CMPQwk Reader

The Premiere Microsoft Windows® Offline Mail Reader

Table of Contents

About the program

Offline mail was invented because a BBS has limited resources. Users don't like busy signals, and that's what you get when everybody reads and writes mail while connected to the system. With offline mail, the BBS uses a program (usually called a door) to "package" the mail for you in a format you can read on your own system, using a program called an "offline mail reader."

There are several different formats used to package mail for consumption off the BBS. One of the most popular---if not *the* most popular---is the QWK format. Once you've had the BBS prepare a QWK packet for you and you've downloaded it, you can read, reply, browse new files (if the system offers that feature) and examine news or bulletins without tying up the BBS phone line. When you're through with your mail, you can quickly upload your replies, and the mail door will process them and put them in the appropriate conference.

All of this will take much less time than if you did it online (few online editors are as good as those built in to even the most feeble offline mail readers), and the whole process will tie up the sysop's board for only a short while.

Offline mail helps the sysop keep his system available, and it improves the quality of the mail you send. You can take the time to compose a clear, concise message, and you also have the chance---while offline---to take back any snippy messages you've written, but after you thought it over, don't want to send.

CMPQwk was designed to be your tool for helping the sysop keep his system free so it can serve the maximum amount of users. Its most important purpose, though, is to make you look good by having nicely-formatted and well-thought-out mail coming from your end.

This software was conceived and created by Derek Backus, a self-taught programmer. He and his dedicated and hard-working beta testing team slaved away, squashing bugs, thinking up features, and otherwise doing everything possible to insure that *CMPQwk* was ready to go out into the world. We make only one request of you: if you evaluate this software and like it, tell your friends. If you *don't* like it, tell us!

Express setup should get you up and running

Generally, the default setup will work for everybody. Once you've told the setup program where to keep its working files, where you store your QWK and REP packets, and what packer you'd like to use (it must be in your path if you pick an external packer), you're ready to roll. Here are the nine simple steps you'll have to follow:

Unpack the program to a temporary directory. Be sure it's *not* the same directory where you want to install the program. If you want to use the optional spell-checker, unpack the file containing it into the *CMPQwk* directory AFTER the program is finished installing. The program will automatically detect that spell-checking is available and allow you to enable it in the Options dialogue.

Using File Manager or Program Manager's **F**ile, **R**un menu item, run the Setup.exe that came in the *CMPQwk* archive.

Once Setup is running, make sure it knows from what directory it is installing (it should know already). Press Enter once that's correct.

Type in where you want the program to install itself, including a drive letter and directory name, if you want something other than the defaults (C:\CMPQWK) and press Enter again.

Setup will ask you if you're converting from one of several mail readers. If you are, type the path to your mail reader if the displayed path isn't correct. This will allow you to use the same tagline, subject, and to list files. If you make a mistake, you won't get your taglines copied, but you can do that later if you refer to the help section Upgrading from a Mail Reader not Supported by CMPQwk.

Once the program is finished copying, you can delete the files you unpacked into the temporary directory. Keep the archive, though, as a backup.

Start CMPQwk by clicking on the icon it created in Program Manager for you (or by double-clicking CMPQWK.EXE inside a File Manager window). Under the **O**ptions Menu select Path Configuration, and then tell the program what unpacker/packer you want to use (be sure they're in your path if you use an external program). The internal packing and unpacking is the default, and should work for everybody. Type in the name of the drive and directory where you keep your QWK packets, and the drive and directory where you'd like to keep your REP packets.

Enter a drive letter where you want *CMPQwk* to create its WORK directory. **Important!** The drive---or drive and directory---MUST exist. If you want the program to create its work directory in R:\MAIL, for example, you must have a drive "R:" and a directory ALREADY THERE called MAIL. On a related issue, be sure a directory of that name doesn't already exist on that drive, or that some other program will try to use the same directory. *CMPQwk* will delete the contents of its work directory when it exits! Click on **O**K or press Enter.

You're finished, and you should be able to open the sample QWK file right away. It won't be in the usual directory, though, it'll be in the *CMPQWK* directory. If you select **F**ile, **O**pen, and then navigate with the Open File dialogue box, you'll find it easily enough. Double-click on the CMPQWK.QWK file to unpack it and begin using your new mail reader. If you follow the directions in the sample messages, you'll see how simple

the program is to use.

Try the program the way it comes out of the box first, *then* change things if you discover you'd like them done a little differently.   It shouldn't be work to set up software.   Our goal with *CMPQwk* was to make it easy.

How to read mail and create replies

Once CMPQwk is up and running, you can get a feel for it by opening the sample packet. Click on **F**ile, then **O**pen (or press Alt,F,O) to see a list of QWK packets.   If the sample isn't in the QWK directory, you can navigate by using the directory display box to pick a drive or directory.   Once you've found CMPQWK.QWK, if you double-click on it, the archiver you selected will open the packet and the Conference List window will present itself in the default position.

To read mail, just double-click on the conference you'd like or press Enter while the cursor bar is over it.   (Personal mail, if you have any, is always the first listed in the Conference list, unless you've created replies.   In that case, the replies conference will appear first.)   The Read window will appear in its default position.   If you want to reply to a message, just press "R" while the Read window is the "active" window, and the message header dialogue box will appear.   Pick a subject, a tagline, flag the message private if you want, and click on "**O**K" to begin editing your reply.

Once you've finished entering your text, Alt+**S** or clicking the **S**ave button will save the message (spell-checking it if you've enabled that feature) and put you back at the read window. If you want to send multiple copies of the same message to different users, just click on the Save **C**C button, and you'll be prompted for a list of users to whom you'd like to send a message.   Type in their names, and when you're finished, click on **O**K to continue.

Pressing the Spacebar will take you to the next message, or the next conference, if the current Read window message is the last one in the selected conference.

When you're through reading or creating replies, you can click on **F**ile, **C**lose (or Alt, F, C) and CMPQwk will prepare your REP packet for uploading.   If you're through with your mail for the day, you can select **F**ile, e**X**it (or Alt+X) and CmpQwk will create the REP packet before it exits.

More about advanced features (like spell-checking and the rubber stamp tool) later.

What the program is supposed to do

It's pretty simple, really: *CmpQwk* lets you open QWK packets, read the messages and other information in the packet, write and edit replies to your mail, and do it all without leaving the warm nest of Microsoft Windows®.   Generally speaking, it won't require clunky DOS shells. For most users running in Standard Mode, that means you can continue to use your Windows communications program while you do mail.

CmpQwk is full-featured and quite powerful.   You can read and reply to as many messages as memory will allow, browse through a complete index of every conference, check out the "new files" listings and messages in their native ANSI colors, and even store important messages in a powerful, yet simply-organized folder system.

What the program isn't supposed to do

It won't read mail that's not in QWK format (yet), it won't edit your system.ini or win.ini or do anything else but let you read and reply to BBS mail.   *CmpQwk* won't balance your checkbook or keep a record of all the people you've called this year to discuss the national budget, or track your recipe database, or anything like that.

It is just a mail reader, but we'd like to think that being a mail reader is good enough.

Important features you won't want to miss

There hasn't been a gusher of mail readers created for the Microsoft Windows® environment.   That's sad, because it's perfect for mail reading: you don't have to tie your system up while you do mail, you have superb control over how things look to you, the mouse is supported by the nature of the beast, and it's fairly easy to stuff the program with slick features because the environment allows them.   Well, maybe not *easy*...

CmpQwk is different from the other Windows mail readers in many ways.   Its internal packer/unpacker is fully PKzip and PKunzip 2.x compatible.   It's a full-featured (MDI) multiple-document-interface application.   That means you're not stuck in a single message.   If you want to jump back and grab some text you saw a few messages ago and paste it into your current reply, no sweat: hop to the index, find the other message, snag the material, and whip it into the clipboard.   Paste it into your message and continue.   *CmpQwk*'s goal is to never tie your hands while you're doing mail.

CmpQwk has plenty of user-configurable options.   There are many features you can set with the program, like font colors (so you can quickly see what material has been quoted) and display font (in case you don't like terminal font for some reason) to name two.

Unlike a simple single-document mail reader, *CmpQwk* lets you define positions for the *Read*, *Write*, *Index*, and *Conference list* windows.   You tell the program how you'd like it to look---it doesn't tell you.

CmpQwk should work right out of the box.   The defaults that come up when you first install it should be acceptable for just about everybody.   But---if you're a tinkerer---you can play with the settings and optimize them to your taste.   *CmpQwk* understands the command lines for most major file archivers (Zip, Arj, Lharc, Windows Unarchive, etc.) and will let you mix and match packers if you want.   If you'd like to use the internal packer/unpacker, that's fine.   If you want to use something else, that's okay, too.

Coming Attractions

    First off, keep in mind that good software is always improving.   Our incentive for you to register (which means you send us money) is to convince you that you're not buying into a blind alley.   Many times with shareware a year down the road it's still the same, with no improvements, no bug fixes, and so on.   We have big plans for *CmpQwk*.   Version 1.0 is just that: the start.   Here are some of the things on the drawing board for consideration to be included in future releases:

        Compressed libraries of old messages, with full database and index functions.   You'll be able to store and search through "canned messages" such as those sysops use, with long descriptions for each message, and a fully-featured search function that'll find exactly the message you need.   To save space, old messages will be stored in compressed format if you want to.

