

ADVENTURE PROBE

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DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the first week of the month. COPY DATE for contributions, advertisements etc is 14th of the previous month.

CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributors sending in material between 14th of the previous month and up to copy date will have their names entered in the Hall of Fame for the subsequent month. CONTRIBUTIONS are always needed and ALL readers are invited to send in items for every section. Anything from a single hint or tip to a full blown article are all very welcome. Reviews of the adventures you have played are especially welcome. Please check first to see if a review has already appeared. Don't worry if you cannot send in typed material as handwritten is just as welcome. If you send in contributions for more than one section please use different sheets and make sure you include your name and computer. If you do send in items ready typed then please use A4 with a nice margin all round with text being approx 70 chars across and 60 lines per page. Items can be sent in on disc (all discs will be returned). The Editor is able to print out from Amstrad CPC6128 (Tasword or Proteat), C64/128 on (Easyscript or Mini Office II) or Atari ST (First Word Plus). Sorry no printer for the Spectrum. If you send in items for the IN-TOUCH section please clearly mark which are adventures, utilities, arcade etc.

POSTAL ADDRESS

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions etc to the Editor: MANDY RODRIGUES, ADVENTURE PROBE, 67 LLOYD STREET, LLANDUDNO, GWYNEDD, LL30 2YP. If writing from overseas please add UNITED KINGDOM.

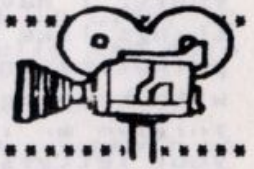


CONTENTS

EDITORIAL.....	PAGE 4
REVIEWS.....	PAGE 5
NEWS.....	PAGE 12
WELCOME TO DUNGEON.....	PAGE 14
DIARY OF ANONYMUM.....	PAGE 16
PAWS FOR THOUGHT.....	PAGE 19
LETTERS.....	PAGE 30
HELP WANTED.....	PAGE 35
IN-TOUCH.....	PAGE 36
GETTING YOU STARTED.....	PAGE 38
KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE.....	PAGE 39
HINTS AND TIPS.....	PAGE 40
BUGS AND AMUSING RESPONSES.....	PAGE 43
INTERESTING INVENTORIES.....	PAGE 43
SERIALISED SOLUTIONS.....	PAGE 44
TELEPHONE HELPLINES.....	PAGE 47



HALL OF FAME



My sincere thanks to all the following readers who took the time and trouble to send in contributions during the past month:

Jim Struthers, Nic Rumsey, Neil Shipman, Brian Pell, June Rowe, Amanda Oliver, Steve McLaren, The Wayfarer, Walter Pooley, Vicky Jackson, Allan Phillips, Paul Brunyee, Gordon Inglis, Dennis Dowdall, Emma Heggie, Sue Roseblade, Tony Browne, George Kersey, Joan Pancott, Barbara Gibb, Tony Melville, Paul Rigby and The Grue!

This months lovely cover picture is by Allan Batchellor.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE FORM OF REVIEWS, GETTING STARTED, GOLDEN OLDIES AND BUGS AND AMUSING RESPONSES ARE URGENTLY NEEDED FOR THE NEXT AND FUTURE ISSUES PLEASE.....MANDY

EDITORIAL



Welcome to Volume 4, Issue 8 of Adventure Probe.

The Probe convention is all set for the 15th September at the Strathallan Thistle Hotel in Edgbaston, Birmingham and I can hardly wait to see you all there. I am getting quite excited about it (despite certain quivers following the information that I would be expected to make some sort of welcome address! I suppose I can always write it down like an Editorial and read it to you all!). Full details can be found in the News pages and an application form for tickets is enclosed with this issue. I sincerely hope that sufficient readers do buy the tickets so that we can cover the costs of an event of this size. So please do your very best to come along and have a good time meeting and getting to know one another. We have booked the conference suite so there will be plenty of room for all! It really should be a day to remember.

If anyone hasn't yet returned the questionnaire and nomination forms, sent out with the last issue, then please do so as soon as you possibly can. Quite a few people have sent in suggestions and some have remarked that there are far too many advertisements in Probe. Please remember that it is only these paid advertisements that prevent Probe making a loss. Also, Probe has always had forty pages and I did increase this to 48 pages so that readers still got full value for money despite the pages of ads. Also many home-producers just couldn't afford the sums needed to advertise in the glossy magazines and can only do so through the pages of Probe. As soon as the rest of the questionnaires are received I will publish the results but I can already see that a pattern is emerging. I think when all the information is collated we could have quite a few surprises! But I promise you that all the demands for "page three girls", sex and other rude suggestions will be ignored! (tsk! tsk!).

Well, with summer firmly with us and the children off school for yunks, I have a very busy schedule trying to fit in all the important things like the Donkey Derby, games of pool at the end of the pier, potholing and "Splash-about" at the swimming baths (sigh!) together with keeping up with correspondence and Probe etc. I hope you will all forgive me if I am getting a little behind with all the replies to your letters and requests. I will reply to each and everyone but do please be patient with me when I get an "overload". I sometimes smile a little to myself when someone rings me up and breathes a sigh of relief when they say "Oh I'm glad I managed to catch you before you went home!" I tend to forget that a lot of the new readers don't realise that Probe is a full-time hobby, run from home. No wonder some of you seem surprised when I answer the phone in the kitchen and the sound of pots and pans and sizzling bacon accompanies the responses to requests for information on "Troll-bashing". It also explains some of the gasps of astonishment when the Editor of an Adventure magazine answers the phone to the background music of Dragon Ninja, Bubble Bobble or Pipemania! It is the children - honest! There have been quite a few requests, with the questionnaire, for myself and other well-known Probe readers to write more about ourselves. I will try to oblige. Also quite a few have written to say that they would like Bob Adams to write about Modems, so come on Bob, do your stuff.

Eeeek! Nearly at the end of the page again! I hope you all enjoy this issue and I'll see you all again next month as usual.

Mandy

REVIEWS

SORCERER



By Infocom. Available originally for most computers. Shop around for the best price. Reviewer - THE GRUE! played on Commodore 128k.

In Sorcerer, the second in the Enchanter trilogy, you are a member of the prestigious Circle of Enchanters. This envious position was achieved in recognition of your success in defeating the evil warlock, Krill, and once again the fate of the kingdom is in your hands.

The game starts when you realise that Belboz, the eldest of the Circle and the most powerful Enchanter in the whole land seems to have disappeared. You remember that lately he had been experimenting with powerful spells and dangerous demons and you begin to fear the worst. Belboz has been trapped by an evil force and his magic could be turned against the Circle of Enchanters, thus destroying the whole essence of the kingdom. You must learn the cunning of a true sorcerer and find your mentor before the forces of darkness use his powers, only you can save the Circle of Enchanters from destruction.

Searching the Guild for some sort of clue to Belboz's whereabouts your journey begins with the discovery of a cryptic journal. Then with the aid of a glowing amulet and one measly Ainfiz scroll, found deep within the cellar of the Guild, you set off in some vain hope that you can rescue Belboz before it's too late.

Sorcerer relies heavily on the use of magic spells and potions and is perhaps the most enjoyable game of the Enchanter trilogy. This undoubtedly is an Infocom classic with great text descriptions and a hoard of wide ranging puzzles and within all this the game has a great sense of humour. Sorcerer also gives you the chance to visit Bozbarland, a fantasy amusement park where it is easy to waste a few hours in the haunted house, bumping around in the dark (Grues do that all the time). There are some great puzzles in Sorcerer like the glass maze, where you must change yourself into a bat in order to negotiate it and then when you've done that successfully the maze rearranges itself, forcing you to solve it all over again!

The coal mine section is a real gem, where you meet yourself at different stages of your life. Here you need to drink the correct potion so you can breath in the confines of the mine, give the correct item to your older self, solve the maze, find a scroll which has been fiendishly hidden from you and then give your younger self a certain bit of information. All wonderful stuff done in Infocom's unique style. (I couldn't agree more!... Anon.)

Although Sorcerer is now six years old it still stands the test of time. The parser is as good as you would expect from Infocom. Written by Steve Meretzky it has an intricately crafted plot, although not quite as zany as you might expect from such an author.

For an amusing response, try to sit on the perch in Belboz's Quarters!

The packaging includes your Creatures of Frobozz Infotator and a copy of Popular Enchanting magazine. With supplies of Infocom games drying up rapidly, I urge you to get a copy now before it is too late.

SOULDRINKER from Tower Productions



Available for the Atari ST from Zenobi Software - £5.99

Reviewed by Neil Shipman

In this homegrown adventure you play the part of Elric, Prince of the Albino people of Melinbonae. Things are pretty good for you at the moment as you've just slain a magnificent boar ready to present to your beloved Ella on your forthcoming betrothal. When the adventure starts you are in your hut some distance from the village. As soon as you leave it a bloodstained serf rushes up with the awful news that everyone in the village has been killed by the forces of evil abroad in the land. You rush off to see for yourself and, after getting past an orc which has remained to guard the path, you do indeed find all the people dead or dying.

Ella expires in your arms but, before doing so, she entreats you to avenge the slaughter and tells you of the fabled Souldrinker, a sword which will give you the power to wreak havoc on the bringers of sorrow and pain. To find this blade you must enter the Cavern of Souls and then go through the very Gates of Hell to confront Satan himself. This, of course, you vow to do and set about finding the necessary light source and magical protection for your quest.

Souldrinker is a small adventure with only about 35 locations. This in itself doesn't matter - there have been a number of adventures with less locations which have still been interesting, amusing and enjoyable to play. With a small one, however, you especially need a tightly-constructed and, hopefully, stimulating storyline with plenty to read and lots to do. Unfortunately, Souldrinker fails on all counts. The descriptions are uninspiring, most of the responses perfunctory and the puzzles are few and far between. As you make your way through Hell the text becomes unnecessarily gory and even the fictional Elric can't hold onto his lunch. When I encountered Satan and acquired the magic blade I thought things might improve - but that's where it ended and I was told to look out for the sequel, Elric's Revenge!

Names sometimes occur in upper case letters for no good reason and both grammar and punctuation leave much to be desired. I also felt that the layout of the text could have been improved - sometimes blank lines appear between command and response and sometimes they don't. Rather surprisingly neither Ramsave nor Ops is supported and Get All does not work consistently throughout the adventure. Every location is accompanied by a picture and these are quite well drawn. This is also the first STAC written adventure I've played which has a lot of music in it. This is well done but, because of the way the utility handles sound, a tune stops playing as soon as you start to type your next command and this rather spoils the effect. I found the light grey text difficult to read but Tower very kindly changed this to white for me.

The writer's artistic skills far outweigh his literary ability and I think he would do well to concentrate on the artwork, perhaps by producing graphics for other people's adventures. The service from both Tower and Zenobi was excellent so it's perhaps unkind of me to write about the adventure in such disparaging terms. But it's the quality of the product that they are to be judged on and I'm afraid Souldrinker is an adventure I certainly could not recommend.

Review of STALKER (for the 128k Spectrum)



On the planet Cramos, Holden is held in an Iso-cube, falsely accused of the very serious offence of dealing in narcotics. Meanwhile back on Earth a top-level diplomat called Andi Stalker is entrusted to deliver to Cramos the evidence that will clear Holden's name.

Whilst on his way from Earth to Cramos a saboteurs bomb cripples the spaceship, which is drawn towards a small planet in the Sowod galaxy. Stalker escapes in a life-support pod which crash-lands, closely followed by the spaceship which disintegrates as it enters the atmosphere, scattering wreckage and vital evidence over the surface of the planet.

Stalker must locate the evidence, in the form of a computer disc, and proceed to Cramos in time to save Holden.

The adventure begins with you, as Andi Stalker, inside the escape pod. It sounds rather comfortable, and if the in-board computer allowed me to play adventure games on it, I doubt if I would have been too anxious to leave. However, with a man's life at risk, you can't hang around too long.

The pod has landed in an area of lush vegetation, close to an interesting cave and a village inhabited by natives who are definitely NOT vegetarians. You will, like all good adventurers, have to collect and use various objects scattered around the planet, and your life is threatened several times before you (may) locate the computer disc and find a way of being rescued.

That's only half the story because you still haven't reached your destination.

You are now in a mixture of primitive and space-age locations, and someone is still intent on stopping you reaching Cramos. I found this half more difficult, as the authors don't give anything away. It is possible to arrive without the evidence, but to succeed you need to present the court with the disc and the guilty person. I enjoyed the second half more than the first, but that is only a personal preference.

This text-only adventure is written on the P.A.W. and is for the 128K Spectrum only. Although I'm no expert, I think some effort could have been made to either "compress" it; or divide it into 2 by 48K parts which would suit all Spectrum owners; or, (my own selfish choice), expand it to accommodate all the available memory.

All the locations are very well described, the length varying according to requirements. It has some interesting objects that turned out to be red herrings and I would have liked some locations to be more important. For example, there is a group of Nomads who at first I

thought had bonked me on the head and pinched the computer disc, but it sees they were just scenery to contrast with the space-age pleasure-dome. The puzzles are logical in most cases, and some will give most players a bit of trouble.

