

ADVENTURE PROBE

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ADVENTURE PROBE

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BACK ISSUES

All back issues are available, at the above prices. Volume 1 comprises 19 issues (June 1986 - Dec 1987), subsequent volumes are 12 issues Jan - Dec.

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Short, private advertisements in the In-Touch section are free to subscribers. Trade prices are: FULL PAGE £5.00, HALF PAGE £3.00 but one page per issue free (subject to available space) for regular subscribers i.e. 3 issues or more in advance.

DISTRIBUTION

Adventure Probe is distributed during the first week of the month (but will be a little erratic until I get back on schedule). Copy date for contributions and advertisements is 14th of the previous month.

CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions are gratefully accepted. Please keep me well supplied with computer and adventure-related material. It doesn't matter how brief the entry is. It may be the very information someone has been waiting for. It will be **very** helpful if items for different **sections** are on separate pieces of paper. It doesn't have to be printed or typed but best handwriting will be appreciated, as I am not familiar with every detail. When you submit an entry for the IN-TOUCH section please mark which are adventures, utilities, arcades, etc.

POSTAL ADDRESS

Please send all correspondence, subscriptions, etc. to:-

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HALL OF FAME

Many thanks to the following readers who have sent in contributions since the last issue:

Dorothy Millard, Tom Leahy, Wynne Snowdon, John Thomson, Jack Lockerby,
 Grimwold, David Rawson, Steve Clay, Peter Clark, Tim Kemp, Trevor Whitsey,
 Martin Freemantle, Diane Rice, Nell Shipman, Vicky Campbell, Neil Currie,
 Julian Spragg, Harold Dixon, Walter Pooley, Les Mitchell, James Judge,
 Simon Avery, Ron Rainbird, Keith Burnard,
 Terry Taylor and Ian Brown.

Special thanks to Dorothy Millard, Dream World and Venturesoft for software,
 Margaret Crewdson for a lovely cover picture, and
 Geoff Lynas who I am hoping will work yet another miracle
 with the printing of the magazine.

EDITORIAL



Dear Reader.

I hope most of you receive this issue before the 25th December, if you don't it isn't for the lack of trying. Sixty pages took a lot of planning, typing, re-arranging and especially printing out. The latter gave me the most trouble as, my usually reliable printer suddenly got the jitters and printed the first couple of lines of each page with either ghost images or missing out parts of letters. (It is a Citizen 120D and if anyone has had this problem, or knows what may be causing it I shall be please to hear from you). Half a ream of scrap paper and two dry ribbons later I gave up and chose the best of what I had - none of them very good, so please accept my apologies in advance. Maybe Santa will bring me a new one but I doubt if his finances are any better than my own.

If you *can* read the magazine fairly easily you should find something of real interest. Due to slightly lower subscription numbers lately I couldn't produce a separate supplement this year, but a fair portion of this issue contains lovely pictures, quizzes, wordsearches, poems, articles, stories, etc. and I've still managed to squeeze in your letters, some reviews, news, help, and a seasonal full solution plus an index that took ages to compile. Amazingly there are over 140 different adventures reviewed and help given for over 150 games covered in the 12 issues during 1993. I hope to improve on this next year.

One more apology. It would be a help if you put your own name on any contribution you send as I don't always open the mail (my husband helps if he is in when the postman calls) and sometimes they can get separated from any covering letter you may enclose with it, hence the lack of credit on a few of the items in this issue. My sincere apologies to those concerned, and if you would like to claim your work, I will be very pleased to give you a special mention in the January issue. Next time I write it will probably be 1994, and if my mental arithmetic is correct I calculate the September 1994 issue will be the 100th (please correct me if I am wrong!). Get your thinking caps on and see if it can be an issue worthy of the landmark!

That only leave me to thank everyone who has so kindly send me Christmas cards, and to wish you all a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. I'll be home most of the holiday, so if you need help or just wish to chat don't hesitate to 'phone.

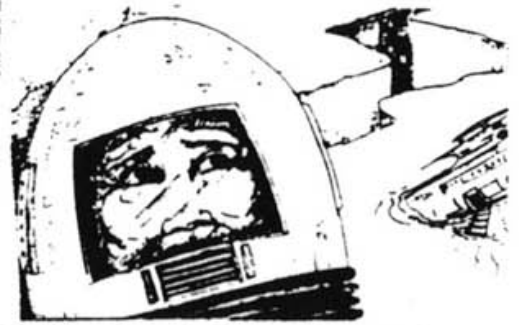
Barbara A.F.I.O. Hon. Member (more on this next month)

REVIEWS

COUNTDOWN TO DOOM

Written by Peter Killworth

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on an Atari ST



You set off from Earth in your one-man ship and soon orbit the planet Doom (short for Doomawangara) which has a weird corrosive climate and will cause you many problems. When your ship is suddenly attacked it crashes onto the surface of Doom and the aptly named planet will claim another victim unless you can find the spares to repair your ship before it collapses, represented by a limit of 400 moves.

COUNTDOWN TO DOOM is the first of the "Doom" trilogy, and has a long pedigree. It was originally published in 1982 by Acornsoft for the BBC, then in 1989 Topologika took over and the text was expanded and new puzzles added. Also it was now available for other computers (see end of review for details) but the revised version was not, until now, in any format that would work on any of my computers. Now that the Atari ST version has just been released I have the opportunity of playing the larger version that I felt was always there if only the memory had been available.

The beginning is identical to what I remember from all those years ago, but when I started to move further afield I soon noticed where it had been extended. Picture the landing area as the hub of a wheel with each spoke radiating out as a different type of landscape: well, these spokes have now been lengthened to accommodate the extra programming. Probably only someone who has played the original taped-based adventure will notice the joins. Like me when I soon fell foul of an allodile which I'm sure wasn't there when I first wandered around the swamp.

The cold region always seemed to have greater possibilities, and it has now been extended to an icy world of an ice-rink and icicles. Leaving wasn't easy as I had to set four switches to ON before I was allowed to proceed through a time-controlling portal and its maze of forcefields. I think I missed something here and it affected my progress later on in the game - namely I couldn't open some sliding doors. I ground to a halt here after an ingenious, for its time, but not too difficult, seesaw puzzle. The text is very descriptive as far as the locations are concerned, but with no examine facility it is essential that you note the initial description of an object when first found as you may not get a second chance.

The short location text is shown when you re-visit a location and the turn limit to complete the adventure doesn't allow for my habit of redescribing a location as I prefer the full description. [I know this isn't a problem in the other two adventures in the Trilogy as you can request the verbose mode every time]. The screen display is neat with the top line showing the location "title" and your score. I'll have to work very hard to get close to the maximum of 325 even with the on-line help facility which is used in conjunction with the printed help sheet supplied with the disk. When I return to Doom, in more ways than one, as I still have Return to Doom and Last Days of Doom to look forward to, I have seen enough to convince me that these are classic text adventures.

Available from: Topologika Software, P O Box 39, Stilton, Peterborough, Cambs, PE7 3RL. Price: £15 on disk for BBC, CPC, PCW, IBM, Nimbus and Atari, £30 (with Return to Doom and Philosopher's Quest) for the Archimedes. Please add £1 p&p.

EXCUSE ME - DO YOU HAVE THE TIME?

Written by Jean Childs



Reviewed by James Judge on an STe

EMDYHTT is what you would call, I suppose, a standard text adventure when you first look at it. You've got a simple start, some puzzles, a known goal and a few graphics. Well, it is and it isn't. Let me explain:

You and your three friends (Dick, Harry and Tom, just to be different) have stumbled upon the abode of the mad scientist Yon Barkodhi who has, through his tinkering, made a time machine. Actually I tell a lie, he has made two - one is his first attempt that is prone to slight 'fallings' and the other is his own personal baby that will make the tardis look like a 'phone booth.

You have been locked up in Yons' house for a few days now, only being fed twice a day and you haven't even got a pack of cards to keep yourselves happy (aaagh). One day Yon seems to be a bit excited and, in his excitement, leaves the door to your room unlocked so, being the great escapologists you are, you take this exit and run slap bang into Yon. Ooops. Oh dear. Mistake. Cock up. Is there a rewind button? Yon was, at that moment, looking for a few guinea pigs to try out his machine and then he saw you - yep, you've got the furry skin, plump cheeks and the cute little look in your eye that automatically puts you in the guinea pig category (oh alright - your human, but does that make a difference? I'm talking metaphorically here and there is nothing that can relieve a bout of metaphorical talking than a bit of nonsense). He tosses you a coin and tells you to meet him, somewhere - you'll find out. If you do want to survive the impending encounter with old Yon, though, you must bring him five items - one that denotes beauty, another that is a symbol of friendship and one each for achievement, bravery and knowledge.

Off he pops in his new machine and leaves you in his house to ramsack the place. Here your adventure starts and it is a good idea to explore everywhere and take all the items that you can find. You must also find the time machine and something to program it with (HINT: think of a Spectrum). Once you've found all this you should be able to get on your way to the first zone. In the game there are five time zones, each one has its own graphic and different puzzles and a main object to get. Once you have completed all the zones you must meet Yon and he will give you marks on your effort and make you an offer you can either refuse or accept (none of this 'get the lads round' tactics now).

Each zone has its own distinctive style with Jean's descriptions giving you a nice feel for that period or place. In the first zone (on a tropical island) it seems bright and airy, and the zone during the war does give you that feeling of oppression and misery.

As well as the graphics and descriptions the puzzles are also excellent. With a time travel game, the author is able to dish out loads of different puzzles and this is just what Jean has done and in a tremendous style. You'll be involved in diffusing a bomb, making friends with a Japanese king (or whatever they are called), doing a bit of swimming, bribing a native and many other things.

Not only has Jean managed to put in all of the three above things, she has also, obviously, spent many a night in her local library, harassing the librarian for books on 'Axted' <grin> (it's meant to be Aztec, but those of you with the early version...) culture, Japanese life style and articles about the war. The whole game is excreting atmosphere from every pore

and orifice and it isn't all that necessary - you can see that Jean has enjoyed writing this game and that enjoyment has brimmed over to the player. If an author enjoys making a game, the player will, hopefully, pick up that enjoyment and get at least something out of it.

I've played this game about three times now - one for reviewing sake, once for enjoyment sake and a third to write a solution. I doubt whether I'll be coming back to it at a later date, but three times is something of a record where I am concerned and it shows that it has that long term appeal.

When I look at the whole game I can only see one or two things to have a moan about - firstly the fact that it was over quite quickly and the whole feeling of getting somewhere didn't last long enough and the second was the bomb problem that had clues that were far too intricate to work out with them alone. Two other people who have played this game said that they diffused the bomb by guess work and not using the 'official' way, as set down in Jean's hints 'n' tips.

Wonderful is all I can say, wonderful. A game that is enjoyable from the word go and right to the end when you see Yon awarding those final few points. If it was a bit longer, with maybe a couple more puzzles in each zone I'd have no qualms ranking it along my favourite game of all time. As it is it comes a damn near second.

NOTICE TO ALL CHILDS FANS: Jean has, since the release of EMDYHTT, been slaving away over her STFM and has come up with a second game. The playtesting has just finished (Saturday evening) and she should be getting the report from me tomorrow (16/11/93). So, hopefully you'll see a new, great game from her in a couple of weeks time and I can tell you - it is every bit as good as this game with a very nice interface which uses STAC the way it wasn't meant to have been.

Available from: Jean Childs, 24 Waverley Road, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5JL Price £3, cheque/postal order payable to Jean Childs.

THE HALLS OF THE DWARVEN KINGS

Written by Geoff Eberle

Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64



To describe this adventure as short would be an understatement. It was written with the AdventureWriter utility and has only eight locations plus an intro screen. It is basically a hack 'n' slash treasure hunt through a cave system.

There are two major points about the game, the first is a lack of flags. As I've covered this point in the past I'll not go on too much other than to say this seems to be a common fault with the older games.

The second point is that the game is a rip-off from the Dungeons and Dragons basic manual example dungeon. It is just as well the Mr. Eberle released this as PD or he may have had to face the wrath of TSR who own the D&D name etc.

Available from: The Guild PD, c/o Binary Zone PD, 34 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcs, WR9 7QW Price: £2 for 4 adventures from the Pick 'n' Mix catalogue.

THE DAY OF THE TENTACLE



Reviewed by Kov on a PC

As my first review for Probe and I hope the first of many PC reviews to come, I have chosen the graphic adventure from Lucas Arts "The Day of the Tentacle". This is the latest adventure from Lucas Arts to use the famous SCUMM adventuring system. SCUMM for the uninitiated means Script Creation Utility for Maniac Mansion, which leads me nicely on the Day of the Tentacle as it's the sequel to Maniac Mansion (which incidentally was Lucas Arts very first adventure).

The scenario to the game goes something like this. Dr. Fred, a weird and zany scientist, has polluted a river (at the back of his mansion) with radioactive sludge, via his strange contraption, the "Sludge o Matic" machine. Now, apparently at the mansion, reside two alien tentacles, one purple (the bad one) and one green (the good one). One day both tentacles find themselves at the rear of the mansion, beside the river, when purple tentacle declares "I'm thirsty". Ignoring the advice from the green tentacle not to touch the slime, the purple tentacle takes a large gulp of sludge which has the immediate effect of growing him two arms and giving him a super brain.

Upon realizing this, purple tentacle declares "I'm going to take over the world" and guess what, it's up to you to stop him. Realizing that purple tentacle must be stopped, green tentacle sends a message to three of his friends (from the first game, Maniac Mansion), Bernard, Hoagie and Laverne, asking for their help. Upon arriving at the mansion, the mad professor, Dr. Fred, decides to send all three friends back in time to switch off the "Sludge o Matic" machine before purple tentacle drinks from the river.

Ah ha, great idea, except for one thing, the time machine has never been used before and of course, it all goes terribly wrong. Bernard ends up back in the present, Hoagie 200 years in the past and Laverne 200 years in the future.

It's these 3 characters which you control in the game. Your first task is to get Hoagie's and Laverne's time machines working again, so that they can return back to the time where they start from and then to try and stop the purple tentacle.

You can freely swap objects between characters and those that can't directly be swapped, can be arranged to arrive at the future through various means (wait until you find out about the hamster, this had me almost falling off my chair in hysterics).

Suffice to say that some very clever and amusing puzzles arise. If you managed to follow all that it becomes clear that this game has its tongue well and truly stuck in its cheek.

The first thing that strikes you about the game are the amazing cartoon-like graphics, all portrayed as seen through a fish bowl lens, giving a wonderful distorted effect, all in glorious 256 colour VGA.

The sound too deserves a special mention, especially if you own a soundblaster or compatible card. There are numerous sampled sound FX (over 100 in total) which really add to the atmosphere.

The music too is very good and fits the game perfectly. Lucas Arts have used their Imuse system which plays different music to suit different situations (very atmospheric) and very clever the way that one piece of music subtly changes to another (just wait until you turn on the stereo in the green tentacle room. Ya, funky, or what?).

