

Apple Barrel

The Journal of the Houston Area Apple Users Group

Apple II • Macintosh • Newton

Members Helping Members since 1978

January 1997

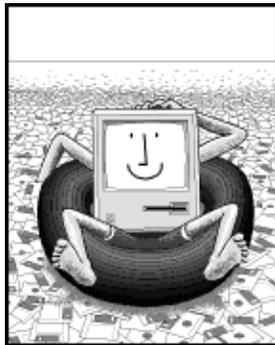
The Screaming Vortex

Sell Your Old Computer and Buy a Bunch of Relatively New Software

by Jill Hayhurst

Okay, troopers, it's that time of the year again. Time to dig through your shelves and closets and under your couches for spare change for the ice cream vendor? Umm, maybe. While you're doing that you might also toss outgrown modems, hard drives, memory chips, games, cables, early Mac rags, utilities, and all like that there into a big box and bring it along to our January Swap Meet on the 11th.

Look, swap meet's are kind of like a sale at Macy's— you can't help but be sucked into the screaming vortex of bargains. You will buy something.



without those somethings will be an unfathomable mystery to you.

You have to bring the somethings from your own closet, if only in self-defense. And here's a tip: Mike's bringing his kittens. Get together with him and work out a deal: one free kitten to every lucky purchaser of Spectre! Oops! Nevermind, that was the July Swap Meet deal.

This year should be a bonanza for those of you still using 680x0 Mac systems. Lots of nice games and things go kerchunk on PPC Macs, with no hint of an upgrade in sight. Or, if you're the kind of user who doesn't want to touch a box unless it's shrinkwrapped, never fear. We get lots of commercial resellers bringing in the latest and greatest of everything, at the latest and greatest prices, too, gosh darn it. But it beats crawling all over town in Houston traffic.

Don't forget to bring cash, checks and credit cards. It would be a shame if you went home with less than you brought.

Likely, several somethings. And they will be somethings you've wanted, nay, needed for eons now. How you've managed to scrape by

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The PowerBook 1400cs A Review

by Will Porter
Houston, Texas

In early December, I purchased a PowerBook 1400cs from the University of Houston's campus computer store. I was in the store when the first shipment of new PowerBook 1400's arrived. Here are my impressions after having used the machine for a couple weeks.

In terms of specs, this machine is not as big an improvement over the 5300 I had used for the previous year, as the 5300 was over the 520 that I used for the year before that. The 1400's processor at 117Mhz (alas, not 177Mhz, as reported in BYTE!) is faster than the 5300's at 100Mhz, but the difference is not dramatic. I have read that the 1400's keyboard is supposed to be bigger than that used in previous PowerBooks, but I can't say that I agree with that claim. I measured the width of the keyboard on our old 520 (same keyboard that is in the 5300) and it is a quarter of an inch wider than the keyboard on the 1400. The 1400 has basically the same I/O options as the 5300, including the single combined printer/modem serial port, an IR port and the PC-card bays. (Is anyone on the planet actually using that IR port?) And like the PowerBook 190, the 1400 lacks a built-in video out port.

But specs are not everything; in fact, they can be misleading. It may not win too many awards for techno-

Trouble Shooting your Mac

by Peter Gingiss

Much of the time, your Mac boots up smoothly and beautifully, and the world is a green, lovely, user-friendly place. But one fine day, when you least expect it, the Mac or your favorite application does things that make you think that either your worst enemy as sabotaged your beloved machine or that you have deeply offended the gods. Naturally, the wisest course is to panic, but if you cannot manage to do that, there are some tricks that will help you find and perhaps fix your problem.

There are two general strategies to help you think about a problem. The first is to try to remember what, if anything, you did or installed last. Often, if you remember, for example, that you added an application at about the same time that things started to experience problems, the nature of the problems can be narrowed down. A second general strategy is to try to isolate the problem. For example, when my printer didn't print, I tried a second cable to see if the cable was the problem. I tried printing from a second application to see whether the application was the problem. What actually happened is that at that point, I remembered Strategy One and

realized I had just updated my system and that perhaps my old printer driver was incompatible with my new system. I found a new printer driver and solved the dilemma.

It is also useful to know where problems might occur. As silly as it sounds, the connections between your Mac and an electrical outlet may have come loose or your keyboard and mouse may have become unplugged. Recently, my wife called me to say that a dialog box came up saying that a document could not be printed and then the computer froze. I had assumed that the dialog box caused a crash. But no, the keyboard had become unplugged and the dialog box was a separate problem that could be tended to only after I had plugged the keyboard back in again.

Other areas, however, may also need checking out. First, an application or its preference files may become corrupted. It's nothing you did, just magnetism becoming unmagnetic. A system file or the finder may also become corrupted. You may need to reinstall the system. I always keep a backup of my last working system file so that I don't risk losing extensions and preferences if I have to reinstall a system.

see Troubleshooting page 4

Calling all Experts

The Mentor group is compiling a reference list of application and system experts to provide assistance to persons contacting HAAUG for help.