Inputs in most cases can be an abbreviated direction, verb/noun, or one or more numbers. Longer inputs are needed for specific instructions. If you want to quit you have to COMMIT SUICIDE in the form of self-stangulation, and then it has the cheek to ask "Is life really that bad?"

If I sound a little disappointed in "Stalker" it's because I feel a good adventure could have been an even better one.

Price : £2.49

Available from Zenobi Software
26 Spotland Tops
Cutgate
Rochdale
Lancashire
OL12 7NX

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb

CASTLE MASTER



By Incentive Software and available, for most computers, in most good shops. Priced from £14.99 to £29.99.

AMIGA VERSION. Reviewer - BRIAN PELL.

In the same vein as Darkside, Castle Master boasts the same graphics, those solid faceless blocks that we have come to love and hate. Whatever your cup of tea (Me, I like a strong cup of coffee, especially when I'm playing a hard RPG), don't let that put you off. I didn't like Darkside but Castle Master is a real change. An adventure with a real 3D feel to it. Objects, even though devoid of any real form, can be climbed upon, walked around and looked behind. There is a touch of the arcade when you have to kill the spirits that haunt the castle. And, wait for it, your progress is measured on a SPIRIT LEVEL! Nice, unusual touch, I thought. To kill the spirits and stop them taking your energy away, you have to throw an endless supply of rocks (where you get this bottomless rockpile from is beyond me.) but you certainly need a great pile because they come in handy for playing the game. Food litters the floor for you to eat and keep your strength up (I hope you like cheese because that is what it all looks like). You can get your hands on the odd bottle of wine but don't go over the limit or the effects can be dreadful.

The object of the game is to save the person you didn't pick at the start, i.e. your twin brother or sister. Each one has different powers. You have to find keys and treasure along the way and it is best to leave no stone unturned ('scuse the pun). Look around, under and over everything. There are some odd places like the horse in the stable (something like a Trojan look-alike). An impression of a well-known TV vet should give you more than you thought. Castle Master is a very good game and with The Crypt (another game) on the same disc, two games for the price of one is a very good buy.

Asteroid Adventure - Atari ST/STE - £8.95.

Published by SoftTouch/J.A.Ure. Cheques payable to SoftTouch.
Available from 6 Oak Avenue, Runcorn Road, Birmingham. B12 8QT.
Please state either Colour or Mono version when ordering.



On a regular trading run through the star systems comprising "known space", your ship's computer alerts you to a distress signal it has picked up. As a diversion from the mundane job at hand, you eagerly change course to investigate. The source of the signal, a large asteroid, looms into view but just as you notice several surface installations including a docking bay, the distress signal is abruptly halted!

Landing on the asteroid is a simple enough task, but there are several important locations within the ship that require a modicum of exploration first. The ship itself is not a particularly large vessel, so it's off to the asteroid's surface before much longer! Anything present in a location usually has to be thoroughly examined to yield a clue or object for the next action, but there is little incidental material within the descriptions to occupy your time with.

The asteroid itself, you soon learn, is to become an alien base for a massive weapons system which will be able to traverse the star systems destroying planet after planet until the Federation surrenders. But then what? You shudder to think - but it seems the appropriate action that you must now take is to thwart the aliens' plans, who, it just so happens, are swarming over the asteroid already following a battle where they defeated the human colony previously settled there.

Although this describes a scenario with aliens lurking around every corner, there are only two occasions where you have to deal with the intruders. The first of which knocked me for six (well, vapourised me really) with it's sudden deathiness feel about it. The second alien can be tricked with relative ease.

There are about 57 locations in the adventure which shouldn't take a great length of time to complete. There are a few interesting puzzles which may well have players stumped, but if you follow the rule of examining everything there shouldn't be much that you miss.

I felt that a main failing of the adventure was the text - or lack of it. In the latter part of the adventure, you'll find yourself walking down a "... boring passage" which leads into "... another boring passage". Several of the location descriptions struck me as being added as an afterthought and offer little in the way of atmosphere. On a plus side, however, the presentation of the adventure is well planned with small graphic images being shown for each item as you examine it, and spot sound effects such as when you use the blaster, "... another fine product from (KILL-O-ZAP)". The introduction screen is displayed while a tune plays quite happily in the background - but this stops as soon as you start the adventure.

The adventure provides the usual parsing facilities which include multiple sentence input and memory save and load commands. You can also use 'AGAIN' to repeat the last command entered. The adventure was programmed using the STOS Basic and Compiler, together with DEGAS ELITE for the graphics. Additionally, the author has included several 'Problem Solver' sheets which offer coded hints on how to overcome particular problems. There are ten sheets in total, each of which contains several related clues which have to be decoded using the letter-for-letter key provided on each sheet.

The adventure has quite a professional appearance all round, and can even be ordered in colour or mono versions. The accompanying documentation is of a high quality but the text doesn't promote the adventure well enough, for my liking anyway. Perhaps a tad pricey at £8.95 bearing in mind the size, but fun nonetheless.

Reviewed by Paul Brunyee.

Incidentally, the help sheets together with the disk label and instructions were created on an Apple Mac and laser printed to give them a clear professional appearance. I understand that the author is offering this laser printing service to anyone requiring high quality print - including graphics. Contact Mr. Ure at the above address to discuss your requirements.



THE LOST TEMPLE OF THE INCAS

By Laurence Creighton and available from Zenobi Software for Spectrum computers. Reviewer - GORDON INGLIS.

You start off penniless in a town on the outskirts of the jungle and have to buy provisions for your forthcoming journey - but where do you get the money from? After getting some cash you have to buy provisions in the local shops - and make sure they are the RIGHT ones for the journey ahead!!! Then you have to pay the pilot to fly you into the jungle in his helicopter - whatcha mean, you've no money left!? This guy won't work for free!

Having started again and re-arranged your finances and cut down on your shopping you are flown into a jungle clearing surrounded by dense jungle (and mazes!) so you wander around for ages trying to find your way out, getting hungry and being attacked by insects, until you find a path out and then are confronted by exits which are all blocked in various ways - and the brain power sets in again!

This is a great Quilled adventure which doesn't (thankfully) have things wandering about unaided as there are several situations which need careful thought and planning - such as the "I can only carry five things but I really need six" syndrome. There are also some nice situations where you reckon you've done the right things with the right bits and bobs - and then you realise that you were wrong! After many dangers and detours you finally get into the temple and then have to start chanting incantations and then you can't get out and the front door is shut and the trapdoor won't budge - and you're getting hungry!

Although not on a par with the likes of Agatha's Folly for size and complexity this is a greatly pleasing game which fits comfortably into the classic "get this to do that and carry that to do it" scenario of good adventure games. Another winner from Zenobi! The follow-up from Laurence is being playtested at present and looks even better than this one! It won't be out for a LONG time though, so spend some money on this one now!

THE MISER



By Jack Lockerby and available from Zenobi Software.
For Spectrum 48/128k and priced at £2.49.

Reviewer - SUE ROSEBLADE

Cringing in your gloomy bedroom, huddled miserably on your damp four-poster bed, you await the arrival of Christmas. Recently you have been troubled by visits from the Spirits of Christmas Past and of Christmas Yet To Come. As you slide into sleep, yet another ghost will appear and your life will be changed beyond belief. You, Ebenezer Scrooge, must perform 12 good deeds this day and then make your way to the house of your nephew.

Your task is to discover what these deeds can be and then to perform them in more or less any order. Some of them will involve helping the people that you will meet around the town, others will include finding Christmas presents for the family of your poor oppressed employee, Bob Cratchit. Your final deed must be to cure Tiny Tim of his crippling illness. By the way, it's well worth taking a trip back to his house in future times, after his cure, and knock on the door for a heartwarming message!

It is reasonably easy to find out the nature of the deeds by talking to the characters that you will meet in the game, and listening carefully to the Spirit of Christmas Present. The hardest thing about this adventure is to find all the objects that you will need, as they are extremely well hidden in some cases. Without giving anything away, I would strongly advise you to look under, behind and inside all possible places!

The puzzles are most enjoyable, logical and fair. You can map almost every location right from the outset, and several of the clues are easy to come across. This gives you a nice encouraging start, but towards the end of the game a lot more ingenuity is required. Finding the correct input presents no problems, and all the usual features such as Ramsave and Ramload are available.

If you are getting the impression that I liked this game then you'd be quite right. It is written in a lighthearted style and I found that completing the deeds one by one was most satisfying. The Miser is similar in style to Jack Lockerby's previous adventures, all of which come high on my list for recommendation. I think that his games contain all the intangible ingredients which go to make up a successful adventure.

PG TIPS HELP PROBE CONVENTION!

Well inadvertantly anyway! Thanks to June Rowe for sending me the following tips (groan). Do you know that if you save 12 Travel Tokens from special PG packs you can buy one coach ticket and get another one absolutely FREE?! All you have to do is to buy plenty of tea (100 tea-bags bring 4 tokens) and you could travel to the Convention absolutely FREE as the travel period covers 15th September. The coaches these are valid for are National Express, Caledonian Express and Stagecoach. I think it could be well worth stocking up with tea-bags for! Gentlemen tell your wives to put PG Tips on the next shopping list! Or better still, go and get them yourself, tell her to put her feet up and make her a nice cuppa - she deserves it you know!

NEWS



THE FIRST GRAND ADVENTURE PROBE CONVENTION!

I am delighted to announce that our very own convention will be held on 15th September, 1990 at the Strathallan Thistle Hotel, 225 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham starting at 9am and continuing throughout the day to finish around 7pm. The hotel is conveniently situated only a few minutes from the M5 and M6 motorways, 10 minutes from New Street Station and 20 minutes from the airport and for visitors arriving by car there is ample free parking. With 167 bedrooms there is no problem if you wish to stay overnight and Phil Glover tells me that he will bring along some brochures offering accommodation to suit all pockets and tastes too. Thistle hotels are known to offer disabled facilities and the convention will be on the ground floor so EVERYONE can come along. Further details and hopefully a map will be sent along together with your tickets. Please feel free to bring along your partner too even if they don't like adventuring they are sure to enjoy the event.

Tickets will cost £5 each and I sincerely hope that sufficient will be sold to cover the cost of organising the event. A form for tickets is enclosed with this issue of Probe.

Any software producers, large or small, are very welcome to come along and set up a stall and all ideas to help make the event a great success are very welcome indeed. If you would like to organise something then please get in touch.

I look forward to meeting you all in Birmingham!

GHOSTWRITER IS ON ITS WAY!

PRESS RELEASE about GHOSTWRITER says, "Ghostwriter is a program that lets you write and design Graphic Adventures, teaching programs and disk scrapbooks that can be run as distinct stand along programs. Sounds, pictures, messages, an intelligent input system, a unique tokenizer and compressor are all combined in Ghostwriter to give you, for the first time, a flexible, easy way to design icon driven games, educational and sales promotions, smoothly and quickly.

Dicon Peeke and Richard Gale collaborated on the design and coding and Aaron Fothingale did the music. Many thanks to the editor of Probe, Mandy Rodrigues (known as Big Momma to Adventurers) for her help and advice and to others whose names have been withheld on advice from M15. Thanks also to Brian who doesn't understand computers but tries not to look too baffled when I explain the latest bug.

Ghostwriter will work on any Atari ST or STE with either a double or single sided disk drive. It can be installed into a hard drive, in fact we recommend it, if you can afford it. It also has its own sound sampler who's results are as good as the original software supplied with the cartridge. It has the ability to grab most graphic package formats including Neo, Degas, Stos compressed, Degas compressed and Tiny. Fonts can be customized and if you have a STAC you can use the fonts from that. All resolutions are catered for and the new compression routines crush down the graphics and the commands so that a BIG game can fit on a little disk. The finished game is icon driven and needs no text input.

All the demonstration games are Public Domain programs and you can do with them what you like. The Alphabets, sound samples, fonts and pictures can also be used in any creations and no copyright is attached to them.

Dicon Peeke is a very old computer graphics artist. He lives half way up a mountain in North Wales and considers himself a Cornishman. He likes graphics in adventure games and Orange Jaffa cakes. Richard Gale lives in the Midlands and is a standard teenage clone whose world

rotates around computers. He likes anything to do with science fiction and synthesized music."

After that remark about "big Momma" I refuse to provide any Jaffa cakes next time Dicon descends from his mountain top! Seriously though, from what I have seen, Ghostwriter is going to be THE utility of the future! It should cost around £29.95 and the ST version will be available in the Autumn (Amiga version to follow!). Dicon promises to have loads of art discs available too and as he is the artist responsible for the fantastic new look graphics at Level 9 you can be sure they will be great! Anyway, don't take my word for it, see it for yourself as it will be on display at the convention.

NEW RELEASES FROM INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY!