The game, of course, uses the familiar point and click interface that is so simple to use it becomes second nature after only a couple of minutes play, and makes the task of solving the puzzles a real joy.

On to the puzzles, and on the whole I found them moderately easy, although I realize that's a subjective matter, but I'm sure most people will breeze through the game in a week, or perhaps two. In saying that a question arises over the lastability of the game and is it worth the hefty price tag? In my opinion, the answer is "Yes" because not only do you get "Day of the Tentacle" you also get another full adventure "Maniac Mansion" (accessed by using the computer in weird Ed's room), so in fact you actually get two adventures in one.

I'm still playing "Maniac Mansion" and although the graphics and sound are poor, the puzzles are much harder. So the package as a whole is well balanced.

Before I conclude this review, a special mention must be made about the intro. A fully animated affair, with the characters actually talking to each other. This is great fun to watch and listen to and sets the mood for the game to come.

So, all in all, I highly recommend that you buy this game. It's dear, I know, but well worth it - £43 retail, £28.49 mail order from Special Reserve.

System requirements: The game comes on 6 high density 3.5" discs (5.25" discs are available from US Gold) and must be installed to a hard drive, taking up 16 megabytes of space. Each saved game takes up about 50Kb and you can have up to 99 different saved positions, space permitting.

The game can be played via keyboard, mouse or joystick, but I highly recommend the mouse.

It is 256 colour VGA only and supports the following sound cards: ADLIB or compatible, Soundblaster or compatible, Roland and general midi.

You must have DOS 3.1 or higher and a 286 or higher processor. Recommended processor speed, 16 mhz or higher.

The game requires at minimum, 530 kb up to 570 kb of conventional RAM and up to 2 megabytes of EMS (expanded memory) although the game played perfectly on my machine with just 1 megabyte of EMS. My machine has a total of 2 megabytes if that helps anyone.

All in all a cracking game.

KING TUT'S TOMB

Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64



This is, as you'd expect, a pyramid adventure, the object is to recover the treasure and escape. It was written in BASIC around the early to mid eighties judging by the style. The parser is very limited and the game runs at a snail's pace.

There are a number of "out of place" objects - such as the Steve Martin poster - and errors have been made when programming the location exits. This is annoying when trying to map and I soon became disheartened by the whole game. To me it scores a mere 2/10

Available from: The Gullid PD, c/o Binary Zone PD, 34 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcs, WR9 7QW Price: £2 for 4 adventures from the Pick'n'Mix catalogue

SETTLEMENT XIII

Written by Sharon Harwood

Programmed by Martin Freemantle

Reviewed by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum



In May 1998 the last nuclear bomb struck Moscow, the last remaining city. This marked the end of World War 3 and civilization as we know it. After five years of individual fighting for food and water some of the survivors gathered together in Rome and began to establish a settlement. As the group grew so did the resources as word spread throughout Europe, and many experts joined the group.

Before long the original settlement was too large to support itself within the chosen area and thus began Project Settlement. Scouts were sent out into the world, reporting back on areas that could support members of the colony. Many groups branched off from the main settlement, becoming self-sufficient but still using the main centre as a communication link.

Last year two more communities were established, one in the French Pyrenees and one in the area known as North Devon: the latter being Settlement XIII of the title. At first all was well with regular weekly progress reports sent to the Mother Centre, then Settlement XIII, also known as New England, failed to report, and when they failed to make contact the next week the situation caused grave concern.

You play Jake, an agent working for the Settlement Agency. This job brings certain privileges such as a two-roomed apartment, one a bedroom cum living room, the other being a private bathroom something not usually granted to most people. Jake had recently visited Settlement XIII to solve their problem of collecting and storing water. He also knew that Loners had attempted to sabotage the establishment of the community and its amenities. At a meeting it was decided that Jake should re-visit the settlement to find out what has happened.

Part one of this adventure begins in Jake's apartment where he has gone to collect a few personal belongings before he meets Agent Harris with whom he will travel as far as the entrance to the Old Channel Tunnel. As Harris has another assignment, you, as Jake, are now on your own with only your wits and few useful objects to help you survive the journey.

It is when you approach the exit of the tunnel that you encounter the first group of Loners. This is your first taste of real opposition and it could require a lot of head-scratching in order to avoid being killed - the Loners don't take prisoners, they shoot on sight. An overnight rest in a "deserted" house followed by a thorough inspection of the ground floor and back yard reveals a few very useful items, not least a way of escaping from a heavily-armed Loner and his comrades unavoidably encountered when you try to leave.

Eventually you arrive at Barnstaple City Centre not far from your destination. The Loners have already scavenged most of the usable items, so exploration of a disused fire-station only elicits one vital object but a lot of danger from the unsound structure. Crossing a nearby bridge, with your destination in sight, completes part one, so you must save your position to load into part two.

In contrast to part one which, as you would expect a journey to be, was linear with several points of no return, part two is in the "explore and find clues and useful objects" style. You are not really surprised to find Settlement XIII deserted. The houses, school, farm, library stocked with magazines (alas no sign of Probe) books and manuals, supermarket, and even the local pub have all been abandoned. You suspect the Loners are to blame, and wonder if anyone escaped to safety. On your previous visit you became very attracted to Ann, the school teacher, an extra incentive to learn the fate of the settlers. You feel drawn to Ann's house convinced she has survived and left a clue to what has happened. Your faith is rewarded for she has not only left a diary and clues as to where she and the remaining settlers have fled to, but she has hidden around the settlement the means by which you can follow them.

As we now tend to take for granted with PAWed adventures, the screen display is neat, responses lightning-fast and inputs can vary between two, three, four or more words as appropriate, which I think adds to the playability and realism of the adventure. I am pleased to see that there is a genuine difference between EXAMINE and SEARCH as they do indeed have completely different meanings and therefore should have different responses. The puzzles are also very plausible. For instance if you are walking through a tunnel and encounter a barrier of stacked cars, it is logical to look around to see if you can find some way under, through or over them. Like all good adventures with very little at your disposal, you must improvise: your agility and fitness is taken for granted.

I think I enjoyed part one marginally more than part two, but it was a close run thing. When I first saw this adventure I wasn't told who had written it. I thought it was by a woman because of the sensitive style of writing, despite having to describe some very tough situations. I was correct. I'm not a womens libber but feel I must express my delight at the recent emergence of two new writers (Diane Rice and Sharon Harwood) who join a very small but select group of female writers. Long may you reign! Well done, Sharon, a first class adventure that combines observation, danger, suspense and an (almost) happy-ever-after finish. Please, please, readers, give her the encouragement she needs to write another adventures by buying SETTLEMENT XIII.

Available from: Dream World Adventures, 10 Medhurst Crescent, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4HL Price: £2.50 on tape or +D disk, £2 on +3 disc but you must supply your own blank disc. Cheque/postal order payable to M. Freemantle.

SLEUTH - OSBOURNE CASTLE MYSTERY - GRUNGY TOWERS



Reviewed by Damian Steele on a C64

There are few differences between these games and all three present the player with the task of discovering who killed who, how and where. The story behind Sleuth is that you were on holiday at Lord Crumbly's mansion and heard a shot. Lord Crumbly was found dead. The other two follow a similar path with murders at Osbourne Castle and Grungy Towers respectively. In all three you have a series of locations where the murder could have taken place and a variety of people who could have committed it with a number of different weapons. You are able to explore the three premises talking to those people you run into. With each turn you can either move/talk to a suspect or accuse someone based on the information you have uncovered. There is little here for the puzzle addicts but budding Miss Marples or Hercule Poirots should enjoy these three. Available from: The Guild PD, c/o Binary Zone PD, 34 Portland Road, Droitwich, Worcs WR9 7QW Price: £2 for 4 adventures from the Pic'n Mix catalogue.

JACARANDA JIM

Written by Grahma Cluley

Reviewed by James Judge



Well, you've gone and done it again haven't you? What have you done? Well, you've bought another adventure game that will have you tearing your hair out for nights on end. What's that? Why will it have me tearing my hair out? Read on and see...

You're on your way home in your trusty spaceship when, suddenly, you crash. That's all you can remember until you feel a slight smack around the chops and you wake up and see a bearded monstrosity learing over you. "Phew, glad you're alive. You had a nasty bump," says the monstrosity (whose name, by the way, is Alan). You find out you crashed on the planet Iberspleen V and that this Gribbley (don't ask me what one of those are, please) called Alan pulled you from your beloved ship.

That is all you know but, after calling up the help menu, you find that it may be a good idea to get off the planet and go home. After a small exploration you find your ship, a torch and a few buzzards as well as a chain and maybe a computer game. If you pull the chain you go funny all over and appear in a market place with elves bustling all around you. Yes, it IS a good way to join two locations, totally daft but a good way.

You soon become involved in your quest murdering postmen (where to put the body though?), being the 10000000 customer in a tailors, giving a thief a package holiday and being sick. It all sounds jolly good fun, doesn't it?

The screen is layed out in a very Infocomish way with the status bar up the top and the text beneath it (which is black on a white screen). Typing <HELP> brings up a menu with certain options open to you. You can get some hints and tips, find out the object of the game, find out how to register your version of the game and about Graham's other game, Humbug.

A nice little thing that is used in the game is the ability to scroll through your last ten commands using the cursor keys. This eliminates the need to type in <AGAIN> when using repetitive commands but I've never used it.

All the way through is Graham's sense of humor which reminds me of Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy and other games of the same breed. This is probably because Graham was first introduced to the wicked world of adventuring by an Infocom game. All text descriptions have a jolly, light hearted feel and the responses to your inputs are enough to make you cry. I'm one of those people who type in all the known swear words to see what the response will be and I've come across some really good ones in my time (Simon Avery's have had me chuckling here and there) but these are real side-splitters.

Problem wise the game is very good with only one or two slightly illogical things to do. For example you drink a champagne bottle and pass out. You then wake in a random room with all your items scattered around town, sometimes making the game impossible to complete but the really strange thing is that if you spit, you get a bird seed!?

One of the main puzzles in the game is colour association. It may sound simple but it just doesn't strike you that, when you're progressing down one avenue of problem solving (where DO you put the posties body?), you should be matching up a flag to the town hall etc. Near the end of the game you will also need to re-use some of the coloured items

Throughout the game you will meet many characters from a gorilla named Grog to an irate pirate. The most notable character is Alan, the Gribbley who has got an infatuation with the word 'Invoices'. try saying it during the game and see where you end up but make sure you've got the wand or you'll have to restart the game.

This is a very good game which Graham should be proud of. Not only is it great but Graham programmed the thing from scratch! Well worth the five pounds if you ask me. I can't wait to get into Humbug which is meant to be bigger, better and funnier. Goody, goody.

Available for PC and ST (with PC emulator) from: Graham Cluley, "Malvern", Seaton Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3NG Price: £6 for 3.5" disc, £5 for 5.25" disc, £2.50 for an earlier, shorter version from SynTax PD Library, 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6JL. Cheque/postal order payable to S. Medley.

THRALLBOUND

Played by Harold Dixon on an Amiga 1200

This game has excellent intro music. You are an escaped slave - you steal the Earl's horse to escape. You enter the city where there are quite a few locations to investigate and several characters to talk to and gain help.

There are some very neat black and white graphics of a kind that I find rather fascinating. They enhance the program in their own quaint way.

Movement is easy enough about the town where there are several objects to pick up, with the inevitable limit to the number you may carry. Try to find the Toadstool and the Mead. You can swim too, but choose your directions underwater carefully! and don't stay under too long or surface too soon. You will have to cover the same ground quite a few times before you get the hang of things. As you cannot save your position, it is best to concentrate on solving one problem at a time before you are caught, eventually capping them altogether in order to complete it.

I found it a very compelling game and interesting little game. A race to solve it before the Earl's men can re-capture you! However it does have a few faults. The vocabulary is sparse, and no X for examining for example, and there are a few spelling mistakes. Also you CANNOT save your position - you must play it out in one go, and do it in a certain number of moves or be caught by the Earl's men and turned back into a slave!

Saying this, I still think it is worth a look at. The graphics are good, and the incentive to solve it before the Earl gets you. It is a nice little adventure that I didn't regret playing, and I would say it's worth 7/10.

Available from: Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs. OL12 7NX. Price: £1.49 including postage.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Warnings issued by Steve Gray:

Don't juggle fireballs in a gunpowder factory.

Don't pull the tail of an angry tiger as they can give you a nasty nip.



THE OBSCURE NATURALIST

Written by Peter Hague



Reviewed by Jean Childs

When I first received this game I had to take a back seat to start with while my daughter played it. She loved it, and for a while I could not get near the computer. I must just add here that at this time my daughter was studying for her mock A-levels, and to break off after hours of revision and indulge in a good adventure game is a tonic to be recommended.

I wrote to Peter Hague to register for Part Two (£5 - Part One is PD). In the letter I received from Peter, he said "I have enclosed the second part of the adventure and the hints and tips. These cover the hardest bits, but it is tricky when writing such a game to know just how difficult it is becoming. I tried to pitch it at various levels so that there are simple and amusing solutions and also some very hard ones. I don't expect anyone to finish soon, though. It was written for reasonably long-term fun". He's not kidding. So this review only covers what I have played so far. I can then continue to play the game at my leisure which is how a game as good as this should be played.

The letter continues "One thing to bear in mind is that although it flows like a river from beginning to end, Part One has various eddies and undercurrents which have to be bypassed and returned to later. In other words, do not be dismayed if you cannot solve a particular riddle, each is part of a whole and sometimes you simply cannot solve one until you have solved another. The best tip for Part One is to get to know it as well as possible. You will soon realise it is one big, interlocked 'jigsaw' puzzle". This is a good description of the game and I could not have put it better myself. But now to the story. You are an obscure naturalist and have come here to observe the birds on the water and in the nearby woods. - 'Obscure' in my dictionary is 'unknown to fame'. It also says 'enveloped in darkness' and that is a good description of the hints and tips sheet, which is not a solution but a cryptic aid to the player who wants to move on. (Don't use it too much - you'll spoil the fun.)

Suddenly, you hear a swoosh in the air above your head, and looking up, see a large and very rare Heron gliding in the sky. Excited, you use your binoculars and see it has a nest and young chicks. If you could get a close-up photograph of them, you would become world famous. But first there is the small problem of getting to the island....

The game is programmed with STAC and the graphics are amazing, full of detail and a pleasure to look at. The text is a pale blue on a darker blue background and is clear and legible. An interesting technique used here is where the text background darkens when you enter darker places such as under a bridge or into a dark passage. Another nice touch is shown when you try to go in a wrong direction. Instead of saying "You can't do that" or "You can't go in that direction", you get "Just bushes that way" or "Mind the fence" and is more personal and user-friendly. I haven't had much trouble so far with inputs, most having been accepted. If you try to do something wrong, it doesn't say "You can't do that" it says "There are good reasons why you can't do that". To that my initial response was "Name one", but it didn't understand that.

The room descriptions are very well written and it is important to read them carefully as some of the exits are casually but cleverly 'dropped in' (almost used 'obscure' again then). The puzzles are original but the main thing about this game is its size and the fact that there is so much to look at in both the graphics and the text.

