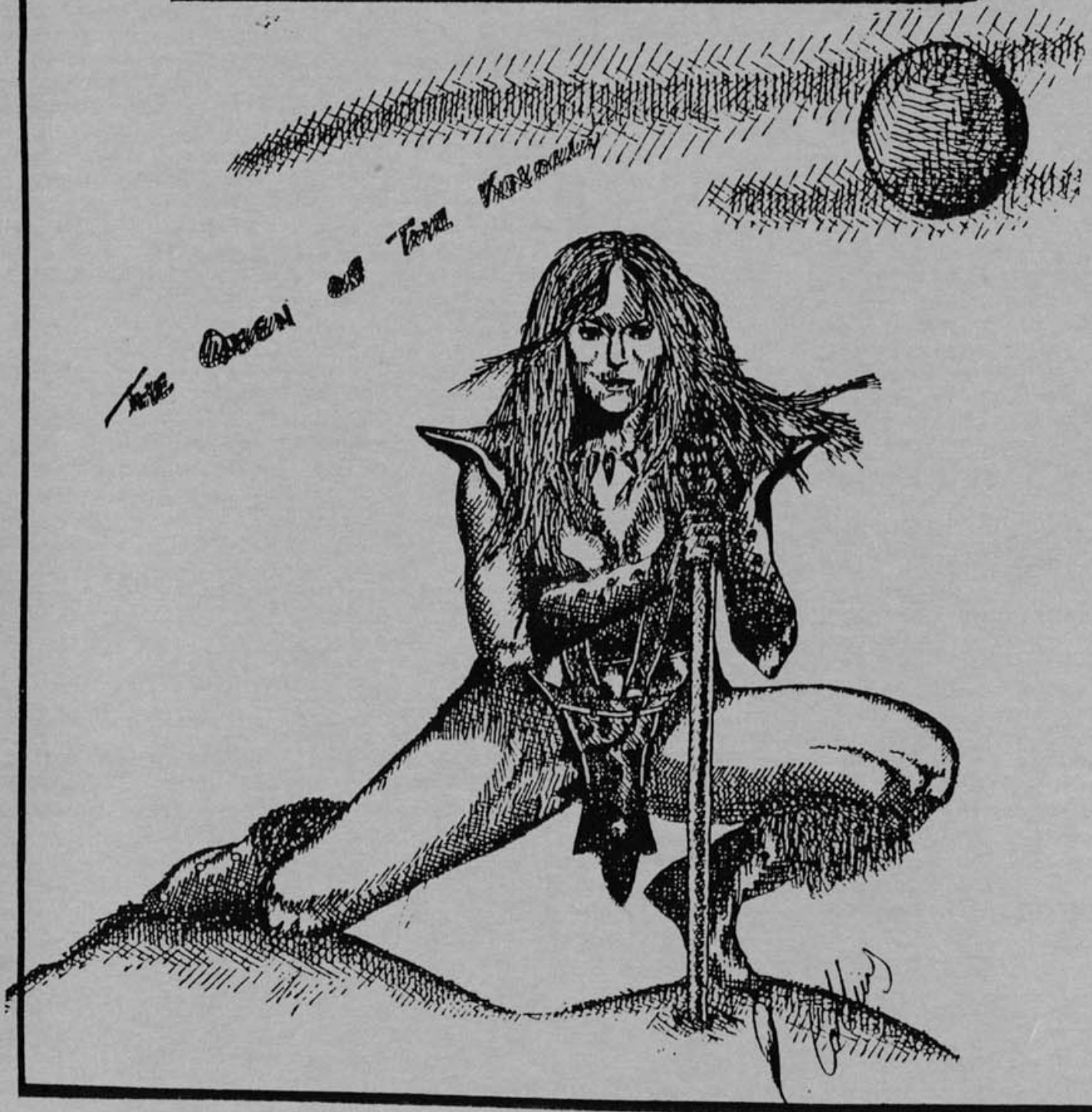


Adventure Probe

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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. 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 around with text being approx 70 chars across and 60 lines per page. Items can be sent in on disc (all discs will be returned). I am able to handle Amstrad CPC6128 on Protext (or Tasword), C64 on Easyscript, Atari ST on Protext or First Word Plus, Amiga on Protext or Kindwords. ASCII files should be alright too. Sorry I have no suitable printer for BBC or Spectrum. FAXSIMILE may be used to send items also (same telephone number). If you send in items for the IN-TOUCH section please clearly mark which are adventures, utilities, arcade games 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 U.K. to address.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL - What's been happening at Probe HQ this month.....	PAGE 4
REVIEWS - Read the views and news on latest releases.....	PAGE 5
SOMA 1 - Stories of many authors - your turn to have a go.....	PAGE 15
WRITE YOUR OWN PARSER - Frank Fridd shows you how to do it....	PAGE 16
THE PROBE INTERVIEW - Vicky Jackson meets the Wayfarer.....	PAGE 18
WIZARD WORKS - Steve Clay tells us how he goes about it.....	PAGE 19
SOFTWARE ADS - Here's the place to find the game you need.....	PAGE 20
LETTERS - Over to you for your news, views and comments.....	PAGE 29
PERSONAL COLUMN - Readers messages, greetings etc.....	PAGE 31
HELP WANTED - Lost souls seeking help.....	PAGE 32
IN-TOUCH - Your sales, wants, swaps and needs.....	PAGE 32
KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE - Postal help from kind souls..	PAGE 33
SOLUTION SERVICE - Latest solutions received for the archives.	PAGE 33
BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ADVENTURES - Tips for novices.....	PAGE 34
A NAME FOR OURSELVES - Debby Howard puts forward suggestions..	PAGE 36
JOKE OF THE MONTH - Debby Howard offeres a chuckle.....	PAGE 36
SOLUTION OF THE MONTH - Featuring Leisure Suit Larry II.....	PAGE 37
NEWS SECTION - Latest news from the Adventure Front.....	PAGE 40
HINTS AND TIPS - Useful tips to guide you on your way.....	PAGE 41
GETTING YOU STARTED - A gentle nudge in the right direction...	PAGE 44
OBJECTS AND THEIR USES - Alf Baldwin features Golden Pyramid..	PAGE 46
SERIALISED SOLUTIONS - Part one of Loom.....	PAGE 47
TELEPHONE HELPLINES - Instant help at the end of the line.....	PAGE 48

HALL OF FAME

Sincere thanks to the following readers who took the time and trouble to send in contributions over the past month:

JAY HONOSUTOMO, NIC RUMSEY, RON RAINBIRD, BOB BATES, HAROLD DIXON, VICKY JACKSON, CLAIRE DYARD, PETER BERGMANN, DENNIS DOWDALL, GARETH PITCHFORD, DEBBY HOWARD, JOHN BARNSLEY, DOROTHY JONES, BRIAN BUSBY, BOB ADAMS, HAROLD DIXON, IAN DOWDALL, ALF BALDWIN, THE CARTOGRAPHER and VINCE BARKER.

This months cover picture is by Tony Collins' brother, logo by MerC.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Volume 5, Issue 11 of Adventure Probe.

With any luck you will either be reading this issue at the Convention or have a nice surprise when it drops onto your letter box a bit earlier than usual. I wanted to get everything done in good time for the Convention so that I could relax and enjoy myself - well I will once my dreaded welcome speech is over and done with. Last year the Conventioneers told me that I was like two different people, very tense before the speech and relaxed afterwards - I should imagine that this year will be no exception. Reckon next year I'll try to persuade the organisers to supply me with a ribbon and pair of scissors so I just need to cut it and declare the "Convention open and may God bless her and all who attend her". Truly though, I am very excited and so looking forward to meeting everyone once again who attended last year and looking forward to meeting many of you for the first time too. It should really be a day to remember if it is anything like last year. I will tell you all about it in the next issue - probably a Convention Special with results of the awards ceremony and items of interest for those of you who cannot attend this year, so you don't feel left out of things.

While on the subject of the next issue, may I remind you all that it will be the December - and therefore the Christmas Special - issue? So contributions with a special Christmassy feel to them would be very warmly received. Last year only one or two of you responded to my plea for Christmas contributions which was a shame. Perhaps we can persuade someone to do a short article or story or whatever. Maybe even get someone to send in a review of Tartan's White Christmas (that's White Door for later buyers!). Anyway, I'll leave it up to you all and see what you can come up with to help celebrate the festive season a little.

I made one of my usual boobs again last issue, so it is apology time again. I decided to neaten up the telephone helpline, remove a couple of names from the list (at their request of course) and to try and fix the previous months blunder when I got Nic Rumsey's code number wrong! (sigh!). Anyway in the process I left off Alf Baldwin from the list, which prompted numerous concerned phone calls to ask if Alf was ill or anything and I miss-typed Dave Barkers telephone number! Normally that wouldn't have been so bad but that issue I printed the list of adventures that Dave could help with so he had loads of calls - well he would have! My apologies to the lady whose number I wrote in mistake for any inconvenience and to Alf and Dave and, of course, to anyone who used the number and was caused any inconvenience or embarrassment because of it - I know it must have been mind-blowing for the lady to be asked "Can you tell me exactly where to place the bomb?" she must have had an awful fright. When I make a blunder I really do a good job of it don't I? I hope (fingers firmly crossed here) that I have got them all correct this issue. I promise not to fiddle about in future - honestly!

Well, it's nearly time to close again now, I see the bottom of the page rapidly approaching so I'll sign off until next month. I sincerely hope you enjoy this issue. I'm so excited about the Convention that I am sure I have been all fingers and thumbs in my typing of this issue, then again, that's not unusual! Bye for now.

Mandy

REVIEWS

ASTRAL PLAIN

By Lynn Evans for Amstrad CPC from P.K.Graphics, 153 Standhill Crescent, New Lodge, Barnsley, S Yorkshire S71 1SW. Cost tape £2.

Reviewed by *Peter Knowles*

Astral Plain is the first adventure written by Lynn Evans and quite a good game for a first attempt, you start off at your own funeral and being already dead you cannot be killed, but beware, you can lose your soul and you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven without it. Also you are unable to enter Heaven yet because some time ago the Gates of Hell were left open and the Devil had sent out upon the earth evil spirits and tormented souls to bring down Heaven and all that is good.

Your task is to roam Hell and Earth to find the Seal of God which was cast out of Heaven when the Gates of Hell opened and then replace the Seal back onto the Great Book of Judgement. While playing the game you have to keep returning back to the Astral Plain and at times I could not wait to get back there, just to see if the stars had changed into Angels and how many were left to change, because the more you progress through the adventure the more the stars change into Angels and only when they have all changed can you enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

There are a couple of bugs, but they do not stop you from playing. One is if you are at the city of Mizraim at the well, then do not type LOOK as the game will crash and the other is inside the Church of Balaam, you light the lamp with the candle and then examine the lamp to be told that the lamp is unlit. All in all quite an enjoyable first effort from Lynn and I look forward to playing any future games she may write.

=====

ESCAPE FROM HODGKINS MANOR

Written by Jonathan Scott for Spectrum. Available from Zenobi.

Reviewed by *Martin Freemantle*

Having just finished your paper round, the empty sack slung over your shoulder and jumping onto your Rochdale BMX, not forgetting to avoid Mrs Jones black tabby, off you speed in the direction of home for dinner, chips and peas - your favourite. So there you are doing 120 mph past the infamous Basil Hodgkins manor, local mad scientist and big-wig, when some idiot slings a crowbar into the front wheel of your bike and you begin some flying lessons. After recovering from your crash landing you look around and realise you are inside grounds of Hodgkins manor. Are you to be the only paper boy in captivity or can you escape?

Hodgkins Manor is full of characters which must all be examined and the use of X-Ray makes this easier. Some will tell you directly what they want, others won't. The responses are excellent and some are misleading, what doesn't work in one location might work elsewhere. The whole game oozes enjoyment and kept me playing until it was finished. Thank you Barbara. This adventure is megga-great certainly goes in my top five. Buy it! Play it! Full marks to Mr Scott, hope there is a follow up!

=====

FOUR MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT

Available from GI Games, 11 West Mayfield, Edinburgh, EH9 1TF.
For 48k Spectrum and priced at £1.99. Reviewed by Brian Busby.

"After a bacteriological disaster has wiped out 90% of the world's population, you must find five companions to establish a colony across the states of America to win. Also de-arm your dead country's nuclear stockpile to create a secure future for you and your companions".

This is the introduction screen which provides the background story to "Four Minutes To Midnight". I also discovered that the story was inspired by the Stephen King novel "The Stand", which I have read, but must admit it didn't help me crack this difficult - well it was for me anyway - adventure.

Your quest begins on the dilapidated forecourt of a gasoline station. Your attention is drawn to a car, obviously out of control, which is careering towards the fuel pumps and threatening to turn the area into a blazing inferno. Your actions here are vital, because two moves later the car hits and you find you've scored 0/100 and are given the option of another go, Y/N? Once over this hurdle, however, it's time to set off in search of your five companions.

Just when you think you're getting along OK, night falls and you have to WAIT or SLEEP for a few turns till the sun rises. This seems to be part of a "let's make it more difficult" factor which is explained on a HELP screen giving details of extra commands. Apparently you can RECRUIT a psychic who will give STATISTICS (technical, social, strength and engineering skills) of a party member, but only at night!

From time to time party members get hungry and as long as you are in a location where there is food (it can't be carried), FEED * will keep them happy for a while.

HISTORY * tells you the recent history of a party member, but is not always as helpful as I would have liked. Thankfully there is a STORE/CALL facility to save to memory, falling down a lift shaft and going back to the garage forecourt a few times soon reminded me to use it regularly.