Experts will be contacted for assistance through the Mentor Group and will not be contacted directly by clients. The Expert may choose to contact the client directly or continue to work through the Mentor to resolve the problem.

If you would like to join the Experts group, please leave a message on HAAUG's Hotline at (713) 522-2179 or mail your information to HAAUG's PO Box.

Please include your name, phone number, days available, hours available, e-mail addresses, and, of course, the names of applications and hardware that you have mastered.

Experts are needed for all Macintosh, Newton, and Apple II applications. Remember folks, "it's members helping members".

Change of Address Notice

HAAUG's official mailing address has changed to P.O. Box 570957, Houston, TX 77257-0957. Mail will be forwarded from the old address for about 11 months or so, but get your database updated as soon as possible, please!

Bottom of the Barrel

Apple Barrel is a monthly publication of the Houston Area Apple Users' Group, P.O. Box 570957, Houston, Texas, 77257-0957.

If you are interested in joining HAAUG, please call the HAAUG Hotline at (713) 522-2179 or sign up via HAAUG Heaven, HAAUG's BBS, at (713) 977-3587. Annual membership is \$35 for new members, \$30 for students, and \$30 for renewing members.

Guests are welcome to attend one or two meetings to get acquainted with HAAUG, but participation in certain presentations and activities may be limited.

HAAUG is an independent support group of Apple product users and is not affiliated with Apple Computer, Inc. The following are trademarks of Apple Computer, Inc.: Apple, Apple II, Apple IIGS, Macintosh, Imagewriter and the Apple Logo. All other brand names mentioned are registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective holders, and are hereby acknowledged.

HAAUG wishes to thank HAL-PC for providing HAAUG with Internet service.

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Apple Barrel Publishing

This month's *Apple Barrel* was produced by a committee including Jerry Jones, Manley Mandel, Elizabeth English, Bob McGuinness and Peter Gingiss headed by Seeley Miller on various Macs running PageMaker. **Thanks to Performance Marketing Resources for donating the printing of this issue.**

Mac and Apple SIGs Wanted
Volunteers who have ideas for SIGs to run, please contact David Scheuer at (713) 464-1228 or send e-mail to david_scheuer@haaug.org.

Articles Needed - All Flavors
Send any articles to Apple Barrel Drop or to apple_barrel_drop@haaug.org.

Cool Websites

<www.ont.com/users/swanjones>
This site is an Art history project on Christian symbolism, its origin and meanings. Photographs of Survey, Medieval, Northern and Italian Renaissance art works, including Notre Dame, can be viewed.

<<http://www.findout.com>> The launch of FINDOUT was announced at the Internet World Conference. Available immediately on the World Wide Web, FINDOUT enables users to submit questions in at least 10 subject categories and receive customized, personalized answers from professional researchers within two business days. The service is currently available free of charge.

<<http://www.nytimes.com>> Beginning early next year, visitors to The New York Times on the Web will be able to submit questions in any of ten broad topic areas and promptly receive customized answers, prepared by professional researchers. This consumer service will also provide guidance on the most appropriate online and offline sources available for any research project.

The Times on the Web has entered into a three-month "market trial" of this feature in association with FIND/SVP, a company that specializes in providing research services for business.

Pointcast for Mac

Version 0.9 (beta) is available for Mac (finally). You can get specs on requirements and download at: <<http://www.pointcast.com/download/dwnmac.html>> Beware of this one. I've had loads of problems since installation, when it runs you can quickly find your disc filled with everything it has seen. And uninstall is a problem too.

Please submit your favorite website for others to see to Apple Barrel Drop on HAAUG Heaven or post them to the Cool Websites folder. Visit HAAUG's website at <<http://www.haaug.org/>>. Sorry you can't command-click them.

The HAAUG Mentor Program

The basic function of the HAAUG Mentor program is to put people that are having hardware or software problems in contact with people that can provide solutions of those problems. Mentors will also follow up to see that the problems have been solved or are being corrected. The program applies to the Apple II, Macintosh and Newton platforms.

How can one apply for assistance? Post your problem on the HAAUG HotLine (713) 522-2179 or through the HAAUG Heaven BBS (713) 977-3587. Mentors are assigned to clear these items every day. We strive to get back with the person requesting help by the following day.

What type of assistance is offered? Basic help with programs such as AppleWorks, ClarisWorks, WordPerfect, Excel, etc. Help with hardware problems such as; My computer will not boot up; Newton questions, etc.

The HAAUG Heaven First Class Bulletin Board System (BBS) is an excellent resource available to members. It is a source of current news concerning computer topics, freeware and shareware, software and software upgrades from Apple. List your questions and problems on-line; there are many experts on-line that can offer assistance. The BBS will be the source that the Mentors will use most often as solutions to members problems.

After everybody has... Uh, "made a killing" at the swap meet, we meet at the Pizza Hut across the street from the U of H. It's called the Pizza SIG and lasts for a couple of hours. Come join the crowd!