Martyn Westwood of Interactive Technology's new game is WEIRD TALES and is for ST only. It includes their new Zen interface and is text based. It has a lengthy list of features including built in hints, auto-mapping, artificial intelligence and truly interactive characters. It is boxed, with extensive packaging. Martyn tells me that Interactive plan to produce at least four new adventures each year with a target of producing Infocom quality games. There is also a special offer with WEIRD TALES; each game will include a ticket for a draw to take place on December 15th and the prize being a years sub to Syntax with two runner up prizes of six month subs to Probe! (that can't be bad!) The next game to come from Interactive will be OPALINE which should be on sale in August/September of this year. It is a science fiction sequel to A DARK SKY OVER PARADISE, and continues the Destiny trilogy. It will be very different from "Paradise" being more of a puzzle game, although it will again have a strong storyline.

A NEW FANZINE ON THE WAY!

Alistair Thomas tells me that he is going to produce a new magazine called TEQUILA MOCKINGBIRD which aims to cover all aspects of interactive fiction. It will include technical articles on the major utilities, reviews of products old and new and articles on the state of the hobby today. It will have a notably analytical approach to reviews trying to unearth the ideas that go to making up a good game, and with the emphasis on the technical sections on using technical ideas to enhance a games structure and plot. Alistair tells me that he expects the magazine to have a distinctly different feel to Probe and Coder. Primarily he wants it to be a forum for debate and discussion for the promotion of new ideas, "in the effort to bring a little intellectual credibility to this far-from-dead hobby." The first issue should be ready very soon now and further details will appear in Probe but if you are interested to know more then why not contact Alistair at The Old Schoolhouse, Inveresk, Musselburgh, East Lothian, EH21 8LX.

SUPPORT THE HOME PRODUCERS

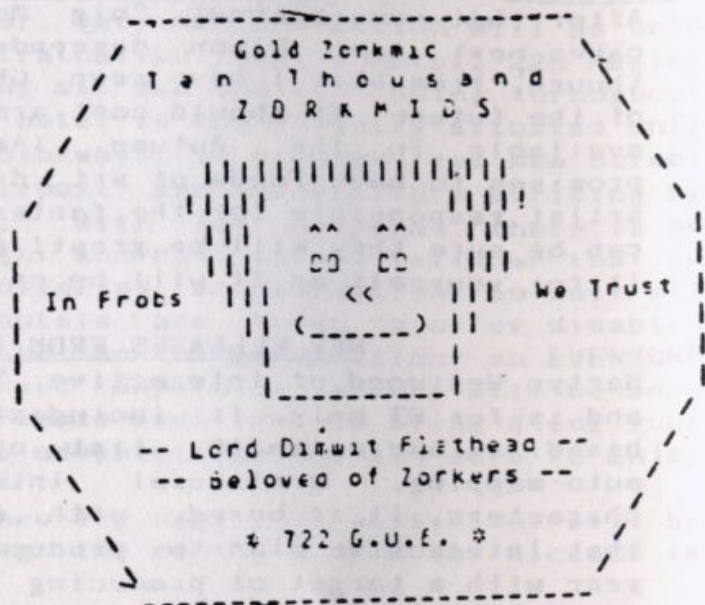
I have heard from no less than THREE "home producers" this month who all tell me that they are seriously thinking of giving up writing anymore adventures due to the lack of orders for their new games. It seems a great pity, especially following all the recent moans about the lack of new adventures for 8-bit owners, that these producers who advertise in Probe should get such little support. When big companies such as Level 9 drop out of the 8-bit market it is these smaller companies which are keeping adventuring alive and well on your machines. These games are good so why is it that a game such as Bug of Brit which received a good review in Probe should receive only a couple of orders? Their future is in your hands folks!

WELCOME TO DUNGEON

By THE GRUE!

PART FOUR

Towards the end of 1979 both Joal and Marc had returned to Boston, Joel was elected president of Infocom and immediately started business school. Zork I was now starting to take some shape as Infocom's first product and was first run on a DECsystem-20 that they had been renting time on. Not long after that a former graduate from MIT, Scott Cutler, used his TRS-80 Model II to create a ZIP for a TRS-80 Model I. As they moved into the 1980's the company spent a large amount of its capital on buying a TRS-80, Scott and Marc soon demonstrated that Zork I was alive by typing N-E-OPEN-IN and actually scoring points.



Although the game now ran on the TRS-80, the next problem encountered was one of manufacturing and marketing. With no factory, business experience and barely enough money to buy lunch they decided to offer the game to software publishers. Actually the very first copy of Zork that was sold for monetary gain was a version for a PDP-11 on an eight inch floppy disk. In June 1980 they paid for a search of trademark records ready for registering Zork as their own trademark and discovered that MATTEL INC had registered "MIGHTY ZORK" in 1973 for a toy model motorcycle but the registration had been cancelled in 1979. Zork was first offered to Microsoft but as they were already publishing the original Colossal Cave they largely ignored Infocom. Personal Software did, however, take the game on and by December 1980 began selling the TRS-80 version of Zork.

By the end of 1980 a ZIP for the Apple II had been created by Bruce Daniels who was now working for Apple Computer Inc., the Apple version of Zork proved to be more popular than the TRS-80, selling 6,000 copies in the first six months, whereas the TRS-80 version sold only 1,500 copies in its first nine months. Meanwhile Dave was busy designing Zork II, at first the idea was to use all the things left over from Zork I but Dave's imagination kept inventing new puzzles. This meant that the Royal Puzzle and the end game were left out, later to be used in Zork III. Instead Zork II included the Wizard of Frobozz, The Garden and a new diamond-shaped maze. The last of the original problems from Zork didn't even feature in Zork III, sending for the Brochure was one of them. These did, however, reappear eventually in a game Infocom called Sorcerer!

Zork II was offered to Personal Software in April 1981 but they were having serious doubts about Personal Software's commitment, even to Zork I. After the initial rush of advertising they did, Zork I just seemed to join the rest of their range of products and Infocom were eager to make new titles such as Zork III, Zork The Mystery and Zorks In Space, but not if their publisher was not of the same thinking. Incidentally, Zork The Mystery and Zorks In Space were actually released but not with those titles!!!!


```

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| Donald Woods, Editor      | <
> Spelunker Today          <
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- THE END -

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 3 ZECKMIES

and not forgetting the DEC hacker, TED.

Adventure Probe Page 15

DIARY OF ANONYMUM



JUN 2ND

Received Probe, husband suspicious of plain brown envelope, so I told him it was a freebie knitting pattern. Read Probe backwards, fed Rottweiler with left-over pies, loaded Clerics Quest from Global. Now I don't wish to be picky, but I spent so much time behind the velvet curtains that I had more fun counting the spelling mistakes in the first few locations than playing the game. (Almost takes the prize from Quest for the Poorly Snail). Not a good start. I suspect the writer of Clerics is a Kylie Minogue fan.

JUN 4TH

Husband's jaws have improved since the hospital removed the wires, have now booked him in for a frontal lobotomy. No 1 daughter has enrolled in Karate lessons in the unlikely event of her ever being attacked, so Junior has paid two strapping lads to assault her sister, claiming that the practice will be good for her. Played Hobble Hunter from Compass, I keep thinking it's called Gobble Hunter, a jolly little game this, as long as I remember to hang on to my Thing. Daughters have plugged microwave into my computer, they're hoping to cook Craldon's Creek, as there is little else one can do with it.

JUN 5TH

Husband going to Iran on business, have packed "Satanic Verses" for him to read in his spare time. He can now eat solid food again, so it's back to four hourly feeds and weaning. I don't know when I'm going to get out of this feeding business. I wish I'd married a chef. Have realised I'm too good for adventure games, Cleric's Quest is the pinnacle of my success; I decided to ignore the curtain and proceed in another direction. Well! Can you believe it! I found a knife and scored 50% thus I have realised that if I find one more object, I'll have completed the game with 100%, and I'll only need to visit a couple of locations, I think the curtain was a ploy - just to waste my time. Of course being a busy housewife and mother, it's great to know I can finish a game in 2 mins flat! Bet old Balrog in Rochdale would be livid if he knew - but there again, how is he going to find out, he spends all his time in the loo as far as I know! Had time to cook Sunday lunch and ignored Junior's protest that it was only Friday. Fed Cleric's Quest to Rottweiler.

JUN 9TH

Lay awake all night, trying to think of a word to describe Cleric's Quest - NAFF springs to mind! Took a look at Dark Storm from Compass, now personally, I don't approve of kicking doors down, I imagine that whoever wrote the game is a football hooligan and have no doubt in my mind that he was at Heyersel. I wonder if his mother knows about his violent streak. I have realised that with regard to adventure games, the younger the writer the more violent the game, I blame Comprehensive Education myself. Despite the door kicking, Dark Storm held my attention until tea time, so I toasted crumpets for husband and fed daughters on left over Christmas pudding.

JUN 12TH

Have had my request to become a member of Mensa turned down. It appears that Black Knight is not the dark side of the moon, nor is the fear of foreigners "Zenobi". I'm not bothered anyway, any organisation that has Vera Lynn as a member must be a bit daft. (Or is that Ensa?) Cheered myself up by playing Agatha's Folly - great game this is. I fell in love with Aggie straight away - bet she'd know what

to do with Craldon's Creek. Husband suggested that Edwina Currie might be interested in it, as the game is obviously a health hazzard. Fed Rotweiler on daughter's Doc Martins. I got fed up with tripping over them. Taught budgie to tap dance, it was a joy to see her little chest puffed with pride as she mastered the basic steps.

JUN 15TH

At last I have found the solution to all my problems! We have engaged an au pair by the name of Ingrid. She's from Sweden and is a real sweetie. Of course I have no intention of signing any petitions, but if she wants to dish up smorgasbord morning, noon and night good luck to her, as long as I can get on with my adventuring that's fine by me. Husband is clearly happy as he didn't bat an eyelid when a package from Zenobi dropped through the letter box. He's not usually so affable, he even plugged my computer in for me, and it's not my birthday. I really underestimate him sometimes. Treated him to a Mars bar as a small token of my appreciation.

JUN 20TH

Have been wondering why it is that in some games I can open doors, but rarely close them. Obviously some writers have not learned any lessons from Zeebrugge, or they're football hooligans! Husband has been searching for a death watch beetle. I've tried to explain that it's the budgie practising her tap dancing but he won't have it. Ingrid is a real treasure, she's forever making the bed and dusting the bedroom. I hope she's not overdoing it. Daughters have applied to Dr Barnardo's for admittance to one of their homes, they're claiming that they are orphans, husband just walks around with a big grin on his face. I can only assume it is because I'm doing so well with Agatha's Folly, I love this game! He's become so supportive of my hobby.

JUN 23RD

Found tap shoes in budgies' cage, no sign of budgie, I hope she hasn't got conceited and joined the Roly Polys. Fed Rottweiler on freebie games from Your Sinclair. I think Ingrid is deformed, she's a nice girl of course and would make an excellent doorstep if she stood on her head. Played Behind Closed Doors 3 today, I think I'm too pure for this game, had to ask No 1 to supply some rude words, actually she's very bright, she even thought of some that Wilson hadn't. Also played Hit and found another rude word. Well I'm assuming that "File Bars" is a rude word, as when I typed it the game crashed. I have been calling Ingrid a "File Bars" ever since, but she doesn't seem to understand. I'm going to knock my husbands silly head off if he doesn't stop grinning. I think he's getting fat actually, too much smorgasbord if you ask me.

JUN 24TH

Was most surprised to see Cat's letter in November issue of Probe, although I shouldn't have been. I've known all along that the Mega Hit(?) R.C. and C was a bit suspect, but didn't expect Wilson to state the obvious, as he's usually so devious! I suppose he's still prancing about wearing a crown. Took a peep at Shadows of the Past from Compass, looks quite promising. I shall take it seriously when I've dealt with Junior's verruca. Had an altercation in the Newsagents with a spotty faced youth. I offered him 50p for Mike Gerrards column in Your Sinclair, but spotty face wouldn't be parted from his adventure pages. I'm not surprised he's got spots with an attitude like that and have serious doubts as to whether he knew what an adventure was anyway. I awarded him my Golden Elephant for being the biggest dumbo on earth and asked if he by any chance wrote Cleric's Quest. Went home

to play Lightmare from Zenobi, found the game to be very thought provoking and decided I'd got better things to do, so I played Hermitage instead. I think it's wonderful that every now and again a game crops up that helps me forget all my domestic duties. I have informed family that I'm not to be disturbed, and that I don't pay Ingrid to sit on her very ample bottom all day, so she's to earn her keep whilst I'm engaged with the Hermitage. Husband backed me up as he knows that this must be a good game - I don't very often ignore the family! Fed three days worth of dog biscuits to Rottweiler and gave Ingrid a map of the kitchen. Have realised why husband has been so idiotic of late, daren't tell him that I thought a frontal lobotomy was a simple snip job! Spent many hours looking for a map in Hermitage, finally found it, all I can say is that I'm very reluctant to look under my own bed let alone anyone else's bed and that is the reason why it took me so long.

JUN 25TH

Will be having a short holiday soon. Husband insisted that I take my lamp, rope and dagger out of the case. It's quite obvious that he doesn't know the first thing about adventures so I suggested he play Magnetic Moon - he just might learn something. Punctured his blow-up doll in retaliation.

JUN 28TH

Am not impressed with Ingrid, the girl is a complete Troll. I'll concede that her English isn't perfect but she ignores everything that I tell her, husband has more influence and the girls think she's really ace, but that's only because she lets them parade around in their undies. Have made mental note to keep an eye on her as I'm getting concerned about husband's cholesterol level. It's a good job that I am absorbed in Hermitage otherwise that Swedish noodle would be out on her ears.

JUN 29TH

Number one daughter had to explain to the Troll what a Hoover was for though where she acquired the knowledge I do not know. Have spent all day playing scrabble with the tortoise, so I'm in no mood for any nonsense, will speak to Ingrid when she has finished ironing the doilies.

JUN 30TH

Fed Ingrid to the Rottweiler.....

SYMPTOMS OF A COMMON SOCIAL PROBLEM

Have you lost sleep as a result of this?

Have you resorted to all night binges?

Do you resort to this when depressed?

Has it made you lose time from work?

Does it make you lose sense of time?

Do you find it difficult to get through the day without it?

Do you become grumpy if you don't resort to it?

Is it sometimes the first thing you do in the morning?

Do you talk to yourself while doing it?

Have your loved ones noticed a change in you?

Do you decide to have just "one more go"?

Answers on a self-addressed Troll.....Anon





PAWS for Thought
by Larry Horsfeld



A phonecall from Keith Burnard has prompted this month's article. Keith wanted to know if it was possible to have a "line of graphics" at the bottom of the location description, under which the inputs and messages scrolled. I told Keith that not only is this possible, but very easy as well. I have, in fact, featured such a "screen divider" in my latest adventure, "The Axe of Kolt". Note that this is mainly used in MODE 4 and you should display visible objects as a sentence using a LET 53 64 line in Process Table 1.

In it's simplest form, the "screen divider" need be nothing more than a line of ordinary characters, e.g. a "*". Simply insert a new system message, say SYSMESS 60, which will be a line of *'s across the whole width of the screen. You can, of course, colour this line differently from the text, say in cyan, to make it stand out.

First of all, insert the following entry in Process Table 1. It will print the location description at the top of the screen, with all inputs, messages, etc, scrolling underneath, and the LET 53 64 will list visible objects as a valid sentence:

```
* * MODE 4 1 LET 53 64
```

To print the "screen divider" under each location description, you should amend the two "* _" entries so they look like this:

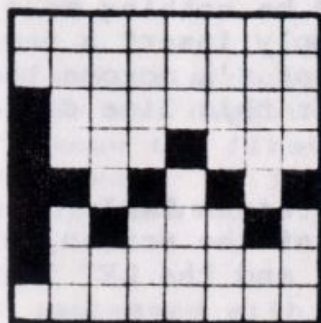
```
* _ ATGT 0 ZERO 0 ABSENT 0 LISTOBJ SYSMESS 60 NEWLINE PROTECT  
* _ ATGT 0 PRESENT 0 LISTOBJ SYSMESS 60 NEWLINE PROTECT
```

The PROTECT action is needed as we have set the MODE as 4. You will note that I have specified that these entries work for location 1 upward. Location 0 is usually used as a "title screen", so no screen divider is needed.

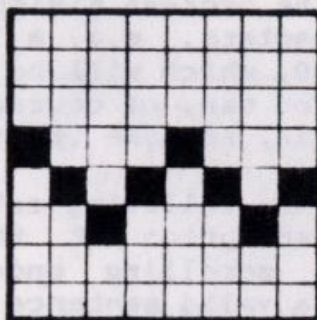
The next logical step from just printing a line of stars is to redesign one or more of the characters to produce a proper "line of graphics". This is very easy and to do this you will need to switch to the PAW Characters, option Q on the main menu. If you press P to screen print the characters, if you've just loaded PAW all you'll see is the UDG's and the SHADES. I have covered inserting new character sets in an earlier PAWS for Thought article, in the July 1989 issue (Vol.3.No.7), but to insert a standard Spectrum character set, you just press I. You can do this up to 5 times, and once a standard set is inserted, you can load one of the 22 PAW character sets in to replace it. For the purposes of this exercise, we'll stick with the standard set for our location description, but press I to insert another set as "SET 1".

To make life easy, I'll describe the "zig-zag" line I use in "Axe of Kolt", and we will redesign the letters "a", "b" and "c" of SET 1 to produce this line. Each of the characters in a set has it's own number. For example, "a" is 97, but "A" is 65, the exclamation mark "!" is 33, while the question mark "?" is 63. I have done a special list of all the characters and their numbers, and if anyone would like a copy, just send an SAE to me at the address given at the end. To amend a character, you must specify the SET number then the character number.

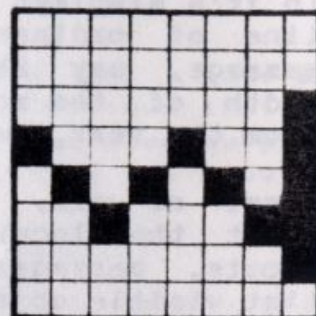
So, if we want to redesign the "a" in SET 1, from the sub-menu you type " A 1 97 " then press ENTER. You'll now see three squares with text underneath. Ignore the two right-hand squares, these show the character as shades in normal and inverted forms. The left hand grid is the actual character, and you'll see a flashing red cursor in the top left-hand corner. To move this you use the four cursor keys either side of the space bar, and to toggle the square, you just press the space bar. My "screen divider" is a zig-zag line, with a short upright at either end. Below I have drawn the three grids showing the redesigned "a", "b" and "c" as they need to look to produce the zig-zag line. Note that the "b" is number 98 and "c" is 99.



"a"



"b"



"c"

Now, to produce the zig-zag line itself, go to the system messages and insert a new SYSMESS, say 60 as I mentioned before. To produce a character from SET 1, press EXTEND MODE, then 1, then DELETE. The cursor won't change, as the set is the same as SET 0. However, if you now press "a", you'll get the left hand end of the zig-zag line! If you want this line to appear in a different colour, say green, then press EXT.MODE then press 4 while pressing down the CAPS SHIFT key, before you press the "a". So, to produce the zig-zag line, press "a" once, then "b" until the cursor is at the far right of the screen, then press "c". Hey Presto! A screen divider!

This method of redesigning characters can be used in many ways. I used it additionally in "Axe of Kolt" to produce the simple axe symbols either side of the adventure title on the first location title screen at the start of each part. Each "axe" is made up of 6 symbols, 2 across and 3 down. In "Magnetic Moon" and "Starship Quest", I used this method to produce double height titles on the title screens. The best use I have seen is in Mark Cantrell's adventure "Diablo", where Mark has very cleverly - and painstakingly! - redesigned each character as one small part of a graphic that, when printed on-screen in its entirety, is the "face" of one of the crewmembers of the spaceship in the adventure!

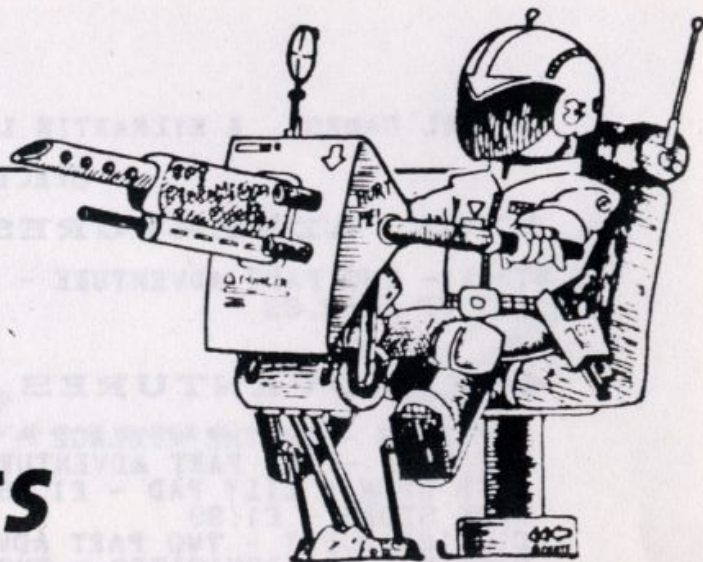
As I said earlier, if you want a printout of the PAW character set numbers, send an SAE to the address below. I also have copies of a printout of all 22 PAW character sets, so let me know if you like that as well. Until next time, Happy PAW'ing!!

Larry Horsfield, 40 Harvey Gardens, Charlton, London, SE7 8AJ



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16-BIT GAMES



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III

5.5PM Wednesday, September 15th,
1941

Office

A window behind my desk blinked
a neon message for a moment,
then dulled, the office pausing
in darkness only to reappear
like a rabbit pulled out of a
magician's top hat as the neon
blinked again.

Rain battered at the windows
noisily.

Spectrum Screen Shown



(Top) The world
of Marlowe
comes to life in
Dead End.

(Bottom) The
acclaimed
story *Dead End*

DEAD END

A Nightmare waits for Philip Marlowe. Is Miles Dunbar's death the suicide the police believe it is? How much does his widow really know? One thing's for sure; if he doesn't enter the storm that grips Los Angeles - he'll never find out! Though if he does, he'd better be sure of himself - or he'll be dead!

"... the game has all the atmosphere of an old private eye movie ..." C+VG.

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interactive fiction -- a
science fiction story.

Version 1.1

Plasti-Pavement

The Plasti-Pavement beneath
your feet forms into a
east, west and north crossroads
here.

The entrance to Security-
Block 2 is before you, a small
slot in the wall beside it.
A Securi-Cam floats above you

People push past you as they
rush off to their accomodation.

Your ID card flashes green
faintly for a moment.

Spectrum Screen Shown

A DARK SKY OVER PARADISE

What a way to enter MoonBase! You've travelled from Earth at a moments notice for some unspecified task, and now here you are, being interrogated in one of the Security Blocks! But it seems there's a good reason; the bombings have the authorities worried - they're looking for the leaders of the terrorists. You'd better get on with your work, and keep out of trouble! But can you?

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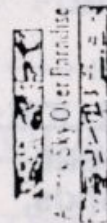
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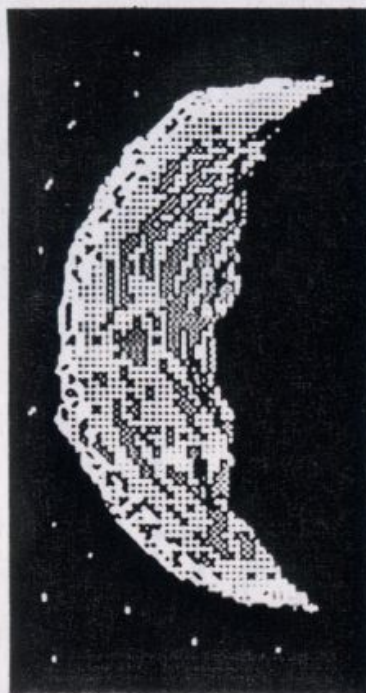
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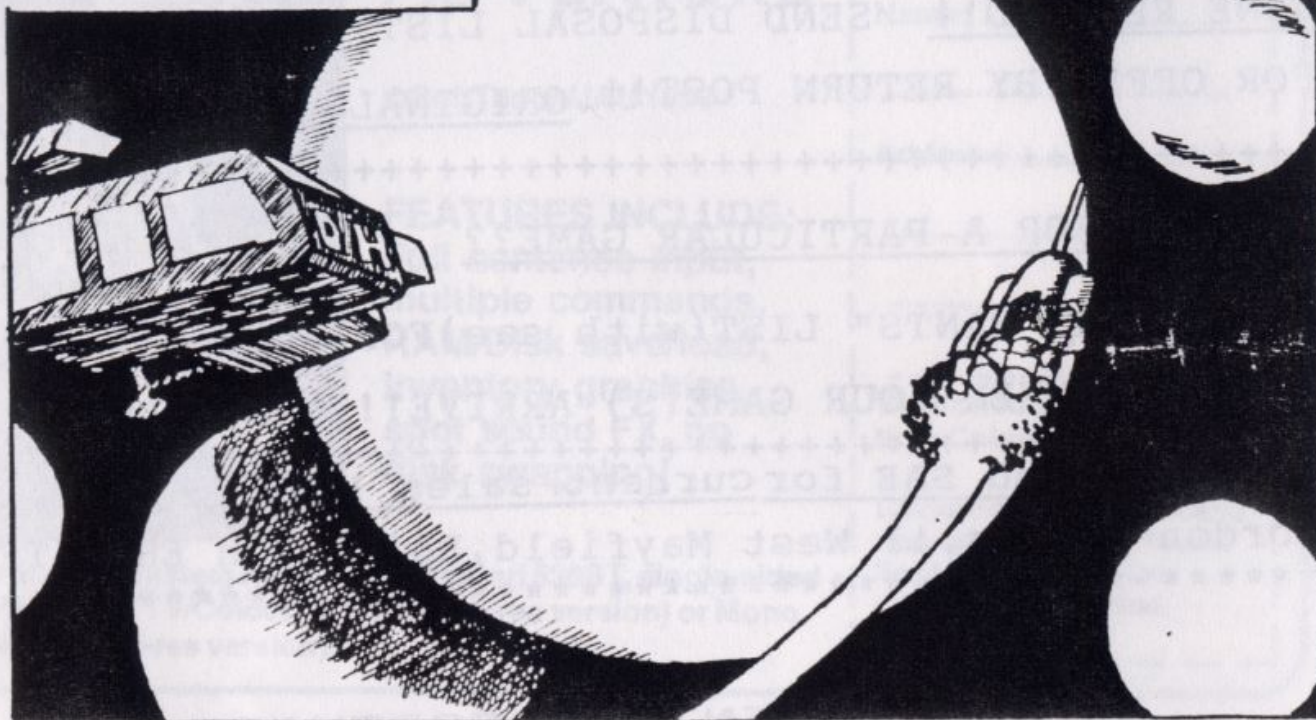
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LETTERS



I was glad to hear from Larry Horsfield, the other day, that he has managed to book a room at the Strathallan Hotel, Hagley Road, Birmingham for 15th September. The Hotel is quite modern, with parking facilities and is on a main road only about one and a half miles from the city centre, and, if any Probe readers like a good choice of real draught beers, some of the buses travel further out into the depths of the Black Country which has plenty of pubs selling various local ales cheaper than anywhere else in the country. (I tend to do plenty of serious research in licensed premises on Saturday nights!).

I hope quite a few software producers bring games along to sell. Something like a raffle may be ok to raise funds for this or any other convention. I'm sure many readers have their own ideas, so it should prove to be a good day, hopefully the first of many. If any members are coming by train at a suitable time I could arrange to meet them and show them the way to the hotel.

PHIL GLOVER, 43 Ferndale Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 9AU

(Thanks for your offer of help, Phil. It is nice to know that we have someone "on the spot" to assist like this. I too think the idea of a raffle is a good one. Anyone care to organise one for the event? Also any ideas for stalls, demonstrations etc? - now's the time to start thinking about it. All software producers are very welcome to come along with games to sell. The more we have to see and do the better the event will be.....Mandy)

Most Probe readers will, by now, have realised that Infocom are no more! This for me is a really sad state of affairs when the so-called market leaders, and certainly one of the most inventive companies, can be allowed to be folded in such an undignified manner. According to Activision, Infocom had not been a profitable company for quite some time before they took them over on 19th February, 1986. I can think of numerous reasons why this came to be. Could it be piracy? With their discs not being protected. Infocom were apparently not very concerned about this, even by needing documentation from the original packaging was not a satisfactory answer as this could easily be photocopied. Could it be the original high prices of their games? I can remember INFIDEL costing nearly £70! but I doubt whether the high prices of their games was stopping people buying them. Games such as ZORK1 and HITCHHIKERS had both sold over 250,000 copies in the USA along and by a year later SUSPENDED and LEATHER GODDESSES had sold over 100,000 copies again USA sales only. So even in 1987 when their games were still commanding a high price in your local store they still sold in good quantities. I can't help thinking how many copies had been sold world wide?? Where they raking in huge profits? If Infocom wasn't making the money, who was? How come firms like Castle Computers could sell Infocom games for around £10 and still make a profit? Where did all the money go? Infocom realised a long time ago that relying on games software alone was not going to keep them in the black and so they invested large amounts of money developing Cornerstone, their first and last business product. Once again Infocom launched this with a grossly overinflated price tag.

What really amazes me is that when Activision took Infocom over in 1986 for \$7.5 million with the knowledge that this company had been unprofitable for numerous years, they appeared to sit back and let them slide further. Why didn't Activision advertise Infocom products like they do with the Sierra ones? Why did they invest all that money and then let Infocom carry on with their own marketing when they

already knew that Infocom had failed at that once before?

In fact I could go on forever offering suggestions that may have contributed to Infocom's fall, I won't even suggest that, not by producing graphic games until it was too late, was the cause. This couldn't be because in their early years they produced text only games but so did 95% of other software houses. What does annoy me immensely is that Activision are going to keep the Infocom name to use on other products of theirs, this in my opinion stinks!!! Does this mean we will see arcade games appearing under the Infocom name, is that what Activision wanted all along? I suppose the real failure is that of not being able to market the product properly, you only have to look in the glossies and see the amount of advertising space that Ocean take up and then look in the games chart and see how many Ocean games are in the top ten. I also realise that this is a slightly unfair comparison with Ocean producing arcade games which do sell better than adventures and in greater numbers but they also suffer from piracy in greater numbers too. One can only guess at the real cause of Infocom's doom with internal politics raging between them and Activision for quite some time. It is very sad. Infocom with the brains to create great software and Activision holding the purse strings, it's a bit like the tail wagging the dog. Myself, I can't hold Activision totally responsible for what happened.....only 90%!

THE GRUE!

