

geoNEWS the Journal of geoCLUB

Issue 82

June 1998



Editor's Comments

I guess the first thing you will notice with this issue is the missing Library Review, I think

it is the first time in almost 7 years that Page 2 has not been taken up by this the most regular of regular's. The reason is that Sharon has found it impossible to continue to run the library due to pressure of work and other commitments and has not had time to write a June Review. As of the date you receive this issue please DO NOT send any more disk orders or inquiries to Sharon has she will not be able to process them. ALL disk orders and inquiries should be sent to me for the time being at least. This applies only to the UK of course, Oz members still have their orders filled by Peter Hunt, I would however beg their patience as there may be some delay with recent geoClub hopefully we will have it all sorted by July.

As you will see from page 8 the April geoClub Web Page statistics show still continued interest from across the world, this does create a number of membership request however many are put off by the higher subscription rates for overseas members due entirely to high postal charges. This of course was the reason Peter formed our Oz branch geOzClub from day one.

Pages 11 and 12 contain excellent graphics by two of the most prolific Geos artists known to man, namely Peter McGuinn of New Zealand and Gordon Turrell of Australia they both continue to come up with some brilliant work. Both these sets of graphics and the ones that will be featured over the next few issues of geoNews will all be available on geoClub library disks in due course.

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M43 6FS

Happy Geos-in, see you all in July Frank

PAGE 1

Don's Digest



by Don McManamey

As I sit here to share my thoughts once again, I am concerned that some will misunderstand what I am trying to say. Let me start then with the follow-

ing statement: I love my Commodore 128. I have no intention of getting rid of it nor do I plan to stop using it. I think it is wonderful that there are companies like CMD who still support us with such fine things as the RAM-Link. I am also pleased that people like Moe are willing to show how these things work. If you had been to the last meeting, which most of our members were not, you would know that Moe gave a demo of the RAMLink by CMD. In part, this is a review of the RAMLink based upon that demo.

I really did not know what a RAMLink was before the meeting. I guess I should have known because I had seen Dale's, but somehow I was under the impression it was a link between the computer and a ram expander. In part, that is correct. I thought for whatever reason that you had to have both. Since they are not cheap, I wondered why people bought them.

(Don's Digest is Continued on page 4) Don's Digest (continued from page 3)

The RAMLink has the capability of being your ram expander with several advantages. One is that you do not have to unplug it in order to plug in things such as game cartridges where the ram expanders I've seen had to be removed to use other cartridges. Second, the RAMLink is expandable. While it does have a maximum amount of memory that you can put in it, the capacity is enormous for a Commodore. Third, there is a battery back-up available. One can use the RAMLink as you would a disk drive or even better, a hard drive. The battery back-up means that data is not lost when power is turned off, as we all know is the case with programs in the computer. Forth, it comes with a nice array of software to support everything. Many tasks would be difficult at best and perhaps impossible without this software. Among the many things you can do is create what the computer thinks is a 1541, 1571, or 1581 disk drive. You could store heavily protected games on one of these --phantom" disks and the load would be almost instantaneous. As I see it this is probably the only real advantage over a hard drive.

CMD does make controllers (interfaces) for SCSI (usually called scuzzy) drives. This interface comes with

one drive and I've seen used hard drives for as little as twenty dollars. I should say here that the RAMLink I saw also had JiffyDOS. I don't remember if it was standard equipment. [Editor's note: Yes, JiffyDOS is built into every RAMLink]

The RAMLink has quite a number of commands which allow you to do things such as make partitions which act like another drive. Then there are commands for calling up that drive or changing to another drive. This is where I think CMD fell down. In watching Moe move (quite smoothly) from one thing to another one is reminded of running an IBM before Windows or perhaps using CPM on a Commodore 128. I don't think most people want to learn all those new commands. It is true that you can use a cheat sheet but why? Most of us --Die-Hard" users in the club have gone to IBM or Mac as a second computer. Here we simply choose from a menu of choices to create a new folder and there it is. To put something in it we just drag it there. To load it we just click on it. To change drives we click on it. Does this sound familiar from somewhere? Of course it does. Mac OS and MS Windows both got their start in the same way: Copying and improving on GEOS.

