

HP 9836 – Notes and Repairs

Martin Hepperle, June 2022

Recently I acquired a HP 9836A with its monochrome monitor. Nothing special for many, but I wanted to have it for extending my HP 9000/200/300 range towards the HP Series-80 systems.

The machine had been offered on E-Bay for a relatively high (according to my valuation) starting price of 290 EUROS. The photographs showed a CRT with very ugly burn-in traces. One could read the text even when the machine was off. Also the left CAPS LOCK key was missing, which was another negative point. At least the seller was honest and did not hide these flaws.

These were probably the reasons that nobody else wanted this machine. I took the risk because I already had a monochrome monitor in storage for more than 5 years but no 9836. And I hoped to replace the missing key cap with a replica or find a “new” one.

Finally, the machine arrived in two parcels, all wrapped in a few kilometers of sticky tape and air bubble wrap and well cushioned with thick cardboards so that nothing was damaged in transit.

The system proved to be an early machine (Serial # 2143 A 00213: the 213th machine manufactured in week 43 of 1981 in the USA) with 64 KB of RAM on the CPL board and of course no MMU. It came with a BASIC 2.0 ROM board. Additionally, a Datacomm and two 256 KB RAM boards (one HP, one Eventide) were installed – all very authentic for its time.

After a visual inspection of all boards, setting the input voltage switch from 220 to 240 Volts and cleaning and mildly lubricating the two mini-disk drives (one original Tandon, one HP manufactured drive HP 9130) I powered the machine up and it booted happily into BASIC.

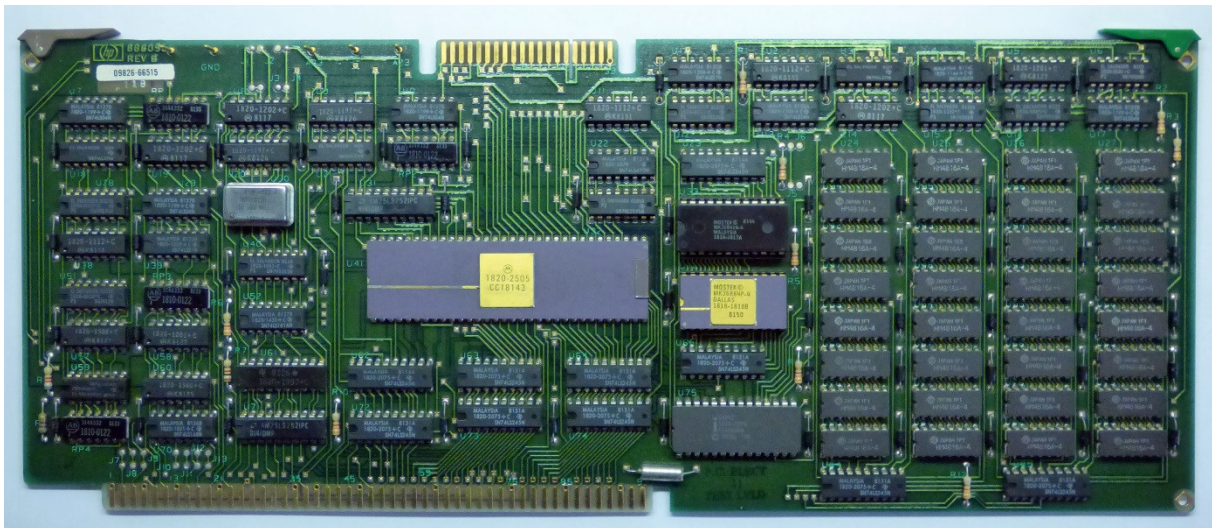


Figure 1: The CPL board 09826-66515 with the large MC68000 CPU and 2.0 boot ROMs.

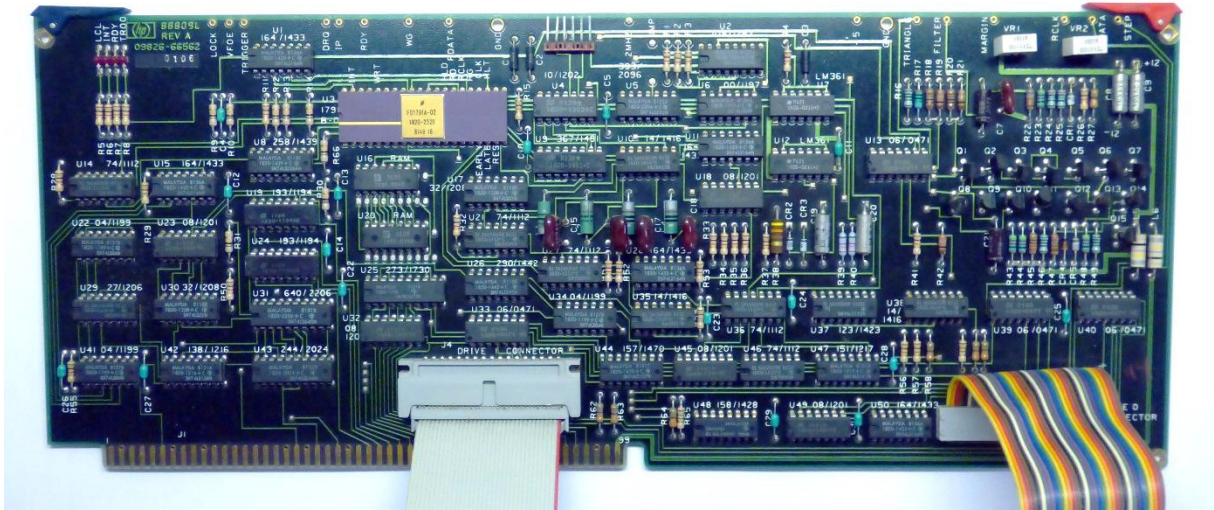


Figure 2: The diskette controller board 09826-66562.

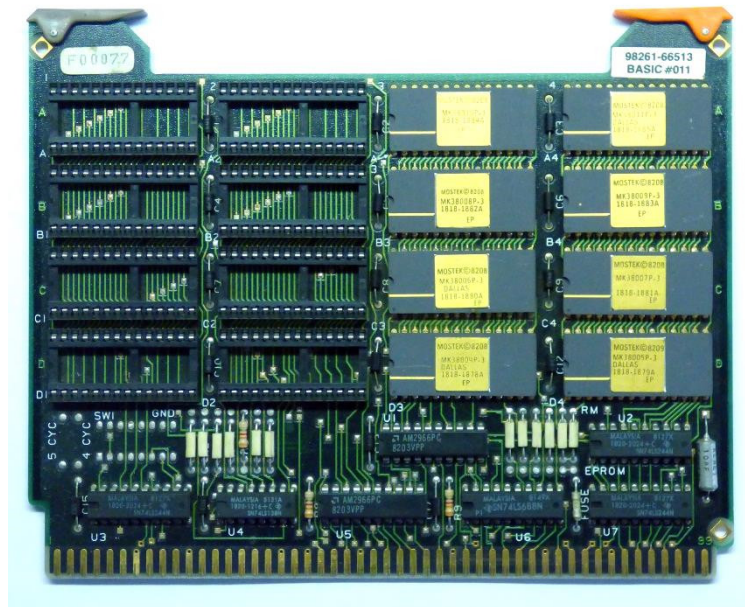


Figure 3: The BASIC 2.0 ROM board 98261-66513.

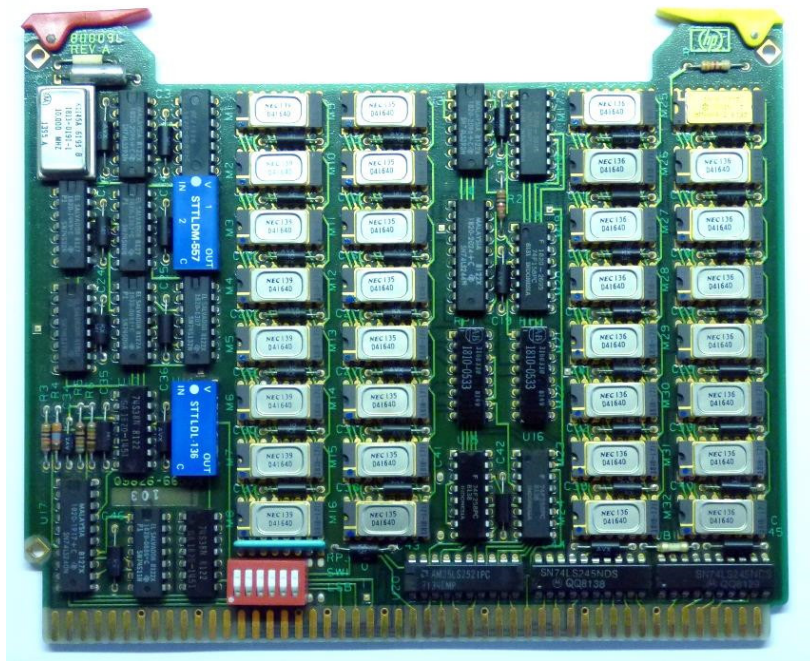


Figure 4: The HP RAM board.

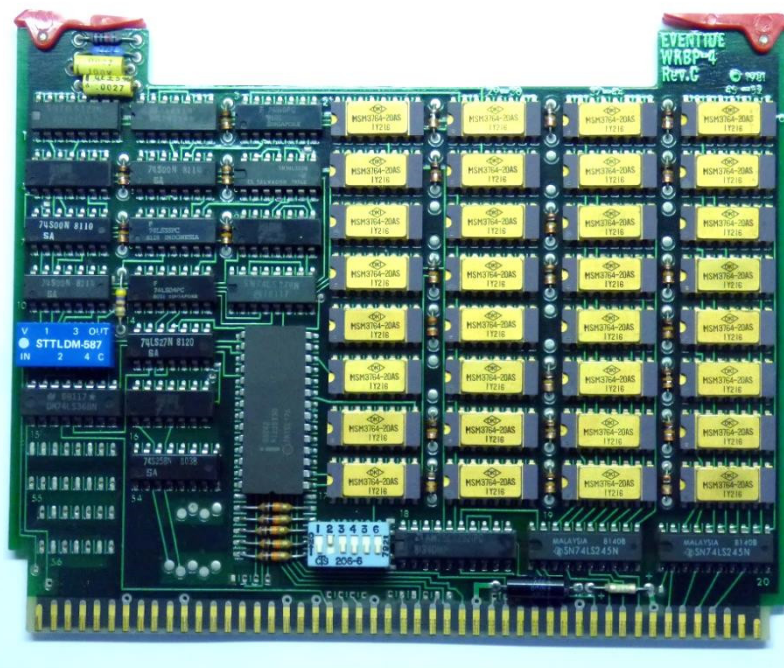


Figure 5: The Eventide RAM board.

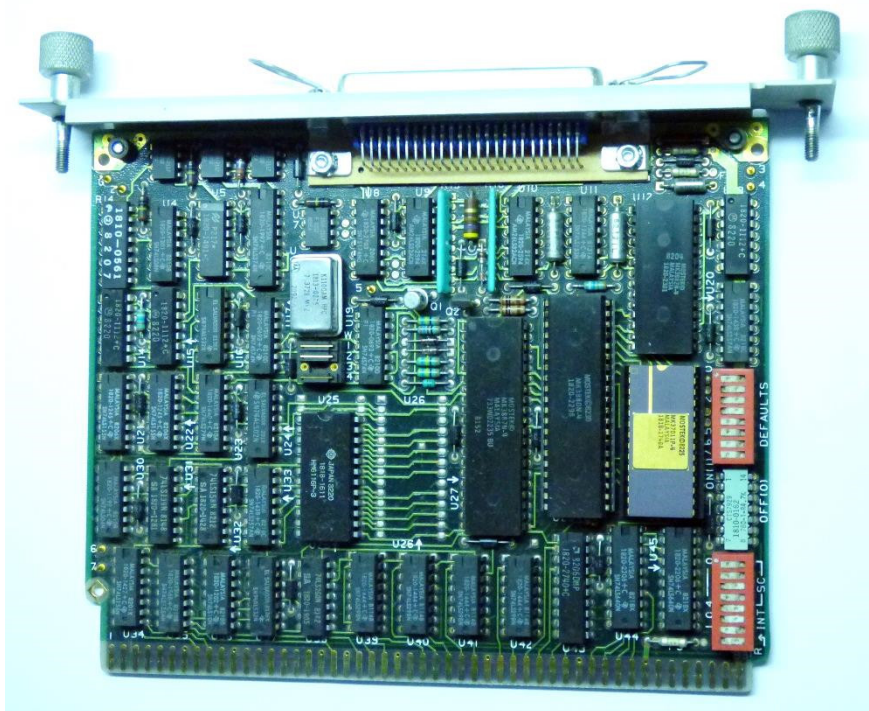


Figure 6: The Datacomm board HP 98628A. Note single 6116 RAM chip.

The Knob

The first fault, which I noted, was that the knob was not working. So I removed the keyboard and replaced the burnt out light bulb in the knob assembly. I had done that before in the Nimitz keyboard of my 9816. All that is needed is a small 6...12V glass light bulb with filament wires and a diameter of about 3 mm. Such bulbs are available for model hobby purposes, e.g. for model railroads.