It is not always possible for the party to stay together, as certain feats can only be undertaken alone and one member has even refused to accompany me into one location!

I've managed to recruit three members so far, one of whom is a psychic. The problem is I can't elicit too much information from them yet as I was forced to leave the other two behind and I haven't discovered a way of rejoining them!

This is not a new adventure, having been re-released as a budget game in 1987, when it was described in a "glossy" magazine's adventure section as "advanced difficulty" and "not to be taken lightly". So if you're an expert adventurer or just an old-fashioned masochist it's one for you.

* * * * *

TAMORET

A text only adventure game written by Michaël LYONS, using AGT. Available at SynTax (PD 66). STE compatible, needs a double-sided disk drive.

You wake one night to find the shadowy figure of a woman at your bedside. She's upset and tells you that in a small town, Tamoret, a scientist had built a gateway to another dimension, inadvertently releasing an evil being who wants to take over your world. The woman comes from the same dimension and wants to send this being back but can't do anything here so she needs your help. Of course, you can't refuse and, in no time at all, you find yourself in Tamoret.

First thing you see is a sign with these words: "WE HOPE YOU ARE GLAD TO BE HERE BECAUSE WE ARE NOT GLAD TO HAVE YOU HERE." And, wandering in the streets, you meet some inhabitants of this town: they are terrified and speak of werewolves, zombies and the like. "Stay away from the sheriff" is a good advice, as you will soon discover. In fact, you will encounter not only a werewolf but also a vampire, a strange statue, a giant rat...

The game is huge, the text lengthy and usually good, apart from some spelling mistakes here and there, and the atmosphere is good too. The puzzles are a bit tricky at times and if you like mazes there are THREE mazes!

This game has all the usual drawbacks of the AGT games:

You can play it on medium or high resolution but the text is difficult to read on a colour television. The default colours are cyan text on black background with inputs in yellow but you can easily change them.

When you die (and this can happen very often), you return to the desktop and you have to load the game again. Very inconvenient. You have problems if you try saving on another disk so it's better to make a back-up copy of the game and save on this disk.

The game accesses the disk each time you move from one location to another, slowing down the game. So, if you have enough memory, it is a good idea to put all the relevant files on a ramdisk, not forgetting to copy your saved positions when quitting the game.

But in spite of these problems, I enjoyed this game and I'm looking forward to the follow-up. Of course, this is not INFOCOM but it's still a good game which will give you hours of entertainment. As it is an american shareware, you can have a look at it and pay the registration fee (\$5) only if you continue playing it.

Claire DYARD. Aubrives. France.

PD ADVENTURES FOR THE AMIGA

The Wayfarer looks at the latest from the Probe Editor's software house. Atlas Software has branched out into public domain and is offering the following adventures at the special PD price of only £1.

HACK

A graphic multi level RPG in the dungeons and dragons style, which allows a choice of character. It is mouse driven and quite fast in its working. Various rooms and levels open up as you explore. All in all a good game for the RPG collector.

MORIA

Once again a RPG but of the more classic sort, it has been around in various versions for about a year, this is the latest that I have seen. It is a single player dungeon simulation adventure game. Like Hack it is a must for the dedicated RPG fan.

WORLD

Classic RPG on the Amiga, it can be found in several PD libraries (but not often at £1). It is a very interesting little adventure which I found quite enthralling. Buy it... you'll be surprised.

5 TEXT ADVENTURES ON 1 DISK

This seemed to be the best value I have seen around. On closer inspection it seems even better as there are actually SIX! Admittedly the sixth is a graphic sort, but it still represents the ultimate in value for money. There really is everything here from a classic style such as ATLANTIS, through modern styles such as GRUNGY TOWERS and SAFARI. There is a definite preponderance towards the Sci-Fi with JEDI, STAR TREK and RING WORLD. The adventures are written in basic and seem to run very well indeed.

I am sure that more will follow these but for the moment it gives Atlas a very good start in Adventure PD.

=====

THE SPIRO LEGACY

The Wayfarer looks at Spiro Legacy, a new conversion to the AMIGA using Hatrack II. Available from the author Ken Bond, 17 Adel Park Gardens, Adel, Leeds LS16 8BN priced at £3 inclusive of p&p.

The conversion of any game between machines is always a potential minefield. The Spiro Legacy was no exception for Ken Bond (Amstrad adventure writer extraordinaire). The game was originally written for the Amstrad CPC/PCW machines, when Ken bought his Amiga he decided to try and convert it using the Hatrack II utility. When I was asked to play it, it was a very pleasing experience as I have played others of his games on the Amstrad. Ken has a reputation for well thought out puzzles and superb gameplay. His latest on the Amstrad followed the others in this way, and now he has converted it to the Amiga and has brought all of the finesse and polish previously exhibited on the new format.

The game had to be adapted to a different handling system, hence puzzles and maps of the other version do not always hold true on the Amiga. Some completely new puzzles have been introduced in this version, which will cause plenty of serious thought. All in all the game is as difficult as any of Ken's others, and handles beautifully. A truly classic text adventure from a master writer of proven ability. On several occasions Ken had to go back to the Utility writers and indeed in one instance a revised version of the program cured a headache. But as ever Ken had demonstrated his able mastery by producing a new version of an already well received adventure.

H.R.H.

Written by 8th Day Software. Re-released by GI GAMES, 11 West Mayfield, Edinburgh EH9 1TF for the Spectrum on cassette at £1.99.
Cheques etc payable to Sandven Ltd
Reviewed by *Steve Clay*

H.R.H. offers you the chance of returning the Queen's giro which, due to renowned efficiency of the post office, has landed on your doormat. The game is text and graphics written with the Quill and therefore relies on verb/noun input which is quickly adjusted to. The text is well written and informative and, as you can guess from the plot, humorous. Now many "funny" games fall flat on the program side because of the need to be witty, but 8th Day didn't get their reputation as a producer of quality adventures for nothing, the game is funny where it needs to be and challenging on the puzzles.

The graphics are few and (thankfully) far between and are drawn in cartoon style which suits the game but adds nothing to it. H.R.H. also has the best argument against sound effects in adventures I have yet come across, I shall explain, early on you come across a phone box, the phone rings when you are outside the box, it rings when you are in the box and each time it rings you will hear a very impressive impersonation of a phone ringing, alas to make progress you have to answer the phone at least three times which involves the player having to listen to the sound effect six times and believe me you will be cursing the lack of SOUND OFF options!

Graphics and sound apart, the game is a gem, the structure of the problems is excellent. Progress is made quickly early on, encouraging you to keep trying as the puzzles get tougher. More recent converts to adventures may find the poor examine command frustrating, when I examine Princess Diana I don't expect to be told there is nothing of interest, the same applies to Prince Philip, Andrew and Edward (fair enough). The humour of the game is very derivative of Spitting Image and some of the language is a touch ripe, you have been warned! Overall I would recommend this game to all but Royal Family lovers and young children. This game was originally released in 1986 and would set you back £6.95, now you can mix with the Royals for just under £2 (that's the kind of inflation I like) and play a challenging game into the bargain. Recommended to anyone who likes a titter!

=====

THE HERMITAGE

By Tony Collins and available from The Guild, 760 Tyburn Rd, Erdington, Birmingham, B24 9NX. For Amstrad CPC's on disk only £4.00.
Cheques/Postal Orders payable to Glenda Collins please.

Reviewed by *Suki's Mum*

Poor Ambrose a disillusioned monk sent out by his boss to track down the evil hermit and put an end to the decadence that has swept the land. Not only does he have to find the hermit and sort him out, he has to fight his inner self. His faith is not as strong as it should be and his mind doubts the existence of God, yet his heart tells him otherwise, and so, doubts and all, he sets off.

You start below the monastery and have to pay it a visit. Not good is right away you're falling over bodies. Your faith is shattered a bit more, but don't despair, when you reach the chapel examine both statues and your faith will be restored, if only a little. The Hermitage has a lot of reading to it but don't be put off by that,

it's a game and book in one. The text is essential and actually makes you feel you are living in the game. Tony's descriptions are excellent and really set the scenes. You come across a woman being burned alive, you feel her agony as you hear her scream and can almost smell her flesh roasting, should you rescue her? and what about the man trapped in a burning hut, do you honestly want to risk YOUR life to save him?

The original game ended at the hermit but this is where the update comes in, yes Tony has added greatly to the game. There's lots more to it now, you can even try your hand at gambling. There are no sudden deaths as such here, but that doesn't mean to say you can't get killed, you can. But you're always given a fair warning. Some situations don't give you too many moves so ramsave often if you don't want to have to keep going back to the beginning. Help is available from the very extensive vocab, but don't expect help from the game itself, you'll get none. I had to ask outside help more than once, the game definitely isn't a doddle. If you liked the original game then you'll certainly love this enhanced version. Tony has done a fantastic job on the update. The one snag to the game is that it runs through CPM+ so if you haven't got it then pity, you'll miss out on a good game. If you have CPM+ then buy it, you certainly won't regret the £4 you spend on it.

=====

DANGER! ADVENTURER AT WORK

By Simon Avery and available from WoW Software, 78 Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9RS. For Amstrad CPC cassettes at £2 and discs at £4. Also available with Mr Avery's other three games at £7 on disk.

Cheques etc payable to J.G.Pancott.

Reviewed by *Jay Honosutomo*

Ahem. Yes, er, may I have your attention, please. The word on the adventure front is that Simon Avery has released yet another adventure. As with his last three, this will be published on the WoW label. One of our secret agents, Jay (call me 007) Honosutomo, will be looking into the game very shortly. Once again Averymania has swept into my household! I thought those days were over! You know, the days of waking up in the middle of the night and screaming "Aaarrggghh, just what do I do with the balloon?!", and leaving the computer after a five hour battle to find that key, only to be faced with a week of uncompleted homework!

Well most of you Amstraders will know exactly what I am talking about. Those of you who have played any of Simon's games will know that irresistible urge to "Have just ONE more go!". If there are any of you who do not know this feeling, then just like everyone else, read on.

DAAW is another Quilled game by Simon. The storyline, my friends, is this. You are basically an Adventure Freak (who isn't?), but the problem is that you can never find anywhere nice and peaceful to play. The whole house is on the rampage 24 hours a day. Finally, you pack your gear and move out. Fed up of the whole business, you wander off in search of a tranquil, peaceful and quiet place to play adventure games forever. A place where time is of no concern to you. A place where it is an adventurer's heaven.

Magic is the only word I can find to sum it all up. Magic. One inevitable source of enjoyment in Simon's games is, as I have said,

the humour. This game is hilarious. Probe readers get a special treat too, as there are a few familiar characters in the game (even Mandy is in there, and probably in one of her more rebellious moods!). There's a witch, a teacher, a grue, a balrog and loads more. Their characteristics are simply spot-on. The puzzles too are indeed brilliant, some of them will be so amazingly logical (not to say that they're easy though), that you will kick yourself black and blue for not getting them right. As with any adventure, but this one in particular, I would advise against asking for help. The pure satisfaction of solving one of the puzzles yourself is one no-one deserves to miss (as I did on a couple of occasions).

The whole game is very well written. From the mind of an experienced Quill user, it comes completely recommended. The responses, atmosphere and descriptions are all excellent. Some of the responses being funny, some hilarious, but never dull. To me, Simon is one of the most unorthodox and masterly adventure writers of our time. This is definitely the funniest and the best Quilled game ever written. Some people may say I exaggerate, but this is just my own opinion. The world holds its breath, and awaits the next two games, Thieves Tale and Gerbil Riot of '67.

=====

TROUBLE AT BRIDGETON

Written by Dorothy Millard and available from Atlas Software, 67 Lloyd Street, Llandudno, Gwynedd, LL30 2YP. Price £3.50 on disk for Commodore 64 (Yayhay!! - Ed).

Reviewed by *Vince Barker*

What a joy it was to play this game. The aim is to get ten escaped patients back to the assylum. At the beginning you are given the names of the patients plus a short description of their characters which are really clues on how to get them persuaded back with you. Sounds easy but believe me, there are a few mind boggling problems. Try playing the rock music on the radio to one of them - she doesn't like it, she prefers opera. There is no way you can buy the necklace but there is an ingenious way of doing the next best thing. How about this for a touch of the infuriating - if you don't give one certain person something to eat before escorting them past the fast food shop they go inside never to be seen again.

Why should you need a bicycle pump in the game when you can't find a bike? - it could be because you need a hammer but there isn't one of those either - nice one Dorothy! One of the patients has a sweet tooth so you think it easy when you find the chocolates - well I did - only to find they are needed elsewhere so get searching for another form of confectionary. Another puzzle I thought was easy was when I found a red hanky and a bull pestering a patient. Only snag it doesn't work in this game so start thinking again for another way round the problem - getting frustrated? - I certainly was by now. Finally the one that really got me baffled was poor old George, the master of disguise, I'm afraid I failed on this one but thanks to Dorothy I finally led him safely back to the assylum.

Mapping is quite simple, not too many locations but some of the puzzles are ingeneous and certainly require your thinking cap and plenty of coffee. Definitely to be recommended. Keep up the good work Dorothy, your games are brilliant.

ENERGEM ENIGMA

Written by Precision Games. Published by GI Games, 11 West Msyfield, Edinburgh EH9 1TF for 48K Spectrum priced at £1.99. Cheques etc payable to Sandven Ltd.