Now I hate to go over the ground we covered in a past issue where several of us talked about our --dream machines" but do you realize that GEOS is owned by the people who make the Yes, both are CMD products. RAMLink? Why, when they spent all that time and money building the RAMLink and writing the operating system for it did they not also include GEOS on a chip and do these things within this environment? Even if they didn't want to operate within GEOS they could have had a single command to call up a menu where you simply choose what you want to do. That is just one command. I say again, one command. CMD has given us the power of a PC and all the headaches. To me that is one step backwards. Don't get me wrong. I wish CMD well just as I do all Commodore users. I just think they could have done better.

(This article is reproduced by kind permission of the author Dale Lutes who also happens to be the editor, of the original source, ZERO PAGE the monthly newsletter of Commodore Users of Witchita Kansas. For which we thank them very much indeed, lets hope we can continue this exchange).

Rear View Mirror

by Moe Shouse

I'll go back exactly ten years to October 1987, Ahoy! magazine issue #46. What I found was a review by Morton Kevelson about Basic 8.0. Many different companies besides Commodore made software and hardware for the Commodore 8-bit machines. But this operating system offers a lot more than most. It should have gone over well, but instead it's just another forgotten system.

When the 128 came out, it offered more bang for the buck than any other eight bit machine. One thing it had that showed a lot of potential was the 80-column screen. But in their infinite wisdom. Commodore made the control of 80-column very hard: It can only be controlled through two memory addresses \$d600 and \$d601. It's like building a ship in a bottle. You have lots of room, only after you go through a much smaller space. But where there's a will there's a way! That's what Basic 8.0 is all about. It's not just a program but an operating system. It adds about 48 commands. All use the @ as a prefix. The paint program is simply called basic paint. But don't let the name trick you. This is a very powerful program. It does boxes, circles, polygons, solids, and pattern fills. And it will automatically draw 3-D solid shapes such as spheres, cylinders, and toroids. Also cut, paste, zoom. Will use joystick or a 1531 mouse. The demos are great!

It also has a utility called Walrus Icon Operating System, it looks a lot like GEOS with boxes and icons and drive icons. But it's not meant to be a full-featured interface. It is only to show what can be done with Basic 8.0.

The one draw back is that to get color you must have the 64K video RAM chips. A lot of the article talks about screen colors, pixel sizes, bit map sizes, and so on. Of course all of that kind of stuff goes right over my head. But it does warn you about one chip, the 4164, is not the one to use. It is referenced in the Commodore 128 Programmers Reference Guide. The only reason for the inclusion in the official Commodore document is that the chip that does work, the 4464, was not yet available.

One last thing: This system came on disk or a ROM chip, that you put in the empty ROM socket found on every C=128. To use the ROM chip you just hold down the CONTROL key on power up and it loads into the regular memory of the C=128. It does not run out off the ROM chip. Or you load it off the disk. Either way the programming code is the same.

I think this system should have really allowed the C=128 to do some great things, but somehow it just didn't catch on. Maybe someone could still make this system work. After all, this is a basic system made so the user could write their own software, it does have a lot of potential.

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FOR SALE

One copy of Nate Feidler's geoCANVAS, 1 disk each. 5 quid including P&P.

One copy of CMD Perfect Print LQ, 6 disks, alas no manual. 10 quid each includin P&P.

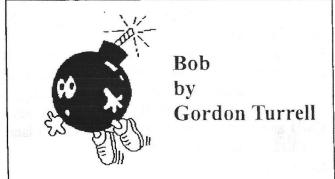
Geos V1.3 2 disks includes manual. 6 quid including P&P.