HAAUG Heaven Demos

Bulletin Board Demos at the January Meeting

Are you intimidated by HAAUG Heaven? Afraid you'll embarrass yourself on-line? Or just can't figure out how to make your modem work?

Well, whether you've never tried to call HAAUG Heaven, or call all the time but are looking to get the most out of your time, you'll definitely want to attend the HAAUG Heaven demonstration at the January Swap Meet.

Neal Scott, HAAUG Heaven Administrator (aka Sysop), will present two demonstrations: one for the beginner and one for the slightly-more advanced.

11 AM Beginners Session: – "The Basics" session will cover all you need to know to make your first call, establish your account, and get a basic overview of the system. You'll learn how to install and configure the FirstClass Client software; log-on to the system; send e-mail (including InterNet e-mail); post public messages; and download software.

12:30 PM Advanced Session: – For the slightly more experienced caller, and for those who attended the "basics" session, we'll go into more details of HAAUG Heaven's functions including uploading files to our file libraries; sending InterNet e-mail; forwarding messages; system shortcuts; using the palette; chatting on-line; and other uses.

Questions are always welcome in the demos, and Neal will be available before and after each session to help you with individual questions or problems.

HAAUG Heaven is our "24-hour meeting place." If you're not using it, then you're not getting the full benefit of your membership.

Then we go eat Pizza!

Announcements

Due Dates for Apple Barrel Articles

The next due date for Copy to be submitted is January 15th. That's when I'd like to have it. The final deadline is January 28th for the February issue. We meet that evening to finalize February. The final deadline is February 25 for the March issue. Plan ahead! Please get it in early, if at all possible.

HAAUG Volunteers

Volunteer Coordinator, Peter Gingiss, will try to place volunteers who replied positively to the survey that they would be interested in helping. He still wants people who didn't send in a questionnaire (or new members) to call him at (713) 721-4134 to volunteer.

Next Meeting

The HAAUG boutique will be open from 10 am to 11 am near the membership desk for those wishing to purchase HAAUG T-shirts, koozies, and coffee mugs. There will also be more First Class Books for sale (no modems this month).

Upcoming Meeting Dates & Tentative Main Presentations:

February 15th – Adobe
March 15th –
April 19th –
May 17th –
June 21st –
July 19th – Swap Meet

Revamped Barrel

by Betty English

Well, we've done it to you again. We went and changed things. This time it was mostly by request, though. People wanted to be able to tell the difference between an I, an l, and a 1. I can't say I blame them and this font (Garamond) is one that will do the job. I already had it so cost wasn't a factor. The other fonts I used are *Pepita* and **Poppl-Laudatio**. Please let us know what you think of them. I'm not too thrilled with *Pepita*. I kind of like *Poppl-Laudatio*. It seems to grow on you. I have always liked Garamond.

Troubleshooting

continued from page 2

One of the most common causes of problems are extensions and control panels, files which load into the computer when your system loads. Often these extensions are perfectly fine in and of themselves, but two or more conflict with one another. At one time, all extensions were from software companies, but now Apple itself has loaded all sorts of extensions into your system. Worse yet, extensions used to be voluntary. Now many applications require extensions to run and installing a program can involve installing all sorts of extensions that nobody tells you have been put in your system. Microsoft is the worst offender. The extensions are badly named. You have no idea what they do but as soon as you take one out, Excel or Word ceases to work. You can try to isolate the problem on your own by starting up with the shift key down which disables all optional extensions or by disabling extensions one by one.

There are a few other software problem areas which I will leave out of this discussion: the desktop may need to be rebuilt, for example.

There is always the possibility that the problem is a hardware problem. Sometimes, electrical connections within a computer break or drives get bent. If you have tested out all the software alternatives carefully, you will know that it is time to go to a repair shop (see the ad in this issue of the Apple Barrel for Startronics; George does miracles cheap).

Any workman (or workwoman) will tell you that tools are the difference between a bad job done with difficulty and a good job done easily. And so it is with trouble shooting. The most useful tool for me is Norton Utilities. There are system level problems that I don't really understand all that well, such as b-trees. But when I run Norton Utilities, not only does it tell me that I have such a problem, but it recommends that I fix it. How do I fix it? I just click on "OK" and Norton fixes it.

see Troubleshooting page 10

Mac Library Realmz Special 6-Pak Deal of the Century

Jill Hayhurst
Mac Librarian in Situ
Fool for Games

Realmz, from Fantasoftware, has been around the Mac shareware gaming world for some three-four years now. It has grown from a buggy little plug-in role-playing game to a practically perfect, in-depth, modular, colorful, story-filled, puzzle-laden, and on and on— simply put, it's the most full-featured RPG* you will find in shareware and in fact puts many commercial RPGs to shame.

