

## Les Ellingham's PAGE 6

As you are reading I/O you presumably already have an Atari Home Computer and know that the software you can buy is the finest available. In fact, there is so much good software around from Atari and the independent American software houses, that sooner or later you may find yourself short of money and will have to forego some of those games you wanted. Your software library will cease to grow and if you can't afford any new games your interest might start to wane. This is a problem which faces all of us, but there is an answer which will get you dozens of programs absolutely free. Write them yourself!

The Atari computers are amazing machines when you get to know them a little. You may find problems in writing software as good as that put out by Atari but, believe me, the advanced capabilities of the Atari are so easily accessible that you can certainly write programs as good as those commercially available for other machines. I expect many of you are now thinking that programming is easier said than done, having struggled through the BASIC manuals, but the secret to learning more is to see actual programs written by other users and to take routines from them to build your own programs. If you can find someone to share your learning — perhaps through one of the User Groups in I/O — then some of those insurmountable problems will soon be solved, but the most important thing is to READ. Read as much as you can, not only articles but program listings. Try to work your way through published listings and figure out what each section is doing. When you find a section that you can understand and which may work as a subroutine

on its own, write it down and use it in your own programs. There is no need to start from scratch — others have already worked out many of the more difficult routines for you. Use them!

One immediate problem is to find listings and articles for they seem few and far between for the



*Les Ellingham, Founder & Editor of Page 6*

Atari, but there are in fact users all over the world writing some very good programs and one man in America — Stan Ockers — churns out dozens of programs with very advanced subroutines written specifically for users just like you to experiment with and learn from.

About eight months ago I started producing a magazine called PAGE 6 which specifically sets out to bring to users in this country some of the best programs from around the world and Stan Ockers has been featured several times. The main objective is to encourage Atari owners in this country to begin writing their own programs, but for those of you who are not as yet ready there are plenty of reviews and hints and tips for beginners. The magazine started in conjunction with the Birmingham User Group, but is now



produced independently although several BUG members contribute material. It has grown quite quickly and many people see it as the UK equivalent to ANALOG magazine.

One of the most enjoyable things which came from producing the magazine is the number of friends I have made in America and Australia. People in User Groups who are as dedicated to their Atari as you or me but who know just a little more as they have had their machines much longer. Much of what they have discovered will find its way into the pages of PAGE 6. Hopefully one day your programs and articles will be featured and then we can repay the kindness and generosity of overseas users. Wouldn't it be nice to know that something you have written has been appreciated by other users all over the world? Wouldn't you like to see what others are writing?

The Atari Home Computing scene is at last beginning to develop rapidly with User Groups springing up and Atari doing a fine job with the Home Computer Club and I/O. Now you have PAGE 6 magazine to add to your enjoyment. You became a part of the worldwide Atari community when you bought your machine — why not get more involved!

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18, Underwood Close  
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Why not take out a subscription? For more information, you can ring me on (0785) 41153  
*Les Ellingham, Editor*