One KCS Power Cartridge with manual, this has a Power Toolkit, Power Monitor, Tape& Disk Turbo, Printertool, Power Reset and Total Backup facilities built in 15 quid including P&P

One copy of the Datasette Head Alignment Kit with instructions, gets those tapes that won't load going again. 5 quid including P&P

Contact

Jim Kindon 95, Darwen Crescent Laira Plymouth PL3 6DU



The Australian



by Jane M. Voskamp-Jones

Hello again everyone Long time no hear from The Genie. Hopefully, I was only gone from the scene, but not forgotten. Since I am consider myself free to write for who I please as a free agent again, I felt that Frank could use a hand to stir up some interest in the Commodore and GEOS especially.

Naturally there are quite a nunber of GEOSy things to delve into. I had a few columns prepared that I am quite happy to shift over to the GeoClub Newsletter

One thing I have noticed whilst reading through the issues of Commodore World Magazine so kindly loaned to me for reading by my friend Jeff Carey of Pubhc Domain Software (SA)), is that GEOS has bene going in directions that I had never thought of or heard of, nor can I now afford to keep up. I would love to buy SuperCPU from CMD and explore the super speed of GEOS in my RAM Units, but I just no longer have the funds, nor can I convince myself that I could make up the costs eventually Can't see it happening.

The closest I have got is to use SmartMouse - on its own a beautiful piece of work. I want to support CMD in their support of the Commodore 8-bit venture (they boldly go where no-one else will even go), as 1 really appreciate what they are doing but as I wipe up my drool, I know that I just can't I afford it

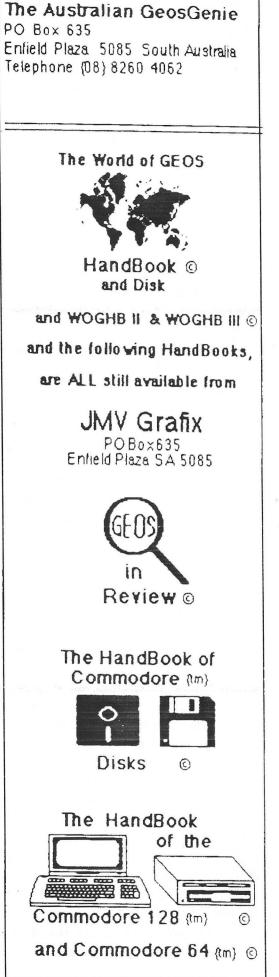
I have no doubt that many of you fellow GEOS users are in the same boat as me. But for those of us still using our original equipment, I can probably help out as always,

The articles that will follow have recently been published in Melbourne Commodore Computer Club's "M.C.C.C. Newsletter, and apparently they won't mind if I send some of the same articles (thank you kindly), slightly reformatted to suit of course, to the GeoClub for inclusion in the "GeoClub Newsletter'.

I have presented the page to Frank as a finished and printed geoPublish page, hoping that he might be able to use it

You an quite welcome to drop me a line and we'll have a yam Yes, I'm back on my feet again, a bit battered and maybe a bit worse for wear (since I becane very sick with Dystrophy in February 1996), but still keeping on keeping on Like me or hate , I'm back.....

So keep GEOSing, and most importantly, having fun with what we already have. There for you, in GEOS land.....



Save my 1541 Disks !!!

by Rick Youngman <wlbbs@ctaz.com>

This is a easy way to protect your 1541 disks from accidental overwrites, *squash files, and those nasty sticky tabs ;-)

Adding a Disk Write Protection Swtich to the C= 1541

I really wasn't going to write anything on the subject, but when I saw a suggestion in the usenet to use Rubber Cement !! to keep those little "sticker" "write protect" tabs in place on a floppy disk... well I have to jump in here, before everyone glues thier disks into the jackets using rubber cement.

Those little black strips we use and even the "high quality ?" foil ones that cover the "window/notch" on a floppy disk never have been worth a hoot. They fall off after age, make the disk hard to install and remove, and God forbid, if one falls off and gets sucked into the drives motor or scratches a drives head. (it happened to me... hence the "project") you don't want to think about the mess you will encounter.

