

Attributes

version 1.3

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Contents

With *Attributes* , you should have received:

- *Attributes* version 1.3x Program File (for both 680x0 Macintoshes and Power Macintoshes)
- Manual in Microsoft Word 5.0 Format (this manual)
- Read Me file for obtaining a manual in a different format
- Updater program for copying preferences of *Attributes* version 1.0x or 1.1x to 1.3x (old versions keeps preferences in the application, this versions writes them to a preferences file).
- Source code in Metrowerks CodeWarrior C/C++ PPC (DR/3) format for *Attributes* [only for users who purchased the

source code]

What Is *Attributes* ?

Attributes is a flexible program designed to alter file information using a drag-and-drop interface. Drag a set of file / folder / disk icons onto this program's icon and *Attributes* will change the file information according to user specification. This function only works on files. Dropping folders or disks onto *Attributes* will modify the information of the contents of the folders or disks.

Information that can be modified includes date and time of file creation / last modification, creator, file type, invisibility, and lock / unlock attributes. The user can operate on all files or files that matching specified criteria (such as creator, file type, etc.) while in the batch mode. If only a single file is dropped on the *Attributes* icon, it's characteristics can be modified interactively.

This program is quite useful for a variety of circumstances:

- toggling Teach Text documents from read only to editable
- transferring text files between the Mac and IBM PCs (permits definition of a program to launch [creator] when double clicking on the file from the Finder)
- altering the creation and modification dates and times of groups of files (useful for programmers when releasing new versions of software and support files)
- hiding files in the Finder
- locking groups of files to prevent them from being altered or deleted accidentally
- interactive editing of a file's characteristics
- others limited only by the imagination

New Features and PowerMac

Both PowerMac and 680x0 Mac versions of *Attributes* are included in this package. The 680x0 version has been updated to contain the newest features found in the PowerMac version when it was released (preferences file, backward tabbing through dialogs).

Version 1.3 is much more flexible in handling date and time formats. The formats used are those defined in the Date & Time control panel. This

permits better support for individual tastes and international users.

Updating Previous Versions

You can run *Attributes* 1.3x without running the updater. *Updater* copies the menus and preferences from version 1.0x or 1.1x of *Attributes* to the preferences folder. To run the updater, launch the *Updater* program. You will be prompted to locate the old version of *Attributes*. Once it has been selected, the menu and preference data is transferred to a preferences file for the new version. If the updater displays a dialog stating "Update completed successfully.", then no errors occurred during the update. Test the updated *Attributes* 1.2x. If it is functioning to your satisfaction, discard the old version of *Attributes*. (Note: since I no longer have access to *Attributes* 1.0, I could not test the updater with this program.)

The updater will only display *Attributes* applications of the proper versions, determined by examining the 'vers' resource with an ID of 1 or 1.1. If this resource was modified, then the program may not be visible in the Get File Dialog Box and cannot be used in an update.

No updater is required for moving from *Attributes* 1.2x to 1.3x.

Registration Fee

This product is Shareware. I am asking a registration fee of \$10 if you decide that you like this product and use it. Please support your local Shareware author by paying the \$10.

You may purchase the source code for \$30. The program was written using Metrowerks CodeWarrior C/C++ PPC (DR/3 release). Please see the Terms of Software Use and Distribution section for terms of the source code use.

Registered owners of *Padlock* (see Famous Cousin section below), will receive a rebate of \$5 when registering (the cost of *Padlock's* registration). Thus the application costs \$5 and the source code is \$25 for *Padlock* owners.

Users who registered for previous versions of *Attributes* do not need to register again. You are considered registered for this version. The source code for users who have already registered is \$20.

Please send Shareware registration fees to:

John A. Schlack
406 Newgate Court, Apt. A1
Andalusia, Pa. 19020

USA

When registering, please enclose an E-mail address on America Online, CompuServe, or Internet (if you have such an address). It is easier to contact you to let you know that I received the registration fee and about upcoming modifications to *Attributes*. Also, check or money order is the preferred form of tender.

