

The WROCC

The Newsletter of the
Wakefield RISC OS Computer Club
For all users of the Acorn and RISC OS family of computers

Volume 30 – No. 10 – January 2013



December's Meeting Report

CLUB UPDATE

by Rick Sterry – rick@wrocc.org.uk

Once again, we devoted the December meeting to more frivolous activities, including the showing of some amusing images and videos. Mince pies, Stollen, Genoa cake and shortbread biscuits were available for those who were not too worried about the calorie count.

The highlight of the evening was Peter Richmond's fiendish computer-related quiz, with some relatively easy questions and a few really tough and/or obscure ones. We divided into five teams of three people each to answer 30 questions, with a possible total score of 34 points. The winning team with an impressive 33 points was 'Clueless', comprising Steve Fryatt, Dave Barrass and myself. I unwittingly gave away the answer to

the first question to the other teams (how embarrassing), but fortunately this made no difference to the order of team scores. The runners-up were 'The Wakers' with a very respectable 28 points, followed by 'Hard Times' with 22 points, 'Amazement' with 15 points, and bottom of the pile was 'Vista Devils' with a score of 13 – still not at all bad. There was no prize for the winning team, but hey, we're British and it's all about the taking part. Those who couldn't make it to the meeting can also test their knowledge on the quiz on the pages overleaf, but no cheating please!

If you would like to find some of the images and video clips for yourself, search for the

Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 9th January

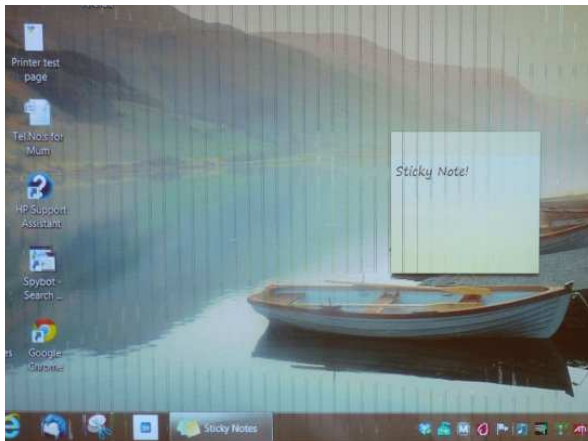
For those readers receiving this via PDF at around the end of 2012, here is a final reminder that the WROCC AGM will be held a week late on the 9th January, and that members within reasonable travelling distance are urged to attend. If you have mislaid them, the AGM documents can be downloaded from www.wrocc.org.uk/members/thewrocc.php (you might need to register to get access). A free light buffet will be provided. *Please note that this is a members-only event.*

Our Next Meeting – Wednesday 6th February 2013 Tablet Computers

Steve Bass will be talking about tablet computers, and addressing such important questions as "What is all the fuss about?" and "Are they serious computers or just fashion accessories?"

following on YouTube and other video sites: “Medieval helpdesk (with English subtitles)”, “Amazon Mother’s Day Commercial” (slightly risqué), and “Bernard – I love sky”. One video of a stunt plane breaking a wing off and yet still landing safely was, as we suspected at the time, a hoax, seemingly part of a clandestine advertising campaign for a German clothing company – “One wing plane Landing” will find it on YouTube. Another amusing item consisted of a series of photos of the very interesting green ‘instructional’ livery on a Kulula Airlines Boeing 737-800 – just Google for “Flying 101”.

The meeting was to have included the debut of our new Optoma HD230X HDMI-enabled video projector, which was purchased earlier on in the day. Unfortunately, it was found to be suffering from a fault which caused a rather curious vertical double-ruling effect to appear on the screen, regardless of the source and screen resolution. This was picked up during testing prior to the meeting, but as no



The strange vertical bands seen on the new projector: the supplier agreed that it was faulty and took it back with no quibbles, so we now plan to get a replacement in time for the February meeting

further units were in stock at the supplier it had to be returned for refund. The existing projector served us well enough at the meeting, and as we do not need one at the AGM, the intention now is to purchase a working example of the Optoma in time for the February meeting, which will be all about tablet computers.