 Adding a "disk write" protection switch to your 1541 drive is probably the easiest "hack" you can do to your C=ommodore equipment !! Even a shakey handed person with a 300 watt Weller soldering gun, should be able to do this with no problem.

How the "little stickers" work

The 1541's (as well as any floppy drive Ive ever seen) use an "electric eye" to enable the drive "brain" to write to a disk.

If the "eye" is BLOCKED (lil stickey things) the drive will NOT allow data to be written to the floppy. (thats why you have to notch the "flip" side of a disk to write to it)

If you pop the top off your 1541 that "electric eye" is right there in front of yer snozz. If you can't figgur out where it is... put a disk in and see where the notch lines up on the drive mechanism. (YUP !! its the thing with two wires coming off it !)... well actually there is one underneath it to.... but that won't matter. Consider one "eye" the passer, and the other (underneath) the reciever. So !!! all we have to do is "break" the connection to any wire going to the "eyes", and they CANT SEE THEMSELFS anymore !!! (just like a little sticky thing was in the way ;-)

No need to take the drive apart, but removing the big metal shield over the top of the circut board may make things easier.

Material List: 1 STSP Switch (basic on/of switch) solder, ect.

The "electic eyes" tie into the connector strips on the left hand side of the circut board. (connector P6 ... the long one to be exact)

	o-blue (bottom) o-brown (eye)
Connector P6	0
	0
	0
	0
	0
	o -red
	o -black
	0
	0
	o-orange (upper)
	o-purple (eye)
	0
	0

By snipping the the purple wire, and installing an on/off switch inline you have broken the connection between the upper and lower eyes and they can no longer see each other, and the drive "thinks" there is a write protect tab/sticker on the floppy, if the switch is "off". When the switch is on, writing to the disk and or formating is carried out normally.

Location of switch is unimportant, but installing it in the top housing with long enough wires to open the drive, is probably the easiest, and you wont have to dis-assemble any of the drives mechanics.

I used this hardware write protect on ALL my drives on the BBs, that did not need data updated to operate the BBs.... and slept very well, knowing there was NO-WAY for someone to sneak in and mess up my data base, if the switch was off ;-)

I hope this helps..... Id hate to see a bunch of rubber cemented disks and drives offered for paper weights. Feel free to pass this on or post it on your BBs or page.

BUT YOU CAN turn the switch on and off even if the drive is running, with no damage... i.e. you can leave the switch off all the time ... (smart...very smart) and have no fear that you will write something to the disk by mistake. (like your GEOS master disk or something) or format a program disk by mistake. If you DO NEED to save something to the disk, you can turn the switch on at any time, even in the middle of a program, and not lose any data. If you try to save something to disk with the switch in the off position, the drives LED light will blink rapidly, just like if there was a write protect tab on the disk. Turn the switch on, and you can now save information to the disk.

The Disk Tower

Constructed by Harald Llantermann

There are a lot of things we do have and there are sometimes things we don't, one of them is often money. The second we often miss as a computer (freak), is very often space, which more often results into complete chaos.

What is offered here is a space saving device which can help us. It is a 'tower' I made of wooden panels which are often used in kitchen furniture. You always can use something different of course, it depends whatever you have lying around of panels and a few laths.

The tower you can make as high as you want, for me : I stashed two 1571's, one 1581 and one FD2000 in it. If you are not so lucky to have all these goodies, then you simply leave out one ore more 'floors'.

There is more advantages to this concept : first of all the drives don't have to be changed of device number anymore, as they are simply switched off -, when you don't need them. For instance to me the 1571's are device 8 and 9, the 1581 is also an 8 and the FD2000 is a 9. 50 the combination can be 1571-8 f or starting a program and FD2000 (in 1581-mode) for a 9, and this simply by switching on the power switches I installed at the 'floor' compartment. As you can see, I left my mouse pad and mouse in it, also a disk notcher and a few other things as you wish.

As you maybe already noticed the power switch of the 128 is not very good after a few years, so by using the power switch on the ground floor and leaving the one on

the 128 'on', you don't wear this one out.