The downside to that kind of success is that it's gotten rather large. On top of that, since Fantasoftware is committed to continuous improvements, there's a new release every couple of months. Those two things together mean that shareware libraries and bulletin boards are hard-pressed to keep the latest rev of the game engine plus scenarios updated, and when they do, the download times or diskette space make obtaining the full package prohibitively expensive for our members. This is a Bad Thing, see, 'cause we really want y'all to be able to pay the shareware fees for those parts you use and enjoy, and if it takes \$30 in cash to get the disks at the meeting, you might feel that you just couldn't afford any more, and where's the fun in that?

So, here's the deal: you get Realmz 3.2.2, the 3.2.2->3.3 updater, all released scenarios (including the beta of White Dragon), tip sheets, books, the PC Editor demo and whatever else I think to toss in there, on six HD diskettes.

\$10.

We'll keep updating the diskettes— if/when they grow beyond six, well, we may have to up the price a bit, but we'll keep it as cheap as we can for you.

* RPG = Role Playing Game



Macintosh Disk of the Month

The January DOM

Been by the Swap Meet yet? Trunk of your car all full up, shocks sagging, muffler scraping the speed bumps on your way to Pizza SIG and your credit cards all in a hot, sticky gooey mess glueing your wallet shut, I bet. Soon comes da fun part: explaining it all to your SO.

Got some little goodies here for you to distract her/him/it with. (We at the Mac Library are ever sensitive to these little domestic issues and will help out any way we can. We have no idea where you should go for a SCSI-to-ADB male/male adaptor for that whatcha you bought, but hey! we got the distracting part down pat.) It's not a long list, but oh, the quality...

Greg's Browser 2.5.4 (Fat).sea

We have long suspected that Greg is actually an acronym for a bit of AI code out of MIT, but no matter. He puts out all these little bells -n- whistles to make your Mac a happier, more responsive to your needs, cooler kind of computing environment, and actually seems to update the things fairly regularly, so it's worth your while to look 'em over and see if one or two would suit you. The Browser is like a window to the Finder. An organized window. A secretarial sort of window, the kind of secretary who knows where you left the only copy of that contract and will get it for you in time for the meeting with all the last-minute changes included. In these degenerate days of massively huge disks, it's not uncommon to clutter up your monitor with ten or thirty-odd windows hunting up a file here, an app there, a text clipping over yonder and where'd I leave that pict? Greg's Browser.

Quick Depth 1.0

An extension for setting monitor depths on the fly for those of you lucky dogs who have more than one monitor. Oh, it must just be such an awful, crashing bore to have to set them individually.

Must just wear your mouse to the nubbins. The Mac Library is choking down its envy and providing a little something to ease the strain a bit. Hmph.

zip label

A PageMaker 5.0 file for making Zip(oh, the heck with it. sue me.) Disk labels. Nicely organized, I think, though set in windoze fonts (easily translated to Real Font Names, however).

And now, the tip-the-scales-to-the-ground portion of this month's DOM, **thezone-14.sea.**

thezone is a truly wondrous space arcade game, bearing only a ghost of a resemblance to Crystal Quest. Colors, sounds, lights, fire, does not crash (so far, which beats CQ all hollow, wasn't it the one where, when you were done playing you had to shut off your Mac Plus using the <gasp> on-off switch cause the programmer couldn't be bothered to write an exit routine, thereby risking the survival of all your files, not to mention directory structure, I'm going on a bit here, aren't I? Maybe you were meant to play only from a floppy... Bah!) Back to thezone, which I loved and I don't much go for arcade games, they get me all excited and I have to drink gallons of warm milk to calm down and I really detest warm milk. (This is getting needlessly personal, I know.) So, anyway, smooth graphics, wonderful background sounds and explosions, not too many controls, really very well-thought-out. Here's the keys, take it for a spin.

The Disk of the Month costs \$3.50 if you supply the disk and \$5 if HAAUG supplies the disk. Come by the Mac PD Library desk to pick up your copy.

Send e-mail if you would like to order in advance. Mail orders welcome! Add 75¢ for shipping and handling per disk.

E-mail addresses:

HAAUG Heaven: Jill Hayhurst

InterNet: jhayhurst@inpc.net

InterNet: betty@cityscope.net

PowerBook 1400cs

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logical innovation, but in my opinion, the 1400 is the first PowerBook that truly rivals a desktop Mac in its overall usefulness.

In the past desktop Macs have had the advantage over PowerBooks in several ways: (1) bigger and better keyboards, including numeric pads; (2) easier expandability, including ability in most new desktop Macs to have a built-in CD-ROM drive; and (3) a better monitor. Some might argue that price and speed, especially when taken together — desktop Macs are faster AND cheaper — should be added to this list of the advantages of desktop Macs. I disagree. A Porsche 911 Carrera is faster and more expensive than a Volkswagen Cabrio, but this does not make it an essentially different kind of “tool.” Besides, for most of us, 117Mhz is plenty fast. What I dream about at night are things like a completely native OS or a faster connection to the Internet, not a faster microprocessor.

