



LINUX EXPOUNDED



Barry Cochrane & Richard Morrell of 'Linux Care' at Riverside Centre

It was with eager anticipation that IWPCUG welcomed Richard Morrell and Barry Cochrane from 'Linux Care' at the Riverside Centre recently. The Linux operating system has aroused much interest within the ranks of our computer club and although there are many versions of Linux, including Red Hat, Caldera, SuSE, Mandrake, Corel Linux and Debian, to mention a few, Richard Morrell gave an accomplished talk to our members. It was inappropriate to interrupt Richard as he flowed with his presentation and had much to share, even though our members were anxious to ask Richard many questions which were prepared in advance by John Bownas. It is hoped that Richard would return to another meeting at Riverside, where he could demonstrate on our monitor how to install Linux and give tips on the various versions of the Linux operating system.

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FUTURE MEETINGS

5th April	"Objects of Desire" Taking another look at Windows	Tim Bateman
Thursday 13th April	Visit to Observatory	David Broughton
19th April	Question & Answer Session Windows Tutorial	Dennis Linzmaier
3rd May	Web Page Design	David Broughton
17th May	Clinic Meeting Question & Answer Session	IWPCUG Teams
7th June	Communications	Sally Ann Garret
21st June	Questions & Answer Session Windows Tutorial	Dennis Linzmaier
5th July	Email Editing/Club Newsgroups	David Broughton
19th July	Windows Tutorial Questions & Answers	Dennis Linzmaier
16th August	Isle of Wight Family	David Hawgood



Dale Godfrey and Roger Skidmore pictured at Riverside Centre

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP- COMMITTEE MEMBERS**Honorary President:**

Sir Norman Echlin,

Chairman:

Dennis Linzmaier,

Vice Chairman:

David Broughton,

Treasurer:

Bob Groom,

Secretary:

Peter Wreford

Assistant Secretary:

Christine Jenkins

Membership Secretary/Marketing Manager:

Douglas Rankin

Hot Key Distribution & Refreshments:

Peter & Dorothy Wolletron:

Hot Key Editor:

Brian Sexton

New Members Co-ordinator:

Maggie Butler

Disability Resources Co-ordinator

Helen Edom

Riverside Centre Liason:

Ian Capon

Meetings Reception Assistant:

John Atkin

Assistant Show Organiser:

Marilyn Barrett

Committee Member:

Cliff Maidment

FOCUS



To: The Editor
 From: Peter Lovely
 Subject: Breakthrough Breast Cancer: London Marathon

I hope that you may find some space in Hot Key for the following plea for assistance towards sponsorship for what I believe is a very deserving charity. Melanie Reddington is a relative of mine and if any members have a mind to be of help, I will be sincerely grateful, as I am personally a victim of cancer.

Melanie is circulating the following letter to companies and appropriate individuals:-

"My name is Melanie Reddington and I will be running in the London Marathon on 16th April, in aid of 'Breakthrough Breast Cancer Research', which is a charity committed to fighting breast cancer. The UK has one of the highest mortality rates in the world, with more than 1,000 women dying from it every month. My mother was diagnosed with breast cancer last year and has received pioneering reconstruction surgery on the Mainland, as it is not yet available on the Island.

As I have secured a golden charity bond place, for which the charity has to pay £250, I am committed to raising a minimum of £2000. I would therefore be most grateful if you would consider sponsoring me to help me to achieve this target and benefit a very worthwhile cause. Naturally, I would be very happy to partake in any publicity to promote your club in appreciation of your support.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Yours sincerely, Melanie J. Reddington".

An article about Melanie will, I believe, be appearing in the next issue of The County Press.

With best wishes, Peter Lovely.

We're on the Web:- <http://www.ddina.demon.co.uk/iwpcug/>

The Isle of Wight PC User Group

welcomes all owners and users of IBM Compatible Personal Computers.

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

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

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

Membership is £12 per year.

