

Sinclair ZX Spectrum

with 16K or 48K RAM

VU-FILE

from **PSION** 

Load and Run by typing LOAD "VU-FILE"

At both home and work we continually use lists, card indices, filing cabinets etc. to store in an ordered manner repetitive data for all kinds of information. In the home this includes address books, lists of members of clubs or societies that we may belong to, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, etc. At work, schools, colleges, businesses and particularly government departments have numerous filing cabinets and card indices for all manner of information.

VU-FILE is a computer program for the electronic storage of lists or files based on the Spectrum. The advantage of a computer for doing this is not only that the information can be stored easily and compactly, but particularly that the computer is very powerful in ordering, sequencing, searching, finding and listing such files.

The file consists of a collection or lists of "records" where each record may contain various items of information. Each item of information on a record is called a "data-field": VU-FILE allows you to lay out or format the standard record of a particular file in a manner of your own choosing. Each record will appear as one page on the screen and you may have as many data-fields in each record as is consistent with your layout on the screen. After laying out or formatting the record a whole series of commands allows you to

develop the file and interrogate it. In addition you can save the file permanently on your own cassettes and retrieve it from the cassette for subsequent use.

Throughout VU-FILE you will find the command or information heading in the top four lines of the screen. This heading continually prompts you as to what to do next and in addition tells you the present command under which you are acting. The rest of the screen always shows the general or current record.

After loading the program from a virgin or original cassette, choose the option to enter a new file.

Formatting a Record

VU-FILE is a general purpose computer file. In the initial option of RECORD LAYOUT, the user may lay out or format standard headings, titles, colour etc. to format the general record as he wishes.

On entering, a red cursor square will be situated in the top left-hand corner of the record. The keyboard may be used as a simple typewriter to enter standard titles and headings. In addition the cursor may be moved more rapidly around the screen with the aid of the arrow keys. Only information which is fixed or repeated on every record should be entered at this stage. The colour for paper and ink can be varied throughout the record layout by pressing "EDIT", (caps shift with key "1").

The current attributes will be displayed and may be altered. When the standard information has been entered the user may exit from this mode with the "STOP" command (shift A).

After exiting from the RECORD LAYOUT mode the program will immediately enter a new mode called

DATA-FIELDS A new command heading will appear at

the top of the screen. The mode allows the user to

define the position on the record where he wishes to

place variable information items. For example, if a file

was being created for names and addresses each record

might show the word "NAME:" followed by the particular name say "BROWN JOHN" of a particular record. The letters "NAME:" would have been entered in the record lay out mode and are fixed on every record. The letters "BROWN JOHN" are a "data-field" and vary from one record to another. The user must specify the position on the record where the data-field (e.g. "BROWN JOHN") is to appear, namely after "NAME:": Move the cursor square with the arrow keys to a position immediately after "NAME:" and press ENTER at the correct position. You will be asked to

define the paper and ink colours for that field.

The position of the data field will now be marked with a > Continue to define the position of each data-field you require on the record. Press the command "STOP" to exit.

VU-FILE Commands

After exiting from this mode the program will automatically enter the main VU-FILE command point (option 1 from the main menu). The main commands available to the user are ENTER, ALTER, INFORM, FORWARD, BACK, RESET, ORDER, SELECT, QUIT, LIST, PRINT, COPY, DELETE. If the file is empty, the ENTER command will automatically be affected.

Most of these commands are self-explanatory and can be implemented from any point of VU-FILE (under option 1) by typing the first letter of each command.

Entering, Deleting and Altering Records

From the command point press key "E" to enter a new record to the file. The screen will show a blank record with the standard titles and headings which have been entered previously. The red cursor box will be situated at the position for the first data-field. You may now simply enter the information for the field and for the record that you require. In the example included on side B of the cassette "Gazetteer" the first item of fixed