TatungBytes
Issue #5 · November 2026

NEW GAME

Send in the Clones

A brand new text adventure for the Tatung Einstein. Eight clones, one garbled mission, and a Friend Computer that thinks almost everything is treason.

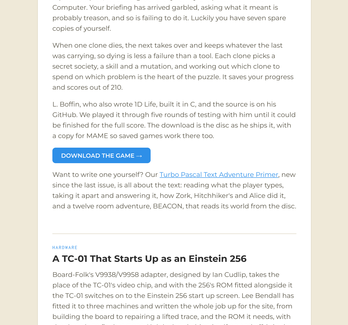
Hello again,

New software for the Einstein is still being written in 2026, and this issue opens with some: a full text adventure by L. Boffin, free to download today. New hardware is still being made too: an adapter that lets a TC-01 switch on as an Einstein 256, with a guide from someone who has fitted three.

Also in this issue: a new course that opens up the 8K ROM inside every TC-01, the Einstein's master disc as it stood three months before launch, five issues of Einstein User, and, at the end, a list of everything that has gone on the site since the last newsletter.

NEW GAME · L. BOFFIN

Your Mission Is to… Crackle… Hiss…



Send in the Clones is set in the world of Paranoia, the tabletop role playing game of the mid 1980s. You are a Red level troubleshooter in Alpha Complex, an underground city run by the paranoid Friend Computer. Your briefing has arrived garbled, asking what it meant is probably treason, and so is failing to do it. Luckily you have seven spare copies of yourself.

When one clone dies, the next takes over and keeps whatever the last was carrying, so dying is less a failure than a tool. Each clone picks a secret society, a skill and a mutation, and working out which clone to spend on which problem is the heart of the puzzle. It saves your progress and scores out of 210.

L. Boffin, who also wrote 1D Life, built it in C, and the source is on his GitHub. We played it through five rounds of testing with him until it could be finished for the full score. The download is the disc as he ships it, with a copy for MAME so saved games work there too.

DOWNLOAD THE GAME →

Want to write one yourself? Our Turbo Pascal Text Adventure Primer, now since the last issue, is all about the text: reading what the player types, taking it apart and answering it, how Zork, Hitchhiker's and Alice did it, and a twelve room adventure, MACHINE, that reads its world from the disc.

HARDWARE

A TC-01 That Starts Up as an Einstein 256

Board-Folk's V9938/V9958 adapter, designed by Ian Cudlip, takes the place of the TC-01's video chip, and with the 256's ROM fitted alongside it the TC-01 switches on to the Einstein 256 start up screen. Lee Bendall has fitted it to three machines and written the whole job up for the site, from building the board to repairing a lifted trace, and the ROM it needs, with the three byte fix that stops Alph lock switching itself on and off, is in the library ready to write to an EPROM. He has also written up Board-Folk's joystick interface, for Atari style joysticks on the TC-01.

READ THE STORY →

NEW COURSE

Inside the Einstein: The MOS



Every character an Einstein program prints, and every key it reads, goes through the MOS: 8,192 bytes of program in a ROM chip on the TC-01's board. This course opens it up. Fifteen sections and six appendices on MOS 1.2 cover how the Einstein fits 64K of RAM and an 8K ROM into one address space, what happens between power on and the prompt, how a call reaches the ROM even when it is switched out of sight, and how the MOS prints, reads the keyboard through the sound chip and keeps the time.

You read it as source code: a listing of the whole ROM that reassembles to the original byte for byte, so what you read is what the machine runs. Every section gives you something to run, and the last two have you build your own MOS, with a new start up banner, a new prompt and a monitor command that was never there, and boot it in MAME. It follows on from our Z80 assembly course.

START THE COURSE →

FROM

The Master Disc Before It Was Finished

A damaged development disc from Crystal Research, the company that wrote the Einstein's DOS and BASIC, boots again. Deleted from its directory, but still there, are programs from the Einstein's master disc as they stood in April 1984, three months before the machine went on sale, and a copy of Xtal BASIC 5.00 we have found nowhere else.

Seven more things from our wanted list arrived on the same day: the first two issues of Tatung Einstein News from 1985 and 1986, Tatung's CP/M 2.2 package with its 80 column XBASIC and CONDOS boot ROM, the Popup utility, the companion disc to B & H's book The Source, and the booklet that came with The Wreck.

READ THE STORY →

NEW IN THE LIBRARY

Five Issues of Einstein User, Programs Included

Thanks to Paul Botley, the library now has Einstein User from Vol 4 No 3, with its show adverts for November 1989, to Vol 5 No 3, about autumn 1991, from B & H Computers of Halifax. Every issue's programs are on a bootable listings disc, among them Alan Wilkins's arrangement of The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba for the Einstein's three voices, Tony Perry's Ludo for two to four players, and a readers' competition to draw the Sierpinski triangle faster.

START WITH VOL 4 NO 3 →

ALSO NEW TODAY

Eleven More for the Library

Fabrizio Di Vittorio's Diagnostic ROM for the TC-01, with its Z80 source, runs from the spare ROM socket and checks the RAM, the video and sound chips, the keyboard, the disc controller and the CP/M code on the board. Microsoft's BASIC Compiler 5.30 comes with its assembler and linker, and Ian Bruce's Circuit Diagram and PCB Designer from 1988 draw a circuit and lay out its board. Text adventure fans there is Colossal Adventure on UK Einstein User Group public domain disc 142. The rest are in the list below.

SINCE THE LAST ISSUE

Everything New on the Site

NEWS

Send in the Clones: A New Text Adventure for the Einstein
A TC-01 That Starts Up as an Einstein 256
The Master Disc Before It Was Finished
Naughty But Nice: The Einstein Had a Saucy Side After All

COURSES

Inside the Einstein: The MOS
Turbo Pascal Text Adventure Primer

GUIDES

Build and Installation of the Einstein TC-01 V9938/V9958 Adapter
Build and Installation of the Einstein TC-01 Joystick Interface
Smooth Scrolling Without Hardware Scrolling: How Time Bandits Does It

DOWNLOADS: GAMES

Send in the Clones
Colossal Adventure (UKEUG PD Disc 142)
Rugby Manager

DOWNLOADS: MAGAZINES AND PAPERS

Tatung Einstein User Vol 4 No 3, Vol 4 No 4, Vol 5 No 1, Vol 5 No 2 and Vol 5 No 3
Einstein User listings discs Vol 4 No 3, Vol 4 No 4, Vol 5 No 1, Vol 5 No 2 and Vol 5 No 3
Tatung Einstein News, Issue 1 and Issue 2
The Wreck Instruction Booklet

DOWNLOADS: SYSTEM DISCS AND ROMS

Tatung 256 System Disc (XtalDOS 2.05E)
Xtal System 5 on XtalDOS 2.04
Xtal System 5 With the 5.00 Run Time
XtalDOS 2.02 Development Disc
Tatung CP/M 2.2 with 80 Column XBASIC
FlexiDOS 2.2
MOS 2.1 Patched for the TC-01 V9938/V9958 Adapter
Einstein Diagnostic ROM

DOWNLOADS: SOFTWARE AND TOOLS

Inside the Einstein: The MOS Source
Microsoft BASIC Compiler (BASCOM)
The Source: The Companion Disc
Popup
Key Mouse
Datamate
Circuit Diagram
PCB Designer
Apollo II Graphics Workshop
Heli Maths and Function Machine
Modern Maths 16+ and Choc A Block

If you finish Send in the Clones, build your own MOS, or fit Board-Folk's adapter to your own TC-01, we would love to hear how it went. Reply to this email or get in touch on the site.

GET IN TOUCH