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

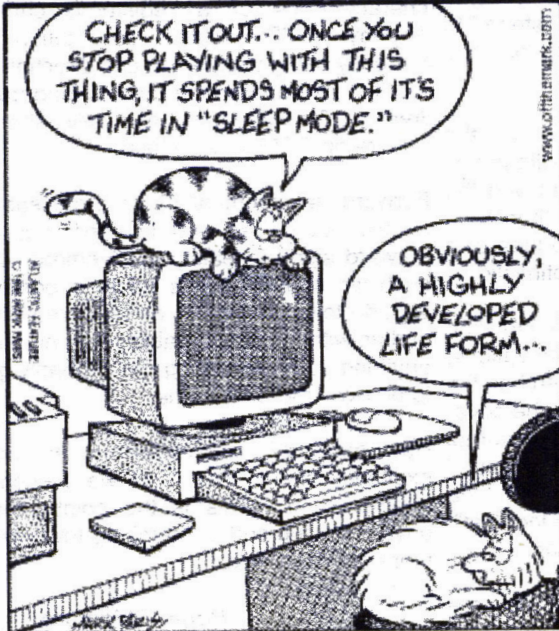
Visitors are welcome.

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

HI, I'M FROM TECH SUPPORT... I WAS TOLD YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE WITH MEMORY INSTALLATION...



CHECK IT OUT... ONCE YOU STOP PLAYING WITH THIS THING, IT SPENDS MOST OF ITS TIME IN "SLEEP MODE."



H
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Ponderings

Founder Secretary - Year 1989



I replied to Sean Colson's ad. in the County Press years ago to start a PC User Group and have been involved ever since. I have a terrible memory for chronology and events but I do know that there has always been a good body of support over the years. The technology has changed and become more complex (as anyone who listened to the talk on Linux will agree) but the enthusiasm hasn't.

Big changes were the move to the Riverside Centre from Brading village hall (by a committee majority of one) and the adoption of two meetings a month instead of just one. I do remember the idea of a show being regarded as over-optimistic.

On the whole there has been an evolution and succession of worthwhile innovations, e.g. the magazine, the club membership and speaker resource database, the cover disk, the adoption of regular external speakers (which has floundered a bit of late), the freebie table, the creation of a club web site and Dougie's "One List", and of course the disability section.

Sometimes I wonder whether we are involved in the medium or the message I

know I never take the lid off my machine unless I really have to, but then there are others who are always in there. I love the idea of Linux (now I know pronounced Linnux) and its evolution, but as to fiddling with it myself - no way! I'm a user not a fiddler and I only ever turn my PC on to do a job of work. Having said that, I have to admit to having put every single bit of hardware in the box myself!! (And the one at work and my various spare systems).

Growth and viability are characteristics of a healthy organisation, which is an excuse to promote my wishes to see the Hotkey magazine available on the Web - preferably in Acrobat format even if the web based version lacks colour for compactness - and a move towards greater charitable activity, which may eventually require charitable registration. Most of our activity is either educational or charitable and as such would bear all the characteristics of a registered charity anyway. (The club's constitution is currently being tweaked in this direction to facilitate the application for a **'Millennium Awards for All'** grant and will shortly require an EGM to ratify this).

Forward development in an organisation should not be an end in itself, but an outward sign of healthy involvement. As such we should always adopt a positive attitude towards innovation and creativity, and as with the Computability section, and anything outward looking has probably got to be even more welcome.

How many of us view the dawn and exultantly shout "Yes!!!" as we welcome another day? This is the spirit which drives the club and its members towards a more positive world.

Roger Skidmore

LINUX - The Latest Versions



The May 2000 edition of PC Plus is accompanied with a free superdisk featuring Mandrake 7.0, together with a complete guide to LINUX and tutorials plus some answers to Linux questions. The



installation of Mandrake is totally graphical and even shows how long the installation will take and how much time is left before all the software is installed.



Also, the May edition of Personal Computer World brings you a cover disk dedicated to COREL Linux.

Linux Web Resources

Other Distributions

- **Red Hat:** <http://www.redhat.com> A major force in the Linux market, Red Hat is still the favourite distro for a huge number of users.
- **S.u.S.E.:** <http://www.suse.de/en/> This distro comes boxed with six CDs or a single DVD-ROM and features a massive amount of software.
- **Debian:** <http://www.debian.org> This distro is only for accomplished and experienced users.