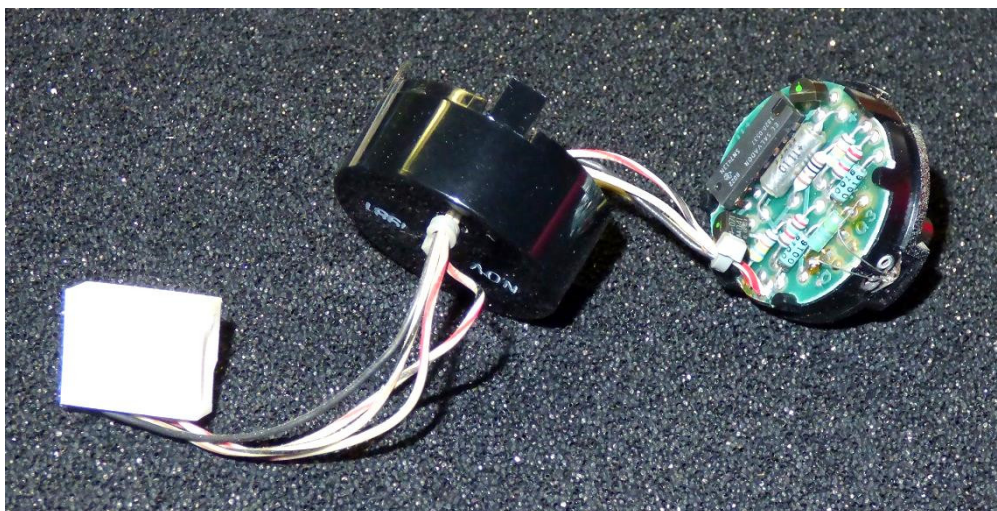


Figure 7: Like on the Nimitz keyboard, the rotary knob is attached to the keyboard PCB by a small edge connector. The black cover can be pulled off after slightly bending the tabs (don't break them, they may be brittle!). The glass bulb is soldered to the circular PCB and a slight press fit into the cavity with a V-shaped sheet metal beam diverter.

The Keyboard

As I had already seen on the photos, the CAPS LOCK key was missing. Indeed, it was not just missing, but the black stem was completely broken off, leaving only the cylindrical shaft of the bare key plunger. To cover the ugly hole, I decided to recreate the key cap.

For mounting the key cap, I drilled two 1 mm diameter holes into the remains of the plunger and carefully glued two short steel wire pins into the plunger. Here, I used a steel-filled Epoxy resin glue. This was a slightly tricky operation as I had to avoid damaging the key switch as well as bringing glue into the key mechanism. In preparation of the next steps I also added a very thin layer of Vaseline to the outer sliding part of the plunger.



Figure 8: Keyboard with missing key and steel pins already glued into the plunger.

The key cap could have been created by a CAD redesign, a 3D printer and lots of sanding, but I made a silicon rubber mold of the corresponding key cap pulled from a Nimitz keyboard. For this step, the template key cap was suspended upside down on a thin steel strip and the 2-component silicone slowly poured into a plastic cup. A larger casting hole and smaller venting holes at the four corners were added for allowing trapped air to escape (it would have been better to add these to the cap before casting the silicone, but I did not want to glue something to the original cap.)

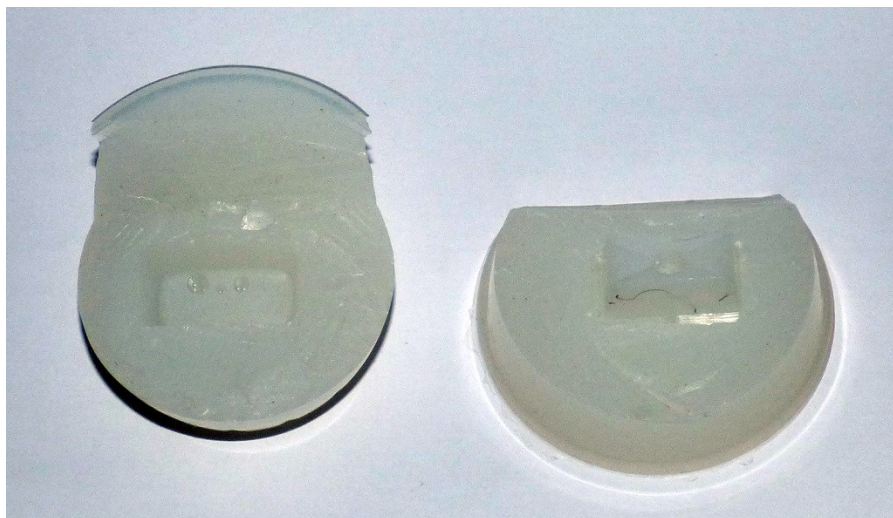


Figure 9: The silicon rubber mold for the key cap was cast in one piece and later cut open with a sharp knife.



Figure 10: The key cap as cast in clear epoxy resin with the casting spruce removed and slightly wet sanded.

Next I cast the new cap using clear Epoxy resin. After filling some small bubbles and sanding the surface, several layers of a matching Humbrol plastic model aircraft paint were applied, wet sanding the surface between these coats.

For the key label, I bought a few sheets of laser printable water slide paper and printed the label in slightly varying sizes with my laser printer. I used a very thin slide paper and carefully applied the decal. After letting the decal dry for 24 hours, I spray-painted the surface with several layers of clear lacquer to avoid rubbing the label off. Unfortunately, I was impatient and did not wait long enough between the layers, so that the lower clear layer started to crinkle and I had to wet sand the cap before adding another coat. However, in the end, after several days of surface finishing, the result was very nice – a satin gloss finish, similar to the original key caps and just the right color.



Figure 11: To minimize waste, I fixed a small piece of decal paper to a sheet of support paper with two squares of thin double sided tape.



Figure 12: Key caps: left original, right: reproduction, painted and with decal applied, but not yet coated with clear protective layer.

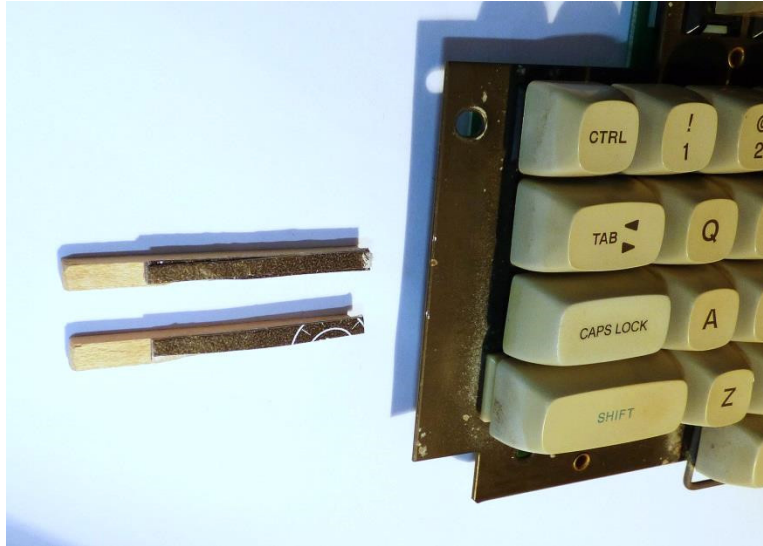


Figure 13: Two wooden square bars were adjusted with cardboard strips to support the key cap at the proper height exactly parallel to the base plate.

For mounting the key cap, I supported it by two wooden pegs of the right height, so that it would rest parallel to the black steel board. Additionally, thin vertical cardboard strips were inserted into the gaps above and below the cap to align it with its neighbors. I applied only a small amount of Epoxy resin to the steel pins and to the holes in the cap and after placing the key cap I inverted the whole arrangement upside down to avoid any excess Epoxy flowing down towards the key switch.

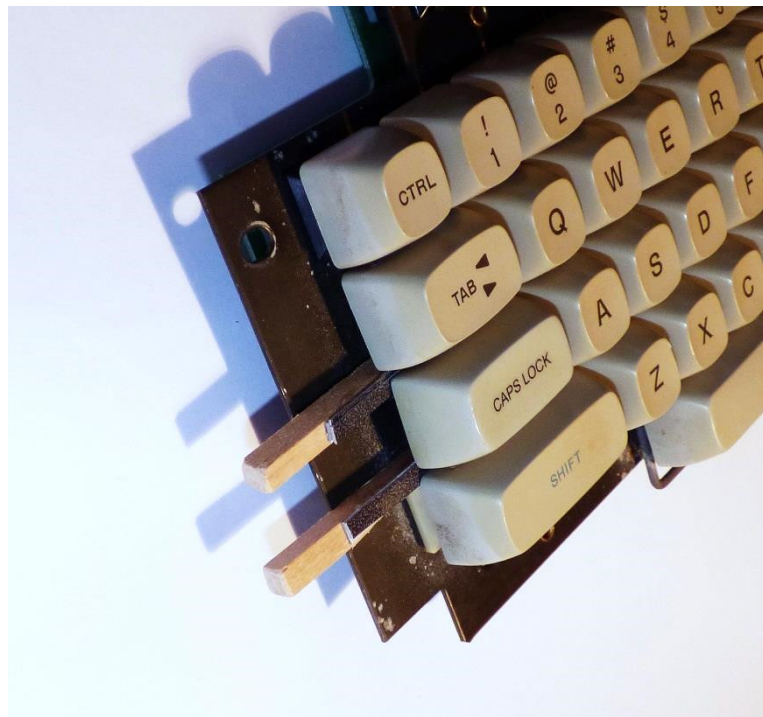


Figure 14: The key cap rests on the supporting bars while the epoxy cures.



Figure 15: The final key cap fits nicely into the keyboard, is difficult to detect and works fine.



Figure 16: The keyboard mounted in the HP 9836 in its natural habitat.

The PSU

While I was toying around to determine the memory configuration and the mass storage MSUS syntax, the machine suddenly died. You know that sinking feeling when this happens. What did I do? Should I have kept the machine as a pure exhibition piece? No – I want to be able to use and explore my systems.

The 16A low voltage fuse had blown. After replacing the fuse it instantly blew again.

So I pulled out Tony Duell's wonderful schematics (with all its glorious 186 pages!) and the Service Manual. Following the Manual, the solution was simple: "replace the regulator board" – not really an option for me.

Compared to other HP designs, the power supply is relatively simple. It produces only +5, +12 and -12 Volts. A massive boat anchor of a transformer powers a rectifier board which feeds about 30 Volts into a large buffer capacitor. From there, a regulator board contains three regulators for the voltages and a crowbar over-voltage protection circuit.

I feared that a silicon component in one of the three voltage regulator circuits had burnt and hoped that no over-voltage had propagated to the core of the machine (assuming that crowbar and fuse had done their work).

Studying the schematics and the service manual helped identifying the correct edge connector pins on the regulator board. I found that the input rails of the regulator board were completely shorted. A visual inspection showed no signs of heat or leaking capacitors.

First, I suspected a permanent short in the thyristor in the crowbar circuit. Desoldering and testing proved that it was good. Next in the input were capacitors C20 (680 μ F electrolytic) and C27 (100 nF ceramic) both between input voltage and ground. I remembered that I had noticed a very faint fishy smell when I sniffed across the board the first time, but now I was not sure. Anyway, after desoldering capacitor C20 the short was gone. And the underside of the capacitor did not look nice – obviously it had leaked a long time ago and the electrolyte had accumulated and dried up on its underside. I also replaced the second capacitor C10 of the same size and make. The remaining capacitors looked fine and tested good, so I did not replace them.

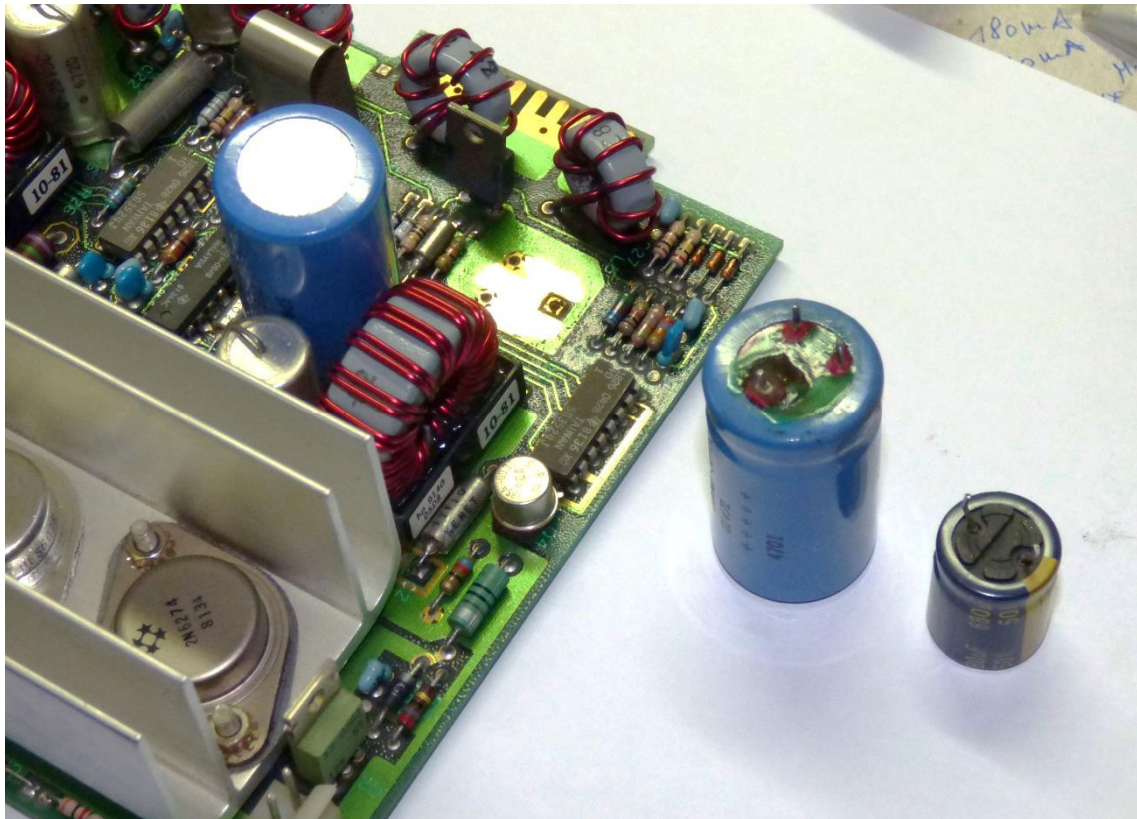


Figure 17: PSU regulator board with defective capacitor removed and modern replacement. The other blue capacitor was also replaced.