Electrically it is very simple, for every device you want to connect you need a switch, I used the illuminated ones, but that isn't necessary, you can use ordinary ones too, just work safely. The schematic is drawn on the next page. Every power switch of every device needs to be 'on'. And now there is no more tampering on the back-end of the drives or so for switching it on.

VERY IMPORTANT :

DON'T USE THE SMALL CARDBOARD PIECES WHICH BLOCKS THE DRIVES, IN-STEAD OF THIS USE AN OLD DISK BEFORE CLOSING THE DRI VE AND POWERING IT OFF,

YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT EVERYTIME YOU POWER ON A DISK STATION THE DRIVE TURNS AND THE CARDBOARD COULD DAMAGE THE DRIVE.

Every 'floor' is a 25 X 40 cm panel. Every space in between two panels is 10 cm which is needed for aeration and cooling, so you won't get trouble with heating up problems. Only the ground floor is much higher, as it contains the switches and it needs the space to put your hand in it to move the mouse 16 cm.

The sidepanel is 40 X (and then we need to calculate

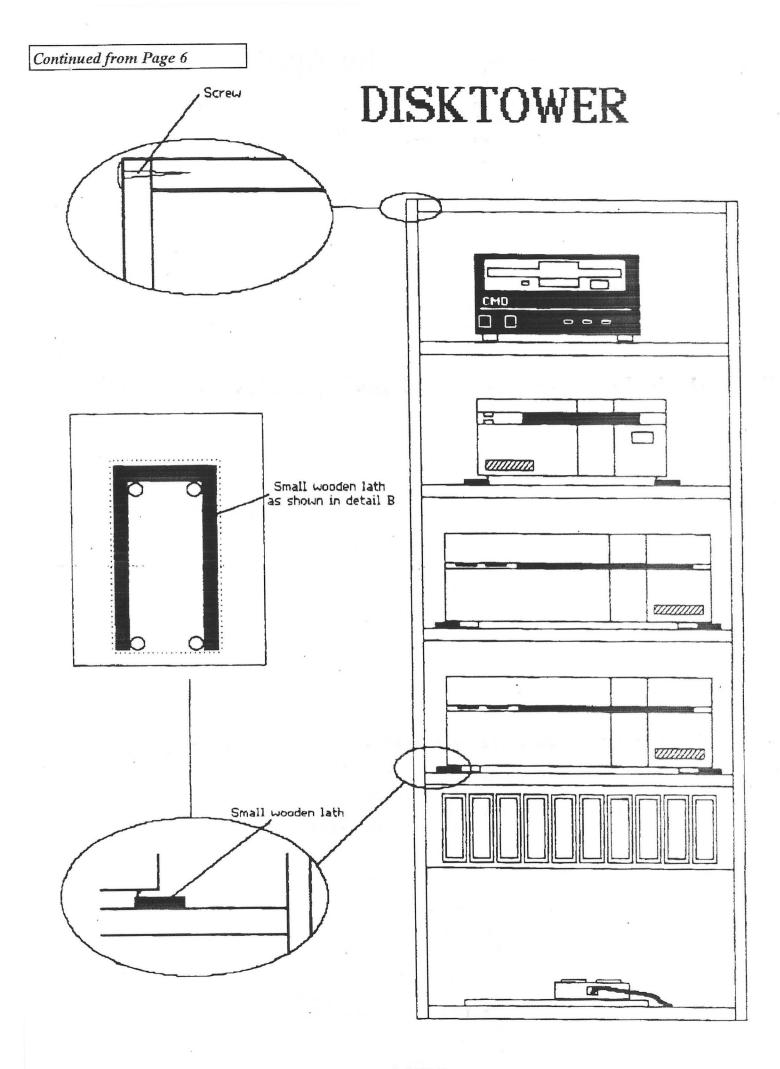
cm
cm
)cm
)cm
)cm

In my case I used a 18 mm panel thickness so the total comes to 40 X 67 cm.