Computability Project News - April 2000

The club project to help disabled people use computers has been running for over a year now. Volunteers from the club have helped over 30 people in various ways; from sorting out problems with some clients' own computers to installing computers (from the project's loan stock) in other clients' homes and providing ongoing teaching support. Almost everyone who has been given hands on computing experience has been thrilled by the difference it has made to their daily life. Many

have gone on to acquire their own machines, even if they have had to ask for financial help from relatives or charities.

Club members have been very supportive of this project. Throughout the year, the club as a whole, has donated sums for extra equipment etc. Various individuals, whom I daren't embarrass by naming them, have been unstintingly generous with their time, which I know is much appreciated by the people they ve helped. Members have also kindly donated equipment such as printers, software and modems. These donations have been invaluable, as several commercial companies have donated down-graded hardware, such as 486's but few have internal modems and companies seem reluctant to part with their printers! Inevitably, good quality monitors are also hard to come by.

Unfortunately, the club's application for a "Millennium Awards for All" grant was turned down on constitutional grounds but we intend to apply again if the constitution is changed. We are also considering other avenues of funding as it would be useful to increase our stock of disability aids, such as adapted keyboards and specialist software. In any case, we hope the project can go on improving the lives of disabled people throughout the year 2000 and many years beyond.

If anybody would like more information about the project or would like to offer help of any kind please contact any of the Committee Members: Cliff Maidment, Buzz Austin, Roger Skidmore or Helen Edom. You might also like to visit the disability page on the club's website!



CENTENARY REVIEW

by David Broughton.

For this special 100th edition of Hot Key I have put together some history of our club magazine plus some history of the club as well.

As far as I have discovered, the club was started by Sean Colson who placed an advert in the County Press sometime in September 1989, inviting interested persons to a meeting at his own premises in Ryde. (Those were the days when Ryde telephone numbers were only five digits!) Sean Colson was then Managing Director of Tomorrow's Designs Ltd (TDL) and it was either in the company's premises or in Yelf's cafe opposite. The first meeting took place either in September or early October 1989. What is known for certain is that by 26th October Sean was Chairman and Roger Skidmore was Secretary with Peter Lano as Membership Secretary. Sean and Roger are still on today's database of members with their joining date as 26th October 1989. By 13th December there were 19 members and by the following February there were 28 members with Sir Norman Echlin, Bill Maden, Mike Parsons, Jonathan Burt, Denny Linzmaier, Brenda Bogacz and many others as members. All meetings after the first inaugural meeting were held in Brading Church Hall on the first Wednesday of each month. The second Wednesday meetings were not introduced until January 1991.

The title of the club was to be "The Isle of Wight Personal Computer User Group (IBM Compatible)" with a subtitle of "a resource group for IBM compatible users". The subtitle was soon dropped and the bracketed part was omitted from

the title with the 1997 revision of the Constitution, it then being somewhat unnecessary as almost all PC's were of the IBM compatible type. These were the DOS days and hard disks (if you had one) had a capacity for storing 40 Mbytes. Floppy disks were 5.25" and could hold 360 Kbytes. CPU speeds were 20 MHz for a top-of-the-range model.

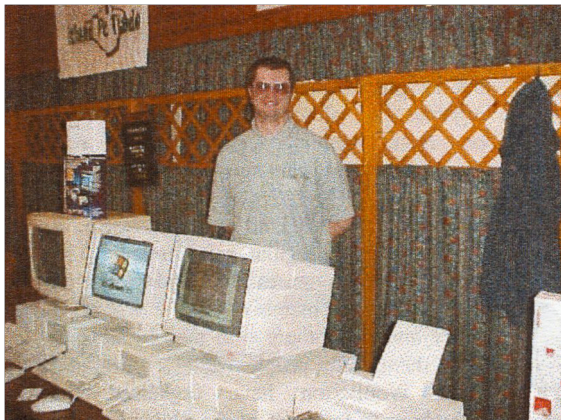
It was intended from the start to have a Journal, also called a Magazine but it was initially issued quarterly. Jonathan Burt was the editor and he did a fine job using DOS text processing software. The first edition was A4 size and had 14 pages. Interestingly enough, the second edition, published for the summer of 1990 was A5 format as it is today, though that size did not last as the autumn edition for that year was back to A4 format with fewer pages.