In the April issue of Probe you carried an advertisement for a new software company, Armageddon and Cream. It was offering a four full-game package for the Spectrum, priced at £2.49. I think that Probe readers should be interested in my experiences with this company before considering placing any orders. I ordered the tape soon after the advertisement appeared, but had heard nothing a month later. Consequently, I wrote to A and C and then checked to find that indeed my cheque had been cashed. Receiving no reply, I wrote to you and you responded by telling me that others had experienced similar problems and you would be contacting Les Floyd who runs A and C. Ten days ago, I wrote again to A and C, suggesting that I would take further action if I did not receive the game or a refund. Finally today, two and a half months later the games arrived, unaccompanied by either explanation or apology. To no surprise whatsoever, three of the four games would not load on any of four different tape-decks (I am one of those fortunate people who rarely experiences loading problems).

Now there are a couple of major issues here. Firstly companies such as A and C do a great disservice to other highly efficient home-based software producers such as Zenobi, FSF, River, (apologies for omissions) who put customer satisfaction and quality products first. While these companies have justifiable reputations, I for one will be deterred from ordering from new companies from now on. Secondly, I realize that Probe is too small to be covered by any form of mail order protection, but, possibly, a condition of advertisement could be adherence to a "Probe code of practice" (deliveries within 28 days, explanations for delays, money-back etc). Companies who fail to adhere to this could then be barred from advertising in Probe. Action could be taken on the basis of complaints to Probe. What do other readers think?

GEOFF WALLIS, Crouch End, London.

(I am sorry for the problems you and many other readers have had with this company. I too received no reply to my letters to Les Floyd but have been contacted by the Trading Standards Department and Police

with regard to this matter. Delving behind the scenes I have discovered that the main problem was that these adventures were advertised before they had been completed and although the games were advertised as suitable for the 48k Spectrum, they were, in fact, written for the 128k Spectrum. All the orders that I know about have been sent out. But despite all this I have to say that, not sending a letter of explanation to his customers in reply to the letters of enquiry is inexcusable. Should any other readers be experiencing difficulties with this company they should contact Mr Crompton, Trading Standards Department in Carlisle who is dealing with the complaints Mandy)

With great enjoyment I read my first two issues of Probe. All those very interesting articles, hints and tips! Especially the hints and tips which are of special interest to me as I have a lot of problems with many games. In some games there appear very strange (for me) things like "UB 40" or "Spoonerism" and other British specialities, those which "non-britics" like me are not so familiar with. (ok I confess, the main reasons are my problems with the English language itself). I learned English at school twenty years ago (yes, I am another adventurefreak over 30) and expand my vocabulary by playing adventures, i.e. by using the dictionary. I often can't work out the right word (maybe my dictionary is not one of the best), so I'm happy to find guidance. Well, this is also a problem. Here in Germany I can't find help, because the people all own such big machines like Amiga or PC and are playing such games as Larry Laffer or some Infocom adventures which are not available for my little (big) Spectrum. The Spectrum scene is dead in this country, I bought my old rubber keyed friend in 1983 in order to learn BASIC, but soon got such games as Atic Atac and Pimania (does somebody remember?). This was my first adventure-like game. But the adventure that "got me hooked" was HAMPSTEAD (I need over three years to solve it, until I found out that a UB 40 is not only the name of a band! I really enjoy it. In the middle of the eighties many thousands of Spectrums were sold in Germany and we had a war between Spectrum and Commodore 64 users similar to that between Amiga and ST in the last years. We have a lot of computer magazines here but no one reviews Spectrum software. But suddenly I found new hope when I discovered some copies of Your Sinclair and Sinclair User during a voyage to the Netherlands. I read those exciting columns from Mike Gerrard and the Sorceress, ordered Mike's wonderful book and some of Zenobi's and Tartan's marvelous and enjoyable adventures and subscribed to this fantastic magazine called Adventure Probe, hurrah! My actual favourite is AGATHA'S FOLLY and I also enjoy JEKYLL AND HYDE. I must remark upon the contribution from Hugh T Walker in issue 7. I've played TIMES OF LORE on the Spectrum and found it very playable and also BARDS TALE! I know the ST is a very good machine but please no derogatory remarks over the 8-bitters. Although, not having an ST I may not know what I am missing, I love my Speccy! (get my point, too?) No offence. Well that's all from me for now. (in fact I have taken over two weeks to write this!) I hope there are not too many spelling mistakes and grammatical errors, if there are then please excuse me, I was never a great letter writer and this is my first attempt to write one in English. Tata!

PETER BERGMANN, West Germany.

(Well, Peter, you may have taken an age to write us your very first English letter but I'm sure the other readers will agree that it is an excellent letter and all that effort deserves publication. I wish I could write in German that well! Mandy)

What a shocking piece of news regarding Infocom! I think I shall be wearing a black armband for ages after that. I can only think how lucky I was to get my Amstrad when I did. By lots of detective work and some very helpful friends I was able to get the full set one way or the other, and all in original boxed versions. I even have a Zorkmid coin! I am reading Gruesomes memoirs with interest. Has he ever seen, I wonder, one of the "One Hundred Zorkmid" notes? I have! I must say he certainly knows his history. Still, I suppose when I am as old as him..... Changing the subject to Spectrum adventuring. I must put in a few words for Paul Avis and his Adventure Swap Club. Since I wrote to him a couple of months ago, I have been rewarded with no less than seven adventures that I thought I'd never get to see again. He always responds with speed and efficiency, and is very helpful and flexible. It is a club that I can soundly recommend to any Spectrum adventurer who is looking for some older games, or even if you just like playing adventures. He is always looking for new members, and has quite an extensive collection to enable him to provide a good service. He can be contacted at: 49 HEWITT ROAD, HAMWORTHY, POOLE, DORSET, BH15 4QB.

DAVE HAVARD, Fareham, Hants.

Now an ADVENTURE PROBE CONVENTION! Are we going to sell GRUE! T-shirts and I HATE/LOVE GRUE badges. We could also do some signs for cars saying ADVENTURERS DO IT BETTER IN THE DARK WITH A MAGIC WAND! No, seriously, we all think this would be great and minds have already been working overtime on some awards that could be given. There will also be some special awards which we cannot say too much about at present (Grue! keep thinking on one we mentioned to you!) Here's keeping the bar sparkling.

THE INNKEEPER and ALLAN PHILLIPS, Peterborough, Cambs.

(Thanks Allan, for preparing the nomination slips which were sent out with the last issue of Probe. If anyone hasn't yet returned theirs then please do so as soon as possible Mandy)

Thank you Jim Struthers, for reading my article in the April issue and picking up on what I was trying to say. I found your letter a big compliment as someone else finds it hard to believe that some folk just want to hang onto their games. Well, like Mandy, I too am keeping LORDS OF TIME as this adventure is so beautifully written and opens up into one of the most fantastic adventures of all time. This game has just got to be most people's favourite and I would recommend it to anyone who hasn't yet played it. I reckon that Jim hit the nail on the head when he suggested having a National Sell or Swap Day. Perhaps this can be organised at the Probe convention? Is there any way that you can persuade Interactive Technology to release their adventures for the Amiga? I am sure there would be a market for them. I am really interested in DEAD END and they have put it on the old faithful C64 but I sold mine to help get my Amiga. Please have a word in their "shell" as it might do the trick, or we could get Amiga owners to sign a petition for these adventures! By the way, I loved your conversation with the ST!

STEVE McLAREN, Margate, Kent.

(As Martin Westwood of Interactive Technology subscribes to Probe I am sure he will take note of your request, Steve. As I mentioned in the last issue of Probe, if there were a version of STAC available for the

Amiga (i.e. AMIGAC) then many more adventures could be ported over from the ST quite easily and many more "home-produced" games written. Perhaps a petition from Amiga owners to Incentive Software would work provided there were sufficient names Mandy)

I would like to elaborate a little on my suggestion in your Probe Questionnaire regarding operating an adventure game lending library. Perhaps "Lending" library is not a good idea - as it is counter-productive vis-a-vis sales of adventures, but maybe a Club Circuit Library would be a rather better proposition. It would work something along these lines: First of all, a leaflet describing the scheme would be inserted into an edition of Probe. This would outline the method of operation and ask if any members who would like to use it would give their names and addresses on the form and return it to the organiser. The replies - if any - would be evaluated and a decision as to whether the scheme was feasible be made. Firstly, I think that there would have to be a membership fee possibly an annual subscription, which would offset initial costs of setting it up. Then, a CIRCUIT list of members' names is devised for circulating parcels of adventures. When a member receives a parcel he can buy any adventures he wishes from it. Also, if the member already has any adventures which he no longer wants to keep he could add them to the parcel and claim, say, half price back on them and deduct this from what he owes for adventures taken from the parcel. The member then sends the parcel on to the next member in the circuit from the members list which would be included in the parcel. Simple, isn't it?

ADVANTAGES: Members could amass a lot of adventures cheaply (second hand). Members could complete a lot of adventures even more cheaply by solving them and then selling them back to the circuit. If required the circuit could be operated on a profit basis - or the profits be used for further expansion by putting them back into the circuit.

DISADVANTAGES: Maybe some form of insurance and/or deposit would be required to offset losses due to damage, loss in the post or theft etc. Would need a person with copious free time to collate memberships and operate the scheme. System based on trust and members would have to keep parcels in circulation promptly as the next member is waiting for it. Circuit is wide open to losses from copying.

Two circuits could be in operation, one starting from the top of the list and working down - and one starting from the bottom and working up. When each member has made his selections from a parcel and sent it to the next person he then sends any cash due on to the organiser. One further disadvantage: members would have to pay postage, preferably recorded delivery for which a receipt is given by the post office and compensation for loss which I believe is a limited amount is given by the post office. However, I don't think that postage would be too outrageous as the parcel service operates on an "economies of scale" basis, i.e. weightier parcels pay less postage per item than lighter ones.

PETER HOLDSWORTH, Huddersfield, Yorkshire.

(You certainly have an interesting idea there, Peter, and perhaps other readers can come up with some suggestions that can be incorporated into this to facilitate some of the problems you outline. The main problem, I think, would be in finding a person willing to operate and organise such a system. As you say, someone with copious free time. That rules me out I'm afraid as ALL my time is spent on Probe, correspondance etc Mandy)



HELP WANTED