        Old QWK packet database.   If you want to archive QWK files, you'll be able to do so and store them with a long description, date you received it, and so forth.

        Fully-configurable keyboard.   There are limitations with what Windows can do here, but within reason, you could set the keystrokes to match the mail reader you use now, if you use one, or to the keys that "make sense" to you.

        ANSI music support in messages.   This gets complicated, but could be a lot of fun. The New Files display can show color ANSI, and so can the read window, but we'd like to support ANSI music via the Windows MIDI driver.   On some systems, ANSI is important.

        Free-floating Toolbar and/or configurable Toolbar positions.   Along with this a "buildable toolbar" so you could put buttons on it to call your comm program, or do other useful things.

        The ability to read multiple QWK packets simultaneously.   That can get pretty hairy, with windows scattered fourteen-deep, but some folks will no doubt want to do it, so we think it's worth some effort.   For now you're limited to one at a time, although you can get messages easily from one packet to another by using the folder tools.

        Ability to read mail other than QWK.   For example, Internet mail.   It'll be tough to work this in, but it's something to shoot for.

        Links you'll set up to a Procomm for Windows dialing directory.   You'll be able to establish links between a directory listing in Procomm for Windows and assign QWK/REP packet names to that entry.   When you're through doing mail, you should be

able to pick "send replies" and Procomm for Windows will load (or come to the front) and begin dialing that system with a script for uploading your replies.   Short of an all-in-one comm program/mail reader, this would be the best way to integrate the two.

User suggestions.   Users often come up with the best ideas.   When they come in, there's a solid chance they'll make it into a future version.   Many of the program's current features were first suggested by the beta team.   We don't want to discount the opinions of those using the software.   If you have a good suggestion, please make it!

Keyboard shortcuts

You'll want to peruse this list in order to learn the various keyboard shortcuts you can use. It's usually faster to use the keyboard during message reading and editing than it is to keep grabbing for that rodent.

Read Window

-	Back one message.
g	Go back one message.
+	Forward one message.
a	View an ANSI message in color (or animation).
z	Jump to reply (brings up header dialogue box).
left arrow	Back one message.
down Arrow	Scroll down one page.
up Arrow	Scroll up one page.
PgDn	Scroll down one page.
PgUp	Scroll up one page.
Space	Scroll down one page.
r	Reply to current message.
e	Enter a new message.
i	Message index.
j	Join a conference (Make conference list active).
s	Adds current message to a folder (you pick which folder).
p	Prints current message to the default printer.
t	Steal tag line.
CTRL+	Next conference.
CTRL-	Previous conference.
CTRL+right arrow	Next conference.
CTRL+left arrow	Previous conference.

Conference Window

A	Add a conference to the scanned conferences on this BBS
D	Delete a conference (stop scanning it for mail in the future)
up arrow	Move up one conference.
dn arrow	Move down one conference.
Enter	Open the highlighted conference.

Index Window

up arrow	Move up one message.
dn arrow	Move down one message.
Enter	Make the Read window the "focus."

Write Window

F10	Save the current reply.
CTRL+S	Save the current reply.
CTRL+Y	Delete Current Line.
Shift+Del	Cut marked text into the clipboard.

Ctrl+Ins	Copy marked text from current reply to the clippboard.
Shift+Ins	Paste text from clippboard to current cursor position.
Del	Delete marked text (doesn't cut it into the clipboard, it's lost)
Ctrl+Del	Clear all.
up arrow	Move cursor up one line.
dn arrow	Move cursor down one line.
left arrow	Move cursor left one space.
Shift+arrows	Highlight text to cut, copy, or delete.

Magic Mouse Shortcuts

There are some nice tricks you can do with the rodent in several of *CMPQwk*'s windows. Most programs sorely neglect the mouse's right button. We figured it was there for a purpose, so we gave it some things to do. Once the menu is "up" pressing the key in bold will make the mail reader take the described action, or start the described process. Let's start with the Read Window. Clicking the *right* mouse button anywhere in the read window will bring up a menu with the following options:

Read window right mouse shortcuts
    Next message - moves to next message
    Previous message - backs up one message
    First message - jumps to first message in conference
    Last message - jumps to last message in conference
    Previous conference - backs up one conference
    N**e**xt conference - goes forward to next conference
    Rep**l**y - opens the reply dialogue
    Jump to reply/message - jump to the reply for the current message (if there is one)
    Pr**i**nt - print the current message
    E**x**port - export the current message to ASCII
Write window right mouse shortcuts
    Save - saves the message (same as F10 or the save button on button bar)
    C**a**ncel - cancels the reply or message
    Cu**t** - cuts highlighted text into the clipboard
    Copy - copies highlighted text into clipboard
    Paste - pastes highlighted text into clipboard
    Sp**e**ll Check... - starts spell-checking the message
    Import text - brings up the dialogue box for importing a plain ASCII file into the message

General information & Conventions

If you're an experienced offline mail user or a Windows guru, you can probably skip this section.   If you're not, I want to take a minute to familiarize you with some of the conventions used in this help file.   Knowing about these few small points may accelerate your ability to get full use from the program.

When you see something in the help file or documentation like this: **Alt+dn arrow** it means you need to press both of the keys at the same time, not Alt,+, and then an arrow key.   It sounds silly, but sometimes people think it's the + key.   When the + key is involved, it'll usually be as a singular keypress, and if not, it'll be explained in plain t

During the description of a menu function such as **F**ile, **O**pen, the letters in bold represent the keys you may hit if you'd prefer using the keyboard to the mouse.   So if you see Alt, **F**ile, **C**lose it's probably a save bet to assume you can type Alt,F,C and save your file.   In the case of buttons, usually either a Tab to the buttons and then the boldfaced key, or Alt+the boldfaced key will do the job.

Any time you see something like Alt, O, S that means to press those keys in the order displayed, not all at once.

The keys Ctrl, Alt, spacebar, dn arrow, up arrow, and so on are always spelled out rather than illustrated.   That's because not everybody has a font that will display a keyboard graphically, and a bitmap for every key of this type would make the help file enormous.

If you see **Important!** it means just that, and failure to pay attention may result in the program behaving in a fashion you won't like.   **Important!**   Don't skip the **Important!** sections!

Where bitmaps were used to illustrate the various dialogue boxes, they may look differently from what you will see because of wide variations in screen drivers, monitors, color selections, and so on.   It's what's checked, filled-in and not-checked that's important, not the appearance of the illustration.

At the time this help file was compiled, all of the screen captures used were accurate, but that may change somewhat after release 1.0 as features are added.   We will attempt to keep this file as accurate as possible.

The Toolbar

   You mouse-happy folks will love the toolbar.   The functions of the toolbar duplicate, to some degree, the keyboard functions.   Users with Super VGA will get larger buttons with somewhat different graphics, but the relative order for each function will be the same as the smaller buttons used in lower resolutions.

VGA Toolbar - 640 x 480 or less resolution

--- Opens *CMPQwk* help file

--- Opens a QWK file

--- Closes a QWK file, saving your replies

--- Cuts highlighted text to the clipboard

--- Copies highlighted text to the clipboard

--- Pastes the clipboard's text at the cursor's position

   --- Copies the current message to the clipboard

--- Moves forward one message

--- Moves back one message

--- Back to previous conference

--- Forward to next conference

--- Same as page up

--- Same as page down

--- Enter a reply to the current Read window message

--- Start a new message (not a reply)

--- Steal the current Read window message tagline

--- Quote from the clipboard (inserts characters for quoting before text)

--- Rubber stamp (inserts the same text every time, see Options)

--- Destroy a reply

--- Start Windows Character Map applet (if available)

SVGA Toolbar - resolutions above standard VGA

--- Open *CMPQwk* help

--- Open a QWK file

--- Close current QWK file, saving your messages.

--- Cut highlighted text to the clipboard

--- Copy hilighted text to the clipboard

--- Paste the clipboard's contents at the cursor's position

--- Move forward one message

--- Move back one message

--- Move previous conference

--- Move to next conference

--- Same as page up

--- Save as page down

--- Reply to current Read window message

--- Start a new message (not a reply)

--- Delete a reply you've saved

--- Steal current Read window tagline

--- Quote from the clipboard

--- Start the Windows character map

--- Use the rubber stamp tool

--- Insert current message into a folder

Read, Write, Conference, and Index Windows

Because *CmpQwk* uses the Multiple Document Interface, it creates several different window types in the course of operations.   Each window has special characteristics, and to some degree, special keystrokes for getting things done.   The program is like any good toolbox: there are hammers, saws, and screwdrivers, and you don't get the same job done with each tool.   That's the beauty of an MDI program, the windows can be tailored to do the task "just right."

You'll want to read this section and the Keyboard Shortcuts section closely if you're at all confused as to how to use the program.   You *shouldn't be*, but perhaps you're new to Windows, new to reading mail, or both.   Relax and have fun with it.   If you open the sample packet and fool around, it'll come to you quickly.   In an hour or so you'll find the way the program works is a lot like the way you work, and a few QWK packets later you'll be buzzing through mail so quickly and smoothly, you'll never know how you got along without *CmpQwk*.

Or at least we hope that's the case.