A constitution was drawn up as early as 1989. In those days you had to be a person of "good standing" to be eligible as a member and there were elaborate rules about how members could be expelled if they were to bring the "Club into disrepute, disgrace or otherwise behave in a manner which is considered harmful or injurious to the Club". The constitution ran to several pages. It wasn't until 1997 that the constitution was rewritten and condensed to one page of A4.

During the first year or two Roger Skidmore did a fine job as Secretary issuing monthly newsletters. These were in addition to the Journal and gave up-to-date information on events with many tips and interesting articles.

Meetings continued at Brading until September 1990 when we moved to the more central location in Newport at The Riverside Centre where we have remained until this day. That first year at the Riverside we also held our first Annual Show,





though there were few commercial stalls on that occasion, the idea being for members to show off their own computers, their hobbies and software. Some members say there was a Show also in 1989; if so, the 1990 event should be classified as the second, but this is open to dispute.

I joined the club in September 1990 and joined the Committee at the AGM that year. The Committee has always met on the second Wednesday of every month and in those days we met in Roger's home in Newport. Roger was still Secretary and he would write up the minutes on his computer as they happened so that by the end of the meeting we could all take home a printed copy of the minutes!

Material for the Journal tailed off somewhat in 1991 and Jonathan found it more difficult to produce a regular edition. That was when I volunteered to produce a regular monthly magazine/journal that would substitute for the Secretary's notes. The Secretary's notes, I should add, had by this time become more professional as Roger started to use Timeworks version 1.2. This paved the way to the birth of Hot Key, which I named. The first edition came out for October 1991. The first few editions were written by me and sent to Roger to add his notes and produce the finished layout and artwork using Timeworks but later I bought my own copy of Timeworks and produced it all. I included a puzzle corner right from the first edition. The first puzzle was actually the solution to a puzzle and one had to compose the puzzle! But prizes for puzzle answers were not introduced until June 1993.

If you work it out, if no month had been missed, the April 2000 edition should be number 103 so three months have been missed. Looking back through my archives I find that there was no issue for some reason in September 1992 and in October

and November 1994 the editor's computer had a major breakdown, though in December that year two editions came out to make up for it; an extra Christmas edition appeared in addition to the regular December issue. There was a further problem in late 1995. But that is not a bad record; nearly nine years of almost regular monthly editions.

We have had four editors during that time. I, David Broughton, was at the helm to start with, producing editions 1 to 19 (up to May 1993). Then Dennis Linzmaier 'took over. Dennis was then the Membership Secretary and Roger was Chairman. Roger thought Dennis would make a better editor and I would make a better Membership Secretary so he got us to swap jobs. Dennis remained editor until Peter Lovely took over in December 1996. All editors have changed the front cover design, as is their privilege, so each editor has his own distinctive look. Peter produced a kind of perspective look with the letters "Hot Key". Peter was editor for over two years when Brian Sexton took over in January 1998. Brian changed the front cover again and introduced colour, first as a cover sheet and later for all sheets. Many more photographs were also introduced with gradually improving quality of reproduction. Brian is the current editor and he has set a high quality that his successor will find hard to equal.

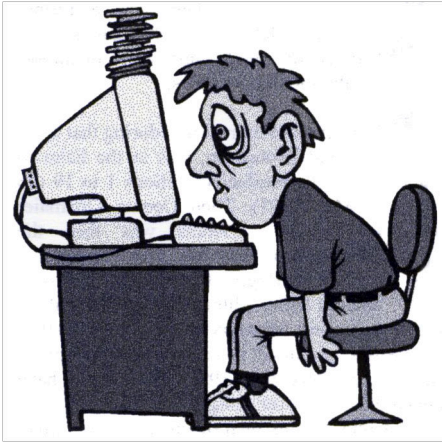
The early editions of Hot Key were printed by photocopying. Biltmore, the Newport Printers were used for many years and helped to raise standards of reproduction, but when The Riverside Centre obtained their own printing equipment, we found they were more economical. Brian now does all the printing his own Epson colour printer and the club's Brother laser printer.

Whilst the printing quality has improved, so also has the software for desk top publishing. Whilst I used Timeworks, Denny used Pageplus 2. Peter used "a variety of software" and left the matter undefined. Brian now uses Microsoft Publisher 2000.