An order form is provided at the end of this document for your convenience. Users who request the source code should receive a disk within two to three weeks. If an E-mail address is included for America Online, Internet, or CompuServe, a message will be sent to you when the source code disk is shipped. Users who simply register the program will receive a message or letter stating that the registration was received.

Register By Credit Card!

To better serve my customers (*Attributes* users), I can now accept registration fees with a credit card through CompuServe's Shareware Registration program. This program is run by CompuServe to help Shareware authors (such as myself) reach a broader audience. It is also meant to help the consumer (you) know that you will be treated fairly.

To register through this program, simply connect to CompuServe, type GO SWREG, and then follow the prompts.

| | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Program Name: | Attributes 1.3 |
| Program Author: | John Schlack |
| Registration ID: | 2814 |
| Price: | \$10 |

Terms of Software Use and Distribution

As this software is Shareware, you have the right to use the software for a period of thirty (30) days from the initial trial date before being required to either register the copy (by paying the Shareware fee, see Registration Fee section) or not to use this software again until you register your copy. Copies of this software may be maintained for distribution to other users whether or not the Shareware fee has been paid (for more information on distribution, see below). Note that although you may maintain copies of the software after 30 days from the initial trial date, you may not use the software again until it is

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Using *Attributes*

As stated earlier, System 7.0 or later is required to use *Attributes*. Drag an icon or group of icons onto the program's Finder icon and release the mouse button. *Attributes* will launch and present the user with either the Batch dialog box with a dizzying array of controls (see Figure 2) or a Single File dialog box (see Figure 3). These dialog boxes coupled with the Preferences dialog box (see Figure 1) regulate the operation of *Attributes*. If the user simply opens the application, the Preferences dialog box is presented. No file alteration will occur as no files were selected.

Selecting the OK button in any dialog box saves the dialog's settings. Cancel will dispose of any changes and no processing will occur.

Attributes functions in two modes: batch or single file. The batch mode permits the user to operate on large groups of files. The user selects different criteria which must be met for a file to be processed and then chooses which file characteristics to modify. In single file mode, the characteristics of the selected file are displayed and the user can interactively edit these attributes. Single file mode can only be entered if the Single File Editor check box is selected in the Preferences menu and only one file (not a folder or disk) was

dropped onto *Attributes*.

Online help is available using Balloon Help.

Preferences Dialog Box

Launching *Attributes* without any selected file or choosing the Prefs button from either the Batch dialog box or Single File dialog box will display the Preferences dialog box (see Figure 1). By altering this dialog's controls, the user permits the program to operate on different classes of files and even all files within folders or on disks.