Luckily, there was no visible corrosion on the PCB. I replaced the capacitor with a new one which I had in my drawers. The modern type was much smaller and had a smaller pin distance so the wires had to be bent slightly to fit the hole pattern on the PCB. Also mine had only two legs (I don't even know, whether three pronged devices are manufactured anymore).

Anyway, after cleaning the board with isopropanol, to make sure no corrosive substances were left, I soldered the new capacitor in and the short was, of course, gone. Testing the regulator board showed the proper output voltages and after reinserting it into the mainframe the system booted up again. Joy!

The second Sprague electrolytic capacitor of the same type was replaced later, even if it still tested good.

So, in this case, as has already been demonstrated by many other repairs, the old electrolytic capacitors were the problem again.

And here comes the HP 9836CU

Martin Hepperle, August 2022

A few months after I obtained my 9836A, I stumbled across a HP 9836C on E-Bay which I found very interesting, but it went for a ridiculous price of more than 400€.

Just four weeks later, another HP 9836, in this case even a “CU” model complete with its color monitor was offered by a commercial scrapper. It did not look too promising because the HP-IB cables and even the short monitor cable had been cut for the copper. The stacked HP-IB-connectors and the display connectors were still attached to the system. Obviously only a few people wanted to have this machine and I obtained it for 185€ including shipping (which caused the seller some headache, as the whole system weighs over 40 kg).

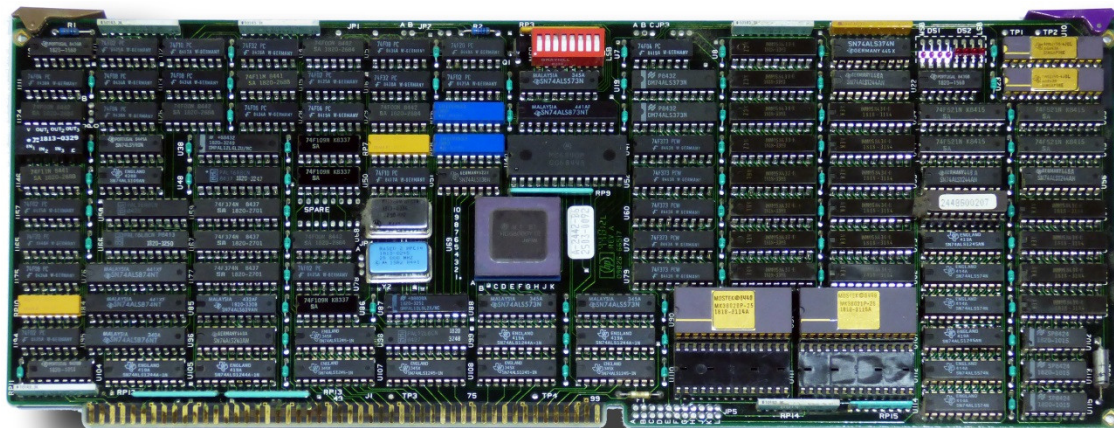


Figure 19: The 09826-66517 CPU board of the 9836CU with the MC68000R12 CPU, 3.0 boot ROMs, a few PALs and 18 4Kx4 SRAM chips. The uneven looks of the gold fingers are due to poor lighting, they are in good condition.

The system included an Eventide WKBP-16 RAM board with 1 MB, a 98628A Opt.100 Datacomm a 98622 GPIO board, a 98620B DMA board and, as a bonus, the math coprocessor 98635A board.

Repairing the Key Switches

I found that 3 key switches were completely broken off and one was just hanging dearly on to the steel key board plate. At least all parts including the key caps were present. In this case, the cherry switches were not broken at the stem, but the upper part of the switch case was ripped from the lower part.

Each mechanical switch consists of a plunger with a triangular wedge which operates a spring contact. The plunger is pushed up by a rather small helical spring of about 2 mm diameter. I glued the upper cases of the broken switches with a thin thread of steel filled epoxy to the lower cases. One has to be careful to avoid bringing glue into the switch mechanisms, but with a little bit of care and a toothpick this can be done. In one switch I had to replace the small spring which was crushed beyond repair. Luckily, I had a matching one in my “may be useful one day” box.

This time, the rotary encoder was still working and needed no attention.



Figure 20: Keyboard with broken switches taken off. Note that one of the function keys in the upper right is also almost broken and leans forward.



Figure 21: Enlarged view of a broken switch. The upper part of the switch case seems to be welded ultrasonically to the lower part and this connection breaks.

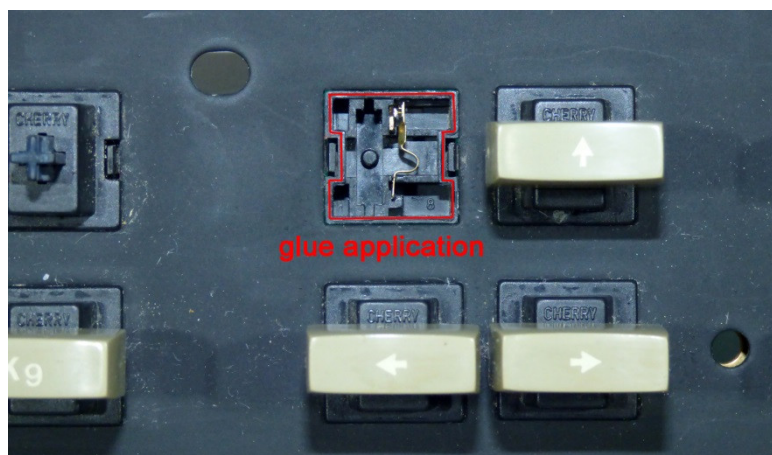


Figure 22: A thin thread of epoxy can be applied to the outer rim of the switch and the upper part including the plunger can be inserted carefully. Make sure that the small helical spring is in place (not yet installed on its pin in this picture) and that the pin on the plunger engages properly into the spring.

Making a new Video Cable

The scrapper had cut away the video cable and only one connector was still screwed to the monitor. This was unrepairable, so I had to build a new cable. The wiring is straight through, but the RGB signals should be individually shielded for good signal quality. I cut an old VGA cable and soldered its ends to male DB-15 connectors. I designed a hood for the rather thick cable and printed four identical semi-shells on my 3D-printer. I did not bother to add screws for closing the hoods; they are simply glued together with epoxy which also includes a cable restraint. The monitor side of the cable received the two original screws with washers to fasten the connector to the monitor. At the computer end I inserted two countersink head screws from the connector side into the hood and secured them to the hood with a blob of epoxy. This allows pulling the cable hood together with the DSUB connector from the female connector.



Figure 23: The new video cable and the sad remains of the original cable..

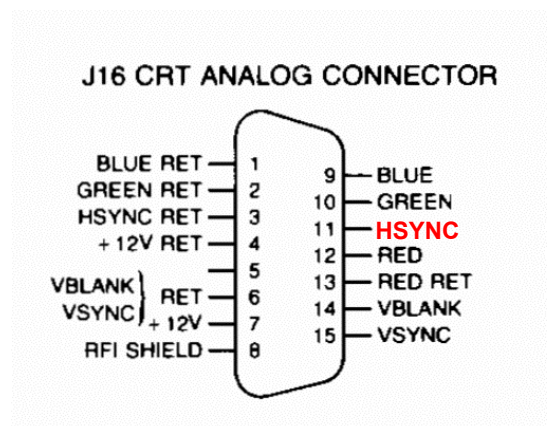


Figure 24: Simple straight through wiring of the color video cable lifted from the service manual. Note that pin 11 carries HSYNC which is not labeled in the HP document. The matching return wire 3 is labeled, though. I connected the ground pins 3 and 6 to a common ground wire as my VGA cable did not have more wires. Only pin 5 is not connected. The 12 V signal is used to switch the monitor on and off.

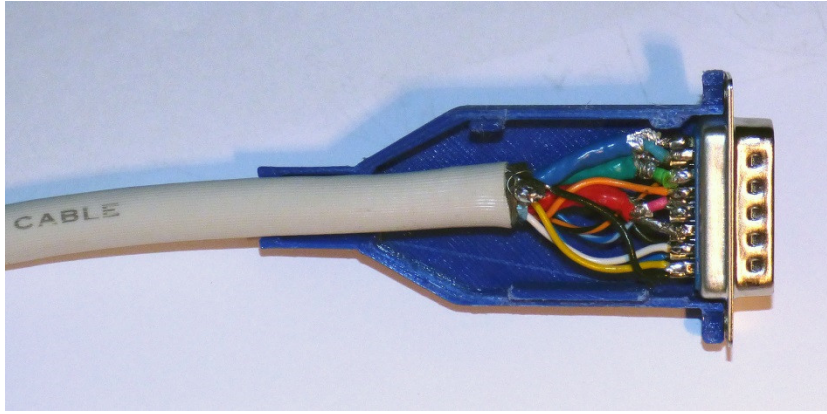


Figure 25: A look under the hood of the new cable before gluing it together. The RGB wires are shielded and not very convenient to solder to the connector.



Figure 26: The new cable installed. The upper connector is secured to the monitor with two screws. The lower connector (which should have a sliding lock), is just held in place by friction.



Figure 27: The final result.

And the Rest

After cleaning lots of fluff from the inside of the machine, cleaning and lubricating the floppy disc drives I tried to boot the machine after removing all boards from the DIO cage. The monitor was not attached to the system. The self-test stopped immediately after the first LED sweep sequence with a 0100 0100 pattern. This indicated that not even the minimum 16 KB of RAM could be found. I thought that the CPU board should carry 128 KB or RAM. But thanks to Paul Berger I learned that the SRAM chips on the CPU board are merely cache and buffer RAMs for CPU and MMU. So I added the 1 MB Eventide RAM board and indeed the boot sequence passed all tests. Without a monitor and without diskettes in the drives, the boot sequence stopped with one LED on the floppy controller lit. After I added a BASIC 2.0 ROM board the system seemed to boot and no LED stayed illuminated.

In the meantime I had the new video cable ready and added the monitor to the system. I was very much delighted to see the green text of the boot screen and finally the BASIC 2.0 prompt.

When I tried the color graphics commands I learned that the extensions GRAPH 2.1 are necessary to use color. In case of later BASIC versions, the GRAPHX extension has to be loaded.

The math coprocessor board 98635A is an interesting device and more information can be found in the Pascal System Designer's Guide (98615-90074). Its NS 32081 FPU offers the four basic operations on IEEE floating point numbers. Later BASIC versions recognize it automatically, but it is also possible to control it directly – see one of the following sections.

And finally the HP 9826

Martin Hepperle, April 2025

As a companion to the HP-85 I always wanted a compact HP 9826. Around the year 2000 many of them were sold, but later the stream of “new” devices slimmed down and the desired prices climbed to insane heights. Finally, in 2025 I obtained a HP 9826A for a reasonable 195€. The drive door latch was somehow damaged, otherwise the machine looked fine. I did not hesitate long and decided to buy that machine. The 25 kg parcel arrived within 3 days at my doorstep, just 2 weeks after my birthday, so I considered this a late birthday present. The CPU board in this system is another variant of the 9826/9836 CPU boards. It carries the boot ROMs at the right edge and has a large, HP-branded 68000 CPU in a ceramic package.

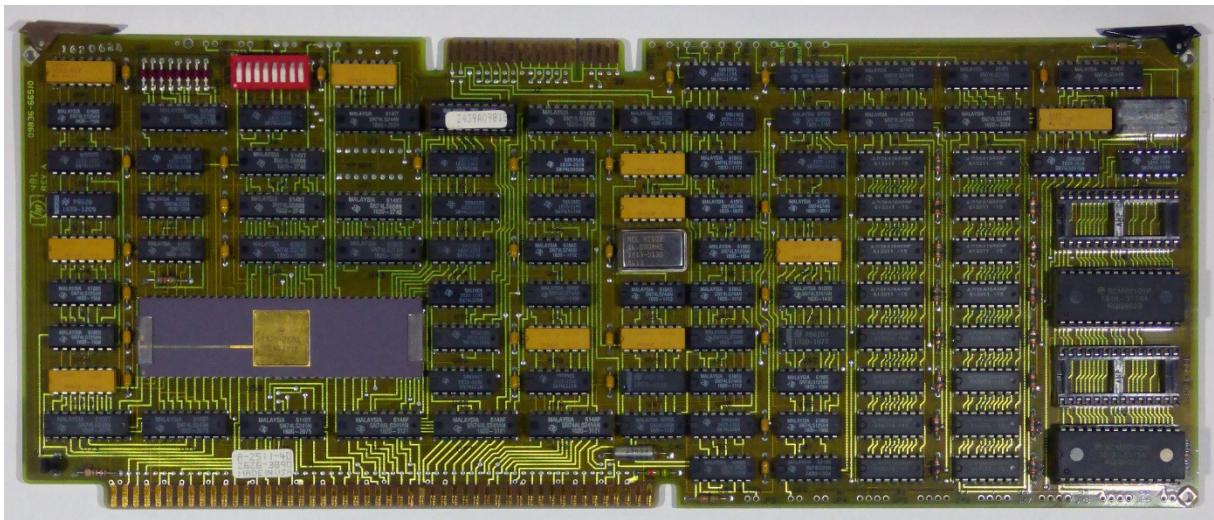


Figure 28: The 9826 came with this 09836-66510 CPU board carrying the 1826-2505 CPU, boot ROMs 3.0 and 16 4164 SRAM chips providing 128 Kbytes of RAM.

The system included two 256 Kbyte RAM boards, another uncovered slot showed that the seller had taken out another interface board for a separate sale. This did not hurt, as I had enough interfaces for replacement.