Another thing to look at on the disk containing Part One is the Read Me file.

Peter has strong views on the large software houses and, although he is serious about this, it is amusing to read. This game has taken him three years to write and he says "You will certainly not find better in the shops". I agree. It really is professionally produced, and its getting to the point where you can hardly get anything in the shops for the ST adventurer, and certainly not for this price. Peter also writes in his Read Me file "please support my time and buy the second half" and "I have other games I am willing to release into the public domain too if I get enough support. Its up to you". Well, all I can end with is, If you have an ST and you don't have a copy of The Obscure Naturalist - YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE MISSING!

Part One available from: SynTax PD Library, 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6JL. Price: £2.50. The full game is available for £5 direct from the author at 32 Chancet Wood Drive, Sheffield, S8 7TR, cheque/postal order payable to Peter Hague.



UNNKULIAN ONE-HALF: The Salesman Triumphant

Reviewed by Vicky Campbell on an Amiga with PC emulator

In Unnkulian One-Half you are Tuckbucker, a newly appointed Acme Salesman. The game opens with you sitting in the Golden Dragon Inn. Not only have you had a bad day, but the barman has gone and there isn't a drink in sight.

You wander around and after some exploration discover the barman, who is definitely the worse for wear. In fact he makes you an offer you can't refuse: he offers to sell you the Inn for just 18 Valmids! All you have to do is find the money or goods to that value.

To complete your quest you will explore the caverns under the Inn as well as a few outdoor areas, and you will meet various interesting people and creatures. Location descriptions are good, with lots of funny responses to your actions. You have a large inventory, and there are plenty of useful objects around. There are footnotes which, when you type note + relevant number, give extra little bits of atmospheric description. There are plenty of mentions of the Acme products that you sell such as Acme Dam Eckspensif Lyfe lhnshoorants. The puzzles aren't too difficult, in fact the author rates the games as "2 - trivial" but some of the problems do need quite a bit of thought.

Unnkulian One-Half is a short freeware adventure which comes on the same disk as a demo for the much more complex Unnkulian Zero. I have to admit that I don't have a PC and played this game on an Amiga with an emulator which made the process rather slow, but the game was so enjoyable it was well worth it.

Available for the PC and also the Amiga with a PC emulator (Task will work). ST version on its way. Price £2.50 (cheque payable to Sue Medley), from Syntax PD Library, 9 Warwick Road, Sidcup, Kent, D14 6LJ.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

As mused by Steve Clay:- Do aeroplanes lose their shape if they don't use hangars?

LETTERS



From Neil Currie of Strathclyde

Like you I also bought all of Jon's adventures and hope that in the criticism that will follow his letter people will remember that his adventures were among the best for the Spectrum. He always put something extra into his games, be it music, special effects, digitized graphics or arcade sub-games, and not forgetting the puzzles and problems.

Since he doesn't want to make any money from his games by licensing them to you then perhaps Jon should release them into the P.D. market.

Anyway, thank you Barbara for giving us the facts about Compass Software.

★

I had hoped for a deluge of letters, but you and Tim (see below) are the only readers to write in on this matter and maybe this confirms Jon's belief that the majority of Spectrum owners aren't really interested. I doubt if the adventures will ever become Public Domain but we can but hope. Please see Tim's letter and my comments for an update on the situation. (Barbara)

From Tim Kemp of Norwich

Thanks for the latest issue of Probe (Vol.7 Issue 10). I particularly liked the letter from Laurence Creighton which was attempting to "get through" to Jon Lemmon, make him see sense, and reverse his decision to call it a day. Since the early days of Compass - after I left Jon to "go it alone" - Jon would keep me informed on what he was doing, how his "latest" creation was coming along, and liked nothing better than to feed me a few snippets on what new fiendish problems he was working on. Considering that we were in contact via the 'phone at least twice a week, and Jon almost always had some adventure news to talk about, then you could say there was enough adventure talk to satisfy even the most ardent adventurer going on between us. He was a true enthusiast.

As was made clear on a few occasions in From Beyond (in Compass interviews) Jon's games sold well. Then, all of a sudden they didn't sell well. He felt his games were still good, they got good reviews, but now they just didn't sell well! It seems fair to say that Jon then made the obvious deduction and came to the ultimate conclusion that the Spectrum scene was virtually dead. It seems to me that more and more ex-Speccy enthusiasts have since come to the same conclusion, and they then have to ask themselves what they are going to do now they've reached this conclusion. Most (Phil Glover, Les Mitchell, Jon Lemmon, Myself) decided to call it a day. I suppose it doesn't really matter why any of us decided to quit the adventure or Spectrum scene. To my mind it makes no difference if you just say "I've had enough" and offer no other reason, but it has to be said that the crunch moment seems to be when you realize that the good old days are long gone and fewer and fewer people will take the time and trouble to sample your wares.

This realization affects different people in different ways - with me I lost any enthusiasm I previously had in an instant and wasted no time in letting people know of my decision to stop doing "F.B." With Jon it seems that he tried harder than me to cling on to his last vestiges of enthusiasm, but in the end, and after a struggle, he succumbed to the "neggies".

- they are the "negative vibes" that reverberate through your mind, and are what ultimately MAKE you decide what to do next. Perhaps Jon's reason for not bothering to send you his back catalogue of games to sell on his behalf is simply to do with people's lack of enthusiasm for them, i.e. why should he bother to sort out master copies, covers, instructions, special odds and ends etc. when few people wanted to buy them direct from him, let alone buy them from other "vendors".

As you know, I let you have issues 10 to 19 of "From Beyond" so that those "unfortunates" who missed later issues could at least get copies of them. I know several people were a bit upset when I couldn't supply them with FB19, hence my decision to let you have me recent back issue master copies. I don't particularly like letting people down, so with a bit of luck you've supplied those people who want FB back issues with the ones they want. Sadly though, I have a feeling that despite your offer to supply FBs to people, you won't sell many (if any), and therein possibly lies the reason why Jon decided not to let anyone else handle the sales of his games.

It is also fair to say that when you enjoy doing something (adventure writing) you tend to enthuse about itI noticed over the last couple of years Jon was spending less time "enthusing" and more time wondering if he was wasting his time, effort and ultimately his life writing adventures, which, let's face it, take an awful lot of time to write. It must have been bad enough 3 or 4 years ago wondering whether your latest creation would sell 50 copies - but imagine the scene nowadays wondering if 6 months effort would be rewarded by sales topping double figures.

That is depressing enough, but add all the hassle of doing adverts, that few people take note of, creating a storyline that few people will see etc. and in the end you just have to ask yourself if it's worthwhile carrying on. Sadly, for more and more people, the answer is NO. That's why my admiration for Jack Lockerby, Laurence Creighton, John Wilson (and others) is so high. They seem to be able to carry on regardless of what is actually happening on the Spectrum adventure scene. This doesn't mean they are blind to the current situation, it just means they obviously care about their customers and have a bit of fight left in them! Good luck to them I say!

In the letter from Jon Lemmon (also in Vol.7 Issue 10) he says his games will just have to slip into obscurity along with the Spectrum adventure scene. I, like you, find it sad that potential customers will now not get a chance of playing his early (or even his last and best) games. Perhaps if you were to offer him an upfront payment then he may change his mind and sell you the rights to his back catalogue? I expect that no one would do this sort of deal simply because of the fact that sales are not guaranteed - and we come full circle to where we began - back to the main reason for Jon's decision to stop, lack of interest in his product. I'm not here to defend Jon in any official capacity, he can do that himself, but I have to tell you that on more than one occasion over the last three years Jon was on the brink of calling it a day. For one reason or another he dug deep, found some fresh enthusiasm, and carried on. Finally, I guess he just couldn't get excited about adventure writing any more! Like I said earlier, it doesn't really matter why you stop doing something, just as long as you know the time has come to stop! Obviously best if you leave your customers feeling happy with what you've given them in the past, but if you must simply "cut and run" then that's a decision you have to make and subsequently live with.

I'll pass my copy of Probe on to Jon so he can see what Laurence and your self have to say about him - don't bank on a letter from him though - and the same goes for any new adventures from Compass!

Well, that's it from me for now. I'd just like to take this opportunity to wish adventurers everywhere a Happy Christmas - I'm sure a few of my old friends will be getting Xmas cards from me, that's if I can find my address list!

★

Many thanks for writing, Tim. Going on past experience, I have no reason to expect a letter from Jon, so as far as I am personally concerned, that is the end of the matter. If anyone cares to express their views, I will be pleased to publish them.

Concerning the back issues of From Beyond, thank you for trusting me with the masters. Indeed your fears about lack of interest have, alas, come true. I forwarded my own copy to someone as they were disappointed not to get one, especially as it contained one of their contributions. I've had one order since then, so I've sold a total of two copies, and one of them was, in effect, to myself. The phrase "strike while the iron is hot" springs to mind, and I think the initial interest has waned.

Maybe the same will happen to Compass Software games unless something is done very quickly. I know of two publishing houses who have offered to take over Compass adventures. As nothing seems to have been finalized yet I won't say any more at the moment. Maybe I'll have more cheerful news in the new year. (Barbara)

From Dorothy Millard of Croydon, Australia

After receiving the October edition of Probe the other day I felt I would like to answer a couple of items raised by Jean Childs. The main reason I concentrate on the C64 is that many of the games on the Amiga are not to my liking. I prefer the old-fashioned text adventures to point and click and don't like role playing at all. Another problem I have is just getting a turn on the Amiga! Having a son doing year 11 studies, where the computer is used extensively for homework etc. etc. and a husband who digitizes music on it, means it is constantly in use. My main use of the Amiga is for desktop publishing.

I would like to see several reviews of the same game published in Probe, as often I disagree with the reviewer, and I like to see different viewpoints. Sometimes it is hard to realize they are referring to the same game when reading reviews in different magazines.

★

In an ideal world we would all have one of every computer to ourselves! I use my Atari mainly for the magazine, letters, solutions etc. although I have a big collection of adventures, most of them not even started. My family like to play puzzle-type games on it, so an STFM and an STE isn't a luxury so much as a necessity when the magazine is being prepared. I've seen nothing to shake me from my belief that the best text adventures are on the 8-bit computers.

Your point about second and even third reviews has been noted, and several "repeats" are in this issue. You (and anyone else) are very welcome to send in your own review for an adventure even though someone else's may have already been published. (Barbara)

From Phil Glover of Hall Green

Thanks for the latest issue of Probe (Sept. issue) which I read completely on the day it arrived. My bit of news on the closure of the Sam Adventure Club disk magazine looked a bit sad, but the club will survive after the loss of the disk. Dave Whitmore, the fellow club founder, and myself both feel bad about our decision, and we've both agreed to keep the idea of the club disk alive, possibly producing an issue or two at erratic intervals, if other SAM magazines can't fill the gap we're leaving. We'll certainly be looking into ways the club may carry on through, and beyond, 1994.

One thing I'd like to do is to offer my services to run a small telephone solutions service to SAM adventurer, possibly via the back page of Probe. If that's OK with you. This shouldn't take too much time, as we've only a handful of SAM adventure games to play, so far! Firstly, I'll have to ensure I have all the solutions for those games, so I'll be playing them with grim determination over the coming weeks. The main problem to my offering help over the phone is when is the best time to ring? I'm a keen pub-goer, and also indulge in frequent Balti meals, for which Birmingham is renowned. Perhaps a list of phone numbers of pubs and restaurants may be advisable! Failing that, I think I could be available Monday to Thursday 6 pm - 10pm and Sunday 11am - 5pm. My phone number is 021 777 7324. If you think I'd be a suitable "candidate" for a SAM helpline, please insert my name, phone number and availability time from the **January** issue of Probe. As well as offering help in SAM adventures, I'll probably be willing to chat about any SAM-related matter, as it could prove a good source of gossip and news.

While on the subject of SAM: I'll try and pass on any SAM adventure news I may have directly to PROBE and other adventure magazines, and supply an occasional review, as promised. I may even try my hand at a cover design for Probe if possible. I thoroughly enjoyed the Adventurers' Convention, and I'd like to thank you for sending a letter. I quite understand that you, and many others, don't like the idea of travelling a great deal. There's no easy way for adventurers to meet socially, and that's why magazines such as Adventure Probe are vital to keep us in touch with each other. It's also a lot cheaper to buy Probe than pay train fares, hotel bills, etc.

The convention seemed to go very well, although the room was smaller than last year. This made for a cosier get-together, though. As usual, I failed to talk to as many people as I'd wished, but I still managed to talk for most of the day mainly to fellow SAM owners, as we huddled around my SAM in one corner. Sam Adventure Club member David Haire turned up with a nearly-completed copy of his TRUEFAITH adventure, which is being written using SAS (Sam Adventure System).

David Munden's FLIGHT OF FANTASY game was on show, and ready for playtesting. Both Gareth Pitchford and myself had a try at it, and told David a few corrections and improvements that he could make. I'm not sure if I'd like any game I may write to be subjected to instant playtesting but I think David took it in good heart. If I ever complete my planned game, I'll let David playtest it, so he can get his own back!

One game I bought at the convention was ZORK 1 (PC version). I've never been eaten/killed by a Grue!, and so I expect to suffer this fate while playing it on the office PC during one of my measly 30 minute lunch breaks.

Above all, thanks must go to Vicky Jackson, Bob Adams, Martin Freemantle, Larry Horsfield and all the others who made such a success of the day. Bob was particularly good at reading out the nominations and awards. Few of us would like this un-enviable job.

especially if they're as nervous as I'd be. All he had as a stage prop was what he referred to as a "magic potion" although it looked strangely like a pint of beer.

Well, that's plenty of waffle from me. Keep publishing Probe as long as you can, and as long as you enjoy it, as you're doing a marvellous job. I hope I'll be able to contribute frequently from December onwards. Despite some of the loss of interest in adventures in general, I'm as keen as ever, if not keener, and I'd like to try and do what I can within reason.

★

My apologies to Phil. This letter was written on 30th October, and I was so anxious to ensure his offer of joining the helpline was included in the magazine from January next year that I had put his letter into the January issue folder, and it only came to light again when I was looking for something else. I can imagine the landlord calling out into a crowded pub "Does anyone know how to kill the Wizard?" or "Why does the Zombie keep following me?" Far safer for adventurers to just hope that you are at home when they need your help. (Barbara)

From Les Mitchell of Hull

Just a quick line to let you know what's happening. On the work front I am being kept very busy, still not had time to play any adventures yet! I do intend to review them for Adventure Probe when I find the time.

On the Goblin Gazette front it seems that everyone, judging from the requests that I have received, wants to order back issues of the magazine. I am quite willing to offer back issues, but again it is a question of when I have the time to produce them. To date I have only been able to fulfil this request once, and this was only because it was for a very special person. There is however, an alternative for people wanting back copies of G.G. and that is to put a request in Adventure Probe in the hope that one of your readers will be willing to photocopy the magazine for them.

