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PowerBook 280: RAM Disk Problem w/Assistant Toolbox 1.2 (11/94)

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TOPIC ---

 The PowerBook 280/280c computers are having problems with the persistent RAM
disk feature under System 7.5. When shutting down after booting from the RAM
disk as the startup volume, other PowerBook computers will shut down gracefully,
writing the contents of the RAM disk to a Persistent RAM Disk file in the System
Folder. The 280c shows an error message saying "error writing to persistent RAM
disk file."

DISCUSSION --

I was able to easily reproduce this problem. I did some investigating into the
code and found out that the problem is apparently a bug in Assistant Toolbox
version 1.2.

I reinstalled a minimal 7.5 system on the RAM disk, loaded MacsBug, and
restarted with the RAM disk. I then set a break point on call to create and call
to write. It turns out that when the procedure to create the file that holds
the contents of the RAM disk is generating an error that is causing the dialog.
When the call gets made to 'create' the file, it first tries to create the
Assistant Toolbox and then creates the file. Since the Assistant Toolbox
already exists, an error (-48) is returned to the routine. What is happening
is that when the procedure encounters the error, it quits and displays the error
dialog. It should not work this way.

I then decided to try the same procedure, but with Assistant Toolbox 1.1. I
repeated all the steps, tracing the procedure with MacsBug. However, this time
I was successful in creating the Persistent RAM disk file. It turns out that
the same error is generated but the procedure handles the error and creates the
file.

There is a workaround to this problem by using Assistant Toolbox 1.1. In my
testing I was successful in creating the Persistent Ram disk file. I understand
that it is an extra step to install a different version of the Assistant
Toolbox, but it does solve the problem for those users that need to use a RAM
disk.

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