

GP32:zine

DOES NOT COMPUTE!!1

Software Preservation

1983

Huge firmware round-up!

Contents:

FLU vs NON-FLU
GPCinema reviewed
Competition winners
More Commercial games
Huge firmware round-up
Focus on the Sinclair Spectrum
Software preservation interview

ISSUE #3

> <http://www.gp32zine.com>

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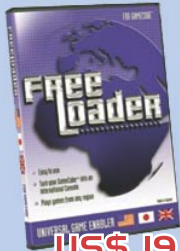
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GP32:zine

Introduction

Wow, two issues already. It feels like it was yesterday we released the first one. Well, time flies I guess. This is noticeable in the things that have happened in the GP32 scene in the meantime. There's been a meet-up in Bath City in Britain (which was a blast, really), we've seen the birth - and death - of some of the best emulators around, including GenEmu from Zardoz Jones and fGen from Rlyeh. Truly both of them are wonderful emulators, and succeed in delivering what we've all been waiting for, a playable Genesis Emulator! Amongst the killed emulators, are the infamous Snes9xGP which was indisputably the best SNES emulator around. Its only competitor was the first version of Zardoz Jones' almost alphasate emulator, and a lot of people are wondering about what the scene would have looked like if ZJ had continued work on that emulator. The real answer is, that it would not have looked much different. Of course we would have had SNES at a more playable rate, but it would not have changed the scene in more ways.

The GP32 scene would still be the small amount of dedicated owners, who are eager to love, adore and cherish this wonder of a machine. This showed at the British meet-up in Bath, where the hardcore fans who were able to come, including myself, spent a whole day, just talking, playing and adoring the GP32.

I hope you will enjoy this second issue of GP32:zine, whether you are reading it online, or you are reading it in print. As you can see below, GP32:zine will now feature an exclusive comicstrip each issue. These strips are done by Bobson. Great work from his side, and we hope you enjoy his artwork!

If you have any questions, or just want to chit-chat, go to our boards at <http://www.gp32zine.com/>!

-zimba



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GP32:zine competition




Competition Winners

The GP32:zine competition is over, even though it was delayed a lot, here are the winners:

- 1st place:** Markus Autio, Finland
- 2nd place:** James McGowan, US
- 3rd place:** Jerry Alan Dunagan Jr, US
- 4th place:** Ferdy van Varik, Netherlands
- 5th place:** Samuel Lee Gordon II, US

Thanks to everyone who entered, great job and thanks for your interest in the magazine! The winners will get their prizes sent to them as soon as possible!

To sum up, this is what they won:

- 1st place:** GP32 Console
- 2nd place:** Astonishia Story R
- 3rd-5th place:** Official Carry Case

by answering these questions:

- 1) At what clock speed did the Commodore 64 run at?
- 2) What company developed Tanglees Magic Square?
- 3) Who the man behind Pipe Panic?
- 4) According to Taras, the cost of GP Cinema is the same as what?
- 5) How many levels does R-type 1 have?

Questions? Send a mail to zimba@gp32zine.com

On the scene news

News

Blazer delayed but expanded!

Following what was only previously some brief mentions, legendary GenesisMu, GPVGB and SnesEmu coder Zardoz-Jones has given more information on his new platform engine *Blazer*.

The game kit, that makes titles like Sonic and Mario “extremely easy to knock up within a few mins of work”, is about 70% complete and work will resume after December 23rd. While information is rare to find, it is known that the promising engine will have a full 2D collision engine and support the GP32, Tapwave Zodiac, Smartphone, PocketPC and PC. PSP support may also be on the cards.

-rico

OpenSNES9x announced!

YoyoFRs new secret project has been revealed! It was - as many of us had already guessed - a working SNES emulator, even a really good one! At the moment it runs most game at fullspeed without sound on frameskip 1.

Good news indeed!

Here are some of the features, grabbed from GP32x.com (thanks!):

- It features zipped savestates!
- You can adjust the gamma
- Many games runs fullspeed with frameskip 1 (at least the ones I tried)
- it has no sound (yet)

I bet I am not the only one really excited about this project, and we are eager to know more. Expect more information on OpenSNES9x in the coming issues!

-zimba

On the scene news

Gloop Deluxe Released!

Toris' wonderful smashhit Gloop Deluxe is finished and is up for order on his very own site, right here:

<http://www.combustion-studios.co.uk>

Gloop Deluxe features in Toris' own words:

48 new original levels
 3 difficulties, resulting in 144 levels to complete.
 The 48 levels spread over 6 interesting campaigns, 3 of which are interestingly themed.
 7 items, including bomb, anti-gravity, and green gloop stopper.
 2 different colours of gloop, each with different exits, presenting a new and exciting challenge.
 Much faster and more optimised than gloop, running on average at 6x the speed.
 New and improved graphics.
 Levels up to 4x the size of the original.
 And, finally, a new level and campaign editor for you to create your own exciting new levels.

Looks like this one is going to be a seller! Gloop Deluxe will be up for a review in the next issue of GP32:
 zine!

-zimba



On the scene news

In other news:

- FaMe Software

have launched a funky new website at <http://www.famesoft.ru/>. Amongst the clean layout and original graphics you can find information on their projects including the now-famous Super Plusha, plus news on their new projects such as the 20-game Solitaire Game Pack. Kudos to these guys for succeeding in a pretty difficult market!

- We got linked!

Austrian radio station FM4 ran an article on the GP32 with emulation as the focus. GP32x, GP32Emu and GPZ were referenced at the end: thanks guys! You can find the full article here: <http://fm4.orf.at/connected/148244/main>

- fCOL released!

After a perpetual private beta stage over the mailing list, Rlyeh has released his ColecoVision emulator to the public. It features the usual lovely compressed ROM support (.ROM, .BIN and .COL formats), fast fileselector and clear sound. However, Rlyeh has surpassed himself with full savestates and a virtual keyboard. Throw in full screen stretching, hacked BIOS support, autofire, GoodNames and PNG screenshots and I think you have a winner. You can get fCOL32 from Rlyeh's site at <http://www.retrodev.info/>.

- Some dispute over a possible European launch

According to GP32news.com's fx-man and GP32Spain.com, Virgin Play signed a contract with Gamepark for as many as 35,000 (!) GP32 units to be sold in March of 2004, plus the possibility of more if the console succeeds. Although sale is currently limited to Spain, Portugal and Italy, this still makes importing easier for the rest of us and will undoubtedly have an effect on the GP32's popularity worldwide. Yet there's a spanner in the works: other sources have labelled this report as "not totally truth." Other sources report that 35,000 units is a gross overestimate. If it is true, let's hope it doesn't get cancelled (again) :) Watch this space for more concrete news...

-rico

On the scene news

GP32:zine mail box

GP32:zine will include a mailbox section in future issues. Therefore we request to you, that if you have anything on your mind, don't hesitate to mail them to us. It could be anything questions, opinions, rants and much more, and the best ones will be put in here, and answered by the staff. The Mailbox feature will only be here if you guys have something to say, so if you got questions about the GP32, the magazine, the world, your life or anything else, just mail them in, and we will choose the ones that should be in the magazine. Regrettably, we can only answer the questions we publish, but if you have questions, go to our boards, on www.gp32zine.com.

Remember this could relate to other things than the GP32, as long as it has to do with handheld gaming!

This is your chance to get heard in the GP32 community, so send the mails to mailbox@gp32zine.com.