Software for members on floppy disks was started as early as 1990. Jonathan Burt put these together on 5.25" 360 K floppies. The 3.5" standard floppies had yet to become popular and it was all DOS software in those days. The first editions of disks were not given away free but cost 50p each to members. For the last five years the Hot Key has produced a cover disk (3.5") three times a year for no charge at all.

Continued on page 10

With the regular issue of Hot Key Cover Disks, it became possible for me to produce puzzles in the form of a computer program



every four months and this has continued without a break since March 1994, with the intervening three months being printed puzzles in the magazine.

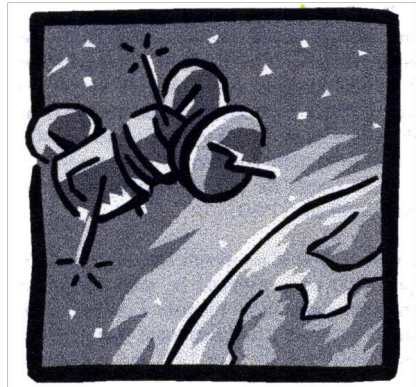
The regular Annual Show went commercial in 1991 when it was held at the Royal York Hotel in Ryde. Commercial firms were invited to take up stalls and a high degree of advertising brought in hundreds of visitors. Various sites have been tried over the years but most of the shows have been held at The Riverside Centre. The club has never set out to make a profit with the Shows, though more often than not a few hundred pounds have been left over to help club funds. The Shows always attract a few new members as well. Organising the Shows is a big Committee Job. Jonathan Burt had the job for two Shows when Steve Bogacz took on the yearly task. The last four Shows have been organised by Cliff Maidment (who would now like a break!).

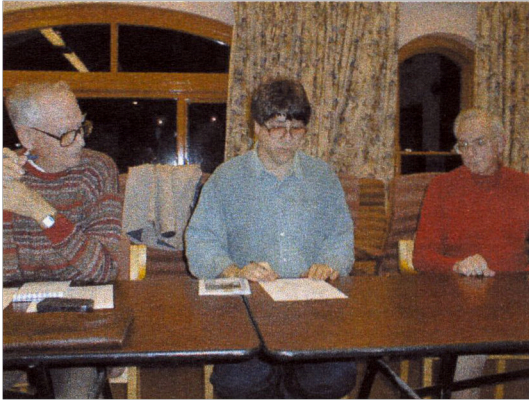
The main activity of the club has always been the talks (usually on the first Wednesday of the month), discussions and demonstrations of the latest hardware and software. The third Wednesdays of the month are more informal: priority is given

to answering questions. A need is often expressed to provide instructional courses but in general this has been left to other organisations, although a series of tutorials on Basic language programming was provided several years ago.

In a review of this kind one must not omit mention of the regular refreshments. The coffee break is an essential part of club meetings where members can have a good natter and find others who may be able to help them with problems. Dorothy and Peter Woollerton have organised the refreshments for most of the club's history, which has been most valuable to the club. And now, a cup of coffee and a chocolate biscuit is free, paid for from the meeting entrance fee of £1.

Recent developments in the club have been the roaming Road Shows, the disability group and Internet connectivity. The Road Shows provide publicity for the club and help to engage the public in personal computing matters, offering help and advice by hiring local halls on the Island. The disability group, called Computability, aims to help the disabled use computers to enhance their lives. Already many persons on the Island have been loaned equipment and given personal tuition on its use, organised through Helen Edom, the computers having been donated by members and local firms. A web site (<http://www.ddina.demon.co.uk/iwpcug/disy/>) has been set up giving a wide range of resource information.





reader, the monthly puzzles, Web Site manager and a role in the Computability section. *[David has now rejoined the Committee -- Ed.]*

The membership has continued to rise and the club's bank balance has improved in health over the years. We now have 100 members and I'm glad to see many more women members in the club, which is something the Committee has been trying to promote for years without success.