Conference window
Read window
Index window
Write window

The Conference Window

Once you've opened the sample packet, the first window that will appear is the Conference List window. The main option you have here is the choice to show all conferences the current BBS packet lists, or just those with mail. Since it conserves screen real estate, checking the box for showing only those conferences with mail makes plenty of sense, but set it how you'd like to see it.

You can navigate through the conferences with either the mouse or arrow keys. Moving the arrow keys to the conference you'd like to browse (personal mail is always the first listed) and pressing Enter will bring up the first Read window displaying the first message in that conference.

With the mouse, double-click on the conference you want. This will pop up the Read window, also. If you've already been reading mail, a new Read window will appear in the default position (or custom positions if you've specified any) with the first message in that conference as its contents.

The Read Window

The Read window works in concert with the Index window. They're a team, and you can really buzz through a mail packet efficiently once you've gotten used to the idea of switching back and forth between them. You have several options once you're in the Read window. You can press **R** to begin a reply, you can *export* the current message to a text file (see the Message Menu section), or you can paste the current message into a folder using the folder tools (see the Folder Menu section).

Before we cover any of that, let's get into the Index window. Press **I** to bring it up. If you haven't set a position for it, it'll appear in the default position. Once it has appeared, though, you have a powerful tool for navigating through the packet and quickly reading the mail you'd like to read---and ignoring mail with which you don't want to bother.

The Index Window

As I mentioned, this window works in concert with the Read window.   If you move the arrow keys you'll see that the highlight bar in the Index window moves---and the Read window itself changes to reflect the contents of the highlighted message.   Using the Index, you can quickly peruse the first pages of all the messages in the current conference.

If you see one to which you'd like to reply, all you need do is press Enter when the highlight bar is over that message, or double-click it with the mouse and the Read window will become the "front" or "focus" window.   Then press **R** to start a reply, which takes you to the Write window.

The Write Window

The heart of any mail reader is its editor.   The editor in *CMPQwk* is the Write window.   It's where you'll spend a lot of your time, and it's where we spent a lot of time and thought trying to make things simple.   There are keystrokes to do many things more quickly than a mouse can do.   Visit the Keyboard Shortcuts section to see them all.   I'll just cover the few you need to know to get up and running now, but there are many more with which you'll want to become familiar.

Before you'll see the Write window, though, you'll see the Message Header dialogue box.   It's here that you'll be able to pick your subject, taglines, and select if you'd like the message to be flagged "private" or not.   Once you've finished with that and hit Enter or clicked **O**K, the Write window appears.

If you've enabled Quote Original (see User Options) the Write window will appear with the original text of the message to which you are replying.   It'll be set off from the margin with the initials of the person who sent it, and a character seperating that from the body of the text on each line.   Quote Prefix

The cursor will start at the top of the page, allowing you to easily edit out the portions of the original message you don't want to quote.   You can highlight the text with the mouse, or use the other shortcut keys (see Keyboard Shortcuts).

If you want to insert material from the Windows clipboard, or copy part of the message into the clipboard, select the text (using either the keyboard or mouse) and click on the **C**OPY button to copy into the clipboard.   To paste in text, put the cursor where you'd like the new text to appear the click on **P**ASTE.

Remember that if you copy text to the clipboard multiple times, the previous contents of the clipboard will be erased!

Edit the material as you see fit.   When you're finished, if you have a user text file you'd like to insert into every message (such as a signature file using high ASCII) you can paste it into the message.   If you haven't already inserted it into the Rubber Stamp Text box in the User Options setup dialogue box, you can do so and it'll be available right away.

Here's how to do that if you haven't already done it: Using Notepad or another text editor, open your signature file and copy it into the Windows clipboard.   Don't worry if it looks strange, if you're using the correct font (terminal is best) in *CmpQwk* it'll be fine in the message.   Open *CmpQwk*'s User Options dialogue box*,* Alt,**O**,**F** click on the Rubber Stamp Text box to put the cursor inside it, and press Shift+Ins to paste in your clipboard text.   Click on **O**K.

From now on, when you click the Rubber Stamp button on the main Tool Bar, your special text will appear at the cursor's location inside the message.

(If you've accidently put a graphic image into the clipboard, you won't be able to paste it into the Rubber Stamp Text box.   QWK mail cannot contain graphics other than ANSI codes, which are really just special text.)

When you're through with the message, press Alt+**S** to save it, or click either the **S**ave or

Save **C**C button.   If you clicked Save **C**C, you'll be prompted for a list of people to whom you'd like to send a copy of the current reply.   Your To List (if you've defined one) appears in the pick box, and you can select to add any of those people, or type in a new name and add it to the list of to receive the message.   When you're finished, click on **O**K or press Enter to complete the process and begin spell-checking the reply if you've enabled spell-checking in <u>User Options</u>**.**

There are a few other special features available with the Save CC option, and how the Save **C**C dialogue works is covered in more detail in the next section.

A quote prefix is used so you can attribute by whom the text was written.   For example, if you get a message from Derek Backus and you've set Quote Original to on, and have selected %f%l> as your quoting string, text from Derek will appear like DB>text of the message...]

Carbon Copies

The Write window Save **C**C button will bring up a special dialogue box where you can select from any user in your "To List" or type in other names and add them to the list of recepients of your message.

There's also a powerful feature which allows you to import a plain ASCII file as a list of users to whom you'd like to send a message.   When you create the file (use Notepad or any other editor that creates plain, unformatted text), put one user's name (first name, last name) on each line.   After you've selected Save **C**C, when the list box appears, click on the **I**mport button or press ALT+**I** and pick the name of the ASCII user listfile you'd like to use.   Click on OK or press enter and all the names in that file will appear in the box.

This feature is handy if you have multiple projects and you need to send specific messages to different groups (say marketing in one group and research in another).   Rather than picking one by one from a list, you can get them all into the routing box (the box on the right) in two easy steps.

The Spell Checker

      CmpQwk has a 227,000 word dictionary.   If you've enabled the spell checking feature (see <u>User Options</u>) when you press Alt+**S** or click the **S**ave button, Save **C**C button, or pick **M**essage, **R**eply, **S**pell check from the main menu,the spell checker will load and begin examining your reply for spelling errors.

      If it finds a word not in either the main or user dictionary (more about that in a moment) it will pop up a dialogue box with the word it finds, a suggestion for a replacement (if one is available) and options to **R**eplace, **S**kip, S**k**ip All, **A**dd to Dictionary, or **C**ancel the spell-checking process.

      If you know the word is spelled correctly (be sure) you can elect to **A**dd it to the dictionary so it won't be flagged later on, or you can tell the spell-checker to **S**kip it.   If this word is likely to be repeated in this message, click on S**k**ip All so it ignores it throughout the text.

      If you know the word is misspelled and the spell-checker shows you the correct replacement, just select **R**eplace.   The error will be fixed and the spell-checker will continue.

      If the spell-checker doesn't show a replacement (or shows one you know is wrong) you can click on the text box where the flagged text is displayed (above the suggested replacement list box) and type in your correction.   If you then click on **R**eplace, your typed text will replace the flagged text in the message.

      If you decide you want to jump back into the message and edit something, selecting **C**ancel will allow you to do this, but you'll have to spell check the entire message again when you save it.

      If you use many specialized or technical words and they're getting flagged by the spell-checker, there's an easy way to get them into the user dictionary.   Send yourself a "nonsense" message that's nothing but all of the special words you use (many technical words aren't in the dictionary).   Keep your mouse pointer poised where the "**A**dd to Dictionary" button appears, and just click away until it's finished.

      The first few times you use the spell-checker, if you tell it to add the words you use (such as slang) you'll find it'll only mark spelling errors by the second or third packet.   Of course, if you don't add them, the words will always get flagged as a spelling mistake.   Just make sure you *have* spelled them correctly before you add them.

      And by the way, the dictionary doesn't know the difference between "your" which means an item belonging to you, and "you're" which means "you are."   So it won't catch that type of error, that's a common grammatical---not spelling---mistake

      The dictionary is as large as we could practically make it, but by no means does it contain the entire Webster's Unabridged!

Menu Contents

The following sections walk you through all the menu items you'll find in *CmpQwk*.   Most of them are pretty self-evident, and if you're a Windows guru you won't need them explained.   But if you're not a veteran Windows user, or you're new to offline mail readers in general, you'll want to browse through this section.

       File Menu
       Edit Menu
       Conference Menu
       Packet Menu
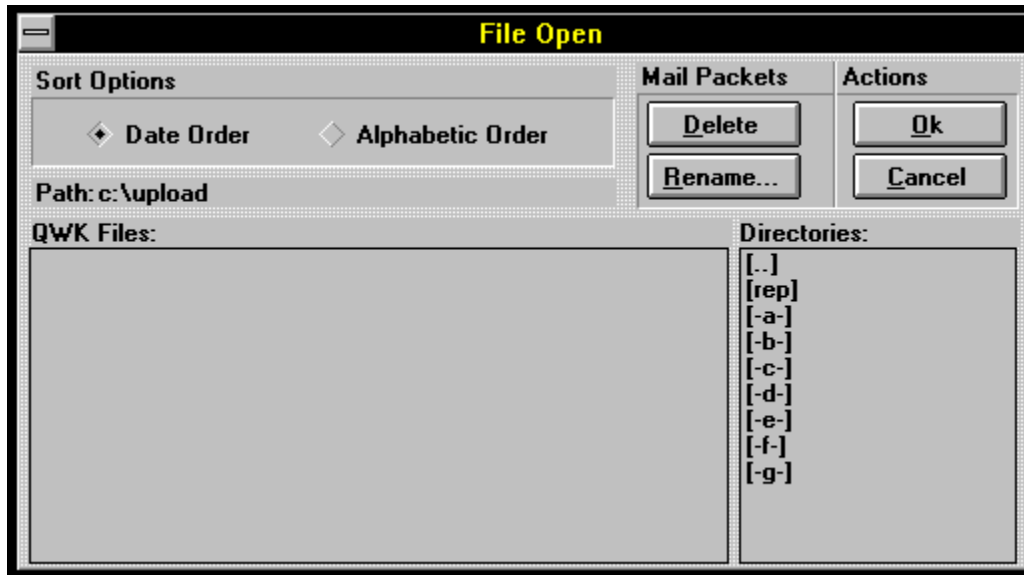   Message Menu
       Folder Menu
       Options Menu
       Window Menu
       Help Menu

File Menu

Open - Opens a new packet.   It shows you a list of the packets in your designated QWK directory.   You also can pick how you'd like the QWK file listings sorted, by file date or alphabetic order.