I do, believe it or not, miss producing the magazine, even though it was very frustrating. What I mean is, I would spend a lot of time producing the mastercopies, which I considered to be of excellent quality, only to be let down by the poor photocopying quality. There were times when I didn't want to send them out. Credit to my subscribers for not complaining and sticking with me. I have asked G.G. reviewers to send the reviews they were writing to A.P. Before I go, I would just like to thank the readers of G.G. who took the time out to write me a letter wishing me Good Luck, one or two of them even sent back my cheques torn up. Anyone wishing to ring me for help or just for a chat should ring me on a Sunday night after 8pm. Talk to you soon. Merry Christmas to everyone.

★

Nice to hear from you Les. Please contribute as and when you have the time. Some of your reviewers have already been in touch with me, and I have received the unpublished contributions which you so kindly forwarded to me. I have issues 3 to 10 inclusive, and I can arrange for duplicates to be printed if Les doesn't mind. In fact if someone is willing to sell me good copies of issues 1 & 2 I will offer the same service as I do for the From Beyond back issues.

From Ian Brown of Leicester

James Waddington's defense of Dave Ledbury last issue was written without him taking the trouble to read the flier issued by Dave in the last issue of FB, or the knowledge that Dave got our provisional support and then ignored us for 6/7 weeks, and then expected us to support and endorse something totally different and decidedly inferior. Some people do not appreciate this type of treatment.

Terry and myself have contributed quite a bit, in various areas, to Spectrum adventuring, yet he questions our attitude and mentality and says it's sad.

What amazed me though was the sentence in his letter - "It's a bit sad that in a market with so little support, some are too quick to judge and criticise before at first looking at the source and checking their facts." Yet he had NEVER written or spoken to me!!!

Instead of trying to convince everyone that Dave Ledbury is Mr. Perfect, might I suggest that his efforts might be better suited trying to understand the profound meaning of that sentence in his letter, otherwise some people might call him a hypocrite.

*

From Terry Taylor of Bacup.....

As one of those who "suddenly turned their backs on David Ledbury" (James Waddington's letter in November issue), I would like to explain to Probe readers the other side of the coin.

Barbara's remarks, in her editorial comment, were basically correct, but did not really give the full story. Shortly after the sad demise of From Beyond, I received a telephone call from David Ledbury - in this, he advised that arrangements had been made with Tim Kemp for him to continue producing the magazine under the new name of Back From Beyond. It was to continue as a bi-monthly publication, and in the same format as before. He asked whether I would be prepared to continue writing reviews for the new magazine, and, although I had already agreed to write for Goblin Gazette, I said that I would.

It must be stated that, at this point, I was fully aware of David's "reputation" (as James puts it); but, as I had had no adverse dealings with him myself, I was quite willing to give him the benefit of the doubt. Following this, I had no further communication for nearly 2 months! David then telephoned again - unfortunately I was not at home at the time, so he said he would call back. This he never did. Not knowing his number, or his address to obtain the number, I was unable to return the call myself.

I did, however, receive a call from Ian Brown, my former co-reviewer on FB, who had spoken to David. To Ian, David admitted that he hadn't realised how much work was involved in producing a "full-blown", 40+ page magazine every two months, and that he was having to give up the idea. Instead he was going to produce a 5/6 page newsletter - but again, the content of this, and the frequency of its issue, could not be guaranteed.

When people subscribe to a publication, they expect it to be reliable - like Probe dropping through the letterbox every month; or the former FB and GG every two months. What they do NOT want is a publication issued whenever the editor finds time to get it out - and the size and content of which is also dependent upon the same factors.

THIS, then, was the reason why both Ian and myself withdrew our offer to be part of the proposed new venture - not, as James says, because "If we can't have what we want, we're not helping at all". We felt that we could not support a publication which, we believed, was ultimately going to disappoint the readership.

To quote James's own words - "some are too quick to judge and criticize before first looking at the source and checking their facts" - perhaps he should practise what he preaches, as he obviously had only one biased side of the story when he wrote his letter.

★

I am so pleased that Terry and Ian have put the record straight. As someone who wasn't directly involved, but an interested bystander, I feel the facts should be told by them. The last thing the magazine side of adventuring needs is misunderstandings and ill-feeling. So, James and friends, start listening to people with the real experience of writing for, and subscribing to, an adventure magazine. (Barbara)

ADVENTURE PROBE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL



Picture sent in by LES MITCHELL

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS by Jo Wood

The transparently beautiful glass
sustains the glowing wine -
the beginnings of festivity -
a birthday -
the birthday of the Peacemaker
and King.

But as the bells resound
bearing the News,
repeated throughout
the years -
in some distant place
the guns still herald
strife, and the bombs
fall into peoples' lives,
leaving the familiar
smell of fear.

And nearer, as the merriment
continues,
a man walks alone, but
not for long as boys,
staggering from their
celebration,
beating the life sustaining
blood from the body onto
the gayly lit pavement
around.

Nearer still, and a
young child cries
bereft of parents -
outside, watching the
glitter of the tree,
aware of his own
aloneness.

Sounds of suffering,
of greed and selfish
desire, drown out the
peacefulness of the
night;
and again I ask if
there is room for
the King of Eternity
in such a self
centred and
temporal
world.



(This poem was written in 1977 but it could have been written today -
the world hasn't changed much in 16 years!. Jo Wood)

ADVENTURE IN TESCOON A GOOD DAY! or
"I'm just nipping in here for a packet of water biscuits"
written and played by MARY SCOTT-PARKER

This little adventure was inspired by the 1991 convention adventure of Peter Clark (Probe, December 1991) as it made me realise that free adventures do exist and can be enjoyed anywhere. Not only don't they cost anything (I think that was a double negative.....ignore it) but you don't even need to own a computer. Has anyone else enjoyed a free adventure lately?

Push door.....THE DOOR IS LOCKED

Pull door.....THE DOOR IS LOCKED

Read notice on door.....THIS STORE OPENS AT 8.30 AM

Look at watch.....THE TIME IS 8.28 AM

Peer through glass door.....YOU SEE A MAN IN A UNIFORM

Wave at man and point to watch.....THE MAN COMES TO THE DOOR AND LOOKS AT WATCH

Smile at man.....THE MAN IGNORES YOU AND GOES AWAY

Wait....YOU WAIT...TIME PASSES

Wait....YOU WAIT...TIME PASSES

Look at watch.....THE TIME IS 8.32 THE MAN COMES AND UNLOCKS DOOR

Push door.....THE DOOR WILL NOT OPEN

Pull door.....THE DOOR OPENS

Enter shop.....YOU ARE NOW INSIDE THE SHOP

Select trolley out of habit.....THE TROLLEYS ARE ALL JOINED TOGETHER

Pull trolley.....IT APPEARS TO BE STUCK

Pull trolley harder.....YOU NOW HAVE TEN TROLLEYS

Kick side of trolley.....THIS ACT OF VANDALISM APPEARS TO WORK. THE TROLLEY SEPARATES FROM THE OTHERS

Push trolley.....THE TROLLEY WILL NOT MOVE. THREE WHEELS ARE POINTING FORWARDS AND ONE WHEEL IS POINTING SIDEWAYS

Pull next trolley.....THE NEXT TROLLEY SLIDES OUT

Push trolley.....THE TROLLEY MOVES FORWARDS WITH A LOUD. RHYTHMIC SQUEAKING NOISE

Ignore loud embarrassing squeak.....YOU CANNOT DO THAT

Head for biscuit counter.....YOU SEE CAULIFLOWERS ON SPECIAL OFFER

Select cauliflower and bag of baking potatoes.....YOU PUT THE CAULIFLOWER AND POTATOES INTO THE TROLLEY

Head for biscuit counter.....YOU REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE RUNNING SHORT OF MILK

Head for chilled counter.....YOU REACH THE CHILLED COUNTER
Select carton of milk, tub of Flora and half a pound of butter.....YOU PUT THEM INTO THE TROLLEY
Head for biscuit counter.....YOU SEE THAT THEY ARE GIVING AWAY A LARGE PACKET OF CHOCOLATE BISCUITS WITH 240 TEA BAGS
Select box of tea bags.....YOU PUT THE TEA BAGS INTO THE TROLLEY
Head for biscuit counter.....YOU REMEMBER THAT THE TOOTHPASTE IS NEARLY FINISHED
Select tube of toothpaste, bar of soap, deodorant and tub of those little sticks for poking down ears.....YOU PUT ITEMS INTO TROLLEY
Head for biscuit counter.....YOU SEE THE SANDWICH BAR AND FEEL HUNGRY
Select large prawn and lettuce sandwich and vanilla slice.....YOU PUT THE SANDWICH AND THE CAKE INTO THE TROLLEY
Head for biscuit counter.....YOU ARRIVE AT THE BISCUIT COUNTER
Examine shelves.....YOU SEE AN EMPTY SPACE WITH A LABEL BELOW
Read label.....THIS ITEM IS TEMPORARILY OUT OF STOCK
Head for member of staff.....I SEE NO STAFF HERE
Wheel trolley up and down aisles.....THE TROLLEY SQUEAKS LOUDLY. YOU SEE A LADY FILLING THE SPICE RACK
Say to Lady "Excuse me, are there any water biscuits?".....LADY FIXES YOU WITH A FROSTY STARE. MENTALLY PLACES YOU IN THE IDIOT CLASS AND REPLIES "I WOULDN'T KNOW...I ONLY FILL THE SPICES"
Look at watch.....THE TIME IS 8.45 AM
Push trolley up and down all aisles.....THE TROLLEY SQUEAKS LOUDLY. YOU SEE A MEMBER OF STAFF.
Say to member of staff "Are there any water biscuits?".....MEMBER OF STAFF WALKS TO BISCUIT COUNTER AND SAYS "NO"
Say to member of staff "Are there none in the stock room?".....MEMBER OF STAFF GIVES YOU A "YOU SURE ARE MAKING MY DAY" LOOK AND SHOUTS LOUDLY TO INVISIBLE PERSON THROUGH OPEN DOOR "SANDRA...ANY WATER BISCUITS?" INVISIBLE PERSON SHOUTS SOMETHING WITH ALL THE CLARITY OF A PLATFORM ANNOUNCER...WHICH APPARENTLY TRANSLATES AS "NOT 'TIL FRIDAY"
Select large bottle of gin.....YOU PUT THE GIN IN THE TROLLEY
Push trolley to checkout.....YOU SEE TWO OPEN CHECKOUTS
Examine checkouts.....YOU SEE A LONG QUEUE AND A SHORT QUEUE
Join short queue....YOU JOIN THE SHORT QUEUE
Smugly observe long queue.....THE LONG QUEUE SEEMS TO BE MOVING QUICKLY. EACH PERSON APPEARS TO HAVE ONLY ONE ITEM
Examine short queue....THE SHORT QUEUE IS NOT MOVING.

THE CHECKOUT GIRL IS STARING VACANTLY INTO SPACE

Examine long queue.....IT IS STILL MOVING QUICKLY

Examine short queue.....IT IS NOT MOVING. A SUPERVISOR ARRIVES AT THE SHORT QUEUE TILL THE CHECKOUT GIRL SHAKES HER HEAD. THE SUPERVISOR LEAVES.

Examine long queue.....IT IS STILL MOVING QUICKLY. PEOPLE WHO JOINED THE QUEUE AT THE SAME TIME AS YOU ARE NOW LEAVING THE SHOP.

Examine short queue.....A MAN ARRIVES AT THE SHORT QUEUE TILL HE IS WEARING OVERALLS AND IS CARRYING A BAG. THE CHECKOUT GIRL PLACES A "TILL CLOSED" SIGN UP.

Run to long queue..... SEVERAL PEOPLE WITH OVERLOADED TROLLEY GET THERE JUST AHEAD OF YOU.....

GAME OVER...YOU HAVE MANAGED TO SCORE 3 OUT OF A POSSIBLE 100...PLAY AGAIN? Y/N

CRYPTIC MIXES by GARETH PITCHFORD

Below are clues to the surnames of 15 adventure authors.

Once you've worked out the author's name look through the list of scrambled games titles and match the "game with the name".

THE NAMES

1. Lady who's never wrong.
 2. Cold thumb.
 3. A misspelt fruit.
 4. A letter short of Oliver's grub.
 5. Place for your birds.
 6. This guy's quite easily moulded.
 7. Place for the nags.
 8. Morticia's husband.
 9. Will mend your clothes.
 10. What you do with oars.
 11. Testament to your male offspring.
 12. Columbo's coat. praying.
 13. Selection of songs linked together.
 14. Almost a farmyard tool.
 15. Keeps valuables safe while working.
- and don't let it get in your bonnet.

THE GAMES

- a. HAM THE AXCENT. TOM
- b. JUST JEER. STAN
- c. SLOOFERY THUMBS
- d. BORED PEPE
- e. SOL GOTTEN HARD
- f. B-ROCK FOOLS. HENRI
- g. ME HEAR DRUIDS
- h. PLOIRE SNUBS
- i. REAPPUNK GED
- j. RUNNY WORN BURN
- k. ROPES NOT CORAL
- l. SHE ATE BT
- m. A FF/FORTE SWOP
- n. IMIPAN'S CARS FOR ME
- o. TIM FED A RED ASWOTA

CRYPTOGRAMS by JACK LOCKERBY

Can you decode the cryptograms? Each uses a different substitution code where one letter of the alphabet is replaced by another.

1. E TVPCWFWPTW XB IENRWFXP I VC XZJVFNEPN JWWLHW ARV BXPIHU
TEP MV PVNRXPI LON NVIWNRFW TEP MWTXMW NREN PVNRXPI TEP LW
MVPW.

CFWM EHHWP

2. AZFWWWUKF XIWFF VBH KQWFWVO VZ PZEHVHFF JBKV WX TZWMT
VZ BKA AHM VZRZEEZJ. MHYV JHHI. MHYV RZMVB KMG MHYV OHKE. KMG
VZ BKCH VBH KQWFWVO KPVHEJKEGX VZ HYAFKWM JBO WV GWGM'V
BKA AHM.

XWE JWMXVZM UBLEUBWFF

3. G KPFIFPR JK G DIYC PIQ QKU DAUF PIQ HGF'Z KVUBB ZAU DIYC PIQ
SJYKZ ZAIQXAZ IS.

MQYZ MGHAGYGHA

CONNECTIONS sent in by HAROLD DIXON

Connect three houses up with GAS, WATER and ELECTRIC.

All the lines must be a direct connection - no linking one house to another.
The lines must not cross one another, or themselves.

Sounds easy! Is it impossible? I don't know the answer so I'm relying on
someone out there to tell me how it can be done!

GAS

WATER

ELECTRIC

No. 1

No. 2

No. 3

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF A SECRET SOCIETY

recorded by DIANE RICE

"There has been a leak," reported the plumber. "My phone has been tapped."

"I'll see what I can dig up," the archeologist announced.

"Sorry! What was that?" queried the truant, "I wasn't attending."

"I'll bet it was you!" accused the gambler.

"No," denied the schizophrenic, "It was the other one."

"Fancy thinking it could be me. I'm very put out," the fireman pouted.