New Committee Members are always welcome to take over some of the management jobs. I have now retired from the Committee, having been Hot Key Editor, Membership Secretary and then Treasurer for four years. But I continue to play many parts with the occasional talk, Hot Key proof

If I have omitted any names from this rather scattered brief history of the club, I apologise. Readers are invited to send letters to the editor to elaborate on other aspects of the club's history and to correct any errors here. I must thank Bill Maden for letting me examine his archives of old club papers.

IN SYMPATHY

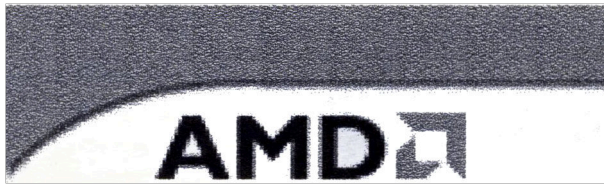


GLADYS BARKER

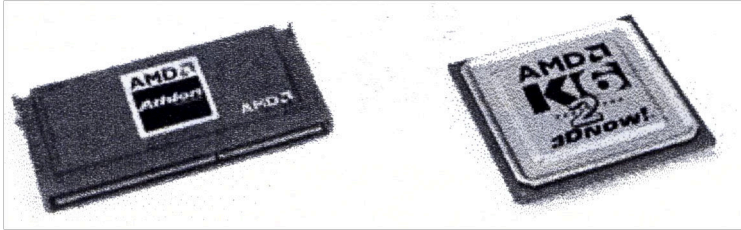
It is with deep regret that the club has been informed of the death of Gladys Barker, an Associate member of our club and spouse of William Barker. She died on the 11th. of March. Our sympathies go out to Bill and his family.

LARRY COALSTON

Larry Coalston, of Bembridge, who used to be a member of the club and came along to the visit to Bletchley Park, has died. Bert Bareham, who was a close friend of his, has informed us of this sad news. Bert has just returned from a month's visit to Australia and was only told when he got back. Larry was a member of the local Radio Ham society and one of its founder members. Many years ago, Larry started off the Radio Society of Great Britain in Ealing, West London



AMD chips and Windows 95



With many people now upgrading their computers a decision has to be made on whose CPU to choose. Intel with their Pentiums' IT & III or AMD with their K6s II & III or The Athlons. (Cyrix hasn't really kept up with the pace of these two).

Editor's Note:

Cyrix is back with a new budget processor.

VIA, who bought out Cyrix, has launched the Cyrix III processor, formerly code-named Joshua. The VIA Cyrix III processor is a Celeron-compatible Socket 370 processor with an integrated 64Kb L1 cache and 256 L2 cache.

It is manufactured using a 0.18 micron process. Clock speeds will be in the 433 to 533 MHz range and it can also use AMD's 3DNow! instruction set.

Prices have yet to be confirmed but it is likely that the chip will retail for around £50.

Our thanks to PC Plus for this information

Which one to choose is personal preference as they are both good reliable chips although the AMD K6s may be slightly faster and cheaper. But then another factor to bear in mind is that any AMD K6 chip faster than 300MHz is not compatible with Windows 95. That is not to say it won't work - just that it wont work without a patch from AMD or Microsoft.

An obvious solution would be to upgrade to Windows 98 as well while you are upgrading your computer but that would cost around another £60 (*suddenly AMD might not be cheaper*).

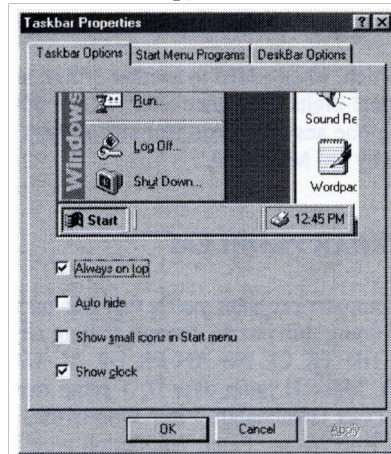
I mention this fact because quite a few people now have rung me with exactly this problem and it doesn't seem to be mentioned anywhere although both AMD & Microsoft have been aware of it for some time. As the slowest CPU from AMD is now the 450MHz I think you should be told at the time of purchase or at least be supplied the patch with the chip.