From the Open window you can also delete old QWK packets, and using the Directory box, rename old packets, and navigate through your directories and drives in the event you've stashed QWK files in a directory or on a drive other than the one you told *CmpQwk* to use.

Close - Closes the packet being read, saves messages into a REP packet if you're created any new ones.

Save Replies - will save any replies you've created.

Print - Prints the current message to the default Windows printer.

Printer setup - Calls a dialogue box for selecting (and if desired) changing the printer setup. Pick the printer you'd like to use or change its settings.

Quick Exit - bail out but don't build a REP packet - your messages are saved, but no REP packet will be built.   When you re-enter the program and CMPQwk will re-open the same QWK packet you were working on when you chose Quick Exit, and any replies you created will re-appear in the REPLIES conference.

Exit - Leave CMPQwk, saving any messages you've created into a REP packet.

Edit Menu

Cut - cuts selected text to the clipboard, deleting it from the message in the process.

Copy - copies (without deleting) selected text to the clipboard.

Paste - pastes the clipboard contents (if it's text) at the cursor's position.

Delete - deletes without copying to the clipboard.

Clear All - clears current reply window and the clipboard.

Conference Menu

Add a conference - Add a conference to your "scanned for mail" list in the BBS.

Drop a conference - Delete a conference, stop scanning it for mail in the future.

Select - pick a conference from which to read mail.

Next - jump to next conference from your current position.

Previous - jump back to previous conference.

Packet Menu

New Files - displays the "new files" listing if the BBS supplies one.   If it's a colorized ANSI screen, and you have a color monitor, *CmpQwk* will display the ANSI graphics as if you were online, in full color.

Bulletins - displays any bulletins supplied in the QWK packet, again, in color if that's how they were created.

News - displays news screens, if available.   Ditto with respect to ANSI.

View Session - displays the session screens (quote of the day, etc.) if any are contained in the QWK file.

Welcome - displays the BBS's welcoming screen, including ANSI graphics and colors.

Closing - displays the "goodbye" screen from the BBS.

Board Stats - statistics about the BBS or your account with it, as available in the packet.

Message Menu

List - displays an index of all messages in the current conference.

Next - go to the next message in the current conference, or jump to the first message in the next conference if you're at the last one in the current conference.

Previous - jump back one message.

First - go to the first message in the current conference.

Last - go to the last message in the current conference.

Enter New - Enter a new message - select recepient and conference.

Reply - submenu...

      Enter - begin a new message (you'll pick to whom and subject, etc.).

      Quote - Quote material from a previous message.

      Edit - Edit a message.

      Delete - Delete the current message (if it's a reply).

      Import Text - Paste in a text file, it will appear at the cursor's position.

      Spell Check - loads the spell checker and begins examining the current reply for errors.

Steal Tag Line - Grabs the tag line from the message you're reading and appends it to your tagline file.

Search - Search through the message for specific text.

Export - Save the current message to a plain text file.

Folder Menu

View and Maintain Folders Dialogue

Add a Folder - adds a new folder item (where you can store messages).

Delete Selected Folder - deletes the selected folder (and all the messages you may have stored there, so be careful!).

Read Selected Message - reads the selected message in the current folder.   Note: from the read window you may copy the selected message to the clipboard for pasting into your current mail packet---great for sysops who have dozens of "canned messages" and for sharing important messages with others (see *Add Current Message,* below).

Delete Selected Message - deletes the selected message in the current folder.

Cancel - exit when you're through, or cancel if you don't want to do anything here.   This will NOT recover messages you've deleted from any folders!   Once you've deleted them, they're history.

Add Current Message - brings up a dialogue box for adding the contents of the current Read window into a folder.   It won't copy a Write window, only an "original message."   Pick the folder into which you'd like to put the message and select **O**K.

Options Menu

This is where you'll find most of the settings *CmpQwk* will use to control its day-to-day functions.   It's also the most critical part of the program.   Fouling up this section will adversely affect how the program works, so be sure you understand everything here if you want to change something.

Best rule of thumb: if in doubt, leave it at the defaults, they'll probably work just fine.

Path Configuration Dialogue

Archiver - Select the archiver of your choice (**Important!**   if you use an external one, it should be in your path.   If you're not sure that your "path" is, consult your DOS manual or see the "Advanced" section in this help file).

QWK Path - Set the path to the directory where you keep your QWK files (drive and directory name).

REP Path - Set the path to the directory where you want your REP packets built (drive and directory).

Work Path - This is where you want CMPQwk to put its "work" files.   A directory called "work" will be created here, you don't need to supply the name, just the drive you'd like

to use.   A ram disk is best, if you have the extra memory to set one up---but be sure it's large enough to hold the opened QWK packet and all your replies.   See the Advanced section if you're not sure how to do this (and how to determine how large it must be). **Important!**   *DO NOT set this to a floppy disk!*   A floppy is too slow and may not contain sufficient free space, resulting in who knows what horrible problems.   Use a hard disk or ram disk.   A drive and directory of that name (if you want *CMPQwk* to put its work directory under another) MUST exist of you will get a fatal program error.   Also don't put any files you want to keep into the work directory while you're reading mail, because those too will be deleted on exit.

User Options Dialogue

General Options

Rubber Stamp Text - insert any text here (either by the pasting the clipboard's contents with SHIFT+INS) or by typing the characters you'd like to have represented.   High ASCII is allowed if the font you've selected properly supports it (terminal does).   Handy for often-repeated items or other special uses.

Start Maximized - tells *CmpQwk* to start in full screen mode.
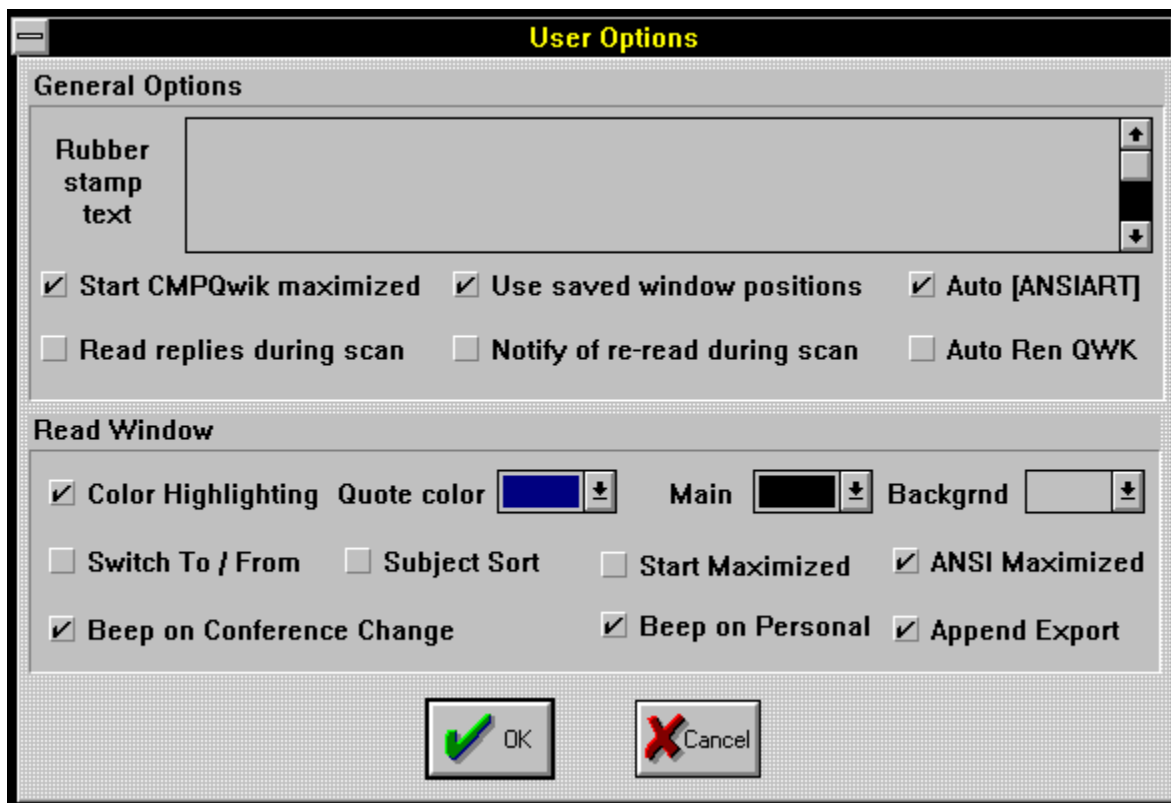
Use Saved Window Positions - tells *CmpQwk* to set the Read, Index, Conference, and Reply windows to the positions you've set up using the Define Window Positions menu (described later).   If you don't check this box, the program will place windows in the default positions.   You must define window positions for this to work!