Focus on: Sinclair

Focus on: Sinclair Spectrum

I'm going to enjoy this. This is my opportunity to write about one of the seminal computers of my life. This is the one that really got me started full speed ahead on my progression towards my current career, and the source of thousands of hours of fun, frustration and gaming Nirvana in the mid to late 1980s. The ZX Spectrum (known affectionately by its many fans as the "Speccy") was a peculiarly British machine, and so here's the article to hopefully educate and inform those around the world who never had the chance to have a go themselves.

It all started with a British

entrepreneur and inventor named Clive Sinclair, in the dawning days of the 80s. A small company known as "Science of Cambridge" produced a machine dubbed as the ZX80, which was a black-and-white, home kit based machine with very little in the way of specification (1k RAM, 3.25Mhz Z80 CPU, and a flat, membrane-like keyboard), but was many people's first venture into the arena of home computing. It allowed the use of a TV (and only a TV) linked to a UHF-out socket as a display. Then came the evolution of "Science of Cambridge" into the more well-known "Sinclair Research". The newly formed company released the ZX81 in

1981 as a follow up to the ZX80, but soon started development on something a lot more interesting.

In 1982, the fledgling company released the ZX Spectrum 16k for £125, closely followed by the ZX Spectrum 48k for an extra £50. Physically, these were identical – small, black, with a grey rubber keyboard and ports at the back. These were more powerful beasts than the ZX80 and ZX81. They had 8 colour (count 'em!) graphics, a more evolved Z80A processor (still at 3.5Mhz), and finally were conducive to the production of, yes, you guessed it - GAMES! The data was stored on cheap cassette tapes, allowing low-cost production of games.

Games are what truly took the Spectrum from the status of geeks' toy to an essential part of many front rooms. Coupled with a tape deck and a 'Kempston' joystick (which plugged into a wobbly interface in the back of the machine), people were working out that you could have rather a lot of fun. The games that were produced for these early Speccies have become classics ('Jet Set Willy' anyone?). It was a common sight to see that flashing wobbly border during tape loads, usually taking 5 or more minutes! (ah – those were the days!). They soon updated the 48k Spectrum to the Spectrum+, which included a better, but still not





good, keyboard.

Just as an aside – it's actually not totally true that Americans never had a taste of Specyness. A company called Timex in the states released clone machines that were fully compatible with the Spectrum, but disappeared into company heaven before they got a hold in the market.

In 1984, Sinclair briefly flirted with the Business market in the form of the Sinclair QL, but the failed and probably contributed to the company's later sell-out to Amstrad (more on this later). 1985 saw the release of the 128k Spectrum, with an improved ROM (with a new, menu-driven system), and a new Yamaha AY-3-8912 sound chip (the same as the 16-bit Atari ST later had!) to round off the package. This new memory allowed larger games to be loaded in one go, and the improved sound made a big difference to the music (with computer music gurus such as Tim Follin cutting their teeth on the spectrum).

Unfortunately, in 1985, around the time of the 128k Spectrum, the rights to produce the machine were sold to the British company Amstrad. This is very likely to have been because of Sinclair's release of the C5, an odd transport vehicle

Spectrum Specifications:

Firmware:

3.54 MHz Zilog Z80A CPU
16K / 48K RAM (later 128K RAM)

Display:

32 x 22 character text display
256 x 192 pixel resolution
8 colours

Sound:

1 channel, 5 octave (16/48K Spectrums)
3 channel, 7 octaves (128K Spectrums)

I/O:

Z80 bus, tape, RF television (All Spectrums)
External numeric keypad (Spectrum 128)
RS232 - Midi Out, RGB, Joystick (Spectrum 128, +2, +2A, +3)

Storage:

Built-in tape recorder (Spectrum +2, +2A)
Build-in 3" disk drive (Spectrum +3)

Links:

<http://www.nvg.ntnu.no/sinclair/>
<http://www.old-computers.com/>
<http://www.worldofspectrum.org/>



that cost a lot to develop, but sold in pitiful numbers. Fortunately though, Amstrad decided to take the spectrum and run with it. They made the ZX Spectrum +2, which included a 'proper' keyboard, a built in tape deck, and brought the price down to £139. It was with this that the spectrum retained its place as the top selling home computer in the UK. Amstrad later released the +2A (a strange, black +2, that just seemed to have compatibility problems, but no real enhancements), and the +3 (a 3 inch disk based system that never really did very well, and was only ever owned by the rich kids in school).

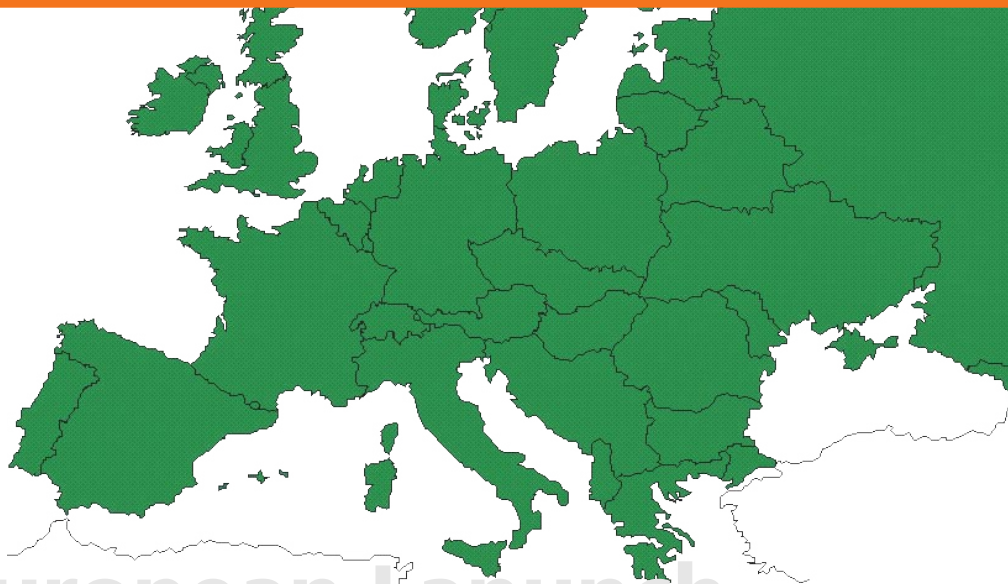
As a final breath, in 1989, the Sam

Coupé was released by a company called MGT. This was like a 'Super Spectrum' that was compatible with most old spectrum software, but had enhanced 128-colour, high-res graphics, and a 6-channel stereo sound chip, along with midi ports and a funky new design. If it had been released two years earlier, it would have taken the world by storm, but alas, it wasn't to be. MGT went under and resurfaced several times before calling it a day. This really marked the end of the Spectrum's dominance, with games consoles beginning to grow in popularity (Sega's Master System and Megadrive being the main ones), and the Commodore Amiga with its powerful graphics and sound becoming more affordable.

The most recent development in the spectrum arena has been emulation. This is of course where the GP32 comes in. Special'K, GPSpeccy, and ZXGP32 all emulate this great little machine. Also, the games have been showing up on a British device by the still-present Amstrad, called the e-mailer. The Amstrad emailer is basically a phone with a mono screen and keyboard built in. Makes me laugh to think that you can now download to your landline phone and play on your GP32 those games I was marvelling over in 1986 whilst waiting 5 minutes each for them to load!