Reviewed by *The (neat) Welsh Wizard*

There was I, lazing in bed on a Thursday morning having taken the week off work when I hear a small parcel plonking through my letter box. "I wonder what that could be?" I said to myself, so up I got to investigate. It turned out to be a cassette of Energem Enigma with a polite note from Mandy asking me if I would kindly review the game for Adventure Probe. Well, yes I would or you would not be reading this now, but what has all this got to do with the game I hear you ask? Absolutely nothing at all but what a brilliant idea by Mandy to send games out for review to people, like myself, in order to encourage them to contribute to and become more involved in Adventure Probe. Keep it up Mandy and I hope it works out well. So just remember, if you receive an unexpected game through the post it may just mean that ADVENTURE PROBE WANTS YOU!

Onwards to the review proper and as usual it is background time. Energem Enigma is the follow up game to THE EXTRICATOR, but you do not have to have played that to understand ENIGMA. Both games were previously sold by Precision Games for the princely sum of £5.20 each but GI GAMES now have the publishing rights and the games can now be bought for the generous sum of £1.99 each post free. In the Extricator you rescued Professor Roberts from the baddies and now in Energem you have to help him complete his experiments by finding four rare crystals that emit energy that are more commonly known as Energems. You are also told that the enemy want them (you never meet them), and that the last agent to retrieve them failed to come back (you never find out what happened to him!).

The game is Quilled (so you know what to expect by now) with average graphics in certain locations. The graphics are nothing special but in a couple of locations they contain clues that are not in the room descriptions. Speaking of which, the descriptions could not be classed as verbose, more like brief and to the point (boring in fact). As usual you should examine everything (that is EVERYTHING just in case you missed it the first time) and there are a few good problems to overcome. They start off fairly easy but become harder as you go on though none stand out as anything special. My favourite was the old one of a man chain smoking, who, on the receipt of some cigarettes, gives you the chain he was smoking! Other problems involve repairing a boat, making a trap, lowering a bridge, finding a way into a lighthouse etc etc. Before you will be able to find the four missing crystals you will need to find a crystalometer and special helmet and learn how to use them. The crystalometer will detect the presence of a crystal while you will only be able to see it through the visor on the helmet. To sum up this paragraph, average graphics, brief descriptions with standard problems to overcome.

One of my pet hates rears its ugly head in this game, but it is done in such a way that I can only almost forgive it. I'm talking about the old (very old) chestnut of having to eat, drink and sleep, whatever after a certain number of turns and in this game it turns out that the planets atmosphere is unbreathable. You must constantly change oxygen bottles in order to breath but what almost makes it forgivable is that you start the game carrying four such bottles with you. You will not find any more during the course of the game so the

net effect is that you have a time limit before all your oxygen runs out, and it will before you are able to complete the game. Rather than mess about with this oxygen business, I cannot see why they did not set a time limit before the enemy finds and eliminates you and have done with it. I'm probably getting worked up about nothing here but I do not see why there should be a time limit to games.

You are probably wondering if there was anything in the game I liked? Well, it's not that I disliked anything yet, it's just so far the game is average, but here come the bits I particularly liked. For a start there are only two (I think) places where the spectre of sudden death appears and they are not done in an unfair manner. You can also roam around a large part of the game going from problem to problem so if you do become stuck on one of the problems just move onto the next for a while. But the best thing about the game for me, is the help command. Instead of just typing help you must type Help "Object" where object can be anything e.g. sword, key, elephant etc. You will then get a clue to what the object could be used for. Brilliant, something I would not mind seeing in other games.

My final thoughts on the game could be summed up by the word "average". Enérgem was first reviewed in Adventure Probe (volume 2 issue 1) by Graham Collier when it was selling for £5.20 and his last sentence was "Maybe a little overpriced, but you won't regret buying it". Now it is no longer overpriced and you certainly will not regret buying it, just do not expect to find anything special, just a good solid game. Enjoy.

=====

ICHOR

By Lee Joynes for Amstrad CPC's and available from P.K.Graphics, 153 Standhill Crescent, New Lodge, Barnsley, S Yorks S71 1SW. On cassette for £2. (Disk versions available from The Guild - details later).

Reviewed by *Dave Cox*

This amusing fantasy-type game is set in the gardens and villa of an Egyptian nobleman. You wake up on a warm morning with just the sound of people talking in the distance. You remember you were on your way home from the beach when your car conked out. It was dark and as you lifted the bonnet a bright light shone in your eyes. Then you woke up to find the word "Coffee" printed on your hand.

This is how you are introduced to this bizarre little game. Some of the responses are a bit wierd and you have to do a few unusual things to get through the game. There are occasional graphics which are quite good, especially a fire where the flames flicker.

One or two of the inputs are a little annoying and it is easy to get killed just before you finish the game, but these are minor problems and the game plays fairly well. It takes a while to get the feel of the game, and the introduction seems only loosely connected to the game itself, which, for me seemed to have little meaning.

Although not a large game it has its share of problems which will lead to many heads being scratched, and would give one or two evenings amusing entertainment to most adventurers.

METHYHEL - THE SPECIAL EDITION

For Spectrum 128K only. Available from The Guild, 760 Tyburn Road, Erdington, Birmingham B24 9NX. FREE if you send SAE and blank cassette or disk!

Reviewed by *Gareth Pitchford*

First the facts - the Special Edition, 128K version of Methyhel is one written by Tony Collins for the Spectrum 128K. Regular Probe readers will know that Tony was unable to get permission to release the game and so he's resorted to giving it away free to anyone who wants a copy. While not wanting to take sides in the argument, I thought that the game at least deserves a review.

Methyhel: TSE opens up in the offices of Sinister Investigations Inc, where you, Professor Jack Slaine (the head of SI), have just received a mysterious telegram from a Doctor Morgan asking you to come to his house immediately. SI doesn't investigate the usual things but rather the paranormal and occult so you can imagine that the mystical amulet enclosed with the telegram would interest SI greatly. Before you attempt to leave though, you should note that examining the office thoroughly produces several useful objects including a coat and the all important wallet full of folding stuff. Your secretary is also in the office computer room and can give quite a bit of help if you ask her the right questions. Then it's out into the cold streets of London where a conveniently placed Taxi Rank provides a useful way of getting about. There are various places you can visit, but at first you won't know where to head for, so it's best to check out the Doc's house first.

Once there you will have your first encounter with the supernatural in the form of a huge demonstalker, who stands over Morgan's dead body and isn't too friendly at all! (Thinks... maybe now's a good time for a note on the spell system).

The spells come in the form of three words on an object etc. Being canabalistic in nature you need to carry the object in order to "focus" the spell. The spells won't really be used until the end of the game, which is a pity, until then you're up against more usual adventure problems.

The main feature about the game is the amount of travelling you do via various modes of transport, the locations you visit follow logically on from each other and you can double back and revisit places if you wish. Eventually you end up in France, where the root of the problem lies, and it requires a cunning bit of spell manipulation to defeat Methyhel, I can tell you!

My only criticisms of the original version were the breakdown in logic in some places and unused locations in part two. However the 128K version sees a tighter plot, more puzzles, better programming and the whole thing crammed into one load (You lose the graphics - a small price to pay though!). Overall Methyhel: The Special Edition is a vast improvement on an already good game. Whether you've got the original 48K Methyhel (or its fore-runner, Nythyhel) it is well worth sending off for this one.

To preserve diplomatic relations, I must point out that the "official" version of Methyhel is available from Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale priced at £1.99 tape and £3.49 disk (+3).

SOMA 1

SOMA means Stories Of Many Authors! The idea was sent in by MerC who thought it would be both interesting and quite amusing. No-one will know the course of the story nor the ending - that is up to you! Each month readers are invited to submit the next short chapter and the editor will choose what she considers the most appropriate chapter to continue the story. The first chapter was submitted by MerC to get things going - the rest is up to you!

Travellers are not, in the very nature of things, the most companionable of beings. Used to long, lonely roads, humour does not sit easily in their company nor conversation spring readily to their service. The Man, for want of a better term, was more taciturn than most. On the way too long, he (and let us agree that this promoun will do as well as any) had not the slightest idea what he was looking for. He was sure, however, that he would recognise it when he came upon it, or when it came upon him - the latter, for he did not lack imagination, a less than comforting prospect.

Heroes, even those of nomadic predisposition, are not unknown to avail themselves of protection greater than that afforded by coarse homespun alone. An estoc invites little comment in these parts, though were the observer aware of the true nature of the alloy from which this particular weapon had been fashioned, or, indeed, of the structure and contents of the baldric from which it hung, more would surely have been remarked. Few would notice the oddly bulbous crampet, or realise that its shape, far from mere fancy, allows a good grip with the toes. For this was a scabbard to be held firmly whilst asleep, so that on being awakened suddenly, covering could be thrown aside and sword drawn in a single movement.

Though ankle boots are not commonplace footwear for pilgrims here or anywhere, neither are they particularly unusual. Sandals, however, are hardly suitable concealment for the needle poniard, an instrument, it has to be said, not intended to be observed either in use or out of it. Like the sword, its steel had been honed beyond the skill of any swordslipper now alive and its narrow foible - on the rare occasions it was allowed to meet the light - would glister with a bright, hard lustre undimmed since the day it was forged. For the sword there was no such luxury - its steel had been artificially dulled and deliberately pitted, and though having lost none of its edge, it would pass for a common shabble, none too clean and none too remarkable.

Even a thorough inspection, respectably distant and respectfully indirect, (for the Traveller was formidable in stature and intimidating in demeanour) would reveal nothing in the hang of the cloak or the cut of the breeches and tunic to suggest carefully stitched-in razor wire, microthin duralumin chain-mail or silicone waterproofing. His hat, it might have been discovered, could not be removed forcibly and it would never come off by accident. Bedroll, backpack, flacket and worn-smooth wine-skin would not warrant a second glance. Ordinary ash-plant might have been the first to mind description of his staff; though, in truth, the way it was held just so, might suggest more of its true purpose to the right kind of observer. Apparently less enigmatic was the malachite pendant pierced by a leather thong and worn in the interclavicle. A corner broken from a polished square of mineral, its bottom edge was irregular yet smoothed by constant wear. When he did eventually find the object, if not exactly what he might have expected, then certainly it was enough to suggest that he was in a right time and a right place.

Emerging from the dense woodland he had been in for what seemed like weeks he found himself on a rough track winding round the foot of a range of low hills, on the other side of which, he had been assured at the last tavern, lay the town of Richesse. Evening was drawing on and he was hungry, so the shallow cave some way up the hillside was a welcome sight. On reaching it, he took the usual precaution of lighting a torch. Passing it round the shelter, his eye caught a familiar shape half buried in the detritus at the back. So familiar was it that it took a perceptible time for his mind to register that it should not, indeed *could* not be present here. Nevertheless, a closer inspection revealed there was no mistaking the protruding cylindrical base of.....

What did the traveller discover? What will happen next? It is entirely in your hands. If you think you can write the next appropriate chapter then I will be delighted to hear from you....Mandy

WRITE YOUR OWN PARSER

By Frank Fridd

I developed this routine mainly on the Amstrad CPC 464 for my game COLDITZ ESCAPE but I know that it works on the Commodore 64 and I can see no reason why it should not be used on other machines with maybe slight modifications.

- 100 - 150 Determine whether the player can move in a certain direction and if so, which location that direction will take him. The reason that this is put at the beginning of the programme is that movement is the most common instruction that is made and on some computers act on a command quicker if that command is at the beginning of the programme than if it is further on.
- 1000-1080 Checks the data of the current location and prints the description of that location and the directions the player can move to. In my game I used a split screen so that this information is continuously on display, but this is up to the discretion of the designer.
- 1100-2000 Within these lines are placed descriptions of objects that can be seen in that location, movements of characters within the game and other information or things that the author may wish to be done.
- 2020 Sounds a bleep and waits for input. The input can handle any length the computer will allow but line 2040 is put in to limit the length of input that the author decides is best for his game.
- 2050 All inputs are changed to capital letters to save having both capital letters and lower-case letters in the data. (Different machines have different ways of doing this.)
- 2060-2100 Separates the input into individual words.
- 2110 Checks words against the words in the data (WD%) and if they agree, delete them from memory and goes on to the next word. (Words such as A, ARE, THE or OF).
- 2120 Checks if the word is an AND or &, and if so, deletes it and places the remainder of the string into Q\$(2).
- 2150 Checks if two or three words have been inputted and if there are only two words used makes the second word into a noun.
- 2160 Checks if the third word (noun) is an IT and the last noun used is within certain limits set by the author this line replaces IT with a noun.


```

2 REM: Copyright 1991 by Fridd Software
5 REM: Parser routine for use in a home grown adventure game not using
any proprietary adventure game creators
10 GOTO 10000: REM: Initiation of game
100 LC%=N%(P%):RETURN:REM:P%=Location number. If unable to move in
that direction then P%=0
110 LC%=S%(P%):RETURN
120 LC%=E%(P%):RETURN
130 LC%=W%(P%):RETURN
140 LC%=U%(P%):RETURN
150 LC%=D%(P%):RETURN
160 PRINT#2," I don't understand ";WO$:GOTO 2000:REM:Unknown word-try
again
1000 REM: The description of locations collected by DATA lines go here
e.g. locate 2,1:print "You are "+PL$(P%)
1010 REM: Next seven lines sort out and print on screen the directions
the player can travel
1020 E$(1)=" ":IF N%(P%)>0 THEN E$(1)+" N,"
1030 IF S%(P%)>0 THEN E$(1)+" S,"
1040 IF E%(P%)>0 THEN E$(1)+" E,"
1050 IF W%(P%)>0 THEN E$(1)+" W,"
1060 IF U%(P%)>0 THEN E$(1)+" U,"
1070 IF D%(P%)>0 THEN E$(1)+" D,"
1080 LOCATE2,9:PRINT"You can go-;:PRINT E$(1)+CHR$(8)+CHR$(16):RETURN
1100 GOSUB 1000:REM: From here are printed objects that can be seen,
other details of information and control of the game is dealt with
1110 REM: If moving into another room GOTO 1100 else GOTO 1120
1120 IF Z% THEN Z%=0:Q$(1)=Q$(2):Q$(2)=" ":GOTO 2060:REM:Checks if
multiple statement and if so bypasses input
2000 CL=FRE(""):REM:Clears input buffer
2010 Q$(1)="" :Z%=0
2020 PRINT CHR$(7);:INPUT" What now ";Q$(1):REM:Draws players
attention and waits for input
2030 IF Q$(1)="" THEN 2020
2040 IF LEN(Q$(1))>100 THEN PRINT" Instructions too complex":GOTO 2000
2050 Q$(1)=UPPER$(Q$(1)):REM:Next lines sort out the input into verbs
(VB$), nouns (NN$) and adjectives (AD$)
2060 Q$(1)=Q$(1)+" ":Y%=1:WC%=0:V%=0:NN%=0:AA%=0
2070 FOR WW%=1 TO 4:W$(WW%)=""
2080 FOR IX=Y% TO LEN(Q$(1))
2090 IF MID$(Q$(1),IX,1)=" " THEN W$(WW%)=MID$(Q$(1),Y%,IX-
Y%):Y%=IX+1:LEN(Q$(1))
2100 NEXT IX
2110 FOR II%=1 TO 12:IF LEFT$(W$(WW%)+ "***",4)=WD$(II%) THEN
W$(WW%)="":II%=12:GOTO 2080 ELSE NEXT II%:REM: Checks if inputted word
is unnecessary and if so, deletes it and returns for next word
2120 IF W$(WW%)="AND" OR W$(WW%)="&" THEN W$(WW%)="":
WW%=4:Z%=1:Q$(2)=MID$(Q$(1),Y%,IX):Q$(1)=" ":GOTO 2140:REM: Checks if
AND is used and if so, stores remainder of string$ for use next time
2130 IF W$(WW%)<>" " THEN WC%=WC%+1
2140 NEXT WW%
2150 IF WC%=2 THEN W$(3)=W$(2): W$(2)="":REM:If only two words have
been inputted then the second word made into a noun
2160 IF W$(3)="IT" AND NN%< THEN W$(3)=Z$:REM: Checks if IT was
inputted and the last noun was within limits then IT is replaced by
that noun