Auto (Ansiart) - when this is enabled, *CmpQwk* will automatically load the ANSI viewer if it comes across a message with [ansiart] on the first line.

Read Replies During Scan - if you check this, *CmpQwk* will jump from your personal mail into the stored replies, allowing you to scan through them before continuing on to other public mail.

Notify Of Re-read during Scan - *CmpQwk* will notify you if you're about to re-read a message you've already read (for example, if you go back to a conference you've already finished). Otherwise it will just load that conference silently.

AutoRen QWK - the program will automatically increment the file names of QWK packets by changing the suffix of like-named packets to letters, starting with A, skipping K and continuing to Z.

Read Window - sets options for the read message window.

Color Highlighting - define the colors you'd like to use for quoted and general text in the message Read window, as well as the background color of the Read window (if you'd like it different than the Windows default). You can have different colors for each, just select the colors from the pick box that you'd like. The current Read window will reflect the changed colors as soon as you've closed the dialogue box.

Switch To/From - swaps the positions on the message header fields from From/To to To/From - a matter of personal preference.

Subject Sort - sort messages by thread rather than by number.

Start Maximized - forces the Read window to start maximized, overriding any saved window positions you may have created.

ANSI Maximized - forces the ANSI viewer to appear maximized when you view messages that contain ANSI graphics.

**Beep on Conference Change** - beep when you've jumped to another conference.

Beep On Personal - beep when displaying a message to you.

Append Export - set whether you'd like the default export file to be appended to or *overwritten* when you export a message to a text file. If you elect to overwrite the file and export multiple times during a reading session, you will destroy all but the last export. You can also export to a specific file name, as well, to prevent this.

Reply Options Dialogue

Fido Taglines - enables the FIDO-style network taglines (the special character signifying taglines must be a " * " when sending mail over FIDO networks).

Start Maximized - start the Write window so it covers all the other windows in the application workspace.

Reply Options dialog box
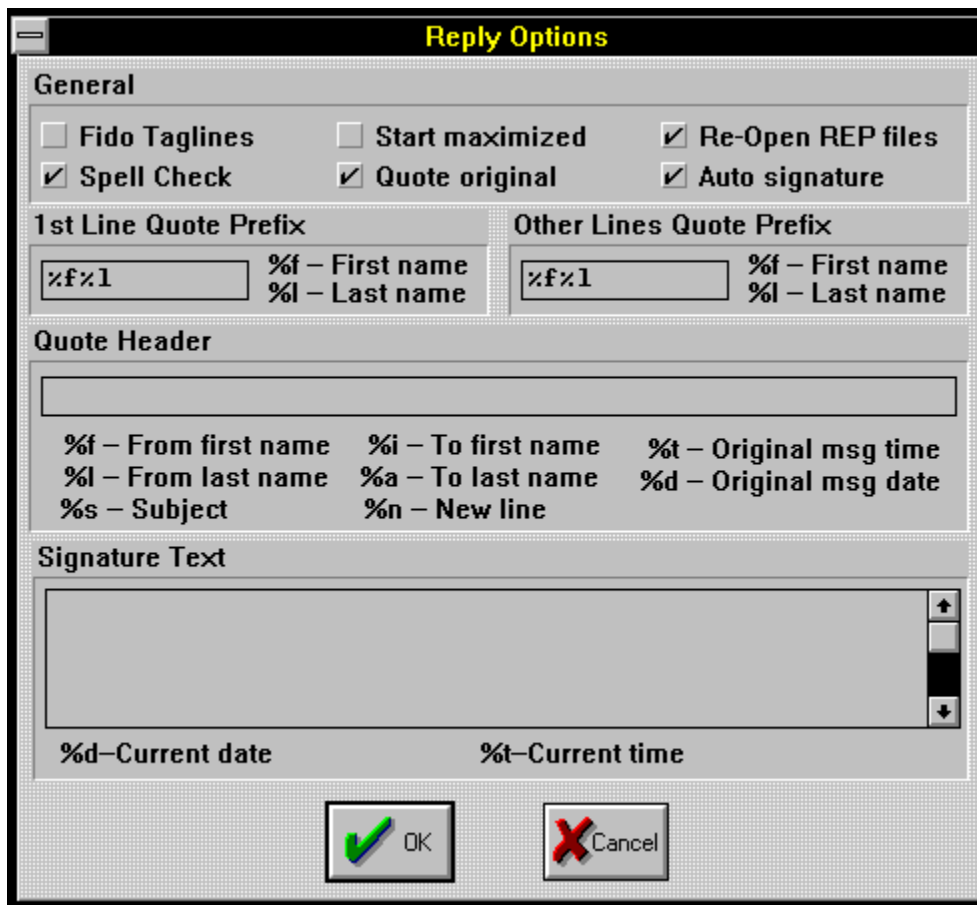
Re-Open REP Files - tells *CMPQwk* to re-open any replies related to the packet you want to open---important if you do mail in multiple sessions

Spell Check - enables the built-in spell checker so it can scan your replies for spelling errors.

Quote Original - duplicate the original message and place it into the editor before you being replying and insert "quote marks" before the message text.

Auto Signature - enables the automatic "end of message" signature if you've placed one into the Signature Text box.

1ST Line Quote Prefix - sets the quoting style for the Reply window.   Pick the characters you'd like to have used on the quoting line.   For example, %f%l} in the 1ST Line Quote Prefix box would result in a quote from a message by Derek Backus looking like: DB}.   You can use any high ASCII character in this line, although traditionally the } sign is used on most BBSes.

Other Lines Quote Prefix - establishes the quoting style for every line following the first quoted line in a paragraph.   The formatting rules are exactly the same.   If you want all the quoted lines to appear the same, just set both boxes identically.

Quote Header - Will enable a header that appears before any other material in the message.   You can put in text, the original sender's name, who it's from, who the message is to, and so on.   To have a header on a message originally from Derek Backus and sent to you that would appear like "Derek Backus said to (your name)" you'd put: %f %l said to %i %a in the Quote Header box.   Be sure to included spaces where you want them (such as between first and last names).   Just about any text can be put here, although on netmail, less is better.

Signature Text - Just like the Rubber Stamp Tool, you can place high ASCII or other text in here.   If you've enabled Auto Signature, when you save your message *CMPQwk* will insert the text you've put into this window at the bottom of the message, above the tagline.   Use the clipboard to get high ASCII into this box if you have a special "graphical" signature you use in mail.   You can also have the time and date you wrote the message inserted into the signature line or lines by using the %d (date) and %t (time) variables.

Define Window Positions - allows you to drag and stretch some sample windows into the positions you'd like the Read, Write, Index, and Conference List windows to appear.

Define Windows Control Panel - pick the window for which you'd like to define a position and size from the Focus Control buttons and then size and place it in the application workspace (within *CMPQwk's* borders).   Select each window in turn, place each where you'd like it to appear during your sessions, and click on the Save Window Positions Button.   If you decide to cancel the operation, click the Cancel/Restore Old button.
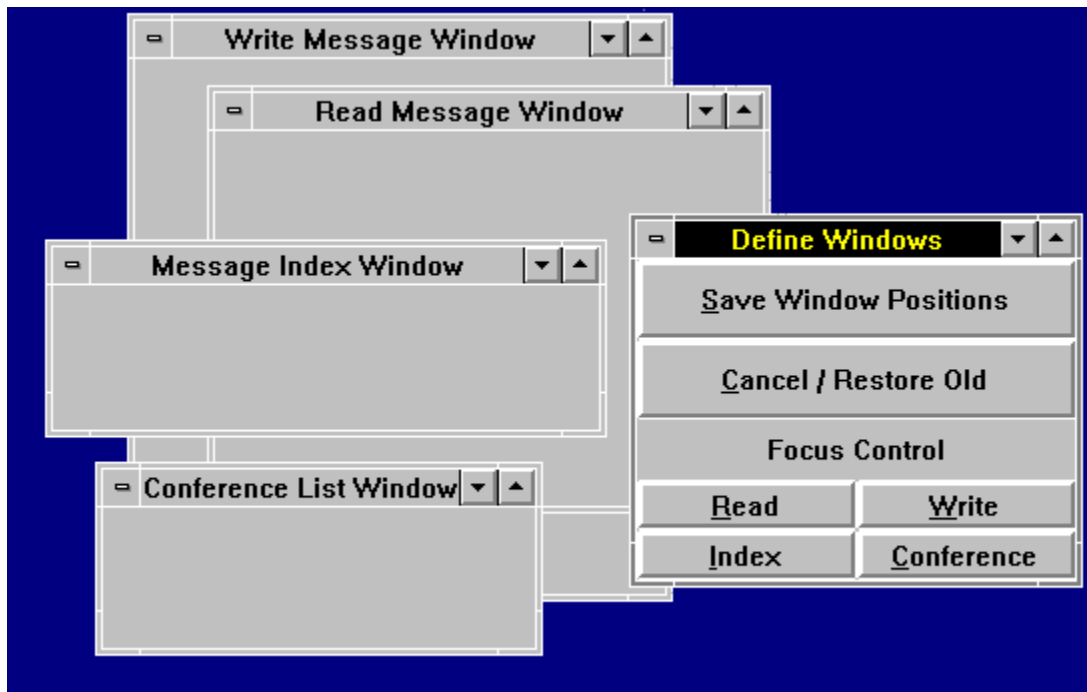
The next time you open a packet, the windows will appear in the positions you've

selected, **if** you've enabled the Use Saved Window Positions in your Miscellaneous Options configuration---one doesn't do much without the other!