Overall, the spectrum was a fantastic part of mine and many others' lives. It was my first 'decent' home computer, and one that will forever have a place in my nostalgic 80s memories. Its great to see the old games resurfacing and being enjoyed by a whole new generation, and its also good to see there are people committed to keeping archives of these titles, when it would be so easy to let them slide into oblivion. Keep it going everyone, but most of all... Have Fun!

-Axeman



European Launch

European launch, where art thou?

As most people know, GP32 is available to most countries in the world, by online ordering, by sites such as Play Asia, Liksang and GBAX to name a few. It was announced around mid September that the GP32 would finally be coming to Europe, launched by Mitsui, something long awaited. At this time, many discussions began about what to expect, etc. Later in October, it was announced by Mitsui that they had backed out of the deal with Gamepark, at the time, it was said that they had pulled out due to Gameparks financial situation, which was out of their control. Around this time, a European firmware was released, which is now available on GP32X.

But now what???

A few days later, Liksang commented on the launch failure, stating that there was no need to

worry about the future of GP32, and that it was still in production, and will be available on Liksang for a long time to come. It went on to say that around 260,000 GP32 units were supposed to be in Europe by the end of 2004, worth around \$20,000,000. Also that they had spoken to Gamepark after Mitsui called it off, and that Mitsui had pressured Gamepark by setting an ultimatum for the end of the month. In early November, it was confirmed by insiders from Entware, that Gamepark were speaking another European company, and that a launch may happen sometime in the spring. There were supposedly translations of games planned for Mitsui's launch, and there is no more information on these.

Is there hope?

So now, while a launch has not

been officially confirmed, there is hope for all GP32 users that Gamepark will successfully do a European launch.

-Herb12

FLU vs. Non-FLU

Let there be light!

The question most people ask themselves while ordering a GP32 is most likely, should I get a Front Light Unit? Being a relatively good question, this article will try to cover the pros and cons of each system, and eventually help future buyers decide. The article will also cover the technical aspects of the Front Light Unit - plus we will try to get rid of some of the confusion some people experience. Well, what are we waiting for, let's get on with the article and lay down the biblical references for a while.

The Good

To fully understand how the Front Light Unit works, you must first understand the psysics of reflection and illumination. No, not really. Basically, the FLU (or Front Light Unit, as nobody cares to call it) is a quite handy – but pretty simple device. It allows one to play in dark places

and enviroments with bad lightning, such as this authors room – dark and messy. As most people play at home, while travelling or at work, a FLU seems like the perfect choice for ultimate comfort. No more irritation angling the console to get just the perfect angle for the sunlight to hit the screen, allowing you to fully see what is going on in the game or the movie. You don't have to think about playing after bedtime, now you can easily comfort yourself in the bed, turn off the lights and watch those dirty movies. The Front Light Unit, not to confuse with a Back Lit Unit, which is not available. This is a message to all new-comers to the scene: Do not call it a backlit unit, as this is not the case. What you have brought, or are intending to buy, is a FLU – short for Front Light Unit. The FLU works by lighting up the LCD screen, using two diodes and a "light distribution sheet". The sheet makes it possible for the two

diodes to light up the entire screen, and not just one edge of the screen. This miracle sheet works by reflecting the light down to the display, using a series of ribs in the



Advantages:	Disadvantages:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to play in dark enviroments • More comfort • No more "angling" the screen for better lightning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs \$70 more • Drains batteries • More dust?

plastic. Clearly a smart invention – allowing us to watch dirty movies and play games in the dark. A FLU clearly sound like a gift from God, but there



are disadvantages as well, so let's start covering those!

The Bad

Let us not skip the major disadvantage, the price. On Lik-Sang, a FLU costs 70 dollars more than the non-lit version. While you might think that it is rather cheap, when you think of the fact that it allows you to play (with yourself if necessary) in the dark, let us cover the other disadvantages. The FLUs diodes need power. That is understandable, but what is not as understandable is, that

the diodes cut the batteries lifetime in half. While a non-lit version of the GP32 can last for about 10 hours of good quality playtime, the lit version will only last for 5 hours. Though a pair of rechargeable batteries solve this problem, it can get pretty frustrating to change batteries all the time. To most people – this will not be an issue. The main way to avoid this, is to only use the light when it really is necessary, which will clearly extend the life of your precious batteries. A good pair of rechargeable batteries is a must – even for a non-FLU user – so get yourself together and buy a pair. They come pretty cheap now, when you weight the cost against the costs of buying new batteries all the time would cost. Buy rechargeable batteries, no matter what! What about dust, you ask? It is true that dust seem to crawl into the most irritating places. Some people experience this problem more than others – I myself didn't experience it at all – but it seems to be an issue for a lot of people. The best way to avoid dust, is to simply keep your GP32 clean and tidy all the time. Buy a carry case specifically for the GP32, and you are most likely going to avoid this problem. A carry case is actually a great way to avoid it, and it makes it easier to carry your GP32 around without damaging it. Those were the major disadvantages of getting a Front Light Unit, and the only ones that really matter. Minor ones, like the fact that the GP32 screen on a FLU actually seem a tad darker than a non-flu in sunlight, is ignored for now. Now we are reaching the big question, will I really need to buy a Front Light Unit, or

can I live without it?

The Ugly?

Back to the biggest question of them all, will I need the enlightened GP32? To fully answer this question, you must turn to yourself for answers. Would you enjoy watching those dirty movies in the dark at night? Do you plan on using your GP32 in places with bad lighting? I myself, was once the owner of a non-flu edition, but after months of use, found myself irritated by the lack of light. I liked to play in the subway in the evening, in bed at night, and living in a rather 'dark' country, in a dark room, I found myself angling, turning and struggling with my GP32, to get the right angle for the light. In the end, this problem got on my nerves, and I eventually ended up regretting I brought a non-lit version. Don't let the same thing happen to you. If you are in doubt, spend the extra quid on a FLU, and enjoy it as much as you can. The worst thing that can happen is that you buy a non-flu, and a month later, you find yourself questioning the need for a FLU. The key point is: If you are in doubt, spend the extra dollars and get the FLU and a carry case, it will serve you best in the end.

A Front Lit Unit is \$229 on Lik-Sang.com.

A Normal GP32 is \$160 on Lik-Sang.com.

-zimba

Review

Treasure Island Review

Treasure Island has nothing to do with the Robert Louis Stevenson's adventure epic we all know and love. Nor is it the Disney movie/video game adaptation called Treasure Planet. So, is it even worth playing?

Well...It depends on your taste.

Take any Bomberman game, convert it to a 2-Dimensional side scrolling view. Split the screen horizontally. Now add some cute and cartoonish looking characters that throw bombs through chutes and pipes and you have Treasure Island.

One of the first games created for the unpredictable GamePark32 system, your objective is blow up your opponents one by one, and be the first to reach the buried treasure to win the game. There are a few game modes that GP32 fans will be ok with, and others that you wished could have been incorporated. TI could have

been an exciting 2 player game, but it falls short in more ways than one. For starters, the single player mode is the bulk of the game, fusing a lack luster storyline with gameplay that doesn't spark much enjoyment. In this mode, the plot for the story unfolds and you find that Kunta and Woody have arrived on an island which appears to have buried treasure. You must choose one of the 2 main characters to start. Kunta, the mean spirited and methodical captain. Or play as Woody, Kunta's Cabin Boy who is nearly as calculating as Kunta himself. Both of them want the treasure and will do anything to get to it first. It sounds good for sure. Until you play and find out that the entire game is turn based. That's right, just like playing a board game or cards only without nearly as much strategy or suspense. The player begins with a chance to start the game first; playing a little game most people

used to do when they were 5 years old (or still do today)... paper, rock, scissors. At first sight, it seems like a good way to start off a game like this. Then after a few rounds, you start to think maybe heads or tails would have been more exciting.