The 2012 WROCC Christmas Quiz

by Peter Richmond – peter@wrocc.org.uk

The quiz contains 30 questions: most are worth 1 point: where more points are on offer, this is shown by a number after the question (so a 2 point question would have ② after it, and so on). There is a maximum score of 39 points.

Note that questions 5, 8, 9 and 28 were worth 1 point each at the meeting; adjust your score accordingly if you wish to compare your result with those on the night!

1. What pet name did enthusiasts of the Electron give their computer?
2. Which UK manufacturer started off making joysticks, and then went on to create musical instruments?
3. What is the name of the new computer marketed by R-Comp that is based around a faster board than the BeagleBoard?
4. What was the special (generic) chip inside the Omega that made it so different?
5. Name three computer languages, apart from BBC BASIC and its inbuilt 6502 assembler, that the BBC Micro could run. ③
6. What ‘main number’ version of RISC OS do the newest computers use?
7. What sort of RGB monitor signal did the BBC Micro give out as standard?

8. What two floppy disc sizes were never really used on the BBC Micro? ②
9. Who wrote the original Elite? ②
10. What 'standard' size battery do APDL offer as a replacement for a RiscPC's backup battery?
11. What was the generic name given to the large computers from the 60s that had those lovely spinning tape reels?
12. What version of a major operating system has been recently ported to run on ARM processors?
13. Which southern memory specialist from the 90s had a French-sounding connection as their name?
14. What is the name of the board built around a more powerful processor than a BeagleBoard?
15. Which classic arcade game is also the name of a town?
16. What is the covering name for the main developer of RISC OS 5?
17. What was the name of the educational frog who made her debut on the BBC Micro?
18. What was the first multimedia authoring program for the Archimedes, which company wrote it, and where were they based? ③
19. What is the new online software store for RISC OS software called?
20. Which programmer wrote View and Pipedream?
21. Two of the main people involved in the Raspberry Pi foundation are married: give their surname and both of their forenames. ③
22. Nowadays we have flat-bed scanners, but they used to be very expensive. What was the name of the cheaper alternative format that we used to use?
23. What was the name of the 'three-box' version of the A3020, aimed at the business and secondary school market?
24. Which piece of RISC OS software lets you listen to internet radio?
25. Which new type of processor is Professor Steve Furber working towards?
26. What is the highest 'main number' version of PostScript that can be created on RISC OS?
27. What was the name of the multimedia system that used a BBC Master and a Laser disc?
28. Iomega made two high capacity removable drives – what were their names? ②
29. What is the name of R-Comp's back-up software?
30. What does the "DP" in "DPScan" stand for?

You can find the answers on page 10.



Wednesday 9th January

Annual General Meeting & Free Buffet – Members Only

Wednesday 6th February

Tablet Computers

Wednesday 6th March

Raspberry Pi Evening

Wednesday 3rd April

Meeting – Details to be announced

Saturday 20th April

Wakefield Acorn & RISC OS Computer Show 2013

The original Back Catalogue CD, with an archive of the Club's newsletter back to the first issue in 1983, was a success when it was published in time for the 2011 Show, and earned the Club useful income. It was envisaged that the second edition of the CD, produced for the 2012 Show, would be simply the same as the first, but with a further twelve months' worth of issues added, i.e. those making up Volume 29 (April 2011 to March 2012).

Not lost... just mislaid

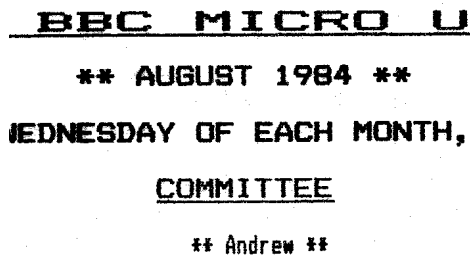
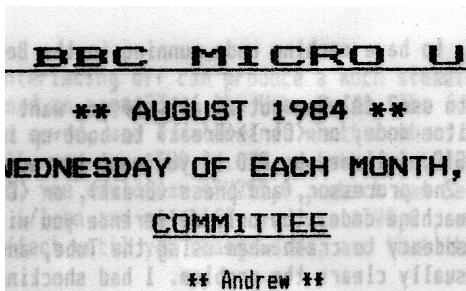
That all changed when I made a chance discovery while clearing out a filing cabinet – in a hanging file right at the very back of the top drawer was a collection of printed copies of the newsletter covering the 1980s, with a few from the early 1990s. I had looked for them prior to the original CD being released, and having failed to find them, had assumed that I had thrown them away. That is why the very first newsletter from April 1983 was the only one from that decade to appear on the CD. So, all I had to do was scan them, turn them into PDFs, and it would be job done. Well, it turned out not to be quite as straightforward as that!