"I would be pleased if someone can give me help in the following games: SAVAGE ISLAND Pt 2, Having hyperventilated and done such things as tying the thread together to form a loop and climbing into it, to find a pirate and some boxes and a blue force field. I know you are supposed to move the force field and talk to the pirate but I can't do that until sometime later on. I have found the Neanderthal and knocked him out using some herbs but I haven't a clue what to do next. In SERPENT FROM HELL Pt 2, I have got into the house and opened the trapdoor, gone down to the portcullis and tied the rope to it, gone back up the stairs and typed "Look Up" to "see a pulley above your head". I cannot find the right words to get the rope through it. In CLERICS QUEST I would be grateful if someone can tell me if I have done the right things, I crossed the river after giving the coin to the dwarf and I am not sure if you need the boat to cross it, because as you can see, I've got across without it. I also noticed that whenever I type SWIM the game puts me back to the same place where I gave the coin to the dwarf, is this a bug?"

ANTHONY CURRAN, 14 Cranbourne Rd, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

"Joy of joys! I have bought myself a Spectrum 48k. Now at long last I have bought Agatha's Folly, Miser, Little Hodcome and more. I don't know which to try first. After having the Amstrad 6128 and trying to get the type of adventure I like it is wonderful to be able to choose from so many. Just one plea for help though, I am not sure about saving to tape. When I received the games the instructions said "save as usual". I don't know what the usual are! In the manual it goes on about removing this lead and that lead when you save, unfortunately this is as clear as mud to me. I'm just naturally thick. Could some kind Probe reader please take me step by step through the save routine? I have taken for granted putting a disc in the disc drive and saving.

PAT NAYLOR, 40 Manchester Rd, Prescott, Merseyside, L34 1NG

"Please could someone give me some help with WITCH HUNT. This is not the version by River Software. I just haven't been able to find anyone who has played this to help me."

VICKY JACKSON, 71 The Larun Beat, Yarm, Cleveland, TS15 9HR

"I could still do with some more help with THE MYSTERY OF ARKHAM MANOR, so if any reader can come to my rescue I would be very grateful."

KEN DEAN, 63 Elmhurst Ave, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 3AR
Telephone 0502 66538

"Please can someone tell me what to do about those dadblasted, knife-throwing varmints (dwarves) in the Crowther and Woods ADVENTURE, they are driving me insane?!"

REYNIR STEFANSSON, Holtagata 3, IS-730 Reydarfjordur, Iceland.

"Please can someone help me? I am playing THE BARDS TALE I and I have got to the third level (just), but my characters keep getting killed, I would be grateful if anybody has any help on: Who are the best people to pick. Is there anyway of getting a lot of experience and gold points. Any helpful tips?"

AMANDA OLIVER, 7 The Hassocks, Waterlooville, Hants, PO7 8QG



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FOR SPECTRUM: Cassettes for sale: BEHIND CLOSED DOORS 1 & 2, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS 3, RETARDED CREATURES AND CAVERNS, CASE OF THE BEHEADED SMUGGLER, FUDDO AND SLAM, BALROG AND THE CAT, JEKYLL AND HYDE (3 parts), JADE STONE, NIGHTWING, BOOK OF THE DEAD, TEMPLE OF VRAN, THE CRYSTAL OF CHANTIE, RETURN TO ITHACA, CRYSTAL CAVERN, FEDERATION, ZACARON MYSTERY and SERFS TALE. £1.50 each or £15 for the lot!

ALSO WANTED FOR SPECTRUM: CASTLE COLDITZ, INSPECTOR FLUKEIT, MATT LUCAS, THE LIMEHOUSE MYSTERY, FISTFULL OF BLOOD CAPSULES. Please write with price required to:

JIM STRUTHERS, 112 Disraeli St, Cowpen Quay, Blyth, Northumberland

=====

FOR SPECTRUM: 100's of Spectrum adventures for sale please send S.A.E. for list to:

SIMON JOHNSON, 29 Langford Way, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 2PD

=====

FOR AMSTRAD CPC: Cassettes for sale: WARLORD (464/664 only), COLOUR OF MAGIC, BIG SLEAZE £2.50 each. SUBSUNK, SEABASE DELTA, QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP, KENTILLA, HEROES OF KARN, FOREST AT WORLDS END, JEWELS OF BABYLON, MESSAGE FROM ANDROMEDA £1.50 each. TERRORMOLINOS, KOBAYASHI NARU, STAR WRECK, GRANGE HILL at £1.25 each. Also not quite adventures: GEMS OF STRADUS (464 only), KNIGHT TIME 75p each and I'll throw in THE EXPERIENCE to the first person to ask for it!

ANN ROBINSON, 58 Edison Rd, Welling, Kent, DA16 3NG

=====

FOR AMSTRAD CPC: I have FISH and JINXTER for Commodore 64 disc (both original and still in wrapping) and will swap for almost any Infocom or Mag Scrolls or possibly any other adventure games but they MUST be for the Amstrad CPC. Also has anyone got LITTLE COMPUTER PEOPLE for the Amstrad CPC also JEWELS OF BABYLON AND CRL GAMES? Please write with price required.

ALSO PEN-PAL WANTED. Preferably Female and aged between 12-15 years (or any age).

BEN ISBA, 11 South Road, Bowden, Cheshire, WA14 2JZ

=====

FOR COMMODORE 64: SCRABBLE wanted, please write with price required to:

PEARL JESSON, 1 Addison Rd, Firth Park, Sheffield, S5 6WE

=====

FOR AMIGA: Discs for sale: SPACE QUEST I, SPACE QUEST II, HOUND OF SHADOW at £14 each. SPRITZ EXPRESS PAINT £9. HOUND OF SHADOW £8. Or the lot for £55!

STEVE McLAREN, 6 Mere Gate, Margate, Kent, CT9 5TR



INFOCOM SWOP' N' BUY

These adventures are accepted on the understanding they are ORIGINAL and with all packaging, and advertised for one month only. No responsibility can be accepted by either Probe or Nic Rumsey for any which are either copies or damaged. It is up to the individual to check that the swop will run on their machine (please note that the majority of Infocoms will run on either 6128 or PCW, but a few early ones are machine dedicated). Lists are sent on a SAE basis only.

This month:

Jim Hazlett, 24 Walnut Close, Thorneby-on-Tees, Cleveland, TS17 8NQ. Has Spellbreaker for swop, or sale at £6.00.

Alex Stansfield, 1 Clifton Manor Rd, Guildford, Surrey GU4 8AG. (0483 571797). Wants to buy Planetfall, Stationfall, Hollywood Hijinx for Amstrad CPC, but would be interested in others. (A very young adventurer who has just discovered Infocom.)

Mr D McElhorne, 44 Greenways, Delves Lane, Consett, Co Durham DH8 7DG. Looking for any CPC Infocoms, but particularly Hitchhikers and Leather Goddesses.

Mr Opher Mansour, 31 Tenterden Gardens, London NW4 1TG. Has Hollywood Hijinx for buying or swapping for any Infocom CPC adventure. (Opher is particularly looking for Lurking Horror.)

Mr Andrew Helsby, 1 Greenfield Court, Birch Tree Drive, Emsworth, Hants PO10 7SA. Has Ballyhoo, Hollywood Hijinx, Cutthroats and Suspect to swop (versions unstated but believed amstrad).

Janice Barnes, 36 Regents Way, Higher Bebbington, The Wirral, Cheshire, L63 5NW. Is looking for Infidel, Witness, Trinity, Wishbringer, Zork 3, Enchanter and Beurocracy for Amstrad 6128.

Judy Holland, Woodacre, 463 Chester Road, Woodford, Nr Stockport, Cheshire SK7 1PR. Looking for Planetfall and Zork 1, 2 and 3.

Dave Weatherhead, 2 Searle Ct, North Dandenong, Vic 3175, Australia. Looking for Planetfall, has Hitchhikers and Leather Goddesses to swop.

Alan Buchan, Cammon, Bank St, Cooper, KY15 1JL. (0334) 52178. Looking for any Infocoms to buy for Amstrad 6128.

Damian Gamble, 1 Dunsmore Way, Bushey Heath, Watford WD2 3FA. (081 950 4165) wants to buy Suspended, Deadline, Starcross or The witness. 6128.

Nigel Russell, 72 Crown Road, Milton Regis, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 2 AJ. Interested in any Infocom/Text adventures for the 6128.

H G Breitingner, Dresdener St. No6, D5628-Heiligenhaus, Germany. Interested in swapping Beurocracy for MAC and Plundered hearts for CPC, would like Border Zone, Sherlock and Trinity for MAC.

N S Ravat, 4 Broxburn Cl, Leicester, LE4 7PS. Looking for Lurking Horror, Suspect (will pay up to £10.00 each), has Hitchhikers to swop (for 6128 Amstrad).

GETTING YOU STARTED

SHADOWS OF THE PAST

By DENNIS DOWDALL played on Spectrum

EXAM DWARF - GET STAFF - CAST SMOKE SPELL - SEARCH DWARF - GET GLOVES
- S - GET RUBY - EXAM STATUE - READ SYMBOLS - SAY ALCEM - E - S - EXAM
SLIME - GET SLIME - D - EXAM PUDDLE - GET WISE - EXAM LEVER - RUB
SLIME ONTO LEVER - PULL LEVER - N - CAST LIFE SPELL - GET KEY - CAST
FIRE SPELL AT WALL - E - CAST LIGHT SPELL - N - E - E - SE - CAST
SMOKE SPELL - D (until you come to the bottom of the pit) - CAST
EARTHQUAKE SPELL.....

MUTANT

By GRAHAM WHEELER played on Atari ST

OPEN BONNET (you see the battery) - IN - GET RAG - EXAMINE SEAT (you
find a map and some stockings) - WEAR STOCKINGS - OUT - D - D - D -
EXAMINE REEDS - GET EGG (a crocodile starts to follow you) - W - W - W
(you see an alligator) - DROP EGG (the reptiles kill each other
fighting for the egg) - UP - GET VINE - EXAMINE NEST (it's a hornets
nest) - GET NEST - D - W - THROW NEST AT BOARS (they run away) - E - E
- GET REED - EXAMINE REED - E - E - E - E - EXAMINE POOL - GET SNAIL -
W - W - S - UP - UP - JOIN LEAD (sparks light rag) - W - W - W - W -
DROP RAG - DROP MAP - PUT REED IN MOUTH (to breath) - IN - W - REMOVE
REED - GET DIARY - READ DIARY - DROP DIARY - EXAMINE SKELETON - GET
WAD (of tobacco) - PUT REED IN MOUTH - OUT.....

QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP

By GRAHAM WHEELER played on Amstrad CPC

E - LOOK UNDER BED - GET OBJECT - S - GET SLIPPERS - GET ROBE -
EXAMINE ROBE - WEAR ROBE - WEAR SLIPPERS - N - W - N - E - EXAMINE
CABINET - GET GOLDEN EGG - GET WATERING CAN - W - EXAMINE BENCH - GET
CLIPBOARD - W - PUT ALL THROUGH HOLE - S - S - GET JEANS - GET TURBAN
- GET BEANS - WEAR TURBAN - WEAR JEANS - N - N - PUT ALL THROUGH HOLE
- D - GET ALL - D - D - READ SIGN - E - N - GIVE BEANS TO GUARD (he
eats them and explodes) - GET BOTTLE - N - D - DROP ALL - GET GOLDEN
EGG - GET BOTTLE - N - N - S - N - N - SIT SEAT (you transport) -
EXAMINE STRAW - GET CREDIT CARD - EXAMINE CARD - N - READ SIGN - RING
BELL - ENTER RAFT.....

MINDFIGHTER

By JOAN PANCOTT played on Amstrad

PART 1.

Start - Viewpoint. INVENTORY - EXAMINE COAT - D - E - GET DEAD DOG - E
- N - N - READ NEWSPAPER CLIPPING - N - N - N - W - S - W - W to
Amongst The Crates - GIVE DOG TO FOXES - E - E - N to Central Baths -
GET CHISEL - S - S - E - GET RAG - S to shops - GET WRENCH - W - S - S
- S - S - S - S - IN to Building - GET SNOWSTORM (when you see Daryl
give it to him for score) - BREAK STAIRS (twice for score only) - E -
E to flats - S - N - N - N to Civic Centre - EXAMINE RUBBLE - D to
discover Shelter - GET JERRY CAN (of petrol) - GASK MASK (you can wear
this to enter the Industrial Wasteland and get the rod which is not
needed) - UP - S - S - W - W - W - N - N - N - N - N - N - W -
S - W - S to Docks - GET DEAD RAT - N to Amongst The Crates - DROP
CHISEL - WRENCH - SLEEP THREE TIMES (the ship arrives) - S - W to
Jetty - INHALE - HOLD - EXHALE - METAMORPHOSE INTO EAGLE (on the ship)
- S - D - S to Yabushi's Cabin - GET GOLD KEY - N - N to Engine Room -

GET LIGHTER FROM COAT - EMPTY CAN - BURN RAG (back on Jetty) - E - N
 to Amongst The Crates - DROP CAN - PUT LIGHTER IN COAT - E - E - S - E
 - N - N to Southern Fence - SAVE POSITION - SLEEP - INHALE - HOLD -
 EXHALE - METAMORPHOSE INTO EAGLE (answer YES to continue to Part 2)...

LAST DAYS OF DOOM

By NEIL SHIPMAN played on BBC

N - U - NE - SE - SHAKE TREE - GET ROD - NW - SW - WAVE ROD - HEEL - S
 - FETCH - GET SPHERE - SE - U - U - NE - S - DIG - S - DIG - N - N -
 SW - D - D - E - GET CYLINDER - E - N - STAY - DROP ROD - DROP SPHERE
 - U - E - PULL STUD - S - GET GLOBULE - N - W - NE - THROW GLOBULE -
 GET POLLEN - PUSH ROCK - SW - D - PUSH ROCK - GET ALL - HEEL - E - E -
 E - GETCH - GET FOODPACKS - E - E - N - WAIT seven times then - SE to
 enter the city.....

HAUNTED HOUSE

By JIM STRUTHERS played on Amstrad CPC

E - EXAM CLOCK - GET WATCH - W - U - S - GET BALL - N - N - JUMP ON
 BED - U - N - W - THROW BALL - GET SUN - E - E - GRAB BANDAGE - GET
 CAN - W - N - PRESS BUTTON - GET WINDCHEATER - WEAR WINDCHEATER - S -
 S - D - S - D - W - SPRAY CAN - DROP CAN - U - GET BULLET - D - GET
 GUN - LOAD GUN.....

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE NEEDED FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE

KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

AMANDA OLIVER, 7 The Hassocks, Waterlooville, Hants, PO7 8QG can help
 with the following adventures played on Commodore 64: GRANGE HILL,
 COLOUR OF MAGIC, FOOTBALL FRENZY, THE QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP,
 VENOM, KOBAYASHI NARU, SHARD OF INOVAR, REDHAWK, KENTILLA, ZZZZ, THE
 PAY-OFF, MAJIX, WIZ BIZ, MYSTERY OF THE INDUS VALLEY, STAR WRECK, LIFE
 TERM, LORD OF THE RINGS, SHADOWS OF MORDOR, TREASURE ISLAND, QUEST FOR
 THE HOLY GRAIL, SOULS OF DARKON, WOLFMAN, STAINLESS STEEL RAT SAVES
 THE WORLD, and played on Spectrum: THE HOBBIT, KENTILLA, COLOUR OF
 MAGIC, ZZZZ, LORD OF THE RINGS, MORDONS QUEST, PLAY IT AGAIN SAM,
 QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL, CIRCUS, SERFS TALE, BORED OF THE RINGS,
 BEHIND CLOSED DOORS 1, 2 & 3 and THE GUILD OF THIEVES.

JOAN PANCOTT, 78 Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 9RS can help
 with the following Amstrad adventures: (updated list) ATALAN, AVON,
 BALLYHOO, BESTIARY, BLACK KNIGHT, CITY FOR RANSOM, GIANTKILLER, GOLDEN
 WOMBAT OF DESTINY, GREMLINS, LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS, MINDFIGHTER,
 MONSTERS OF MURDAC, MYSTERY OF THE INDUS VALLEY, PANIC BENEATH THE
 SEA, PROJECT ANNIHILATION, SCAPEGHOST and THE TEST.

NEIL ASHMORE, 5 Park Crescent, Furness Vale, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2
 7PU can help with the following adventures: CASTLE BLACKSTAR, CIRCUS,
 CUSTERDS QUEST, DRACULA, EXCALIBUR, HAMPSTEAD, IMAGINATION, KOBAYASHI
 NARU, LORDS OF MIDNIGHT, MAFIA CONTRACT 1 & 2, MATT LUCAS, MINDSHADOW,
 MORDONS QUEST, MESSAGE FROM ANDROMEDA, NEVERENDING STORY, QUEST FOR
 GOLDEN EGGCUP, QUEST FOR HOLY GRAIL, RIGELS REVENGE, ROBIN OF
 SHERWOOD, SEABASE DELTA, SORCERER OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE, SPYTREK, BIG
 SLEAZE, THE HELM, THE HOBBIT, URBAN UPSTART and VALKYRIE 17.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO ENCLOSE S.A.E. WHEN WRITING FOR HELP

HINTS AND TIPS

ONCE UPON A LILLY PAD

By JUNE ROWE played on Spectrum



The water looks inviting
And what you will find.
Is the fee for getting Sally
Right off your mind.

The mushroom is magic -
'Twill transport you if you eat it.
If given to a rabbit
Then Colin will beat it!

Once inside the warren,
A horsey tit-bit you can get.
Throw it on the busy road,
And live to play more yet.



LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS

By JOAN PANCOTT played on Amstrad

Hold. Get sword, s, mount stallion, ride west to Main Hatch, dismount, get suit, wear it, open hatch, n, repeat kill Thorbala (with sword) until her sword drifts towards you, get sword, give her sword back, attack monster, untie young man, n into Spact Yacht and the young man gives you a PHOTO, examine it (Douglas Fairbanks), put it in the sack, s, s to Main Hatch, e, e, e, e, e, e, e, e to Alcove in Long Corridor, enter Black Circle.

NOT A PENNY MORE, NOT A PENNY LESS

By JOAN PANCOTT played on Amstrad

PART 2.

Jean-Pierre's Office. JP examine safe, JP open safe, 54321 (The fake Van Gough has now been bought from David Stein).

Robin's Office. R order Prostigmin and Pentothel, R leave office (he is at St Thomas's Hospital). R go west, R get gallstone, R go to Monte Carlo.

TEMPLE TERROR

By JIM STRUTHERS played on Spectrum

Read the scroll, it has an important hint.

Examine the carpet.

The spoon has an important use.

Smother the fire with the blanket.

Read the message on the wall for another important tip.

Be ready when you open the coffin!

Examine the pile of rubbish.

Examine the skeleton.

Make a solution as you only have 26 moves to complete the game after achieving your objective!

LABOUR OF HERCULES

By GEORGE KERSEY played on Spectrum

The only way to kill the Lion is with your bare hands so "strangle Lion", then skin it with the knife.

The Boar is too quick for you to catch so "chase Boar" and follow it until it gets trapped in the snow. "Throw Net" over Boar and "Get Boar".

CASTLE MASTER

By DAVE HAVARD played on Amstrad

Ballroom - Walk all the way along the edge. A door appears at the end as you approach the wall.

To enter the Magister's room - go behind the cupboard in the junk room. The key to this room is on the Chapel Roof!

To move the boulder near your start point - you need Herculean strength. Then just walk into it. This reveals an entrance to the Catacombs. Here you will find the key to the treasure chest in the Dragon's Hoard.

To find the key to the Wizards Hut - go to well, look down it and action it.

Action the carpet in the Wizards Hut to reveal an entrance to the Catacombs. Below you will find a potion of Revitalisation (one use) and the key to the King's Solar. The key is in a small niche in a corner of the floor.

SCAPEGHOST

By STEVE McLAREN played on Amiga

PART II

Do not get caught in the headlamps of a car.

When outside the old hideout, do what Joe mentions.

Freeze the water then you may get the map.

You will need help to get rid of Luke.

The whisky in the bottle is not for drinking.

PART III

Do not hang around your grave.

You must fuse the lights before entering the house.

To make sure you are not blinded by the light, examine cupboard.

Make sure you distract John five times in the correct order.

HOUND OF SHADOW

By THE GRUE! played on Amiga

Sept 24

Wait until Miranda arrives. Explain to her about the seance, hound of shadow. Answer NO, answer MAGDA BATHORY.

Sept 25

Go to attic, exam marks, exam symbols. Go to Museum, get Bridewell, order Bridewell, read about cults. Go to attic, chant, search room, chant, answer NO, answer MAGDA BATHORY. Go to 49a Museum St, get journal, read journal, ask about leng. Go to Museum, get Bridewell, read about cults. When your friend arrives and asks you what shall we do, answer KILL HOUND and then when he asks you how, answer MAKE HOMUNCULUS. Go to your flat and write to Paul Mason.

You now only have two days before the Hound attacks and kills you so you'd better be quick making your Homunculus!

AGATHA'S FOLLY

By ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum

PART II

Wrap the scarf round your hand before picking up the crystal shards. To avoid cutting your finger. If you do cut yourself, rub the leaves on the wound to cure the infection.

Examine the cliff at the pool to see the postbox. Ehen Ted grabs the

blue parchment, find him and throw a pebble for him to fetch. Then look around to find where he has dropped the parchment. Drink the water in the pool to cure the plague. Cut the creepers at the copse to see the statue. Press the blue eye to clear the vines and the red eye for the statue to move and reveal the entrance.

MAGNETIC MOON

By ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum

PART II

Ignore the security cameras, they are being repaired and not working. Search the alcove and the rubbish to find the superglue. You can't crawl through the ventilation ducts with your helmet on so put it in the crate until you are ready to leave. Push the crates so you can climb onto it to reach the ventilation grille. It is heavy so you will need to push hard. Don't forget to go back to the alcove for the piece of wire. Do not drop anything in the ducts, the droid will immediately pick it up. Examine the piece of paper and move in the opposite direction to which it is fluttering. When you reach the shaft, throw the grapnel, climb the rope and unscrew the grille with the forcer. After you have climbed in get the grapnel and replace the grille which you will find on the top bunk.

FOREST AT WORLDS END

By TONY KINGSMILL played on Amstrad

Collect the bow and arrow from the man. Get the log from the wood pile. When you reach the chasm, type LAY LOG ACROSS CHASM. A bridge is then created going in that direction. When you come to the river, climb in the boat. Row boat and climb out boat. You will then be on the other side of the river. Kill the lizard with the bow by typing KILL LIZARD WITH BOW. Visit the Nyiph to heal wolf wounds.

SPACE QUEST II

By PAUL BRUNYEE played on Atari ST

Where you end up in the canyon with the pink creatures, you must take heed of what they say to you, quite literally, to be shown the exit. Remember that you may have dropped some items when falling down the chute.

The guard at the landing platform needs to be distracted before you can safely enter the platform. You need to have picked up the stone for this.

Once in Vohaul's fortress, you must visit the upper level's first to find the necessary items for later on. On the prison level, don't stray too close to the hairy hands protruding from the bars, and don't let the alien kiss you.

When the barriers are blocking your way and the floor is retracting, you need to use the plunger to cling onto one of the barriers to avoid falling into the vat of acid.

DALLAS QUEST

By DOROTHY MILLARD played on Commodore 64

Always make sure you close the pouch and the rucksack after use, as otherwise things will fall out and you will lose them. Offer the sunglasses to the owl. The bungle will soothe the cattle.

BUGS AND AMUSING RESPONSES



TEMPLE TERROR

By JIM STRUTHERS played on Spectrum



GET ROCK - "I'm no Big Daddy, mate!"

GET TABLE - "Call Burgess Removals on 77648!"

WEAR BLANKET - "There's no need for that, you're wearing thermal underwear!"

GET COBWEBS - "Don't be so cruel, that's a poor spiders home!"

GET RUBBISH - "The dustman comes tomorrow!"

DRINK ELIXIR - "How could you! That's for your daughter!"

INTERESTING INVENTORIES

By JUNE ROWE

I was amused by Jim Struthers' account of the bugs in AN EVERYDAY TALE OF A SEEKER OF GOLD (June issue) but I think that he may have been wrongly accusing the game of insect invasion! What makes me say this?? Well, I was playing PROJECT X - THE MICROMAN recently, on a Spectrum +2, and I had saved the game at intervals, three times. When I arrived at the desk in the laboratory, I had no rope with which to climb up to it, so I realised I must have missed something somewhere. So I started again at the point where I had saved the game the second time, and sure enough, I found what I needed, so I saved the game again from that point on the tape, the third (previous) save being useless. Later on, I saved it a fourth time and left the game until the following day.

To my surprise, when I loaded the fourth save, instead of being on the landing with mirror, card, grappling hook and computer dongle, as I should have been, I found myself on the lawn, where I could see a sonic key and a (telephone) receiver. What's more, my inventory showed that I was carrying a button, a diamond ring, a broken razor blade and a broken lolly stick (worn). Funny! I thought...

Besides these items, I also had a safety pin, some paper, a video recorder, a ferocious mouse, a sponge, a set of scales and a small compact mirror. Curiouser and curiouser! I could only carry half that number of items while playing!

However, I decided to see what would happen next, so I tried to get the key and was told that I couldn't carry any more. Then I amused myself with different inputs.....

DROP MOUSE - I can't do that, sorry.

DROP SPONGE - Ok.

DROP STICK - I can't. My hands are full.

DROP ALL - Ok.

Sure enough, there they all were, when I LOOKed, and my inventory showed that I was carrying nothing at all, but when I typed GET KEY, I was told "I can't carry any more".

My conclusion was that saving on top of saves (on a +2, which has no counter, so you don't know where you are) confuses the program something 'orrible, and I think maybe Jim owes John Wilson an apology!

P.S. What on earth is a dongle? I don't think my computer has one!?

SERIALISED SOLUTIONS

KINGS QUEST I - SIERRA ON-LINE

By JOHN R. BARNESLEY played on Atari ST

CONTINUED.....

Go south from the woodcutter's house, swim across the lake in a southerly direction, then continue south and go around to the front door of the Witch's Cottage. (Taste her house if you must, it's quite good!) - (Save your game at this point). Open the cottage door and make your way to the bedroom. Now wait. Eventually the witch will come home. She won't see you because you're in the other room. Sneak up on her and push her into the stove! You've done the old hag in and can move about her house without fear now!