"I'll fight that accusation," said the boxer.

The carpenter hammered on the table. "You're a chisler," he accused the woodcarver, "I'm going to nail you."

"It's an arresting thought," said the policeman.

"Come now. Let's all rally round," cajoled the driver.

"Yes. It's been a testing time," interjected the optician. "Let's take a long look at the situation"

"I've a germ of an idea," said the biologist, infecting everyone with enthusiasm.

"Come now," said the electrician, lightly. "don't leave us in the dark."

"Count me out" the mathematician added, "our days are numbered."

"Pull the other one, it's got bells on," laughed the campanologist.

"Let us settle our differences," intervened the mediator.

"I agree," stated the artist, drawing attention to himself, "let's sketch out a programme for next time."

After a spell the Wizard declared the meeting closed.

JUST A WORD sent in by A.PENCE-HILL

ABRACADABRA

Supposed to come from the Hebrew words Ab (Father) Ben (Son) and Ruach Acadasch (Holy Spirit). It was a Caballistic charm, written on parchment and worn round the neck in a special pattern.

A B R A C A D A B R A
A B R A C A D A B R
A B R A C A D A B
A B R A C A D A
A B R A C A D
A B R A C A
A B R A C
A B R A
A B R
A B
A

WHO SAID WHAT?

1. Old age isn't so bad when you consider the alternatives.
2. It's not that I don't want to die. I just don't want to be there when it happens.
3. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.
4. Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel.
5. From the moment I picked up your book until I laid it down I was convulsed with laughter. Some day I intend reading it.
6. Youth is a wonderful thing: what a crime to waste it on children.
7. I am not young enough to know everything.
8. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Then give up. No use being a damn fool about it.
9. The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but that's the way to bet.
10. The greatest pleasure I know is to do good by stealth, and to have it found out by accident.

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| A. Bernard Shaw | F. Dr. Johnson |
| B. Groucho Marx | G. Oscar Wilde |
| C. Charles Lamb | H. Woody Allen |
| D. W.C. Field | I. Damon Runyon |
| E. Sir James Barrie | J. Maurice Chevalier |

ITEMS YOU MIGHT PURCHASE AT THE GREENGROCERS by Keith Burnard

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Steve Davis could do this to a part of the foot | 11. Nel's famous for them |
| 2. Vehicle rust | 12. Pray |
| 3. Taxi getting older | 13. Bar Grandma |
| 4. Father's pinch | 14. English rock - as an Aussie would say |
| 5. Inflate a relative | 15. Scandinavian |
| 6. Dog's buttonhole | 16. Sugary foot blemish |
| 7. Whip tuber | 17. Adam's downfall |
| 8. Popeye's favourite | 18. Two of the same |
| 9. Line up for arrival of a rough edge | 19. Regret wire |
| 10. Time to call the plumber | 20. Seasonal colours |





MORE CLASSIFIEDS offered by Steve Clay

When in Romania, why not visit Tatiana and Marin's computer software and hardware emporium. Lots to choose from. Stocks arriving daily from the United Kingdom.

New Inflatable haemorrhoid cushions now in stock. Soft rubber construction with fake fur cover. Available in three sizes: Garden pea £3.50, Nut cluster £4.50 and Bunch of grapes £5.50.

The Travelling Troupers are proud to present, for one night only, their hit show: No Sex Please We're Eunuchs! Tickets available from usual outlets!

Flash In The Pan! Yes, at last we have overcome government restrictions and can now bring you the world famous Flash In The Pan. Pour a small amount of our secret formula into the WC bowl and the next time someone pays a visit! Bang! A chemical reaction takes place that will light up the house! Great fun at parties! £9.95 per bottle. Apply Round The Bend Products, Box 667, London.

NEW!! Sounds-Like! These handheld toys are all the rage in the States and now you can own one too! The Sounds-Like is a small black box with eight buttons. When pressed each one will give out an authentic sound, from the irritating trim phone to the chaos-causing shopping precinct fire alarm! Others include car alarm, rattling chains (best pressed in the small hours when everyone is asleep) and break-wind! £9.99 but they'll be 50p if you wait long enough!

Genuine Balrog Green Cheese. Sold in small sachets and actually collected by the Balrog himself from between his toes just before his annual bath. Also available: cotton wool made from belly-button fluff and bath cubes from scraped and shaped ear wax!

Waste-a-way! The all new diet plan from Skeletoid products. This wondrous bread and water diet will give you that anorexic look in weeks rather than months. Based on the diets used in jails and dungeons of times gone by. Box 999, London.

WARNING!!

Faulty goods - We have received notice from the Police and the Office of Fair Trading that two products in our Grue Goodies range have minor defects.

Grue Glove Puppets: It has been found that the dribble, released when the pressure pod inside the puppet head is pressed, is of a highly acidic nature and some discomfort has been encountered by users. Any burns should be treated at once, while holes should be plugged with anything handy and the advice of a doctor sought.

Grue Glow In The Dark Masks: The paint on these masks has been found to contain levels of radiation at three times the legal limit. Any customers who own one of these masks should return it to their supplier. Any sores or blisters should be treated with copious amounts of calamine lotion.

WATCH THE BIRDIES by Keith Burnard

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speedy 2. Prank in the clouds 3. Warning - low bridge! 4. Piece of edge 5. Tommy Cooper's hat of insects 6. Dance on the lake 7. Night birds call of pain 8. G.... to wake up 9. Famous Russian leader 10 Extra female bird 11. Lifting equipment 12. Royal angler 13. Sore measurement 14. Fight and argue | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Gulp 16. Burgle the tavern 17. Guards of the tower 18. Participant in chess 19. Doggy greeting 20. Dark time in rough weather 21. She's in the navy 22. Is it barmy? 23. Pantomime mother 24. Bird of peace 25. Instrumentalist on the beach 26. A vegetable that's rather funny 27. Out of breath |
|---|--|

QUICK ALPHABET QUIZ

(Each letter appears only once)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 and 2 3 and 4 5 and 6 7 and 8 9 and 10 11 and 12 13, 14 & 15 16, 17 & 18 19 and 20 21 and 22 23 and 24 25 and 26 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> New music format. Too much. Bug-eyed alien superstar. Arts diploma. Sounds like the source of Solomon's wisdom?? Car to beetle around in? Visitor from Outer Space. Scottish soccer team. Before jack in a kidnap. 60's British sports car. Robin Hood's sidekick initially. Not known. |
|---|--|



BALROG'S CHRISTMAS

'Twas Christmas in the Grue Hall, little lamps were glowing.
Holly decked the cave walls and cotton wool was snowing.
Grue wrapped up his present, wrote the label too
"MERRY CHRISTMAS FATSO, FROM YOUR ONLY PAL THE GRUE"
He placed it carefully 'neath the tree, then poured a glass of Sherry
And cut a slab of Christmas cake, to make old Santa merry.
Balrog watched him grumpily, through yellow teeth he hissed.
"What a stupid waste of timeSANTA DON'T EXIST!"

Christmas is all HUMBUG Grue. I swear I'm getting thinner.
FESTIVE!!.....that's a bleedin' joke, without a Christmas dinner!"
He kicked the cat, who hissed and spat. "I'll give you merry hell."
He shouted at the ball of fur, who ran behind the tele.
"Watch the box, then FACE-ACHE!" said Grue, a little boozy.
"I think it might be 'GRUES AT TEN' or perhaps 'THE SAINT AND GRUSIE'
Balrog slumped back in his chair and pressed the channel changer.
"We won't die of excitement Grue. Of that there's little danger.

Some bleedin' flippin' Christmas treat, what rubbish they do send us!
An old 'Extermination Street' and an omnibus 'Beastenders'"
After several Dragon Meads, Balrog's eyelids drooped,
Well, a hard day in the caverns can leave one feeling pooped!
From the cavern's murky depths a jangling sound rang out
Balrog leapt up to his feet and gave a gleeful shout.
"My adventurer trap's gone off, Grue. We've caught ourselves a roast.
Was my plan not wonderful?" he shouted to his host.

Grue was strangely silent, so Balrog went himself.
A tangled heap of red and white lay swearing at an elf.
"OUTRAGEOUS!.....QUITE OUTRAGEOUS! To be thus abused.
If you're the one RESPONSIBLE.....I am Sir.....NOT AMUSED!
Do you NOT know WHO I am? Or the DAY or SEASON?
I wouldn't set foot in these caves without a darned good reason!
It's Christmas Eve. I've brought to you a present to unwrap
And what is my reward for this? A stupid BOOBY TRAP!"

At least you have the grace to blush! You doubted I was real.
Well, why not open up your gift and then see how you feel?"
Balrog took the little box from Santa's outstretched hand
But when he set it on the ground, it started to expand.
The parcel kept on growing and with very little fuss
Quickly had attained the size of a double-decker bus.
Balrog watched uncertainly, the thing grew by the minute.
Perhaps if he undid the string, he'd find out what was in it.



He pulled the flimsy Christmas bow then gasped in pained surprise.
As a squirt of Grue Repellent caught him right between the eyes.
Next a hail of Balrog Balls hit him on the nose,
And when he tried to run away his legs just sort of froze.
Now Balrogs as a species are known for being bold.
But the contents of that box just made his blood run cold.
A swarm of mad Adventurers of every shape and size,
Was heading straight towards him with vengeance in their eyes.

Two BARBARAs and a VICKY. A June.....a JOAN.....a MANDY.
A couple of SUEs.....a LARRY or two, and all with weapons handy.
Before he could shout "HELP!" or "COME AND SAVE ME MOTHER!"
The Adventurers attacked him encouraging each other,
With cries of "DOWN WITH BALROGS" and "BASH HIM TO A PULP"
And "HIT HIM WITH YOUR HANDBAG" and stuff that made him gulp.
One grabbed him by the shoulder and shook him like a mad one,
Well, it WOULD have been his shoulder if the fat old slob had HAD one!

"BALROG" they shouted "BALROG" their voices getting bolder,
And when he woke up with a jerk, Grue's hand was on his shoulder.
"BALROG" he was shouting. "WAKE UP.....It's Christmas Day.
Here's your special prezzie, to be opened right away!"
Balrog left the chair at speed, legs just like two pistons.
He was last seen somewhere South of Hull, headed for the distance!
So if you see a Balrog, passing by your way,
Tell him that Grue misses him and send him home today!

THE FACTS OF LIFE (author unknown)
sent in by KEITH BURNARD

This is the story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

DEAR DIARY

Extract from the journal of Dewsbury apprentice to the travelling healer Corad:

Sunday 21st. Today Corad confronted me about the food I have served over the last week.

"Dewsbury", he said, "what did you give me to eat on Monday?"

"Rabbit, Sire!"

"And what did you serve me on Tuesday?"

"Rabbit, Sire!"

"Wednesday?"

"Rabbit!"

"Thursday? Friday?"

"Rabbit, Sire!"

"And Dewsbury, what treat did I receive yesterday?"

"Er....Rabbit, Sire!"

"Today Dewsbury I do not want Rabbit. My stomach is feeling delicate and I could not face another rabbit!"

"If your stomach is upset Sire perhaps you need one of your potions!"

"After my diet of the last week I would be better off with a ferret!"

(Steve Clay)

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH by DAMIAN STEELE

A	D	E	C	E	M	B	E	R	C	L	M
F	R	E	S	E	N	T	S	L	A	N	R
T	E	R	C	L	A	U	S	M	V	S	I
Z	I	T	D	O	V	Y	S	P	O	Q	Y
Y	N	A	B	N	R	X	A	N	M	T	E
S	D	R	A	C	K	A	N	Y	N	R	K
F	E	Y	K	U	L	D	T	I	D	E	R
L	E	S	I	E	E	C	A	I	F	E	U
E	R	E	T	I	N	S	E	L	O	R	T
O	R	V	Y	E	N	M	I	H	C	N	E
K	A	R	D	N	I	C	H	O	L	A	S

SANTA
CLAUS
TINSEL
CHIMNEY
CARDS

DECORATIONS
TURKEY
SAINT
NICHOLAS
PRESENTS

REINDEER
STREAMERS
TREE
DECEMBER

WORKS FROM WoW by DAMIAN STEELE

All the answers can be found in the WoW advertisement in Vol.7 Issue 4.
Fill in the blanks and then re-arrange horizontally so that the name of a well-known publication can be read vertically.

Uncomplicated	*****
Place to serve punishment	*****
A short and backward brother	***
Melancholy jazz	*****
Legendary male magic user	*****
Payment to a kidnapper	*****
Our favourite game style	*****
Mysterious mythical power	*****
The final one	*****
Castle famous for escapes	*****
Kday's opposite	*****
Ancient name for sunken city	*****
Dispensed by the law courts?	*****



ALPHABET-POEM-QUIZ by Mary Scott-Parker

Each answer to the following questions is a different letter of the alphabet. Use the letters to solve the poem written in number code and use your imagination to supply the last word.

1. Cross..... because of adult certificate?
2. A couple of these could make you like Solomon!
3. Grub for 'orses?
4. Irishman.....in debt?
5. 500 old pennies in Rome?
6. Indefinite number (mathematically speaking)
7. Psychiatrists have a silent ones!
8. Yes.....in Somerset?
9. Very short sleep?
10. Can you do this for miles with 19?
11. In front of a motorway
12. Potassium (add the word nine for a dog!)
13. 50 novices?
14. Stand in line
15. Neck.....sign.....formation
16. Symbol of a radioactive element
17. Drive the plumber round this bend?
18. Bird.....of cloth?
19. Myself as a body part
20. Half a horse?
21. Insect..
22. If this number is present, something has been added
23. Plan this diet?
24. Don't drop this to be posh
25. Golfers can't drive without it
26. ***** *** For a quid (if you're a gambler, that is!)