The first thing to do was to look at the CD and list which issues were missing, other than those from the 1980s. There were 80 missing from the 1980s, and 10 from the 1990s, one of which was a show report special additional to the monthly issue. I also viewed all the existing PDFs and where possible I compared them with printed copies, and a few anomalies came to light. Two of the PDFs were in booklet format instead of paged (we now supply both versions since the start of volume 28), and one of them had a completely different centre article to the printed copy. This was at a time when we only issued printed copies, so it was apparent that the PDF had not been created from the final draft. Two issues from the 1990s had the odd graphic missing – screenshots illustrating articles – and this turned out to have been

caused by the sprites being created in non-standard screen modes. One issue had the wrong volume number on it.

In cases where there was a printed version available for comparison, we at least knew exactly what was missing, and if all else failed then we could insert a scanned bitmap of the graphic. The 'wrong article' problem was fixed by Steve Fryatt (who had recreated all of the newsletters from his time as Editor for the first CD, to get the benefits of using PostScript 3 and the ability of PrintPDF to include a table of contents, but had overlooked one last-minute article switch in the process), and Chris Hughes managed to fix the 'wrong format' and 'missing graphic' problems. I think in the end there was just one graphic still missing, but as it was not an essential one, we did not worry about it. In one issue from the 1990s, space had been left literally to paste in a hard copy advert, but this was missing in the PDF. For the sake of authenticity, a scanned bitmap of the advert was inserted in order to re-create the original.

Chris had a good hunt round in his loft, and managed to find more of the missing issues to go with the ones I had found. I set about scanning them too, not as PDFs but as bitmaps, to enable some editing to be done. I mostly used the scanner on the 'Auto' setting for speed and convenience, as it was simple enough to reduce the resolution and colour depth later. Most of the printed copies were in very good condition, and the scans came out very well indeed. Some were not so good, and some were booklets rather than A4 sheets, so inevitably some staple hole marks and faint gutter shadows were present. The gutter shadow could often be removed simply by cropping the double page into individual A5 ones. I cleaned up the darker marks and shadows manually, but in most cases it was not necessary to remove fainter defects, as I will explain shortly. Where individual letters or words were missing or not very legible, I used cut-and-paste in order to



The effect of bleed-through on some of the scanned newsletters and the improvement by simply changing from greyscale to black and white images

replace them with the same letters or words from elsewhere in the bitmap. Where this was not possible, I resorted to pixel editing, or actual text insertion in a very small number of cases.

Image improvements

Finally, I reduced the colour depth on each individual bitmap to the minimum necessary – just two colours (black and white) in many cases. This also had the very useful effect of removing faint gutter shadows, smudges and other marks remaining on the page, and also bleed-through from print on the reverse side of the rather thin listing paper used for some older issues. An exaggerated example of bleed-through is shown in the image above-left, and the result of doing nothing more than reducing to two colours is shown above-right – a marked improvement! Where the scans were a little more ‘fuzzy’, better results were obtained by using four colours. i.e. black, white and two shades of grey – akin to anti-aliasing. Where there were monochrome photographs, either eight or sixteen (greyscale) colours were used, as the crudely printed originals simply didn’t justify using 256 colours – the image on the right shows the worst example. I also tweaked the dynamic range where necessary, so that white was not merely very pale grey and black was not merely very dark grey. I also reduced the resolution to somewhere in excess of what was required in the finished PDF, in order to keep the size of the working files to something sensible.