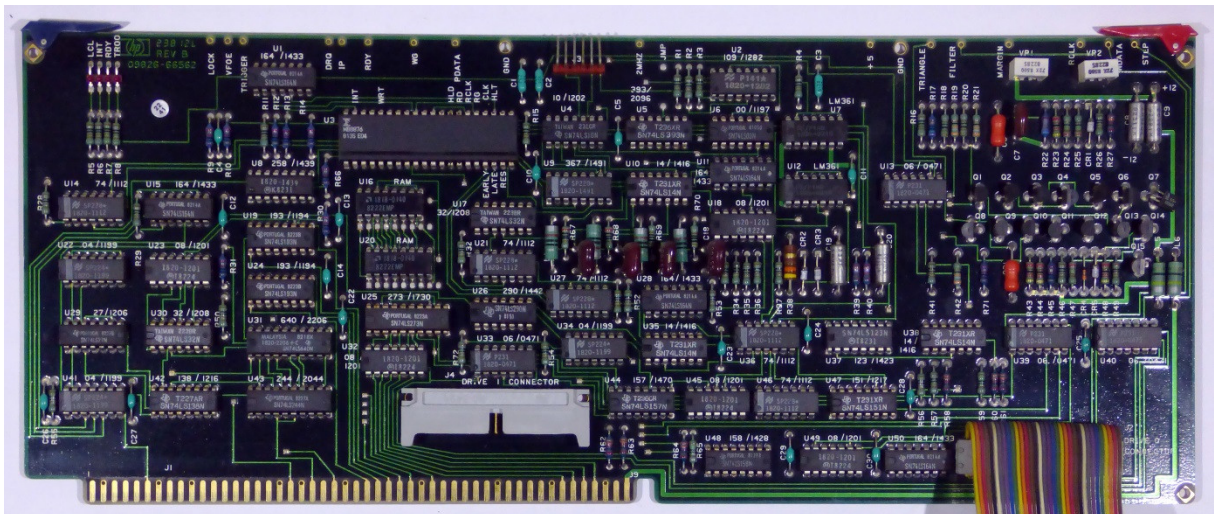


Figure 29: The diskette controller in the 9826 is the same 09826-66562 board as used in the 9836A, just with only one ribbon cable connected.

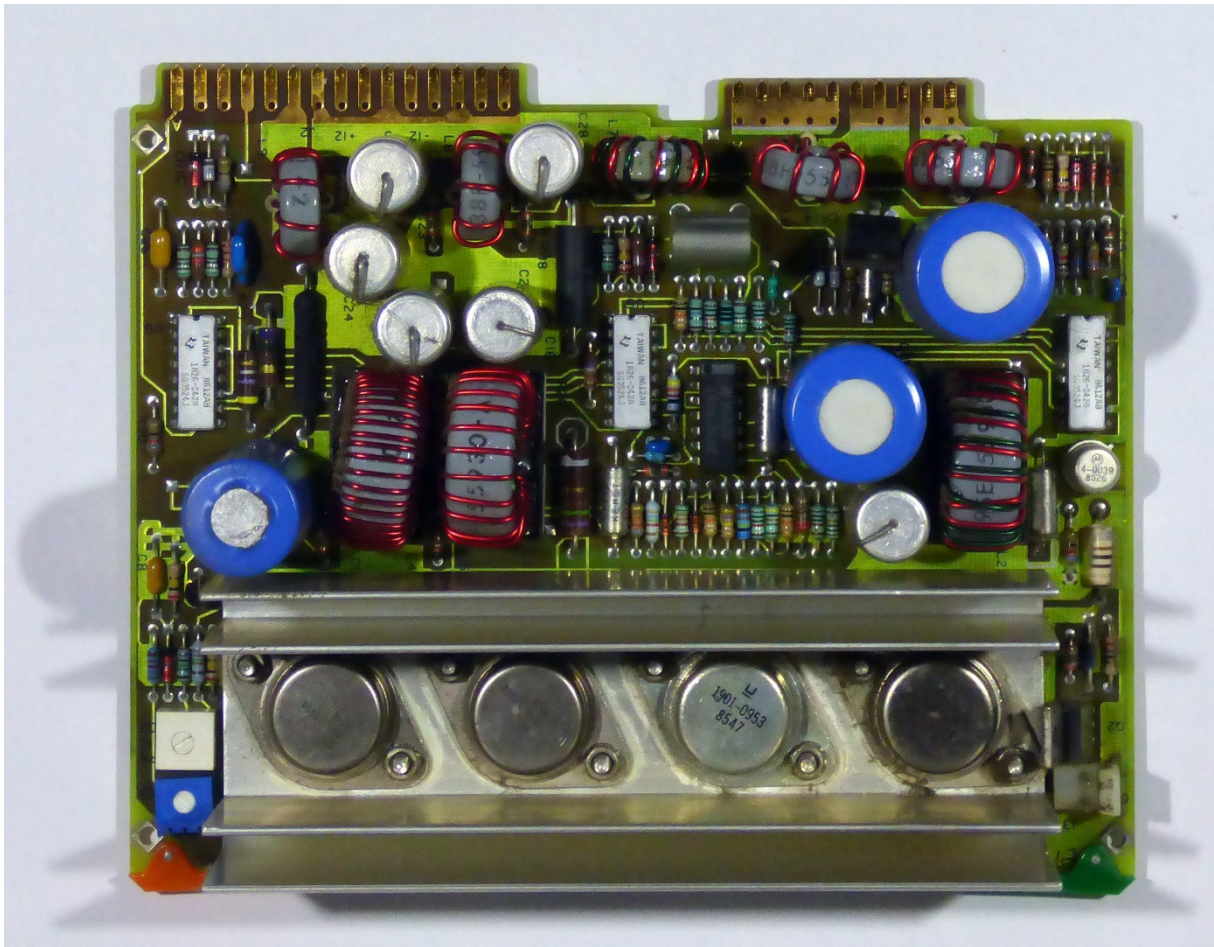


Figure 30: The power supply regulator board of the 9826.

The HP 9826 system uses the same Tandon TM-100 disk drive like the 9836. During the first inspection, I noticed the missing disk drive door handle. Later I found the missing part inside the disk drive – the latch of the disk drive door was completely broken off. This part is HP-specific and consists of a complex injection molded part which includes two torsion bar springs and two latching hooks. It can be opened and closed easily with the tip of a finger, but obviously someone tried to pull the tab out or rotate it. I don't know how he accomplished the feat, but the latching door was broken completely into two parts. The breaks were symmetric at the narrow bridge where the rectangular handle attaches to the torsional springs. My first idea was to reconstruct the part in CAD and 3D-print it, but this would require a very accurate model and some stiff but still springy material. Therefore, I tried first to fix the part by gluing it back together. The material seems to be a sturdy ABS type, which is good, as it can be glued with solvent-based cements. Just gluing the parts together would probably not do it, because the connection area was just about 3 by 1.5 millimeters and highly stressed.

In order to beef the repair region up, I cut small strips of white ABS sheet material of 1 mm thickness, about 1-3 mm wide. First I used acetone and a small brush to soften the surface in the area to be glued and its environment. Next, I used “Revell Constructa” cement for plastic models. This liquid cement comes in a bottle with a thin steel tube for precision applications. It contains a solvent which is well suited for ABS and polystyrene. As a first step I glued the small contact areas and let the part dry for 24 hours. I used small parallel screw clamps for keeping the parts well aligned and under slight pressure on the glue area.

The next day I added the thin ABS strips; first to one side, then to the opposite side. These strips extend over and beyond the crack to provide a wider load path. One day later, I added some more thin strips to make some fillets. It is important to let these solvent based glues dry for long enough time, because the solvent can only evaporate very slowly due to the dense plastic material. It takes 1-2 days to be ready to use. And, of course, it is important that there are no gaps between the parts so that the dissolved plastic surfaces touch each other and can mix. But compared to other glues, like Cyanoacrylate (Super-Glue) or Epoxy, the solvent-based glues create a chemical bond which is much stronger than other adhesives, which hold on mostly due to mechanical friction in a more or less rough surface.

The result is not very nice because of the white reinforcements, but this region is invisible when mounted in the disk drive. Reassembling the parts requires some careful adjustment of the part so that the upper edge moves nicely into the slot in the black bezel and the whole drive must be mounted again in the HP-9826 case so that the latch moves freely and has equal gap along its side edges.

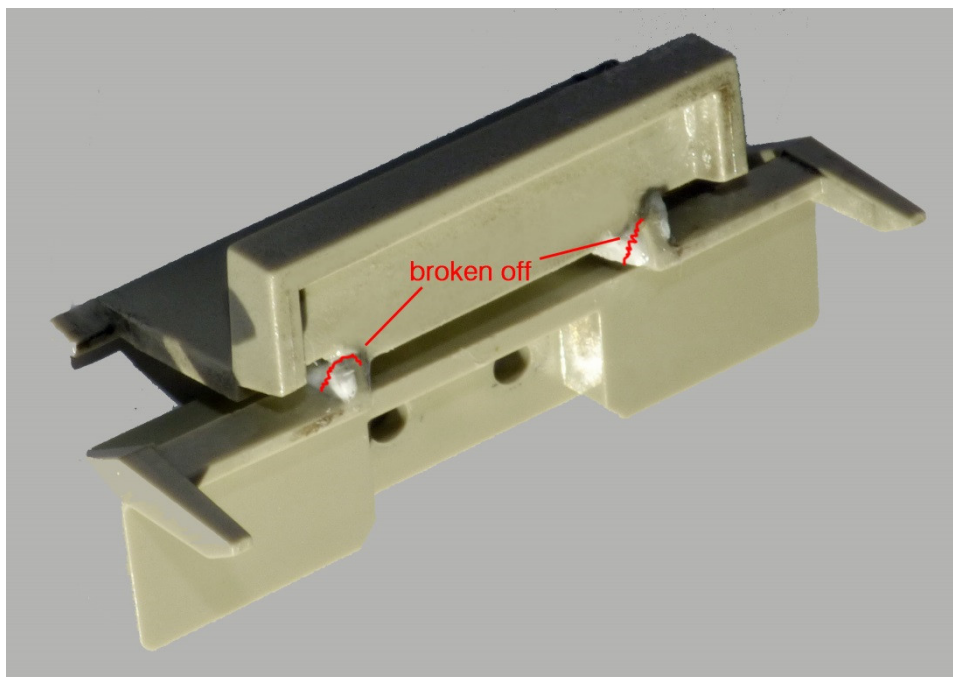


Figure 31: The repaired latch with the initial break lines indicated in red. The white ABS strips are attached to the right and left of the break to create some additional strength. The horizontal torsion bars to the right and left are not affected.

First Steps with BASIC 2.0 on the HP 9836

This early version of HP BASIC is missing many features of the later BASICs but it still quite useable. Because it is on my ROM board it boots immediately without any additional disk drives, which is very nice.

Mass Storage

The 9836 system has two 5-1/4" diskette drives and the ROM BASIC 2.0 can also talk to external AMIGO drives. The right hand drive is `" : INTERNAL , 4 , 0 "` and the left hand drive `" : INTERNAL , 4 , 1 "`.

The default drive can be set with a `MASS STORAGE IS` command, `MASS STORAGE IS ":INTERNAL"` defaults to drive 4,0, i.e. the right hand drive. The left hand drive can be select as default by issuing `MASS STORAGE IS ":INTERNAL,4,1"`.

`CAT ":INTERNAL"` lists the files on the default MSUS, `CAT ":INTERNAL,4,0"` the ones on the right and `CAT ":INTERNAL,4,1"` the files on the left drive.

Copying a file from the default to the left disk drive `COPY "FILE" TO ":INTERNAL,4,1"`.

Loading a file from the default drive `LOAD "FILE"` or from the left hand internal drive `LOAD "FILE:INTERNAL,4,1"`.

HP-IB Devices

The built-in HP-IB interface has the default select code 7. Thus a listing of the current BASIC program can be sent to an external printer with HP-IB address 1 with `LIST #701`.

When it comes to disk drives, you can access drives supporting the AMIGO protocol with the identifier `HP8290X` (for 9121S, 9121D, 9133 floppy), `HP9895` (for 9133 hard disks, 9895M and 9896S) or, `HP82901` (for 82901M and 82901S) or `HP82902` (for 82902M). Here, 9133 stands for the early 9133A/B/XV disk drives (not the later 9133D/H/L using the CS80 protocol often used with HP 9000 systems).

The HPDRIVE software disk emulator can, for example, simulate the 9895 AMIGO diskette drive.

```
LOAD "FILE:HP9895,700,1"
```

Note: on my older Pentium 200 MHz PC system, HPDRIVE must be run without the `-d` flag otherwise it is too slow to complete the INITIALIZE command in time.

For accessing more advanced CS80 disks in addition to the classical AMIGO drives, one has to load the AP2.1 extensions:

```
LOAD BIN "AP2_1"
```

These extensions add the `CS80`, `HP9133`, `HP9134` and, `HP9135` protocol specifiers to the MSUS string. Here, 9133 stands for the later disk drive model. Series-80 users: note the space between `LOAD` and `BIN`.

An external CS80 disk drive having HPIB Address 3 and unit number 0 can then be accessed as

```
CAT ":CS80,703,0"
```

```
LOAD "FILE:CS80,703,0"
```

```
MASS STORAGE IS ":CS80,703,0"
```

BASIC 2.0 Programs

The command `EDIT` enters edit mode where the cursor and line manipulation keys as well as the knob can be used. This command is also on one of the function keys in the upper right of the keyboard.

Listing a file on a printer having HP-IB address 1 and connected to the internal HP-IB interface:

```
LIST #701 or with a range of lines LIST #701,100,200.
```

The knob can be used to move quickly in the editor, the `SHIFT` key toggles between x and y direction.