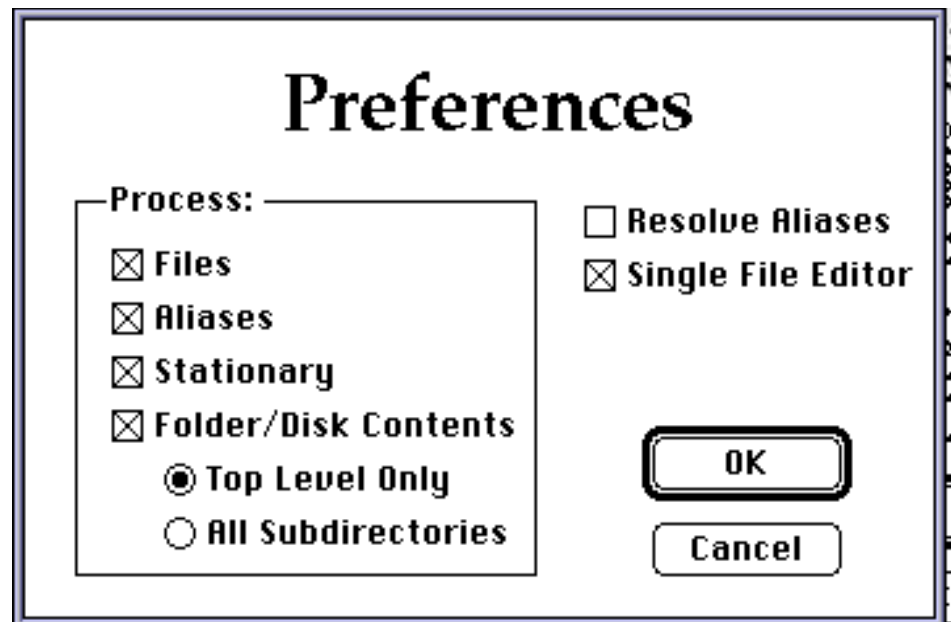


Figure 1: Preferences Dialog Box

As stated previously, this program can operate in either batch mode or single file mode. The Single File Editor check box is the primary control for toggling modes. If selected and one file is dropped onto the program, the Single File dialog box is displayed for interactive file editing. Otherwise the Batch dialog box is displayed.

NOTE: Changes to the Single File Editor check box do NOT take effect until the next time this program is launched. This is the only preferences item which does not take effect immediately. The remainder of this section is dedicated to the other controls of the Preferences dialog box. These controls are used only in the batch file mode.

Each item dropped onto *Attributes* is placed into one of four categories:

standard files, alias files, stationary files, and folders / disks. A standard file (one which is not an alias or stationary file) will be processed if the Files check box is set. The same is true for alias files and stationary files with respect to the Aliases and Stationary check boxes.

Folders and disks cannot be altered by this program. Instead, the user may operate on all files residing within that folder or disk and its sub-directories by setting the Folder / Disk Contents check box. If this control is selected, the user must choose between operating on only the files in the top level of that directory (Top Level Only radio control) or files in all subdirectories within that folder or disk (All Subdirectories radio button).

The final check box involves working with aliases. If an alias is dropped onto the *Attributes* icon, it is automatically resolved by the Finder. Thus, the item to which the alias points is passed to *Attributes*. However, when evaluating the contents of a folder or disk, *Attributes* will be able to directly access the alias file and perform the desired actions. If the Aliases check box is set, the alias itself will be modified. If the Resolve Alias check box is set, the program will locate the file that the alias points to and work on that file or folder. If you are confused, the Preferences Examples section might clear things up a bit.

When the Aliases check box is set, altered characteristics should not include creator or file type. Such changes will probably render the alias file useless.

Batch Dialog Box

The Batch dialog box (see Figure 2) permits the user to select which files to process and which attributes to modify. The dialog is divided into four areas (distinguished from sections, which are regions of this document) by dotted lines: Process Attributes (labeled), Altered Attributes (labeled), Sets (bottom left of dialog), and Dialog Control (right side of dialog). The Sets area controls the definition of working groups of operating states and is described in the Parameter Sets section. The other areas of the dialog are explained below.