```

PART TWO OF THIS LISTING WILL BE IN NEXT ISSUE

Frank has kindly offered to assist any authors programming in basic and will supply the complete listing on disk or tape if media is supplied and postage paid. See advertisement centre pages for address.

yet again our own intrepid interviewer, Vicky sets off in search of a suitable candidate to answer her own particular brand of questions - serious ones are not allowed - and comes face to face (well considering their respective heights, perhaps not) with Nic Rumsey, alias The Wayfarer, and known fondly by all last year's conventioners as The Adventurer!

THE WAYFARER INTERVIEW

By *Vicky Jackson*

Vicky: Apart from playing adventure games, I hear that your other hobby is collecting goldfish and that you allow them to swim around in whisky. Is this normal or are you trying to improve the breed?

Wayfarer: We have bred a new strain of Scottish Tartan goldfish (complete with Tam O'Shanter heads and Kilts). Feeling that no self-respecting Scot would drink water we have trained them to live in a bowl of whisky, which is also much better for them as it is antiseptic!

Vicky: Is it true that the fish jump out of the bowl to attract your attention when you are engrossed in an adventure?

Wayfarer: No, but I have been known to drink the odd bowl full in mistake for my glass of scotch.

Vicky: We understand that you and Grue are going to jump off the Golden Gate bridge attached to a rope. How did you manage to talk the Grue into this insane stunt?

Wayfarer: It was suggested, but I declined as Old Gruesome wanted me to go first: I did not like the way he was holding a pair of garden shears and smiling.

Vicky: It is rumoured that you own two Renault 5's - one for each foot - if it is true, do you find it expensive to run?

Wayfarer: Yes, because I seem to suffer from a stone boot on the gas.

Vicky: We understand that Amiga is Spanish for girlfriend and that is why your wife refused to have her in the house. However she has now welcomed her into the family home. How do you all get along together and dare I ask what the sleeping arrangements are?

Wayfarer: Not so! Beethoven practiced on an old Spinet in his attic. Wayfarer does likewise on an Amiga!

Vicky: One of your favourite foods is Pork and Jam doughnuts, a Spanish speciality. Does the Amiga cook them for you?

Wayfarer: This seems to be the only thing that Commodore omitted from Amiga Dos, I understand it has been rectified in version 2.1(A).

Vicky: I understand that one of your wife's favourite hobbies is knitting and she recently knitted a complete outfit for the Amiga. Are you pleased that they get on so well together?

Wayfarer: To tell the truth Mrs W was actually knitting a new kite. The reason is that she is devoted to Para-ascending and always knits her own hang glider.

Vicky: You keep your computers in the attic, but have this problem of pigeons tap dancing on the roof. How do you deal with them?

Wayfarer: I have removed the taps and now they just do a soft shoe shuffle.

Vicky: We understand that you won't be attending this year's convention because your wife confiscated the outfit that you wore last year and insists you wear the pink and green suit she has knitted for

you. You were heard to comment that it would suit the Grue better than you. Do you really believe this?

Wayfarer: I felt it would be in complete contrast to the Pink Cap (and pink fur that Dicon thinks he has). Anyway WHO would wear a suit with "I like Bob Adams" on the pocket?

Vicky: As a computer addict, can you advise our readers how to cope with withdrawal symptoms when they have to be away from their machines for any length of time?

Wayfarer: Yes, drink lots of Scottish Goldfish water, or, pack the Amiga with a small petrol driven generator. The noise is terrible and after a few minutes you will not have to worry... one of the family is sure to murder either you or the Amiga. On the plus side the genny running does mask the disk drive click!!

WIZARD WORKS

By *Steve Clay*

When I purchased PAW four years ago I had my illusions shattered. The program, while being excellent, expected me to do some of the work! I realised very quickly that the construction of an adventure is a difficult process for a beginner; it involves the learning of a new computer language and the development of good programming habits.

After four years I have completed my first adventure, the first that I class as worthy of playtesting, I've started dozens, only to decide sooner or later that the game is poor quality or a waste of time.

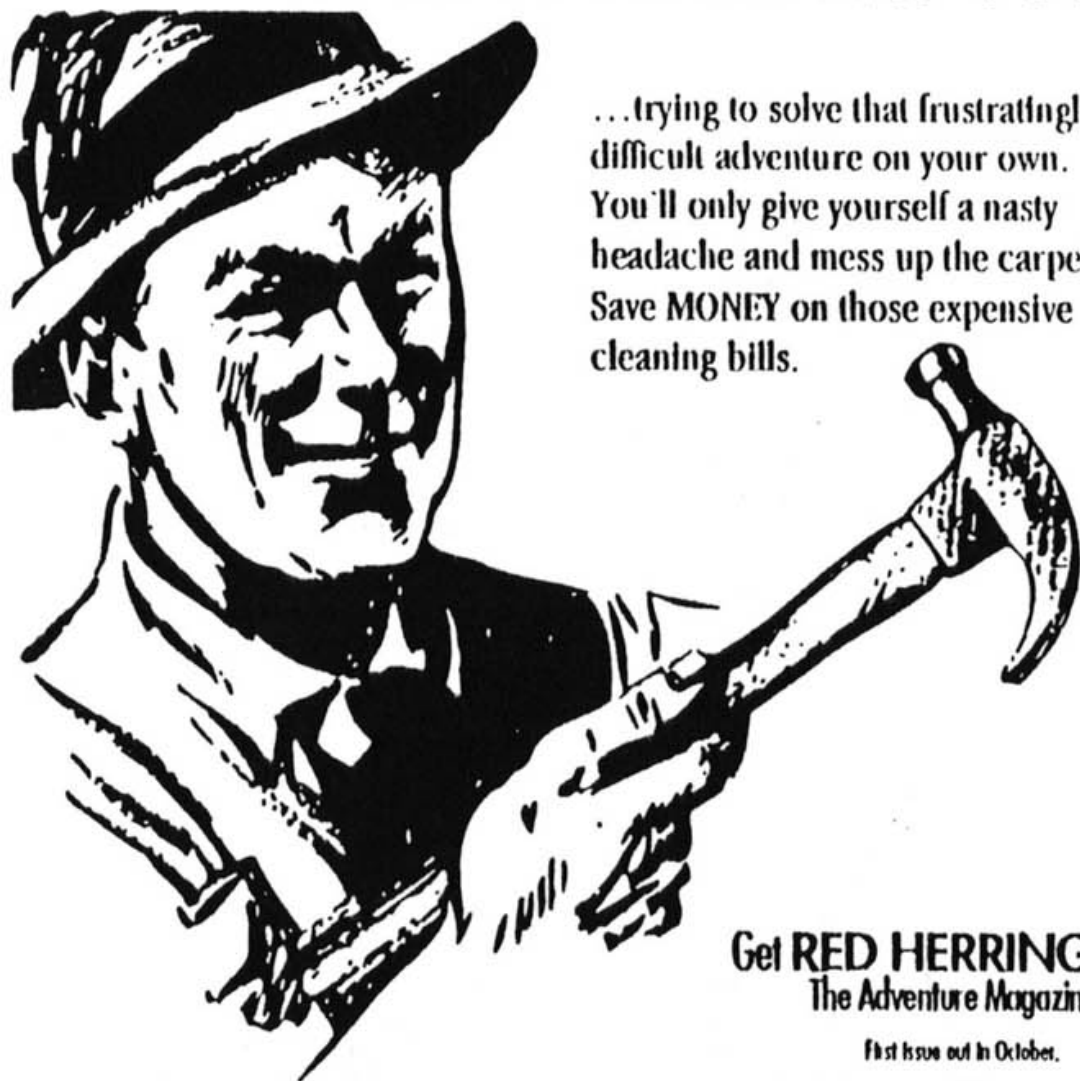
THE TAXMAN COMETH is the result of my labours. From start to playtesting stage it has taken nine months of twice-weekly programming sessions. The name came first and the ideas followed. The game has the player assuming the role of the Taxman, who has to obtain the unpaid taxes from various fantasy-based characters; Wizard, giant, dragon etc. The first playtest version was the fifth incarnation. The four previous versions have included a two part text only, a 128 only, a four part text and graphic and an interaction based adventure. After writing 14K of the latter, I realised that this wasn't a game I'd like to play and the interest in it died there and then. I stopped using PAW for two weeks, I felt "Taxman" was a good enough idea yet I was unable to develop the idea. In the end I decided to challenge myself, if I couldn't write a game on this idea, I would give up PAW and adventure writing. I sat down and planned an adventure I would like to play.

I decided I had neither the desire nor talent for graphics, the character interaction I would like to implement (close to Ingrid's Back) ate memory and was a breeding ground for bugs. I dislike mazes (sorry Lorna) and liked puzzle packed games.

With this in mind I decided on a list of six debtors, which included Snow White, Sindarella and Hazel the Witch, none of which appear in the final game. I sent the game for playtesting and the report confirmed a tiny niggle I had about one section, so out it came. The second playtest version is on its way and I can say I have no niggles. As a matter of fact I have a great idea for a follow-up; The Taxman Returneth. Now will it be a 2 part or perhaps 128 only.....

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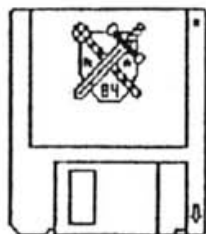


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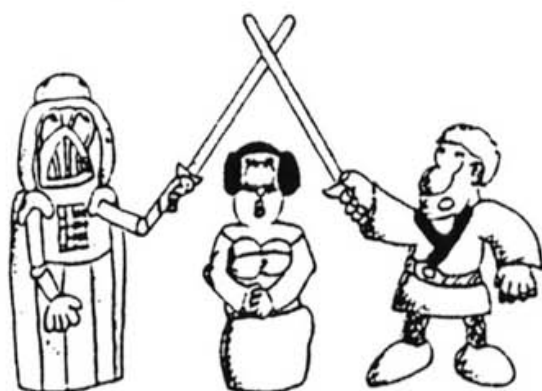


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LETTERS

Dear Mandy

First, may I offer my thanks to Dave Barker of London for his revelation of my problems with TANGLED TALES - I'll waste no more of my precious time on that program - thanks Dave! I went to our local computer shop the other day, and just happened to mention that I was in the final stages of writing an adventure. I am not really interested in the financial return, but just wish to complete it as an adventure. The man said that if I fetched some copies he would be pleased to put them on sale in the shop. He said that many customers often asked for adventure programmes of this type for Commodore 64, but unfortunately he was unable to get hold of any. I thought that after a good playtesting session I might make a few copies and try it out for sale. I am an official at our local Methodist Church, and the money would go to one of it's causes. That way I would be satisfying myself and at the same time supporting a worthy cause! I am hoping for some assistance with playtesting please. However, I get ahead of myself - each checkup on my progress seems to reveal snag after snag as I wade on, ironing them out, mucho time is consumed and although a lot of work is done the advance towards an end is slow. I really can now see why there are not many adventures on the market as opposed to the other types of games - they take so long to produce! But writing them is exciting - just as good, if not better than playing them. Especially when you realise that the whole game, the whole concept, or world of the adventure is your own creation. If this is a success you can rest assured that I will not stop at one adventure! I have recently bought a second-hand C128 and wondered if it were possible to use it in conjunction with GAC+. I know it will load in 64 mode, but wonder if there is any way of using the full 128 memory with the program? Just think of the potential if that were possible. Do you know of any way of producing adventures for the C128 using its full capabilities and GAC? Is there a version of GAC for that machine? It is a grand machine, hasn't much software though - there aren't many about I know, but I'd like to give it a try anyway. If there are any amateur adventure writers living in my area or around Barnsley they may be interested in visiting our local computer store as in my opinion it is the finest computer shop for miles! The address is ELBEE COMPUTERS, 17 Skipton Road, Colne for anyone who is interested.