Both players take their turn picking a chute to toss their bomb through. You have a time limit to choose which chute you are going to throw your bomb into. If you choose the right chute the other character gets a health point taken away. Most of the characters you fight against have a very basic »3 strike« health meter. You hit them 3 times, you win that battle and move on to the next area. Then, surprisingly, you do the same thing all over again. Of course there are power ups that allow you to see the paths that all the chutes are connected to, gain health packs,





As far as sound and musical scores are concerned, there isn't much to be excited about. There seems to be that infamous »clicking and popping« sound that is imbedded through repetitive sound effects and the musical score. In this game, once you have heard one explosion you have heard them all. The repetitive sound effects are not appealing at all. It appears not a lot of time went into making this game sound good. In fact, I can swear I have heard some of those sounds in some other game before.

One thing I have to applaud GamePark for is the presentation of the game and menu detail. Although a few (not many) of the menu options appear in Korean, they did do their best to add

the English language into all the dialogue for in game sequences and for most menu selections. This actually does add a certain appeal to the game that other GamePark games just don't have, but should incorporate. Plus the opening scene of the game is pretty cool. Especially if you are a newbie to the GP32 and don't know what to expect.

reduce or increase the number of chutes, or paint different chutes so you know which hole of yours connects to your opponents. These add a small amount of enjoyment, but it doesn't motivate you to keep going. You will find yourself fighting through the natives of the island and some very weird creatures to get to your treasure. Sandworms, sharks, monkeys, and mermen (that's right! The opposite of mermaids) are all present in this game. There are some cool little random occurrences like the sudden mix up of the chute paths (especially once you have memorized them all). Unfortunately, the TI turn based gaming engine makes winning a single battle long and tedious. Some battles can go on for up to 30 minutes, much too long for a single fight.

As it was mentioned earlier, the bulk of the game is in the single player mode itself. But the fun, is in the two player mode. All you need is a RF module and another person with the same game and you are set to play some one on one action. The gameplay is smooth with no drop off in frame rate or slow down. In general, it's always more fun to play a turn based game

with a friend than to play versus the AI, waiting for it to make a single move. What is most disappointing is the option to connect to the internet to play versus someone in another world, and yet that mode is not functional to use. If I could have played TI against one of my fellow gamers from another country, I would have enjoyed the experience a lot more.

Graphically, the game is a step above some of the other original GamePark games, like Dungeon and Guarder and Dyhard. The cartoony looking characters are appealing if you enjoy movies like some Disney animated features. I find the characters fit the game very well, and are at times, quite enjoyable. The background is also very well done. The vibrant colors of the background compliment the action and entire atmosphere to a point where you would rather look at the background than play the game. We start to see problems graphically when a slow fps and lagging appears from time to time in single player mode. Also, the animation of the characters seem slightly choppy, but this doesn't distract or annoy you where you can't play.

In terms of lasting playability, the game doesn't hold my attention long enough to follow through to the end (I did force myself to finish it for this review after all). There are no special codes or secret levels or extra characters at the end. The area of the game that grabbed me is the RF two player mode. It plays well enough without lag time or processing time in between each players turn. The online Internet mode would have made the game even more interesting and perhaps something that could have been potentially very addicting.

Overall, the game started out to be something I really looked forward too. Purchasing it from JoyGP is still a very good deal for the quality of game I received. I do play it from

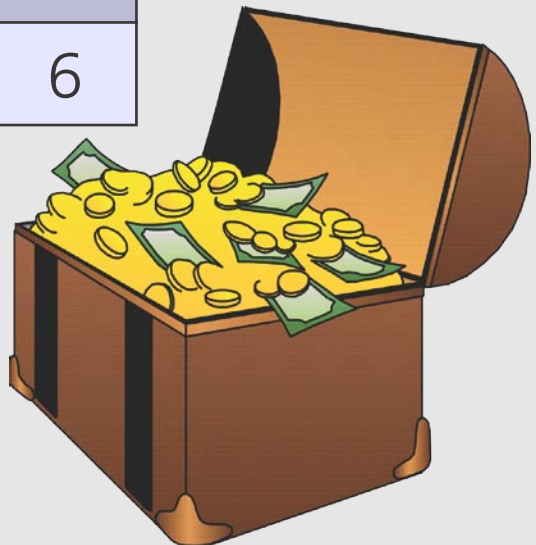
Treasure Island	
Manufacturer	Gamepark
Language	English
Price	\$34.90
Players	1
Interface <i>Overall a mediocre interface, easy to use, but not effective. The fact that they spell the game's title wrong in the credits is amazing.</i>	4
Gameplay <i>The idea is somewhat interesting, it's just a shame it has been fulfilled this bad.</i>	6
Graphics <i>Crisp, colorful graphics make the score this high. The somewhat inappropriate menu interface, prevents it from scoring more.</i>	8
Sound <i>Boring low-quality sounds - straight from a standard sound library – annoying screams and terrible music.</i>	5
Replayability <i>Gets boring really quick, no variation in levels, characters or sounds. BORING!</i>	4
OVERALL	
<i>Dyhard could have been much more. It could have been fun to play, compelling and above all it could have sounded good. Instead we were given a mediocre game, filled with annoyances.</i>	6

time to time and sometimes only for the short intro clip. For only a few Euros or USD's, the game is well worth the money to download and the SMC space to save it on.

I believe the most disappointing part of TI is not the fact that it falls short in gameplay, but in options and modes of play. I wanted it to be so good. It actually has a lot of potential. So with the knowledge that I purchased technically an »incomplete« game, it makes me think that maybe if they only spent another month or two putting the game together, fine tuning it, they could have had a winner. Instead, TI uninviting gameplay, shortage of options, and repetitive music makes

it a game most GP32 community members think twice about purchasing, even on JoyGP.

-Tjfbryant



Review

Dyhard with Infinite Stairs Review

A terrorist faction has placed a bomb on a famous skyscraper, and they're threatening to blow up the building if their demands are not met. You are the only one able to prevent the building from total destruction, so you're sent in to reach the mined floor, and disarm the bomb. Does this scene sound familiar to you? Welcome to Dyhard with Infinite Stairs by Kookie Soft.

Dyhard comes packed in ZPK format from JoyGP, and is – just as all the other JoyGP games – fairly easy to install. All you need is PLink and your GP32 connected to your PC.

The game loads up with a splash screen, the company logo alongside a small tune like the GP32 logo when you boot up your GP32, and an introduction cutscene. You can't really call it a cutscene though; it's merely a slideshow of pictures in the

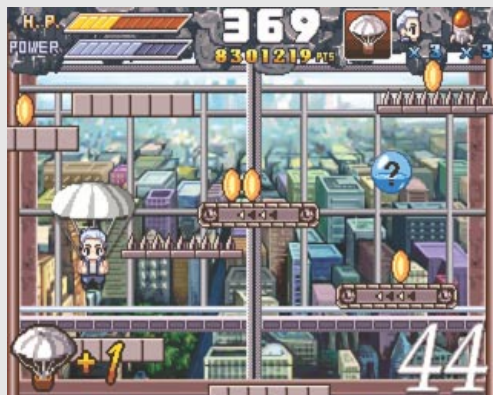
traditional Japanese drawing style. The art is well done, and takes us through a metropolis of a city – with a interesting similarity of New York - into a skyscraper (interestingly enough with resemblance to Empire State Building). We see a bombs timer reaching 00:00, and we see the desperate look of the disarmer, trying to disarm the bomb – with no luck. The bomb goes off with a blast, and we are presented with a desperate scream, followed by the title screen.