While doing this, I found that several individual issues had completely the wrong volume numbers on, and in some cases also the wrong issue number – this despite the fact that the preceding and succeeding issues were correctly numbered! This was unrelated to the known anomaly with the volume numbering. Chris was able to correct the original document files where they existed, and I was able to correct the scanned copies by deleting the incorrect numbers and either cutting-and-pasting the correct ones from elsewhere, or by inserting text. Finally, the scanned and edited bitmaps for each issue were dropped into sequential pages in Xara Photo & Graphic Designer – the Windows ‘evil twin’ of ArtWorks 2. I could then export them as PDFs, after experimenting with the JPEG compression and dpi resolution settings to achieve a satisfactory compromise between file size and



The quality of reproduction of some of the scanned photos was poor due to the originals being photocopies

visual quality. The resulting file sizes worked out at about 250K per page, the issues ranging from one to three pages in the 1980s, and anything up to eight pages in the 1990s. Issues published over the past year or so and produced as PDFs directly from Ovation Pro files, are between 100K and 500K in size, depending on the number of pages (four or eight), and the mix of text, graphics and photos – this is clearly far more efficient than producing PDFs from bitmaps.

Technology updates

It seemed that the job was done, when Steve Bass took it upon himself to re-create the February 1990 issue, using Impression. The original was probably produced on InterWord and definitely printed using a dot-matrix printer, so a diagram of the Beeb serial port drawn using just text characters was somewhat crude. The Impression version looked much nicer, especially where the serial port diagram was concerned, and of course it used ‘proper’ fonts. Very careful proof reading was necessary in order to prevent ‘modern’ errors creeping in. It wasn’t until March 1990 that Impression was used to produce the newsletter for the first time, so in order not to confuse anyone, a note was inserted at the bottom of the final page to indicate that the February document was a re-creation. (As a historical side-note, we switched to using Ovation Pro for booklet printing some time in the early 2000s, and completely dropped Impression in favour of David Pilling’s alternative in March 2006 when the newsletter editing started to be done on an Impression-unfriendly Iyonix.)

This set the ball rolling, as Chris realised that where an original document file was missing, he could re-create it using another issue from around the same time as a template. It meant me doing some OCR (Optical Character Recognition) work from the scanned bitmaps to supply the text for insertion, and with the graphics we had to cheat a bit and insert scanned bitmaps in some cases, but the end results were quite good. Again, some very careful proof reading was necessary to check

for new errors and for font/character mapping issues. Whilst we corrected some obvious typos in the originals, we generally avoided any other corrective changes – that would perhaps have been rather Orwellian! The advantages of re-creating these issues rather than being content with scanned copies are that the visual quality is far better and the file size is smaller.

As well as finding printed copies of some of the missing newsletters, Chris also managed to find some of the original Wordwise and InterWord files from the 1980s, and also Impression files from the 1990s. Some were his own creations, but some had been done by the late Mike Wilson, who had edited many issues in the 1990s. Thus, PDFs could be produced from the original documents, with the aforementioned advantages. However, once again things weren’t quite that simple. In a few of Mike’s files, comparison with the printed copies revealed that the file was not the final draft. In some cases the differences were very subtle – just a few corrections and a little rephrasing here and there – but in one issue a multi-page article was completely missing from the document. So, I had to get busy with the OCR again, so that the missing article could be restored.

Still to find...

Had I known which issues would subsequently be found as document files, it would have saved me having to scan quite so many printed copies, but never mind. The end result is that in one form or another we now have all but three of the newsletter issues produced since the Club began in April 1983, the missing ones being May 1984, Jan 1985 and Nov 1987. There is circumstantial evidence to suggest that the May 1984 one may never have been produced, but we will probably never know. The May 1995 one is of rather poorer quality than we would like, as it was scanned from a photocopy, but it is perfectly legible. I suppose that it is a suitable candidate for re-creation, but it would be quite a bit of work and whether it will ever happen, I do not know.