Harold Dixon, Colne, Lancs

I wish you every success with your adventure, Harold. I also think it is a wonderful idea to put the proceeds to such a worthy cause. I'm afraid that there is no special GAC program for the C128 and that GAC+ will only work in C64 mode. That was the greatest fault in the design of the C128 as it is in fact three computers in one, but each is quite separate from the other. Virtually no software was produced for the 128 part of it and, as far as I know, very little for the CP/M part either. That is the reason that the machine, although beautifully designed in that it is three computers for the price of one, and easy to use, failed miserably to make any impact on the home computer market. I presume that most people thought that they might just as well stick to their C64's and not bother about the C128 and CP/M part of the package.....Mandy

Dear Mandy

The last issue of Adventure Probe was quite fantastic and it was a joy to read and re-read it. It was very well printed too, which makes reading much easier. I was particularly pleased with WIZARD WORKS: as you may have guessed, I'm writing my own game and I was slightly depressed when I learned that Simon Avery wrote his games in just 5 or

6 evenings. I've been writing my game for two years and it is not completed yet. So it was good to see that Dorothy Millard needs more time to write a game.

Claire Dyard, France

Dear Mandy

I have been interested in emulating other computers on the Atari ST ever since I fitted PC Speed to my ST some 18 months ago. I may therefore be able to shed some light on Brian Palmer's query in the September issue of Probe about the existence of a Spectrum emulator. In short, to the best of my knowledge, there isn't one. With the right hardware/software the Atari ST can be made to run like an IBM PC, an Apple Macintosh, a Sinclair QL, a BBC Micro, an Atari XL or a Sinclair ZX81 and it can also run the CP/M and Unix operating systems. PC, Mac and QL emulators all have to be purchased and, indeed, can be quite expensive, but the others are available from most good PD libraries. Amiga owners can similarly emulate a number of different computers including (so a certain extent) the Atari ST and I am told that there is also a Spectrum emulator for this computer - Amiga owners in the know will be able to give the definitive pronouncement on this. But even with the Spectrum emulator you will still have the problem of media incompatibility (as you do with all the above emulators other than the PC and Mac ones) because the ST doesn't have a cassette port and ST/Amiga and Spectrum disks are different sizes. You could get round this by finding someone who has a 3.5" disk drive attached to their Spectrum (which I'm told can be done) and persuading them to copy files for you, but I don't know whether even this would work satisfactorily. Undoubtedly the simplest way for 16 bit owners to play all those great, cheap Speccy adventures they've been drooling over is to shell out a few quid on a second-hand Spectrum.

Neil Shipman, Bristol

I believe that there is a piece of equipment available to plug into the Amiga to run Spectrum software with the emulator. I haven't got one myself but I do have emulators for Atari ST, IBM PC and Commodore 64 for the Amiga. To run C64 software with the emulator you need a lead (available from Trilogic cost around £10), to be able to connect your 5.25" drive to the Amiga. It is quite an experience seeing the old C64 logo appearing on the Amiga screen. I understand that our Bob (Amster) Adams is at present busily exploring the Spectrum emulator on the Amiga, however, not ever having owned a Spectrum computer, he is having great difficulty in figuring out which keys to press on the Amiga to get the desired results! Anyone familiar with the Spectrum keyboard will know immediately what I am talking about. If anyone can come to Bob's rescue with a diagram of the Spectrum keyboard it will prevent Bob's computer room walls from blistering with his frustrated swearing!.....Mandy

Morning Probers

Yes, you've got it, Sand Viper again, slightly miffed because my printer isn't very well, but I'm not too disgruntled as leave time is almost here and the Convention too! Been busy on my ancient Amstrad lately (no begging letters please), just trying to pit my wits against the finest - ENCHANTER, what a disaster - had a fight with the Adventurer, got squashed a few times in the Hammer Room (squashed the turtle even more), ran out of food and water too often to mention and in desperation chewed on those magic ropes. Even tried to kiss a frog (well, it does get lonely here). Last, but by no means least, how often have I been killed? - too many! The weather is cooling off now, getting near "real" party time, trouble is the flies and mossies appear in clouds and we end up feeding the flying population of Oman.

You all know about the Gulf War and the oil slicks, don't you? One of the lads went home from the bar a bit under the weather and found a black thing flapping about outside his door, gives it a poke and decides it is a Cormorant covered in oil. Being the kind hearted sort (albeit drunk) he gets the fairy liquid, fills the sink and pops in the bird, only to discover it is not a bird but a black plastic bag! On being asked what he did next he replied, "rung its neck and threw it out!" I only tell this story as a warning, next time you're out on the town it may not only be pink elephants you see!!!

Sand Viper
(Yes, still in the desert!)

Dear Fellow...

I don't know what adventure game addicts call themselves - apart from hooked! A casual visit to my brother-in-law while he was stuck on his first (and last) adventure - weeks of head scratching followed, so a computer was purchased, the tape was borrowed, played, an address obtained - and here I am, 24 adventures later and hungry for more! Help, I keep reading reviews in Probe (great mag, Mandy) but I don't know where to get them from. It's also nice to read in Probe that I am not the only new adventurer. I was feeling alone as everyone seems to know everybody else. Are there any addicts in Southampton? I also want/need a printer for a Spectrum 2x plus 2 128K cassette, can anybody help please? Phone Dot on 0703736939 after 6pm. My husband thinks I'm potty when I sit in front of the computer giggling to myself or sit up in bed saying, "I wonder if that's it?". Do other addicts do things like that?

Dot Vaughan, Southampton

Yes, Dot, we all tend to do things like that. My family still vividly recall the time when, whilst washing up, I grabbed a teaspoon in both hands, raised it up in front of my eyes and shouted. "Oh yes, that's it! I know it'll work!". Then, according to the family, I raced out of the room (still clutching the teaspoon), dived to the computer and wasn't seen again for the next four hours! They wouldn't really have minded too much apart from the fact that the kids had some of their friends in at the time!.....Mandy

Dear Mandy

In reply to Ian Osborne's letter in the September Probe, I would like to add my comments. I for one wouldn't like to see the Solution of the Month or the Serialised Solutions dropped in favour of long lists of Kings and Queens, especially as you say, now that Spellbreaker is to be no more. I enjoy the Serialised Solutions, they are like a Fantasy Serial and can be enjoyed even if one doesn't have the game. So more, not less for me! I mention this as you asked for our opinions. Mind you, Kings and Queens is a good feature - maybe lists could be applied for with SAE, like the Solutions, with the cost of copying added, and the updates in the Mag, also as with solutions.

Margo Porteous, Spondon, Derby

PERSONAL COLUMN

To PHOENIX, be very careful when you tackle Violator.....Chronos
(a friend of The Traveller)

Will LEE MARTIN, ALEX GOUGH, MIKE STANWORTH, PAUL GILL, DAVE LEWIS
please contact Peter Knowles, 153 Standhill Cres, New Lodge, Barnsley,
S Yorkshire, S71 1SW or ring (0226) 292141 as soon as possible please.

HELP WANTED

I would appreciate some help in PARADOX by Runesoft. This is a very good game but I am stuck in Magician's Rooms, unable to find the Magician. Any help would be appreciated.

Ron Guest

2 Eyncourt Road, Sheffield, S5 6SU

IN-TOUCH

SPECTRUM SOFTWARE WANTED: Any Sci-Fi/Space adventures on tape for 48K Spectrum. Please write with price required to PETER GREGSON, 28 Irton Road, Southport, Merseyside PR9 9DY or phone (0704) 538742.

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CONTACT WANTED PLEASE: Could the following authors (or anyone who knows them) please contact me as soon as possible. ALEX GOUGH, PAUL GILL, PAUL LUCAS, CHARLES SHARPE, LEE MARTIN, MIKE WHITE, PAUL ROBSON, LEE JOYNES, DAVE LEWIS, TIM KEMP, MIKE STANWORTH and JONATHAN PARTINGTON. Contact TONY COLLINS, 760 Tyburn Road, Erdington, Birmingham, B24 9NX. Tel: 021 749 2585 (9am to 9pm).

MESSAGE: From the MISTRESS OF THE HUNT. Three guesses which small furry rodent will be the intended prey. Season opens 26th October 1991 - care to join the pack?!

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 CPC6128 or PCW, but a few early ones are machine specific). Lists are sent on a SAE basis only.

This month:

ERNESTO MANUEL MONTEIRO SIMAO, Portimoveis, Rus Ranto de Jesus Caraca, IB/C, 8500 Portimao, Portugal is looking for Infocoms (and other adventures) for Amiga, Amstrad CPC664, Commodore 64 and Spectrum 2. Wants to buy LURKING HORROR, TRINITY, MIND FOREVER VOYAGING, SHERLOCK, PLANETFALL, STATIONFALL, HITCHHIKERS GUIDE, SUSPENDED, SUSPECT, BUREAUCRACY, ZORK 1, 2, 3, ZORK ZERO. ENCHANTER TRILOGY, DEADLINE AND HOLLYWOOD HIJINX. Any other quality adventures as well. He is offering £10-£20 for Amiga, £10-£15 for Amstrad and ST and £10 for C64 versions. Please state the version and price when writing. Also wants to buy S/h Atari 800XL, any offers?

JAY HONOSUTOMO, 23 Tintagel Close, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 6NL is desperately looking for ENCHANTER, DEADLINE and HITCH-HIKERS GUIDE (must be hardbacked version) on the Amstrad CPC6125. He is willing to swap LURKING HORROR, STARCROSS or SUSPENDED for ENCHANTER or DEADLINE. And any two of the above three for HITCHHIKERS. They are all originals and only originals accepted please.

As Infocoms become increasingly scarce month by month I have extended the range of 'Swop'n'Buy to take in ALL machines. If you want to use the service either phone the helpline number or write to Nic Rumsey, 167 Eastbourne Road, Lower Willingdon, E Sussex BN20 9NB. As usual it is a FREE service, just send S.A.E. if you want a reply to your letter.

KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

DEREK SHAW, 7 James Avenue, Clearways Park, West Kingsdown, Kent, TN15 6BE offers postal help on the following Spectrum adventures (Updated list):

THE PYRAMID, MUTANT, MISSION X, WITCH HUNT, MANSION QUEST, IN SEARCH OF ANGELS, CASTLE ADVENTURE, JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, THE BOGGIT, VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE, DESERT ISLAND, JADE NECKALCE, A HARVESTING MOON, SHERLOCK (Melbourne House), BOOK OF THE DEAD and WOLFMAN (Parts 1 and 2).

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO ENCLOSE SAE WHEN WRITING FOR HELP

If you would like to offer help on any adventures then please send in your list with name, address and type of computer they are played on. If you wish to join the telephone helpliners then please send your telephone number and the hours and days that you will be available to answer calls.

SOLUTION SERVICE

Solutions cost 30p each plus S.A.E. the latest solutions received this month for the archives are:

EVILUTION, GOLDEN PYRAMID and TAMORET

SAE for full list of Solutions Available from Probe please.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ADVENTURES

By *The Cartographer*

Mention the word "adventure" and most people think of a book, a film, a television programme, perhaps even a personal experience, but many people would think of computers because there is an army of computer owners to whom the word Adventure (with a capital "A") refers to a very specific kind of computer game. To get an idea of what computer Adventures are like, compare them with books. When you read an adventure story you enjoy the dangers, mysteries and exciting events - but they are happening to someone else. In a computer Adventure you do not sit observing the action - you are part of it. As the leading protagonist in the story, you are plunged into the action and it is you who lives out the experience.

In a book the reader cannot influence the course of events of the story. The order and outcome of happenings is always the same and no amount of re-telling will alter it. In a computer Adventure your decisions, judgments and actions determine how the plot unfolds. There can be any number of variations to the order of events, and many different endings, some pleasant, some unpleasant. The essential thing about computer Adventures is that you take an active part - though in the comfort of your own home.

Each adventure takes place in a particular environment. This might be a strange world under the earth, a fairground, a ghost town, another planet, a mythical land - in fact, just about anywhere. It can be set in the past, present or future. The Adventure usually has a consistent theme that includes an ultimate objective. For example, you might have to escape from an alien planet, find and destroy an evil wizard, rescue a princess, collect treasures or solve a crime and arrest the perpetrator.

Interesting as these factors are, the pleasure in playing an Adventure comes from solving the puzzles. These form an intrinsic part of the Adventure. A puzzle may be encountered in one of four situations. The most common situation is one where the puzzle must be solved before further progress can be made - such as when confronted with a dangerously dilapidated bridge. At the other extreme, the puzzle constitutes a red herring - having crossed a canyon to tackle the strange figure who has been staring at you from the other side, you find only an enormous mirror. The puzzle might be one to which the solution is helpful but not essential for the successful completion of the game - the discovery of a secret passage leading past a vicious Troll, perhaps. It could be a matter of life and death - you are stranded on a ledge with no obvious way up or down, and no food or drink.