The title screen is fairly odd, the background looks like an acid-trip, with psycadelic colors filling the screen. Well enough rambling, let's get playing already. Before each mission, you're presented with a short briefing, not really anything but a short: "Go disarm the bomb dammit!" note. The first mission is set in the home building of Kookie Soft, the '63 building' in Korea.

Terrorists has mined the building, and you're sent in to reach the mined floor. You're sent in on the bottom floor and have to make your way up to the top floor, by jumping from platform to platform, avoiding to fall down. Does this sound like a weird gameplay? That's it.

The gameplay is actually a bit difficult to explain. The person you control moves from left to right of the screen, and you have to jump to higher platforms, by holding the A-button for a given time. The longer you hold the A-button on your GP32, the higher your person will jump. If you fall down from a platform, you will instantly die.

Along the way to the top, you can collect power-ups, containing various items such as health, jetpacks and you can even catch a virus which will slowly take away your health. The



jetpack will provide you with a huge amount of power, enough to life your person several floors up. The jetpacks are really useful in emergency situations where your person is almost falling off the platforms. In these cases, there's nothing more helpful than a jetpack to save you from instant death.

The gameplay sound fairly easy, doesn't it? Well it will properly be the most difficult commercial game you've tried on your GP32. At first, I found myself completely lost. I had no idea what I was supposed to do, as I was left with no help file, no instructions or anything alike. It took a while to get used to the 'feel' of the game, but after a while I seemed to get the hang of it.

The problem was I kept falling down when I got fifty-sixty floors up. And the mission seemed endless, I kept climbing floors, but nothing happened. When you fall down, you have to restart the mission, so you can put away your 'save-halfway-through' ideas for a while. When you play the game, you'll find yourself smashing your GP32 to your head, biting your earplugs, and scream in agony several times.

Yippee-ki-yay, motherf*cker

A first glance, Dyhard with Infinite Stairs seems like a pretty good game for the GP32. They managed to pull off some decent graphics, colorful and overall really crisp and clear graphics in-game.

But it's clear that Dyhard Infinite is made by a amateur game company. The game has some really annoying bugs and lack some fundamental things. First of all, Dyhard is packed with low quality sounds. Most of the sounds and music are standard sounds, from sound libraries on the internet. We have to cope with tacky screams, lousy explosion effects and stupid jump noises. The music just feels plain wrong. In the

Dyhard	
Manufacturer	Kookie
Language	English
Price	\$34.90
Players	1
Interface	
<i>Overall a mediocre interface, easy to use, but not effective. The fact that they spell the game's title wrong in the credits is amazing.</i>	6
Gameplay	
<i>The idea is somewhat interesting, it's just a shame it has been fulfilled this bad.</i>	3
Graphics	
<i>Crisp, colorful graphics make the score this high. The somewhat inappropriate menu interface, prevents it from scoring more.</i>	8
Sound	
<i>Boring low-quality sounds - straight from a standard sound library – annoying screams and terrible music.</i>	3
Replayability	
<i>Gets boring really quick, no variation in levels, characters or sounds. BORING!</i>	4
OVERALL	
<i>Dyhard could have been much more. It could have been fun to play, compelling and above all it could have sounded good. Instead we were given a mediocre game, filled with annoyances.</i>	5

second mission where Empire State comes crumbling down upon us, and the only option is to run, we're given a happy, slow and boring jazz-tune. It just doesn't fit.

The game's psysics engine 'feel' wrong aswell. Especially in the second mission, back in Empire State, I found myself restarting the game lots of times, because I died due to a lame psysics bug.

The lack of a save feature, that allows you to save halfway through the game, and the (almost) infinite platforms, make everything even more frustrating.

Decisions...decisions...

After playing the game, frustrated, angry and disappointed, over only reaching second level, I came up with this conclusion: Don't buy this game...at all...never...ever. Later in the game we would have seen other gameplay modes, a more variated gameplay with shooting, more puzzles and other things. Just a shame I weren't able to cope with the lousy game that far.

-zimba

Firmware Roundup

Firmware Roundup

Has your GP32 got tiring all of a sudden? Fed up of sitting through that annoying tune at boot-up that questions your sexuality? Annoyed at having to wait 10 seconds just to past the 'Game' menu when all you want is a Free Launcher from the moment you turn it on? Lots of other people had the same problems, and some of them were coders. Within months of the GP32's release,

an assortment of new 'firmware', or BIOS images arrived to solve your troubles.

So how does it work?

The GP32, like many other devices, has a set of code that it runs initially, to set things up and then pass control over to executable files, in most cases FXE or GXE files. For the Gamepark, this code also contains the familiar cartoon-style menu when you turn it on, and the musical intro. The code and its assorted graphics and sounds are contained in what we call the 'firmware' of the machine. Luckily for us, this firmware can be upgraded or replaced with another one. All you have to do is get your hands on another firmware image and 'flash' it over, using a program such as DarkFader's Firmware Upgrade Utility (<http://darkfader.net/gp32/files/fw.fxe.zip>).

After putting the program into your GPMM directory, you get your firmware and rename it to fw.bin, then place it into the root (top-level) directory of the GP32. After that, all you have to do it run the fw.fxe program and wait for it to complete, and tada! New firmware.



The disclaimer bit

Flashing your firmware is a little bit of a risky business, however. By its very nature, you are overwriting code that allows your GP32 to function: if you do this incorrectly, you will end up with a useless hunk of metal that doesn't start. (Although recovery procedures are available, they are difficult.) Firmware replacement is a very common and relatively safe practice, as long as you flash with correct firmware, and completely. Make sure power is being supplied to the GP32 constantly, using new, reliable batteries or a stable power source, because if the power source goes, the GP32 will turn off mid-flash. In fact, batteries are actually safer than mains supply as long as your batteries are new, or to be really safe, use both. The flashing process itself takes about a minute, after which you can restart to see your new firmware. To sum up: your GP32 needs run for over a minute without turning itself off, which is extremely likely, but if you are still worried about flashing, don't do it. It's not worth losing a GP32 over.



If you wish to back up your old firmware, you can also do that with some of Darkfader's tools (<http://darkfader.net/gp32>) - more of this process is covered in an excellent tutorial at GP32Emu (<http://207.44.176.77/~admin28/gp32emu/faq/firmware.htm>).