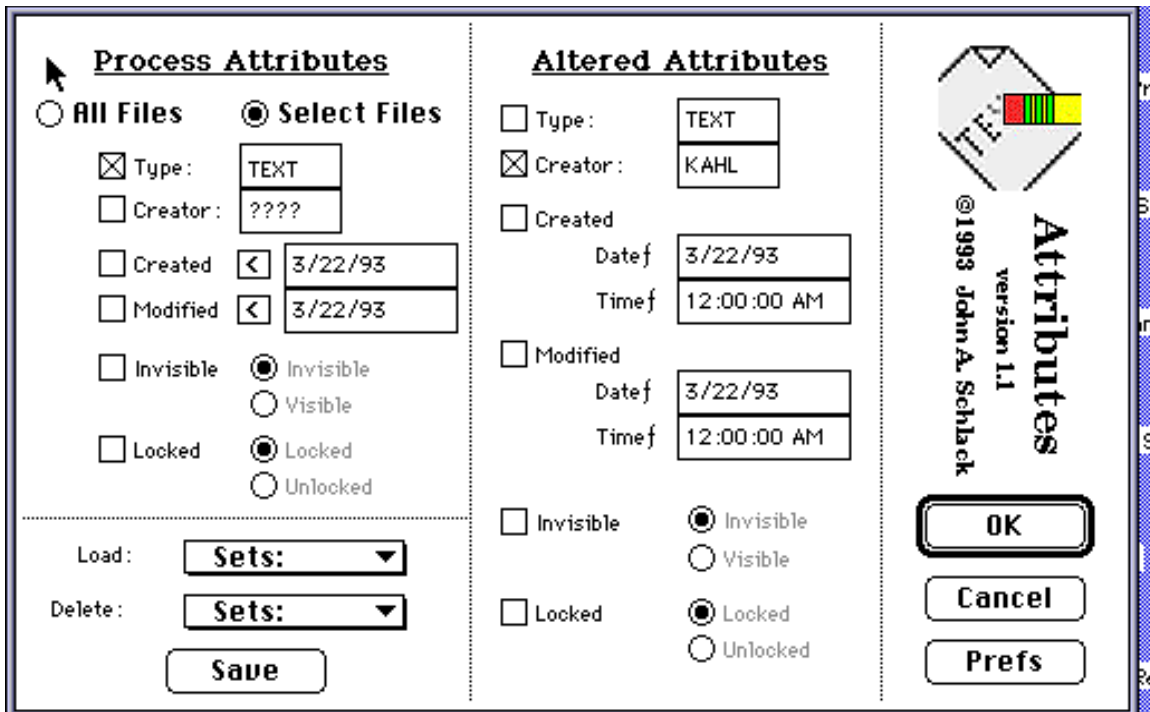


Figure 2: Batch Dialog Box (version 1.1 is pictured)

The Process Attributes area permits the user to decide upon which type of files to process. All files that meet the Preferences dialog criteria will be subjected to Process Attributes criteria. Any files that pass will be altered as defined by the Altered Attributes area. When discussing which files will be operated upon in this section, it is assumed that those files also meet the requirements imposed by the Preferences dialog box.

The user may decide to process all files by selecting the All Files radio control. Otherwise, setting the Select Files radio button will force *Attributes* to examine file characteristics for processing considerations.

Six check boxes are listed under the Select Files radio control. Boxes with check marks establish the processing requirements. Characteristics from unselected boxes are ignored.

Selecting the Type (file type) or Creator (application that created the file) boxes requires the user to enter a four character string into the text boxes. This string is used by the Finder to identify file types and creators. This document does not go into detail about types and creators. Information about these subjects is available from the Inside Macintosh series of books as well as other less technical publications. Please see the Warnings section before

using file types and creators.

The user may decide to operate on files depending on the dates of creation or last modification. The user enters the desired date and can change the date search criteria among: less than (<), less than or equal to (\leq), greater than (>), greater than or equal to (\geq), equal (=), or not equal (\neq).

Finally, the user may decide to operate on only visible/invisible files or locked/unlocked files. Toggling between these modes can be accomplished by use of the radio controls.

If more than one check box is set, ALL conditions must be met to start the processing.

The dangerous aspect of this program comes from Altering Attributes. Selections are similar to the Process Attributes except that the user must check which attributes to modify. All checked items will be modified. The user can alter the file type, creator, creation or last modification date and time, file's Finder invisibility, or its locked status. For more information about altering the file type or creator, see the Warnings section.

The date and time text boxes can operate in special ways. Entering information into both of these fields alters a file's date and time of creation or last modification. If only the date is entered and the time is left blank, altered files will have their date altered but keep the time (of either creation or modification). If the time is entered and date is left blank, the times will be altered for files but their dates will not be changed.

The Dialog control area permits the user to continue with the processing action (OK button), abort the action (Cancel button), or display the Preferences dialog box (using the Prefs button). Selecting the OK button will also save the current state as the initial state the next time the program is executed.