Puzzles are capable of being solved by common sense and require no special expertise or knowledge. However, the Adventurer must be on the alert as clues to the solutions are always found in the text, or deduced from it. Random elements also have their vital place in the well written adventure.

It is likely when playing an adventure that you will come across objects, messages and characters that seem to have no real relevance to the story. Bear in mind at all times that almost everything in an adventure has a specific purpose, even if occasionally that purpose is to throw you off the right track. Of what significance is a collection of broken rum bottles? What notice should one take of a

hollow voice saying "Plugh"? How can one make practical use of a pile of evil smelling mud? Why was the rug nailed to the floor when there was nothing under it? These puzzles all come from actual adventures and were essential components of the plot. When you first find an object, no matter how mundane or strange, you are unlikely to be certain of its immediate relevance - but as sure as Dragon's eggs are Dragon's eggs you will need it before you are done.

Many adventures have a small maze in which every room or location is described in identical terms. The only sure way to map your way through such labyrinths is to emulate Hansel and Gretel and lay a trail by dropping objects, thereby uniquely identifying each room. This method has become so well known that some authors have added extra problems such as having a thief following you in to discreetly rearrange the objects behind you.

In some adventures, although you must solve every puzzle and achieve every objective to complete the game successfully, the order in which the mysteries are cleared and the goals reached is unimportant. This is in contrast to those adventures where there is only one path to a triumphant conclusion. A good adventure may take you hours, even weeks of playing before it yields its secrets. It must allow you to save the state of the game at any time onto tape or disc, so that you can resume play later. This is also useful when you reach a dangerous part of the adventure - striding boldly towards an army of Orcs armed with only a lamp and a bottle of water is asking for trouble. The prudent adventurer saves the state of the game before striking up a conversation with the Orcs. Then, if the Orcs feel like having the adventurer for supper, at least the game can be restarted and the adventurer can try a different course of action - far less vexing than beginning the adventure again from square one. Even if the adventurer is killed, that may not be the end of the journey. Some authors permit the deceased to be brought back to life, often with a puff of orange smoke, sometimes with a loss of possessions and/or points, and always in a less than desirable location, such as the nether-world or the middle of nowhere.

How do you take part in and communicate with the program? You can be addressed directly or represented by a "puppet" character whom you control with commands. The computer acts both as interpreter of your wishes and as narrator. The player enters commands through the keyboard and the computer's responses are displayed on screen. Some adventures display only text on the computer's screen. Some purely graphics, others a mixture of the two. Sound effects are mostly used in graphics-only adventures. Text adventures can be thought of as un-illustrated books, the words describing places, objects and events. The graphics in most text and graphics games serve to supplement the textual descriptions and are often static scenes of locations and objects. They range from simple line-drawings to detailed pictures. The graphics-centered adventures are normally used for stylised maps or pictures of terrain, and for representing the interiors of buildings. Characters and objects are represented by symbols or miniature figures. In these the player is usually restricted to a small number of commands, mostly single keystrokes for moving and controlling the character.

The textual display in an adventure generally covers three elements. Where you are, what you can see and where you can go. For example, the screen text might read "You are in a dark forest. Above you the sky is blotted out by dense foliage. There is a well worn track leading east

and west. Just ahead, to the north a yawning pit beckons. You can see a sword lying on the ground; around the sword is curled a green snake." You are given a description of your immediate surroundings, some of the directions you might take, and the objects in view. Commands usually consist of two words, a verb followed by a noun, although the more sophisticated adventures understand full sentences. Some of the standard verbs include GET, DROP, PUSH, PULL, THROW, LIGHT, EAT and DRINK. GO NORTH for example would be the usual way of specifying movement, although most adventures allow you to abbreviate these - for example W for GO WEST.

EXAMINE is an essential verb - it is often the means of acquiring further information. EXAMINE SNAKE might result in the message "It is a grass snake" or perhaps "The snake notices your movement towards it and strikes out at you." Some verbs do not need a noun. INVENTORY is used to tell you what you are carrying. Some objects can be placed inside others - water in a bottle or an axe in a bag for example - while some may be worn - a ring perhaps or a cloak. SCORE is often used to let the player know what progress towards the objectives has been made. Typing HELP may result in a hint for overcoming difficulty, but usually advises you to keep trying. Occasionally, in response to a particular command the adventurer may be told "You can't do that - yet!" which implies that the verb-noun combination will give a result but not now, and perhaps not in this place. Part of the challenge comes in finding out which verbs and nouns are relevant to the adventure. Words and combinations that the adventure does not understand or recognise are often met with "I don't know what you mean". Most adventure publishers supply hint sheets for those who get stuck. These offer subtle clues.

Some adventures are too large for the computer memory. To overcome this they are supplied on disc, the main program being loaded into memory at the start and chunks of text or graphics loaded from the disc as needed. But thanks to clever techniques for compressing large amounts of text into restricted memory and the use of machine code programming a large adventure can now be stored in the computer's memory. This means that such adventures can be supplied on cassette tape. There are adventures for virtually every computer. Any one of them should give you an enjoyable experience and could be the start of a lifetime hobby.

Happy Adventuring!

COLLECTIVE NAME FOR ADVENTURES

In response to the article by June Rowe in the last issue of Probe about a suitable name for a group of adventurers, Debby Howard has sent in her top ten suggestions:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. A Convention of adventurers. | 2. A Maze of adventurers. |
| 3. A Probe of adventurers. | 4. A Friendship of adventurers. |
| 5. An Awe of adventurers. | 6. An Addiction of adventurers. |
| 7. A Ferrago of adventurers. | 8. A Committal of adventurers. |
| 9. An Intelligence of adventurers. | And finally: |
| 10. An "Oh, bloody hell. I've gone off the page again!" of adventurers. | |

JOKE OF THE MONTH

By Debby Howard

How many adventurers does it take to change a lightbulb? 100. One to put the bulb in and 99 to phone up and ask how he/she did it!

SOLUTION OF THE MONTH

LEISURE SUIT LARRY II (LEISURE SUIT LARRY GOES LOOKING FOR LOVE - SIERRA)

By *Mandy* played on Amiga

You start the adventure outside Eve's house in Los Angeles. Walk into the garage and move out of sight on the right hand side. LOOK IN EVES PANTS. GET DOLLAR BILL. Leave garage and walk up and right to the end of the street (exit top right). Walk along pavement to next screen. Cross road towards sign and leave screen at top right. Walk past the television studio to the next screen. Walk along pavement to the next screen. Walk up to the fence. LOOK THROUGH KNOTHOLE IN FENCE. Exit this screen on the right. Enter Quickie Mart. Go up to girl at counter and GET LOTTERY TICKET. Enter random numbers at the prompt. Leave the Mart and go to the TV Studio. Enter the studio and wait up to the receptionist. SHOW TICKET TO GIRL. She will tell you some numbers so make a note of them. Now repeat the numbers that the girl gave you at the prompts. When you get into the green room go to the back of the room and SIT. When the man enters and speaks to you STAND and follow the man through the door on the left. Wait on the stool until you are asked a question. Make any reply you wish. It doesn't matter as you will win the contest. When back in the green room go to the back of the room and SIT and wait for the girl. When she speaks to you STAND and follow her through the door on the right. You will now spin the wheel and win one million dollars per year for life. When you receive your first million dollar note you leave the studio. Exit to the left and return to Eve's house. EXAMINE TRASH. EXAMINE TRASH out side the garage and you find your passport. GET PASSPORT. Exit the screen at the bottom right this time and walk across the next screen. Ignore the barbers shop for now and exit behind it. Exit the next screen along the path just under the bar sign towards the top of the screen. Exit the next screen on the left. Enter Molta Lira. Go to the back of the shop and READ SIGN. GET SWIMSUIT. Go to the counter and BUY SWIMSUIT. Exit the shop. Exit the next screen on the right and exit the next screen on the right also. Enter the drug store. Move Larry to the left hand side of the left display unit and GET SUNSCREEN. Go to the counter and BUY SUNSCREEN. Exit the shop. Exit the screen behind the shop and enter the Quickie Mart once more. Move to the soda dispenser. GET SODA. Move to the counter and BUY SODA. Exit the shop. Exit the screen bottom right. Exit the following screen bottom right also. Enter barbers shop. Walk up to the chair and SIT. (Get the full works here). Exit barbers. Exit screen on left and exit the following screen on the left also. Exit the next screen at the top right and exit the following screen on the top right also. Enter the music store. Go to the counter and TALK TO GIRL. After some misunderstanding and a little talk the girl will give you an Onklunk. Exit screen on the right. Now watch what happens next as a counter plot unfolds. When you next regain control of Larry continue walking towards the Bar and if a drunk offers you a drink say NO. Exit that screen at the bottom. Exit the next screen on the right and walk up to the man at the gate. SHOW TICKET TO MAN. He will open the gate and allow you to board the ship.

Once you have boarded the ship walk to the right until you appear in your cabin. Immediately OPEN DOOR to the right and enter the next cabin. Don't get close to Mama but listen to all she says then exit back into your cabin to the left. Now examine one or two things to give Mama time to leave her cabin. WEAR SWIMSUIT and walk to the nightstand and GET FRUIT. Now go back into Mama's cabin and walk up to the nightstand there. OPEN NIGHTSTAND. EXAMINE NIGHTSTAND. GET

SEWING KIT. CLOSE NIGHTSTAND. Now go back to your cabin CLOSE DOOR and exit through the bottom door. Now go up two flights of stairs and walk right to the right hand end of the ship onto the swimming pool area. Walk right into the pool and SWIM. TAKE BREATH. DIVE. Swim down to the bottom of the pool as quickly as possible and GET BIKINI TOP and return to the surface as quickly as possible. Swim to the edge of the pool and CLIMB OUT. Now walk round to the vacant chair and USE SUNSCREEN. Now SIT. Ignore the girl who makes advances to you and wait until she leaves. STAND. Return to your cabin and WEAR SUIT. Exit your cabin and climb two flights of stairs. Walk all the way to the left into the barbers shop and walk up to the chair. SIT and let the barber do his best to tidy you up and he will sell you a wig which you prefer to put in your pocket. Leave the barbers and walk up the next flight of stairs and walk left onto the bridge. Move Larry until he is near the console behind the captain and MOVE LEVER. Now exit the bridge and go down the stairs along the deck to the right and climb halfway up the centre stairs. Walk left until you find yourself on the lifeboat deck. Walk up to the lifeboat and JUMP IN. As soon as the lifeboat hits the water you should quickly enter WEAR WIG. Now you will travel on the lifeboat for ten days gathering points as you use the items you have carefully carried with you. Eventually you will land on a tropical beach with only the necessary possessions you require to start you along this part of the game. You should have the Onklunk, your money, the bikini top, and your passport.

Exit the beach to the left. Walk over to the naked woman and TALK TO WOMAN until she invites you to follow her. Wait until she leaves and then leave the beach to the right (but not immediately following her). Exit the beach at the bottom of the screen and watch while you wander around a garden for a while until you discover an exit into a restaurant. TALK TO MAN. SIT. wait until all the tables are full and he will usher you inside and arrange an impromptu table for you. Don't sit and eat! Go to the buffet table and TAKE KNIFE. Now leave the restaurant. You wander around the garden and wait until you are standing near the flowers in the centre and quickly type GET FLOWER. Now wait until you arrive at a bedroom. Talk to the maid then when she leaves go to the nightstand and GET MATCHES. Walk into the wash area and GET SOAP. Now leave the bedroom and wait until you wander around the gardens and arrive at a barbers shop. Walk up to the chair and SIT. When the barber has finished you should have long curly blond hair! Leave the shop and wander until you arrive at the beach and exit to the left once more. You should now find a bikini bottom lying on the rock in the centre. GET BIKINI BOTTOM and exit to the right. Go back to the bottom of the screen and enter the garden. Ignore the restaurant and wander until you reach the bedroom once more. Go behind the screen to the dressing area and WEAR BIKINI. PUT SOAP IN BIKINI. Leave the bedroom and wander to the barbers once more. Go to the chair and SIT. You will now have a body waxing session. Leave the shop and wait until you arrive at the beach again. Now you can exit the beach to the left side. Walk across the next screen to the left and avoid the KGB agents. Now you must walk along a tiny cliff path. When you vanish around the final bend on the cliffs you should quickly type WEAR SUIT. Now you will arrive at the airport. There are two men dancing near the door. They are KGB agents. Carefully walk as close to them as you can without danger and GIVE FLOWER TO AGENTS. Now you can enter the airport.

Once inside the airport walk off to the left and enter the barbers shop. Walk to the chair and SIT. Your hair will be returned to normal and you will get a bottle of hair rejuvenator. Leave the shop and

exit to the right. Exit the next screen to the right and go up to the desk. SHOW PASSPORT TO MAN. He will eventually let you through to the baggage x-ray department. Walk to the moving line and as each bag arrives GET BAG until you find one with a bomb in it. Now you will take this through the airport until it explodes and clears the queue. Go to the counter and GET TICKET. When you have it go back to the passport man and SHOW PASSPORT again. Now go through to the right and walk on to the right until you come to the escalators. Go to the vending machine (red one) and GET INSURANCE. You will get a parachute. Go to the counter and ORDER FOOD. When it arrives GET BOBBY PIN. Now walk up the escalator and up to the next desk. GET PAMPHLET and SHOW TICKET. You can now board the plane. Once the plane has taken off GET BAG. GIVE PAMPHLET TO KEN. STAND and move to the rear of the plane. Go to the bottom right of the plane and WEAR PARACHUTE. FICK LOCK. MOVE HANDLE and OPEN DOOR. You will be sucked out so immediately OPEN PARACHUTE and you will fall down to an island jungle and be caught in a tree. CUT PARACHUTE with knife and you fall to the floor. GET STICK. Now move as near to the left hand side of the bush as you can without the bees killing you and CRAWL UNDER BUSH. On the next screen you will see an anaconda waiting for you! Walk under the tree where he is waiting and quickly type USE STICK. This will take care of him. Move to the next screen. This is a bog of quicksand but you can cross safely if you only walk on the path marked in light orange towards the right side of the screen. The next screen is a bit tricky so do make sure you save before making any moves. Walk down to the edge of the river and move a little to the right until you are near the vines. SWING ON VINE. As soon as you start to swing on the vine you must quickly input SWING ON NEXT VINE and again SWING ON NEXT VINE until you reach the third vine. As soon as your swing is right JUMP to land safely on the other side of the river. Now GET VINE and exit to the right.