The PHYREC Binary Program

This CSUB contains two keywords to read or write a sector of 256 bytes (128 16-bit integers).

```
DIM Sector(127)
INTEGER Nsector
Nsector=0
Phyread Nsector, Sector(*)
PRINT Sector(0) DIV 255;Binand(Sector(0),255)

Phywrite Nsector, Sector(*)
```

Using READIO and WRITEIO

Arbitrary memory locations can be accessed byte-wise by using the special identifier 9826

```
Address = &H20000
Bdata = READIO ( 9826, Address )
WRITEIO 9826, Address; Bdata
```

For accessing memory 16-bit word-wise the same special identifier is used, but with a negative sign

```
Address = &H20000
Wdata = READIO ( -9826, Address )
WRITEIO -9826, Address; Wdata
```

The address of numeric variables can be found by reading with the special identifier 9827

```
Integer Codedata(32)
Caddress = READIO ( 9827, Codedata(1))
```

Unfortunately it is not possible to obtain the address of a string variable with this function. However, by embedding the string variable into a common block it is possible to access its contents.

Note that the variables in common blocks are stored in reverse order, from low to high addresses.

Therefore, in the following dump example, we have to start at the address of the last item of the COM block.

The common block

```
10    COM /Common/ INTEGER I1,I2,L$(8),INTEGER I3,I4,REAL R1,INTEGER Last
```

is actually stored as

start	length	item	
0	2	Last	- lowest address
2	8	R1	
10	2	I4	
12	2	I3	
14	2+8	L\$(8)	- 2 bytes current length, 8 bytes characters
24	2	I2	
26	2	I1	- highest address

Common block dump example (note that negative addresses are actually unsigned values):

```
10    COM /Common/ INTEGER I1,I2,L$(8),INTEGER I3,I4,REAL R1,INTEGER Last
20    I1=1
30    I2=2
40    I3=3
50    I4=4
60    R1=1.0E-12
70    L$="ABCD"
80    Last=32767
90    !
100   Addr=READIO(9827,I1)
110   PRINT "I1 at ";Addr
120   Addr=READIO(9827,I2)
130   PRINT "I2 at ";Addr
140   Addr=READIO(9827,I3)
150   PRINT "I3 at ";Addr
160   Addr=READIO(9827,I4)
170   PRINT "I4 at ";Addr
180   Addr=READIO(9827,Last)
```

```

190  FOR I=1 TO 14
200  B=READIO(-9826,Addr)
210  B1=READIO(9826,Addr)
220  B2=READIO(9826,Addr+1)
230  PRINT USING "DDDDDDDD,X,A,DDDDDD,X,A,X,DDD,X,DDD";Addr,":",B,"=",B1,B2
240  Addr=Addr+2
250  NEXT I
260  END

```

RUM

```

I1 at -19394
I2 at -19396
I3 at -19408
I4 at -19410
-19420 : 32767 = 127 255 - Last: 1 word, 2 bytes
-19418 : 15729 = 61 113 - R1: 4 words, 8 bytes
-19416 :-26727 = 151 153
-19414 :-32467 = 129 45
-19412 : -5615 = 234 17
-19410 : 4 = 0 4 - I4 = 4
-19408 : 3 = 0 3 - I3 = 3
-19406 : 4 = 0 4 - 4 characters used in L$[8]
-19404 : 16706 = 65 66 8 bytes with content of L$ 'A','B'
-19402 : 17220 = 67 68 'C','D'
-19400 : 0 = 0 0 empty part of string
-19398 : 0 = 0 0
-19396 : 2 = 0 2 - I2 = 2
-19394 : 1 = 0 1 - I1 = 1

```

Writing to the identifier 9827 performs a jump to a subroutine (jsr) at the given address.

```
WRITEIO 9827, Address; D0data
```

Here, **Address** could be the address of an array with words of machine code, ending in a “return from subroutine” (rts) instruction. The additional parameter **D0data** is placed in the processor register **D0** so that e.g. the address of a buffer can be transferred.

The following example shows a minimal machine language routine which increments the 16-bit word (a BASIC INTEGER) at the memory address given in D0data.

```

Integer CodeBuffer(10)
Integer Databuffer(1)
!
! 48E7 FFFF MOVEM.L D0-D7/A0-A6,-(SP) ; save registers (optional >---+)
! 2040 MOVE.L D0,A0 ; copy D0to address register |
! 5250 ADDQ.W #1,(A0) ; increment 16-bit value by 1 |
! 4CDF FFFF MOVEM.L (SP)+,D0-D7/A0-A6 ; restore registers (optional <---+)
! 4E75 RTS ; return
!
DATA 48E7,FFFF,2040,5250,4CDF,FFFF,4E75,STOP
!
RESTORE
I=0
Nextword: READ Word$
IF Word$="STOP" THEN GOTO Done
Codebuffer(I) = IVAL(Word$,16)
I=I+1
GOTO Nextword
Done: MaxWords=I-1
!
Address = READIO ( 9827, Codebuffer(0))
Daddress = READIO ( 9827, Databuffer(0))
!
Databuffer(0) = 0
PRINT Databuffer(0)
FOR I=1 TO 10
WRITEIO 9827, Address; Daddress
PRINT Databuffer(0)

```



```
NEXT I
END
```

The Alpha screen data starts at 0x512000 and is 4 Kbytes long. It is organized in 16-bit words per character. The odd numbered addresses contain the actual character code and the even addresses the character attributes (bit 3=half bright).

The graphics screen RAM of the monochrome “A” model starts at 0x530000.

The early BASIC versions do not have functions for accessing graphics RAM e.g. for bitmap operations. Only **GSTORE** and **GLOAD** for storing resp. loading the entire screen are available.

Using **READIO** and **WRITEIO**, it is possible to access any byte in the graphics RAM.

The code fragment below writes some patterns directly to the graphics RAM.

```
! HP 9836, monochrome
! 512 pixels = 64 bytes per row
! 390 rows per screen
INTEGER X, B
! first, left byte of upper row
Address = 5439488
! draw a dotted horizontal line, 170d = 10101010b
B = 170
FOR X=0 TO 63
  WRITEIO 9826, Address+X; B
NEXT X
! skip to start of bottom row
Address = Address + (390-1)*64
! draw a dotted horizontal line with words
B = 170*256 + 170
FOR X=0 TO 31
  WRITEIO -9826, Address+X; B
NEXT X
END
```

If you use **GLOAD** and **GSTORE** with a multi-dimensional array to load or store the complete display RAM, remember that HP BASIC (like FORTRAN) increments the rightmost index first. So the dimension of an **INTEGER** array for 64 bytes in 390 lines of the monochrome 9836 display would be

```
INTEGER Screen(1:390,1:32)
```

	Model 216	Model 217	Model 226	Model 236A	Model 236C	Model 237
Width (mm)	168	230	130	210	210	312
Height (mm)	126	175	100	160	160	234
Width (pixels)	400	512	400	512	512	1024
Height (pixels)	300	390	300	390	390	768
Pixels/mm	2.38	2.23	3.08	2.44	2.44	3.28
mm/pixel	0.42	0.45	0.33	0.41	0.41	0.30
Start address	\$530001	\$530000	\$530001	\$530000	\$520000	\$300000
Last pixel address	\$537531	\$536180	\$537531	\$536180	\$550BFF	\$3BFFFE
Ending address	\$537FFF	\$537FFF	\$537FFF	\$537FFF	\$550BFF	\$3FFFFE
Addressed Memory	\$7FFF	\$7FFF	\$7FFF	\$7FFF	\$30C00	\$FFFFF
Actual Memory	\$3FFF	\$7FFF	\$3FFF	\$7FFF	\$18600	\$20000
Visible memory	\$3A98	\$6180	\$3A98	\$6180	\$30C00	\$18000
Address layout	7	8	7	8	9	10

Table 1: Characteristics of the graphics RAM of various HP 9000/200 systems [1]. Address layout 7 uses only the odd bytes, layout 9 corresponds to 4 bit indices into the color map and layout 10 is one byte per pixel (bit 0 used).

The following example code demonstrates two versions of a simple **Bplot** subroutine for the HP 9836 with monochrome monitor, constructed from the information given above.

The first version is written in pure BASIC, whereas the second version makes use of a short machine language routine, embedded into a BASIC subroutine.

Version	Time
BASIC 2.0	2.110 s
Machine Language	0.120 s

Table 2: Run times of both Bplot versions.

For simplicity, the **X**-position will always be byte aligned. No precautions have been taken to avoid out-of-screen writes. Appropriate tests could be added to the **Bplot** routines. The size of the string buffers can be larger than the actual bitmap data because the machine language routine uses the actual string length to determine the number of rows to map.

```

10      !
20      ! Requires AP2.1
30      !
40      ! Martin Hepperle, 2022
50      !
60      INTEGER X,Y,Wb
70      DIM Buffer$(80)
75      !
80      ! load machine language routine into COM
90      CALL Bplot_init
95      !
100     ! get logo bitmap
110     Buffer$=FNLogo$
115     !
120     T0=TIMEDATE
130     GCLEAR
140     WINDOW 0,511,0,389
150     MOVE 466,0
160     DRAW 466,389
170     MOVE 510,0
180     DRAW 510,389
190     X=474
200     Wb=4
210     FOR Y=8 TO 360 STEP 32
220         CALL Bplot(X,Y,Wb,Buffer$)
230     NEXT Y
240     T1=TIMEDATE
250     PRINT "dT=";T1-T0
260     END
270     ! -----
280     ! Load the ML program
290     SUB Bplot_init
300         COM /Bplot/ INTEGER Code(0:39),Bitmap$(100),INTEGER Xb,Yb,Wbytes
310         INTEGER I
320         DIM Word$(4)
330         DATA 48E7,FFFF,2040,3218,3418
340         DATA ED42,3618,E64B,3818,88C1
350         DATA 2A3C,0053,0000,DA43,DA42
360         DATA 2245,4283,B644,6700,001C
370         DATA 4285,B245,6700,000A,1398
380         DATA 5000,5245,60F2,D3FC,0000
390         DATA 0040,5243,60E0,4CDF,FFFF
400         DATA 4E75
410         DATA STOP
420     !
430     RESTORE
440     I=0

```



```

450 Nextword:READ Word$
460   IF Word$="STOP" THEN SUBEXIT

470   Code(I)=IVAL(Word$,16)
480   I=I+1
490   GOTO Nextword
500   !
510 SUBEND
520   ! -----
530   ! Bit Plot
540 SUB Bplot(INTEGER X,Y,Bytes_per_row,Buffer$)
550   COM /Bplot/ INTEGER Code(0:39),Bitmap$[100],INTEGER Xb,Yb,Wbytes
560   ! Copy to COM
570   Xb=X
580   Yb=Y
590   Wbytes=Bytes_per_row
600   Bitmap$=Buffer$
610   ! get addresses
620   Dataaddr=READIO(9827,Wbytes)
630   Codeaddr=READIO(9827,Code(0))
640   ! call ML routine
650   WRITEIO 9827,Codeaddr;Dataaddr
660 SUBEND
670   ! -----
680 DEF FNLogo$
690   INTEGER X,Y,Wbytes
700   DIM Bitmap$[80]
710   ! Definition of bitmap data
720   ! 4 bytes per line, 18 lines
730   DATA 4,18
740   ! top to bottom
750   DATA 63,255,255,252,127,255,255,254
760   DATA 255,240,15,255,255,240,3,255
770   DATA 255,176,1,255,255,62,124,255
780   DATA 255,63,126,255,254,51,102,127
790   DATA 254,51,102,127,254,51,102,127
800   DATA 254,51,102,127,255,51,126,255
810   DATA 255,51,124,255,255,128,97,255
820   DATA 255,192,99,255,255,240,111,255
830   DATA 127,255,255,254,63,255,255,252
840   !
850   ! Read bitmap to transfer buffer
860   READ Wbytes
870   READ Nrows
880   Bitmap$=""
890   FOR I=1 TO Nrows*Wbytes
900     READ C
910     Bitmap$=Bitmap$&CHR$(C)
920   NEXT I
930   RETURN Bitmap$
940 FNEND

```

Listing 1: This program uses a machine language subroutine.

```

48E7 FFFF      movem.l d0-d7/a0-a7,-(sp)

                ; a0:  address of WB in COM
2040          move.l d0,a0

                ; d1:  WB in COM
3218          move.w (a0)+,d1
                ; d2:  Y in COM
3418          move.w (a0)+,d2
                ; d2:  Y*64 = row start offset from upper left
ED42          asl.w #6,d2

                ; d3:  X in COM
3618          move.w (a0)+,d3
                ; d3:  X/8 = start address of first column
E64B          lsr #3,d3

                ; d4:  actual string length
                ; a0:  start of string
3818          move.w (a0)+,d4
                ; d4:  d4/d1 = Rows

```

88C1	divu.w d1,d4
2A3C 00530000	; d5: destination address, upper left move.l #5439488,d5
DA43	add.w d3,d5
DA42	add.w d2,d5
2245	; a1: destination start address move.l d5,a1
4283	; d3: row=0 clr.l d3
B644	; WHILE Row while d3<d4 WhileRow:
6700 001C	cmp.w d4,d3 beq EndWhileRow
4285	; Byte=0 clr.l d5
B245	; WHILE Byte while d5<d1 WhileByte:
6700 000A	cmp.w d5,d1 beq EndWhileByte
1398 5000	; copy source byte to destination move.b (a0)+,(a1,d5)
5245	; END WHILE Byte addq.w #1,d5
60F2	bra WhileByte
D3FC 00000040	EndWhileByte: add.l #64,a1
5243	; END WHILE Row addq.w #1,d3
60E0	bra WhileRow
4CDF FFFF	EndWhileRow: movem.l (sp)+,d0-d7/a0-a7
4E75	rts

Listing 2: This Bplot code has been embedded into the BASIC routine Bplot_init above.

What about Speed?

Of course, I had to run the infamous BYTE benchmark “Eratosthenes Sieve” on my HP 9836. Three variants of the same algorithm were implemented and the results are listed below.