Parameter Sets

Control settings from the Batch dialog box can be saved into a Parameter Set for later use. All control states are saved. Thus different file processing needs can be quickly met by simply selecting a saved processing setup.

Parameter Sets are controlled by the Batch dialog box. The bottom left of the dialog box (see Figure 2) has two popup menus and a button. The two menus control the loading and deleting of previously saved Parameter Sets while the Save button inserts a new entry into the set. If no Parameter Sets

are available, the popup menus will be replaced by this text: "N/A"

To save the current batch processing state to a new set, select the Save button. A dialog box will appear prompting the user for a menu name. Enter the menu name and select the OK button to validate the name. Cancel will abort the save sequence. If the name is valid (not a duplicate or filled with characters not permitted in menu names), the entry is saved to disk and the set name is inserted into the popup menu.

To recall a previously saved set, select the Load popup menu. A list of set names will appear. Selecting one of the names changes the controls in the Batch dialog box to their state when that particular set was saved.

Deleting a set is very simple. Simply select the Delete popup menu and choose the Parameter Set to delete from the displayed list.

Note that any alteration of the Parameter Sets is permanent. Selecting the Cancel button does not undo any modifications to these menus.

Single File Dialog Box

The Single File dialog box (see Figure 3) is launched if the Single File Editor check box is selected from the Preferences dialog box and only one file was dropped onto this program. Please note that the processing mode cannot be changed in the current session. Thus if the program is in the wrong mode, altering the Single File Editor check box will not correct the problem until the next time the program is launched.

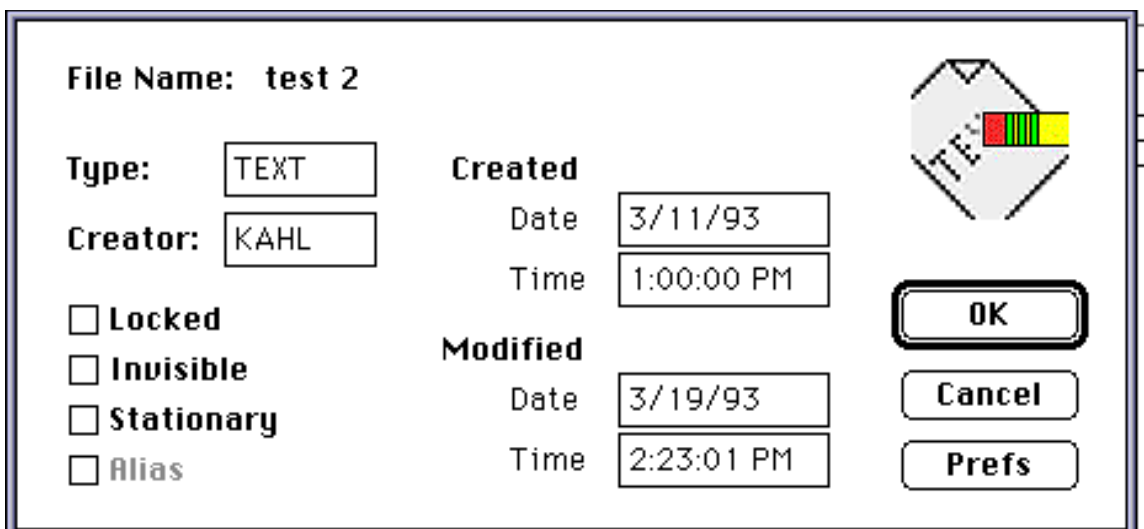


Figure 3: Single File Dialog Box

This dialog box displays the file type, creator, and dates and times of creation and modification in editable text boxes. Its lock state, invisibility, and stationary status are in check boxes which can be altered, and the alias state is in a check box which cannot be altered. Any changes that are made are saved if the user selects the 'OK' button and discarded if 'Cancel' is chosen.