Well, with the PowerBook 1400, Apple has reduced the desktop

computer's advantage in all these respects. Even the price is relatively competitive, at least with comparable top-name Pentium PC notebooks. For example, an ad in the December 1996 BYTE touts the IBM Thinkpad 365 as starting at \$2495, the MSRP of the plain vanilla PowerBook 1400 (sans CD-ROM drive). But from the details in the ad, I gather that for that price you would get a machine with a processor about the same speed and a hard drive about the same capacity (810Mb) as the plain vanilla 1400's, but with a smaller screen (10.4"), and with less RAM (8Mb as the minimum configuration).

The 1400's keyboard has a crisper, cleaner touch than previous PowerBook keyboards, and it is raised out of the computer's top a little, so it's easier to access. True, it still doesn't have a numeric keypad, but you can easily add one via the ADB port. (I use one from Sophisticated Circuits that has performed well.) I like the keyboard on this new PowerBook better than the newer

keyboards on the desktop Macs in our office (a 7200 and a Performa 6300CD).

This is the most easily expandable PowerBook ever. To install more RAM or an Ethernet card, you no longer need a Torx-8 screwdriver (something not everyone has lying around the house); a small Philips head screwdriver will do. You go in through the speaker grill behind the keyboard, which is about a foot wide (from the left to the right side of the computer) and an inch deep. That grill slides and snaps out easily. Then you unscrew the metal heat shield to get to the expansion connectors. I found that adding a 12Mb RAM card from Newer Technology (to give me 28Mb total) was much easier than installing RAM in any of the half dozen PowerBooks I have upgraded in the past. (Still, if you plan to open one up, you ought to know something about working with sensitive electronic equipment. And for Heaven's sake, be sure to

see PowerBook 1400cs page 8

Fun and Games with the InternetPhone

by Manley Mandel

Are you running up a lot of long distance charges talking to your kid at college? Turn those calls into local calls with a local ISP and a software package from Vocaltec...the InternetPhone Release3. That is what the promotion says. So my son in Boston bought the \$45 package which includes free registration of a second party (me) and I downloaded the software installer from Vocaltec's home page (<http://www.vocaltec.com>). My daughter in Maryland thought it was a great idea, so she also bought a license. Now Dad would save at least \$30 per month on phone bills. Well, it has not been easy.

My first problem concerned the download of the software. After two corrupted downloads, I finally was up, registered and running. I'm using a Performa 6115 with a Supra 33.6 modem and a dedicated phone line. My son has a Macintosh 8500 with an ISDN modem and line, while she is using a Dell Pentium and a 28.8 modem. We have set up a Private Chat Room and try to communicate between 7:30 and 8:00 PM CST. We use E-mail to verify attendance. We have been able to connect successfully each evening and the conversations (sic) have gone like this, "Jill, this is Dad. Can you hear me?" "Dad, I hear you." "Jill, your packets appear to be 128 bits at about 300 bps. Check that you are full duplex and at 28.8 and talk louder." "Daaaaadd". "Bye!"

The Mac to Mac platform appears to be a bit better and the transmit and receive packets are generally at 512 bits and 14,400 bps or a trifle better, but never approach 28.8. To make matters worse the delay (even

at full duplex) is usually 0.3 seconds and can get as long as 2 seconds. This results in echoes and broken conversations. I cannot say that I have had any real conversation with either party in a month of trying.

There are General Chat rooms, and I have tried a number of parties (not listed as sexy or the like) with the same failure to have a conversation.

Mexicans answer the phone with "Bueno", not "Hello", as is the

custom here. This is because the phone lines and switches were so terrible that people spent the first part of the discourse establishing whether each party had a good connection. Like the InternetPhone, most of the time it was terrible. For my part, I am sending my money to the phone company, and am not wasting my time on futile calls...though I may give Apple's Cool Talk a try.



PowerBook 1400cs

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GROUND YOURSELF!) Best of all, where earlier PowerBooks had only one RAM expansion slot, the 1400 allows you to install one and later, if your needs increase, piggyback a second card on top of the first. If I decide that 28Mb is not enough, I can buy a second card for, say, 8Mb and add it. This makes so much sense it is hard to remember why previous PowerBooks haven't permitted it.

The CD-ROM drive in the 1400cs is the most obvious difference between the 1400 and its predecessors. The drive is 6x and works nicely, except that I find it difficult to get the bay door closed. It seems to be necessary to slam the thing shut for it to catch, and slamming is not something I like to do with my computer. The CD-ROM bay opens in the front of the PowerBook, and it is recessed into the case near the bottom. As a consequence, this PowerBook does not have feet in back that elevate it the way previous PowerBooks did; raising the back end of the case causes the CD-ROM bay to scrape the table-top when it comes out. The CD-ROM drive is easy to remove if you need to insert a floppy disk, and the 1400cs comes with both expansion modules: the CD-ROM and the SuperDrive. Carrying both the floppy drive and the CD-ROM module around may be a bit of a pain; each module weighs about a third of a pound. But it's less of a pain than carrying around a ReNO or Panasonic portable CD-ROM drive,

which is what I have done sometimes in the past.) I used to use CD-ROM mainly for installing software, and that is such a convenience that the drive is worth having for that alone.