Mounting things together is very easy, you simply drill holes in the sidepanels on one straight line, 3 screws of 3,5 cm length, and rather thin, about 4mm will do the job. The place to drill the holes should always be in the middle of the 'floor' panel. See detail A for this.

Note, whenever you use these kitchen furniture panels, they are a little bit slippery; every time you put a disk into the drive you would easily push the drive a little bit backwards, and as for aeration the back isn't closed, it would fall off. Therefore as seen in detail A, I made with a few wooden laths a 'fence' around the disk' legs', so the drive can't go backwards.

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geoClub Web Site Statistics for April

Printing all domains with at least 1 request for a page, sorted by number of page requests. Printing all requested subdomains with at least 1 request for a page.

pages :	#reqs :	kbytes :	domain
361 : 360 :	361 : 360 :		
319 :	319 :		: [unresolved numerical addresses]
204 ;	204 :		
143 :	143 ;		
120 :	120 :		
1200	100		(65): (65): (213): com.au
			(18): (8): (67): edu.au
			(1): (1): (4): gov.au
			(36): (36): (134): net.au
58 :	58 :	215 :	: .edu (USA Educational)
46 :	46 :	170 :	: .nl (Netherlands)
34 :		126 :	: .dk (Denmark)
32 :			: .fr (France)
31 :	31 :		
30 :			
25 :			: .pl (Poland)
21 :			: .hu (Hungary)
21 :			: .org (Non-Profit Making Organisations)
19 :	19 :		. nz (New Zealand)
16 :			: .ch (Switzerland)
14 :	14 :		: .se (Sweden)
13 :			
12 ;			
12 :			-
12 :			
11 :	11 :		: .mx (Mexico)
9 :	9 :		: .ar (Argentina)
9 : 9 :	9 : 9 :		: .ie (Ireland) : .us (United States)
8:	8 :		: .no (Norway)
7 :	7 ;		: .es (Spain)
. 7 :	7	26	
6 :	6	22	
6 :	6 :	22	: .uy (Uruguay)
5 ;	5 :	18	
4 :	4 ;	: 15 :	
4 :	4		: .ru (Russian Federation)
4 :	4		: .tw (Taiwan)
3 ;	3	: 11 :	
3 :	3	: 11 :	: .gov (USA Government).
3 ;	3	: 11	: .gr (Greece)
3 :	3	: 11	: .il (Israel)
3 :	3	: 11 :	: .jp (Japan)
3:	3	: 11	: .si (Slovenia)
3 :	3	: 11 :	: .tr (Turkey)
3:	3	: 11	: .za (South Africa)
2 :	2	: 8	: .arpa (Old style Arpanet)
2:	2	: 7	: .do (Dominican Republic)
2 :	2	: 8	: .hk (Hong Kong)

This analysis was produced by analog2.11/Unix. Running time: 15 seconds.

Please note: if you should publish these statistics in a newsletter, please use a mono-spaced font, such as Courier New to preserve formatting.

Gaelyne R. Gasson VideoCam Services Web Administrator http://videocam.net.au/vcswww/ videocam@videocam.net.au

Predictions from the Experts

(Author Unknown)

But what... is it good for?"

Engineer at the Advanced Computing Systems Division of IBM, 1968, commenting on the microchip.

Everything that can be invented has been invented."

Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899

Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons."

Popular Mechanics, 1949

I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."

Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943

I have traveled the length and breadth of this country and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won't last out the year."

The editor in charge of business books for Prentice Hall, 1957

There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."

Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corporation, 1977

So we went to Atari and said, -Hey, we've got this amazing thing, even built with some of your parts, and what do you think about funding us? Or we'll give it to you. We just want to do it. Pay our salary, we'll come work for you.' And they said, -No.' So then we went to Hewlett-Packard, and they said, -Hey, we don't need you. You haven't got through college yet.' "

Apple Computer Inc. co-founder Steve Jobs on attempts to get Atari and HP interested in his and Steve Wozniak's personal computer.

