

**A first-hand user's report on**

# **FUNWAY INTO ELECTRONICS — 2**

*Following on from December's article, EA's secretary tackles soldering in her quest to understand electronics . . .*

**by NAOMI LENTHEN**

After last month's successful learning experience, I was ready and eager to learn more — so I moved onto Funway 2 & 3. The Giftbox 1, 2 & 3 which I had contained both books 2 and 3, as well as two projects from each series.

Book 2 again launches into a description of various components and their purpose, but also includes other components not previously covered in Book 1. Integrated circuits are explained, and there is talk of analogue and digital but where it said "See technical terms" at the back of the book, they weren't actually there.

A component marking chart is also

included, as well as in the actual kit packs of the projects. This is followed by a lesson in reading circuit diagrams and circuit laws. I glanced over the "Learning to solder" pages as I already had vast experience in soldering(!). I did notice that clear photos were provided on common faults and remedies.

Then it was onto my first project, a Multi-Purpose Flashing LED. The circuit was small and after reading the instructions carefully, I put it together. Success first go! I now had a little LED that flashed nonstop every half-second. The book then explains in what way such a circuit can be used. For example,

a darkroom warning indicator, or in a car alarm, or even as a flashing brooch! I have decided to use it as a fake burglar alarm. Don't tell anyone.

The other project supplied for Funway 2 was a Wireless FM Microphone. This too worked first go, although I did burn my finger slightly on the soldering iron in the midst of construction. Watch out for that soldering iron! I tuned the microphone into the radio in our office and my voice came clear through.

Excitement ruled the office that day as we tried to think of several ways of using it. We did play a really great trick though. Since Carmel (our production editor) was out when I made the microphone, we placed the microphone in the laboratory in front of the radio speaker in there, so in our office, the sounds of 2DAY.FM came through our radio. When Carmel returned, one of the engineers announced into the microphone that the next song was a "special request for Carmel With-An-Italian-Surname-I-Cannot-Pronounce". Due to the engineer's obvious accent, the game was given away. We next bugged a few offices, but nothing much exciting goes on here by the sounds of it!

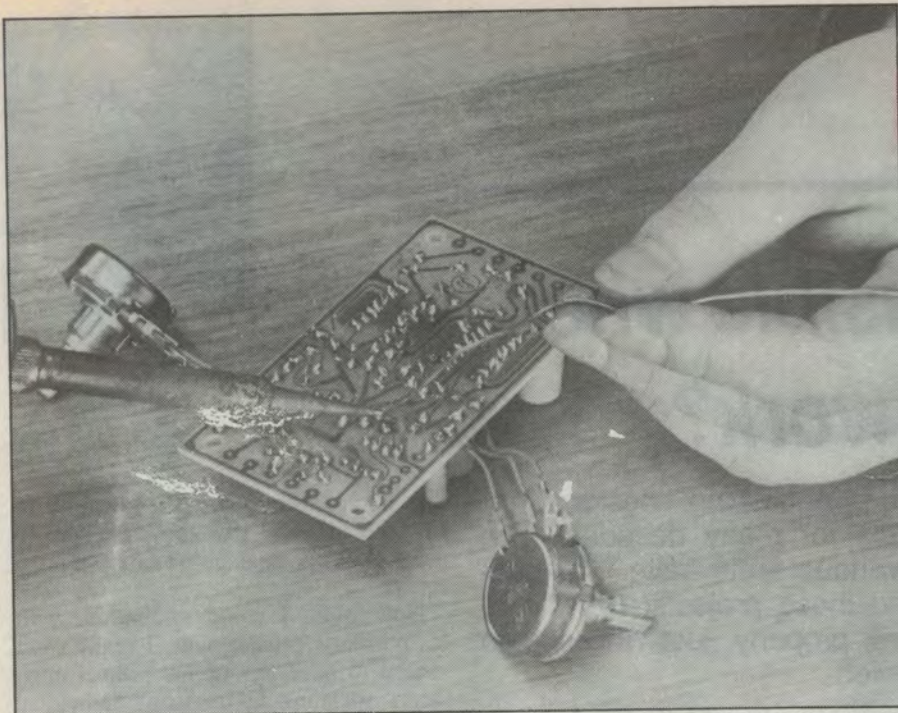
The book also shows you how to make your own circuit boards, but I haven't tried this yet!

Now onto Funway 3. The beginning of the book is the same as in Funway 2, except there is a chapter on how to use a multimeter. The two projects supplied with this book were an Electronic Cricket, and a Mini Stereo Amplifier.

The Electronic Cricket looked fairly simple, so I built it without reading the instructions first. Using only the the PCB overlay diagram as a guide, I soldered my components in, confident that



*At my desk, making sure my fingers are well away from the "hot" part of the soldering iron.*



*The tricky application of solder to the PC board for the Mini Stereo Amplifier.*

I wouldn't make a mistake. I did!

Only a slight one, though. I put one of the components on the wrong end of the circuit board. This was easily rectified and I finished this project okay.

Jim came to watch me test out the "cricket" and soon it chirped away merrily. You can set this one to work in the dark, which is the whole purpose of this project. I took this one home and

placed it in my mother's room and annoyed her to bits as she couldn't find any cricket. Ha Ha.

And my last project for this series was the Mini Stereo Amplifier. Again I did this without looking at the instructions, and I was told to stop getting too cocky. But I soldered this with no problem although I have as yet to find some small speakers and a walkman to hook it up to and test out.

Other projects from these two series include a Mini Synth, a Home and Car Burglar Alarm, a Pocket Transistor Radio and a Home Intercom. The books also contain several interesting tidbits like *Pioneers In Electronics*, *Milestones In Electronics*, and *Understanding Electronics*. The third book also has pre-printed front labels to make your projects look professional, and instructions on how to put them into a container.

Well I definitely found this experiment to be very worthwhile. I now can read complex circuit diagrams, solder professionally, and understand electronics. Well, almost!

So Funway into Electronics 2 and 3 get my vote of approval, at least. You'll find them at any Dick Smith Electronics store or dealer. 24

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