But I have now discovered another and more wonderful use. As I write this I am listening to Corelli Sonate di chiesa (op. 3 [1689]) performed by London Baroque, one of my favorite bands. The music is playing on the CD-ROM drive in the computer and

.....
 The power key is now helpfully named in English: "on/off." If only Apple would put the word "command" on the command key...

coming out through the headphones I have plugged into the jack in the back of the PowerBook. The necessary software (the AppleCD Audio Player) comes installed on the PowerBook. David Pogue, who reviewed the PowerBook 1400 in the most recent MacWorld, claims that it did not skip for him even when he rapped the PowerBook sharply on the side. Good for him, but it skipped for me. Maybe Pogue has a wimpier rap than I do. But it won't skip if you just move the computer around, so it is practical to use the PowerBook on your lap and listen to music at the same time. (The Radio Shack cd player that I use in my car has a buffer of a second or two,

and won't skip unless I go over two or three potholes in quick succession.)

By the way, the expansion bay which is used for the CD-ROM drive or floppy drive will apparently also accommodate an extra battery. This is an improvement over the PowerBook 5300, which could only use one battery at a time, but it is not quite as good as the PowerBook 520, which used two batteries but did not require you to disable the floppy drive. When I had two fresh batteries installed in my 520, I used to get five or six hours of use without much difficulty. That made working off the battery truly practical. The batteries, like other peripherals for the 1400, are still a little hard to come by (Micro Center here in Houston has no peripherals yet, although you can order them from MacConnection), but this may have changed by the time you read this.

The pc-card slots are placed farther to the back on the 1400 than on the 5300, but otherwise there are no changes here. My Global Village PowerPort Platinum Pro 28.8Kbps pc-card modem made the transition from the 5300 to the 1400 without any problems. BYTE Magazine's review of the 1400 notes that you can boot from the pc-card, if you have a storage card properly configured, and that means that a couple individuals could share a 1400 yet have their own setups, if each had his own System and storage pc-card.

For me the main reason that the

see PowerBook 1400cs page 9

PowerBook 1400cs*continued from page 8*

1400 obviates the need for a desktop machine is that the 1400's screen is finally adequate to the needs of present-day computing. The 1400/1400cs's 800 x 600 screen displays the same amount of logical real estate as the 800 x 600 display on a PowerBook 5300ce (the top of the line 5300), but the 1400's screen is physically bigger (11.3" diagonally versus 10.4" for the 5300ce). And the 1400cs displays fifty percent more of the desktop than the 640 x 480 screens on all the other 5300-series PowerBooks. In fact, the 1400's screen shows almost as much as I could see on the 15" multi-scan monitor that I used to hook my 5300 up to when I was at my desk at home. (Connected to my PowerBook the 15" monitor would display 832 x 624 pixels.) And the 1400cs's screen is not just larger than the screens on the 5300 or 5300cs, it's clearer and easier to read, because it shows thousands of colors rather than just 256. I have found this screen to be quite capable of dealing with the World Wide Web. For this reason, the lack of a video-out port, which seemed so stupid to me in the PowerBook 190, makes pretty good sense on the 1400. (But an academic colleague, reading a draft of this review, commented in response to this point, "Yes, but it won't be easy for me to plug in the department's LCD projector!") I will be giving my 15" external monitor to my daughters for them to use with their older PowerBooks.

Let me conclude with a few final comparisons to earlier PowerBooks.

The 1400's trackpad is clickable, unlike the trackpad on the 5300, but apparently like the 190 (which I have never used). There is a freeware control panel available called ClickPad II which gives you the ability to click on the trackpad of a 5300, so you don't have to use the button. ClickPad II gave you the option of hearing a clicking sound when you tapped the trackpad, which I found helpful. The 1400's Apple-supplied software

doesn't provide that option. One of the problems with the clickable trackpad is that you sometimes are not sure whether you have clicked or grabbed an object properly; auditory feedback helps minimize that uncertainty. On the other hand, the trackpad on the 1400 is more sensitive to my touch than the trackpad on the 5300 was when I used ClickPad II. I still find tapping the trackpad with my finger to be somewhat awkward, but it is supposed to be less likely to cause repetitive-stress disorders than using the mechanical button, which requires you to flex those thumb muscles constantly. Besides, if you enable "dragging" as well as "clicking" on the 1400, it is much easier to deal with menus, especially pop-out menus, which can be such a pain on a PowerBook. I have been giving tapping the old college try for the last several days and I'm getting better at it. I will say one thing to those who have not used the trackpad at all yet (it was introduced in the 500-series PowerBooks two years ago): Once you get used to the trackpad, you will never, ever want to go back to the trackball used in earlier PowerBooks. I'm a little more emotional than usual on this subject at the moment because I just finished tearing a PowerBook 165 almost completely apart so I could replace a tiny spring necessary for the trackball to work. I don't even like using a mouse anymore. If I were forced to go back to using a desktop Mac very often, I think I would buy one of those third-party trackpads to use instead of that filthy rodent.

