall 6/10 better than average but it does look like an old type in listing
Sounds	5/10 more bleeps	
Gameplay	6/10 nice quick blast	

Summary

It's a variation on a theme but plays nicely enough, very retro

WORM -OUT II

Instructions

by system iii c1990 can you worm your way out of the hole? use I J K L to gobble food that sprouts in the garden. good luck! press space to start

you know what this is, you will have played this many times before especially if you owned a well know brand of mobile phone, when they were still none touch screen and weren't designed by fruit trees or green robots. In this game you control a worm and eat dots or in this case squares, as you eat them your worm goes longer and so the game continues until you either crash into yourself or the edge of the screen, Again its nothing new and the graphics are functional rather than spectacular but it all works well and feels smooth and fluid.



Graphics	2/10 minimal	Overall 4/10
Sounds	3/10 just blips	
Gameplay	4/10 it's tried and tested game play	

Summary

Tried and tested game play, its cut back to the very basics and of course much better versions already exist

PARA-TROOPER

Instructions

by system iii c1990

You are the earth's last hope to save it from a meteor swarm. you have 10 chances. you lose 1 for every time you miss a shot against a meteor.



Using keys J and L to rotate your launcher you release the missiles with I

You have lives to try to rid the earth from deadly meteor storm by rotating your cannon and shooting them out of the sky, miss one and you lose a life, when all the lives are gone you are DEAD and the game ends.

Not too much to say really; again it looks like a type in listing, The graphics and sounds are again minimal and as you shoot the animation of the meteor moving down the screen stops while the animation of your shot takes place, making the game feel even more type in listing than it needs to be. Definitely needs more work, and better graphics and sound. The game play needs to be built up. Maybe its needs restarting or scrapping and starting again.

Graphics	3/10	Overall 3/10
Sounds	3/10	
Gameplay	3/10	

Summary

Nice idea let down by sound and graphics and to some extent the gameplay

COMMODORE FREE INTERVIEW WITH GHISLAIN DE BLOIS VIC PROGRAMMER AND BLOGGER

Q. As is the Commodore Free custom; can you please introduce yourself to our readers, and could I ask on their behalf "what is so special about the VIC" and when was your first computing experience, was the Vic your first machine?

I received my first VIC-20 computer in 1982 (I was 9 years old) after winning it in a Pepsi contest in Northern Ontario. For the contest, you had to collect bottle caps that spelled V I C 2 0, the letter that was hardest to find was the letter "C" (the Commodore "chicken lips" logo) I found it because my grandmother owned a convenience store and had a bottle cap opener/drop case and gave me several bottle caps that she collected every few weeks. I suppose I had an unfair advantage over other people who participated in the contest at the time, but the "C" that I collected was discarded by the original purchaser of the Pepsi bottle.

The VIC-20 that I got came with a cartridge of Jupiter Lander and the original user's guide, and no datassette or disk drive. I got bored of Jupiter Lander fairly quickly and I wanted to learn how to write my own programs and games. After reading about half of the user's guide, I quickly learned the following commands: PRINT, GET A\$, POKE, FOR...NEXT and GOTO. I did not know how to manipulate or display the values of variables until I was 10. I incorrectly assumed that video games were programmed with every single possibility/outcome displayed on the screen with PRINT statements. To be fair, the main portion of the VIC user's guide didn't get into variables, they were only really discussed in the appendices.

I didn't really make good games when I was 9, but I did have fun and a lot of frustration typing in those games called KILLER COMET and ROCKET COMMAND (from the VIC user's guide). I didn't have any means of storing these programs, so I spent considerable time typing them in order that myself and my younger brothers could enjoy another game besides Jupiter Lander. We only got to enjoy them for a few minutes as my Dad would often kick us off the VIC-20 to watch television. I had no cassette drive to save my games and programs. I did eventually acquire more games on cartridge such as SERPENTINE, GORF, OMEGA RACE, etc.

Q. Why do you still program the VIC what's the fascination with the machine apart from your nostalgia

Well yes I suppose that growing up with the machine, there's a certain attachment to it. But I also appreciate the aesthetic qualities of a 22x23 character screen which gives it close to a perfect square when it comes to creating a display and playfield for games. And considering that the VIC-20 was soon eclipsed by its successor, the Commodore 64,

there's a lot of games and game genres which were never programmed for it--especially in the case of computer fantasy role-playing games (which was the impetus for REALMS OF QUEST) and tactical war games. The latter case is where THEATER OF WAR comes in.