Edit Taglines - loads your tagline file into a simple editor so you can edit, delete, and otherwise manage your taglines.

Edit To Pick List - Allows you to enter, edit, or delete users who will appear on your quick-pick "to list" when sending messages.

Edit Subject Pick List - Allows you to enter, edit, or delete subjects that will appear on your "subject list" when sending messages.

Edit Twit Lists - Opens a series of dialogue boxes where you can assign user names and words to three skip lists.   That means if a user's name (assuming it's spelled correctly) is in a message header, and you've entered that name in the To and From skip list boxes, you won't see any mail to or from that user.

Also there's a *Subject* Skip list.   If you type in the appropriate keyword (like TAXES, for example) you won't see any messages with TAXES in the message header subject field, even if they're sent to you directly.
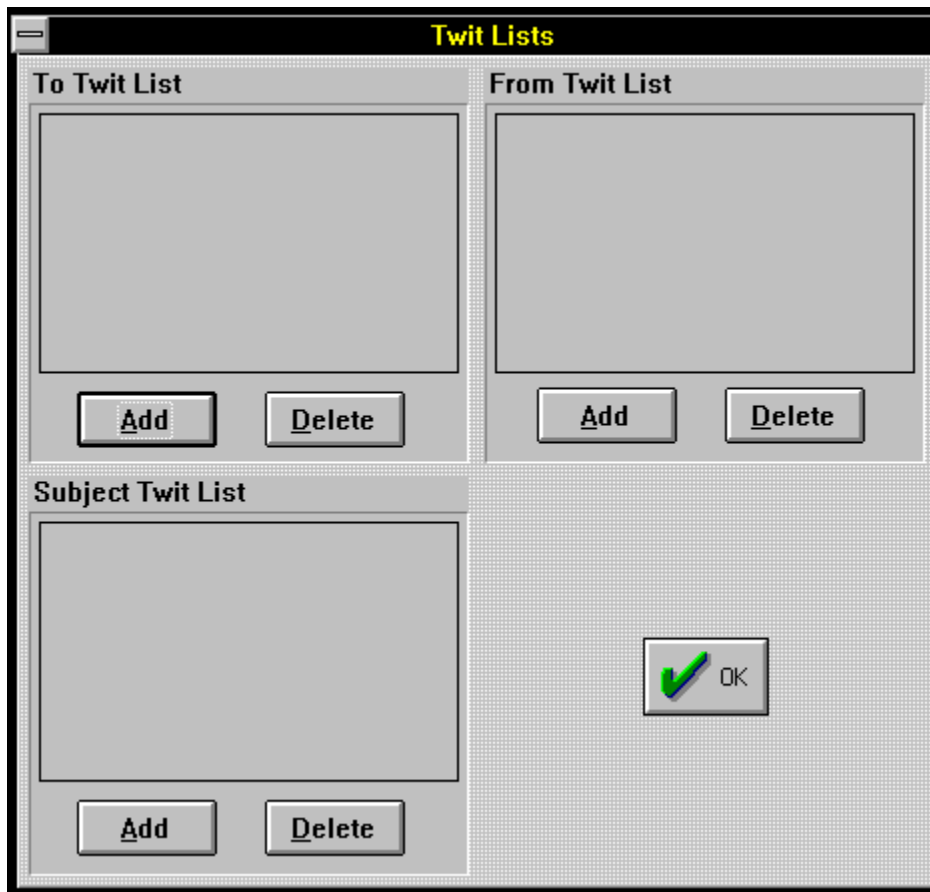
To put something in the skip lists, after you've clicked on Edit Twit Lists (Alt,**O**,**K**), click on the

box you want (or Tab to the button below the section you want) and select **A**dd.   When the Add Skip To (or Skip From, or Subject Skip) dialogue box appears, type in the item you want to skip and press enter or click OK.

This feature is handy if you have a pesty user you'd like to ignore, or if you're sick of seeing messages about a certain subject.

If you decide you want to remove somebody or a topic from the skip list, select that item and click on **D**elete.   This will clear the person's name or subject keyword, and from the next packet on you'll see messages to or from this individual, or with the specific keyword in the message subject header.

Window Menu

Cascade - overrides any selections you've set up in the "define window positions" menu and cascades all the open windows down the screen, from left to right.

Tile - tiles all open windows with no regard for the text contained within them, they're simply packed onto the screen however they fit.

Arrange Icons - lines up all the iconized windows along the bottom of the screen, from left to right.

Close All - closes all open windows (prompting you upon closure of a packet, and saves your replies on the way out) - does not close the program, just open windows.

(Active Windows) - Once multiple windows have been opened, allows you to quickly select between them with the keyboard or mouse.

Help Menu

Index - brings up the help file at the Index page - from here you may pick the subject with which you require assistance.

Keyboard - a list of all keyboard shortcuts you can use.

Using Help - how to use the Windows Help engine.

About - shows your registration information and the version of the program you're using.   Will print a registration form if you haven't registered your copy.

Disclaimer & Copyright notices

Here's the section where we spell out all the legalese stuff.   Be sure you understand everything here before you use the program.   Our liabilities are strictly limited with respect to non-registered (read that *non-paying*) users.

Legal disclaimers
Copyright notices.

Legal disclaimers

This program isn't warrantied to do anything other than fill up disk space.   If you use it, and it eats your hard disk's FAT and all your data, we're very sorry, but we're not liable.   *By evaluating this program you assume all liability for its use and operation, or its failure to operate as expected*.   No warranties either expressed or implied are in place during the evaluation period.   Period.   Finito.

Registered users will have other rights that will vary from state to state, regarding fitness of purpose and other features.

Todd Henschell and *Scrazner Graphics* (creators of this documentation) are not liable for any omissions, typographical or other errors that cause program malfunctions, or by omission, neglect to provide the user with information required for correct operation of the software.

User assumes all liability with regard to operation of Cmpqwk Reader.

Copyright notices

Registration Information.

      Here's the section that, like the annual PBS fund drive, is where everybody goes out to get something from the refrigerator.   Well, sorry, but we have to talk about it.   Without registrations, continuing to support and improve the program will be impossible.

        How to register & why register
        What do you get when you register?
        What do you get when you don't register?
        Where can you register?

How to register & why register

That's an easy one to answer.   You register by sending a check or money order to the address listed under <u>Where can you register?</u>.   Once you've registered, your key and registration numbers (which will disable the reminder that comes up when the program loads and enable your taglines) will be mailed to you via U.S. Mail.   If you prefer, that information can be posted in a message to you on one of our support sites, or routed electronically via the networks listed in the section covering support.

Why register?   Because you're an honest person who recognizes the amount of work, dedication, and general pain it takes to produce a piece of software like *CmpQwk.*   You don't like to hear about penniless programmers dying of starvation, yet it's an awful fact in today's heartless shareware world.   This terrible tragedy hasn't made 20/20 yet, but rumor has it that Geraldo might be interested, so stay tuned...

If you send a check, the author can pay his rent, pay for the electricity to continue to power his computer system, and improve *CmpQwk* even further.   Our goal is to make this product the *best* mail reader---*period*---not just the best mail reader *for Windows*.   The best is the only place to be.

That's an impossible task without user support.

With the support and suggestions of users like yourself, who appreciate the complexity of the task (you're reading this, that means you liked it enough to peruse this deeply into the help file), something approaching "the best" is within reach.

What do you get when you register?

I'm not going to say "peace of mind."   Nobody gets peace of mind by spending money. Well, nobody except the bureaucrats running the government.   You get $40 poorer, of course, but you gain the honest use of a superb piece of software that, if it were marketed through retail stores, would cost well over $100.   You also get free support via the regular channels, notification of updates, and reduced prices for future versions.

If you're a BBS sysop and can get ten or more users to register at once, notify us of this and we'll give your users a discount price if they all submit their payments (through you) in one order and with **one check** from the BBS sysop.   We'll mail you a single card with all the key information and you can distribute that to your users directly.   It helps us, and your users love the convenience of registering locally through their favorite sysop.

What do you get when you don't register?

Nothing.

You can continue to use the software, of course, although you'll be in violation of the copyright if you don't register it within the trial period.   And no, we're not going to send the Copyright Police out looking for you.   We're too busy working on the next version.   If you don't register, and you're confused about something, or have a technical question or other problem, you'll have to be content to get your questions answered *after* we attend to registered users.

Fair is fair.

Where can you register?

Send a check or money order to:

> Derek Backus
> 1930-B East Alosta Ave. Ste 432
> Glendora, California 91740

You can also register *CmpQwk* via Compuserve.