Like the 520/540, the 1400 has its power connection in back on the right side, rather than on the left, like the 5300. And like the 520/540, the 1400's AC adapter is thick and sturdy. The 5300's plug was thin and delicate, and it was reported that many people had trouble with them breaking off. And speaking of breaking off, the little door that covers the ports in back when they are not in use is another

improvement. Previous PowerBook doors have had a tendency to snap off. The door on the 1400 is still made of flimsy plastic, but when it's open, it slides halfway into the PowerBook's case, just underneath the ports. This means it is only half as exposed and much better anchored. (I understand that this innovation was introduced on the Duos.)

The power key is now helpfully named in English: "on/off." If only Apple would put the word "command" on the command key, I could die happy. A picture is sometimes worth a thousand words only because it may take a thousand words to explain the picture, where if words had been used to begin with, a single one might have sufficed. (If you don't know what I'm talking about, you've never tried to help a brand-new Mac user find the power key or command key over the phone.)

Finally, the 1400-series machines come bundled with some very valuable software, including ClarisWorks 4, Claris's Organizer (ver. 1), the Apple Internet Connection kit, and System 7.5.3. (The 1400 will not run System 7.5.5.) All of the pre-installed software is also included on a CD-ROM, so, while you can still use Floppier to build a set of backup floppies, you do not have to do this to sleep well at night.

Overall, I would give the 1400cs two thumbs up, three and a half mice, four stars out of five, and a 5/6 on the Porter sliding scale. (On the Porter sliding scale, the item under review is rated according to how ambitious it is and how well it fulfills its ambitions. Citizen Kane gets a 10/10.) In other words, I like it a lot.

Will Porter <wmpporter@io.com> teaches at University of Houston and has been using Macs since 1985. He was section leader for Macintosh word processing on CompuServe 1995-96. Some of his reviews for the H-MAC list on the Internet are archived at the H-MAC list's home page: <<http://polyglot.lsu.wisc.edu/hmac/hmachome.html>>. He uses his PowerBook 1400cs mainly for telecommunications, word processing, database management and development (with FileMaker Pro 3), and for composing and performing music.

Troubleshooting

continued from page 4

It was nothing, really (blush).

My second favorite tool is Conflict Catcher III. As I said earlier, it is possible to isolate conflicts one by one, but Conflict Catcher does it for you. When you tell it you have a problem, it automatically activates half your optional extensions and then asks you if you still have a problem. If you say "no," it adds half of the remaining extensions and asks again. If you say "yes" it removes half of the extensions you have just used, and asks again. It does all the heavy thinking; you just answer yes or no.

A third tool is a disk of some sort that will allow you to start your computer with some system other than that on your internal hard disk. Not only will that allow you to see whether your current system is causing the problem you are experiencing but in some cases, if your main system is damaged enough, it may be the only way of starting up the computer. Norton Utilities will help you create a system floppy for emergencies. If you have a zip drive or an external hard disk and you have an alternate system on it you may not need a bootable floppy. By the way, your computer will boot from a system on a floppy drive before it will boot from the internal hard drive, but to start from an external hard drive or a zip drive, you will need to push

command option-shift-delete to bypass the internal drive.

What to do about a problem is, for the most part, beyond the scope of this article. If you can isolate where the problem is, of course, then replacing the problem component or turning it off will usually make things better. Otherwise, there are steps that may work even if you don't know exactly where the problem lies. It is best to try them in the reverse order of difficulty. Sometimes just restarting the computer can clear up a problem. It is always worth trying because it is easy to do and cannot do any harm. At the other end of the spectrum, replacing a system is a major undertaking, and if not done right can result in losing valuable third party extensions or losing preference files which you have painstakingly constructed to customize your applications.

With the approach I have advocated and the tools I have recommended, many problems can be solved. Often, a systematic, logical approach will have your computer up and running as well as ever. But I must warn you that some mysteries will remain mysteries. Even the most experienced guru finds problems for which there seems to be no explanation. The gods must have amusement.

TheZone

by Christian Carlson

I was presented this game by, none other than, Betty English! But, why would that be an issue... well because I heard it was on the January DOM (just don't tell nobody!). The story goes that you are the last and only hope to fight back the "stronger" forces. You shoot and destroy the enemy. Each level gets harder... sounds like a pattern in games, huh? Games have learned nothing from the movie *Suburban Commando*; in order to win, you have to win, not lose.

You get three space crafts that come with no brakes. Can't you just imagine the insurance on that? To brake you turn it the opposite direction and shove that sucker into full thrust. American technology at it's best, eh? The idea is to destroy the enemy bases and things in order to be transported to the next level.

If you get used to the playing field, which is like, no inertia for there is no gravity in space, well there is but for processing purposes, there is none. So if you hit the thrust for a few seconds, you'll go the same speed until an outside force, such as an asteroid, acts upon you, of course.