The Choices

Once you have committed yourself to flashing, you have a few choices: unofficial software, such as Pacrom and Wind-ups, official releases, or a compilation such as Mr.Spiv's MultiFW. For the first time in two years, Gamepark officially updated the GP32 firmware in preparation for the now doomed European release. TJFBryant covers the differences over the original:

The New European Firmware

<http://www.gp32x.com/board/>

The thought of ever having a European release of the GP32 may be forbidden territory to contemplate nowadays. But when many of the GP32 community

may want to consider before you do. Here is a comparison that may help you decide whether flashing your precious GP32 with this cool looking bios is worth the time and effort. From a pure gamers perspective, flashing your Bios isn't going to give you anything extra when loading a particular game. It won't enhance your experience of the game, nor will it effect gameplay in anyway. What a new Bios will do (depending on the bios) is give you the flexibility of customization of the main operating screen the GP32 runs on. This will in turn effects the loading time, and the number of screen menus you need to go through to get to the game or program. These kind of options and flexibility are usually only used by developers, not necessarily gamers. When you purchase a GP32 the original BIOS is what you have to deal with. A main and sub menus that lead up to a free launcher menu (that you already installed, hopefully) just to get to the game you want to play. Most of the time just to play a game it may take you anywhere's from 20-30 seconds to find the one you are looking for. Honestly, that's a long time to wait for a game to load. Especially if your always on the go.



	Original	European
User Friendliness	8	9
Introduction	8	7
Appearance	7	9
Functionality	8	7

If you don't have a GP32 yet (and you should), you may or may not know a few things about the original firmware. First there are 3 submenus to choose. Music, Game, or PC-link. Depending on what you want to do, obviously the Music menu is for MP3 playing and Game is for ...well, games. The original firmware boasts a pretty user friendly interface, no matter if you understand Korean or not. It comes complete with everything you need to start, with one exception, the free launcher program. You download the program from GamePark which allows you to play all your emulators, homebrew and non-commercialized games. Without it, you are dead in the water, and the only program you can open is the built in MP3 player. The player is a fully functional player, but many fans of the system have always desired something more,... robust. Exit original firmware, enter the European BIOS.

Designed exclusively to accompany the newer European GP32 during its inaugural release (now indefinitely suspended), The European firmware shows that it has more to offer (visually), than the original. Created by a Korean developer named Team K2YAA, the BIOS has its fair share of pros and cons. First thing to consider if you are ever flashing your GP32 is whether you can live without a built-in MP3 player. As the original came with a descent player, the Euro version does not. If you can not do without an MP3 player though, you don't have to look too far. You can head over to www.GP32x.com and download the official beta version of the newer MP3 player created to be incorporated into the

Euro release. The MP3 player, also created by Team K2YAA, does a very good job matching the skin of the player with the overall look of the Euro firmware. The player features more of the options audiophiles are looking for, such as track listing, looping and shuffling.

This newer BIOS looks smoother, sleeker, and less cutesy than the original. On the positive side, besides its change of appearance, you will notice that you no longer need the free launcher to play your games. The main menu screen has 2 options, Game or PC-Link. Choose game and you will be automatically directed to a thumbnail view of all your programs and games. No more waiting for the free launcher to load. This enables to cut your start time in half. What used to take nearly 20 seconds, now takes about 10. Although... be wary, the more files you have in the GPMM directory, the longer the menus will take to load. Try putting the files in subfolders (if you can), this will cut down the load time. The GP32 scans the directory every time for new programs or games installed on your Smart Media Card. Finally, some bugs were present in this version of the firmware. Some programs don't open without going through the free launcher first [possibly compressed FXEs -- Rico]. Also, the PC Link installed on your PC may have some problems recognizing the firmware. If this happens, I suggest purchasing a SMC reader from your local PC store and downloading the FPK extractor from www.DarkFader.net. This will enable you to install all FPKs and programs manually without the aid of the PC-Link. But this may cause problems for some of you gamers

out there who don't care to tinker around with their GP32.

When everything is said and done, and the final choice must be made first whether you want a new BIOS or not. Make sure you understand that, flashing the BIOS voids your warranty, and may cause several problems with your GP32 if not done carefully and correctly. I chose the Euro BIOS for one reason only, because I liked the user interface. Sometimes though, I do miss the good old original firmware with that famous GP ball bouncing across the screen. Ahh... the good times.

See the next page for more firmware goodness!

Wind-ups v0.99

<http://www.f-labs.com/gp32/wind-ups/>

Winner of the ADIC 2002 competition, Wind-ups is a Windows-inspired shell replacement that lets you create icons from your FXE files and keep a Desktop-style arrangement of them. You can also try out various built-in programs such as kEditor, the text editor, and kReader, an eBook viewer with built-in dictionary. Once the FPK is installed and Wind-ups started, you'll see a rather plain-looking background with some icons on it. This is the main interface of the program, and all you have to do is move the mouse with the d-pad and select an icon to start a game or emulator. The whole thing is very customisable, accepting custom GIF icons and wallpapers and a virtually unlimited set of icons. 'Right-clicking' (via the B button) brings up the useful utility menu. Over an icon, you are given the chance to edit, delete or move it. Over the desktop space, you can add a new icon, change the background, quit or store your desktop settings (including all the icon placements and custom graphics). It's incredibly simple, with adding a new icon as simple as selecting the program from your SMC and giving it a name and icon. Placement is a little dodgy due to a snap-to-grid when moving the icon, but none when creating it, so care must be shown if you want your icons to line up prettily like the screenshots. A 'line-up icons' command would be much welcomed.

When selecting a program for the icon, you can choose either an FXE/GXB on disk, or one of the built-in programs. These tools are the main strengths of Wind-ups, and each one is well coded and consistently designed. Most importantly, as they are contained within the Wind-ups program, you can close them and get back to Wind-ups without restarting. The most important tool is the Microsoft-esque 'My GP32', a



directory-capable file browser. From it, you can launch FXE and GXB files without making icons, view GIF images, and open other known file types such as text documents. The image viewer even has next/previous support with L/R so that you can browse a directory full of images without closing the viewer, much like the 'Photo Album' view of Windows XP.

kReader is an extremely good application, fitting the requirements

of even the most prolific eBook fans. Although it only supports text files, it comes equipped with a dictionary, bookmarks and skipping 10/100/1000 pages at a time. Auto-scrolling like that in Lazy Reader would be nice, though. kEditor is a little less comfortable text editor. "Text editor?" You say. "That must be slow!" Well, the site boasts that the 'Quad-9 Tree' typewriter could get you typing 60 letters a minute, but I found it incredibly hard to adjust to it. Pressing the d-pad in



the wrong direction is surprisingly easy, and in my opinion a letter layout more similar to the QWERTY keyboard would be easier to learn. Still, Wind-ups provides some useful stats such as characters and words per minute, so you can see how good you are with the method. Another qualm is the use of MS Sans Serif like everything else; while consistent, a fixed-width font would have suited it better.

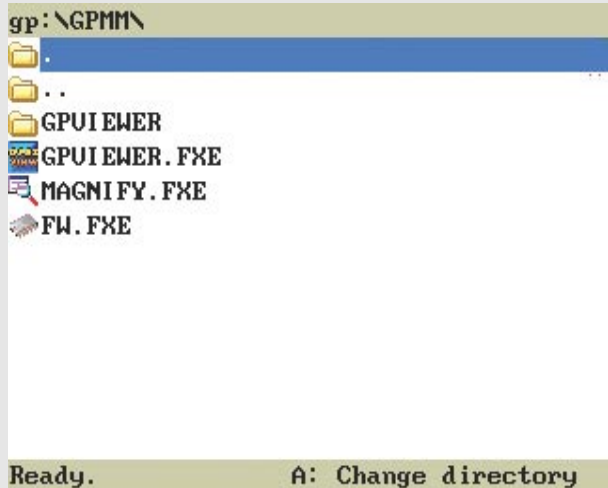
Rounding it off, Age2k is an address book program to satisfy those who would like to use their GP32 as a PDA. Using either the PC (yes!) or the GP32, you can add information such as name, address, e-mail, notes and phone numbers. Sorting through is easy, and a useful paired list of all your contacts (group/name, name/email, name/mobile or name/phone) is provided for quick searching. You can even assign a 76x102 GIF to each contact, and sort your entries by group (Family, Friends, School).

