

Hints & Tips. . . Hints & Tips

Please keep sending in your hints on anything relevant to the Archimedes, A3000 and A5000. Don't forget, we pay for all hints we publish.

COMMS WITH SERIAL PORT ON A5000

The Acorn A5000 Release Notes contain some important information about the serial port that will especially affect comms enthusiasts. Split baud operation is no longer supported, as the serial chip has been changed, and this will affect those who wish to access boards at 1200/75 baud (V23), for example. Remember that buffered modems can still access V23 on a 1200/1200 speed as the modem will accommodate the speed differential automatically.

Some RISC OS 2.00 applications which interface with the serial port will not work correctly under RISC OS 3 due to changes in buffer vector specifications. There is a module, *SerialUtils* which is provided with RISC OS 3 which should help some of these applications to work - for example, Hearsay I and early versions of Hearsay II need this module, but the latest versions of Hearsay II do not.

Finally, the serial port has had a number of pins swapped around to make it compatible with the PC standard serial port. Generally to make "old" leads work on an A5000 (i.e. those that work on models before the A5000), you should swap over pins 6 and 8 in the A5000 9-pin connector. This is the recommended wiring for Hearsay I and II on the A5000.

MONITOR SAVER PRINTING PROBLEM

[Alan Wrigley](#)

The RISC User Monitor Saver (Volume 4 Issue 7) is very useful, but it has one snag. If an application is in the middle of a print job when the screen is blanked, the print job is suspended until the screen is restored by pressing a key or moving the mouse. It can be very annoying if you leave a long

document printing, then go back in 20 minutes to find that it has halted halfway down the first page.

Luckily there is a simple solution. The monitor saver works by claiming the event vector, and enabling events 10 (mouse button) and 11 (key pressed). All you need to do is add event 0 (output buffer empty) to the list, since this event will be generated regularly while printing is in progress. To do this, load the program *MakeMod*, and alter lines 320-330 as follows:

```
320 CMPNE R0,#0
330 CMPNE R0,#11
```

and then add the following lines:

```
221 MOV R1,#0
222 SWI "OS_Byte"
551 MOV R1,#0
552 SWI "OS_Byte"
```

Then run the program to create the amended module. The monitor saver will not switch the machine off while the machine is printing, so the print job will not be stopped.

CHANGING LANGUAGE IN DESKEDIT

[Lee Calcraft](#)

DeskEdit will only detokenise a Basic program dragged to its icon if it is of filetype Basic. If you have a Basic program of some other filetype (imported from another machine, say) you will need to change its filetype to Basic before dragging it to DeskEdit.

Also, if for some reason you have a text file in DeskEdit that you want to change into a Basic file, you must select Basic from the Language submenu, and also set the correct filetype from DeskEdit's filetype menu. But remember the filetype you want is BasicTx (FD1) - detokenised Basic - since that is what you have - not FFB, Basic.

HARD SPACE BY MISTAKE

[Rolf Herschel](#)

When typing text quickly, you can sometimes hit the

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Alt key at the same time as the space bar. This will insert a hard space (ASCII 160) into the text rather than the usual space character (ASCII 32). This looks just like a normal space and so you will not be able to spot the error. This can cause problems in several areas. For example, if you do this in a Basic program, then you are likely to get a syntax error when the program is run. Listing the program will show the keyword EVAL where you expected a space, because 160 is the token for EVAL.

You could also have problems if you are transferring the text to another application or computer. For example, you might transfer it to a DTP package and then use an outline font which does not have character 160 defined at all, so no space at all will appear in the text. If you transfer the text to another computer, it is quite possible that ASCII 160 is used for a completely different character altogether. Unless you have intentionally put hard spaces into your text, it is a good idea to perform a global search/replace if these problems are likely to occur.

WAITING FOR THE PRINT JOB...

Will Davidson

It can be very frustrating waiting for an application to print out if it doesn't print in the background. Take Paint for example; a large sprite can take a very long time to print, and there is no way of telling when the job has finished without staring at the screen for ages. However, if you start the print job and wait for the hourglass to appear, then press F12 followed by Ctrl-G and then Return (nothing

will appear on the screen, not even the expected * prompt), then when the print job has finished the computer will emit a beep, informing you that you can use your computer again.

TEMPORARY DIALOGUE BOXES

Richard Hallas

Windows may be opened using the calls "Wimp_CreateMenu" and "Wimp_CreateSubMenu" in place of the normal "Wimp_OpenWindow". When windows are opened in this way, they are *transient*, and clicking a mouse button outside them or pressing Escape makes them vanish. If a dialogue box opened in this way (i.e. as a box off a menu) contains any writable icons, the caret will be placed in the first of these by the Wimp. You should set the input focus colour to be the same as the standard title bar (i.e. the title bar should not light up) and the window should incorporate no control icons or scroll bars, just a title. It should, however, contain a Cancel and OK icon, and no action should be taken until OK is clicked. The following lines will open a standard Info box using this method, in a similar way to Edit when the Info option is chosen (rather than just moved over):

```
SYS "Wimp_GetPointerInfo",,block%
SYS "Wimp_CreateMenu",,info%,block%!0
-24,block%!4+24
```

You may wish to open a window as part of an existing menu tree, as the user moves over a submenu pointer. By setting the menu item flag to generate a message (type &400C0, MenuWarning) instead of opening the window in the menu tree itself, the Wimp will pass the co-ordinates for the

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Title repeat

dialogue box within the message so you can update the contents of your window and then let it open as a submenu using “Wimp_CreateSubMenu”.

STANDARD ARCSCAN SEARCHING

Neal Mercer

The indexes to RISC User and BEEBUG magazines have a number of standard entries that can be searched for, like Postbag and Points Arising. The RISC User indexes are generally consistent in their presentation, so that searching for *Postbag*: should give all the Postbag entries in the database. However, some of the early BEEBUG databases may be missing the colon, and have “Postbag “ or “Postbag-” instead, so it is wise to search for standard fields using wildcards, e.g. *Postbag** or *News**.

UNPLUGGED SHELLCLI

George Toulmin

A note by Alan Wrigley in Hints and Tips, RISC User 4:6, remarked that ROM modules may get unplugged by certain programs, and that

```
*RMReInit <module name>
```

will restore them. However, there is a problem if the module unplugged is the ShellCLI module, which interprets star commands, because then the above command will give the error “File ‘ShellCLI’ not found”. However, if you get an Edit task window on the Desktop and type the above into it, then the ShellCLI module will be reinitialised and all will be well.

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