

## CD-ROM Review: 167 into 1 will go!

My complete bound run of the *Quekett Journal* [to volume 36] occupies 167cm of shelf space, while the recently-produced [January 1999] set of four CD-ROMs occupies only 1cm — hence the title of this review!

The set, entitled *THE QUEKETT JOURNALS ON CD ROM* comes nicely boxed, with a brief note on their use in any computer with CD-ROM facilities. If any browser is already installed on the machine, then the discs can be used at once. If not, a copy of Netscape is included on the first disc.

Charles Hussey was the Project Manager, and he and his advisers chose to reproduce each page of each of the 36 volumes in facsimile, and not merely to re-enter each word. Had they done so, then the material would all have gone onto one disc, but the feeling of the older issues would have been quite lost. As it is, the original typefaces are retained, as are the original styles of the many illustrations. Nonetheless, even though four discs are used, each contains the complete index for all the volumes, so searches for words or phrases are always easy to make.

The size of the images has been arranged to have the text large enough to read, while having most of the page visible at any one time. Advice is included on altering one's machine to show more or less of each page as required. Some pages of illustrations are in colour, and some other pages which contain tables of detailed information have been enlarged. The whole project is very user-friendly, and has been demonstrably well-managed; Charles and his helpers are to be warmly congratulated on the result.

The decision to restrict the entries to those appearing in the first 36 volumes [to end-1992] was to match the published index by Michael Newstead. Any particular pages can, of course, be printed off just as with any other material on one's computer. The illustrations have been reproduced at a definition which allows them to be used for study, but which is not good enough for re-use in other publications. Anyone printing copies of any material from these discs, of course, is subject to copyright law as to what can be done with them.

A master set of the illustrations was made at a much higher definition as part of the exercise, for retention by the Club for official purposes, and images made from this set would be indistinguishable from the originals.

It is worth quoting in full the introduction to the set, from the first disc:

The *Quekett Microscopical Club* was set up in 1865, to bring together those interested in the microscope, particularly for recreation. It now has a world-wide membership, including quite a few professionals as well as amateurs, some of whom are acknowledged authorities in their special subjects.

The Club started its *Journal* in 1868, since when it has had an unbroken publishing record. 37 volumes had been completed by end-1996, and a most valuable index compiled by Michael Newstead and published by the Club in 1994 provided a full key to the first 36 volumes. Thus the wealth of important papers put out by the Club, some of them by famous names, was revealed to many for the first time. Now, of course, those individuals or institutions lucky enough to possess a full run of the *Journal* [which occupies about two metres of shelf space] are relatively few in number.

It is thus a most important event for the *Quekett* to make available a set of CDs which contain all the pages published to 1992 in facsimile, and to make them available for a tiny fraction of the price which a full set of the paper edition would cost, if one was ever to come onto the market. This venture was stimulated by the *Newstead Index*, but has been made possible by the great generosity of another *Quekett* member, L V Martin.

Leslie Vernon Martin [who died in 1993] left in his will a substantial sum of money to the Club, and it is some of this which has been applied to publishing this CD set. He had a great interest in microscopy, and served as Treasurer and then as President of the *Quekett*, before he retired from the Colonial Office [where he had been Chief Accountant] in 1978, when he was appointed OBE. Apart from his interest in the history of the microscope he was an authority on the Rotifera and on the Gastrotricha, and published extensively on his interests in the *Journal*. These CDs are a fitting tribute to his memory.

Little more need be added to the foregoing, apart from the sheer ease of finding particular topics or words in all the volumes, as one would expect from such electronic means. In use the CDs are user-friendly as has been said, and they are certainly good value for money. It is to be expected that sets will be made widely available, perhaps by other societies for their members, as well as in various libraries. But the sheer joy and convenience of owning a set for oneself cannot be overstated.



Sets are available in either PC or Apple versions, from:—

Savona Books, 9 Wilton Road, Hornsea, North Humberside HU18 1QU, U.K., at a cost of £150.

The Gemmary, PO Box 2560, Fallbrook CA 92088, U.S.A. Price approximately \$260.

Members of the Quekett Microscopical Club in good standing should see the *Bulletin* for special arrangements for their individual purchases.

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