The assembler version was my first 68000 program ever and is therefore not perfect, but produces the correct results. It shows how one can use small assembler routines inside BASIC programs without resorting to CSUBs or third party assembler tools. I developed the code on my PC using the Easy68K assembler and simulator for debugging and then typed the machine language words into the BASIC editor.

interpreted BASIC 2.1	180 s
compiled Pascal 3.25	9.9 s
68000 assembler, in BASIC wrapper	2.4 s

Table 3: Eratosthenes Sieve benchmark. Execution times are for 10 iterations,

For comparison: BYTE Magazine gives a time of 5.9 s for a HP 9830 (HP Pascal 1.0 on its 68000 @ 8 MHz). A HP 85 with its Capricorn @ 640 kHz and interpreted BASIC takes 3084 s – its machine language version runs in 21 s. An IBM PC with interpreted BASICA needs about 1900 s.

```

10  INTEGER Flags(8191)
20  INTEGER M,I,K,Prime,Count
30  TO=TIMEDATE
40  FOR M=1 TO 10
50  PRINT M
60  Count=0
70  FOR I=0 TO 8190
80  Flags(I)=1
90  NEXT I
100 FOR I=1 TO 8190
110 IF Flags(I)=0 THEN GOTO 190
120 Prime=I+I+3
130 K=I+Prime
140 WHILE K<=8190
150 Flags(K)=0
160 K=K+Prime
170 END WHILE
180 Count=Count+1
190 NEXT I
200 NEXT M
210 PRINT Primes;" Primes in ";TIMEDATE-T0;" seconds"
220 END

```

Listing 3: The Sieve program in pure BASIC performs 10 iterations.

```

0000      *-----
0000      * BYTE Eratosthenes Sieve Benchmark
0000      * Martin Hepperle, 6/2022
0000      * 68000 assembler code
0000      * Call with address of a 8191 bytes array in register D0
0000      * On return array[0] will have the count value of 1899
0000      *-----
0000  =00001FFE      SIZE    equ    8190
0000                  ;
0000      entry:
0000                  ; save all to be sure - probably already done by HP BASIC
0000  48E7 FFFF      movem.l d0-d7/a0-a7,-(sp)
0004
0004                  ; on entry:
0004                  ; D0:  address of flags[SIZE] byte array
0004
0004                  ; Register Usage:
0004                  ; D0:  address of flags byte array
0004                  ; D1:  i loop counter
0004                  ; D2   count
0004                  ; D3   prime
0004                  ; D4   k
0004                  ; A0   address of flags[i]
0004                  ; D5,A1 address of flags[k]
0004                  ;
0004                  ; initialize flags[0..SIZE] with true
0004  2040      move.l D0,A0
0006  323C 1FFD      move.w #SIZE-1,D1
000A  10FC 0001      Fill:  move.b #1,(A0)+
000E  51C9 FFFA      dbra   D1,Fill
0012
0012                  ; ---  count = 0
0012  4242      clr.w D2
0014
0014                  ; D0: start address of flags byte array
0014  2040      move.l D0,A0
0016
0016                  ;      i=0
0016  4241      clr.w D1
0018                  ; main loop over flags[i]
0018      NextNumber:
0018                  ; ---  if flags[i] == 1
0018  0C18 0001      cmpi.b #1,(A0)+
001C  6600 0024      bne    Incr
0020
0020                  ;      begin
0020                  ; ---  prime = 3 + i + i
0020                  ;      D3   = 3 + D1 + D1
0020                  ;
0020  363C 0003      move.w #3,D3
0024  D641      add.w   D1,D3

```



```

0026 D641          add.w   D1,D3
0028              ; ---   k = prime + i
0028              ;       D4 = D3   + D1
0028 3803          move.w  D3,D4
002A D841          add.w   D1,D4
002C
002C              ;       if k>SIZE goto Crossed
002C              Crossing:
002C 0C44 1FFE      cmpi.w  #SIZE,D4
0030 6E00 000E      bgt     Crossed
0034
0034              ; ---   flags[k] = 0
0034              ;       (D0+D4)
0034 2A00          move.l  D0,D5
0036              ;       add lower word
0036 DA44          add.w   D4,D5
0038              ;       to address register
0038 2245          move.l  D5,A1
003A 4211          clr.b   (A1)
003C
003C              ; ---   k = k + prime
003C              ;       D4 = D4 + D3
003C D843          add.w   D3,D4
003E 60EC          bra     Crossing
0040              Crossed:
0040              ;       count = count+1
0040 5242          addq.w  #1,D2
0042
0042              ;       end
0042              Incr:
0042              ;       increment loop counter i
0042 5241          addq.w  #1,D1
0044              ;       if I <= SIZE then goto Next
0044 0C41 1FFE      cmpi.w  #SIZE,D1
0048 63CE          bls     NextNumber
004A
004A              ; place count into integer at flags(0) so that BASIC can see
004A 2040          move.l  D0,A0
004C 3082          move.w  D2,(A0)
004E
004E              ; restore all - probably also done by HP BASIC
004E 4CDF FFFF      movem.l (sp)+,d0-d7/a0-a7
0052 4E75          rts
0054
0054              ;       END   main

```

Listing 4: The assembled single iteration Sieve code with the resulting machine code.

```

10      !
20      ! Requires AP2.1
30      !
40      ! Martin Hepperle, 2022
50      !
60      INTEGER Codebuffer(128)
70      INTEGER Databuffer(8190)
80      REAL Address
90      REAL Daddress
100     ! Eratosthenes Sieve Machine Code Words
110     DATA 48E7,FFFF,2040,323C,1FFD,10FC,0001,51C9,FFFA
120     DATA 4242,2040,4241,0C18,0001,6600,0024,363C,0003
130     DATA D641,D641,3803,D841,0C44,1FFE,6E00,000E,2A00
140     DATA DA44,2245,4211,D843,60EC,5242,5241,0C41,1FFE
150     DATA 63CE,2040,3082,4CDF,FFFF,4E75,0000
160     !
170     !
180     RESTORE
190     I=0
200 Nextword:  READ Word$
210             IF Word$="0000" THEN GOTO Done
220             Codebuffer(I)=IVAL(Word$,16)
230     I=I+1
235     ! TODO: should test for Codebuffer() overrun
240     GOTO Nextword
250 Done:    Maxwords=I-1
260     !

```

```

270 Databuffer(0)=0
280 ! Get Addresses
290 Caddress=READIO(9827,Codebuffer(0))
300 Daddress=READIO(9827,Databuffer(0))
310 PRINT "Code:";DVAL$(Caddress,16)
320 PRINT "Data:";DVAL$(Daddress,16)
330 FOR I=0 TO Maxwords
340 PRINT USING 370;I,IVAL$(Codebuffer(I),16)
350 NEXT I
360 PRINT
370 IMAGE #,2D,":",4A,X
375 ! --- start of timing
380 T0=TIMEDATE
390 PRINT Databuffer(0)
400 FOR I=1 TO 10
410 WRITEIO 9827,Caddress;Daddress
420 NEXT I
430 PRINT Databuffer(0);"primes"
440 T1=TIMEDATE
445 ! --- end of timing
450 PRINT T1-T0
460 END

```

Listing 5: The BASIC program with machine code words performs 10 iterations too.

Using the Datacomm Interface

The Datacomm interface is a very flexible device and most users will use it as a RS232C interface.

If you use it without handshaking, even with a modern, fast computer, you might see transmission errors. I usually set the inter-character spacing to a value of 1 or 2 to obtain error-free connections.

Simply set the control register 37 to the desired value, the default is zero.

```
CONTROL 20,37;1
```

Using the HP 98635A FPU Board

The Floating Point board HP 98635A carries a floating point processor produced by National Semiconductor, the NS-16081. This FPU was later renamed NS-32081 and it had been designed for application with the NS-32000 CPU, but can also be interfaced to other CPUs like the Motorola 68000. At the time, the Motorola FPU 68881 was not yet available and when it came to the market, it was about 10 times as expensive as the NS chip (but also more capable). For one or both of these reasons, HP must have decided to develop this board and add support to Pascal and BASIC in 1983.

The FPU can handle short float (4-byte, 32-bit, single precision) and long float (8-byte, 64-bit, double precision) numbers in a format which is identical to the emerging IEEE-754 standard. The processor has eight short float registers f0 to f7 which can be combined into 4 long float registers.

HP Basic uses the same long float format for its **REAL** numbers, so that no lengthy conversion, except for word order is required. Therefore, I used the long float format and having only four register pairs requires some planning to avoid too many data transfers into and out of the FPU.

Unfortunately, the repertoire of the FPU is limited to the four fundamental operations addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, additionally supporting absolute value and negation. It implements no trigonometric function like sine or tangent and no logarithmic and exponential functions nor the square root. For these functions we must still use the common approximations by series or table interpolation.

The card is attached to the DIO bus as a memory mapped device. ROMs are used to decode a range of addresses and translate them into instructions for the FPU. A state machine then sends these opcodes and data to the FPU for execution. The starting address for the card and this opcode map is `0x5C0000` in the internal I/O address range.

While the FPU executes an opcode, the program must wait for completion before starting the next operation. This wait is usually done by so called “bogus reads”, which simply waste some time and finally may return a status bit (on Intel FPUs one used the FWAIT opcode and on Motorola FPUs the FNOP opcode to wait for completion).

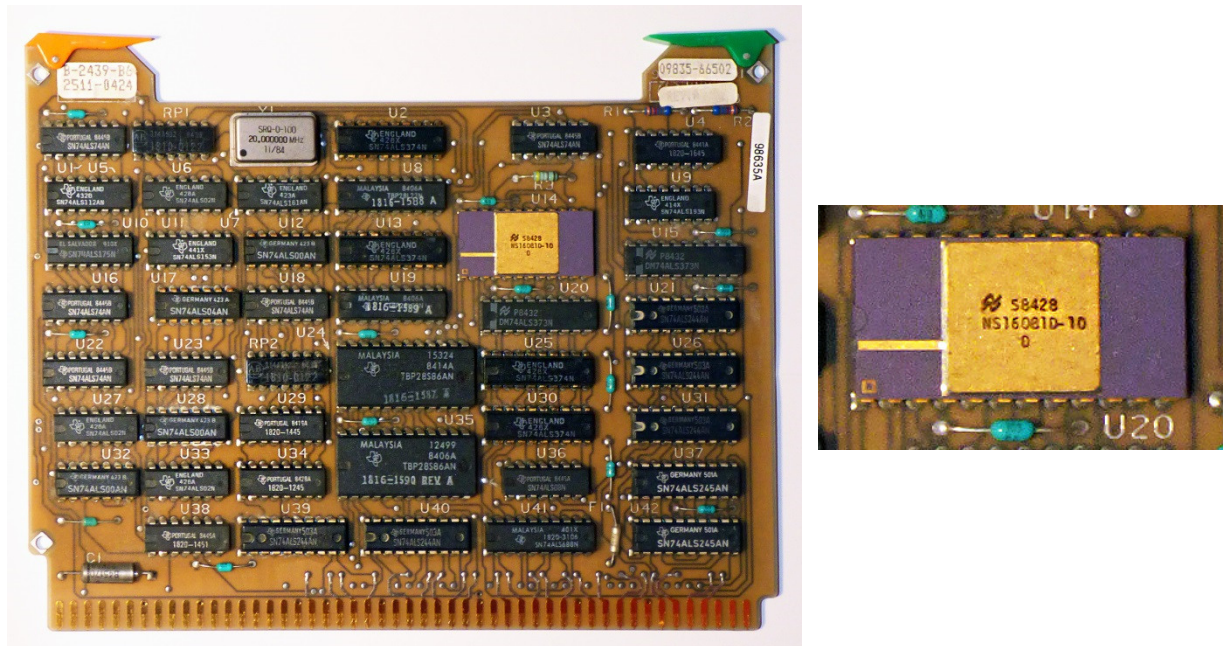


Figure 32: The HP 98635A Floating Point Unit board with the NS-16081D-10.

The HP 98635A board is automatically supported by BASIC versions above 3.0. These versions recognize the board and use it for floating point operations. However, the BASIC system cannot know your intentions and can only replace individual floating point operations with a code sequence of

- copy operands from RAM into the FPU,
- perform the operation,
- copy the result back to RAM.

The 98635-aware BASIC systems probably also include compact FPU code modules for the transcendental functions, which should be more efficient than the replacement of single operations.

In case of a simple BASIC chain operation like multiple additions, this approach can insert many unnecessary copy operations. An optimized version would copy only “new” operands to the CPU and keep intermediate results in the FPU as long as possible. Such an application would require an optimizing compiler or manual assembly.

I was interested in learning “how to do it by hand” without using a compiler or inline assembler.

First, the board must be enabled before you can use it. If the board is not active it does not monitor its I/O RAM area and any access would lead to a fault.

CONTROL 32,2;1	enable the board
CONTROL 32,2;0	disable the board

It is also possible to query the enable state:

```
STATUS 32,1;A
```

A return value of **A=1** means that the board is active, **A=0** indicates that the board is not enabled or not present.

An alternative direct way to enable and reset the card is to write a 1 to the base address+1:

```
Addrcard=6029312
WRITEIO 9826,Addrcard+1;1
```

After having enabled the board, you can call machine code subroutines either by creating a **CSUB** with the Pascal Assembler or more primitive by using the **WRITEIO** BASIC function.

For testing, I used the latter method and have read the machine code from **DATA** statements into an **INTEGER** array and then calling it with **WRITEIO**.

A Simple Example

The most simple (and probably most inefficient) example would be a machine language program to multiply two real numbers.

The subroutine takes the two input values **X1** and **X2** and returns their product in **X3**. Again, as explained above, we perform the data transfer via a **COM** block. The routine must load the two input numbers into the FPU, multiply them and copy the result back to the variable **X3**.