Date and Time Fields

The date and time fields can select a variety of formats. Standard American examples are shown below:

Date Examples:

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| 1/1/93 | 1/1 (default to current year) |
| Jan 1, 1993 | Jan 1 (default to current year) |

Time Examples:

| | |
|---------|----------|
| noon | midnight |
| 1:00 | 1:00 AM |
| 1:01:01 | 1 AM |
| 1 PM | 13:00 |

Note that the actual format for date and time is specified in the *Date & Time* control panel. This permits support for a variety of formats (and provides better support for international users). If you are not sure a date/time format is valid, just try it. If the program does not like the format, it will let you know.

Valid dates range from 1904 through 2039. If the year is entered in two digit format, a value below 40 is considered the twenty first century (2000 to 2039). To enter a date of 1904 to 1939, the entire year (all four digits) must be entered.

Attributes follows this convention for displaying dates as well. Dates are shown without the century for dates between 1940 and 2039. Dates earlier than 1940 are displayed with the century information.

Observing the Results

After applying the changes to a file, the results may not immediately show up in the Finder. For example, if a file is visible in the Finder and its creator is altered, the file's icon may remain the same (it may not be immediately altered to reflect its new creator). Instead, the file's parent folder may need to be closed and reopened. Similar events may occur for file type

and invisibility modification.

Warnings

There are conditions where resolving aliases could get the user into trouble. If an alias points to a folder or disk and is located within one of the sub directories of that folder or disk, the program may jump into an infinite loop. *Attributes* attempts to compensate for this problem by tracking all of the aliases previously resolved. If *Attributes* runs out of memory and can no longer store these references, a dialog box is displayed prompting the user whether to continue resolving aliases. Unless you are sure that no circular alias references exist, please choose to cancel the alias resolving process (for the safety of your disk and so you don't get mad at me).

Be careful when modifying the file types and creators. Unless you know what you are doing, changing these signatures could result in loss of information or System crashes. If either signature is altered and the file is opened in an application, that program might believe that the file is a different type than it actually is. Applications attempting to process these files may destroy the file or crash the System.

Please note that I am not responsible for damage to files, software, or hardware, or loss of information due to the altering of any file information. See the Warranty Disclaimer section.

Make sure that the *Attributes* file is unlocked when executing the program. Otherwise, changes to dialog settings and Parameter Sets cannot be saved.

Preferences Examples

The following examples are designed to show the user which files would be processed depending on the current preferences settings. This assumes that ALL files were chosen from the Batch Dialog Box.

Common items in examples

Disk XXXX has 2 folders in it: F1 and F2

Folder F1 has files A, B, and stationary file C

Folder F2 has alias to file A, file D, and alias to folder F2

Boxes Checked: Files

Item Dropped: file A
Result: A was altered

Boxes Checked: Files
Item Dropped: alias to file A
Result: file A was altered (Finder automatically resolves
aliases to items dropped on *Attributes*)

Boxes Checked: Stationary, Aliases
Item Dropped: alias to file A
Result: nothing (alias resolved by Finder, nothing altered
since Files was not checked)

Boxes Checked: Stationary, Aliases
Item Dropped: stationary file C
Result: C was altered

Boxes Checked: Files, Aliases, Stationary
Item Dropped: folder F1
Result: nothing (Folder/Disk Contents not checked)

Boxes Checked: Files, Folder/Disk Contents
Item Dropped: folder F1
Result: A, B altered (C not changed since it is Stationary)

Boxes Checked: Files, Stationary, Aliases, Folder/Disk Contents
Item Dropped: folder F1
Result: A, B, C altered

Boxes Checked: Files, Folder/Disk Contents
Item Dropped: folder F2
Result: D altered (resolve aliases not checked so A not altered,
aliases not checked so alias to file A not altered)

Boxes Checked: Resolve Alias, Folder/Disk Contents
Item Dropped: folder F2

Result: nothing (although alias to file A was resolved, A was not altered since the Files pref box was not checked)