Here you will find the girl of your dreams and fall in love and she will take you to her father. After passing a little test he will take you onto a path near a chasm beneath the volcano. When he leaves return to the village to the campfire and TAKE ASHES. Now go back to the path and stand as near to the edge beneath the tree as you safely can and THROW VINE OVER BRANCH. You will get to the other side but cannot return this way again. Continue along the path until you come to the glacier. Near the steps THROW ASHES ON ICE and you will manage to make a way upwards. Continue along the pathways until you reach the summit of the volcano beside an elevator which you cannot open. Stand as near to the crack to the right of the elevator as you possibly can and PUT BAG IN REJUVENATOR. LIGHT REJUVENATOR. THROW REJUVENATOR INTO CRACK. Now the door to the elevator will open so go to it and enter elevator. There is no floor but don't worry. You have now really done all that you possibly can to complete the adventure so why not sit back and enjoy the screens and screens of storyline that follow as you finally find true love at last and destroy the evil Dr Nanookie once and for all! WELL DONE!

NEWS

NEW SOFTWARE HOUSES COME TO THE RESCUE

As you will have gathered from recent editorials in Probe, there has been quite a bit of concern over the whereabouts of Mark Eltringham and the situation regarding Recreation Re-Creation Software for the Amstrad. I won't go into full details of what has happened to Mark or the rather involved story in the search for him. Suffice to say that Mark was eventually contacted and the situation is that, as far as Mark is concerned, Recreation Re-Creation is no longer trading. I believe, from current information, that it is unlikely that outstanding orders will be honoured but I will let you know if this situation changes. My suggestion to anyone in that situation is to write to the last address we have for Mark, at his parents address - see reviews in the last issue of Probe for that - I believe that mail is still being passed to him from there. If you get no joy from Mark then I would suggest that you get some advice from the Trading Standards Officer for the Norwich district (usually listed under the local County Council). They have helped many people in the past with similar problems. I would suggest that you give Mark a chance to clear matters up with you first if at all possible though.

Good news is that Mark has agreed to Peter Knowles and Tony Collins taking over the marketing of his extensive range of games so they will still be available to adventurers. I also believe that perhaps one or two will be available from WoW Software also. Tape versions will be available from Peter and disc versions available from Tony. Both Peter and Tony will be sending in advertisements shortly so you will know what is available from them or you will find the addresses to write to in the Reviews section of Probe during this and the coming months. As you know, I have a great many reviews on file for Marks games which I had to hold back until I knew what was happening. I apologise to the reviewers for this but I am sure they understand the problems. I will now use the reviews as information comes in about availability from Peter and Tony and will change the addresses as appropriate.

I would stress that neither Peter Knowles or Tony Collins can fulfill any outstanding orders for Recreation Re-Creation software unless Mark passes any orders and monies over to them, in which case they will do so with pleasure. I will keep you posted on further news on the situation as I receive it. When this kind of thing happens, when small software companies vanish without any warning leaving customers without either goods or refunds, it does make me angry. Not only does it leave Probe readers at the losing end of things it also makes life rather uncomfortable for the many reputable small software companies as people begin to doubt the wisdom of using mail order. In most cases I am as surprised as everyone else when a company folds but sometimes I get some "inside information" of what to expect but, because of the laws governing publications such as Probe, I am prevented from issuing any warning in advance. As one or two of you know I nearly landed myself with a heavy lawsuit when I warned of this once before. What really annoys me though is why customers cheques are cashed when they know that orders cannot be honoured. Surely the proprietor knows in advance that they are running into difficulties and should call a halt there and then, not cash any further cheques and try to sort themselves out so that customers are not left high and dry. I am sorry to climb onto my soapbox like this but I know, from personal experience with my own small software company that this should never happen and the effect that such "bad apples" have on the rest of us who try hard to provide a good service to our customers.

HINTS AND TIPS

NEVERENDING STORY

In response to pleas for help in the last issue
By *Dennis Dowda* 77 played on Spectrum

Part One:

Fly south across the desert on Falkor.
Light the branch at the campfire and use it to burn the bushes.
Have the leather with you when you get the glass fragments.
Wait till the sphinxes blink then go south.
Blow the horn to attract Falkor.
Drop the crystal in the room with the strange machine.
Smash the box while carrying the stone.

Part Two:

Remove the planks to reveal a stairway.
The glowlobe will provide light underground.
Cut the web with the knife.
Open the tin and drop it by the storeroom entrance to kill the rats.
Unlock the cell with the iron key.
Drop the coin in the torture chamber.
The golden key unlocks the main gates of the city.

Part Three:

Say please to enter the door to the Empress's quarters.
Unlock the tower door with the golden key and go east.

GRUE-KNAPPED

By *Dennis Dowda* 77 played on Spectrum

Put the seeds in the cage to catch the parrot.
Plant the crisp in the pot.
Look behind the cupboard to find a wand.
Throw the dagger back at the dwarf.
Give the bat to the cricket.
Jump on the computer to reach the high shelf.

PUZZLED

By *Dennis Dowda* 77 played on Spectrum
Move the log in the cabin to find a pair of mittens.
Eat the spinach to enable you to climb the firemans pole.
Use the hacksaw to saw off the bolt on the grid.
Exam the timetable on the station and go to sleep.

FOOLS GOLD

By *Ian Dowda* 77 played on Commodore 64

Offer the whiskey to the prospector.
Use the oil to free the track and rusty lock.
The Bear will tame the mountain lion.
Hit the wall at the Bear Baiting Room.
Open the jewelry box with the staff.
To tame the bear is a piece of cake!

THE DARKEST ROAD

By *Gareth Pitchford* played on Spectrum

Can't see an exit? - Say Warning.
To get past the wraiths - Stand still.
Pray at the shrine.
Prick finger with needle and give the goblet of blood to the demon.
X Demon, get diamond and move bones.
Kneel to get past the Gods.

QUEST FOR THE PICKLED CABBAGE

By *Gareth Pitchford* played on Spectrum

Lift mattress to find a pie.

Eat the hamster and sit on the chair.

Burst the fat man and jump on the fat womans belly after dropping the pie. (Eh? - Ed)

FLOOK ONE

By *Simon Avery* played on Amstrad

When in the maze, blow out the candle and follow the arrows.

Break the crystal and throw vial of holy water at demon.

THE LAMBERLY MYSTERY

By *Kevin Murphy* played on Spectrum

In the start location examine everything and TAKE things OUT of or OFF objects eg. TAKE TOBACCO OUT SLIPPER.

When Dr Fordham arrives listen to him then SAY FORDHAM "WHERE IS THE HOUSE" to find out where Pycroft Hall is.

When in Victoria Station BUY TICKET then go to platform 3.

When at Edgware Road SAY ASSISTANT "PYCROFT HALL" to find Cunninghams address.

When in Kennington Lane you should QUESTION CUNNINGHAM, pay him, then go home and read the letter.

In Lamberly TELL DRIVER "PYCROFT HALL". Examine the flowers in Miss Wilders garden and the dresser in her bedroom. Examine the body and SAY WATSON "EXAMINE BODY". Get the note also.

To operate cabs simply CLIMB IN, TELL DRIVER "wherever", wait for it to stop, PAY DRIVER, CLIMB OUT. If you forget to pay the driver be ready for a nasty shock!

STALKER

By *Kevin Murphy* played on Spectrum

To get out the pod PRESS 1, PRESS 4, TAKE ALL, LEAVE POD. Go straight to the cave crawler and let him follow you to the pit, then JUMP, JUMP back and collect the material, branch and flint. Tie the material to the branch and dip it in the open barrel. Go back to the cave and STRIKE FLINT ON BOULDER. Get what you find. Get the metal shard and go to where the bloke clobbers you on the head. In the hut CUT a hole in the wall.

SWORD OF VHOR

By *Dorothy Millard* played on Commodore 64

Chop the tree to get through the south exit.

Wave the wolvesbane to get rid of the dog.

At junction simply knock on the door to reveal a north exit.

Give the plate to Vhor.

In the Black Room rub the sapphire and wave sceptre which is replaced with a shield.

At the vast chasm throw the rope then climb it.

Chop the wall using the axe.

Make sure you have the shield before entering Dragon's Chamber then drop water to put out the flames.

Don't pick up the Sword of Vhor unless you are wearing the gloves.

Throw the sword at the dragon to kill it.

Return with the sword to the shack to complete the game.

EYE OF THE INCA

By *Dorothy Millard* played on Commodore 64

In the Emperors Writing Room, move the statue before going west and the axe falls the other way.

At the south end of the large hall stomp your feet to reveal a slot

where you put the knife.

In the wood panelled room clap your hands twice to open the door.
In the room with an open ceiling ring the bell to open the north door
and move the vase to reveal a passageway.

At the sacrificial altar prick your finger with the needle.

Throw rock in the furnace room and a trap door opens.

At top of steps put the ladder in the hole to get down into the maze
of passages.

Wear scuba gear before going west into the quicksand burial chamber.

Use the ladder to climb out of the quicksand.

Put the coffin in the bubbling pool and sit on it then paddle with the
gold shovel.

At the north end of the corridor, get the shovel back from the
quicksand burial chamber by using the shovel.

Total number of treasures = 26 plus "The Eye of the Inca", which
should be returned to the Jungle Clearing to complete the game.

ZORK ZERO

By *Paul Hardy* played on Amiga

The permanent source of light you will require is a candle and not the
talking torches.

Read about Jester in the tome in the library to learn his middle name.

LORDS OF THE RISING SUN

By *Paul Hardy* played on Amiga

It doesn't really matter which of the two brothers you play as the
idea is exactly the same - conquer all the castles of Japan. If you
aren't very good at beseiging castles, then send one of your followers
to the castle in question and when he arrives, he will attack the
castle by himself. When combat begins between opposing armies move
your archers to one side in a tight group, then let your footsoldiers
charge into the enemy ranks. Then when the battle is won, click on
the enemy general. You will now find yourself charging through his
retreating men on horseback - slay the footsoldiers and when you see
the enemy general beside his fallen horse take a swipe at him too.
Try to synchronise attacks so that two of your armies attack an enemy
group simultaneously. Try to keep control of any parts you may
conquer as these are extremely valuable!

WHERE EVIL DWELLS

By *Simon Avery* played on Amstrad

Kill the troll with the sword.

Step over the trip-wire.

PULL ARM in the altar (or Alter as the authors spells it).

PLACE PLANK ON LEDGE to cross the pool.

THE GOLDEN SWORD OF BHAKHOR

By *Alf Baldwin* played on Spectrum

In the large tent, pull the curtain and attack the chieftain. When he
forces you to your knees, throw sand in his face. Wear his robe to be
safe from military patrols and to enable you to get food from the
tribal women. Do not eat the food until you need to or the game will
crash.

Rescue the maiden in the solitary tent from the unwelcome attentions
of the tribesman. She is Princess Mari-Am, and she will lead you
through the waterfall to Arkan-Ra, the Lord of Sweetwater.

Forgive Arkan-Ra for losing his key and he will give you a silver
disc.

Discard the robe before entering the torrent, it could drag you down.

GETTING YOU STARTED

THE GOLDEN PYRAMID

By *Alf Baldwin* played on Spectrum

X BIRD (protecting something), X TREE (nest), X NEST (egg), WAIT (bird flies away), GET EGG, REMOVE HARNESS (slide to base of tree), GET HOOK, X HOOK, W, SEARCH BUSHES, GET MONKEY, E, E, DROP MONKEY (it trips wire and is caught in a net), W, S, D, ROLL EGG (python swallows it and chokes to death), SKIN PYTHON, GET SKIN, TWIST SKIN (into form of a rope), TIE SKIN (to hook), THROW HOOK (catches on edge of pit), CLIMB SKIN (to south side of pit), RAM SAVE (random element, you could be struck by lightening).....

TREASURE ISLAND

By *Ian Dowd* 17 played on Spectrum

Part One: INV, X CLOTHES, OPEN DOOR, IN, U, N, OPEN DOOR, IN, X BED (you find the body of Billy Bones), X BILLY (wearing a buttoned up shirt, something is clenched in his fingers), UNBUTTON SHIRT (you take a key), UNCLENCH FINGERS, GET PAPER (the black spot), OPEN CUPBOARD, IN, UNLOCK CHEST, X CHEST, GET PACKET, OPEN PACKET, GET MAP, OUT, OUT, S, D, OUT, X BUSH, E, D.....

Part Two: W, S, S, SE, X ROCK (abrasive), X BIRD (will catch anything that flies), NW, NW, U, OPEN DOOR, IN (stockade wall in need of repair), OUT, D, SW, W, NE, E, D, GET AXE, GET SHOVEL, GET PICKAXE....