A suitable assembler subroutine with the generated machine code looks like this:

```

; purpose:
; calculate X3 = X1 * X2
; no error checking
; Uses COM / FPU / REAL X1, X2, X3

; a5: base address of FPU
4BF9 005C0000 lea $5C0000,a5

; a0: address of X3 in COM
2040 move.l d0,a0

; d0-d1: X2 in COM -> d0,d1
4CE8 0003 0008 movem.l $8(a0),d0-d1
; d2-d3: X1 in COM -> d2,d3
4CE8 000C 0010 movem.l $10(a0),d2-d3

; this operation moves two 64-bit words in one go
; X2 = d0,d1 to f3,f2
; X1 = d2,d3 to f1,f0
48ED 000F 44F0 movem.l d0-d3,movf_m_f3(a5)

; multiply: X1 * X2 = (f2,f3) = (f0,f1)*(f2,f3)
4A6D 4042 tst.w mull_f0_f2(a5)
; wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018 movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7

; return X3 = X1 * X2
; f3,f2 to d0,d1
4CED 0003 4560 movem.l movf_f3_m(a5),d0-d1
; d0,d1 to X3 in COM
48E8 0003 0000 movem.l d0-d1,$0(a0)

; f3,f2 to X3 in COM
; alternative without using CPU registers, but changes a0
; 20ED 4560 move.l movf_f3_m(a5),(a0)+
; 20ED 4564 move.l movf_f2_m(a5),(a0)

4E75 rts
```

The corresponding BASIC program which calls this subroutine is listed below. It includes a routine to dump the machine code for crosschecking as well as the content of the output variable X3 before calling the subroutine. The program performs the multiplication 5000 times, first with the machine code routine and then a second time with pure BASIC.

```

10!
20! LOAD BIN "AP2_1"
30!
40   REAL Address, Addrcode, Addrdata
50   DIM Hex$(4)
60   ! COM used for data transfer
70   COM /Buf/ REAL X1,X2,X3
80   ! COM is arranged from X3 at low to X1 at high address
90   INTEGER Code(80)
100  ! For testing: just a RETURN
110  DATA 4E75, STOP
120  ! The real thing: use FPU to multiply two REALs
130  DATA 4BF9,005C,0000,2040,4CE8,0003,0008
140  DATA 4CE8,000C,0010,48ED,000F,44F0,4A6D
150  DATA 4042,4CED,00E0,0018,4CED,0003,4560
160  DATA 48E8,0003,0000,4E75,STOP
170  !
180  I=0
190  RESTORE 130
200  READ Hex$
210  IF Hex$="STOP" THEN 260
220  Code(I)=IVAL(Hex$,16)
230  I=I+1
240  GOTO 200
250  !
260  Address=DVAL("5C0000",16)
270  PRINT "      Address  Byte(s)"
280  CALL Showbytes("Card ID",Address+1,1)
290  CALL Showbytes("Status",Address+33,1)
300  !
310  X1=1/3
320  X2=1/3
330  X3=0.0
340  ! get addresses of code and last variable in COM
350  Addrcode=READIO(9827,Code(0))
360  Addrdata=READIO(9827,X3)
370  !
380  CALL Showbytes("CODE",Addrcode+0,I*2)
390  CALL Showbytes("X3",Addrdata+0,8)
400  !
410  ! First RESET the card
420  Address=6029312
430  WRITEIO 9826,Address+1;1
440  ! -----
450  T0=TIMEDATE
460  FOR I=1 TO 5000
470    WRITEIO 9827,Addrcode;Addrdata
480  NEXT I
490  T1=TIMEDATE
500  PRINT "BASIC + Machine Code:"
510  PRINT "=====
520  PRINT "dT=";T1-T0
530  PRINT X1;"*";X2;"=";X3
540  ! -----
550  T0=TIMEDATE
560  FOR I=1 TO 5000
570    X3=X1*X2
580  NEXT I
590  T1=TIMEDATE
600  PRINT "BASIC:"
610  PRINT "=====
620  PRINT "dT=";T1-T0
630  PRINT X1;"*";X2;"=";X3
640  ! -----
650  END
660  !
670  SUB Showbytes(Label$,Address,N)
680    INTEGER Bdata,I,J
690    DIM H$(8)

```

```

700 PRINT USING "#,10A,2X,AAAAAAA,X";Label$,DVAL$(Address,16)
710 Address=Address-1
720 J=0
730 FOR I=1 TO N
740 Bdata=READIO(9826,Address+I)
750 H$=DVAL$(Bdata,16)
760 IF J=16 THEN
770 PRINT
780 PRINT RPT$(" ",21);
790 J=0
800 END IF
810 PRINT USING "#,X,2A";H$[7,8]
820 J=J+1
830 NEXT I
840 PRINT
850 SUBEND

```

The program should produce this output.

```

Card ID      Address  Byte(s)
Status      005C0001 0A
CODE        005C0021 00
           FFFFA7FE 4B F9 00 5C 00 00 20 40 4C E8 00 03 00 08 4C E8
           00 0C 00 10 48 ED 00 0F 44 F0 4A 6D 40 42 4C ED
           00 E0 00 18 4C ED 00 03 45 60 48 E8 00 03 00 00
           4E 75
X3          FFFFA93E 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00

BASIC + Machine Code:
=====
dT= 2.54000854492
.33333333333 * .33333333333 = .11111111111

BASIC:
=====
dT= 3.04998779297
.33333333333 * .33333333333 = .11111111111

```

Exploring the Mandelbrot Set

A more compute-intensive application with floating point numbers is the iteration loop required for determining the behavior of a point in a Mandelbrot set. The results show a clear reduction of the execution time by using the FPU.

Running the `Example=2` case with `Maxiterations=25`.

Block Size	BASIC Version without FPU	BASIC+Assembler using FPU	Factor rel. BASIC
64	4.040008545 s	2.309997559 s	0.572
32	12.700012207 s	6.029998779 s	0.475
6	43.779998779 s	17.399993897 s	0.397
8	160.569976807 s	56.149993897 s	0.350
4	620.649993896 s	199.599975590 s	0.322
2	2438.190002440 s	747.119995117 s	0.306

The corresponding pure BASIC program is listed below.

```

10 ! =====
20 !
30 ! Fractal Program
35 ! BASIC Version
40 !
50 ! For color graphics e.g. HP9836C

```



```

60      !
70      ! Martin Hepperle, 2022
80      ! =====
90      OPTION BASE 0
100     ! HP 9836: 512x390
110     W=512
120     H=390
130     ALLOCATE REAL Re(W),Im(H)
140     INTEGER Rw,P,Q,N
150     !
160     Example=2
170     !
180     SELECT Example
190     CASE 1
200     ! a) full Mandelbroy figure
210         Xcenter=-.55
220         Ycenter=0.
230         Xwidth=2.9
240     !
250     CASE 2
260     ! b) Zoomed in
270         Xcenter=-.13
280         Ycenter=-1.0
290         Xwidth=.1
300     CASE ELSE
310         PRINT "Unknown case, enter Xcenter,Ycenter,Xwidth"
320         INPUT Xcenter,Ycenter,Xwidth
330     END SELECT
340     Yheight=Xwidth/RATIO
350     Xmin=Xcenter-Xwidth/2
360     Xmax=Xcenter+Xwidth/2
370     Ymin=Ycenter-Yheight/2
380     Ymax=Ycenter+Yheight/2
390     Rw=64
400     !
410     Dx=(Xmax-Xmin)/(W-1)
420     Dy=(Ymax-Ymin)/(H-1)
430     !
440     ! Set up x- and y-stations
450     FOR P=0 TO W-1
460         Re(P+1)=Xmin+P*Dx
470     NEXT P
480     FOR Q=0 TO H-1
490         Im(Q+1)=Ymin+Q*Dy
500     NEXT Q
510     PRINT "Arrays set up."
520     !
530     SHOW Xmin,Xmax,Ymin,Ymax
540     GCLEAR
550     AREA PEN 0
560     N=0
570     GRAPHICS ON
580     FRAME
590     REPEAT
600     TO=TIMEDATE
610     ! sweep over x and y
620         Wx=Dx*Rw
630         Wy=Dy*Rw
640         OUTPUT 2 USING "#,AA";CHR$(255)&CHR$(75)
650         OUTPUT 2 USING "#,AAA";VAL$(Rw)
660         FOR P=0 TO W-Rw STEP Rw
670             FOR Q=0 TO H-Rw STEP Rw
680                 Z1=0
690                 Z2=0
700                 Z1q=0
710                 Z2q=0
720                 N=0
730                 C1=Re(P)
740                 C2=Im(Q)
750     Another:IF Z1q+Z2q>4 THEN Diverged
760                 Z3=Z1q-Z2q
770                 Z4=2*Z1*Z2
780                 Z1=Z3+C1
790                 Z2=Z4+C2
800                 Z1q=Z1*Z1

```

```

810      Z2q=Z2*Z2
820      N=N+1
830      IF N=25 THEN
840          N=0
850          GOTO Diverged
860      END IF
870      GOTO Another
880 Diverged: AREA PEN N
890      MOVE Re(P),Im(Q)
900      RECTANGLE Wx,Wy,FILL
910 Done: NEXT Q
920      NEXT P
930      T1=TIMEDATE
940      PRINT Rw;T1-T0;"s"
950      Rw=Rw DIV 2
960  UNTIL Rw=0
970  PRINT "Done."
980  DEALLOCATE Re(*),Im(*)
990  END

```

The assembler subroutine replacing the inner iteration in the Q-loop looks like this:

```

*-----
* Title       : Mandelbrot-32081
* Written by  : Martin Hepperle
* Date       : 2022
* Description: A Mandelbrot set iterator using the
*              NS-32081 Floating Point Unit on the
*              HP 98635A FPU card.
*              Uses long floats (64 bit IEEE-754).
*              Callable from HP BASIC with
*              INTEGER Code(150)
*              COM / Fpu / Real X,Y, Integer C,N
*              ... fill Code(*) with generated code words
*              Codeaddress = READIO(9827,Code(0))
*              Dataaddress = READIO(9827,C)
*              READIO 9827,Codeaddress;DataAddress
*-----

; We use a COMMON data structure in BASIC
; to convey parameters X and Y into this subroutine
; and to return the iteration count (color index) C
; COM / Fpu / Real X,Y,Integer C,N

; On entry:
; D0:      address of N
;          COM / / REAL X, Y, INTEGER C, N
;          OFF  LEN Name
;          0   2   N  16-bit INTEGER, input, max. iteration limit
;          2   2   C  16-bit INTEGER, output, iteration count
;          4   8   Y  64-bit REAL, input, point position
;          12  8   X  64-bit REAL, input

; CPU register usage:
; D0:      initial: address of N
; D1:
; D2:
; D3:
; D4:      iteration loop, current count
; D5:      iteration loop, maximum count limit
; D6:      used for bogus reads
; D7:      used for bogus reads
; A5:      address of FPU card
; A0:      address of N
; A7:      should not be changed (BASIC stack)
;
; We use 8-byte long floats for accuracy
; An alternate version with 4-byte floats
; could be slightly more efficient because
; more registers could be used for keeping
; intermediate results

; FPU register usage:
; (f0,f1): Re
; (f2,f3): Im

```

```

; (f4,f5): tmp
; (f6,f7): tmp

;      The actual subroutine starts here
;      Embed the words from here on
;      into an BASIC INTEGER array

2040      ; a0:  address of N
          move.l d0,a0
          ; a5:  base address of FPU
4BF9 005C0000      lea $5C0000,a5

;      Set initial values
;      -----
; Create a 64-bit zero
4280      clr.l  d0
4281      clr.l  d1
;      0.0 = to (f1,f0)  Re
;      0.0 = to (f3,f2)  Im
48ED 0003 44F8      movem.l  d0-d1,movf_m_f1(a5)
48ED 0003 44F0      movem.l  d0-d1,movf_m_f3(a5)
;      no wait needed

; Reset iteration count
4244      clr.w  d4
; Get iteration limit N (typically 25...100)
3A10      move.w  (a0),d5

LOOP:
;      Test for divergence
;      Calculate Re^2 + Im^2 - 4
;      -----
; Copy Re (f6,f7) from (f0,f1)
4A6D 4446      tst.w  movl_f0_f6(a5)
;      wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l  $18(a5),d6-d7
; Square Re: Re^2 = (f6,f7) = (f6,f7)*(f6,f7)
4A6D 405E      tst.w  mull_f6_f6(a5)
;      wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l  $18(a5),d6-d7

; Copy Im (f4,f5) from (f2,f3)
4A6D 444C      tst.w  movl_f2_f4(a5)
;      wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l  $18(a5),d6-d7
; Square Im: Im^2 (f4,f5) = (f4,f5)*(f4,f5)
4A6D 4054      tst.w  mull_f4_f4(a5)
;      wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l  $18(a5),d6-d7

; Add Im^2 to Re^2: Re^2 + Im^2 (f6,f7) = (f6,f7)+(f4,f5)
4A6D 4016      tst.w  addl_f4_f6(a5)
;      wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l  $18(a5),d6-d7

; Load (f4,f5) = 4.0
7004      move.l  #4,d0
;      convert from integer to long float
48ED 0001 4524      movem.l  d0,movl_m_f4(a5)
;      wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l  $18(a5),d6-d7

; Subtract 4.0: Re^2 + im^2 - 4 (f6,f7) = (f6,f7)-(f4,f5)
4A6D 4036      tst.w  subl_f4_f6(a5)
;      wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l  $18(a5),d6-d7

; Diverged?
; If (f6,f7) > 0 goto DONE
4CED 0003 4570      movem.l  movlf_f6_m(a5),d0-d1
; d0 [SEEEEEEEEEEEEEMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM]
; d1 [MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM]
;      [10987654321098765432109876543210]
;      test sign bit in d0
;      -> Z is 1 if bit is zero, i.e. (f6,f7) is positive

