

HINTS

&

T I P S

Keep sending in your hints on anything relevant to the Archimedes range. And remember, we pay for every hint we publish.

STICKY DISC LABELS

Tony Shew

After removing a label from a disc, the surface of the disc can sometimes be left sticky. Spray WD40 onto a tissue and wipe gently over the surface of the disc case. Never spray directly onto the disc as some of the oil will get onto the magnetic surface. Ensure that you remove all the oil with a dry tissue otherwise a new label will not stick.

SPACES IN FILENAMES

Henry Morgan

The RISC OS Filer does not allow spaces in filenames, and yet occasionally you notice that some other people have got around this restriction. In fact, what they have done is to use a so-called hard space (ASCII 160). There are several ways to access this. If you have Chars running, you can see the hard space in the third column of the sixth row. To enter a character from the Chars window into a transient dialogue box (such as a Save box) you can't just click on it as normal since that would cause the dialogue box to disappear. You must instead position the pointer over the character and press Shift.

Two other ways to get a hard space are to hold down the Alt key while typing 160 at the numeric keypad, or even more simply press Alt-Space.

ICONISED MENUS

Dr. M. Richards

If you have a window which has been iconised on the pinboard, then clicking Menu over that icon will open

the standard pinboard menu. However, if you hold down Shift while clicking Menu, what you get is the window's own menu, i.e. the one which would have been seen if the window had been open. This facility can often enable you to perform functions on the window without having to de-iconise it first.

FILING SYSTEM CONFUSION

Atle Mjelde Brødholt

If you use a lot of different filing systems (ADFS, SCSI, CFS, RAWFS etc.) it is easy to forget which one is the currently selected system. An easy way round this is to put the following line into your boot file:

```
SetMacro CLI$Prompt <FileSwitch$Current  
FilingSystem>:>
```

This will cause the command line prompt to include the name of the currently selected filing system, e.g.:

```
SCSI:>
```

PRINTER RESOLUTIONS

Derek Lucas

The performance of my Star XE24/10 printer has been much enhanced by the RISC OS 3.1 Printers upgrade (RISC User 7:6 disc), particularly in the colour mode. However, printing at 360x360 is very slow and also greedy with ink! For most purposes 180x180 grey dithered is adequate and nearly five times faster. To make the change between the two easier, drag the LQ860 driver to the printer control panel twice. Configure the top one, which will be the default, to 180x180 and add the suffix LR (for low resolution) to its name. Then configure the lower one to 360x360 with 250 colours and add HR to its name. The two icons now sit side by side on the icon bar, where either can be selected when required. Further resolutions could be added by configuring more incarnations of the driver.

DOTTED LINES IN BASIC

Jack Pike

DRAW x,y draws a continuous line from the present graphics position to the point x,y. The equivalent dotted line can be drawn using PLOT 21,x,y. The default dot setting sets alternate pixels on and off, giving what appears as a faint continuous line. To get a more recognisable dotted line, the dot pattern needs to be set with the VDU 23,6 command. To set dashes and spaces four pixels long use VDU 23,6,%11110000|. Note that the last character is a vertical bar not a 'one'.

The VDU 23,6 command has a total of eight further

parameters. These can be used to give more complicated dot-dash patterns which repeat using more than the default 8 pixels. The repeat number of pixels can be up to 64 and can be set by:

```
*FX 163,242,n
```

where n is between 0 and 64. For example:

```
MODE 12
VDU 23,6,%11111100,%00110000|
*FX 163,242,16
MOVE 0,0:PLOT 21,500,500
```

draws a dot-dash line with a 16-pixel repeat pattern.

MOUSE BRAKE

Alan Wrigley

The default mouse step setting for RISC OS 3.1 is 3 (this value being the one that most users find preferable). This is ideal for moving the pointer around the screen quickly without losing control over its position. However, at this setting the pointer does not always move consistently by a pixel at a time; sometimes the tiniest movement of the mouse causes the pointer to jump two pixels or more. Most of the time this is not a problem, but if you are performing a delicate task, such as dragging an icon's bounding box in RomEd so that it aligns to a specific position, it can be very frustrating if you can't position the pointer accurately. In this case a mouse step of 1 is much more reliable.

How do you change the step quickly and simply? Using *Configure is no good since it has no effect until the next reset, and although the Configure application acts instantly it's a bit inconvenient having to have it installed and the window open. Equally, you don't want to have to quit the desktop and drop into Basic to issue a MOUSE STEP command every time you need to change.

There are two quicker ways. Firstly, if you keep a permanent task window open with Basic running, as suggested in Using the RISC OS Task Window (RISC User 6:6), then you could program two function keys with MOUSE STEP 1 and MOUSE STEP 3. Alternatively, you could keep two small Basic programs on your pinboard for the task (named perhaps MouseSlow and MouseFast). All these need contain is one line:

```
MOUSE STEP n
```

where n is the required step value.

HANDS-FREE PRINTING FROM

MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS

Tony Shew

If you want to print a selection of files from different directories or different applications, first drag their icons onto the pinboard, then select them and drag the selection to the printer manager on the icon bar. This method means that the computer can get on with the job of printing the whole lot while you have a cup of tea.

ICONISER BUG

M. Whiteman

I have found what appears to be a bug in RISC OS 3.10. If you click on a window's Close icon with Shift held down, the window is iconised as you would expect. If you then re-open that window by a method known to the program (e.g. clicking with Select on the icon bar icon as with Palette or Configure), the window reappears but the iconised window is still on the pinboard. Clicking Shift-Menu in this icon still offers all the menu options as normal. This can cause confusion, and I have not been able to find a solution.

OVATION & HEARSAY DISC SPACE ECONOMY

David Pilling

You can make Ovation use less disc space by deleting one of the files !RunImage or !RunImageS. The latter is the spell check version and is loaded on machines with more than 1Mb of memory. Normally only one of the files is used, so you may delete the one that is not appropriate for your machine.

You can make Hearsay use less space by deleting unused modem drivers (held in the directory !Hearsay.Driver) and keeping only one of the following files: Hearsay (RISC OS 2 only), HearsayA5D (A5000 with RISC OS 3.00) and HearsayA5 (RISC OS 3.1 or greater).

USING CFS

Geoff Scott

Having used Computer Concepts' CFS for some time, I have found that while some files could be compressed, there were others that I wanted to remain untouched. The only way to handle this was to use the ADFS Filer alongside the CFS Filer, and this led to a confusing and cluttered desktop.