BOOK OF THE DEAD PART 2

By *Peter Knowles* played on Amstrad

Load in saved position from end of part 1: Type RESTORE. REMOVE BLINDFOLD, LOOK, UP, TALK TO WOMAN, SAY IN TORTURE CHAMBER, D, N, E, E, WAIT, SAY RACK, LOOK (woman bursts in and sets you free), GET CHEST, EXAMINE CHEST, PUT PIPE IN CHEST, PUT BEADS IN CHEST, DROP CHEST, S, E, E, N, IN, UP, UP, UP, UP, UP, W.....

YARKON BLUES

By *Lorna Paterson* played on Amstrad

EXAMINE POD, PULL PANEL, GET SHOVEL, S, S, E, E, E, E, DRINK WATER, FILL BOTTLE, N, N, N, DIG, S, S, S, W, W, DIG, GET ROCK, DRINK WATER, E, E, DRINK WATER.....

PRISON BLUES

By *Lorna Paterson* played on Amstrad

EXAMINE BED, LOOK, GET BOOK, OPEN BOOK, LOOK, GET CARD, EXAMINE WINDOW, PULL BAR, GET BAR, EXAMINE DOOR, INSERT CARD, OPEN DOOR.....

MAGICIAN'S APPRENTICE

By *Lorna Paterson* played on Amstrad

GET BACKPACK, EXAMINE BACKPACK, LOOK, GET MAP, GET STAFF, S, E, S, E, READ MAP, S, S, U, EXAMINE BED, GET HAT, SAY HOME.....

TAMORET

By *Claire Dyard* played on Atari ST

W, W, OPEN CABINET, GET FILE, READ FILE, DROP FILE, E, E, S, S, E, EXAMINE COUNTER, GET VIAL, EXAMINE VIAL, READ LABEL, EXAMINE TABLE, GET SEED, W, N, W, EXAMINE DIAL, TURN RIGHT, 4, 9, TURN LEFT, 3, 96, TURN RIGHT, 2, 4, TURN LEFT, 1, 50, W, GET BULLET, E, E, E, EXAMINE RACK, GET LAMP, EXAMINE LAMP, E, EXAMINE CRATE, GET SPADE, W, W, S, W, OPEN BOX, EXAMINE BOX, GET FUSE, E, S, W, W, N, EXAMINE SHELF, GET BONE, S, E, E, S, TALK TO MERCHANT, S, W, W, GIVE BONE TO DOG.....

EVILUTION

By *Mandy* played on Atari ST

BUY BEER, DRINK BEER, BUY BEER, DRINK BEER, BUY BEER, DRINK BEER, BUY BEER, BUY KEY, S, ASK STORYTELLER "HELLO", N, U, UNLOCK DOOR, OPEN DOOR, W, SLEEP, E, E, GET ALL, READ NOTE, CAST PROTECT AT ME, CAST FLY AT ME, E, U, GET BOTTLE, D, E, E, GET PHIAL, W, W, N, N, KILL GRAVEDIGGER, CAST DEATH AT DEMON, KILL DEMON (repeat until he is dead), GET ALL, SLEEP.....

KINGDOM OF HAMIL

By *Philip Reynolds* played on Amstrad

Go to the east end of the Chapel and GET ALL, return to the Middle of the Chapel, TURN ON the LAMP then LIFT the SLAB. Go east and decode the password from the message on the wall, (the first three words are THE PASSWORD IS, the last word can be decoded using the letters from the first three), type the password and a door will open. Go back west until you come to the room with the coffin, OPEN the COFFIN and a vampire will arise and chase you, go directly east through the door and GET the TAPESTRY you find there, this reveals a window the sunlight from which kills the vampire. Return to the coffin and GET the DOCUMENTS then go to the Orbicular chamber and GET the WAND. Go Northeast then east, you drop everything and a rockfall blocks your way back, use the following route to get through the maze picking up the coins on the way: E, N, E, S, SW, S, E, N, E and you're at a small valley. PAY the FARE and you're transported to Quarternion. GET the CROWN then go south, GET ALL the objects you dropped and return west then southwest to the Orbicular chamber.....

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA

(A GOLDEN OLDIE FROM THE VAULTS OF TREASURES)

By *Ron Rainbird* played on Atari 800XL

Start at marble hallway then go North, Royal Chamber, look at King, go South Hallway, South again, by Palace, South once more to Dusty Trail, get Sack, go back North to by Palace, then West to Road, West again to Clearing, get water, then East to Road, East to by Palace, East to road, South to Dry Waterhole and Beggar. Give water to Beggar, then get Discus. North to Road, West to By Palace, West to Road, West to Clearing, Enter Cave and examine Statue (you see a Golden Helmet of Invisibility) throw Discus at Statue and get Helmet. Wear Helmet to become invisible, get Discus then go East to Clearing, East to Road, enter Temple, Pray, get Sandals, wear Sandals, then go South to Road, East to By Palace, East to Road, East to Temple, go Dias, Pray, get Shield. Retrace your steps to the other Temple, go to the Pedestal and Wait.....

SEABASE DELTA

By *Neil Ashmore* played on Spectrum

GOLDEN OLDIE

OPEN BRIEFCASE, EXAMINE POCKETS, GET DOCUMENTS, GET CARD, E, S, PULL LEVER, ENTER CAR, FASTEN SEATBELT, INSERT CARD, INSERT CARD, UNFASTEN BELT, LEAVE CAR, N, EXAMINE SCREEN, 104, 199, S, ENTER CAR, FASTEN BELT, INSERT CARD, UNFASTEN BELT, LEAVE CAR, GET SCREWDRIVER, ENTER CAR, FASTEN BELT, INSERT CARD, UNFASTEN BELT, LEAVE CAR, GET TORCH, ENTER CAR, FASTEN BELT, INSERT CARD, UNFASTEN BELT, LEAVE CAR, S, S, OPEN CUPBOARD, GET SUIT, N, W, W, N, GET PLAYER, S, W, W, W, S, U, N, DROP EVERYTHING YOU HAVE, N, GET BOTTLE, S, W, W, W, S, GET FLIPPERS, GET FORK, E, OPEN FRIDGE, GET MILK, EXAMINE SHELVES, GET FLOUR, W, N, W, DROP MILK, DROP FLOUR, DROP BOTTLE, WEAR FLIPPERS.....

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THIS SECTION WOULD BE APPRECIATED PLEASE

GOLDEN PYRAMID - SPECTRUM 48K

OBJECTS AND USES - BY ALF BALDWIN.

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|------------------|--|
| SAFARI HAT | - Fill it with water at the river to drink and to extinguish the fire under the cauldron.
Wear it when going up the hill to the pyramid to avoid sunstroke. |
| KNIFE | - Skin the python with it. Also to give to the tribesman in the pyramid in exchange for the loan of his lodestone. |
| MONKEY | - Drop it by the trip wire. |
| EGG | - Roll it towards the python. |
| SNAKESKIN | - Twist it into a form of rope. |
| HOOK | - Tie the snakeskin to it. Throw it to climb out of the snakepit and also to climb the oily tunnel in the pyramid. |
| FALCON'S FEATHER | - Use it to open the door to the pyramid before giving it to the Witch Doctor. |
| FLESH | - Throw it into the steel trap. |
| BRASS KEY | - Not required. |
| TORCH | - Needed in pyramid. Light it at the fire. |
| FRUIT | - Eat it if you get hungry. |
| AIR DUCT | - Shake it to dislodge dirt. |
| RAFT | - Sail it across underground lake and wait for tribesman to appear. On return, dismantle the raft to get round logs to act as rollers. |
| LOGS | - Insert them under the slab, so you can push it over the floor of spikes. |
| CRATE | - Smash it by burning the rope holding the rock above it. The crate contains a map of the quicksand. |
| TALISMAN | - Remove the hair and tie it to the lodestone to act as a compass. Map and compass needed to cross the quicksand. Before returning the lodestone to the tribesman, untie the hair and thread it back through the talisman. The talisman must be worn when filling the chalice with the elixir. |
| ROPE | - Needed to re-build the raft to return the lodestone to the tribesman. |
| RED WHEEL | - Turn it to raise the iron panel just inside the pyramid. When raised you can avoid the quicksand. |
| GOLDEN TOKEN | - Given to you by the tribesman when you return his lodestone. Insert it in the slot to open iron box. |
| URN | - Fill it with water at the lake. Throw the water on the hot coals to cross them. |
| GOLDEN CHALICE | - Fill it with elixir to take back to the chief. |
| LEVER | - Pull it to open door to pyramid. |

SERIALISED SOLUTION

LOOM

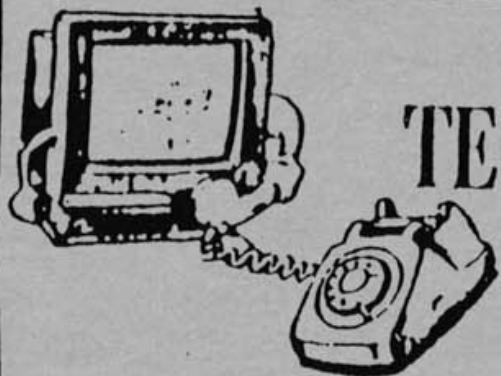
By *Mandy* played on Atari ST

PART ONE

After the introduction: Examine the leaf on the tree and make your way to the village. Enter the tent to the bottom left of the screen and keep walking right, examining the tapestries as you go, until you come to the Loom. The game will take over for a while here. When you are in control once more take the distaff. Walk to the egg. Examine it to get the OPEN DRAFT. Cast OPEN DRAFT on the egg. The game will once again take over for a while. Leave the tent and make your way onto the path and towards the top left of the next screen into the forest. Examine the four holes found in the trees until you find one that is empty. Go left to the graveyard screen and examine the thorns to release a rabbit which will wake the owl sleeping on the gravestone. Go back to the forest and examine the hole which was empty. You will then get the NIGHT VISION draft. Go back to the village and enter the tent in the middle of the second "village" screen. It is dark here. Walk until you see two eyes appear then cast the NIGHT VISION spell. Go to the spinning wheel and examine it to get the STRAW INTO GOLD spell. Walk to the pile of straw and cast the STRAW INTO GOLD spell upon it. Leave the tent and go to the far right of the village and enter the tent. Examine both the dyepot and the flask to obtain the DYING SPELL and the EMPTYING SPELL. Experiment here with the spells for a while. Go to the Landing Stage screen via the bottom left of each passing screen and examine the gull to obtain the OPEN SPELL once more. Cast this on the clam. You should by now have obtained the note "F" on the stave below the distaff. Return to the start location and, standing by the tree, examine the sky. Cast the OPEN SPELL on the sky. The tree should be hit by lightening and the game will show you the tree falling into the sea and drifting to the landing stage. Go to the landing stage and jump into the water. Make your way onto the log and you will be taken from the island.

You will drift until you come across a tornado in the ocean. Examine it to get the TWIST SPELL. Cast this BACKWARDS at the tornado to untwist it. You can now make your way to land. Go to the back of the beach screen and enter the forest and keep going until you come to some shepherds who will become visible, giving you the INVISIBLE SPELL (BACKWARDS!). Ignore them for the time being and go back to the beach and make your way to the green glass city. Make your way into the domed building you will find and examine the plaques on the two graves you find there. Someone will enter and the game will take over for a while whilst you enter into conversation with the man. Make your way to the base of the tower and enter. Here you will overhear a conversation between two people about a scrying sphere. Note what they say. When they have gone, go out of the tower and point the pointer at the people in the window at the top of the tower and cast the INVISIBLE SPELL on them. Re-enter the tower and make your way into the glass cube to the bottom right of the screen. Click on it twice and you will be transported to the top of the tower. You are invisible here so make your way across to the other side of the tower, past the workmen, and exit at the other side by ringing the glass bell. If you like you can hang around and listen to the conversation of the workmen as this will add atmosphere to the story. When you appear at the base of the tower on the left hand side, go to the scrying crystal and examine it. You will see a vision of what will happen to you a few hours into the future and receive the CAST TERROR spell as you watch yourself casting this at the Shepherds.....

TO BE CONTINUED...



TELEPHONE HELPLINE

ALF BALDWIN	0452 500512	MON TO SAT 10AM TO 5PM	Spectrum
WALTER POOLEY	051 9331342	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Various
DOREEN BARDON	0653 628509	MON TO FRI 6PM TO 10PM WEEKENDS ANY REASONABLE TIME	Spectrum
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	Various
ISLA DONALDSON	041 9540602	SUN TO SAT NOON TO 12PM	Amstrad
NIC RUMSEY	0323 482737	MON TO FRI 6PM TO 9PM	Various
BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE	0935 26174	SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM	BBC
BARBARA GIBB	051 7226731	ANY EVENING FROM 7PM	BBC
DAVE BARKER	071 7321513	MON TO FRI 7PM TO 10PM	Various
VINCE BARKER	0642 780076	ANY REASONABLE TIME	CBM64
STUART WHYTE	061 9804645	ANY REASONABLE TIME	Amstrad
ROBIN MATTHEWS	0222 569115 OR 0642 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 64 COUNTY ROAD, ORMSKIRK, WEST LANCs, L39 1QH.

* * * ADVENTURE PROBE * * *

Fax and Phone 0492 877305

Between 10am and 9pm any day apart from Sunday please
If you need to contact Adventure Probe then I will try to be available during these times apart from shopping and the occasional evening meeting. If you are telephoning for help on an adventure then please try to call during daytime hours but please try one of the helpliners for help first, as above.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ONLY RING AT THE TIMES SHOWN