On the strength of its multitude of accessories and ease of use, Wind-ups v0.99 is a brilliant package. It may not suit more technical users who'd prefer a sortable list instead of pretty icons, but it's certainly a friendly interface for anyone who uses Windows. For optimal use, however, Wind-ups users are encouraged to use MultiFW so that Wind-ups boots immediately after a restart - see later. The only real problem is its inability to load commercial games or compressed FXEs, but the compressed FXE bug is fixed by Mr.Spiv in his MultiFW edition.

Pacrom 0.31b

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~fvdhoef/>

Pacrom aims to be minimalist. No graphics, no music, just a plain but fairly attractive text-based interface. The main advantage of this is that it requires no external files like Wind-ups does, and is extremely fast.



Upon starting, you get four options: File manager, Link mode, Tools and Options. The link mode works as expected, but offers improvements over the default: a full log of all your transfers and directory lookups are displayed. Tools includes options to format or repair your SMC. However, the heart of Pacrom is the file manager.

Like Wind-ups, you are given a directory-by-directory listing of all

your programs. Simply select one with the d-pad and it starts. Unlike Wind-ups, Pacrom is capable of running commercial games and compressed FXEs "out of the box". It's also a full firmware which can be flashed standalone, without assistance from Multifirmware (although MultiFW includes it). The plethora of options allow you to customise the file manager output to suit your tastes: you can set Pacrom to remember your last

Options	
Startup mode	2
Filemanager view mode	2
Filemanager sort mode	4
Remember last item	Yes
Quicklaunch	Off

Sort on app name

directory / program launched and select it, and choose a mode to start in. Start-up modes are file manager, USB link, or menu; USB link comes in very handy for developers who want to constantly test something on real hardware. If you'd prefer to run a custom program on start-up, Pacrom can do that too, through the 'Quicklaunch' setting. The file manager itself can display entries sorted by 'program name', filename, etc. Unlike Wind-ups, the icons come from the FXEs themselves, miniaturised to 16x16. Personally, I use Pacrom on my GP32, sorting alphabetically but displaying the 'program name'. This is a great improvement over the seemingly random display order of the Free Launcher. The 'Remember last item' mode is helpful too, as I often find myself replaying the same program. Overall, Pacrom is a great choice for the more technical users out there or those who simply don't need the custom apps of Wind-ups, but can't stand the annoyances of the official firmware.

MultiFW 2

<http://www.deadcoderssocie.ty.tk/>

Can't decide between the original firmware, Pacrom or Wind-ups? Get all of them! By far the most popular firmware choice is MultiFW2, an extremely useful firmware that incorporates all of these choices into the tiny firmware space, thanks to b2fxec compression. Starting a MultiFW-flashed GP32 will bring up a menu like the one shown, with a simple menu. If you are dead set on which program you want at start-up, selecting it with B will make it the 'default' program that will always start as soon as your GP32 turns on, unless you hold Select to bypass it. As well as the three mentioned programs, PC-Link is also included for developers' use.

Improvements have been made in many ends: the official firmware



has had its intro animation patched out to make it more usable, Wind-ups v0.9 has been fixed to support compressed FXEs, and errors that would previously crash your GP32 completely now pop up an error environment which allows developers to poke around the handheld's memory and more. There have been isolated complaints of MultiFW interfering with USB on Windows XP - Spiv makes some notes on the firmware at <http://www.cs.helsinki.fi/u/jikorhon/condev/gp32/multifw.html>. Note that MultiFW still requires Wind-ups external files, so install the FPK (and optionally delete the redundant FXE file) or you'll only get a blank screen when you start Wind-ups through the firmware.

So what of the new European firmware and Wind-ups v0.99? MultiFW 3 is in the works. When it is eventually released, it will probably have GDB debugging support, FXE running via USB, 32MB RAM support, a fixed GpAppExecute() routine, and Wind-ups (either 0.99 or 1.0, if v1.0 is released by then). The European firmware has been tested but isn't currently included. More information/progress reports are available from Mr.Spiv's website shown above.

Conclusion

First of all, as to whether or not to flash: it's pretty safe if you have full batteries and well worth it if you want to save time. If you are quite satisfied with your GP32, or you don't reboot enough for the start-up process to grate, consider skipping flashing. As to what firmware to use - I would suggest MultiFW 2 over Pacrom. Pacrom does everything MultiFW 2 does with its link and thumbnailing programs, except without the firmware recognition issues. Until the European firmware is officially supported, it's probably best to stick with Pacrom or Wind-ups, and what is better than a package that gives you both?

-Rico and TJFBryant

Software Preservation

Software Preservation

In your hands you have the most powerful handheld gaming device known to man.

Yet it would be nothing without the software. Software can make or break a platform, especially in the good old days when a game was written by one man in his bedroom, trying to squeeze everything into a small amount of memory. Games had to concentrate on playability – today's cinematic production values were unheard of back then. It had to play right. How many of you can remember what it was like to play these games?

Computing was a lot different then, programs were more often than not written by one person – a far cry from the big budget projects of today. The 80's 8-bit era is really where it all began – so you could say I got involved for the history and heritage.

Time has gone on – its been neigh on 20 years and this software still exists thanks in part to the various software preservation projects that have been set up by loyal computer enthusiast's.

Andrew Barker, who is a co-maintainer of World of Spectrum & .TZX Vault, helps maintain the largest and most concise collection of preserved spectrum software. He's

been kind enough to give us an interview from his point of view.

Why did you get into software preservation?

I got involved for Nostalgic reasons mainly. The Spectrum was the first computer I ever owned at the age of 8, and I have fond memories of the machine. It would be a shame for all of this software to be lost forever, and some software companies don't seem to care if that happens. This is why myself and a number of others choose to preserve software in the best format available at the time (TZX for tapes and EDSK for +3 disks).

How much software do you think has been lost forever?

It's hard to say really as there was many that we just don't know about. We have most of the mainstream software catalogued and have most of it stored in one form or another.

We set up projects to cater for missing titles or images that we would like to improve. The most important project is MIA (Missing in Action), this project caters for titles which we have don't have preserved in any format, it is of utmost importance that we source and preserve these and time could be running

out as the magnetic media it was stored on is degrading by the minute.

We have another project which follows MIA and that's STP (Spectrum Tape Preservation), this project aims to obtain TZX images of tapes, the .TZX format can store a faithful reproduction of the original source tape and this is important to us.

The newest project that I run is the SDP (Spectrum Disk Preservation), this project deals with Spectrum +3 disks, When amstrad bought out Sinclair, they released a few models similar to the CPC464/C6128, these were the 128k +2 (Grey in colour), 128k +2a (Black in Colour) and the 128k +3 which had a 3" floppy drive.

While preserving disks for this project I've found that duplication processes were very poor and the quality of the original disks were sub-standard in many case, they used Amstard disks and duplicated over the top of them.

Whatsmore, I've noticed that this media decays more rapidly than tape because more of the surface area is exposed to the elements (magnetic interference, humidity etc.).

Software preservation is quite

a large task, how many are on the team?