Boxes Checked: Files, Resolve Alias, Folder/Disk Contents

Item Dropped: folder F2

Result: A, D altered (if all goes well, *Attributes* should handle the circular alias of alias to Folder F2)

Boxes Checked: Files

Item Dropped: disk XXXX

Result: nothing (Folder/Disk contents must be checked)

Boxes Checked: Files, Folder/Disk Contents

Item Dropped: disk XXXX

Result: A, B, D altered

Boxes Checked: Stationary, Aliases, Folder/Disk Contents

Item Dropped: disk XXXX

Result: C, alias to A, and alias to folder F2 altered

Boxes Checked: Files, Resolve Alias, Folder/Disk Contents

Item Dropped: disk XXXX

Result: A, B, D altered

Boxes Checked: Single File Editor

Item Dropped: file A

Result: The Single File dialog box is launched for interactive processing.

Batch Attributes Examples

The following examples are designed to show the user which files would be processed depending on the current attribute dialog box settings. This assumes that the files in this example meet all criteria established by the Preferences dialog box. In each example, only those controls that are set and relevant are given. Any check box whose initial condition is not given should be assumed unchecked.

These examples differ from those above in that the effects of previous examples are cumulative. The initial conditions are provided below.

Initial Conditions

Folder F has files A, B, C; In all cases Folder F is dropped onto *Attributes*

| | | |
|--|-----------|--------|
| A, B, and C are text files | File Type | 'TEXT' |
| A and B were created by Teach Text Creator | | 'ttx' |
| C was created by Word | Creator | 'MSWD' |
| A, B, and C are unlocked and visible | | |

Dates:

| | | |
|---|----------|-------------------|
| A | Created | 3/22/93 1 AM |
| | Modified | 3/22/93 1 AM |
| B | Created | 1/1/93 12 AM |
| | Modified | 3/26/93 12 PM |
| C | Created | 3/1/92 2:30 PM |
| | Modified | 3/2/92 10 AM |

Controls (process): All Files Radio

Controls (altered): Invisible Check Box, Invisible Radio

Result: A, B, C are invisible

Controls (process): Select Files Radio, Creator Check Box, Creator 'MSWD'

Controls (altered): Invisible Check Box, Visible Radio, Created Check Box,
Created Date 4/4/95, Time blank

Result: C is now visible, and has a creation date of 4/4/95 and
creation time of 2:30 PM (not changed)

Controls (process): Select Files Radio, Invisibility Check Box, Invisible Radio

Controls (altered): Invisible Check Box, Visible Radio, Creator Check Box,
Creator 'KAHL'

Result: A and B are now visible and have a new creator (THINK C)

Controls (process): Select Files Radio, Created Check Box, Created Date 1/1/94,
Created Comparison Function '>'

Controls (altered): Created Check Box, Created Date 3/22/93 Time blank,
Modified Check Box, Modified Date 3/22/93 Time midnight

Result: C (whose creation date of 4/4/95 was greater than ('>')
the date 1/1/94) has been modified so that its creation and
modification dates are each 3/22/93, its creation time is
unaltered (2:30 PM) and its modification time is midnight

Controls (process): Select Files Radio, Type Check Box, File Type 'TEXT',
Locked Check Box, Locked Radio

Controls (altered): Type Check Box, File Type '????'

Result: nothing since no files are both type 'TEXT' and locked

Controls (process): Select Files Radio, Type Check Box, File Type 'TEXT',
Locked Check Box, Unlocked Radio

Controls (altered): Creator Check Box, Creator '????'

Result: A, B, and C now all have unknown creators ('????') since
all three files met the criteria of being text files and
unlocked

Controls (process): Select Files Radio, Creator Check Box, Creator '????'