Q. Yes The limited resources in the machine can be a problem, yet you still released "Theatre of War" for the unexpanded machine, do you enjoy the challenge or are you just completely mental

It's a little bit of both :) But 3.5KB of free memory on the stock machine is not as limiting as one might think. In fact, when designing a game within those parameters, you are forced to come up with the core engine and you don't deviate much by being tempted by feature creep. I read an anecdote where an old school video game designer stated that the main game should be programmed within 1K and that everything else--graphics, music and sound are to fill out the rest of the unused memory.

Q. What options would you suggest to the would be VIC programmer, for example what software or programming applications exist for the Vic that you can recommend and what on line forums or blogs would you suggest our would be programmer subscribe to?

I would suggest a good PRG editor like BASEDIT and an ML 6502 compiler like ca65 to save a lot of time. I actually programmed the first Theatre of War game entirely on the VIC-20 itself back in 2010 on a whim using Commodore BASIC 2.0 and my own makeshift assembler. For Theatre of War II & III, I just used a laptop, an emulator and of course, ca65. You can see my makeshift assembler the latter in magiTOOL on the Theatre of War game disk.

Myself, I use websites like Denial (<http://sleepingelephant.com/denial>) and Lemon 64 (<http://lemon64.com/forum>). For everything else, I use Google to look things up. In fact, a lot of Commodore technical stuff is on the internet so it's actually more convenient to search for it rather than saunter over to a book shelf and pull out the old programmer's reference guide to look something up.

Q. You mentioned cross platform programming so Do you feel Programming the vic has become easier to program with cross platform applications, and is this why we are seeing more software appear that seems to make the Vic do things that would have been unthought-of of a few years ago, or are programmers becoming more adventurous and dare we says just more proficient at programming

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Cross platform development applications certainly helps a lot. It's much easier to write an ML routine in a text file on a PC and then compile it from command line for quick testing (as in the case of ca65). There's impressive stuff for the VIC-20 lately like rhurst's Omega Fury and Kweepa's adaptation of DOOM. I also like very much Jeff Daniels' (the owner of the VIC-20 Denial website) unexpanded VIC-20 games which remind me a lot of those COMPUTE!'s Gazette type-in games. Orion70 has created some impressive board games like VICTORIA and The Great Adventure using Mike's graphical tools. (The names I mention here are from the Denial forum).

Q. It seems Your software is written mainly in BASIC is this proving to be a limiting factor for what you can develop

Most of my games written in BASIC actually have ML routines embedded in them. Consider the case of THEATER OF WAR where the entire playfield is stored in screen and colour RAM and in order to set flags for the individual units, this had to be done in machine language. Since most of my games are more like board games, it's not necessary to program the entire game in machine language and so you can use BASIC for most of it. Though I did develop REALMS OF QUEST III entirely in assembly language, the main reason I did that was because I had intended it to be a cartridge game at first. I went back to using BASIC for my next project, REALMS OF QUEST IV (80% BASIC and 20% ML). Realms IV isn't as quick and responsive as its predecessor in certain parts, and in hindsight I probably should have made it 100% ML, but because I don't have as much free time as I used to, BASIC certainly makes it easier to develop games.

Q. All the Theatre of War games run on the unexpanded VIC, did you have to employ any programming "tricks" to fit the software into

- 1. the limited amount of space on the unexpanded vic**
- 2. the amount of line space**

1. I use almost all of the VIC-20's free space for THEATER OF WAR, most notably memory locations 673-767, 828-1023 and even the unused colour RAM space at 37888-38399.

2. The VIC-20 has 88 character line space. But I use BASIC tokens (like ? for PRINT) to fit even more commands on a single BASIC line. Modern tools like BASEDIT let you surpass the 88 character limit if you want to.

Q. So What is your fascination with War inspired strategy gaming to create this series

I like board games like RISK and AXIS & ALLIES, though I did try those hex and counter games made by AVALON HILL. While the more simple war games (like Risk and A&A) are fairly easy to attract casual players, it is quite another thing to get a bunch of people to commit to a long term hex and counter war game. Who wants to explain the rules of a 50

page manual? I even designed my own Axis & Allies variant in 1997 which was subsequently called Theatre of War with 2000 counters designed by hand but I only play tested it once with a friend.

So the genesis of the computer version of THEATER OF WAR (for the VIC-20, though maybe I should program a smartphone app version for it someday) was to be able to find a computer opponent, albeit with a hilariously bad AI considering the limits of the Unexpanded VIC's memory. In the game's documentation, I blame the enemy's inferior strategy on Stalin's purge of his competent military officers that was done in a fit of paranoia. But the game is still challenging VS the computer, as it is given overwhelming resources to try to crush you as you progress further and further towards Moscow. Sort of like what happened historically after the German army had poured all of its strength into Stalingrad in 1942 and Kursk in 1943 where they faced impossible odds after that. And even then, they were still expected to mount counter-offensives even while they were outnumbered.

Theatre of War II lets you play Japan against the United States. What if Japan's navy won the battle of Midway and then proceeded to chase the "Yankee Imperialists" (as described by the Japanese commander) across the Pacific Ocean and attacked San Francisco? And considering the massive industrial production of the US VS Japan, the player also faces insurmountable odds. Theatre III goes back to the game's roots, but adds more units.

Q. How did you come out with a package of your games via Psytronik software who contacted who and of course whose idea was it to do a bundled version

First, when Realms of Quest III was published by Psytronik in 2009, I included most of my VIC-20 games I had created prior to that on side two of that disk. After 8 months of grueling ML programming, I had sworn off ever making another VIC-20 game ever again! However in 2010, I made Theatre of War and subsequently after that a series of VIC-20 games, a lot of which I had almost finished but had abandoned in the past (like SPACE WARZ, STREET BATTLE, etc.).

When I started working on Realms of Quest IV, I took note of those VIC-20 projects I had worked on or revived since 2010 with the intention of placing them on side two of that release. But then I noticed that these, along with the Anniversary Editions of REALMS OF QUEST I & II (made in 2011 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of very first Realms of Quest game) could not all possibly fit on there. And since I actually quite like Theatre of War, I thought it would be pretty cool if it was in its own release, along with a small collection of games.

I then emailed Kenz (of Psytronik) back in April to release a compilation under the Theatre of War title and I would later submit Realms of Quest IV sometime after that.

COMMODORE FREE INTERVIEW WITH GHISLAIN DE BLOIS VIC PROGRAMMER AND BLOGGER

Q. the games mix seems a little odd we have strategy, turn based games and just plain arcade

- THEATER OF WAR I (WW2 Eastern Front)
- THEATER OF WAR II (WW2 Pacific Theatre)
- THEATER OF WAR III (WW1 Western Front)
- BREAK FAST II
- FACE VERSUS HEEL
- MAGITOOOL
- OLYMPIC DASH
- SPACE WARZ
- STREET BATTLE
- VICROLEAGUE WRESTLING I
- VICROLEAGUE WRESTLING II
- WORM OUT

Psytronik puts out a lot of impressive titles where programmers seem to chase the raster beam like it was second nature to them. I figure that in order to compete with those, I should give people their money's worth. I think where I might lack in terms of technical ability; my greatest strength comes with game design. There's not too many strategy games being made for the VIC-20 and in the retro computing scene nowadays, and I am there to fill a void. I did appreciate Commodore Free's previous review of OLYMPIC DASH (in issue #68), and I acknowledge that it can be a bit disappointing that there is only one event featured in the game.

Q. We have already mentioned the released "Realms of Quest" can you tell our readers about these series of games and are they still available to purchase ?

You can buy Realms of Quest III from <http://www.binaryzone.org/retrostore>. That release also includes every iteration of Realms I & II up to 2009 along with my other games that were made up to that point. I had made Realms I in the summer of 1991, two years after me and a friend's attempt at making our own CRPG for the Commodore 64 (Ultimate Quest, which is actually currently being finished right now and will be featured on side two of Realms of Quest IV when it gets released by Psytronik, hopefully next year

Realms of Quest I (1991, 2011) is a very basic dungeon crawler in the mould of DND and Telengard. I was very satisfied that I was finally able to complete a CRPG, albeit a limited one. But it fits on an unexpanded VIC-20.



Realms of Quest II (1993, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2011) expands on the dungeon crawler concept from the first, but adds a land map on which to explore. It finished 11th place as an entrant in the 2004 mini game compo and an improved version was resubmitted in 2006 where it finished in 2nd place. And in 2011 (for the Anniversary Editions), I finally added the monster portrait graphics I created back in 1993, which were intended to be part of Realms II. The sequel was technically (fully) finished two years after the third game in the series. And it still fits on an unexpanded VIC-20!



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Realms of Quest III (2009) is the game I had basically always wanted to do, where all my previous CRPGs were leading up to. I fully dedicated myself to creating a game that was worthy of competing with the likes of Ultima and Wizardry. I put in a lot of time and effort to make it in 100% machine language and adding several music scores. But I couldn't do that all by myself, I think that the manual artwork created by Bry Henry along with saehn's graphics really pushed the game over the top as a modern retro title that took notice. Hearing that some people compare it to a late 1980s Commodore 64 CRPG was quite good to hear. The full game runs on 32K while the dungeon-only version runs on 16K.



Realms of Quest IV (2013-14?) is admittedly not as ambitious as its predecessor in terms of graphics and music. I deliberately scaled back as time was a limiting factor and also to give it more of an old school retro feel--but it does include 100 digitized monster portrait graphics. It gives the player the impression they're looking at those 1970s RPG monster manuals while they play. But it features a lot more magic, items and strategy than the previous. You also have encounters and interactions with other characters along the

way. 16K is the minimum requirement, but 24K is recommended for improvements in terms of less disk loading and a wider 3D graphical perspective.



You can also download a 4-level demo version of Realms of Quest IV from my website:

<http://realmsquest.blogspot.com>

Q. Do you have any comments you would like to add

When the full release for Realms IV comes out it will most likely be my last Commodore project. I will then use my free retro computing time not for creating stuff but to finally check out those new projects that others are working on.

Many thanks for your time

You're welcome, and thank you.

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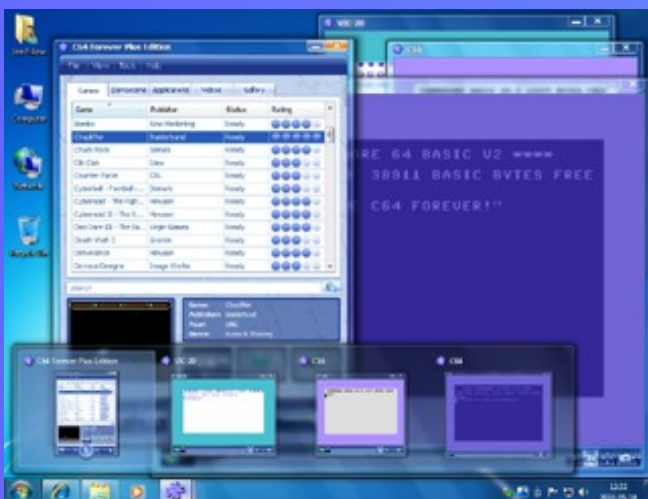
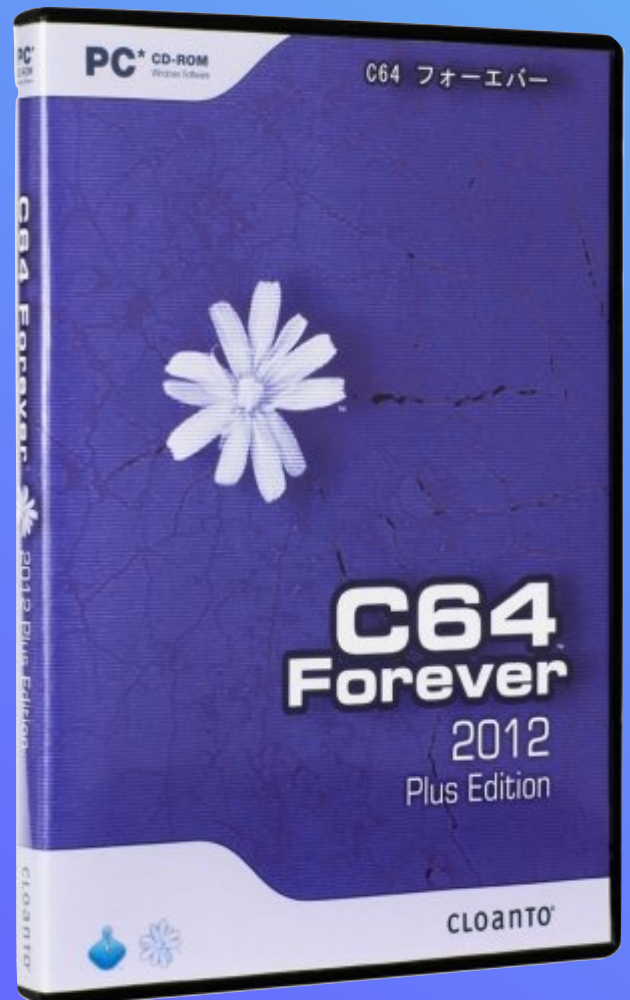
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RetroPlatform Project

<http://www.retroplatform.com>



A TOTALLY INCOMPLETE HISTORY OF THE VIC COMPUTER BY COMMODORE FREE



Well the title may not inspire much confidence in the article or even set your mind racing, but back in the 80's the Commodore Vic literally did set people's hearts racing. 16 col-

our graphics and 3 channel sound were just some the many features that made the machine stand out to the home user. Of course we can look back nostalgically at the machine as for many people it was "**their**" introduction to the world of computers. Yours truly hadn't touched a computer until the Vic appeared as we had to be in the top set for Maths and English before we could even look at the school's 3 Commodore Pet machines locked away in the as now aptly named secret ITC suite.

Putting the nostalgia aside for a minute, we also have to remember this was a cutting edge machine and although it sounds corny to say it now the machine did indeed change the lives of many people. Not only was the Vic a very powerful machine for the time, it was a design work of genius with a full sized QWERTY keyboard that made typists feel at home and of course it introduced many to the world of computing, programming and software design.

What's in a name

Well the not so humble Vic was known by many names, you notice I hesitated by not calling this machine the Vic 20 (as most of Europe would call it). That's because it was renamed or rebranded for different countries, some of the common names were Vic20, vic1001 and vc20 (although I am told other names existed). The machine was manufactured by Commodore as a way to break into the home computer environment as current Commodore models notably the PET had been more hobbyist or college / technology installations and of course demanded a price premium to own. Not only did it break into the home computer market it SMASHED through into homes and made its way into computing history.

CHIPS 'N STUFF

The Vic's video chip was designed by MOs Technologies Al Charpentier in 1977 called the "Video Interface Chip 6560" or VIC1 as it is more commonly known. It was designed for the video game market and was originally destined for game consoles. At the time Commodore was supplying several of its competitors with chips for consoles, including Atari. Sadly the chip didn't sell as intended and Jack Tramiel, the founder and head of Commodore, decided the market was right for a home system. He ambitiously wanted the machine to be unveiled at the CES in 1980 so Chuck Peddle and Bill Seiler began to design what became known internally as the TOI (The Other Intellect). Sadly that machine never ap-



peared, with Chuck interested in pursuing a business machine.

However another Commodore engineer named Robert

Yannes who was also working at MOS Technologies designed a machine using the same chip. He called it the "MicroPET" and the machine was shown (albeit in prototype form) to Jack Tramiel who immediately said he wanted the machine finished and to be ready for the CES show. A rough and ready version was shown at CES and caused some considerable interest from various parties. Although the press would slate the machine for being underpowered but heck what do they know, Jack knew better and emerged with the infamous phrase "*computing for the masses not just the classes*".

CODENAME

The machine was then given the codename or internally branded as the Vixen, Robert Russel constructed the Kernel and Basic interpreter and the machine was given an Atari joystick port. At the time it is rumoured Commodore had a very large supply of 1kbitx4 SRAM chips they couldn't get rid of so Jack Tramiel demanded that they be used up in the (Vixen) machine. The resulting machine seemed most like a PET albeit with a 22 column VIC chip and of course reference was made to it by the original MiniPET name. The VIC chip could also handle a light pen signal the input was provided on the DE-9 joystick connector. Few of these devices ever appeared on the market though, but it was carried over to the Commodore 64.

JAPANESE

In 1980 Jack Tramiel said he wanted and was insistent that Commodore needed to mass produce a low-cost colour machine. He insisted to the other managers that if we don't make it the Japanese will! The machine was given a 30 page memo by Michael Tomczyk which he presented to Jack Tramiel. Some of the recommendations were an RS232 interface, and full size typewriter style keys. The push here was to make the system as user friendly as possible and the proposed retail price was set at \$299.95 A marketing team was created working in England and Japan to create colourful and friendly manuals for the machine.

PROCESSING

Commodore's successful 1Mhz, 8 Bit [CSG / MOS 6502](#) CPU powered the Vic. But Because the Vic and the PET used completely different memory maps, the BASIC PEEK and POKE commands were not compatible between the two machines. Also because the VIC had only a 22 character screen and the

A TOTALLY INCOMPLETE HISTORY OF THE VIC COMPUTER BY COMMODORE FREE

original PET's had 40 character screens, only rudimentary Basic 2.0 software would function on both machines. However, the Vic-20 was generally peripheral compatible with other Commodore machines. Unfortunately most programmers found that 3.5K was not even large enough to load a machine language compiler and start working on a project. So developers were often forced to write machine code in the machine by hand! Later cartridges would be used to hold the programming languages allowing the whole memory to be available for the programmer's use.

The Vic was expandable to a massive (for the time) 32k, and with the use of its modulator the machine could be plugged into a domestic television set by way of an external modulator. The modulator had to be external to meet FCC regulations on interference to radio & TV signals. The whole Vic strategy of Commodore worked and in 1982 the machine was listed as the bestselling computer of the year with over 800,000 units sold. In 1983 this figure passed the 1 million point with an alleged 9,000 units selling per day.

In 1982 however rumours were rife that Commodore was working on an updated Vic called the Vic64 (or alternatively the VIC-40). Of course this became the Commodore 64. To many the term upgrade would rest uneasy as it does now but it was a term never heard of before in the computing world.

In 1985 the Vic was discontinued when Commodore would use the Commodore 64 for their entry-level system. The Vic had no reset button but users found that by typing the command SYS 64802 from Basic would cause the machine to reset. Many people found they could create hardware projects easily and then have them connect to the machine for things as mundane as temperature sensors to measuring devices, up to robotic sensors.

The VIC chip had three rectangular-wave sound generators. Each had a range of three octaves, and the generators were located on the scale about an octave apart, giving a total range of about five octaves. In addition, there was a white noise generator. There was however only one volume control, and the sound output was in mono. The Vic didn't have hardware sprites but for many programmers this didn't seem to matter looking at some of the later titles released. The low-cost VIC modem also opened up the world of BBS (bulletin board systems) and would pave the way to the Internet we know today.

RETAIL

Commodore decided the Vic's retail chain would be via toy stores, shops and many places you wouldn't normally associate a computer with. Of course the more technical electronic shops could provide more support and more knowledgeable staff could advise about the machine. Ultimately though it seemed the Vic would sell where it had to compete with other "games systems". It was also the first computer sold by the famous K-mart store. To enforce the message that the machine wasn't just about games, Commodore used the famous actor William Shatner from the *Star Trek* TV series in commissioned adverts and commercials for the machine

where he came out with the infamous line "*why buy just a video game?*"

For about the cost of a video game, you can own the Commodore VIC-20... a full featured color computer that's easy to use even a child can be computing an instant. It's also the great games kid too. And the VIC-20 can also improve learning skills. In fact, it's the same computer language taught to school on the Commodore PET. So make sure you get the VIC-20... the computer of the 1980s.

Commodore's new computer, the VIC-20 has many great applications, such as drawing graphics and word processing. And the VIC-20 can be used alone. It can talk, read to you, draw, and do much more. With the right accessories, you can do just about anything. In fact, you can even use the VIC-20 as a... which lets you connect to word processing and educational centers.

The brand's computer of the 1980s... VIC-20... Commodore... 1980... the year of computers... the... and... and... and...

VIC-20 VS. THE VIDEO GAMES			
Product Name	Price	Color	Storage
Commodore VIC-20	\$299	Yes	32K
Atari 2600	\$199	No	8K
Intellivision	\$299	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$399	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$499	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$599	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$699	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$799	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$899	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$999	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$1099	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$1199	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$1299	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$1399	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$1499	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$1599	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$1699	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$1799	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$1899	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$1999	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$2099	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$2199	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$2299	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$2399	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$2499	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$2599	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$2699	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$2799	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$2899	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$2999	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$3099	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$3199	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$3299	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$3399	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$3499	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$3599	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$3699	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$3799	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$3899	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$3999	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$4099	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$4199	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$4299	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$4399	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$4499	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$4599	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$4699	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$4799	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$4899	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$4999	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$5099	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$5199	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$5299	Yes	16K
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Atari 5200	\$9399	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$9499	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$9599	Yes	16K
Atari 1300	\$9699	Yes	16K
Atari 2800	\$9799	Yes	16K
Atari 5200	\$9899	Yes	16K
Atari 7800	\$9999	Yes	16K
Atari 8000	\$10099	Yes	16K