20-8-16-22-17 3-8-22 21-22-3-17-25-17
 4-23 25-24-22 6-19-20-24-25.
 19-6-24-3-21-19-25-19-6-20 10-3-15-22-17
 26-19-25-24-4-16-25 13-19-20-24-25.
 25-24-22-19-8 11-22-25-24-4-5-17 5-4-6-'25 15-3-8-2.
 25-24-22-2 20-8-3-21 25-24-22 16-6-26-3-8-2.
 20-4-21-21-13-19-6-20 25-24-22-11 5-4-26-6
 26-19-25-24 4-6-22

***** ?

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH by JO WOOD

E V X Q M F X W G A N A D V E N T U R E
 E S R R R X U B T S C N S T X N I K I C
 R I E U V D M N A O U K G E I W M N S A B P
 T K C A T O A E O C G E L M K P L E S K I
 N L N O F S L A E D G E P T S V D L T L D
 O L A M F A T K U S T R K E Y O E P N J L
 I U R F O S F T T I U R L E Y R B E P Y
 A E A X I M D R V S T W W E R X M O P Y
 F V L G C U X E L T N R J V H P V L D S
 O C B N L V O T J N E Y A F H M L U R P X
 C E A D P L I D A E L N A C C G F R O R E
 E D R A C N E S D M S E A S U D I C A E E
 T I X A N T Y D A O T H G A M C S A N H E
 Y C T R F Y D I A O N E I T N W F L O U N
 Y L L O H O M Z E N Y R O I T M G G D U I
 S P B L I T Z E N Y R O I T M G G D U I
 R T A J J V T H R U D O L F N C C H F F R
 Y A D I L O H R U D O L F N C C H F F R

COMET
 DANCER
 DONNER
 BLITZEN
 DASHER
 PRANCER
 RUDOLF
 CUPID
 VIXEN
 REINDEER
 DECORATION
 TREE
 CHRISTMAS

TELEVISION
 CHIMNEY
 PRESENT
 MISTLETOE
 WINE
 SANTA
 SNOW
 MUSIC
 FUN
 ADVENTURE
 ANGEL
 SLEDGE
 HOLIDAY

CANDLE
 CAROL
 CARD
 TINSEL
 HOLLY
 TURKEY
 GAMES
 STOCKING



SOMA - PART 5 written by Steve Clay

.....they crested a now blanketed ridge and stood looking down into the valley below. Her eyes widening. Oda sank to her knees and stared at the sights spread before her. Straddling the base of the valley was a large gleaming construction that to the Traveller's educated eyes looked very similar to factory ships he had seen back at home. To Oda it looked like some giant monster, this was emphasized by the Lizardmen who appeared to be "feeding" humans into a gaping mouth. The Traveller, seeing Oda's distress explained, as best he could, what Oda was seeing. However the Traveller was equally at a loss as to why humans were being rounded up and taken into the factory ship.

It was Oda who spotted it first. She pointed to the rear end of the ship. All the Traveller could see was a small group of Lizardmen. They appeared a little dazed and he wondered if they had just returned from battle. However, as he watched the group he saw that it was steadily growing. From the initial half dozen at the end of an hour there was a cluster of thirty or more standing around at the back of the ship. Waiting. For what? More important than what they were waiting for was where were they coming from, and as the Traveller watched the activities below a cold shiver ran down his spine as he began to form an idea that not only revolted him it also confirmed the fears of those who had sent him on this quest, that the Lizardmen had technology far beyond their own.

Towards evening a group of wagons entered the valley. They were packed with humans in varying states. Some lay on the floor of the wagons others, still some fire in their souls, shouted and screamed at their captors. The humans were unloaded and secured in a small pen. The Traveller had thought this was for animals of some sort, now he knew better. Once emptied the wagons trundled towards the group of "new" Lizardmen. The wagons were filled once more and after a few shouted orders from the lead rider they left the valley the way they had entered.

A stillness fell over the valley and it seemed there would be nothing new happening for a while. The Traveller took Oda's hand and led her to a small shelter beneath an overhanging rock. He was silent and gave the impression that he didn't want to be disturbed, but the questions were bubbling in her head and she needed some answers.

"Why are people going in and not coming out?" she asked.

"Why do you think, Oda? What explanation can you find?"

"I know what I think. I want you to tell me that I'm wrong."

"I think the humans are somehow being turned into Lizardmen," he said. "The numbers of those who enter and those who come out ties up and the delivery of more humans appears to confirm this."

"What should we do? Go back to my village? Maybe some of my people have survived and we could raise an army.....". Her voice tailed off as she realized how small the chances were that any of her friends and family had survived.

"We are on our own!" the Traveller said. "We need to get into that factory ship and confirm my fears, then I can contact my people who can do what is required." He sat staring at nothing. "First though we have to get into that ship."

"That is very easy to arrange!" The Traveller heard the voice moments before he felt the club crash against his skull. He crumpled to the floor. The Lizardman gripped the girl and a second and third lifted the unconscious Traveller and headed towards the factory ship.....

[What now? Can *you* continue the story?]

A. NON'S LIST OF PHRASES AND SAYINGS compiled by NEIL ASHMORE

1. Using a Mac is like shaving with a bowling pin.
2. It's a perfectly good program, it just doesn't work.
3. A truly wise man never plays leap-frog with a unicorn.
4. If at first you don't succeed, redefine success.
5. Never hit a man with glasses, hit him with a baseball bat.
6. Sudden decompression sucks!
7. It's not an optical illusion, it just looks like one.
8. Carrier bags come in one size, slightly too small.
9. Using an IBM is like juggling with straight razors.
10. Everybody is someone else's weirdo.

PLAYING A WAITING GAME patiently compiled by JILL NOTT

WAIT....at least once

in CURSE OF CALUTHA for something to grow.

in IMPACT for a wife to become distracted.

in THE TEST for a bucket to empty.

in MURDER HUNT 2 to plot a killer's downfall.

WAIT.....at least twice

in THE LABOURS OF HERCULES up a tree and behind bushes.

in THE GOLDEN PYRAMID up a tree and by a lake.

in TREASURE ISLAND in two hiding places.

in MURDER HUNT 1 in a farmhouse and at a murder scene.

in THEME PARK in two high places.

WAIT.....at least three times

in KIDNAPPED on a journey, in the dark and in hiding.

WAIT.....for what seems like forever (about 65 moves in each case)

in THE TREASURE OF SANTA MARIA for the estate agent to return
with change.

in REALM OF DARKNESS after spotting the flotsam for a magical item to
appear elsewhere.



THE QUEST FOR THE TALONS by Cucaracha

As Roal gazed at the small rowan tree standing before him, a warm moistness welled up in the corner of his left eye and began trickling down his cheek. Raising one earth-stained hand to his face he wiped away the tear and then continued to press the dark peat into place around the base of the sapling - gently stamping his right boot. Then taking one backward pace he stopped to admire his handiwork.

As the early morning sunlight glistened on the leaves of the rowan Roal's mind filled with warm memories of old Kcaj - in whose honour the rowan tree had been planted - and a gentle smile crossed his face. It had been some months now since his old friend had set out on the final journey we all must take and during that time Roal had tried hard to ignore the loss of one who mattered so much to him but here in this woodland glade everything that Kcaj had ever stood for cried out to be acknowledged.

Off to one side a small brook gurgled merrily on its way and overhead the canopy of leaves filtered out the sunlight, allowing only the occasional random shaft to reach the forest floor. On all sides small birds chirped their glee at the arrival of another day and took to flight in search of food.

With a final stomp of his right boot Roal finished the job in hand and turned to face his companion. The small surreal, known as Cazz, was sitting atop a nearby tree stump and upon sensing Roal's movement, looked up in anticipation.

"Come on little one, the day is young and the brown trout are eager for battle," murmured Roal, gently patting Cazz on the head. "Life goes on and Kcaj would have been the first to tell us that." So saying he strode off in the direction of the brook, drawn by the sound of splashing as the brown trout leapt in search of breakfast.

The surreal dropped down from the tree stump, rubbed some life back into its legs and set off in pursuit of the striding Roal. However just before it did so it looked at the small rowan and whispered gently "Don't worry, he has come through it safely and I will make sure that no harm comes to him." Then spinning on its heels, sped off in pursuit of Roal.

A small blue creature that had been watching all this from the comfort of a nearby grassy mound felt sure that the tree waved a branch in the direction of the departing companions, but then decided it must have been just the result of the presence of a small gust of wind, and continued with its early morning grooming.

For the next hour or two Roal and the brown trout did battle, each eager to outwit the other and neither willing to relent. Cazz watched in fascination as the pair continued a struggle they had been having for longer than it could care to remember, and marvelled at the pleasure they both extracted from it.

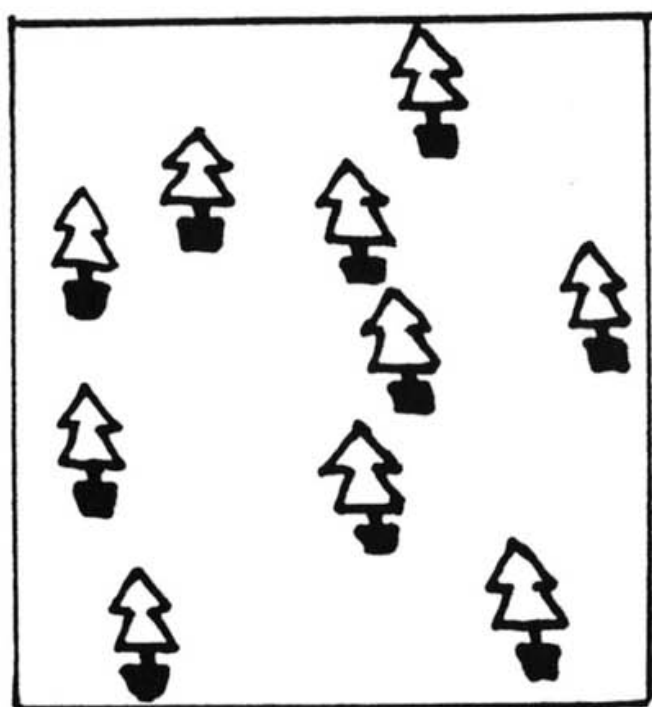
However, off to the west a pair of green eyes peered at this tableau - but not with the gentle pleasure of the surreal but with an evil hatred that could almost be felt. From within the confines of the dark hole that it called its home, the creature gazed upon the playful struggles of the small halfling and the brown trout and vowed that now was the time for it to wreak its wicked revenge. For now, without the guidance of old Kcaj, the halfling would be no match for it and now would be the perfect moment to retrieve the Korat talons that hung from the belt of Roal.



Oblivious of the nearby "watcher", Roai cast his line into the bubbling waters of the brook in one last attempt to snare the fat brown trout that swam amongst the clear liquid and as the hook on the end of it sank beneath the surface, settled back on the earthy bank behind him.

If he had but known that the last surviving Korat was a mere forty paces from him he would not have felt so at ease with the world - nor would he have been so intent on what he was doing. In the musty dark depths of its hole the Korat's green eyes blazed with an intensity so fierce that they threatened to set light to the dry twigs and straw that festooned the floor today would be its day today would be its moment of triumph today his ancestors would be avenged and that which rightfully belonged to them taken back. then cursing the pain in its crippled left wing it turned back into the dark dismal tunnel and shuffled off to prepare itself. (to be continued)

PAIR THE CHRISTMAS TREES by BARBARA BASSINGTHWAIGHTE



Which 3 straight lines, drawn from edge to edge and without taking your pencil off the paper, will divide the rectangle into 5 parts each containing 2 trees?

A RARE LOOK BACK INTO THE PAST

by RICHARD BATEY

Are there such things as rare Adventure games? This thought came to me one day while I was reading a report in a paper on a newly discovered rare stamp and the idea came to me that in all types of collections there are rarities so why not adventures? I am not thinking in terms of rare in the sense of "money" but there are games that have been released that are very scarce since I have never seen them for sale or any mention of them in adventure magazines such as Probe. Including reviews, help and hints. Just what would you give for such a game anyway? Since there are many new Adventurers that may not be aware of games gone by I thought I would write a quick article on games I wish I had bought or games that may be of interest to other people. I have only chosen games that were released for the Spectrum because this is the area I know best. I hope you enjoy this look back into the past.

The first game we will look at is called BYTE and published by CCS. In this you play the part of a computer looking for missing circuits concealed in various rooms. The best feature of the game is that you have statistics based on that of a real computer such as RAM, languages known, speed of operation etc. The idea is that the missing circuits will improve these statistics thus making other problems solvable, so far so good. It is a shame that the game is written in basic and is so slow that it really makes the game unplayable. Every time you type a command (and these are one letter commands such as W for west, O for open, etc.) the computer gives a little jingle, thinks about your input, tells you what it means, does something about it and then prints your character statistics, all done very slowly. The room descriptions are not going to inspire you either as they go something like this "You are in room 3.1 on level 1. You see: table." This game was reviewed in Sinclair User June 1984 with a score of 3 out of 10. The final sentence from the review about the game went "The result is unlikely to be of use to anyone, except possibly as a cure for insomnia."

The next game is one I really wanted to buy but could not find anywhere. The only review I saw of it was in Big K magazine May 1984 and there was no address given to send off for it. The game is called WONDERWORM and published by Havensoft and was given 3 out of 3 K's in the review which meant it was unsurpassable. In this game you play a worm who happens to be called Wonderworm. You have been invited to your uncle's Wormday party across town so you have no choice but to risk the terrible dangers that a worm will have to face in order to get to the party, not that it will worry you as after all you are a worm not a man! Cross busy roads in one mighty crawl, faster than a speeding bus, stronger than any crow, you are WONDERWORM. A game with a sense of humour, a few graphics and I still want one. If you have a copy then name your price!

We now turn our attention to a game written by a church minister set in the period first century A.D. Called JERICO ROAD it will not be surprising to learn that it closely follows certain events in the Old Testament and can be played in two separate modes, junior and full. One of the first puzzles will see you being robbed and beaten by bandits on the road after which a priest and then a lawyer will pass you by on the opposite side of the road. It will not surprise you that the next person along will be the original Good Samaritan who will take pity on you and give you a helping hand. All this is accompanied by sound effects as people arrive and depart.

A novel feature is that instead of typing help you pray instead and you will be given a reference to a chapter and verse in the bible for you to look up. I like this idea a lot and believe it to be a perfect way to get across ideas and messages without being preachy. I have seen two reviews, the first being in Sinclair User where they said that the game was a "....gentle, original and enjoyable adventure." and received a mark of 7 out of 10. The second review was in Computer and Video Games by John Mollow who said "The plot being inextricably tied up with the biblical narration relating to the scenario proved to be a winning formula as far as I was concerned." Originally published by Shards Software for the sum of £5.75.

Now for a hard game called ADRIFT IN SPACE published by Mogul and reviewed in TV Games November 1984. A typical space game in that you are adrift in a space cruiser infested with psycho bloodlusting aliens and your aim is to find the exit and escape. What interests me is that the review states that the game is full of ".....puzzles and problems which must outstrip an IQ test." Having said that it seems that the game is not very helpful via commands recognized or solutions to problems faced and that may go a long way to explaining the reviewers frustration towards the game. It seems it did not help in that it was a bit slow to play as well but at least it was not Quilled. Even so they gave it 3.5 points out of a possible 5 so that must say something and who could resist a challenge like this?

Finally, time for another game I wish I had bought all those years ago. This one could be found on a compilation tape published by Automata (famous for the Golden Sundial of PI) called the 10 pack volume three. This features eight arcade type games and two adventures, the latter two called Royal Adventures of a Common Frog (not a bad game in its own right) and HERE BE TYGERS which is the one I want to concentrate on. Written by Bob Franklin and reviewed in Sinclair User by Chris Bourne and in Popular Computing Weekly by the great man himself Tony Bridge. Both found the game to be enormous fun as well as weird and I can only touch on the basic storyline. It seems that the game opens with your big toe stuck up the tap in your bath and a vampire leeching onto the end of it. Just another typical Saturday night! The game soon moves on as once again you are required to save the universe starting on the planet Gekko 4 which just happens to be the home planet of the aforementioned Tygers. Some of the problems to be solved are rescuing the 19th Iridescent owl from the flaming pit, speaking the spell of Oblivion from the lexicon of the Undead, boring the weregerbil to death, rescuing the droid's peanut butter, reading the small print, visiting the singing obstetrician etc. etc. Let's finish with a quote from the one and only, Tony Bridge himself. ".....just play and enjoy, but a warning: this game will pollute your computer and damage your tender little ego!" For me, you can't get a better recommendation than that.