640K ought to be enough for anybody." Bill Gates, 1981

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Single Reflections Single Keflections

Our age is but the measure of the years that have passed by-The trouble is that age give rise to thoughts that make you sigh;

Remembering all those wonderous years

when you were young and free Before yourdreams were manifest with joy - for all to see.

Or - in your haste to 'make the grade',

you 'stamble in your tracks' forsaking good advice from Mum those proven 'homespun' facts.

With trial and error we all learn the 'error of our ways', The pitfalls there awaiting those whose wilfulness betrays;

Unwillingness to take advice from Parents and the wise -The history of our Pioneers, who'slaved' to win their prize.

Of course there were those carefree days through learning years at school When all our 'wants' came to us from Parent's money pool'!

Bereft of need to 'count the cost' or earn the 'bread' to pay, We sailed forth in 'brand marked' clothes

and kept our fears at bay.

In later years how things have changed -

how different is our lives; Gone are the carefree days of fun instead - men think of wives; Whilst single girls - no longer young

and those who've lost their man -Now contemplate a new outlook and join another Clan.

Once 'single bliss' was joyous times

embracing youth and thrills -But now - the thrills of yesteryear are 'scorched' with age and Bills.

and - sad to say there's loneliness through loss of someone dear, The pillar of your heart's desire or someone - not so near.

Regardless of life's trials and joys, the 'buck stops' square with you; ûdulthood has its blessed perks but hard decisions too;

Thus - as we measure how we've fared

and where we 'made the blue' , Remember there are many more who think the same as you.

But - why dwell on what might have been -

the future is still 'sweet'

There's love for all who seek to find -

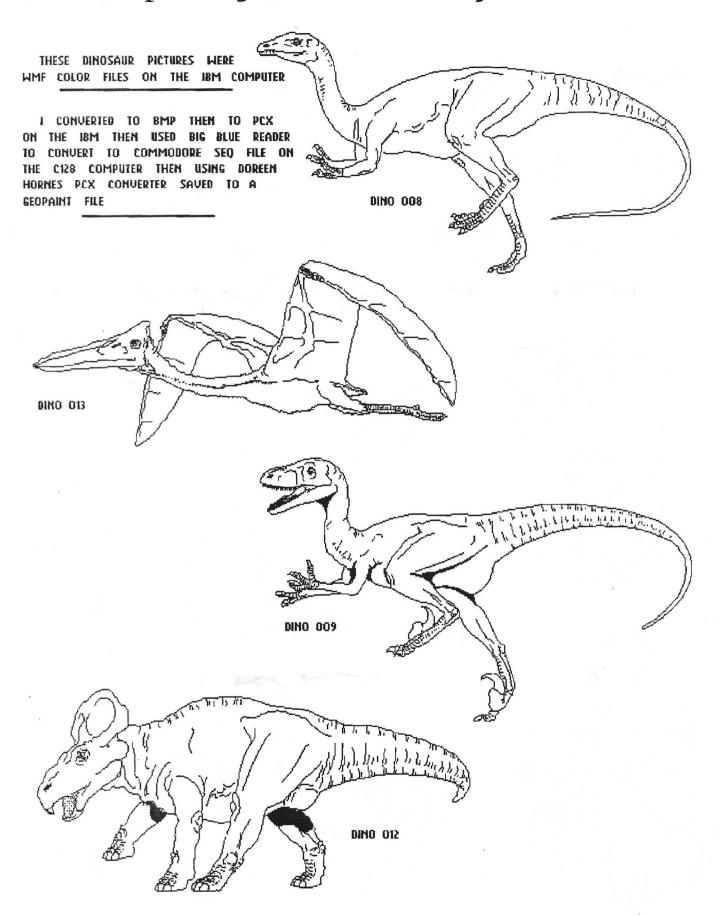
the 'Mate' - they'd like to meet!

alf Goding Palm Beach NSW 10th January 1998

Graphics by Peter McGuinn of New Zealand



Graphics by Gordon Turrall of Australia



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