Controls (altered): Creator Check Box, Creator 'KAHL'

Action: Strike Save Button, enter set name "THINK C" (but skip
the quotes) in the dialog box that appears and strike OK;
name dialog box disappears and strike Cancel for Attributes
dialog box

Result: a new set was just saved, but file processing was aborted
by Cancel in Batch Dialog; in addition any
modifications made to the Batch dialog (except sets)
are lost due to the Cancel

Action: Select Load and from the popup menu select "THINK C"

Result: Changes from the above example are loaded as the

operating parameters, hitting OK will process the files
and cause all files to have a Creator of 'KAHL' (THINK C)

Other Software

Color Fractal Generator 2.2x is a scriptable fractal program that creates beautiful fractals. It provides/supports background processing, multiple fractal generation, 16 to 16 million colors, large screen monitors, custom palettes, comprehensive manuals, QuickScript support, an editable scripts menu, and an extensive vocabulary of verbs (scripting). It recently received honorable mention in the category of "Best Scriptable Application" in the Everyday AppleScript Contest.

Attributes is a cousin of the now famous (in my view) *Padlock*. In addition to being available on CompuServe and America Online, a copy can be obtained in the Power User's Toolkit version 15.0 from MacWAREHOUSE (in volume 19.0 of their catalog). *Padlock* is a much simpler utility than *Attributes*, although much less powerful. *Padlock's* only job in life is to lock and unlock groups of files using the same drag and drop procedure as is present in *Attributes*. Since it has only one function, it is extremely easy to use (plus it has two neat 3-D buttons for locking and unlocking files).

Both programs are available on CompuServe and America Online. In addition, they may be found at various ftp sites.

Revision History

Version 1.3 (June 29, 1994):

Users enter the date and time in formats specified by the Date & Time control panel. PowerMac version now displays an error message if attempting to launch it on non-PowerMac.

Version 1.21 (May 28, 1994):

680x0 version updated to the same feature set as the PowerMac version. Program modified to always be the front-most application when launched.

Version 1.2 PPC (April 22, 1994):

PowerMac version of *Attributes* (users of others Macintoshes

should still use version 1.1). Writes preferences to a file in the Preferences folder. Permits shift-tab key combination to move through text fields backwards.

Version 1.1 (July 3, 1993):

Added support for altering file creation / modification times or leaving it the same and only changing the date. Updater to maintain current preferences and menu items from previous version. Option to display files dropped onto Attributes with special editor (interactive attribute modification as opposed to batch modification).

Version 1.02 (May 4, 1993):

Fixed some missing Balloon Help items.

Version 1.01 (May 2, 1993):

Fixed pop-up menu bugs.

Version 1.0 (March 26, 1993):

Initial release.

Problems and Incompatibilities

Updating text boxes in the Batch dialog box is slightly quirky. The first time a character is typed into a field (whether at the start of dialog editing or after changing edit fields) the text display may shift, which causes some misaligned characters. The problem will correct itself in a second or so after a dialog update. However, this problem is slightly annoying. I have not been able to devise a fix yet, but if and when I do, I will upload a new version of the program.

Questions and Comments

If you have questions or comments, please try to use E-mail. My addresses are:

Internet: jschlack@voicenet.com

CompuServe: 70252,143

Visit my web site:

<http://www.voicenet.com/~jschlack>

Attributes Order Form

Version 1.3

Name and Address

Name:

Company:

Title:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Country:

phone # (optional):

fax (optional):

E-Mail Addresses

America Online:

CompuServe:

Internet:

Other:

Register for Program

| | <u>Number</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|---|---------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Attributes | _____ | x \$10 | = _____ |
| Attributes and Source Code | _____ | x \$30 | = _____ |
| Attributes (Padlock Owners) | _____ | x \$ 5 | = _____ |
| Attributes and Source (Padlock Owners) | _____ | x \$25 | = _____ |
| Attributes and Source (Attributes Owners) | _____ | x \$20 | = _____ |
| | | | TOTAL = _____ |

Mail this form and Check or Money Order to:

John A. Schlack

**406 Newgate Court, Apt. A1
USA**