

MCDS Prom Programmer

Joe Blackburn oct 21 2020 1:57am #28557

The MCDS kits had two versions (or more) of the Prom Programmer.

I have the bare board, and I suspect this is the CDP18S480 - or it's predecessor, as some of these boards were renumbered when included with the MCDS CDP18S693, CDP18S694. The later one is the CDP18S680.

My board is labelled PROM PROG 2468382 A00. It appears to be able to take 1842/1702's, 2704/2708's or 2758 - 2716's. The only reference I have seen quoted is MPM-222A Operator's Manual for PROM Programmer CDP18S480. I think the 18S680 is covered in the MCDS docs. Wodering if anyone has a part listing or a copy of the manual?

Re: MCDS Prom Programmer

@HamHack 8:21am Cot 21 2020 #28559

Hi Joe,

Long time lerker, first time poster, I found this group as I have a MCDS system from about 1983, Came into our house when I was young, the terminal broke a while later, and it has lived in my Dad's back shed till about 2 years ago when I rescued it for my own entertainment.

It has the Prom Programmer Board, however I have not documentation, for it. From what I have read there is a specific software available and there are a few scant details about its operation in a variety of available files around the internet.

I will post a picture of my populated board here so hopefully you can see if its the same, get some parts numbers off of it, a rough glance indicated to me it is pretty similar. I am pretty sure it has been configured to burn 2716 roms as there was one stuffed in it when I got my hands on it.

I have so far got the CDP18S601-CPU board up and running with a version of IDIOT/4 thanks to Lee Hart for that piece of software. Next on the list is to get the CDP18S652-Memmmory & Tape going. All the ROMs on that were corrupted. thanks to Herb Johnston website for the dump of those. Having found the reset/run switch and discovered it was faulty, thanks to the recent distribution of the schematics for this board on this group(thanks to Ed Keefe I think for this), I will hopefully progress getting this running in the next few months.... things move slowly here, with three children.

I would also be very interested in any info that comes to light regarding this and in particular the software that makes it work.

Regards

Dale

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Regards
Dale

thinkpast2:07pm #28567

Pardon me for simply stating what I ask for and what I will provide. I call that "getting to the point", the request for information.

To Joe Blackburn: I also have the same unpopulated board as you.

To Dale "HamHack" and Joe: The documentation I have for the board, was sent to me as a photocopy from the "User Manual for Microboard Computer Development System CDP18S693 and CDP18S694", date and RCA manual number unknown. It's pages 51 thru 58 and it only describes operating details - no schematic, no parts list.

Dale: please email me a higher-resolution image of your populated board, please. one sufficient for me to read actual chip labels, printing and so on. Then I can construct a parts list from that better photo. My Web page home page, will provide you with an email address. Please confirm, I have rights to redistributed your photo. Thank you.

After I get the photo and resolve the parts list, then I will add to my Web site a PDF of the manual portion I have, that parts list, Dale's photo and photos of the RCA board I have. Joe and Dale can copy that PDF at their convenience. The Web page I'll add this information to is:

https://www.retrotechnology.com/memship/cosmac_dev_sys.html

since that Web page already covers other MCDS cards of this type.

Dale, Joe, et al: If anyone comes across the RCA programs or ROMs to support this board, please contact me and consider offering me a copy, for my distribution as I've described.

To: moderators of cosmacelf:

I'll be glad to upload the same PDF to the cosmacelf groups.io file archive. Please inform me of a proper folder to upload it into. I

abhor the scattering of document by contributor or flavor-of-the-month, and I don't have or want a folder-by-my-name. So you decide where it best resides and inform me so i can upload it. Or, upload it yourself from my Web site and attribute my name to it. Thank you.

It's good that some productive information is finally emerging for this card. Now there's enough material to consolidate.

Regards, Herb Johnson
retrotechnology.com

David Schultz 2:37pm #28569
Another source of information is the program PROM25 included with MicroDOS. The MicroDOS manual is useless as all it does is point you to the documentation for the CDP18S680 board for operating instructions.

But if you get really desperate you could disassemble it and dig through the code to glean details of board operation. A quick look shows references to several PROM types: 2758? 1842? 1702? 2704? [etc.]

joshbensadon3:20pm #28570
Hi Herb,

Hank and I believe this is the right place.

<https://groups.io/g/cosmacelf/files/MCDS%20System%20Board%20Manuals>

Regards, Josh

[additional notes not posted, Herb Johnson]

I recieved the paper documents for the board from "Captain Hugh" who got them from a third party, copied from "MPM-293 User Manual for the RCA COSMAC Microboard Computer Development System (MCDS) CDP18S693 and CDP18S694". "Hugh" suggested looking at the UT61 ROM and the edit/assemble/BASIC3 ROMs associated with the MCDS, for PROM programmer support. But those do not support the board, RCA provided seperate software for the board, I believe on cassette tape but details would be documented among RCA's documents.

"Captain Hugh" provided photos of the assembled 18S402 board from a 3rd party. They seem identical in layout, to a photo of an assebled board (version unclear) posted by Dale "HamHack" on cosmacelf.

On Oct 20th, I uploaded a version of the PDF accumulated document to the file area suggested. This document is available on my Web page with the PDF.

https://www.retrotechnology.com/memship/cosmac_dev_sys.html