What about *VISA* and *MASTERCARD*?   Not yet, but coming soon...

Support sources and how to contact them.

Technical support is provided first to registered users, and then if Derek has any free time, questions from unregistered users *might* be addressed.   There are only so many hours in the day, and we feel this is the most fair way to distribute support time.

How to report a problem if you have one (or a compliment!)
Compuserve
Net support sites (Smartnet, etc.)
Los Angeles Area BBSes

How to report a problem if you have one (or a compliment!)

    If you have encountered a problem with the program and you are a registered user, want to register, or have other non-technical questions, feel free to contact the author.   Derek Backus can be reached via multiple methods.   The fastest way to reach Derek is to leave him a message on one of the Los Angeles-area BBSes in the list.   But you can also get E-mail to him on several networks, on the Internet, and via U.S. Mail, of course, if all else fails.

Compuserve

Derek's Compuserve ID is: 72233,3255.   It is 15% cheaper to register by check or money order mailed directly to the author, but for some folks, Compuserve may be more convienent.

Net support sites

You may route messages to Derek through Smartnet and Metrolink if you send them to the Dataphile BBS (-}Dataphile in the message header).   Be sure to use Derek's full name and the correct routing line in the message.   Response time will be slower than Compuserve, but this way of contacting the author is usually free.

Derek is also "reachable" via the Internet at dbackus@Patchby@speedway.com.

Los Angeles Area BBSes

     Several Los Angeles area BBSes are supporting *CmpQwk*.   **The Patchbay BBS (818) 441-3965** is one site where you can leave a request for support.   You may post a message there in **Conference 14,** *CMPQwk* **Support**, either to Derek Backus or Todd Henschell.   *The Patchbay* is currently the "home" of *CMPQwk* support.

     Grant Willey, sysop of **The Dataphile**, is also providing support for *CMPQwk*, in addition to Smartnet and Metrolink routing services at **(818) 957-5813**.   You can leave a message there to either Derek Backus or Todd Henschell in the **Windows Conference.**

Advanced User Information

   The following tips are for users who want to squeeze the most out of the software that they use.   If you're happy with the way things are running "stock" then you're all set and don't need to read any of this.   If you'd like to delve more deeply into how the program works, what follows are some practical tips.

How to make the most out of the program.

It should be obvious that if you have a marginal Windows system, you also have a marginal *CMPQwk* system.   That means if you can barely run Windows (let's say you have a 286 12mhz with 2 megabytes of RAM and you like to torture yourself by trying to run Windows) then *CMPQwk* will be no fun at all.   Also only standard and enhanced mode are supported (which shouldn't be a problem, because Windows 3.1 only supports them, also).

To make the most of this---and every Windows program---you should have at least some type of a 386 (so your PKZIP windows don't have to go full screen, for example) and you'd be a lot happier with four megabytes of RAM.   If you're running something less, it just won't be as enjoyable as on a more powerful system.

If you have such a "minimalist" system, try to stick with the internal unpacker/packer, it won't cause you to load a DOS session, and that might speed things up.   Since *CMPQwk* is a multiple-document interface program, the more screen real estate you feed it, the better it looks. Try it full screen first, and arrange the windows (see the section on setting window places) so that your Read and Write windows appear on top of each other.   That way you get the maximum size in which to do the body of your work---reading and writing.   Stuff the Index and Conference windows where they fit or ignore them---you can spacebar through mail and thus you won't need them most of the time.

If you're low on memory, try running *CMPQwk* by itself, with just Program Manager and no other software running.   That'll speed things up a tad.

Rubber stamps and auto signature

One of the drudgeries associated with heavy mail is, for many users, inserting a signature or other file into every message.   Sometimes a corporate ID number must be inserted into mail, other times a "power user" just wants to have a distinctive signature with high ASCII. We've taken such users to heart with the Rubber Stamp tool and the "auto signature" feature.

If you have a user text file you'd like to insert into every message (such as a signature file using high ASCII) you can paste it into the message.   If you haven't already inserted it into the Rubber Stamp Text box in the **User Options** setup dialogue box, you can do so and it'll be available right away.

Here's how to do that if you haven't already done it: Using Notepad or another text editor, open your signature file and copy it into the Windows clipboard.   Don't worry if it looks strange in Notepad, it'll be fine in the *Cmpqwk* text box.   Open *Cmpqwk*'s User Options dialogue box*,* Alt,**O**,**F** click on the Rubber Stamp Text box to put the cursor inside it, and press Shift+Ins to paste in your clipboard text.   Click on **O**K.

From now on, when you click the **Rubber Stamp** button on the main Tool Bar, or press Ctrl+U, your special text will appear at the cursor's location inside the message.

(If you've accidently put a graphic image into the clipboard, you won't be able to paste it into the Rubber Stamp Text box.   QWK mail cannot contain graphics other than ANSI codes, which are really just special text.)

If you have a special ASCII signature file, open the Reply Options dialogue and look for the Signature Text box.   Use a similar procedure to copy it from your text file into the entry box.   If you've checked "auto signature" the contents of the Signature Text box will be inserted at the end of your message (before the tagline) automatically when you save your message.

You can modify either the Signature or Rubber Stamp text at will and the changes will be reflected the next time you use either tool.

System requirements, both minimal and optimal

The rule of thumb to remember here is is that if Windows runs poorly, so will anything you run under Windows.   That includes, but is not limited to, *CMPQwk*.

Windows Version

If you're running anything less than Windows 3.1, all bets are off.   You MUST have Windows 3.1 to use *CMPQwk*.   It will not work correctly with Windows 3.0 or earlier versions.

Disk space

The program takes about three megabytes, plus the small files it will put in the directory it creates under itself to track your messages.   If you have huge tagline, subject, and to-list files, you'll need more space.

Memory

Minimum memory requirements will vary, but it's safe to say that if Windows runs slowly on your system because you don't have much memory, *CMPQwk* will run slowly, too.   A 386 25mhz machine with four megabytes of memory is a good start.   From there up, things will only get better.   From there down, Windows will get intolerably slow for most folks.   *CMPQwk* uses about 200 Kbytes of memory when a packet isn't opened.

Ram Disk minimums/maximums

Figure twice the size of your QWK packet plus one-half of that for replies to be safe. More if other applications will need temporary space.

Laptop without a mouse

You'll want to have a mouse.   If you're using Windows and you don't have a mouse, for example on a laptop, there are "mouse substitute" programs like *NoMouse*™ from Abacus.   Some of the things you'll want to do (such as setting window positions) are a real pain without a mouse.   Most folks using Windows have the little rodents, but some don't.   Your best bet: get one if you can do so.

Packer Considerations

    And if you want to use an external packer, be sure that it can be called from a directory in your path.   If you're not sure what your path is, it's the list of directories that DOS has been told to look into when a program is "called" and the program can't be found in the "current" directory.

    Open a DOS window, change to the directory where you put CMPQwk, and type the name of the program you want to use.   Say it's ARJ.   From a DOS window inside the C:\CMPQWK directory type "ARJ" with nothing after it.   If DOS gives you the message: Bad Command or File Name... ARJ isn't in your path.

    Either edit the path statment in your autoexec.bat file so the directory where ARJ is is listed, or copy the ARJ.EXE file from where you're keeping it into the *CMPQwk* directory.   Either procedure will work fine.   The first just saves a bit of disk space and makes better sense technically, but will require you to close Windows and reboot your system before it takes effect.

    If you create PIF files for the external packers that set them to run in a window (and you run in 386 Enhanced Mode, you won't have to watch as your unpacker/packer takes over the screen, it'll just pop up a small screen while it works.   Be sure to name the PIF the same as the packer's name.   You'll need two for PKware's products (pkzip.pif, pkunzip pif) , and one for ARJ (arj.pif).

    If all of this confuses you, best to crack that DOS manual for a refresher course.

    And of course, be sure that you and the BBS to which you're sending mail, are using the same packer!

For VGA only users

VGA (16-color 640 x 480) users should run the program maximized (full-screen) and use the terminal font that ships with Windows.   At that resolution, it's just not practical to run in a smaller window.   If you try it, you'll have to choose a font size so small you'll need an electron microscope to read your mail.

Try setting the positions of the Read and Write windows so they take up most of *CMPQwk's* workspace, with one stacked on top of the other.   That way you can use a larger font, and generally you don't read mail while you're writing replies.

For SVGA users

There is sufficient screen real estate at 800 x 600 and above to run the program in a window that's less than full screen.   You can also fool around with some other fonts that are available, such as those that come with *Procomm Plus for Windows©* by Datastorm Technologies Incorporated.

If you use *Procomm Plus for Windows*, you can install the fonts it ships with into your system and use one of them.   These fonts are only available when Procomm is running *unless you install them manually*.   They're the PWKEYMAP.FON and PWTRMNL.FON files located in the Procomm directory.   Also the OEM fonts that ship with Windows should work, as well.

Start Control Panel, double-click on the FONT microapp, then click on **A**DD, and point it at your Procomm directory, you'll see the fonts listed there.   Install them both and test them at different point sizes by opening a mail packet, then selecting "**F**ont" from the **O**ptions menu. Look for "PC Plus" in the available font names.

The Read window will reflect whatever font you select once you've clicked **O**K.   The PC Plus SS at 9 points is a good size for 1024 x 768 resolutions.   If you don't use *Procomm Plus for Windows*, pick the Terminal font that ships with Windows, it's the best choice, and it'll display the high ASCII characters correctly.