I am reliably informed that the patch works well although personally I would favour the upgrade to Windows 98

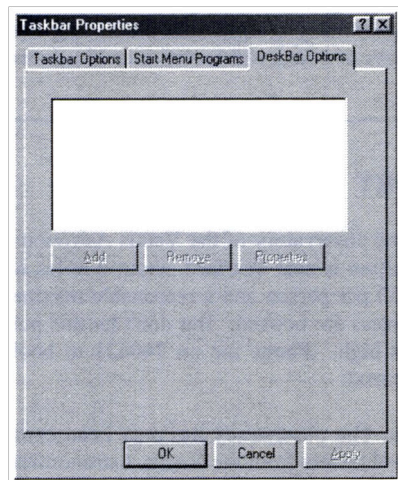
Dennis Linzmaier

What is the Deskbar?

An intriguing item called the Deskbar is puzzling me! What is it? What does it do? (or more likely what was it supposed to do?) We know about the “Taskbar!” The Taskbar runs along the bottom of the screen (by default, but you could set it along the sides or top) but where was the Deskbar supposed to go?



Pardon me, “You’ve never heard of the Deskbar?” Well, hold down the Ctrl key while you click the “Start” button, move up to “Settings”, then across to “Taskbar & Start menu”. The pop-up box now contains an extra tab for “Deskbar”.



Selecting this tab offers no help as there are no items to modify. So what was this option for? It was not available in “Windows 95” so therefore it must have been designed for “Windows 98”. Has it been completed for “Windows 2000”?

It’s a mystery to me, any ideas???

Dennis Linzmaier



Prize Puzzle for April 2000

by David Broughton.



Can you find a 3-digit number which, when added to another 3-digit number, produces a 4-digit number with all ten decimal digits used once only? None of the numbers may have a leading zero. There is more than one answer. Send just one of them to me, David Broughton (see page 3 for address) to arrive by 3rd May 2000.

ANSWER TO THE CRACKBAR PROBLEM

I received eight answers to the computer program puzzle that was on the February Cover Disk. There are thousands of ways of doing this puzzle, though finding any one of them can prove quite difficult. Here is one: B HD TK CE NF AN PR UP AL UA XU HT XC HX. You interpret this as "Remove peg B, Make H jump over D, T jump over K", etc. Solvers were Dennis Linzmaier, Colin Boon, Peter Greenhalgh, Peter Woollerton, Dorothy Woollerton, Ian Moth, Ken Cameron and Clem Robertson. Peter Woollerton won the draw and a £5 book token. This was a fine turnout. I thought at first that I had set a problem that was too difficult so it was nice to have as many as eight solvers. Well done.

As a point of interest, I wrote a program to enumerate every possible solution. The total was 438984. Of course, this includes many symmetries. Removing equivalent solutions that are simply rotations or mirror images of others still leaves over 131 thousand.

VISIT TO OBSERVATORY

A visit has been arranged to the observatory of the Vectis Astronomical Society on Thursday, 13 April at 7.30 pm. The location is near Winford, about 2 miles west of Sandown (see map on page 15). The price is £1.50 per person and a reasonable maximum is 20 persons. At the time of writing, 17 of these places are booked. But don't let this put you off as a second visit can be arranged if demand is high. Phone me on 740421 to book a place on this visit or reserve yourself a place on the next.