You are at the beginning equipped with a little laser (why is it never the big, planet killing machines?) to destroy things and you have the ability to grab better weapons. You also have shields, so you don't blow to Kingdom Come when that stupid asteroid comes out of nowhere to kill your game. Don't you just hate that or does that just happen to me?

And once again, follow your heart, try it out. It's shareware, pretty cheap. It requires an '020, System 7, 2.5 megs of RAM, Sound Manager 3.0, and a 13" monitor that can display 256 colors.

Price: \$10, shareware.

Thanks Christian! The Gaming Guru has returned!

Tech Support Tales

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TECH SUPPORT TALES - the publication which proves that stupid-

ity breeds humor. Send all mail, comments & rantings to: JUNKSPILL@AOL.COM

Look, this one really happened: Tech Support kept getting calls from this one client because any disk which was sent to the client became unreadable after one day in the field. A live technician was sent out. He asked what happened after the client receive the disk. "I keep them right here, on the side of the file cabinet" (under a magnet!)

HAAUG Swap Meet Form

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Evening Phone _____ Daytime Phone _____

Member Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Preferred Location (Cougar Den or World Affairs) _____

Number of tables desired _____ Table Fee total _____

**for the January or July, 1997
Swap Meets
Instructions Below**

Electricity Fee (if applicable) _____

Membership Renewal Fee (if applicable) _____

Total Amount Due _____

Place
Postage
Here

Joe Cornelius
Houston Area Apple Users' Group Vendor Co-ordinator
7102 Deep Forest Dr
Houston, TX 77088-6623

About the Swap Meet, January 11th

Reservations are now being taken for tables with electricity and without. We can arrange to share tables for those members with a small quantity of items to swap.

One table is free for paid up members, those with dues scheduled for payment in January can be paid during the meet. Extra tables are \$5 each for members. Dealer tables are \$50 each.

Electricity is \$5 each for both members and dealers (Cords will not be allowed across walkways).

Please provide your name, member number, expiration date, phone number, so it can be confirmed with your table number.

Each table will be tagged with the reservation name prior to the swap meet and an alphabetical name list will be posted on the doors, in case you forgot the reserved table number. Everybody will be in the Houston and surrounding rooms on the second

floor of the UC this time, so you don't need to select a location for January.

For reservations, send e-mail to:

*joe_cornelius@haaug.org or
photolab@aol.com*

If you are unable to send e-mail:
*Call Joe at (713) 448-7218 or fax the form to
him at (713) 448-3031.*

Or fill out the form and mail it to Joe. The address is already there for you. Check to see that he will receive it in time. Created to be folded in thirds to keep personal information private.



Pizza Sig

by Betty English

The Pizza SIG is for everybody, by the way. It has been mentioned that some people might not be aware of that. Everybody is welcome to join us after the meeting on Saturday for Pizza and Beer (or soddy pop, etc.). It begins as soon as the earliest people arrive and ends... well when Apple presented the PowerBooks we stayed until 8 (that's when I left. There were still a lot of people there.)

For talk (mostly computer, but not entirely) food and company, come join us. 3 is about right usually, earlier during Swap Meets. It's nice for unwinding a bit before the drive home.

RE: Pierce Elevated

To get to the meeting while Pierce Elevated is under construction, take your shortest route toward Galveston and come in from the South to I45 North. Take the Elgin/Cullen exit left onto Elgin. That will take you to Calhoun.

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Space Size	1X	3X	6X
2/3 page	125	120	115
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The Apple Barrel is published 12 times a year and is sent to all

HAAUG members (approximately 800) and to about 125 other user groups. If you would like to advertise in "the Barrel" contact Peter Gingiss, Advertising Manager, through the HAAUG Hotline (713) 522-2179 or on HAAUG Heaven or at (713) 721-4134 for more details.

The Houston Area Apple Users' Group provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information about Apple Computer products and their associated hardware and software. Meetings, newsletters, special interest groups, the BBS and other events create this forum.

Directions to the Meeting

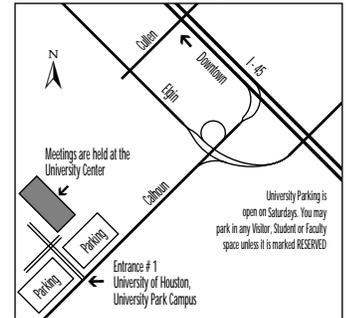
from the south

from the southwest, west & north

From Pasadena, Galveston, Clear Lake, and other points South, get onto I45 north towards downtown Houston. Take the Elgin/Cullen exit and turn left onto Elgin. Go under a group of overpasses then bear right onto a ramp that leads you to Calhoun.

From most areas Southwest, West, and North, take the most convenient freeway to downtown Houston and get on Interstate 45 (Gulf Freeway) South. Take the Calhoun/UH exit and follow the road as it curves to the right.

At the 3rd light, turn right into "UH Entrance #1." The University Center will be ahead of you, the first building on the right. You can park free in the first parking lot on the right.



How to get to the HAAUG meeting at UofH

Apple Barrel

January 1997