If you arrange your window positions so the Read and Write windows appear on top of each other filling about two-thirds of the application workspace, put the Conference List to the right in a narrow column, and the Index window along the bottom in a narrow strip, you'll find the results generally pleasing.

For high-color/high end graphics boards users

Scrolling speed with some high-color drivers and frame-buffer video boards (non-accelerated products) is quite slow.   This is a problem with the driver and *not* with *CMPQwk.* Also, the colors in the highlight color palette may not appear the same in different color-depths on all systems.   This is a function of how the Windows 3.1 palette-manager works, not a bug.

Problems with colored fonts

Some graphics boards, such as the ATI *Ultra Pro*, have the ability to fix the Windows palette, display higher-than normal colors, or shift the amount of available colors on the fly.   If you set your Read window color highlighting and then change the available color depth---or lock the Windows palette as this and other cards can do---you might find the colors won't appear as you set them.   You'll have to re-set them for the current session.

In some cases, high-color drivers will incorrectly report the number of available colors to software, or they'll report a number the software doesn't understand, and so the color palette might not appear correctly.   The only workaround for this is to pick your colors for each session if, when you originally set colors, you were using a different color-depth driver.

Scrolling speed problems

On accelerated boards such as the ATI *Ultra Pro*, and most *S3* boards, using the arrow keys to page-down (holding the key down) may result in the message scooting by so quickly you can't read it.   This is a function of the hardware, and the way around it is to watch how long you hold down that key!

Inaccurate window placements if you change video modes

    If you set window places in one resolution, they may or may not appear the same relative to the application workspace in a different resolution.   This isn't a bug, it's a function of how your screen driver describes screen sizes to a running application.

Big Netmail packets

If you routinely download and read *huge* netmail packets (thousands of messages) and you want to use a ram disk to speed up the mail reader's operation, be sure you have sufficient space on the ram disk to hold the size of the uncompressed packet (probably twice its compressed figure) and at least half as much in addition to contain replies.   If your QWK file is one megabyte, you'll need a 2.5 megabyte ram disk to be safe, and three would probably be better if you're likely to run other programs that create temp files.

If you get a huge mail packet and *CMPQwk* acts strangely, we want to hear about it.   It's been tested up to and beyond 1,000 messages and worked flawlessly.   The actual limit for messages is 16,000 messages per conference and 65,000 conferences.   It's doubtful you'll get a packet too large for the program to handle.

Upgrading from a mail reader not supported by CMPQwk

Two of the most popular mail readers (Rosemail and OLX) are directly supported when it comes to copying certain parts of their configurations.   There are others out there, and it may be possible for you, by doing a few things on your own, get your new mail reader quickly into the shape you'd like to have it in.

Taglines

If your mail reader keeps its taglines in a plain ASCII file, you can just copy it into the CMPQwk directory (renaming it in the process) as TAGLINES.CMP.   If your mail reader keeps taglines in some other format, you'll have to manually add them into CMPQwk's tagline data file using the tagline editor built into CMPQwk, or with some other plain ASCII text editor (like Notepad or Qedit).   The taglines should have one tag per line and no other extraneous formatting characters.   Other formats may cause unpredictable results, so we don't reccomend you experiment if you're not sure what ASCII is.

To Lists

The same rule as taglines applies: plain ASCII can be copied into the mail reader's directory as WHOTO.CMP.   The same as taglines applies except use one name per line.

Subject Lists

Yup.   You guessed it: SUBJECT.CMP.

Twit Lists

You already know the answer, I bet.

Canned Messages

If you've got a huge database of canned messages you send often (like support professionals or sysops) the best way to get them into the *CMPQwk* folder system is to use your old mail reader to e-mail them to yourself (flagged private) on a system where the sysop won't mind, and put them in via the program's Add Current Message to folder option.   It'll be a lot faster than the clipboard, retyping, or anything else I can think of.

Other considerations

At this writing, nothing to add here.

Index of Terms Used

If you didn't understand a term used in this help file, it's probably in this list.   If it's not, there's always a dictionary...

ANSI: American National Standards Institute.   In this case, it refers to the colored graphics that a BBS that supports ANSI can display.   Usually there will be ANSI graphics in the BBS's "new files" or "welcome" display under the Packet, New Files and Welcome selections, for example.

ASCII: in this context it refers to a "plain" text file, or a file that has no special formatting characters, and thus can be read by most any software that can open "text" files.   The tagline file *CMPQwk* uses is plain ASCII.

Application Workspace: the space inside a **M**ultiple **D**ocument **I**nterface application where it places its various windows.   These windows are called *Child Windows*.   Child Windows that *CMPQwk* uses are the Conference List, Read, Write, and Index.

Button Bar: a row of buttons with function labels on them.   *CMPQwk* has a button bar on the Write window, and it can be used to tell the program what functions (like saving a reply) to perform.   Some people think they're faster than menus or simple keyboard combinations. It's a matter of taste.

Dialogue Box: a box containing instructions, picklists, or buttons that give you the options to set program runtime parameters, pick files to open, or define other variables that affect the way a program runs.   If you select Help and then About, *CMPQwk* will show you an "About" dialogue box, with an OK button to close that box,   for example.

Frame Buffer Video Board: the basic type of graphics board where there is no hardware acceleration (such as an *S3* chip) present and the system's CPU is called on to draw all the elements on the screen.   Some of these boards will, with the use of a high-color DAC (Digital to Analog Converter) chip, allow you to set your color depth beyond 256 colors. However, in such high-color modes, text scrolling is often unacceptably slow.

Multiple Document Interface: a standard by which a Windows application can open multiple windows "inside" itself.   This means it can edit (or do various functions) while holding different text or information inside other windows, but it needn't load multiple copies of itself to do it.   Windows Notepad and Write are both "Single Document Interface" applications.   If you want to edit or cut and paste between two Write files at once, you'll need to open two copies of Write.   *CMPQwk* and Sysedit are both Multiple Document Interface applications, or **MDI** apps, for short.

Offline Mail: versus "online mail," which is mail you do while you are still connected to a host, or BBS system.   Offline mail you can do on your own system, using an offline mail reader, and you don't need to be connected to a host system to do anything except upload it when you're through creating messages.   See QWK Packet below for more.

QWK Packet: a file created by a BBS "Mail Door" that contains a specially-formatted and compressed collection of messages extracted from the BBS system's mail database.   To open and read a QWK packet, you'll need some software called an Offline Mail Reader.   Our preferred choice for you to use is this one, of course.

RAM DISK: a virtual "disk" created with software (ramdrive.sys ships with DOS) that happens to be much faster than a "real" or "physical" hard disk.   If you have extra memory (say eight megabytes or more) setting up a RAM-based disk and using it as your work directory will speed CMPQwk's handling of the temporary files it needs when you do mail, and even save some wear and tear on your hard disk.

Shareware: a concept where eternally optimistic (some say naive) and enterprising programmers release their finished software products out into the world in the hopes that users who download and use them will see the justice in paying for them.   Sometimes they "cripple" the software so it only works partially as intended, or they put in "pester screens" with pictures of VISA cards to make the user feel bad.   The best approach is just to make the product so good that the user feels horrible about not paying for it.   Shareware registrations approach four to ten percent of actual use, depending on who's giving the figure and the software package used.   Of course we'd like to beat the odds...and only you can help us do that.

SVGA: "Super VGA," or Super Video Graphics Adapter.   Usually it means a display system (including video board and monitor) capable of displaying at resolutions and colors beyond IBM's old standard of 640 x 480 x 16.   If your video subsystem can display resolutions greater than this and at higher colors, you've got SVGA.

Toolbar: usually a strip of buttons with colored or other graphics on them that, when pressed by the mouse, will peform a function that could involve multiple menu selections. Similar to a Button Bar, but a Button Bar only has text on the buttons, not bitmapped graphics.

VGA: Video Graphics Adapter, based on IBM's standard 640 x 480 x 16 and below. Sometimes extended to include that resolution at 256 colors, although technically that's Super VGA.

Known quirks, bugs, and the history of the program.

Version 1.0 released into the world.   They say if you love something to set it free.   Well here it goes...

Thank You, Thank You...

Kudos to the Beta Testing Team who plugged away during thick and thin, their only payment being able to see the software come into shape, help it get that way, and to get to use it once it was ready to be used.   Great work!

Programmer: Derek Backus

Documentation & Graphics: Todd Henschell, Associate Sysop *The Patchbay BBS*

Beta Wrangler: Pye Scrazner, lost forever in the Aether

Beta Testers: Mark Whitney, Mark Warnsdorfer, Ben Schorr, Grant Willey, Ron Amick

Program Security Analyst: Ben Chiu, *Jensen Gema Volstatic*

Thanks to: Daniel Bise, Sysop *The Patchbay BBS* (support site)

Thanks to: Grant Willey, Sysop *The Dataphile BBS* (support site)

Thanks to: William Padilla, Sysop **Panasia BBS**

Special Thanks to Mike W. Smith and Mark Warnsdorfer, who helped greatly with the spelling dictionary.   Way to go Mike and Mark!

And **Extra Special** thanks to Colette and Leslie.

Documentation by Todd Henschell
Scrazner Graphics © 1993

The Scrazner Logo is a Trademark

TM