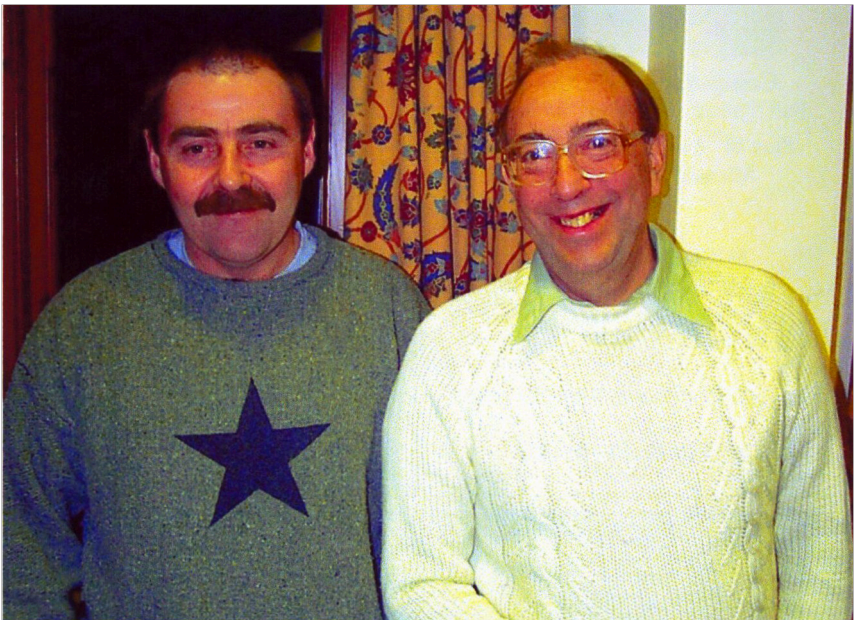
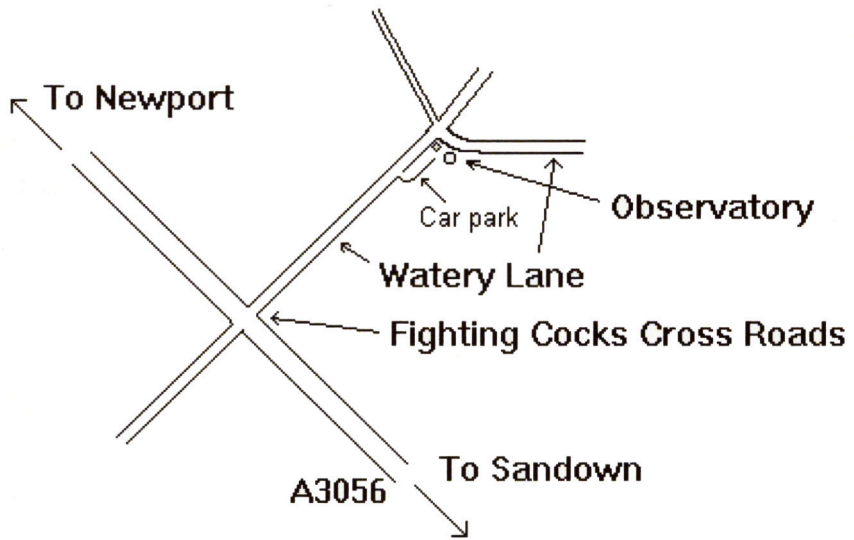
Some background information: The observatory has only been completed and opened within the last year, built mainly by volunteers from the Vectis Astronomical Society. Computers are used for the CCD imaging processes and some of these could be demonstrated on the night. After sunset, if the sky is clear, some visual observing may be possible.

The names of persons on my list can be seen on the web site. (Go to <http://www.ddina.demon.co.uk/iwpcug/> and click on:- Latest News | Visit to Observatory).

David Broughton

Vectis Astronomical Society Observatory

Map ref. SZ 554842



John Watson and David Carpenter at a recent meeting

MEMBERS NOTICE BOARD

FOR SALE

Desktop Computer

Pentium 166
with 32Mb RAM, 2Gb Hard Drive
plus soundcard, keyboard and mouse.

£155 (incl. Vat)

Extra - 15" Monitor - **£45**

Contact: Dennis Parkes

Tel: #####

FOR SALE

STAR Wintype 4000

GDI Laser Printer

(Software & Manuals available)

Needs toner cartridge
£20

Contact:

Roger Skidmore

#####

FOR SALE

14 inch monitor,
SVGA, excellent picture
£50

Contact: Tim Bateman

#####

tim@*****.*****.co.uk

FOR SALE

Word 97 with manual

£30 o.n.o.

L & H voice recognition software

Plus boxed without microphone

£10.00

L & H software (use with Word 97)

Advanced with desktop microphone

Can be used in any application

£30

(All the above compatible with
Windows 95/98 and NT)

Contact:

Andy

Tel: #####

Computer - 486SX25

Full System with Windows 3.1

Plus 14" colour monitor and

Microsoft Works 2.0

£50

SCSI Hard Drive

1Gb- **£20**

Quad Speed CD ROM - £10

Windows 95 CD/How & Why CD - **£15**

Contact: Roy Hollis - 611433

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