Go to the cabinet on the north wall, open it and take the cheese wedge. Now go back south and leave the cottage. Now comes the fun part. Go west and south to the front of the cave where you found the magic mirror. The large friendly bird seems to be waiting for you! Go down to the lower middle portion of the screen and keep jumping up until the bird (which is actually a Condor) catches you. The Condor flies high up in the air and carries you to a small island which lies in the moat in front of the castle. When he drops you, your head spins as you try to regain your bearings.

There's an odd hole in the ground here, but don't go down into it just yet. Head west and get the mushroom you see growing here. Go back east and down into the hole. Oops, the long drop seems to have set your head spinning again! When it stops spinning, go south to the end of the tunnel and then (cautiously) head west. There's a hungry rat running in circles here and when you talk to it, he says he won't let you pass until you give him a treasure. Don't get too close to it!

Throw the cheese to the rat. Being hungry, he's just as satisfied with the cheese as he would have been with a treasure, and he scurries away into some unseen crevice in the rocks. Go to the door, open it, and go west through the door. On the other side of the door is a tiny leprechaun, who, upon seeing your clover, lets you pass unmolested. Go south and play the fiddle for the King of the Leprechauns. They dance and dance to your music then finally they all leave the hall. As the King of the Leprechauns leaves, he forgets to take his Sceptre! Get the sceptre and look! Next to the Leprechaun King's throne is King Edward's Magic Shield!

Get the shield and go west up the stairs. Continue west until you come to the little hole in the western wall. Now, eat your mushroom and you're shrunken down to a size small enough to allow you to enter the hole. Go west into the hole and you find yourself in front of the big rock where you saw the strange green glow! Eventually, you regain your former size, but wasn't it fun being so tiny?!!

Go north twice then east three times to the left hand side of the castle. Walk (carefully!) across the bridge and open the door. Enter the castle and follow the hallway to the throne of King Edward. Bow to the King as he descends his throne. You've managed to recover the Strength of Daventry and the king places his crown upon your head! As he does so, he falls to the ground in a seizure and dies. Heavy lies the head that wears the crown. You ascent the throne to govern Daventry as King Edward had - guarding the Treasures of Power that you laboured so long to recover. Thus ends the King's Quest - congratulations, King Graham!!!!!!

ADVENTURE COMPLETED!

SERIALISED SOLUTIONS

LANCELOT - LEVEL 9

By THE WAYFARER

CONTINUED.....

The last puzzle to be found along the road requires an object to complete so go E, E, E, E, E to the west shore where you find a boat. IN, S and you are at a rock where a mermaid is sitting playing a harp. You need this later so GAWAIN, WAIT THEN GO E. TAKE HARP. If someone doesn't steer the boat whilst you take the harp the mermaid snatches it back. E and you are on the far shore. E and you are on a road by a tower, which has a notice telling how the lady Elaine is cursed to boil in water in the tower. S and you are on the stairs, U and you are in a room which contains an enchanted bath with the lovely Elaine naked and simmering in it. You rescue the lady (by helping her out of the bath) and she modestly invites you to visit her later at castle Corbin. D, N, E and you are in the village outside the castle. IN and you are welcomed as a hero. After much feasting, and an invitation to visit Elaine later, you go U to the landing.

Elaine's room is E whilst your room is S. You cannot go to Elaine without sullying your honour, so S and you gain 10 points for entering the perilous bedroom. You cannot, in honour, leave until morning. TAKE PILLOW, LIE ON BED. You will be attacked and wounded, later a magical knight will appear from a panel in the wall. CLOSE PANEL, A, A as the magic knight keeps popping back to rejuvenate himself. ATTACK KNIGHT and keep ATTACKing until he is defeated. You have now scored a further 10 points. An old man with a staff of vengeance appears. If you kill him you will lose 20 points. Ignore him and the other figure which appear from time to time. At cock-crow you will awaken and go N to the landing where you will be given a magic potion which makes you believe that Elaine is Guenever. Thus you will be tricked into fathering Galahad, without being unfaithful to your Queen.

Your score at this point should be about 350. GO TO BOAT, GO TO SERVAGE and you find yourself on an island. U and you are outside a castle where lives a giant, Nabon le Noire, who likes to eat knights. IN and the giant wakes long enough to tell you that he is not afraid of you as a saint once told him that he could only be killed by his hand (which is mummified and in the sack which the giant rests his head on). GAWAIN, WAIT THEN PUT PILLOW UNDER HEAD, GET SACK. This substitutes the pillow for the sack and the Giant continues sleeping. GET RELIC, HIT GIANT WITH RELIC and he crumbles. GAWAIN, WAIT THEN OPEN DOOR, OPEN DOOR and you are free to go E into the cell of Sir Bors. You have scored 10 for entering the giants tower and 20 for opening the door to Bors' cell. BORS FOLLOW ME. This concludes the sea section puzzles so GO TO COAST ROAD. From here GO TO MARSH ROAD and then GO TO TURQUIN'S MANOR.

When you arrive at the Manor. FIGHT TURQUIN who realises that he has lost and runs back into the manor. IN and you are at the gateway. N and you step on movable planks which open a concealed panel and activate a crossbow. Lancelot is the only one who can safely pass the crossbow, so BORS, WAIT THEN HOLD PANEL OPEN. N, the panel opens and Bors holds it so. When asked if you jump back, YES. GO PANEL (NW) where you wreck the crossbow. This room also acts as a balance for the boards. If you leave a knight in here you can pass in safety (if you don't you will fall into the lower dungeons with the other knights).

GAWAIN, GO PANEL AND WAIT 20. BORS, FOLLOW ME. N, N, N to the upper

prison where is a lever (to free the chains of the prisoners, although due to a bug it is possible to free them without moving it), a cage to lower by the winch to the lower dungeon. BORS, WAIT 12 THEN TURN WINCH. GET IN CAGE. TURN WINCH. You descend to the lower dungeon where 9 armed knights await to be rescued. If you follow the wording exactly you will rescue them and send them to Camelot on reaching the surface. ECOTR, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 10 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. AGRAVAIN, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 9 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. ALIDUKE, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 8 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. BRANDILES, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 7 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. BRIAN, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 6 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. GEHERIS, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 5 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. GARETH, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 4 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. LIONEL, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 3 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. MARHAUS, GET IN CAGE, WAIT 2 THEN GO TO CAMELOT. GET IN CAGE. WAIT at which point Bors winches the whole party up to the top. The knights ride off to Camelot and you fight a rearguard action with the castle gaolers. For defeating Turquin you get 10 points and a further 20 for freeing ALL of the imprisoned knights.

GO TO FOREST ROAD. GO W. W and you are on a windy Tor. N to a dry stone wall where roads lead NE and NW. NE and you are on the road from the beach. A carter is moving towards the beach GET IN CART and wait until you have passed the sentries and are on the beach. GET OUT. On the beach is a cauldron over a fire. EMPTY CAULDRON. GAWAIN, PUT COALS IN CAULDRON (gaining 10 points on the score), PICK UP CAULDRON and go U onto a boat where a pile of sails lie on the deck. PUT COALS ON SAILS, D and the army storming the town of Tintagel realises that it has no chance without a navy and surrenders. You are greeted as a hero by the king (Mark) and invited to his castle for a celebration. SW, SW, SW back to the stone wall, NW and you are outside the Cornish King's castle. IN and you find that the wily old king is holding Tristram, one of Arthur's knights as hostage and has imprisoned you lest you free him. GIVE HARP TO TRISTRAM who plays it and magically you both walk to freedom.

Your score at the moment is 480, and as you have released the knights from the 9 locations you have to report back to Arthur, to be confirmed as a Round Table Knight. GO TO ARTHUR and the game takes you back to the palace, where you are confirmed as a knight (after Arthur reads some letters to the queen from the lady you have endured scathing comments from all through the game). You are told that the Queen would like you to join her and her knights at Westminster Meadows for a picnic. When you arrive you find signs of a struggle and tracks leading to castle Meliagaunt. WAIT FOR CARTER, and when he arrives, GET IN CART. If you get in whilst he is going north you will see him making deliveries before finally loading provisions and heading south to castle Meliagaunt. WAIT and keep WAITing until you are at the gates to the castle (in the cart). GET OUT of the cart and your very presence scatters the sentries. You have scored 10 points for passing the archers. IN and you burst into the hall of the castle. U and you are on a landing. N to the royal suite where the Queens knights are. N and you are in the Royal Boudoir, where Sir Meliagaunt is apologising for kidnapping the Queen. She thanks you as her saviour (inviting you to return later), and dismisses you imperiously with a wave of the hand; if you try to get back into the Boudoir you are told that you are not permitted. You have scored 10 points for being invited to return later.

TO BE CONTINUED.....



HELPLINE

ALF BALDWIN	0452 500512	MON TO SAT 10AM TO 5PM	Spectrum.
JACK HIGHAM	0925 819631	FRI TO MON 7PM TO 10PM	Spectrum.
WALTER POOLEY	051 9331342	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Various.
DOREEN BARDON	065 382 509	MON TO FRI 6PM TO 10PM	Spectrum. WEEKENDS ANY REASONABLE TIME
MIKE BRAILSFORD	0592 757788	SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM	Various.
MERC	0424 434214	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Atari ST.
JASON DEANE	0492 622750	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Amiga.
JOAN PANCOTT	0305 784155	SUN TO SAT 1.PM TO 10PM	Amstrad.
ISLA DONALDSON	041 9540802	SUN TO SAT NOON TO 12PM	Amstrad.
NIC RUMSEY	03212 2737	MON TO FRI 6PM TO 9PM	Various.
BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE	0935 28174	SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM	BBC.
BARBARA GIBB	051 7228731	ANY EVENING FROM 7PM	BBC.
DAVE BARKER	071 7321513	MON TO FRI 7PM TO 10PM	Various.
STUART WHYTE	081 9804845	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Amstrad.
ROBIN MATTHEWS	0222 589115 OR 0842 781073	EVENINGS AND WEEKENDS	IBM PC

• • • THE ULTIMATE INFOCOM HELPLINE • • •

If you need help with an Infocom adventure then who better to help you than A GRUE! Ring GRUE on 0695 573141 between 7:30pm to 9pm Mon to Fri. Or write to 84 COUNTY ROAD, ORMSKIRK, WEST LANCs, L39 1QH.

ADVENTURE PROBE

If you need to contact Probe please telephone 0492 77305. I will be available at all reasonable times any day apart from Sunday, but please try to telephone between 10am and 10pm. If you are telephoning for help on an adventure then please try to phone during the day as the solutions are on hand during that time. But please try the helpline for help first as above.

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ONLY
RING AT THE TIMES SHOWN



RETARDED CREATURES

SO LONG,
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