So there you have it, five reviews of games I hope you may not have come across before. Each has something to offer, the first a nice idea but with poor implantation, the second played for fun, the third includes a novel idea of abstracting information from a book (in this case a Bible), the fourth just one plain hard adventure for whatever reason, and the fifth just weird, wonderful and a lot of fun at the same time. If you happen to own one of these games then please write in with a more definitive review because I for one would be interested in reading them. If Probe readers like to read more on obscure and rare games from times gone by not only on the Spectrum but on other computers as well just let me know and I will try my best to oblige. The question that remains to be answered is, are the above games to be classified as "rare" and just what would they be worth to you? Your thoughts and comments would be appreciated on the subject.



AMIGA NEWS

reporter STEVE CLAY

Klxx the off-shoot of US Gold that handles the budget side of things have numerous adventure-related products appearing over the festive period.

At £12.99 there is a choice of three. Midwinter, Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders and Maniac Mansion (the last two of course being early Lucas Arts games). Moving up in the price range you can choose from Cruise for a Corpse (an Agatha Christie-type murder mystery set on a cruise missile.....er ship). Another World (I remember seeing a coverdisk demo of this and very nice it looked too) It is a graphic adventure using filled polygons [Where would we be without filled polygons?], thirdly If you missed it first time around you can grab that whip and have a go at Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, and finally in the £14.99 bracket is Loom. A penny change from seventeen quid will give you the chance to play The Secret of Monkey Island (never heard of it!) or the much acclaimed RPG Eye of the Beholder and Midwinter 2 (In Search of my Thermals!) [Joke].

Moving on. Genesis I mentioned last time is actually called Genesis. The "a" key is next to the "s" key and mistakes are easily made. Staying in the land of cock-ups I included Risky Woods in my list of Hit Squad releases, fact is it is not an adventure but rather an arcade adventure, my fault for not reading the blurb properly.

Cosmic Spacehead! It was billed by all and sundry as Codemasters first adventure. It does have a point and click adventure-type interface but and here's the rub. It also has extensive platform sections and due to this is unlikely to appeal to the majority of true adventurers.

Heimdall 2 is under construction and utilises the isometric 3D display. The producers have stated that the second game is a complete rewrite and not just an update. Let's hope the awful disk swapping will be improved.

Return to Zork: Have you seen this yet! It is not out on the Amiga and whether it will ever appear on our machine is unknown. However the new product from Infocom uses digitized pictures of actors and actresses with whom you interact. The whole thing looks like a movie. It is available on CD and floppy for the PC in case you are interested.

Coverdisks: I'd like to have a little tantrum with regard to the "free" disks you get on the front of the glossies. Apparently WH Smith are not happy to carry magazines without disks on and of course the publishers want the big shops to carry their products. An editor said they would like to produce a magazine without disks occasionally because not everyone likes them, but their hands are tied, but when astute readers ask for a subscription at a reduced cost without coverdisks the um and ah and move swiftly on. Also what point do they serve? I thought it was to give you a taster of a game and yes that seems to be the agreed reason for them, but when an irate reader compared a review telling all how wonderful the game was with his own view having played the coverdisk demo, the reader was told he was a fool to compare a demo with the finished game. So what is the reason behind coverdisks? Justify a £4 price tag perhaps.

NEWSDESK

Software House takeover

Nell Shipman has written to me to say that the French software house Coktel Vision have been acquired by Sierra. As a result of this Digital Integration will no longer be representing Coktel's new line-up of products (Goblins 3, Lost in Time) which will be released by Sierra. Digital Integration will, however, continue to represent Coktel's back catalogue game like Goblins, Goblins 2, Ween, Inca and Fascination.

So Little Time

The adventure game written by Damian Steele has now been converted to the Spectrum (and hopefully for the Amiga under emulation) by Martin Freemantle. It is being playtested at the moment. Further details in the January issue. The Commodore version is available from me at the usual Probe address for £2 tape or disk. All proceeds to the Probe fund.

New Releases from Dream World Adventures

Curse of the Serpent's Eye (full version of the Megapoints competition game), Settlement 13 (by Sharon Harwood) and Final Battle (last part of the Dragon Slayer trilogy) are all now available. £2.50 each on tape or 3.5" +D disk. £2 if you supply your own blank 3" +3 disk. cheque/postal order payable to M. Freemantle, from 10 Medhurst Crescent, Gravesend, Kent. DA12 4HL.

Latest Zenobi Software Releases

Everyone dreads anything to do with the taxman, but for just £2.49 (tape) and £3.49 (+3 disk) you can buy Steve Clay's FINAL DEMAND, the third and maybe last of the Taxman series. Also just released is Theme Park USA (follow-up to Theme Park UK) by Jack Lockerby and Perseus by Dennis Francombe, an amazing retelling of the Greek legend - £2.49 (Spectrum tape and Amiga under emulation), £3.49 for +3 disk. Please add 25p p&p per item. All available from Zenobi Software, 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs. OL12 7NX.

PC Shareware Library

Simon Avery's Round Corner Shareware Library for PC and compatibles has lots of programs and charge only £1.50 per disk - 3.5" disks only at the moment - and most disks are packed to capacity. Send SSAE for free disk catalogue to Hamlyn's Cottage, Old Exeter Road, Chudleigh, South Devon. TQ13 0DX.

New Commodore Adventure

Tony Rome of Logyk Software says that due to illness he hasn't yet completed The Last Dinosaur, but it will be available by early January. I have already ordered my copy and hope to review it as soon as it is released.

IN TOUCH

FOR SALE - PC Software: Are We There Yet (3.5") and Puzzle Gallery (3.5") - puzzle games £8 each or both for £12. Altered Destiny (5.25") £8. Fascination (3.5") £8. Heart of China (3.5") £8. Plan 9 From Outer Space (3.5") £8. Les Manley in Search For The King (3.5") £5. Leisure Suit Larry 2 (5.25") £3. Tennis Cup 2 (3.5") £3. *** Take the lot (£55 separate) for just £30 *** prices include p&p. Apply Nell Shipman, 1 Heath Gardens, Coalpit Heath, Bristol BS17 2TQ Tel. 0454-773169

FOR SALE - 3.5" D/D floppy disks. 135 tpi. suitable for PC. Atari ST. Amiga. Amstrad CPC 3.5" "B" drive etc. Priced at £4 for 10. labels and p&p included. Replacement guarantee. Simon Avery, Hamlyn's Cottage, Old Exeter road, Chudleigh, S. Devon. TQ13 0DX.

FOR SALE - PC Software: Day of the Tentacle (3.5" HD) £20. Legend of Kyrandia (3.5" HD) £12. Secret of Monkey Island 1 (3.5" DD) £10. Prices include p&p. Apply Simon Avery, Hamlyn's Cottage, Old Exeter Road, Chudleigh, S. Devon, TQ13 0DX. Tel. 0626 853254 (evenings).

HELP WANTED

Does anyone know how to get rid of the green zombies in Legacy? If so, please contact Sharon Lowndes, 54 Blackberry Lane, Four Marks, Alton, Hants. GU34 5DF

PERSONAL

To Grimwold: Please send me some clean undies, clean moleskin vest. Oh, and a brillo padUncle Horace

Happy Christmas Damianfrom Custard

Ellen Mahon - Thanks for my lovely holiday in rural Stanley. All my love to Rudi - Uncle Horace

Daymeeyenne Shteall - One day, sometime soon, somebody will get it right- Casual Crusader Mk IV

ADDITIONAL SOLUTIONS

The following additional solutions are now on file. I'll only supply them for older games (released for 6 months or more) but will gladly give help with the new releases by post (enclose an SAE) or telephone. Cost: one 29p stamp per solution plus a first or second class stamp for the return postage.

ARNOLD 3. ASTRODUS AFFAIR. BALLYHOO. BILLY BARKER IN WALESVILLE. BILLY BARKER'S TV HELL. CURSE OF THE SERPENT'S EYE. DEMIGOD. DUNGEON MASTER. FINAL BATTLE. GRANDAD/HOLEY VEST PT. 1. GUILD OF THIEVES. HELVERA - MISTRESS OF THE PARK. LURE OF THE TEMPTRESS. MURDER HUNT (1986). MURDER HUNT (1992). MURDER HUNT 2 (1986). MURDER HUNT 2 (1992). SETTLEMENT XIII. SOLVALDOL-X. THEME PARK USA.

GETTING YOU STARTED

ASTRODUS AFFAIR played by Dorothy Millard on a C64

Start on bridge of Astrodus. EXAMINE BRIDGE (debris is blocking path of laser beam). MOVE DEBRIS (door slides open). EXAM captain GONTRA (he's dead). E (don't try to get the log book or delay here at the moment as you will be sucked out through the hole into space). E. N (to lounge). GET APPLE. S. E (base of stairwell where a creature is blocking your path). EXAMINE CREATURE. FEED TORTOR WITH APPLE. U. N (dank room). EXAMINE GENERATOR (it's on low power). EXAMINE PLATING (arrow points clockwise). ROTATE PLATING (it's now on full power and the air becomes fresh and clean). S. D. W. N. N (lengthy corridor). If you simply go east you will be killed by the security beam). so CRAWL EAST (you pass beneath the sensor to Captain Gontra's quarters). EXAMINE CARPET. MOVE CABINET

CURSE OF VOLCAN played by Barbara Gibb on a C64

Start in your shack. I (nothing). EXAM TABLE and TAKE MIRROR. W (middle of forest). EXAM FOLIAGE and TAKE MATCHES. EXAM TREE. (to treehouse). TAKE DINGHY. OPEN CUPBOARD and TAKE PLANK. D. W (edge of forest). EXAM BRANCHES on floor (see boar trap). DROP PLANK (over trap). W (south side of river). GO DINGHY (river full of pirahna). EXAM PIPE. S (pond). EXAM GNOME (he's lost his fishing rod). S (factory). EXAM MACHINE and PRESS BUTTON (pollution pours out into river. killing the fish). N. W. N (inside cave). EXAM BONES and TAKE CANDLE. S. E. N to river. It is now safe to GO DINGHY. N. EXAM GRASS and TAKE COIN. E (swim shop). EXAM COUNTER and BUY diving EQUIPMENT (need old coin). W. N. EXAM FLOWERS and TAKE POPPY. W. LAGOON. SWIM (need diving equipment). E (grotto)



DOOMSDAY played by Martin Freemantle on a Spectrum

SEARCH SHELF. GET SPRAY. ACTIVATE DEVICE (prevents anyone mugging you). E. S. S. W. GET CASE. E. N. N. GET ALL OUT OF BOX. W. GET KEY. E. S. S. OPEN CASE. GET CAT. FIND JONSON (lead Jonson to analyser - SAY TO JONSON "N" etc.). SAY TO JONSON "FIX MACHINE". POUR SALTS OVER MACHINE. E. FILL INJECTOR WITH SALT. INJECT CAT. S. E. E. PULL NAIL OUT OF DOOR. E. SE. GET APPLE. NW. W. W. W. N. W. WASH APPLE

GRIMWOLD'S BIG ADVENTURE played by Ellen Mahon on an Amstrad

EXAM PANEL. PRESS RED BUTTON. N. KILL SCIENTIST. SEARCH BENCH. LOOK. GET TAPE RECORDER. E. EXAM GATE. EXAM TAPE RECORDER. PULL LEVER. S (broom cupboard). GET VAC CLEANER. GET BROOM. N. N (into lift). DOWN. S (science building). E (caretaker's room). TALK CARETAKER. GIVE CLEANER TO CARETAKER (he gives you seed catalogue). W. W (pavement of busy street). S. EXAM DUSTBIN. OPEN LID (you now have a tube of cream). EXAM TUBE. N. N (hospital). N. W. GET COAT. WEAR COAT. E. E. TALK TO MAN. EXAM MAN. GIVE TUBE TO MAN

HINTS AND TIPS

ADVENTURE QUEST played by Ron Rainbird (available for many different computers)

Finding it difficult to move from the Fire Pit? Only shift when the flames leap from NE to SW.

To cross the hot coals, remember Sir Walter Raleigh.

A nest is just begging for an egg to rest in it.

Stone bridge trouble? Repeat the rope trick.

When freezing, get the Brazier, drop it immediately, then get it again.

Chop off the skeletal hands. Ghosts hate warmth.

Throw the Magic Stones out of the window. Don't worry, they will be waiting for you.

Search the moors for a Mist-stone.

Lost on the moors? - try the following route from the House of the Vampire: E. E. N. N. N. E. E. E. To return, try W. W. N. W. S. S. S. S. W. W.

Boots are ideal for walking through marshy ground.

Taunt the Orcs with the Medallion.

When chased, alcoves make good hiding places. Go past Agaliarept to the NORTH. The Phoenix will love him!



DAY OF THE TENTACLE played by Grimwold on a PC

To rescue the professor from the IRS men, tie the rope to the mummy in the garden and over the pulley outside the upstairs window to get him into the room. Paint him red and use him with the professor.

Close the door of the sleeping conventioneer to find his car keys, give these to the thief at the car. Use what you receive to get the second dime which you use in the Ficklefingers coin slot, to get the jumper.

Use the crowbar in the food dispenser to get a pile of coins. Put the jumper in the washing machine and feed all the coins into it. When Laverne visits the washing machine in the future, she'll have something to warm her hamster. Put the hamster in the ice box on the first floor.

Give de-caf coffee to the professor. Push Edna down the stairs, then use the videotape in her VCR to tape the professor's secret. Use the book on the horse to get some false teeth.

To win the "human show", use the roller skates on the mummy, then push him down the stairs. Use the wet spaghetti on his head, then use the fork on that. Use the horse's teeth on him as well. Drop the fake barf at the feet of the competition and he will disappear.

In order for Laverne to wander freely, flush the tentacle anatomy diagram to Hoagle, who then puts it with the plans for the new American flag. Laverne can then wear the flag from on top of the chimney.

BLACK MASS played by the author, Damian Steele, on a C64

There are five randomly selected "HELP" messages in the game.

To discover what you need to find search the library.

If you "discover" an object you will automatically pick it up. Found (you also see....) must be collected with the "GET" command.

The fireplace will kill you - ignore it. There is a secret room which you'll need to find.

The attic can only be accessed from the secret room.

There are five keys hidden in the game. The display cabinet cannot be opened.

The main gates need to be opened.

When confronted by furniture remember what children tend to do, apart from destroying it.

All areas CAN be accessed.

DANGER! ADVENTURER AT WORK! 1 played by Peter Clark on an Amstrad

At the beginning in the pub, throw the stool through the window.

The kipper! on the beach is a red herring.

The teacher wants paying in gold for a biology lesson.

In biblical terms, it was easier for a camel to do this than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. What the camel leaves behind is full of surprises.