Finally, I have a confession to make – I used Windows rather than RISC OS software to manipulate the scanned newsletter bitmaps, though I did not use anything particularly fancy. I used MS Paint for cleaning up the bitmaps, IrfanView to adjust the colour depth

and resolution, and a *very* old copy of Photoshop Elements to auto-tweak the dynamic range where necessary. As mentioned previously, I used Xara to generate the PDFs from the scanned bitmaps, but ArtWorks 2 would have done just as good a job I'm sure.

Completing the index

Once all of the missing issues had been located and converted into PDF, Rick created the raw index data for them and sent it in CSV form to John Arthur who compiles the indexes for *The WROCC*.

The back issues are now indexed as far as volume 6, which more or less coincides with the arrival of RISC OS and the transformation of the newsletter from a simple news-sheet into the format we know today. The full indexes are on the CD, with a master index available on the Club website at www.wrocc.org.uk/newsletter

Show Update

SHOW NEWS

by Chris Hughes – chris@wrocc.org.uk



As has already been announced in November, the Club is running another show in our 30th year of existence.

The show will once again be at the Cedar Court Hotel Wakefield, in the same rooms at the back of the building as in the past couple of years. It will be on 20th April 2013, so get the date in your diary because we will be asking for your help in running the show on the day as well as looking for some help before-hand.

The show is sponsored by MW Software, who have kindly supported us for the past few years. I am currently in ongoing discussions with a couple of other organisations regarding more sponsorship.

We have had provisional bookings from MW Software, R-Comp/R-Comp Interactive, CJE Micro's, North One Communications

(Organizer), Soft Rock Software, Orpheus Internet, WROCC and the charity stall. We are also planning on having a Raspberry Pi area at the show, as a feature highlighting what can be done and who is doing it.

We are planning to have the usual show theatre if there is demand from exhibitors; if not then this will become more exhibitor space! In addition – as it is our 30th anniversary – we are considering having a special guest open the event.

The entrance fee will remain the same at £5 for those paying at the door, and we also intend to have the mini-bus operating to and from Wakefield Westgate station during the day.

You can help us promote the show by adding one of the show banners to your website: these are available from the show website at www.wakefieldshow.org.uk in a couple of standard formats.

Using SyncDiscs for a Mirror Backup

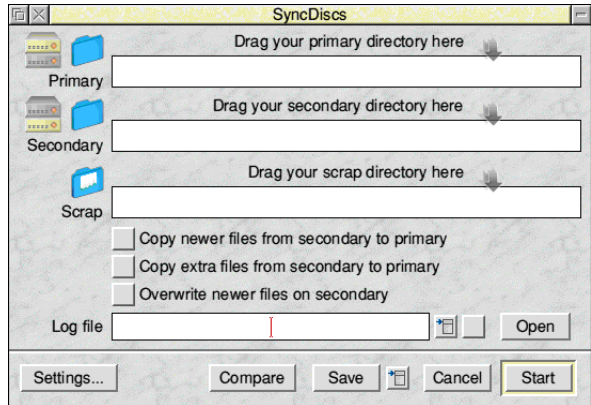
SOFTWARE FOCUS

by Peter Young – pnyoung@ormail.co.uk

For a very minor-interest system, RISC OS has a surprisingly large number of applications for doing backups: some commercial and some not. I've tried quite a few of these, and have come to the conclusion that, for my purposes anyway, Chris Johnson's adaptation of SyncDiscs – which was originally written by David Pilling – is the easiest to use and the most reliable.

The original SyncDiscs was a single-tasking app which produced a 'mirror' of a directory on another disc or filing system: in other words an identical copy, with new files added and removed files removed. David originally wrote it for his own purposes, and, as far as it went at the time, it was useful. Chris, in addition to making it multi-task, has added a whole lot of additional functionality to it – making it for me a must-have app.

Not only does it multi-task, but it can copy to the backup as many as ten separate groups of



The main SyncDiscs dialogue box, which opens when the application is launched from the iconbar

files simultaneously. It can also save as many different backup configurations, and also as many different backup destinations, as you wish, and can run these individually or as a batch, or from an Obey file. It can also keep logs of each backup, so that you can be sure of what has been done.

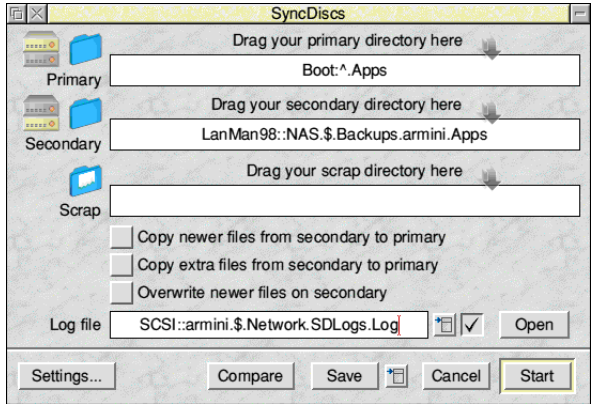
```
-----
*** SyncDiscs started at 10:00pm 1 Jul 12
-----
*** Timestamps will be assumed equal if less than 200 cs different
*** Differences in filetypes will be ignored
*** Primary Boot: ^.Diaries
*** Secondary LanMan98::NAS.$ .Backups.armini.Diaries
-----

copy:Boot: ^.Diaries.OrgData to
LanMan98::NAS.$ .Backups.armini.Diaries.OrgData
copy:Boot: ^.Diaries.OrgData/bak to
LanMan98::NAS.$ .Backups.armini.Diaries.OrgData/bak
remove:LanMan98::NAS.$ .Backups.armini.Diaries.Backups.12-06-22Fri
copy:Boot: ^.Diaries.Backups.12-07-01Sun to
LanMan98::NAS.$ .Backups.armini.Diaries.Backups.12-07-01Sun

*** Completed Boot: ^.Diaries at 10:01pm 1 Jul 12
```

An example of a log file generated by SyncDiscs during a backup

On running the application and clicking on the iconbar icon, the window on the left appears. A bit about terminology: the *Primary* directory is the one you wish to back up, the *Secondary* directory is the destination of the backup, and the *Scrap* directory is where you can, if you wish, copy files that have been deleted from the primary directory. Log files aren't obligatory, but for me are useful; if you click on the menu icon to the right of the *Log file* field you get a save box for saving where the log file(s) should be. An example of what one of my SyncDiscs windows looks like is on the right. You can then either click on *Compare*, to see what the app will do, or on *Start* to do the actual backup. If you have elected to save a log file, as well as this file being saved, you can make it appear in a text-editor as soon as the backup is done. An example of part of a log file is shown at the bottom of the left-hand page opposite.

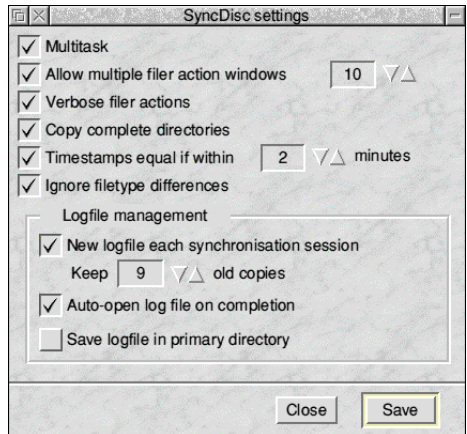


An example SyncDiscs configuration for backing an ARMini up to some network attached storage (NAS)

However, as I've elected to have ten simultaneous files being backed up, I also increase the Next slot considerably to stop the machine slowing down: this is done by editing the application's *!Run* file. I hope that Chris

If this is a backup that is done regularly, you can save the backup as file of type SyncJob (&1D9) using the *Save* button in the window, and as long as SyncDiscs has been seen by the filer the backup is run immediately when you double-click on the SyncJob file. If you double-click on a series of these files they are added to a queue and are run sequentially, with the log-file appearing only after the last one has run. You can also run a series of backups from an Obey file, and an extract from one that I use is below.

Finally, the app is very configurable from the *Settings* button in the main window. Clicking on this produces the dialogue box shown on the right. Most of this window is self-explanatory.



SyncDiscs can be configured as required using its Settings dialogue

```
Filer_Run SCSI: \armini.$ Network.SyncJobs.Win_USB.Apps
Filer_Run SCSI: \armini.$ Network.SyncJobs.Win_USB.Boot
Filer_Run SCSI: \armini.$ Network.SyncJobs.Win_USB.Database
Filer_Run SCSI: \armini.$ Network.SyncJobs.Win_USB.Diaries
Filer_Run SCSI: \armini.$ Network.SyncJobs.Win_USB.Diversion
```

SyncDiscs backups can be automated: this example Obey file would run five SyncJob files to back up the contents of !Boot, Apps, Database, Diaries and Diversion.

will forgive me for this change – done so that I don't forget! It seems that the maximum number of filer action windows is twenty, and of log-files to be kept is nine, though I don't think this is documented.

You can also set up a 'zone' file globally, in which you put the pathnames of files you don't want backed up, such as perhaps the contents of *!Scrap*.

SyncDiscs is free, and comes with a comprehensive HTML Help file. It can be found at www.chris-johnson.org.uk/software

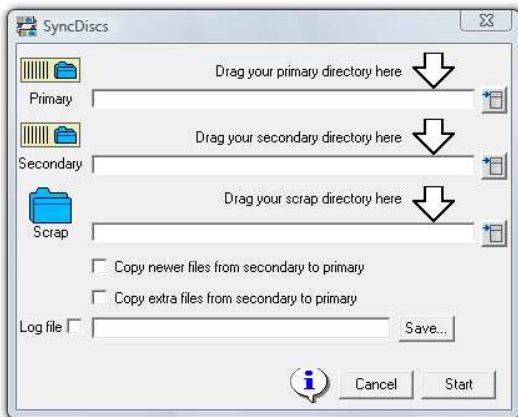
I have found that Chris is most willing to accept suggestions from users, for this and for his other excellent software, and indeed the *Ignore filetype differences* option resulted from my suggestion, as some of my backups were bedevilled by confusion between zip and arc files on my Network Attached Storage (NAS).

[Indeed. I have had to edit one of Peter's minor criticisms as to the limitations of SyncDiscs: version 1.25, which was released by Chris in November, would seem to have addressed it! Good service from Chris; apologies to Peter for sitting on his article for so long. – SF]

Look familiar?

Those also using Windows systems might be interested to know that – like some of David's other software – there's a non-RISC OS version of SyncDiscs available.

It's only at version 1.06 (its RISC OS sibling reached 1.10 before it was passed over to Chris, and is now at 1.25), so it lacks some of the more recent bells and whistles that Peter describes above. Despite that, it's still pretty functional and can be scripted from a batch file; see www.davidpilling.net/syncdiscs.html



Quiz Answers

1. Elk
2. Cheetah
3. ARMini-X
4. Field Programmable Gate Array (FPGA)
5. Any three of: BCPL, C, CIS COBOL, COMAL, FORTH, FORTRAN, LISP, Logo, Pascal, Micro-PROLOG
6. RISC OS 5
7. TTL
8. 3" and 2.8"
9. David Braben and Ian Bell
10. AAA
11. Mainframe
12. Windows 8
13. IFEL
14. PandaBoard
15. Repton
16. RISC OS Open Ltd (ROOL)
17. Flossie
18. Genesis, Oak Solutions, Leeds
19. The Pling Store (!Store)
20. Mark Colton
21. Liz and Eben Upton
22. Hand scanner
23. A4000
24. Digital CD
25. Asynchronous
26. PostScript 3
27. The Domesday System
28. Zip and Jaz
29. SafeStore
30. David Pilling

They say that a picture can be worth a thousand words, and this is often especially true when writing about a piece of software for a publication like *The WROCC*. A simple image of the options in a dialogue box – such as the one on the right – can often clarify things much better than the wordiest piece of prose.

Taking screenshots in RISC OS is deceptively easy: Paint comes with a *Snapshot...* entry in its iconbar menu, which does – more or less – what it says on the tin.

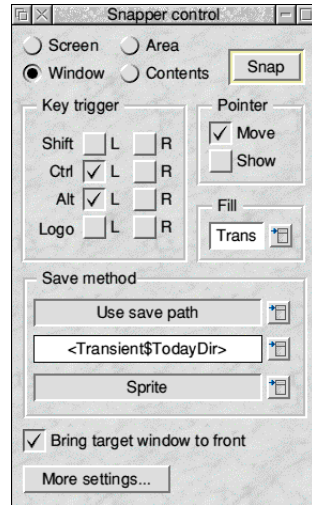
The devil, as ever, is in the detail. If you're trying to get an image of a window or dialogue box, it's usually necessary to grab more than is required then load the sprite back into Paint and laboriously trim off the unwanted pixels from around the edge. Get it wrong and there will either be stray pixels around the border or, worse, bits missing from the window furniture. While that might look OK on screen, it becomes very obvious when printed on paper.

Fortunately there are some alternatives to Paint which make the task a lot easier. For years I used Jason Tribbeck's WindowRd: simple but effective, it worked fine for most things that I asked it to do. Unfortunately, it was let down in a few cases by its lack of configurability.

Enter Snapper, from the enigma that is David Pilling. Originally commercial (sold bundled with DPScan and its predecessors), it's now freeware and is another of the titles that David has released into the care of Chris Johnson.

In use, Snapper is simplicity itself. Load it on to the iconbar, then open the control window (seen above) with a click. While the window is on screen, pressing the 'hot-key' combination (configurable from the Shift, Ctrl, Alt and Logo keys) will take a snapshot of something.

That 'something' is also configurable. It can be the whole screen (like Paint) or a selected area (unlike Paint, the area is set using a draggable frame before the snap is taken – making it



much easier to set up accurately around windows and icons). In addition – and this is what makes it perfect for screenshots – it can also take just the window under the pointer, with or without its 'furniture' (title-bar, scroll bars and so on). There's no need to mess about getting the cropping correct: Snapper does that for you. There are even a range of options for controlling what happens to the mouse pointer when the snap is taken (it can be included in the shot, hidden, or even moved out of the way so that menus and the like become unselected for the 'camera').

Once taken, the snap can be saved to disc (either to a configured folder or via a save box), loaded directly into your favourite sprite editor, or put on to the global clipboard. There are even options to convert it to JPEG or PNG, or wrap it up into a drawfile.

Snapper is freeware, and if you need to take screenshots in RISC OS then it's hard to recommend it enough (if you're writing for *The WROCC*, then it makes it so much easier to get screenshots correct). As with SyncDiscs, copies can now be found on Chris Johnson's website at www.chris-johnson.org.uk/software

Browser Progress

Readers keeping an eye on NetSurf's test builds might have noticed the appearance of archives on the RISC OS page with names containing 'json'. The result of a lot of hard work from developers including Vincent Sanders, Chris Gransden and Chris Young (along with others that I have almost certainly missed), these downloads hold a RISC OS version of the cross-platform browser which has been successfully built with a JavaScript engine.

'Successfully built' is a long way from 'useful', or even 'usable': if you use the test builds for day-to-day browsing then you are probably best leaving JavaScript disabled in NetSurf's configuration or just sticking with the 'jsoff' builds for the time being. Nonetheless it's an important milestone for the project and some of the braver subscribers to the NetSurf Users mailing list have reported success with some very rudimentary tests. See the project's website at www.netsurf-browser.org for more.

Corrections

A small error slipped into Colin Sutton's '...and finally' last month. Whist London 2012 did set a unique record, it was that London is now the only city to have hosted the Games three times. As a nation, the USA is still ahead with four games: St. Louis in 1904, Los Angeles in 1932 and 1984, and Atlanta in 1996. Things are complicated further if you decide to include the un-numbered tenth anniversary Games of 1906, because then Athens, and hence Greece, have both hosted the Games three times as well.

Apologies to Eben Upton for mis-spelling his name in the November meeting report.

The deadline for contributions to the next issue of the newsletter will be 21st January 2013.

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7:45 p.m. on the first Wednesday in each month

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