Your Guide to Commodore 64 *Songwriter*

Because of the differences in hardware and other considerations, each computer version of *Songwriter* is a little different from all the other versions. In this guide, we will outline those differences and describe some of the special capabilities the Commodore 64 *Songwriter* program offers.

BOOT-UP PROCEDURE

Turn on the screen (a TV or a monitor). Now turn on the disk drive without your *Songwriter* disk in it. When the "busy" light goes off, insert the *Songwriter* disk, close the door on the drive, and turn your computer on. Then type the following:

LOAD "SONGWRITER", 8, 1

and press **RETURN.**

SONGWRITER COMMANDS

f1—Escape key (**ESC** in manual). Can return you to your song. Can also be used with other keys to perform various actions.

RETURN—Pressing this key lets you hear the note sitting in the scale at that moment. Does *not* record the note.

] and [(cursor keys)—Moves the note right (**]**) or left (**[**), or "up" or "down," the *Songwriter* scale, to change the pitch.*

SPACEBAR—Records the note sitting in the scale at that moment.

A and Z—These keys move the *Songwriter* "roll" up (**A**) or down (**Z**) one note at a time. In other words, **A** plays the next note; **Z** plays the previous note. Using these keys you can "scroll" through your song forwards or backwards.*

P—Plays the song currently in memory from the beginning. Pressing any key except **F** or **S** will stop the song from playing.

C—Continues to play the song at the point at which you stopped it.

X—Erases the note directly above the scale.

∅(zero key)—Records a "rest."

Number keys (1 to 9) and +, −, /, * (operator keys)—Used for changing note length.

G—Sends you to the Get screen, where you can choose from among a number of options (see OPTIONS section following).

f1, then Z—Jumps you back to the beginning of your song.

f1, then A—Jumps you to the end of your song.

*Although the Commodore 64 has cursor control keys, we chose not to use them for moving up and down the scale or scrolling through the notes because it would have required two keystrokes instead of one. (You would have had to use the **SHIFT** key with the cursor key.)

DEL—Pressing this key allows you to correct mistakes made while typing in a name for a musical idea or song. It erases the last letter typed.

f1, then M—Sets the measure length equal to the length of the note.

M—Resets the measure marker to the beginning of a measure.

F—Increases the speed (tempo) at which your song will play.

S—Decreases the tempo at which your song will play.

f1, then F—Jumps you to the fastest possible tempo on *Songwriter*.**

f1, then S—Jumps you to the slowest possible tempo on *Songwriter*.**

>—Moves you a half-step to the right on the scale.

<—Moves you a half-step to the left on the scale.

f1, then]—Moves the entire scale to the right, changing the key you are working with.

f1, then [—Moves the entire scale to the left, changing the key you are working with.

K—Allows you to see or edit musical ideas stored on your disk. You can also use **K** to create new musical ideas.

Note: **f1,F and **f1,S** will not work while a song is playing.

L—Instructs the computer to "learn" the musical idea you are writing.

f3—Selects "special effects" sounds.

f5—Selects "deep and tinny" sounds.

f7—Selects "bright and fuzzy" sounds.

Note: The "fire" button on your joystick can serve the same function as hitting the **SPACEBAR** key. The joystick itself can be used to move the note in a desired direction. Both the joystick and the joystick button can be used with the sound-effect keys (**f3, f5,** and **f7**) to produce additional sound effects.

OPTIONS ON THE GET MENU

SAVE SONG—Saves on disk the song currently in memory.

LOAD SONG—Loads into memory a song from your disk.

ADD SONGS—Inserts a song from the disk into the song you are currently working on.

RETURN TO SONG—Returns you to your current song.

SAVE IDEA—Saves on disk a musical idea you are working on.

LOAD IDEAS—Loads all the musical ideas from the disk into memory.

NAME NOTES—Allows you to turn the note names on or off.

START NEW SONG—Erases the current song from memory.

MAKE NEW DISK—Formats, or initializes, a blank disk.

SOUND QUALITY

Sound on the Commodore 64 is produced by using a special "sound generator" that has many interesting capabilities. This sound generator is similar in some ways to a music synthesizer and can create many of the same effects. These effects are produced by using the Commodore's **f3, f5,** and **f7** keys. Each key generates a unique type of sound. In addition, while a song is playing you can use the joystick and the joystick button to add yet more dimensions to the sound.

The **f3** key gives you what are called SPECIAL EFFECTS SOUNDS. Technically, these sounds are generated by what are called "triangle waves."

The **f5** key gives you what are called DEEP AND TINNY SOUNDS. These are produced by means of "pulse waves."

The **f7** key produces what are called BRIGHT AND FUZZY SOUNDS. These are produced by "sawtooth waves."

We will not explain here what these waves are. If you are interested, you can check them out in a physics textbook, a science encyclopedia, or your Commodore 64 Reference Manual.

To turn off these special sound effects, you simply can press the **RESTORE** button on your computer.

You can experiment as much as you like with these sound effects. Using the joystick in addition to the sound-effect keys will cause different things to happen, depending on which key you press. For example, if you press **f7** and then move the joystick, the note length will change. Pressing the joystick button after pressing **f5** will switch you between various sound filters.

Occasionally you may find that your song is fading out or disappears altogether. This is because not all types of changes go together. The easiest way to remedy this situation is to use the **RESTORE** button. After pressing **RESTORE,** press **C** to continue playing your song.

Different instruments playing the same music will sound very different. A musician plays a trumpet different ways to achieve different sounds. By playing with the joystick and the **f3, f5,** and **f7** keys, you can create an almost infinite number of different sounds on *Songwriter*.

Note: These special sound effects are not saved when you save the song on the disk.

CONNECTING TO A STEREO

Connections can be made between the audio line of the 5-pin DIN output socket on the back of the Commodore 64 and an auxiliary (AUX) input on a stereo amplifier or tape recorder. You will need a special cable with a 5-pin plug to accomplish this. *Songwriter* provides you with one. Most stereos use RCA phono jacks for inputs. The *Songwriter* cable has this jack. If it does not fit your stereo,

consult the manual that came with your stereo or buy an adapter, available at your local electronics store.

Songs and musical ideas cannot be erased from a disk while *Songwriter* is running. To erase files from a Commodore 64 disk, turn off your computer, then turn it back on. To erase a song, type:

ERASING SONGS OR MUSICAL IDEAS FROM A DISK

OPEN 15,8,15, "SØ:SNG. (name of song to be erased goes here; no parens)"

To erase a musical idea, type:

OPEN 15,8,15 "SØ: IDA. (name of idea to be erased goes here; no parens)"

Songwriter has 14K bytes of memory for music storage. Each note uses up 2 bytes of memory. Therefore, there is room for 7,000 notes on the Commodore.

CAPACITIES (DISK AND RAM)

The Commodore program is designed to save 54 songs or 54 sets of musical ideas on a formatted disk. This number may be shortened by long songs or extraneous files.