The "sharp wit" is a cutting tool.

If the pony ride at the end is too much for you, take some seasick pills.

LOST IN TIME played by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

Shake the blanket before you put it over something.

To buy the apple you will need a coin from the piggy bank - careful where you are when to try to get it.

The unsafe brick building is very important - be extra careful about which order you do things. You'll catch up with that bit of paper that keeps blowing away much later in the game.

The blacksmith will strengthen something for you if you give him a little help.

Eventually you'll get hungry, but be careful exactly what you do eat as you may need some of it for later.

The leaf and parchment will help you find a way across the fissure.

Look in something before it is too late.

The canoe will only take you half-way across. When you swim ashore the policeman will issue a couple of warnings, the one about "no swimming in the lake" will have to be overcome later.

DEATH KNIGHTS OF KRYNN played by Ann Castelow on a C64

Kalaman - Knights greet you as you enter the city, and tell you the Commander seeks information. He can be found at (15,5). There is a map of this city on Journal Entry 44 of the Adventurer's Journal (you can buy this map off a gang at (15,8 - approx) for 25 steel pieces, answer YES if asked "New in Town?" to obtain it).

Commander Daine asks for news. To the question "Do you tell of Sir Karl?" answer YES and then mention the Dream Merchant. Ariela (Daine's advisor and consort) tells you he has a pavilion in the Bazaar, and warns you of a gaunt-faced man, called Sebas Astmoor, being Soth's agent. Told to return when you have news, you are shown out.

Upon entering the Bazaar, there are many stalls which are separated by canvas sheets. Do NOT cut through these or the traders will have nothing to do with you, and the Knights on patrol will arrest you. Most of the stalls are worthless, apart from a Weapons Stall at (6,6), where you can buy and sell equipment. The Dream Pavilion can be found at (2,3), and here you are attacked by Sivaks. When you have defeated them, you hear a cry to the WEST. Move to (1,4) and the Dream Merchant's Aides point to the WEST and say the Merchant has been taken. Follow the trail to (0,12) - the entrance to the Inn from the Bazaar - and you find the kidnappers have got away. Enter the Inn and the clerk will give you a message from the kidnappers, saying to meet them in the middle of the Bazaar at the 16th hour that night.

Go to the middle of the Bazaar (6,6) after the 13th hour and wait. Blue Dragons approach with a Red Dragon holding a man. LISTEN to the Merchant, who asks for the Sleepstone so he can go free. Give him the Sleepstone and the Dread Wold appears again, to try and prevent the Merchant from telling you about the dream. The Merchant mutters some magic words and disappears, which leaves an evil troop to attack you (Patriarchs, Black Mages and Evil Warriors again). After defeating them, you get a Clerical Scroll of 3 spells.

Now go back to the Commander's House and Ariela asks if you will go to the Dream Merchant's Shop in Vingaard. Answer YES, and you will be asked to return when you have news.

You are now on your way to Vingaard! (continued next month)

SPIRO LEGACY played by Peter Clark on an Amstrad

The bees in the orchard hide a secret but you must wear something that was in the housekeeper's room before you will be able to get it.

Cast the Bisto spell on the sage to open it and get the Brasso spell.

In the hovel, ask the old crone about the castle and about Maltravers. She will give you some useful information. Giving her £5 will produce a crucifix.

In the laboratory search the pile of junk for some acid. This can be useful sometimes to open locks.

Setting the monkey free will encourage him to give you a gift.



DAY IN LIFE OF TUPPERWARE SALESMAN played by Grimwold on an Amstrad

The storekeeper is an accomplished salesman, but then, so is Horace.

Think advertising when dealing with the cow.

Take note of Horace's feeling for the Yog. and act accordingly.

The mummy's clothing could be its undoing.....

Think of the first man to run the four minute mile when in the King's audience.

The jester is a fool, but you need him.



THE HOUSE played by Barbara gibb on a Spectrum

Close doors to prevent certain alarms from sounding.

Feel under the stairs to find your light source.

To find a secret passage, examine the hearth, stand on cracked tile, examine mantelpiece and then press the button.

Examine the dial on the radio for a clue to the door combination. If the ice machine goes into action, wait for the ice to melt and the water to drain away.

You need to pour (cleaning) fluid on cloth before you can clean the mould from the plug and the wall.

In the closet, look into keyhole and then push screwdriver into keyhole before you can unlock the door.

Unroll the scroll and examine it - It is treasure and a clue as something should now appear in the hut near the lake where you should feel the presence.

Loosen the bars on the cellar window with the hammer and chisel the enter. An alarm with sound so simply turn off alarm without delay.

Lie on a bed to find a bag of gold then find someone who will be very pleased to receive it.

Check the soup before you venture into the maze, you'll need the spade so that you can dig for a treasure.

SORCERER OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE played by Walter Pooley

The crate from the kitchen contains the piece of metal needed to open the tin can which contains a star.

Drink the potion found in the loft to become invisible to the dragon.

Throw the dust from the dusty room at the dragon to get past him.

Dry the towel when crossing the lava. Check your inventory to confirm that it is dry.

Use the fire bricks to knock the tin can from the battlements.

ISHAR 2 played by James Judge on an STe

Over the next year, I hope to take all of you who have got this game from the start of the game to the end, where you will hopefully defeat Shandor and save all of Kendoria. When you go into the village you will be given loads of choices as to which characters to recruit and what to buy. Well, at this point party moral is more important than anything else, as you need the group to work together and not be in competition. Those of us who have played Ishar will know how important morale was, and the idea of it is continued into this game. It is portrayed as the number, right at the bottom of the of the first inventory sheet. The higher the number the better. So, to get a really good team spirit you need characters of the same race so, if I were you, I'd get myself the five elves. Before you do that, though, wind up the bucket in the well, recruit the character, take all his money and then kill him. Do this with all the unwanted characters and you'll get well over 10,000 coins. Then, with one character, recruit one elf, kill the other character (after transferring the items etc.) and then recruit the remainder of the elves. Now, with your money, buy two swords for the mercenary and warrior, a bow for the archer, food for one character (the archer) and body armour for everyone. Remember to put the armour on the characters bodies and to buy female armour for female characters. Also get 20 arrows for each member. You are now ready to kill the people who killed the girl. It should be easy, don't use arrows just yet. Once you've killed the murderers, walk over the girl and check you are given a necklace - put this on to save inventory space. Now head east until you reach the forest. Using your map, work your way through the forest, to the northeast corner where you will find a meadow type thing. Along the way you'll be assailed by wasps and green swamp creatures. They are all easy to kill and shouldn't be much of a problem. When you do reach the meadow, pick the flower that is in the rock circle (important for later on), as well as a couple of black mushrooms - the white ones aren't really useful, unless you want to kill a character as they are poisonous. Now, head back into the forest to the large clearing. You may or may not be assailed by a couple of small orcs - deal with them quickly. Watch out for the very large person with two strange-looking weapons - you don't want to get close to him. Here you can now cheat. Go to the archers inventory and get one food. Click on the black square where one of his hands were (it denotes a two-handed weapon) and the food will be returned to the backpack. Your pointer will still be in the shape of a food so transfer that to a warrior's backpack. Enter the warrior's backpack and you'll see the food in it. Give it to him to eat - you've still got ten food and one of your characters has been fed (well, if you repeat it until they all have got 100 vitality). Now, get this big beastie in your sights, but not close enough so he attacks you, and then just keep on spiking him with arrows. Keep feeding your archer until the monster dies - you should kill him with about sixty arrows - a waste of money it is not, as you haven't got any healers. Go up to where he was and pick up the money as well as the necklace which is hard to spot so be careful. While you're here you might as well familiarise yourself with the terrain so head east until you hit the coast. Search north and south and you should find a travelling wizard - note his position and then head back to the village. Enter the chieftain's hut and give him the necklace. While your are in the village, buy helmets for your characters and put them on. Now head to the southwest part of the island and watch out for four upright stones, this shows you where the dock is. Enter your newly acquired boat and head for the next island. Don't worry you haven't eaten or slept as you will be getting rid of the elves quite soon for better characters. That's where I'll leave it for this part, with you heading to the next island, waiting to get a new party, rob a bank, kill a giant and buy some pets. Fare ye well young adventurers - destiny awaits!

SOLUTION OF THE MONTH

CRISIS AT CHRISTMAS

(aka "White Door" from Six-in-One by Tartan Software)



solution by Barbara Gibb on a Spectrum

It is Christams Eve. You have just arrived home and the baby-sitter tells you the children are fast asleep in their beds. The telephone rings. It is your husband/wife to say the car has broken down, and although most of the presents are under the tree there are two special ones which FATHER CHRISTMAS must leave in each of the children's bedrooms so that they will find them in the morning. Unfortunately, your husband/wife doesn't tell you where the presents are hidden!!

Your task - You start in the lounge. TAKE NOTE, READ NOTE, DROP NOTE. Do not drink the sherry. S. E (study), EXAMI DESK and TAKE DIARY. READ DIARY (cryptic clues). DROP DIARY.

Preparation - E (garage). OPEN CUPBOARD and TAKE STRING. W. N. N (kitchen). TAKE TOWEL (see partly open drawer). DROP TOWEL. OPEN DRAWER and TAKE SCISSORS. S. S. W. W (cubby hole). TAKE PAPER. E (study). DROP ALL.

Finding John's Present - N. N (alcove). TAKE TORCH. EXAMI TORCH (needs battery). S. E (dining-room). OPEN WINDOW. E. E (shed). EXAMI BENCH and TAKE CHISEL. W. W. N. N (larder/store). TAKE BATTERY. INSERT BATTERY. S. D (dark). LIGHT TORCH (see chest). OPEN CHEST (need chisel). DROP CHISEL. TAKE SPECTRUM. U. S. W. S (hall). TAKE PAPER. TAKE STRING. TAKE SCISSORS. WRAP SPECTRUM. DROP ALL.

Finding Clare's Present - TAKE TORCH. U. LOOK UP (see trapdoor). OPEN TRAPDOOR (can't reach). W (master bedroom). TAKE OTTOMAN (too heavy). OPEN OTTOMAN. TAKE BLANKETS. DROP BLANKETS. CLOSE OTTOMAN. DROP TORCH (hands now empty). TAKE OTTOMAN. E. DROP OTTOMAN. W. TAKE TORCH. EXAMI TABLE. OPEN BOX. TAKE KEY. E. CLIMB OTTOMAN. OPEN TRAPDOOR. U (dark attic). LIGHT TORCH (see trunk). UNLOCK TRUNK. TAKE DOLL. DROP KEY. D. DROP TORCH. D. TAKE PAPER. TAKE STRING. TAKE SCISSORS. WRAP DOLL. DROP ALL.

How to become "Father Christmas" - E. N. E (patio). TAKE BOOTS. EXAMI BOOTS. WEAR BOOTS. W. CLOSE WINDOW. S. W. U. W (master bedroom). OPEN WARDROBE. EXAMI CLOTHES. TAKE PONCHO. WEAR PONCHO. E. N (bathroom). OPEN CABINET. TAKE FOAM. SPRAY FOAM (now have a white beard). DROP FOAM. S. D. TAKE (wrapped) DOLL. TAKE (wrapped) SPECTRUM. U. E. E. DROP DOLL. W. N. DROP SPECTRUM.

Final message:- Today is Christams Eve and THAT was an extremely bad dream!



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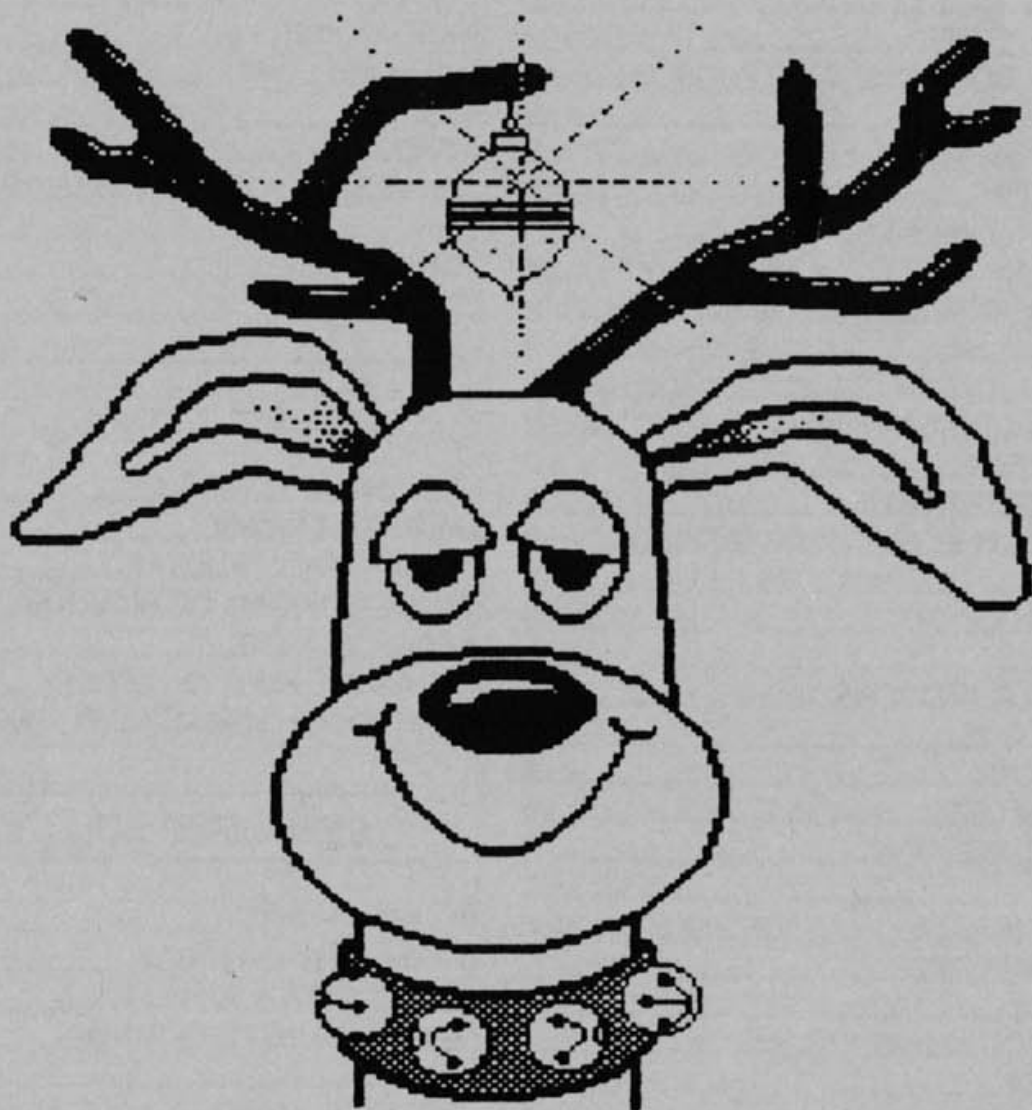
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TO ALL ADVENTURE PROBE READERS
HAVE A HAPPY CHRISTMAS



AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR