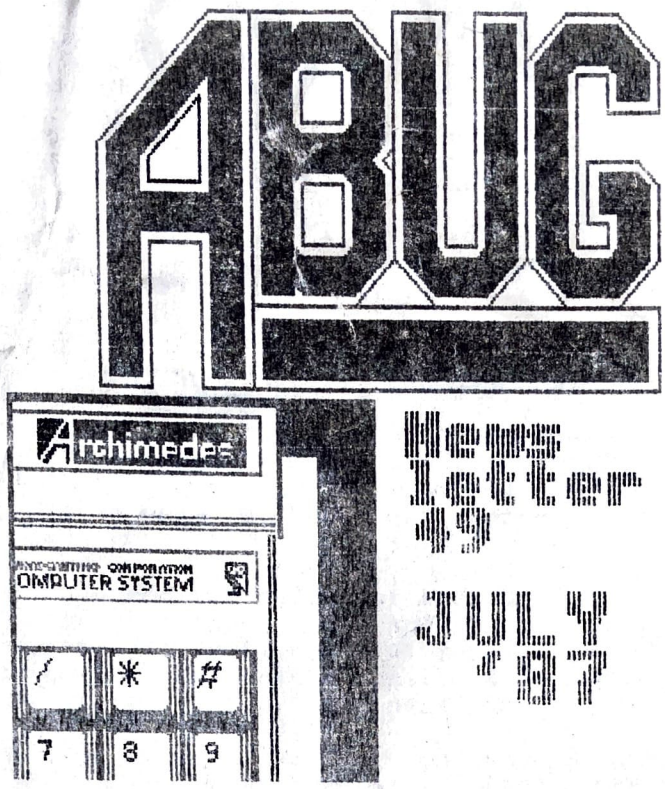

ABUG #49 JULY 1987

CONTENTS

Diary	1
Eukeka! It's Archimedes	1
Acorn User Show	2
ABUG Library	2
What's in the Mags?	3
Computer Repairs	4
Cover Credits	4
For Sale	4

DIARY

The next few meetings will be held on:

5 August
19 August
2 September
16 September

All meetings are held at the Sheffield Trades and Labour Club, Duke Street.

Please note that there is a three week gap until our next meeting on 5th August.

EUREKA! IT'S ARCHIMEDES!

So, as predicted in our last issue, Acorn have introduced their new RISC-based machine. There are full descriptions of it in all the Beeb magazines, with reviews promised for next month, so all I'm going to do here is give a brief description of some of its main features.

Acorn have announced two series of machines, the A300 and A400, with two models in each. The A300 series carry the BBC badge, and are available in small quantities now, and will go on general sale in September. The more expensive A400 series will carry the Acorn badge, and will go on sale next year.

The A300 series have 32-bit processors, 512K of ROM, which includes an operating system called Arthur (why have they given it a silly name?) and BBC BASIC V. There are 18 screen modes, plus three extra for use with multi-synch monitors, with a choice of up to 256 colours from a palette of 4096. Because there is no dedicated teletext chip, Mode 7 occupies 80K, rather than the 1K it takes in the earlier models! Text can be displayed up to 132 columns wide.

Sound enthusiasts have eight "voices" to play with, which can be spread across a stereo 'sound stage' from far left to far right. There is provision for stereo headphones to be connected, and also an interface for outputting to a hifi, although there is only a single internal speaker.

On the hardware side, Acorn have settled on 3.5 inch drives, as fitted to the Compact (and the new IBM PS/2). The 300 series have a single 1Mbyte floppy drive, with room for another to be fitted inside the case (for £144 in VAT). A 20 Mbyte Winchester can also be fitted for an extra £574 inc VAT. The keyboard is considerably larger than earlier BBC models (103 keys) and a three-button mouse is included in the package.

The two machines are designated the 305 and 310, with the final two figures indicating the amount of ram. The 310 has 1.0Mbytes, with the 305 having 'only' 0.5Mbytes, but this can be upgraded to the full 1M for an extra £102 inc VAT.

Arthur has a GEM-like interface called Desktop, manipulated with the mouse, and including windows. Although the machine does not allow true multitasking, the speed is such that it can appear to be doing several things at once. Another new feature is a system of 'podules', two of which can be fitted internally at any one time, to provide additional features. The backplane to allow this to be done costs £29 extra inc VAT. External podules are also allowed, so watch for the add-on boxes to appear. Two podules to be released shortly are a MIDI interface and a ROM extension. In the pipeline are a modem and an MS-DOS co-processor. Acorn have produced a booklet detailing software available now or shortly for the new machines.

The BBC has confirmed that it is to continue its association with Acorn, which has brought complaints from such as Research Machines (makers of the Nimbus). BBC Soft has already announced two titles for the Archimedes, one a comms package and the other a word processor. Both will be released later this year.

Prices range from £920 for the 305 without monitor through £1235 for the 310 with colour monitor, to £1810 for a 310 with colour monitor and Winchester 20Mbyte hard disc. These prices include VAT - note that the £799 which Acorn quotes in its advertisements excludes VAT.

Dave Brown

ACORN USER SHOW

The 1987 Acorn User Show is being held at the Barbican in London from 24 - 26 July, where the Archimedes is sure to be the star attraction.

ABUG LIBRARY

Below is the present state of the Library:

BOOKS (Lending fee: £1)

Advanced User Guide	Bray, Dickens & Holmes
Advanced Graphics	Angell & Jones
Assembly Language	Ian Birnbaum
Forth on the BBC Microcomputer	Richard de Grandis-Harrison
Functional Forth for the BBC computer	Boris Allan
Graphic Art for the BBC computer	Boris Allan
Making Music on the BBC Computer	Ian Waugh
Disk Systems for the BBC Micro	Ian Sinclair
Interfacing the BBC Microcomputer	Colin Opie
Guide to the BBC Rom	Don Thomasson
Advanced Sideways RAM User Guide	Bruce Smith
Service Manual	Acorn
Using Wordwise Plus (with disc)	Paul Beverley
Wordwise Plus Programming Ideas (with disc)	Paul Beverley

SOFTWARE (Lending fee: £1)

Masterfile (40 track disc with instructions)	Beebug
Spellcheck (2 x 80 track discs with instructions)	Beebug
3D Graphics Development System (2-40track discs + manual)	Glentop
Graphito (cassette + manual)	Addison-Wesley
Solidisk Volumes 1-10 (4 x 80 track discs)	Solidisk
Multifile (cassette)	Bug-byte

MAGAZINE SOFTWARE (Lending fee: 50p or 25p if not taken away)

Micro User Cassettes: Vol.1 No.2, Vol.3 No.4 to Vol.4 No.2
Discs: Vol.2 Nos.11 & 12, Vol.3 No.5 to Vol.4 No.7
(we no longer subscribe to Micro User software)

Acorn User Cassettes: Graphics, July, Aug, & Sept '85
Discs: Graphics, Gallery, from July '85 to date

Beebug Cassettes: from Vol.2 No.10 to date (except Vol.3/8&9)
Discs: from Vol.4 No.2 to date

EF

Mike Robinson (The Librarian)

WHAT'S IN THE MAGS?

A & B COMPUTING, August 1987, Vol 4, #8, 100pp, £1.50

Features:
Archimedes / Data transmission / Packages for home office / Learning Logo / Variable structures in Pascal

Programs:
Spell Master utilities for Wordwise Plus / Skywatcher 3 astronomy program

Reviews:
Acorn 'Co-Pro Adapter' / Music 4000 Keyboard / Barry Box / Arcade Games / Unistat II statistics software / Educational software for language teaching / Microbrush Graphics System / Electron Plus 5 / Printers under £300

THE MICRO USER, August 1987, Vol 5, #6, 140pp, £1.25

Features:
Archimedes / Online adventures / Midi / Writing a book / Using sideways ram for data storage / Adventure games, inc Snowball map pt 4 / Ceefax guide for July

Programs:
Survive game / Wallpaper estimator / Snapper upgrade / Adventure programming: accepting players' instructions / Program library / Mailing lists

Reviews:
Arcade games / Key educational database

ACORN USER, August 1987, #61, 162pp, £1.30

Features:
Archimedes / AU Show Guide / Music teaching / Multiply and divide in assembler / Making music / Uses of micros

Programs:
Text compression / Calendar / One line graphics programs / Multi-tasking in BASIC / View function key program

Reviews:
Games / Genie desktop program / ACP's Advanced Control Panel / Avon's Crashproof / KM's System Utility rom / Flight simulators

Dave Brown

COMPUTER REPAIRS

In the last issue we mentioned a Guardian report about Model B spares drying up after 1989. Acorn have written to The Micro User, calling this story 'utter rubbish'. They say that the Master contains all the customised components used in the Model B, and state that they will be available for at least five years after the Master is discontinued, 'and we don't know when that will be'. They told Micro User, 'As long as there is a demand for parts, we'll keep supplying them', and pointed out that they are still supplying spares for the Atom.

COVER

This month's cover was designed by Ian Brown.

FOR SALE

Oki Microline 80 dot matrix printer. 40/80/132 column printer with block teletext type graphics. Centronics standard interface. Friction or form feed. £75.

TRS 80 line UII (DMP100) 80 column dot matrix printer. Dot addressable graphics. £80.

LVL/Leasalink 40 track dual drive. No data or power leads. Will separate. £40 each or £70 for both.

Torch (CPN) Z80 second processor. 64K ram, Perfect Writer/Speller/Filer/Calc integrated software, BBC (Z80) Basic and manuals. £180 or will consider exchange for Music 5000 or Teletext Adapter.

For any of the above, contact Pete Frith on Sheffield 459165 (after 6pm).

Acorn graphic printer AP 100 A, in good condition, complete with manual and leads. £100 ono. Telephone Dronfield 416230 after 6pm.