To this day the machine stands out as another of Commodore's success stories. Many machines were used mainly for games but educational titles did exist on both on tape and cartridges. The cartridge software was undoubtedly where the machine shone, removed from slow loading times and the technicalities of typing the right commands. Even the most non-technical person could power off the machine, insert a cartridge and then power the machine back on.

Scott Adams was contracted to provide a series of text adventure games for the machine and with help from a Commodore engineer who came to Longwood, Florida to assist in the effort, five of Adams's Adventure International game series were ported to the Vic. They got around the limited memory by having the 16Kb games reside in a ROM cartridge instead of being loaded into main memory via cassette.

Although the Vic didn't originally have a disk drive available, Commodore would release the VIC-1540 disk drive in 1981.

MEMORIES

As soon as I power on my Vic I am transported back into time. When I see the "boot screen" with the prompt READY, I am transported back to Christmas and a very welcome present sat under the tree. Not only was the machine a success, it's still loved all over the world by dedicated fans who are still pushing the hardware to the limits and seeking out

A TOTALLY INCOMPLETE HISTORY OF THE VIC COMPUTER BY COMMODORE FREE

something extra and special.

The Vic was and indeed always will be a special machine, well respected and indeed capable of many and varied uses.

The VIC-20 was also sold as the VIC-1001 in Japan and the VC-20 in Germany.

The Vic-1001 includes a special character ROM and a different (incompatible) Kernel to the Vic20 and keyboard that allow the user to enter Katakana characters, although the origins of the name are unknown. (The PET was labelled as the PET 2001 in Japan, and so perhaps the association and lower number were intended to market it as a lower cost model).



German produced VIC's were labelled with VC-20, which made reference to the Volkswagen car brand: the VolksComputer was a big hit in Europe. More likely is that "VIC" spoken the German way is very close to the swearword ficken (which means "to f*ck", and is also the reason the Vixen codename was dropped).

According to Wikipedia

"Because of its small memory and low-resolution display compared to some other computers of the time, the VIC-20 was primarily used for educational software and games. However, productivity applications such as home finance programs, spread sheets, and communication terminal programs were also made for the machine. Its high accessibility to the general public meant that quite a few software developers-to-be cut their teeth on the VIC-20, being introduced to BASIC programming, and in some cases going further to learn assembly or machine language. A young Linus Torvalds, the eventual creator of Linux, was given a VIC-20 as his first computer. Another notable software developer who began his computing career with a VIC-20 was the OpenBSD creator Theo de Raadt."

MACHINE Specifications:

Length (depth): 216mm

Width: 404mm

Height: 75mm

Power Consumption: Original model - 18 Watts, Revision C (also known as VIC-CR) - 7 watts

Video Standard: NTSC, PAL, SECAM (by special modifica-

tion)

Processor: MOS-6502

Random Access Memory (built-in): 5K built-in of which 3.5k (3583 bytes) available for BASIC language programming

Random Access Memory (optional): up to 37k of additional RAM with 27.5k (28159 bytes) available for BASIC language programming

Display area: 23 rows x 22 characters, 176x184 pixels with one bit per pixel depth, and 88x184 with two bit per pixel depth

Colours: 16

Sound: Monaural, 3 square wave voices & 1 noise channel

Ports: Cartridge port, User port, Cassette tape port, Serial bus, Joystick Connector, Audio/Video port.

Commodore Free

Thanks to Andrew Fisher for Proof reading this.

Websites

Vic 20 Denial

<http://sleepingelephant.com/denial/>

Old School Gaming

http://www.oldschool-gaming.com/view_index.php?4mat=5

Revival Studios

<http://www.revival-studios.com/?page=137>

Cosine Systems

<http://www.cosine.org.uk/products.php?4mat=vic>

VIC Tapes

<http://www.6502dude.com/cbm/vic20/arma/0to9taps.html>



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Submissions

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