```



```

0800 001F          btst    #31,d0
6700 007E          beq     DONE

; Not diverged: calculate next iteration
; =====
; Save Re: (f4,f5) = (f0,f1) for later
4A6D 4444          tst.w   movl_f0_f4(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7

; Square Re: (f0,f1) = (f0,f1)*(f0,f1)
4A6D 4040          tst.w   mull_f0_f0(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7

; Copy Im: (f6,f7) = (f2,f3)
4A6D 444E          tst.w   movl_f2_f6(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7

; Square Im: (f6,f7) = (f6,f7)*(f6,f7)
4A6D 405E          tst.w   mull_f6_f6(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7

; Subtract Im^2: Re^2 - Im^2 (f0,f1) = (f0,f1)-(f6,f7)
4A6D 4038          tst.w   subl_f6_f0(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7

; Load X to d0-d1
4CE8 0003 000C      movem.l $C(a0),d0-d1
48ED 0003 44E0      movem.l d0-d1,movf_m_f7(a5)
;                  no wait required
; Add x: Re^2 - Im^2 + X (f0,f1) = (f0,f1)+(f6,f7)
4A6D 4018          tst.w   addl_f6_f0(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7
; Re (f0,f1) now has new value

; use saved Re in (f4,f5)
; Multiply Im by Re: Im*Re (f2,f3) = (f2,f3)*(f4,f5)
4A6D 4052          tst.w   mull_f4_f2(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7

; Multiply by 2: Im*Re*2 (f2,f3) = (f2,f3)*(f6,f7)
; by addition to self
4A6D 400A          tst.w   addl_f2_f2(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7

; Load Y to d0-d1
4CE8 0003 0004      movem.l $4(a0),d0-d1
48ED 0003 44E0      movem.l d0-d1,movf_m_f7(a5)
;                  no wait required
; Add Y: Im*Re*2 + Y (f2,f3) = (f2,f3)+(f6,f7)
4A6D 401A          tst.w   addl_f6_f2(a5)
;                  wait for completion (2 bogus reads)
4CED 00C0 0018      movem.l $18(a5),d6-d7
; Im (f2,f3) now has new value

; Iterate until count == d5 = MaxCount
5244              addq.w   #1,d4
BA44              cmp.w    d4,d5
6600 FF30          bne     LOOP

; Iteration limit reached, return zero (black)
4244              clr.w    d4

DONE:
; Place count into integer value C
3144 0002          move.w   d4,$2(a0)

```

The corresponding BASIC program using this subroutine is listed below.

```

10 ! =====
20 !
30 ! Fractal Program
40 !
50 ! HP 98635A Version
60 !
70 ! For color graphics e.g. HP9836C
80 !
90 ! Martin Hepperle, 2022
100 ! =====
110 OPTION BASE 0
120 ! HP 9836: 512x390
130 W=512
140 H=390
150 ALLOCATE REAL Re(W),Im(H)
160 INTEGER Code(150)
170 DIM Hex$(4)
180 COM /Mandel/ REAL X,Y, INTEGER C,Maxdepth
190 INTEGER Rw,P,Q,N
200 ! select 1 or 2:
210 Example=2
220 Maxdepth=25
230 !
240 DATA 2040,4BF9,005C,0000
250 DATA 4280,4281,48ED,0003,44F8
260 DATA 48ED,0003,44F0,4244,3A10
270 DATA 4A6D,4446,4CED,00C0,0018
280 DATA 4A6D,405E,4CED,00C0,0018
290 DATA 4A6D,444C,4CED,00C0,0018
300 DATA 4A6D,4054,4CED,00C0,0018
310 DATA 4A6D,4016,4CED,00C0,0018
320 DATA 7004,48ED,0001,4524,4CED,00C0,0018
330 DATA 4A6D,4036,4CED,00C0,0018
340 DATA 4CED,0003,4570
350 DATA 0800,001F,6700,007E
360 DATA 4A6D,4444,4CED,00C0,0018
370 DATA 4A6D,4040,4CED,00C0,0018
380 DATA 4A6D,444E,4CED,00C0,0018
390 DATA 4A6D,405E,4CED,00C0,0018
400 DATA 4A6D,4038,4CED,00C0,0018
410 DATA 4CE8,0003,000C,48ED,0003,44E0
420 DATA 4A6D,4018,4CED,00C0,0018
430 DATA 4A6D,4052,4CED,00C0,0018
440 DATA 4A6D,400A,4CED,00C0,0018
450 DATA 4CE8,0003,0004,48ED,0003,44E0
460 DATA 4A6D,401A,4CED,00C0,0018
470 DATA 5244,BA44,6600,FF30
480 DATA 4244,3144,0002,4E75
490 DATA STOP
500 !
510 I=0
520 RESTORE
530 READ Hex$
540 ! IF (I MOD 12)=0 THEN PRINT
550 ! PRINT I;" ";Hex$;" ";
560 ! IF Hex$="STOP" THEN 600
570 Code(I)=IVAL(Hex$,16)
580 I=I+1
590 GOTO 530
600 ! PRINT
610 IF Code(116)=25 THEN Code(116)=Maxdepth
620 !
630 ! Reset Card
640 Addrcard=6029312
650 WRITEIO 9826,Addrcard+1;1
660 !
670 Addrcode=READIO(9827,Code(0))
680 Addrdata=READIO(9827,Maxdepth)
690 ! PRINT Addrcode,Addrdata
700 !
710 SELECT Example

```

```

720 CASE 1
730 ! a) full Mandelbrot figure
740   Xcenter=-.55
750   Ycenter=0.
760   Xwidth=2.9
770   !
780 CASE 2
790 ! b) Zoomed in
800   Xcenter=-.13
810   Ycenter=-1.0
820   Xwidth=.1
830 CASE ELSE
840   PRINT "Unknown case, enter Xcenter,Ycenter,Xwidth"
850   INPUT Xcenter,Ycenter,Xwidth
860 END SELECT
870 Yheight=Xwidth/RATIO
880 Xmin=Xcenter-Xwidth/2
890 Xmax=Xcenter+Xwidth/2
900 Ymin=Ycenter-Yheight/2
910 Ymax=Ycenter+Yheight/2
920 Rw=64
930 !
940 Dx=(Xmax-Xmin)/(W-1)
950 Dy=(Ymax-Ymin)/(H-1)
960 !
970 ! Set up x- and y-stations
980 FOR P=0 TO W-1
990   Re(P+1)=Xmin+P*Dx
1000 NEXT P
1010 FOR Q=0 TO H-1
1020   Im(Q+1)=Ymin+Q*Dy
1030 NEXT Q
1040 PRINT "Arrays set up."
1050 !
1060 SHOW Xmin,Xmax,Ymin,Ymax
1070 GCLEAR
1080 AREA PEN 0
1090 N=0
1100 GRAPHICS ON
1110 FRAME
1120 REPEAT
1130 TO=TIMEDATE
1140 ! sweep over x and y
1150   Wx=Dx*Rw
1160   Wy=Dy*Rw
1170   OUTPUT 2 USING "#,AA";CHR$(255)&CHR$(75)
1180   OUTPUT 2 USING "#,AAA";VAL$(Rw)
1190   FOR P=0 TO W-Rw STEP Rw
1200     FOR Q=0 TO H-Rw STEP Rw
1210       X=Re(P)
1220       Y=Im(Q)
1230 WRITEIO 9827,Addrcode;Addrdata
1240       AREA PEN C
1250       MOVE Re(P),Im(Q)
1260       RECTANGLE Wx,Wy,FILL
1270 Done:NEXT Q
1280   NEXT P
1290   T1=TIMEDATE
1300   PRINT Rw;T1-T0;"s"
1310   Rw=Rw DIV 2
1320 UNTIL Rw=0
1330 PRINT "Done."
1340 DEALLOCATE Re(*),Im(*)
1350 END

```

Connecting a “Centronics” Printer to the HP 9836

My HP 9836 did not have a parallel Centronics type interface, but I had a 98622A GPIO interface.

This interface is very common and has a wide 50-pin “Centronics” style female Amphenol plug. It supports 8- and 16-bit input and output via 16 dedicated I/O-lines. Additional control lines are available for handshaking. Switches allow selecting logic sense and handshaking options. Ideally you have a matching male connector with screw terminals and cable; otherwise you have to improvise with a 50-pin clip connector and additional screws. For these wide Amphenol connectors it is essential that the connectors are held firmly in place.

The other end of the cable was terminated by a female DB-25 connector, so that I can connect regular Centronics printer cables as used for IBM-PC systems. Alternatively, for directly plugging into a printer, you can of course attach a 36-pin male Amphenol connector to this end.

This simple cable works with my Epson MX and FX printers. Most of the actual work is to identify the correct wires inside the cable.

Note that the STROBE/ and ACK/ signals are not 100% Centronics compatible: they should be pulsed, but the timing of the falling edges obviously works with most printers.

Switch	0/1	Description
PCTL	1	invert, falling edge = STROBE/
PFLG	0	positive edge = ACK
PSTS	0	don't care
HSHK	0	pulse mode
DIN	0	don't care
DOUT	0	positive logic



Table 4: Settings on the GPIO interface. Figure 33: DIP switch settings.

My interface has a select code of 16 so that any CAT or LIST output can be printed easily by issuing a

```
PRINTER IS 16
```

Amphenol 50-pin	GPIO Signal	D-SUB DB-25	Amphenol 36-pin	Direction from I/F	Centronics Signal
17	DIO0	2	2	→	data bits
16	DIO1	3	3	→	
15	DIO2	4	4	→	
14	DIO3	5	5	→	
13	DIO4	6	6	→	
12	DIO5	7	7	→	
11	DIO6	8	8	→	
12	DIO7	9	9	→	
10	PCTL	1	1	→	STROBE/
44	PFLG	10	10	←	ACK
1	GND	18	33	—	

Table 5: Wiring the GPIO card to a Centronics cable.

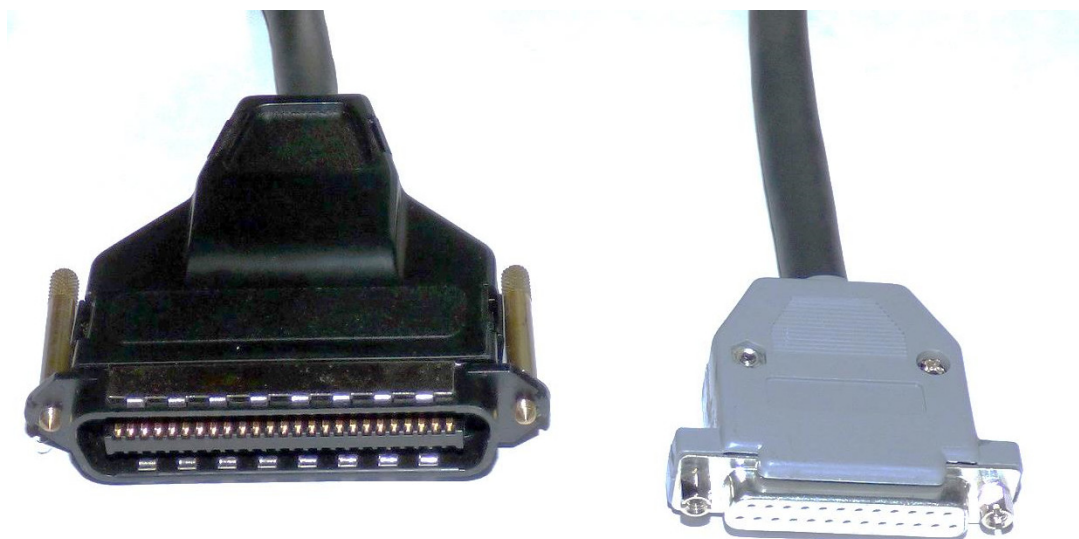


Figure 34: This Cable allows attaching a standard Centronics printer cable to the GPIO interface. The DB-25 connector has been equipped with hex nuts for securing the printer cable.

HP 9836 Screen Control

Control Codes

Chr\$(7)	BEL	sound the keyboards beeper
Chr\$(8)	BS	backspace, not beyond first column of line
Chr\$(10)	LF	move cursor down 1 line
Chr\$(12)	FF	scroll screen up, print two blank lines, place cursor in first column of second line
Chr\$(13)	CR	move cursor to first column of current line

Character Enhancement Codes

Bitmask

```

10001111
|  | | | bit 0  inverse
|  | | bit 1   blinking
|  | bit 2     underline
|  bit 3       half bright
bit 7          always 1

```

Chr\$(128)	all enhancements off	
Chr\$(129)	inverse	
Chr\$(130)	blinking	
Chr\$(131)	invers and blinking	
Chr\$(132)	underline	
Chr\$(133)	underline and inverse	
Chr\$(134)	underline and blinking	
Chr\$(135)	underline, inverse, and blinking	
Chr\$(136)	half bright	white
Chr\$(137)	half bright and inverse	red
Chr\$(138)	half bright and blinking	yellow
Chr\$(139)	half bright, inverse and blinking	green
Chr\$(140)	half bright and underline	cyan
Chr\$(141)	half bright, underline and inverse	blue
Chr\$(142)	half bright, underline and blinking	magenta
Chr\$(143)	half bright, underline, inverse and blinking	black

Key Codes sent to Kbd as a second Character after Chr\$(255)

33	!	stop
73	I	clr I/O
35	#	clear line
37	%	clear from cursor to end of line
42	*	insert line at cursor
43	+	toggle insert character mode
45	-	delete character at cursor
47	/	delete line at cursor
60	<	←
62	>	→
71	G	shift → cursor to end of line
72	H	shift ← cursor to start of line
75	K	clear screen
76	L	toggle graphics
77	M	toggle alpha
86	V	↓ cursor down
84	T	shift ↓ cursor down
91	[clear tab at cursor
93]	set tab at cursor
94	^	↑ cursor up

87	W	shift ↑ cursor up
41)	tab
40	(shift tab
88	X	execute
69	E	enter
82	R	run
80	P	pause
67	C	continue

References

- [1] HP 9000 Series 200 Computers “Pascal 3.0 System Designer’s Guide”, 98615-90074, February 1985 Edition 1.
- [2] Duell, Tony, “9826-9836 Schematics”, 184 pages.
- [3] Datasheet NS-32081-10/NS-32081-15 Floating Point Units, National Semiconductor.
- [4] Möller, Udo, <http://cpu-ns32k.net> [visited 7 October 2022]