There are about half a dozen full time members and many people who contribute by providing us with the software, and also money donations. A lot of time and money is spent searching charity shops, car boot fairs and of course eBay for titles which we have yet to preserve! We try to get titles that are in as mint a condition as possible, because we also scan the inlays for reference (not re-

production I must point out). Also, Where possible, the instructions are typed, some software is unplayable without these.

Where do you stand legally?

It's quite a difficult line we tread. What we try to do is obtain permits from the author or publisher, to make the software freely downloadable. Some companies deny distribution of there software (Codemasters, Ultimate, Play The Game,

Capcom, Puffin Books) so we have to respect that. Other companies are more than willing to allow us to

distribute their old work. We do not profit from the preserved software, our purpose is simply to preserve the software.

Unfortunately some people see fit to do as they please, ignorant to the fact that someone still owns the copyright, they think if the software is that old then then noone is bothered, this is a common misconception. A prime example of this would be some unscrupulous eBay sellers who leech whole web sites and pass it on as their own at a huge profit, or claim they have every game ever released on the Spectrum platform, this is simply untrue and all it does is damages legitimate sites like our own. Technically you can only use the files if you already own a copy of the software, or the copyrite holder has granted distribution.

What use can you make of preserved images?

This is an interesting and important point in preservation. With the images that are made it is possible to repair damaged media or just load them into an emulator in seconds, unlike with real hardware which you might have to wait 5 minutes or more for it to load. A preserved image is also better clarity than the original source tape and is now in a digital form preserved forever.

Do you deal with any other 8-bit platforms?

Yes, although Spectrum is our main focus, we also preserve software for the Amstrad CPC, Commodore 64, VIC-20 & BBC/Electron.

What are your oppinions of the GP32, and it's retrogaming capabilities?

The GP32 is an interesting little gadget, it has the potential to play software from many other platforms via emulation. The software



companies should see this as a good thing and maybe charge a small fee to download older software. Companies like Atari Inc already do this via Star ROMs and it's a great idea. It also promotes their back catalogue of software.

-Bobson

If you're interested to know more about what we get up to then check out the following links:

Specfreak Server - <http://www.specfreak.co.uk/>

The .TZX Vault - <http://tzxvault.retrogames.com/>

World of Spectrum - <http://www.worldofspectrum.org>

Permits - <http://www.worldofspectrum.org/permits>

MIA Project - <http://www.worldofspectrum.org/mia.html>

STP Project - <http://www.worldofspectrum.org/stp/>

SDP Project - <http://www.worldofspectrum.org/sdp/>

Special thanks to:

Martijn van der Heide (Owner of the World of Spectrum)

Steve Brown (Owner of the .TZX Vault)

Andy Barker (Owner of www.specfreak.co.uk, but also co-maintains many project with the above guys)

Paul Hurd (Preservation team member)

Tony Barnett (Preservation team member)

Review

GPCinema Review

As my first work for the GP32 magazine I wrote a review about GP cinema, because gaming on your GP is cool, but watching movies on it is even cooler!

What is GP cinema

Well basically GP cinema is a program that enables you to watch movies files on your GP32, from a whole movie to a television series. When the GP32 came out there weren't a lot of games and programs available for it. But that changed over time, people started encoding their own software and making emulators, but there was still something missing; a good movie player.

There where a couple of homebrews, but none of them did what they should do, play movies smooth and with sound. But then Entware brought out Moviepark, a great movie player that enabled sound and image at the same time and worked good. But over time the flaws of Moviepark came to the surface and soon the GP32 community was asking for an improvement. That improvement came and it is called GP cinema, thé movie player for the GP32.

User friendly or not?

A movie player is great, but it has too be easy to use. And let me assure, it is! The buttons are logically configured and you can do all the things with it that you can do with a standard VCR, so fast forward and rewind, play, pause and stop are all possibilities, you can even adjust the brightness, and that is very useful when u watch a dark movie! You can also adjust the clock speed what is really helpful. You can play at 100-120-133-150-166 Mhz, but you should watch out above 133Mhz because that is overclocking and not all GP's can take that.

But I found that 120 Mhz plays good and 133 Mhz plays great,



so there is no need to overclock! You can also save all your settings so if you set everything good once you are ready to go every time you start it up.

Quality and appearance

GP cinema is a nice looking program that does what it has to do. The movies look great and if you want to see the sample of the quality download this file: http://www.entware.co.kr/img/mpgp/matrix_D.avi. That is how it looks at 133 Mhz. As you can see both the picture and the sound are good and you can see it all great. So the quality is no reason not to buy it.

What can you do with it?

Well you can watch movies, that's logical! But what kind of movies? And where can you get them, because I never seen a GP cinema movie at my local supermarket. First of all you can download prefixed legal and illegal movies from a pear to pear program like Kazzaa or E-donkey. (Remember we do not support the downloading of illegal movies!) Second of all you can convert your DVD's and downloaded movies (once again we don't support that) so you can

fit them on your GP. The best way to do this is to use Virtual Dub, a free program what you

can download here: http://www.waystation.mcmail.com/VirtualDub-1_4_7.zip. There are



some very good tutorials about it so I am not going to explain. A tutorial about converting your DVD's to GP32 size you can find here: http://www.gp32-divx.com/index.jsp?nod_id=3&tuto=dvd1. A tutorial about converting your Divx to GP32 size you can find here: <http://www.gp32-divx.com/>

[index.jsp?nod_id=3&tuto=divx1](http://www.gp32-divx.com/index.jsp?nod_id=3&tuto=divx1). You can only convert Divx movies but the most of your downloaded movies probably are. But if you ever did download a movie you probably have noticed that high quality movies are about 700MB. But if you just stick to the tutorials they will become about 100MB. You can

also convert a normal TV serie it will become about 25 MB large, so you can fit a couple of episodes on one SMC. That can come in handy when you don't have to travel very far and you don't have time to watch a whole movie.

Personal Experiences

First of all I can tell you that the price of GP cinema is only 8 dollars 99. So the price is no reason not to buy it. You can buy your copy of GP cinema at the site of Entware (joygp.entware.com), and I strongly suggest you that you buy a legal copy, because you support the GP32 community and it's not very expensive. First you have to register your GP32 and then you can buy GP cinema. You can pay with a creditcard or with paypal. Once you have paid you can download it from you MyJoyGP and install it on your GP32, witch is really easy. And then you have to put a movie on it and watch it where-ever you want, whenever you want.

Conclusion

GP cinema is a cool program that increases the value of your GP32. It's easy to use and install and the movies look great. So don't hesitate and buy GP cinema and enjoy the movies! It's worth it and it's very low priced!

-Bazzie

GP Cinema	
Manufacturer	Entware
Language	English
Price	KRW 10.000
Players	1
Interface <i>Clean interface, does what it is supposed to do. Nothing nifty. Skinnable!</i>	8
Graphics <i>The movies you are able to produce are much better than Moviepark. Great to see such smooth video on a handheld!</i>	9
Sound <i>Great quality sound.</i>	8
Replayability <i>You keep using it, loves it!</i>	10
OVERALL	
<i>GP Cinema is a great program, really a must-have. It is worth every single cent it costs. If you don't have it, get it!</i>	9

Final Words

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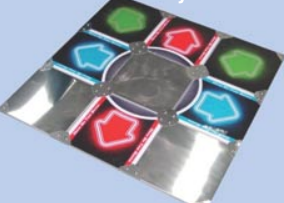
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